

2018 Presidents Report

This report covers the period since our last AGM was held in March 2017 until August 2018. This is a longer period than what the Board would ideally like for reasons which were unavoidable and will be dealt with later in the Agenda.

2017 SUPSA Sanctioned Series

The 2017 Supsa Sanctioned Surf Series consisted of 3 Supsurf Events, which took place in Durban, Cape Town and Sun City respectively. There were 50 Male Competitors in the Sanctioned divisions across the age groups and 21 Female surfers, excluding the Social divisions which proved popular once again. The XOTB contest held at Muizenberg was also the 7th Annual SA Supsurfing Championships. A foilsurfing demonstration heat was included for the first time at a surf contest in Africa.

The Race Series consisted of 9 races, of which 4 took place in KZN, One at Sun City, and 4 in the Cape. There were 94 Male Racers in the Sanctioned divisions across the age groups and 30 Female racers, as well as the social division which featured shorter fun races.

Highlights of these series were:

- holding the first inland SUPSA Sanctioned Surf contest at Sun City
- the introduction of the Live Heats online scoring system allowing competitors, spectators on the beach and at home to follow the action
- Live Facebook broadcasts of some of the events.
- the first South African Downwind SUP Racing Championships were held consisting of two days of racing in False Bay and Table Bay.

For the first time the Annual Prizegiving to celebrate the achievements of our athletes during the 2017 season was held in Durban during the 2018 SUPDurbs Pro, thereby allowing members from KZN to share in the occasion along with a big contingent from Cape Town.

2018 SUPSA Sanctioned Series

The 2018 Series consists of a similar number of Surf and Race events as 2017, although some new concepts were introduced for the first time in 2018. The 2018 series is still underway and will be discussed in more detail at the 2019 AGM, but the major changes introduced this year were;

- that SSA approached SUPSA to host 5 SUP races at the SSA City Surf Series Surf Contest held around SA. It proved a challenge to attract competitors to these races despite Accelerate Sports contributing R12000 in prize money to each of the events. The events were reduced to 3 as a result held in Durban, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth. The XOTB Wave Classic finals were also held during the finals day of the Jordy Smith Coldwater Classic in Cape Town as part of this initiative with SSA to co-host events , but due to the low number of entrants to the races, it remains to be seen whether the sponsors will have the appetite to repeat these events next year.
- a ranking system for the race series where races were ranked from one to three stars in order to reward paddlers who achieved good results against stronger fields, to try and make the race rankings more reflective of who the best paddlers are at the end of the series.

2017 ISA World Standup and Paddleboard Championships

A selection subcommittee was formed chaired by myself and a team was selected to participate at the 2017 ISAWSUPPC in Denmark in Sept 2017. The team came 10th overall and there were notable performances from Tammy Foster who came 5th in Surfing and Jackie De Billot who came 5th in Sprint Racing. Special thanks to Shayne Chipps who coached the team for the second time, and especially to Mandy Scanlen who stepped in and took over after the resignation of the Team Manager prior to departure of the team to ensure that all logistics were taken care of.

2018

A selection subcommittee which I again chaired after the withdrawal of Jackie De Billot, has selected a 12 person team to compete in Wanning, China from 23 November to 3 December. The team will be managed by Mandy Scanlen again and coached by myself after the recent withdrawal of Shayne Chipps. The ISA has again increased the number of events which therefore requires a bigger team to compete and more entry fees in order to remain competitive in the Team competition. It has therefore become increasingly challenging for the selectors to find enough world class athletes with the necessary resources for the team to remain competitive in the team rankings.

The team are training hard including squad training sessions every Saturday morning since May with the generous assistance and valuable input of Kit Beaton, Shayne Chipps and James Raaff. Various fundraising initiatives are underway to raise the large amount of money needed for each athlete to compete, and your support is requested with these.

Corporate Governance

Along with the growth of the sport into different regions, the Board's geographic composition diversified during the period under review. Whereas previously the Board had been concentrated in Cape Town, the board has now had members in Jhb, Pretoria, and Durban. While the geographic spread is to be welcomed, it has made holding effective meetings more challenging. The 6 meetings held have been conducted via Skype, and most discussion is via email by necessity to ensure members are all aware of what is under discussion.

