

# Dinner / Prizegiving



Well, the 2008/2009 season was officially closed with the annual prize giving and end of year dinner. What a great turnout with family, paddlers and friends. A special thanks to Bob and Lee for attending the dinner, and Bob for his presentation of the prizes.

As always, with the way prize givings go, the evening was about celebrating the achievements of the team and gave special recognition to those behind the scenes, on the front line, both on and off the water. Overall we have had a pretty good season haven't we?

The venue choice 'Tables on the River' (thanks to Tery) was outstanding, with a smashing array of food and was enjoyed by all. With a few intros from Allan, Bob Laing presented the awards for the evening with the appreciation awards first up:

- Ric Grocott – Thanks for getting up early in the morning steering those waka, assisting the coach, and for your general good humour. Despite being one of the older members of the crew you're just as hard, and truly an inspiration.
- Deb Hardwicke – Your photos capture the moments both on and off the water. There is something comforting about seeing you out there on the water at the start line. We are all lined up, you can feel the pressure building, then you hear one lone woman cheer 'Go EW'. We are especially proud of Photos Forever providing us with Paddle Waikato, that link is going global.
- Tery Hardwicke – Dr Teo you're our fave statistician and you've been there at every regatta crunching those numbers. If you were given a dollar for every time someone asked "How did we do?", you would be a rich man. You have spent tireless hours working on paddlewaikato. Dragon words has come alive with your wit and I think everyone has had some great laughs from it. We wish you the best with the NZDBA.
- Jimmy Heta – Well, just thanks for being our Coach. You see wonderful things in our team, we know you have a lot of commitments, and we fully appreciate the time you give to us.

Sez, on behalf of the team, presented Jimmy with a G-Shock watch, Meccano voucher, and first aid kit.

The results of the people's votes

- Most Dedicated - Virginia Comer
- Most Improved - Jo Cootes
- Best Crewperson Sarah Orchard
- Best Sportsperson Sarah Orchard/Virginia Comer

A special thank you to Tama for being the boat captain. You have a talent for bringing people together and your efforts this year certainly didn't go amiss.

To top it off, Allan decided to introduce a new prize in recognition of the committee and those who particularly worked hard behind the scenes. Allan very kindly donated a brand spanking new trophy 'The Presidents Cup'. Allan presented the cup to Virginia who is also the new President-elect for the upcoming Season. The Cup is awarded by the President to a person he or she nominates. I was truly privileged to accept it and as you all witnessed, my speech skills need some serious upgrading.

So the night was a bang. Most left to watch the rugby and a solid few stayed behind to help me christen the President's cup with a few cocktails. As we finished at Tables we moved on to the Zone to catch the end of the game. There was only a minor issue at the door, when we girls (Sarah, Joe and I) were stopped by the bouncer eyeing up our wooden paddles. Mr Bouncer man, "these are not weapons". He was a bit hesitant but let us through. The night continued on into the wee hours of the morn - good company, good music, and good ales.

Next season is almost upon us again, and I know some of you won't be back and some will be back in full force. I'm already feeling there is a lot of drive to do well this year and, after seeing the unofficial dragon boat league, if a school girls' team can beat the NZ Army then I'm pretty sure our council team can take down the Airforce.

See ya on the water.

- Madam President-Elect Virginia Comer