

Presidents Report 2022

Introduction:

Life returns to 'normal', well, for us in the paddling fraternity, life had resumed a sense of normality, with the changes in the Covid 19 restrictions, with most of the events on our calendar being able to take place. History will record that two years of covid restrictions were in place in South Africa. My sincere thanks to each and every club/event covid officer that took on the responsibility to ensure our clubs and events could take place. We can move forward confidently knowing we played our part to keep our sport safe, and could enjoy as much as possible the freedom of being outdoors exercising.

To our discipline committees, thank you again for your willingness to be involved. This was not an easy year again for anyone, but one can look at what was achieved with a huge smile and gratitude. Seeing our events back at full steam was always the number one goal.

Our clubs, the backbone of our sport. Certainly, this was not an easy two years, yet we have emerged somewhat beaten and tired, but the clubs are still going, and that is thanks to every volunteer at each club. I once again urge you, to get involved and help at your club. Many hands make for light work, and we certainly need that more than ever right now. We need volunteers for events, we all need you, so please consider giving up one race to volunteer.

International Competitions:

It was exciting when we received the news that some International events were going to take place. Once the dust settled, the enormity of the task hit us, as South Africa was still 'banned' from a vast majority of countries due to the Omicron variant of Covid19, and Embassies were still closed. How do we get visa's? How do we travel to banned countries?

Well, we forged forward and we did it! Teams travelled to Sprints, Ocean Racing, SUP, and Marathon racing Champs. Unfortunately, some team members did not make it to the World Ocean Racing Champs, which was heartache for everyone involved, but with all the other tours we made it.

We emerged with World Champions from Ocean Racing, and medals at World Marathons. To the team behind the scenes that dealt with visa's, Government Departments, Overseas Embassies etc, my sincere thanks. If only we had logged the hours spent, would we realise that we overcame the impossible for the best interest of our athletes and our sport.

Development:

Post Covid19, our development projects are in full flow throughout the country. Teams travelled to National Championships and certainly showcased the enormous talent that we have here in South Africa. Janet Simpkins, once again my sincere thanks for the incredible amount of energy and passion you bring to the programme. Your guidance and tenacity is crucial to the continuation of the programmes. The hours spent working on logistics to get the athletes to events safely (and on time) is truly appreciated. To our coaches at the grassroots level, thank you for your persistence, coaching and mentorship of our young athletes.

We look forward to more success stories in 2022/23.

Administration:

Finances:

Once again, Walter Ulrich was instrumental in ensuring we survived financially as a National Federation. Detailed breakdowns on club numbers are provided to Union Chairs. This vital data is important as it highlights clubs current membership, expiring membership, memberships renewed etc, and can assist club committees with their own budgeting and planning.

Meticulous record keeping and preparation of financials is all in a days work, as well as the daily assistance with race entries to both organisers and entrants, not to mention problems with passwords etc.

The Board of Canoeing South Africa, appreciates the time and effort that goes into this department and the clean audits year after year.

Secretary General:

Another year, and we made it. There can be no planning at what is thrown in the way of a Secretary General each year, it is a matter of standing up and tackling it head on. Was it an easy year, absolutely not. Thank you for always acting in the best interests of the Federation, for guiding the disciplines, and answering all the questions, but most of all for your sheer passion for the sport.

Colin, thank you.

General:

To round it off, it is simple: WE ARE BACK. We look forward to over 300 events planned for the year with much enthusiasm and let us make the year, one of support not only for each other, but support to all the event organisers. Introduce a friend, and bring them on board to appreciate the beauty of all our disciplines.

To the Board of CSA, thank you for your guidance and support this past year.

Finally, to you the members, thank you for your incredible support this year. Onwards and upwards.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kim Pople', written over a horizontal line.

Kim Pople
President Canoeing South Africa