I attended the AGM and NATCOM meetings of SSA as the SUP representative in July 2017 and Jackie De Billot attended a two day SSA workshop in March in East London. The workshop discussed the proposed changes to SSA structures to allow for the control of Supping, Bodyboarding and Longboarding at a National level, within the new framework set out by SASCOC for the management of all sports in South Africa. In terms of the new policy, there can only be one national controlling body for any sport, and representation is required in five of the nine official regions of South Africa.

These workshops followed extensive consultations which we have held on this issue over the past few years with Surfing South Africa. Ultimately it was decided between us that the most effective way for Supping to retain access to SASCOC and the ISA is for SSA and SUPSA to work in partnership to control the sport at a national level, and for this concept to be represented in all media and communications regarding Supping.

Media

Our Media Officer has recently resigned and Mandy Scanlen is currently managing the media portfolio on a temporary basis, but it is essential that a new Media Officer is found ASAP to take this vital portfolio forward and implement our communication strategy effectively.

Mandy has had a new logo designed to reflect the partnership between SSA and SUPSA and this is currently being incorporated across all communication channels as part of the strategy agreed to between SUPSA and SSA.

A project is currently underway to update the membership database to include all recent participants in Supsa events, as well as the various club members to ensure that communications reach the widest possible audience. In order to keep this database up to date going forward, a new Secretary needs to be found urgently

Financial

SUPSA has had to function without a treasurer for much of the past two years since Wayne Roberson resigned, as we were unable to recruit a new Treasurer until Adrienne Vorster joined the board in May this year. We are still in the process of transferring control of the bank account and accounting system to Adrienne which Wayne has kindly continued to operate for us to date. This will allow us to once again maintain full control over the financial systems including the implementation of a formal invoicing system which we have not previously had. As a result the 2017 Financials have not yet been finalised.

However Wayne has recently finally managed to get all the Financial Statements audited from 2011 to 2016 Pro Bono by Ralph Stanton to whom we wish to extend a vote of thanks. Copies of these financial statements will now be lodged with Glen and in the Supsa Dropbox file.

The bank balance is currently R27 890.

For the 2017 Series, Sanctioning fees were increased to R60 per competitor, which raised total Fee income of R15 660 through the series.

Development

Guy Bubb has recently joined the board and will take over responsibility for the development programme which has been driven by Mandy Scanlen in the absence of a dedicated Development Officer. Mandy has designed a transformation policy for Supsa as required by SASCOC and which is essential to enable us to make our sport more representative of the SA population and to encourage access to the sport to our under privileged communities. 10 athletes have been identified to participate, 5 each in Durban and Cape Town and they are to receive sup training, access to equipment, free entry to events, as well as first aid training sponsored by ER 24 to allow them to supply first aid services at Supsa events.

Environmental

SUPSA has been unable to recruit a new Environmental Office since the resignation of Jenny Koopmans, and have therefore not been able to develop any new initiatives in this critical area.

Archiving

Glen Thompson accepted the role of advisor to the board on the development of a policy to ensure that relevant SUPSA records are maintained and archived. Glen has set up a Dropbox folder on which all SUPSA records from the years 2011 to 2017 are stored. After each AGM the preceding year's records are to be uploaded into this folder. Glen also retains all SUPSA's paper records. A project which still needs to be undertaken once a new media officer is elected will be to collate all the video material that is available into a single online storage facility accessible to members via the website.

In conclusion there have been numerous initiatives undertaken to improve the platform offered by SUPSA for competitive Stand Up Paddleboarding in South Africa during the past few years.

South Africa were early adopters of competitive Stand Up Paddling who competed in the very first World Championships and we are blessed with ideal conditions for the sport. We have made great strides in developing a formal competitive infrastructure during this period, however despite this participation numbers in our sanctioned events are not growing and interest in the competitive side of the sport appears to be tapering at the same time as it appears to be growing in the rest of the world. Much can be done to improve the growth of the sport, starting with the social paddler which is everyone's entry point to the sport.

The single biggest challenge to achieving this remains to find people who are prepared to offer their time to get involved and make this happen. For too long the sport has relied on the same people to invest their time and/or money, whether as sponsors, event organisers or committee members.

Without the involvement of new people and energy into the sport, there is a danger that the platforms which have been built up over the past eight years will eventually dissipate and formal competitive Stand Up Paddling in South Africa will go the way of waveskiing and windsurfing and simply disappear. Please do not let us allow that to happen.