

NZMA AGM President's Report – March 2nd March 2018

Over the past year the Board has worked hard to implement and build upon several new initiatives already in place. In this report, I will highlight the significant areas of change.



1. Centralised Help from NZMA:

Hosting the NZMA Championships is a challenge for many Centres. To make this a more achievable task, a generic programme has been created, using the past seven years average attendance per event per age group figures to work out appropriate groupings. A generic programme booklet template is available, which I have worked hard to improve over the past few years. We have encouraged local master's centres to team up with the Athletics NZ Centre when hosting a championship and this is working well in most centres.

John Campbell initially created our own on-line entry system used last season for all championships and NI & Si Championship this year. However, Michael Wray has setup the NZMA Championship on-line entries on the SportsTG system used by Athletics NZ. All club athletes should be familiar with this system and they can use their same club login details, so this simplifies the process. There are many advantages of using this system over our own. It handles payments instantly and exports information in a format used by the Meet Manager programme. We are able to use this system independent of Athletics NZ, one of the benefits of the MoU. All funds are paid directly to the host organisation, less fees.

2. NZMA Website Development & Communication with Members

Our preferred method of communication to our members is via our website and using e-mail. The NZMA website, built on a generic Wordpress platform, is continually being improved. We could always do more, but it is time consuming and we are all volunteers afterall.. If you have been to the new website, you will see that we have introduced a few new features:

- We have a NZMA news post on the Home page to highlight important information about up-coming events or achievements of our members.
- We have imported the NZMA Database using Mailchimp and use this programme to e-mail our members.
- I have created a NZMA President's e-News page and use this to communicate important information to members. Members are invited to read this page via an e-mail request sent out using Mailchimp. This provides a continuous record of messages sent to members that may otherwise be lost if only sent via e-mail and this includes information sent to Centre secretaries.
- All NZMA documentation can be downloaded from the website, such as the Board Meeting & AGM minutes, our Constitution & Handbook, plus the Annual President's report.

- We now use the Sports TG Event desk console to handle all on-line entries for our championship events (SI, NI & NZMA), therefore assisting LOC by handling entries.
- We can handle Subscriptions for Vetline on-line and we are working towards payment option at the time of purchase. Micheal Wray is the expert there and once he has set this up, we will also make it possible to purchase NZMA uniforms the same. This a plugin sale features of the Sport TG system we use for handle event entries.
- We have a NZMA Facebook page, with an Athletics NZ Facebook link, all on the Home page for easy access.
- There are also the usual links to other athletics sites of interest, such as Australian Masters Athletics, OMA & WMA, plus World Masters ranking list and age -graded percentage calculator etc.
- There are also links to all Centres with their own website and any Centre is welcome to piggy back off our site and have their own pages. Just contact me if you are interested.
- We have also created an NZMA Dropbox (in the Cloud) in which we have added some of our generic files, making them accessible for all Board members from any computer, anywhere.

1. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Athletics New Zealand and New Zealand Masters Athletics

The purpose and intention of the MoU was simple. It was to create a partnership between NZMA and Athletics NZ and to simplify the registration system, therefore making it easier for more masters to attend our three championship events, plus the OMA or WMA events. For too many years, the paying of two registrations fees has caused nothing but confusion.

Has it worked? You can judge for yourselves. At last year's NZMA Championships in Nelson, we had 221 competitors attending which was up on the 199 the previous year in Dunedin. The 42 ANZ Club athletes who have never joined NZMA in previous years, would have been excluded from competing.

This year at both Island Championships this season, participation numbers were down, which I thought may have been because I had not been very proactive advertising these events via our website.

However, at the OMA Championships held in Dunedin during January, we had 224 New Zealanders competing. 187 were ANZ club athletes and of these 63 (28%) had never joined NZMA before.

At these championships we have 225 New Zealanders competing (134 ANZ club athletes & 87 NZMA).

If you combine these events, that's 449 entries.

There were 77 competitors who entered both events.

That means we will have **372** individual competitors.

That is a significant increase in overall participation numbers that can only be attributed to NZMA embracing the master's athletes who join clubs, but not us. With the next NZMA Track & Field Championships being held in

Christchurch at a brand new venue and the only major event on the calendar, there is the potential for us to have over 300 competitors. When did that last happen at a NZMA Championship?

