



USFA

Meeting Minutes

21st March 2024

USFA MEETING MINUTES

Location: Online meeting (Google meetup)

Date: 21 March 2024

Time: 8:00pm – 9:30pm

Facilitator: Simon Trippe

Minute taker: Ian Buck



Agenda Items

1. Attendance
2. General Business
3. President Report
4. Committee Reports
5. Club Reports
6. New USFA records
7. Next meeting



0 | Attendance

Role	Name	Attendance
Chair	Simon Trippe	Attended
Vice Chair	Parry Gryllis	Attended
Treasurer	Evan Leeson	Apologies
Secretary	Ian Buck	Attended
Sports Assistant	Lee Dali	Attended
First Nations Liaison Officer	David Lehā	Apologies
Membership Officer	Ricardo Casquete	Apologies
Historical Officer	Mel Brown	Apologies
Mosman Whalers	Steven Park	Apologies
Public officer	Alby Cooke	Attended
NSUC		
NSUC		
Port Hacking Penguins Del.	Pat Ireland	Attended
Sydney Orcas Delegate	Bob McComb	Apologies
Norah Hammerheads	Alex Bond	Attended
Norah Hammerheads	Justin Elsey	Attended
Norah Hammerheads	Craig Bond	Attended
Coffs Harbour BW Freedivers	Tom Sandstrom	Attended



1 | USFA meeting minutes

1.1 | General Business

- Norah Hammerheads
 - A new club on the northern end of the Central Coast, the Hammerheads although a new club with many members new to spearfishing around that area, they too have a wealth of experience with members Alex and Craig Bond, Brett Carter and Beau Mellon. Welcome Hammerheads to the USFA tribe.

- Coffs Harbour Bluewater Freedivers
 - Welcome aboard Coffs Harbour!
 - The Coffs club affiliated with the USFA prior to the Blue Water Classic
 - Their committee and divers competing in the Bluewater Classic are covered now under the USFA insurances.

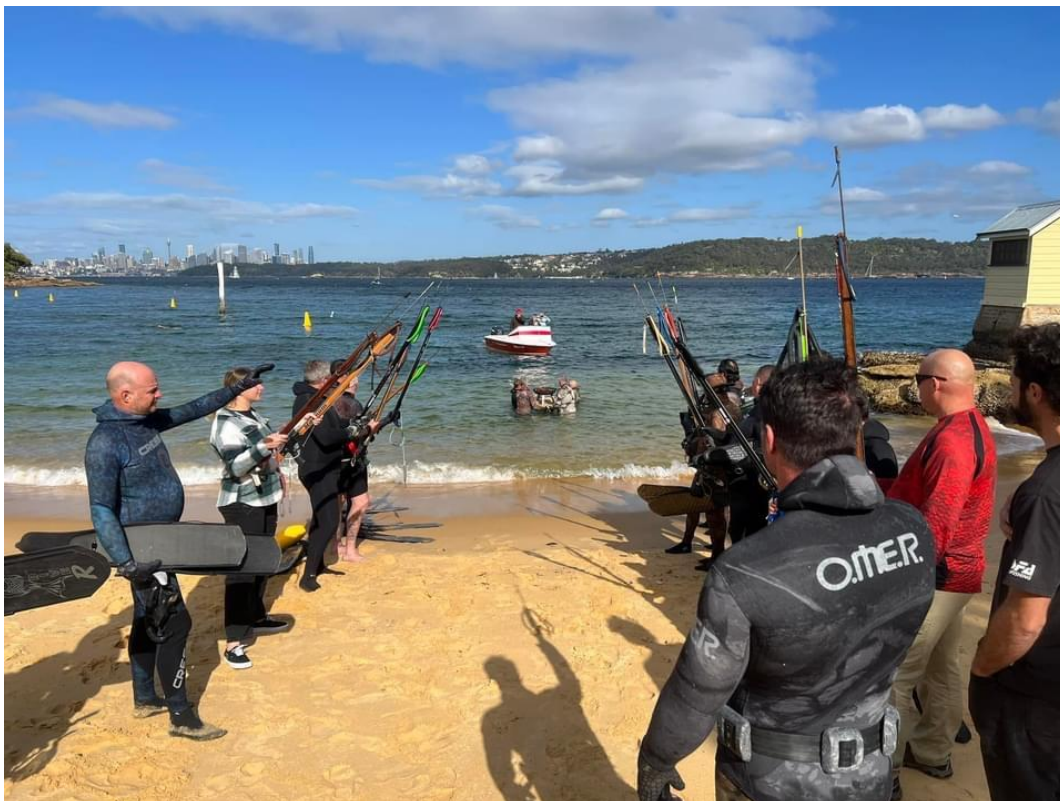
- Gus the Groper furore
 - So much to unravel and issues ongoing with the Department of Primary Industries stance and Minister's approval. See Presidents report and USFA website for more information and USFA stance ongoing.

