



# President's Report

During last season, I passed the President's baton to Sarah (Sez) Mackay when I started working at Hamilton City Council in January, 2008. Sez is way too smart for me and gave it back at the AGM later in the year. Clare Crickett (acting CEO) gave the okay for a non-EW-staff member to take the President's role on the proviso that I trained an EW staff member to take over for the following season. And so the season began.....



Helen Leslie, our Treasurer (and my right hand man) from the previous two seasons, declared herself unavailable and was going to be hard to replace. Fortunately Sarah Orchard stayed on as Secretary and, with newcomer Virginia Comer as Treasurer, made a formidable combination that has done the team and EW proud. They have been a pleasure to work with.

Much to the committee's relief, Jimmy Heta agreed to coach for a third successive season. Under Jimmy's leadership the team's performance has steadily improved until this year when EW, for the first time, won the Council Championship Cup at the Rotorua Nationals. We were also the 3<sup>rd</sup> top of 40 registered corporate teams in NZ and 7<sup>th</sup> top NZ adult team including those in the Open category (See results pgs 39-41).

This season, seven of the 25 paddlers were non-EW-staff and this was a higher ratio than normal. The majority of the non-EW paddlers were either ex-EW staff or partners of EW staff. It is clear that there needs to be a recruitment plan within EW prior to the commencement of the 2009/10 season to enlist more current EW staff members.

A highlight of the season was the purchase of new T-bar, carbon fibre paddles (Pg 17). The old wooden paddles had seen 14 seasons of wear and tear and their replacement was delayed because we knew the NZ Dragon Boat Association was introducing international DB standards this season. The international standards, in addition to requiring new boats with dragon heads and tails, required drummers at the front of the boat (formerly callers) to play the drum during races. Also permitted for the first time was the use of the light-weight T-bar paddles. Three years of setting aside fundraising money meant we could be amongst the first teams to purchase the paddles.

The EW Dragonboat team sponsorship (Environment Waikato, Photos Forever) is greatly appreciated. EW's sponsorship is clearly a major factor in enabling the team to compete at a number of regattas nationally (See Sponsorship pg 57-59)

Special thanks must go to Virginia for the amazing job she has done this season in the Treasurer and trainee President's roles. It was obvious to a number early on that Virginia was being groomed to replace me, and thus comply with Clare's request at the commencement of the season to bring the presidency back to EW. Sarah Orchard has been an enthusiastic and tireless worker who has gelled extremely well with Virginia and myself. We've been a great team and I can't speak highly enough of Virginia and Sarah's organisational contribution.

From an organisational level I would like to thank those people who stepped up when required, especially Sarah (Sez) Mackay and Ric Grocott, who assisted at the end of the season when Virginia and Sarah Orchard were finding that the "politics" was taking their attention away from the paddling they love. Thanks also to committee members, Murray (Muzza) Mulholland and Mark Hamer for being there when required.

I'd also like to thank those who contributed most directly to the results we achieved on the water, as this year is clearly the best the EW team has performed in my 6 years of paddling.(Please see Roll Credits pg 57-59)

Regards, *Allan Halse (President), EW Dragon Boat and Waka Ama Club*