I would like to acknowledge and say “Well done & thank you” to our NZMA members who have belonged to clubs for years, who have played their part by spreading the word and encouraging these club athletes to join our events.

I would also like to acknowledge the support that I have received from the Athletics NZ database manager, Kerrie Mott. Every time I have asked her to promote one of our events to their members, including the OMA Championships, she has done so immediately. All of our events appear on their website thanks to Brett Addison from ANZ. To further promote ourselves, I know that if we supplied copy for their online newsletter, they would print it.

There is always a potential downside to change. For us it has meant that the number of NZMA registered members has significantly dropped. With that comes a reduction of income we collect via subscriptions.

However, when Stewart goes over the end of year accounts, you will see that we still made a profit, collecting more income through competition fees due to increased participation numbers, but less than previous years collected from registration.

I have heard comment that we should be worried about this drop in income. That we should try to extract income from the ANZ Club masters, other than when they attend our events? However, I completely disagree with that view as that goes back to a double fee structure as before. As a Board we have discussed this at length and we have asked for your feedback. We are committed to being a financially responsible board and therefore appropriate decisions will be made to ensure we never run at a significant loss. A zero profit would be okay, given we have \$74k in the bank. We will continue to review our expenses against our income and budget accordingly. We will look for alternative income streams, such as sponsorship or applying for grants if required.

4. Vetline and its future?

One of our biggest potential expenses is producing a paper version of Vetline. On the website now are PDF versions of all issues going back to 2010. That could be the way of the future? All NZMA registered members have continued to get Vetline as part of their subscription. We have not asked if that’s what they want, but for the foreseeable future it will continue that way.

Unfortunately, the number of ANZ masters taking up a subscription has been zero. Even the ex-NZMA members who previously received the magazine. In terms of print run length, it has reduced with approximately 200 fewer copies being printed, therefore the unit cost has gone up. The \$25.00 for four issues does not cover the current production costs. Production costs are subsidized by an OMA grant and NZMA registration fees. However, unless we can obtain more advertising or the print run length increases, we will have to increase the costs sometime in the future.

In several issues of Vetline, I have commented in my President's report that we need help to keep this magazine 'alive'. It always seems to be left to the same few contributors to provide articles. While I appreciate their contributions sincerely, we need some fresh ideas and input, so this is an on-going issue.

5. NZMA Going Forward.

In the coming year we have several important issues that need to be considered. A few of these issues I would like to implement before I step down as President, such as

1. Reviewing how the NZMA Board operates / number of committee members / when, where & how often to meet face to face, in line with the reduce income we receive. We are intending to implement Zero (an online banking apt) to make the accounting process easier in the future, with better reporting options.
2. Creating a workable Strategic Plan, with clear job descriptions for the various NZMA Board roles, i.e. succession planning.
3. Looking at ways to attract / promote NZMA to all masters aged 'athletes', not just those within clubs, but the wider public as well. This will mean working closer with Athletics NZ. I am keen to potentially open up our events to non-ANZ club and non-NZMA members by staging some 'how a go events'. I certainly intend to do this in Canterbury and not just masters.
4. Managing our membership database is complicated and we can do it better, such as using the Athletics NZ on-line system. Do we still need local Centre database 'managers' or should we be encouraging members to join themselves up, as ANZ club members will be required to do as from 1st April this year? Between now and 1st September, we will be loading all NZMA into ClubNet, which will give members the option to rejoin themselves. This will be discussed further at a Board level before any final decision is made.

As you can see, we are a proactive Board

Finally, you may be aware that Karen Gillum-Green is not seeking re-election this year. I would like to thank her for her commitment to the Board and undertaking the role of looking after the uniforms. Not easy, given accounting is perhaps not one of her strengths. I know she is a well respected official in the Taranaki. She has brought a breath of fresh air to meetings, always willing to give an opinion. I hope you have enjoyed the experience and I look forward to catching up at future events.

To my remaining Board members. Thank you all for your on-going personal support. You all bring different skills to the table. Together we have created an environment within a Board meeting, where opinions can be expressed freely, but in the end democracy rules and there we get on with job.

Andrew Stark

President New Zealand Masters Athletics

(2nd March 2018)