- Patrick Ireland (PHP) has been put forward as Records Officer for USFA NSW.
 - Motioned by Lee Dalli
 - Seconded by Parry Gryllis

- Treasurer is to be thanked for resolving issues arising. On August 2023 we received an email from ASIC who requested "annual summary of financial affairs" there were outstanding from 2020 and 2021, and 2022. The importance of proper back of house is important, furthermore the communication for new committees coming in is essential. Thank you very much to Evan Leeson for tidying this up, this was extensive work seeing as USFA had started new bank accounts mid 2022, and thus had no electronic records for the years prior.

Presidents Report

There has been a lot happening since the last committee meeting of the USFA. I'll begin with the USFA's 75th Anniversary celebrations that were held at the Watsons Bay Gamefishing Club in October, this was an amazing day, we had two people in attendance Kerry Heffernan and John Wright who were in attendance on the actual day the USFA was formed in 1948! Over 80 people attended from around the country, old friendships rekindled and new friendships forged, a bittersweet occasion as the prior to meeting a "Viking" funeral was held for long serving USFA member, former President Peter Saunders, this was organised by Alistair Cooke, held at Camp Cove it was a moving tribute to Pete who dedicated a lot of his life achieving positive public awareness of spearfishing. See the link for more on the 75th and Pete's farewell - <https://usfa.org.au/seventy-fifth-anniversary-celebration/>



Kingfish Cup



The second weekend in November saw the 5th running of the Sydney Kingfish Cup, Adreno is the major sponsor of the KFC. This year saw record attendance numbers with 235 registering for the largest ocean spearfishing event in the world. This number included 17 ladies and 11 Juniors.

Kingfish are not uncommon in Sydney waters, especially at this time of year yet they remain elusive, which makes them all the more alluring for Sydney spearos. Sixteen Kingfish were presented with the Central Coast Sealion's Keiran Timp taking out the Cup with a splendid 21400gm Kingfish. The average weight of the 16 fish was 9533gm. Diver effort amounted to 1342.5 hours equating to 83.9 hours of effort per fish.

Late November saw myself, Bob McComb and Mel Brown AM attend Parliament house meeting with the

Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party MLCs Robert Borsak and Mark Banasiak, after being warmly welcomed we went to our meeting with the Minister for DPI, Hon Tara Moriarty. The point of the meeting was to introduce ourselves to the new Minister, explain what we, the peak spearfishing Association, offers to its members, spearfishers and Fisheries. Much discussion eventuated and we left on great terms. To read more about the meeting click the link below.

<https://usfa.org.au/spearfishers-meet-the-minister/>

Gus the Groper: Where do you begin with this... to start with the USFA does not condone illegal fishing practices. A groper was hand-spearfished by a **non-licensed** rec fisher who had no idea what type of fish it was, "Dinner" was the term used by the party concerned. Too, "Gus" himself has not been sighted at that area for some years, this has been confirmed by many locals who actually know a fish from an emotion. USFA, and usually NSW Fisheries have always held true that education is always going to be key for these issues, these incidents rare as they are will continue to happen all along the coast. USFA believe the best we can do is to minimise the incidents with continued education. The USFA continues to assist NSW Fisheries and DPI in the education of the public in these matters. However after the USFA's resounding result at the Sutherland Shire meeting, where Line fishers, spearos and the Hon Mark Banasiak MLC of the TSFF Party attended and fought the good fight together in arms to beat the lockouts proposed on spearfishing. The DPI Minister Moriarty disappointed every rec licensed fisher with her stance the following day where the Department decided to throw education away, and, without any consultation with rec fishing associations prohibited line fishers from taking Groper for 12 months, (to do research on their numbers - there has been no study done on the Groper for well over 20 years - they have nothing to compare!!). The Recreational Fishing Alliance (RFA) express concerns that Octopus, Cuttlefish, Squid and even Crabs will be next in the sights of Fisheries as it seems the "green" emotional outcry carries more voting power than the fisher. The USFA will continue to lobby for fair fishing rights, safe access and equal treatment to all relevant stakeholders. This issue will not be going away anytime and will be an ongoing bugbear for the Minister and her Department.

