

December 2011

Just a quick note to wish you and your family all the very best over the festive season.

Let me also take the opportunity to give you a brief overview of some of the things happening at MAC. Obviously a great deal more has happened at the club and such is technology that various people report a great deal of it. Most of what we have to report is posted on Facebook and the website so apologies to those who have read some of this news there! What follows is an overview of bits and pieces that don't make it to the website, or get lost in the midst's.



Please have a look at our website and feel free to contribute.

Perhaps the most significant thing affecting us all this year has been the building of the Nature Conservation offices. It all got off to an unfortunate start when it was discovered that certain processes and procedures had not been followed and the neighbours had not been consulted. This resulted in a delay in construction. I do have to say that as the project nears completion is a great job and certainly will contribute to a very positive 'first impression' to Rietvlei – it certainly puts a bit of pressure on us as they have set a refreshing new standard and we will certainly be considering our options once the dust settles. Although we have all been affected, I would like to record our real appreciation to the power boaters who were the most affected, and as a result of the construction delays, remain affected! Sincere thanks to you guys for your patience and understanding. We certainly hope to at least reward you with a decent storage facility in the near future.



On the aquatic front, many of our members have achieved great things again...representing the club, province and country in various disciplines. In addition, we also hosted a number of national events and regattas. MAC is a firm favourite in many different sporting federations, not only because of the incredible locality but because of the facilities we have, and not to forget the members who go the extra mile to make things happen. Darryn Ridgway of South Africa Wake Board Association had this to say in his annual report "Milnerton Aquatic Club, Rietvlei, Cape Town, was the venue for stop four of the National Pro Tour - The great thing about this event is Titch Mitchell, Mark Burton-Moore and Laurence Gutridge. From the layout of the course, obstacles, generators, tents, food, all you do is arrive and everything is sorted."

Regatta's, gatherings and other fun stuff

Masters 'n Blasters events have continued to gather momentum and the windsurfers in general have certainly 'upped their game' since the upgrade of the storage facilities, the introduction of some decent hire equipment and replacement of our beginners training gear. Well done guys, you really have energized the club! The recent introduction of the mid week 'Twilight sailing' is gaining momentum and it certainly has the potential to become a firm favourite over the next few summer months.



Improved training equipment

Our training facilities in general received a boost this year as we were lucky enough to get a grant from Lotto. Not only were we able to repair and replace some windsurfing equipment, we are now able to invest in some wakeboards,



waterskis and safety equipment for our Powerboating side, it also helped refund the club kitty that we used for the purchase of the 5 new Oppies. There is still cash to spend and this money was applied for and allocated to more sailing equipment and significant emphasis will be on investing in equipment that can be used to train adults as well as juniors. The “Ladies @ Launch” continues to be a popular initiative and as a club we want to broaden our offering – getting bums of all ages on boats!

The revised bylaws

We were not expecting the repeal of certain bylaws to take as long as it has but we are assured that there has been significant progress and it is approaching the Mayor’s desk at long last! This means that we should hopefully be able to introduce some youngsters to Junior Powerboat racing as the bylaw allows for U16’s to be skippering a boat (albeit under controlled circumstances). We have the boats, we have the youngsters – we just need it to be legalized! Not only will this introduce an additional activity for youngsters who may not be interested in sailing or windsurfing, it is also a great opportunity to introduce powerboats to everyone, hopefully with a view to creating a crop of guys able to assist with ‘rescue @ regattas’.

This year 10 of our ‘sailing’ youngsters managed to get their skippers licenses and they have all proved to be a big help with rescue duties, as well as being able to have a whole lot more fun on those days where not a breath of air blows.

Talking of skippers, over 150 skippers did their Skippers course at MAC/ Rietvlei this year. The office has names of the various people who offer it.



Whilst on the topic of powerboats – There has been a tremendous amount of discussion with Nature Conservation with regards to our tyre barrier on the slalom course. It continues to break up and deteriorate and it has now been condemned. We did try and get another wake barrier but Nature Conservation were not happy with the hodgepodge of colours. What has been agreed is that the area will remain clearly demarcated, with restricted access for slalom skiers only.

We are also waiting for confirmation that we can install another jetty, just to the right of the clubhouse, parallel to the existing municipal one. As soon as we get that go ahead, we will remove the tyre barrier and rejected wake barrier and install the jetty simultaneously.

Power boaters will also be pleased to learn that ‘tubing’ is now allowed at Rietvlei. Safety remains an absolute priority and we urge everyone to exercise extreme care – the vlei is big enough for sensible, responsible and considerate people – please co-operate.....as we really would not want to have it banned just because of a few cowboys.

Repairs and maintenance.

We have recently begun a little landscaping around the pool area and the feedback has been very positive. Many thanks to Sean de Nobrega and Gary Grinstead for his help with the picket fence alongside the pool (Paul Vivian junior and Jon Kukard will also feel they deserve a mention! ☺)

In addition to the landscaping already mentioned, we are aware that the clubhouse is in desperate need of attention but practically we need to wait for the nature Conservation development to end. We also hope to spend some money on the pool. We are well aware that a number of members



really enjoy the facility and we go to great lengths to keep it sparkling clean. Alan Jones does a sterling job, but between the howling South Easter, the youngsters rinsing themselves after being in the vlei and the sheer age of the pool and filter this is becoming a full time and often a frustrating and fruitless job!



The social side of the club remains a mainstay, with the Annual Potjie Cookout remaining a firm favourite. More recently a number of members gathered at the Waterfront for the Volvo Ocean Race, as guests of Puma on their Deck for a complimentary beer, a few handouts and a special discount on all their clothing. It was a great evening and although the Puma boat had broken it's mast en route, the party continued in full force.....enthusiastically following an impromptu theme of *"The show 'mast' go on!"*

Talking of things 'social, this years theme for the New Years Party is the MAC Mad Hatters High Tea party' – We have the same band as last year as well as Rene and her team organizing things so it promises to be the sell out success it was last year. R50 a ticket, wear a hat, bring a picnic basket and come enjoy – Kids under 16 are free! Buy your tickets now – they are limited.



Well, that's all I have as a quick wrap up – here's hoping you all have a great holiday!

Certainly hope to see you down at MAC, but in any event, please be assured that we will continue to offer every member great value for money, a place to relax and enjoy and the very best facilities for our members who want to achieve great things - it's a place we can all be very proud to call 'my club MAC'.

See you on the water

*regards
Ross*