



# 2011

## Chair Report

Newcastle University Sport

# chair's report



2011 was another busy year for NUSport and noteworthy matters during the year included:

- Protracted discussions with the University of Newcastle regarding its relationship with NUSport;
- Growth in participation by students, staff and alumni across a range of programs;
- Success in inter-university sporting competitions;
- University confirmation of plans to develop new student accommodation on the tennis courts site;
- Increasing attention by the Board and management on plans to improve and expand existing facilities;
- Solid financial performance for the year and retention of Forum memberships in the face of increasing competition within the fitness industry and the physical limits of a number of our facilities that are at capacity at peak times.

I would like to draw member attention to the following specific matters in 2011.

## Member Survey

A Member Satisfaction Survey conducted by NUSport in November 2010 found:

- Over 90% of participants were either satisfied or very satisfied;
- Strong positive assessment of the levels of facility cleanliness, maintenance and equipment;
- Feedback from customers about staff had been very positive.

Comments made by every survey respondent were carefully read and an action plan was put in place in 2011 to address matters requiring attention. NUSport then informed members as to action taken in response to their feedback.

## NUSport Company structure

At the 2010 AGM, I informed members that NUSport's proposal to develop another facility off-campus in late 2009 raised an issue of competitive neutrality for the University that led to the University asking whether NUSport might be a controlled entity. Working Parties were set up to address these issues. I am pleased to advise that after almost 2 years of discussions the issues were resolved with the University concluding in 2011, that NUSport was not and never has been a controlled entity of the University. I take this opportunity to thank CEO Chris Hicks and our Board members who were involved in the negotiations with the University.

During discussions, the need for a management agreement between the University and NUSport was recognised. Much of the preparatory work was undertaken by NUSport and while a management agreement is yet to be finalised, I wish to thank CEO Chris Hicks and Director Tim Osborn for the large amount of work they did in developing a workable draft.

## NUSport 10 Year Anniversary

On 15th May 2011, NUSport celebrated its 10th anniversary as it was first registered as a public company on 15 May 2001.

## Facility Upgrades

- In October 2011, the Forum Health & Wellness Centre Harbourside, which had been in operation for 5 years, was refurbished. Activity space in the centre was increased to cater for an additional 200 members, change rooms were air conditioned, and new equipment was installed.
- The High Performance Training Zone in The Forum Sports & Aquatic Centre was also refurbished.
- NUSport agreed to a request from the University to locate two covered basketball courts on the south side of No 2 Oval for teaching by the School of Education. The covered courts provide students with recreation facilities when not required for teaching

## Facility Maintenance

During the year the University relaced the climbing wall roof to fix the water leaks.

## Student Accommodation

The University confirmed that new student accommodation would be built on the tennis courts site with work expected to commence in 2012. The Board is working with the University to ensure lost recreational facilities are replaced with an equivalent level of needed facilities.

Higher Education Legislation Amendment (Student Services and Amenities) Bill 2010

Legislation passed by the Federal Government on 11 October 2011 allows universities to charge students a

fee for provision of a range of specified services and amenities. The University will introduce a student services and amenities fee in 2nd semester this year.

## University Sport

University teams performed well at inter-university competitions during the year

- EUG in Canberra in July – 22 teams comprising 193 students won 2 gold, 2 silver and 1 bronze medals.
- AUC Snow Sports - A record large team of 45 students competed in Thredbo winning 3 Gold and 1 Silver medals with the team placing 5th overall.
- Students also competed in AUC Rowing at Penrith and in AUC Distance Running in Sydney.
- AUG on the Gold Coast in September – 12 teams comprising 110 students won 4 gold, 6 silver and 5 bronze medals.

## EAFU

NUsport also provided support for 56 student athletes through the Elite Athlete Friendly University Agreement. This group included 26 current or former Australian Representatives in Open, Age, Australian Universities or AWD categories.

## Participation

NUsport was especially pleased to see the growth in participation that occurred in Affiliated Clubs, Swim Academy and Social Sports programs.

## NUsport Leadership

I am pleased to report that the Board confirmed the appointment of Chris Hicks as NUsport CEO for the next 2 + 2 years. Chris has put in a great deal of work since taking on the role and members can be confident of further improvements in NUsport facilities and programs under his leadership.

## Future

Looking ahead, some disruption can be expected during the construction phase of new student accommodation even though the University will be working to minimise adverse impacts. NUsport is working with the University to have some new facilities provided to replace the tennis courts that will be lost. NUsport is also working on plans to upgrade a number of existing facilities on campus including improvements to drainage on ovals and replacement of equipment in the University gym.

## Thanks

The Board was faced with a number of important issues in 2011 and I would like to thank my fellow directors who gave generously of their time as volunteers for their input. I wish to thank Prof Adrian Page who stepped down in May 2011 for his contribution over the previous 5 years. I would also like to thank Heidi Turon, soon to be Dr Turon, for her active role on the Board over the past 4 years and Professor Ron Plotnikoff for his contribution over the past 2 years as both are standing down from the Board after this meeting.

I also wish to thank the NUsport management and staff for their hard work and dedication throughout the year and to end this report by thanking all our members for their participation and support which is essential for NUsport if it is to prosper and continue to provide excellent facilities and services on this campus.



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