Norah Hammerheads



A new club has formed and recently joined the USFA, the Norah Hammerheads, already 3 dozen members strong in its first weeks. The Hammerheads have many great spearfishing advocates amongst their tribe and this is great news for spearfishing, the local north central coast community and the USFA. Every success to the Hammerheads and we look forward to watching you grow. See the link for more details about the Norah Hammerheads

<https://usfa.org.au/norah-hammerheads/>

Coffs Harbour Blue Water Freedivers



The Coffs Harbour Club, whom I hold dear as I joined them in their initial year of formation and have many great friends from the club, have affiliated themselves with the USFA NSW. Tom Sandstrom, Vice President of the Club attended the meeting, and expressed ideas for the future of spearfishing in the country going forward. The USFA look forward to collaborating with Tom and others around Australia to bring forth an independent national spearfishing body.

Thank you
Simon Trippe
President



1.3 | Sports Reports

1.3.1 | Canada Cup 2024 - Alastair Cooke

- Canada Cup -
- Postponed

1.3.2 | Sydney Cup 2024

- Won by Warren Carter, (South Coast) see link for more <https://usfa.org.au/usfa-sydney-championship/>

1.3.3 | State titles 2024

- Date set down for May 18/19th Central Coast as HQ

1.3.4 | Mahi muster 2024 – Simon Trippe

- In planning stages

Patrick Ireland – Sports Secretary

1.4 | Committee Reports

1.4.1 | Treasurer report

- There is \$23,8900 in the bank, compared to this time last year we are \$3000 higher.
- One of our three insurance policies increased 50% a leap of \$4000. This was explained as an international increase.

Evan Leeson - Treasurer

Approved – ST
Seconded – PG

1.4.2 | Club reports

1.4.2.1 |

Norah Hammerheads

At the start of February, the discussion came up between a few mates Alex, Brett, Craig, Beau & myself about a spearfishing club based at the north end of the Central Coast. As much as we loved diving with, and being part of the Central Coast Sealions, the distance was a problem for us getting to the meetings and dives that were out of Terrigal. The Central Coast is a huge area, and it can take an hour and a half, or more, to get from one end to the other.

The discussion was had with a few of the Sealions committee, and once it was explained about the reasons behind our decision, we had the blessing of our southern Central Coast brethren, and we were away brainstorming.

This was something that we were motivated make happen, so it was time to start thinking of a name and where we would call home. Norah Head was a no brainer for us, most of the crew that was part of the discussion were only about 15 minutes from there, so that was locked in. Then the question, what was to be our mascot? A few ideas were floated around (pun intended) Norah Head Sea Wasps, no, too close to Sealions. Norah Head Tridents or Vikings, nah. then a few joke names like The Lake Macquarie Mermen and my son Flynn said we should call ourselves the Fishy Fellas. Then it came – The Norah Hammerheads. We had a name!

What's the next thing a club needs? A space for meetings and presentations etc. So the hunt began for a spot that had a few key things for us. Enough room to accommodate 10-20 people, surely that's enough for a start up club, space for our kids to go and play (get out of our hair for a little bit), a good feed and cold beer. Brett visited a few places before coming across a hidden gem, the Norah Head Sporties. Well the name fits with ours, so big tick there. Time to test the food and beer, tick again. A meeting was set up with the CEO and not long into our talk she told us that their club was in need of a new sporting group for them to sponsor, so a few things were thrown back and forth and we had an agreement for The Norah Head Sporties to be our first sponsor and be our home base.

