

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE 50th AGM 28TH JULY 2007

Once again it gives me much pleasure making a report to a NSWFCA Inc Annual Meeting, this one marking our 50 years service of organised member clubs and their members.

Whether it is a 5 year old, an 85 year old or an entire family the NSW Fishing Clubs Association has some sort of available interest for them. By encouraging those persons to participate in the greatest sport and recreation that exists at individual, club, association and ultimately national level we are continuing on with the tradition that fishing can be enjoyed by all at whatever pace, skill or competitiveness that you decide or want to put the effort into. Something new arises every day. Our fishing fraternity doesn't have to have the latest or the most expensive gear to participate with us. Having mates of individual or team players is paramount for the continual learning's we get in those new things that arise. Traveling statewide or interstate, mingling and watching also enhances those skills as well as exposing your own.

The 2006-07 seasons have produced the usual personal contests between our members and Divisional team contests are healthy. As expected the Swansea- Roy Barnham Estuary and the Hat Head- Harry Pontey Beach and Rock are our best patronised.

A bit of a stir up in alerting clubs and members to their actual financial and contact status occurred this year with the resulting updates appreciated by most.

After many withdrawals 2007 saw a small NSW team make its way to Phillip Island for the National Convention hosted by the AAA Victoria. A CD is available with all those results along with a variety of photos from the fishing events and presentation night. John Prosser was called out of retirement to take the reins of state captain organising and instructing the NSW contingent. John along with Margaret Riddell and me attended the AAA Term AGM held midway the convention. Unfortunately due to NSW election commitments I missed the NSW team get together night but as always a good time was had by all by the time I arrived late back there in the night.

The next National Convention will see a gathering in Wallaroo-South Australia in 2009. This spot is central on the east side of Spencer Gulf. Snapper, Kingfish and KG Whiting we are told dominate the fish species there. No matter, as NSW always adapts to local conditions. Time flies so NSW should be now thinking about their turn again in 2011.

Already some of our keen enthusiasts have visited the area, taken some photos and booking accommodation.

Having my wife Robyn involved with the members data and looking after the competition scoring has seen us both attending all the competitions throughout the year. It is a very convenient arrangement and whilst some minor discrepancies may have occurred the overall management and results have been adequately achieved with most competitors going away happy. As I am unchallenged in the president's position and as long as the association accepts that, then I would ask the management team to continue with Robyn doing that positive work load again.

I take this opportunity to thank the past executive team and committee's. The Secretary Margaret Riddell has been busy along with Treasurer Merv McFie keeping an eye on the finances. Vice President and fishing competitor Allan Cannon has kept the troops in line with his strict rulings and control of competitions and I am sure that will continue. It is a shame our 50 year celebrations are on hold but further arrangements are likely to occur.

Congratulations go to the member divisions and clubs who have committed the effort to host and organise our individual championships. 2006-07 saw the South Coast and Berry club do the R & B, Clarence and Yamba the freshwater, Newcastle the Offshore and recently the Estuary with MNCAFCA and Harrington based clubs organising. That involves volunteers to help out at weigh-ins and garnish trophies by way of cash or donations or even running local raffles so without that interest we would be finding it hard to operate. I congratulate the South Coast on hosting the 2008 mini convention at St Georges Basin.

On the fisheries front we have seen 2 more marine parks implemented, one at Bateman's Bay and the other in Port Stephens/Great Lakes. As usual there were many uproars and debates and public meetings over the issue and an electorate changed political hands as a result. There are more restrictions being placed on our fishing and more closed areas are planned to fishing. I am sure that headlines have alerted our members to the plight of the Grey Nurse Shark and costly court cases that eventuated. In the end NSWFCA became part of it in a joint application headed by Recfish Australia who had the financial access to angling funds. Seven organisations were joined in the case but many more contributed available finances, some small, some large. I attended the entire joinder application along with Rod Burston who between us contributed some directions. Recfish employed a legal team to put the recfishing case. The case concluded on the 10th July and the judge has reserved his decision. Anybody wanting to study the massive piles of paper evidence, files or peruse the paperwork or acquire knowledge of the case please contact Rod or myself and arrangements can be made. Whatever the result out of this, and at a guess \$700,000 plus court case instigated by the NCC there will and still IS **no-fishing zones** in the making involving GNS.

Competition fishing is under the limelight for some reason so we can't guarantee what our prospects are for the future. Final reports are surfacing for the Hawkesbury bio-region marine areas so anything could happen. For now FCA needs to heed the concerns of its members.

An interesting idea has been put to me about plug casting and getting the freshwater clubs/inland areas involved somewhere out west, even a exploratory visit out there has been suggested.

On a sadder note NSWFCA attended the funeral of Mr. Ted Acland who had many years of service as weigh-master and delegate with the FCA, metropolitan and local fishing associations. His service was conducted on the mid north coast.

Tight lines
Robert Smith