So, we set up our first meeting and decided that for us and people with families and work commitments, that a Sunday afternoon would be a great time for a meeting. Then we could have the meeting and then if anyone wanted to, they can stick around for dinner or drink and have a bit more of a relaxed catch up. And what a meeting it was! Not long after our start time of 4.30 the room started filling up fast, and by the time everyone piled in there was standing room only. Then an intro to our Club's committee – Alex Bond was chairing the meeting and was to head up the Club as President, he has been diving since he was washing pee out of his dad's wetsuits and his passion to teaching his own kids about the sustainability of spearfishing and building their skills in the sport is amazing to see, nobody better for this role. Brett Carter as Vice President, another great advocate for the sport that has been diving since he was (still is) a young fella. He is always available to offer advice wherever he can help, just make sure to double check comp start times that he tells you. Craig Bond as Treasurer. Now there wouldn't be many around the spearing community that don't know Craig, with his wealth (and years) of knowledge, I know he has taught me a thing or 2 in the few dives I have been with him, he has plenty of experience in the committee side of clubs, and will be a key to keeping us in line and on track for our goals. Beau Mellon as Sports Secretary, Beau was the very first person I dove with when starting out and for a young bloke he is definitely one of the best spearos I have been out with. And then myself, Justin Elsey, as Secretary. Only a few years in the sport, but absolutely love it and the friendships that I have made over my time doing it. If I'm not in the water, I'm out on it in my boat.



We were also lucky enough to have Bob McComb attend and give the fresh and experienced divers a in the room a detailed talk about the USFA.

After all the formalities were done with, a count of the membership applications we had taken in for the day. 33 including us!! We did not expect that at all! The next day we also had another 3 join us, bringing the total to 36, and the breakdown of the following classes 5x sub junior, 2x junior, 2x intermediate, 13x senior, 7x veteran, 6x ladies and 1x Grand Master. And we still have a few more messaging us about joining up, so we are all very thankful for the support received so far and are extremely excited to see where this is going to take us.

Justin - Norah Hammerheads

Club Secretary

Port Hacking Penguins

1. Your club committee for the year and AGM dates

- President – Gary Baxter
- Vice President – Daniel Coelho
- Treasurer – Glenn Sewell
- Secretary – Daniel Coelho
- Sports Sec – David McGowan and Patrick Ireland
- Membership Officer – Danil Hike
- Safety Officers – Gary Baxter and Scott Williams
- Media and Technical Adviser – Nick Tang
- Public Officer – Steve Fienbier
- AGM is held in December (last was 9th December 2023)
- Currently 49 financial members

2. Club Activities over last quarter.

- The Port Hacking Penguins (PHP) continue to have representation at every Alliman round.
- PHP also has regular representation at other major competitions (recent examples include the Sydney Cup, South Coast Championships, Bluewater Classic)
- PHP Christmas Party and AGM was held in December 2023.
- The 2024 'Catch of the Year (COTY)' is an internal club competition. It has kicked off for 2024 with some notable species already recorded. PHP also planning on doing a 'KFC' in April 2024 which will run for the month and be restricted to NSW waters.
- There has been talk of having a social day competition with St George. A positive outcome from the recent Blue Groper incident. PHP are keen so we're looking to lock in a date soon.
- PHP has been heavily involved in the recent Blue Groper discussions with David McGowan presenting at the Sutherland council meeting.
- A number of members completed the AIDA Level 2 freediving course in January which was run by Lucas Handley.
- There have been a few club trips away over the last quarter which included Bendalong (November), Broughton (February), Nelson Bay (March) and Coffs (March).



- The PHP have an ongoing presence on social media, and we expect this to continue especially with the addition of a Media and Technical Adviser (Nick Tang) position being added to the PHP committee in 2024.
- PHP will continue to instruct all divers in safety and encourage all divers to join a spearfishing club and become involved with the USFA.

Patrick Ireland – Sports Secretary

North Shore Underwater Club

1. Management team have organised a club trip away, first time in a long time.
2. Looking at new merchandise.
3. Membership team has been driving new traffic and increased membership to the club.
4. Club has been encouraging to newcomers, with a free basic training.
5. Increasing new members (4) to join club competition as of last comp.
6. Had first social dive for new spearos which was well attended

Herny Morgan President

Sans Souci Dolphins

- Sports report of note – Steve Manolias came 2nd in Alliman at Kurnell
- 3 new members each meeting, warmer months have been great for membership
- First trip away was a successful, Broughton Island (32 members – 10 boats)
 - o Good fish caught – Derrick with a 27kg Cobia, Parry Kingfish 16kg, Ian a 4kg Snapper.
- Club meeting recently saw a presentation given on Food preservation and pickling.
- To find out more about the Dolphins check out the Dolphins website

<https://sanssoucidolphins.org/>



1.5 | New USFA records

Nothing to report

1.6 | Summary of actions

#	Theme	Action	Owner
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			

1.7 | Future Meetings

All members welcome to attend, start time 1900, venues to be announced

- June 27th, 2024, AGM

Meeting Closed

