



USFA

AGM

25 July 2024

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USFA MEETING MINUTES



Location: Online meeting (Google meetup)
Date: 25 July 2024
Time: 7:30
Facilitator: Simon Trippe
Minute taker: Ian Buck

0 | Agenda Items

1. President Report
2. Committee Reports
3. Club Reports
4. Election of New Officers
5. General Business



1 | Attendance

Role	Name	Attendance
Chair	Simon Trippe	Attended
Vice Chair	Parry Gryllis	Attended
Treasurer	Evan Leeson	Apologies
Secretary	Ian Buck	Attended
Sports Secretary	Patrick Ireland	Attended
Sports Secretary Assistant	Lee Dalli	Attended
Public officer	Alby Cooke	Attended
NSUC – VP	Ryan OGorman	Attended
NSUC - Guest	Brice Lamarque	Attended
Hammerheads Del.	Alex Bond	Attended
Hammerheads Del.	Justin Elsey	Attended
Port Hacking Penguins Del.	Pat Ireland	Attended
Web Master	Sam K	Attended
Hammerheads Del.	Justin Elsey	Attended
Port Hacking Penguins Del.	Pat Ireland	Attended
Web Master	Sam K	Attended

First Nations Liaison Officer	David Lehā	Apologies
Membership Officer	Ricardo Casquete	Apologies
Historical Officer	Mel Brown	Apologies
Mosman Whalers delegate	Steven Park	Apologies

2 | President Report

President's Report AGM 2023-24



Hi Spearos!

I have to tell you, being involved in the Association is never boring, as those of you who assist in the Association whether on the committee or the many clubs would well know there is always something happening.

Firstly, to get the report rolling, the committee gets on like a house on fire. The team is always supportive, and always there to assist each other. I have to thank you all of you for picking up the phone and hearing me out; helping me with issues arising; being there when needed; your thoughts and great ideas; and your motivation for putting spearfishing in a positive light really gets us all working together for best spearfishing outcomes in NSW. Thank you!



In previous President's reports the past year I have embellished the record registration for the Sydney Kingfish Cup, how the event supports science on this specie, how it reaches out to a greater number of the public, how it is just so darn positive in all aspects of reaching out to the greater spearo community and gathering us together. The Sydney Kingfish Cup is a vibe that lasts 10 weeks of the year, yet it is talked about year-round, it is now our flagship event, and the planning for 2024 is about to commence.

Our membership is strong, and it includes ten spearfishing clubs. Ten! That is amazing. Well done to all the club committees for their never-ending work in promoting the Association and the positives of being in clubs.

Stronger Alliances through Education



More on positives, and I am taking it as a positive as the incident brought so many people together. Let's talk about the Gus's of the sea – usually whenever a Blue Groper is taken by spear cue the usual ensuing emotional ruckus from those flabbergasted that "their" fish was horribly killed by a spear. Note: I find it fascinating that a tourist with no NSW fishing licence - therefore no knowledge of the do's and don'ts of local waters commits this offence, yet somehow spearfishers are to blame?!? This dude who speared the 33rd

version of Gus the Groper, if we are being honest, you wouldn't call him a snorkeller let alone a spearo yet he is suddenly the poster boy for the greens that "spearfishing is bad".

Yet, thankfully, an overwhelming support for spearfishers came from many of other ocean stakeholders who we share the sea with. Social media saw heartening support from Scuba divers, swimmers, surfers and others sticking up for the good conduct of spearfishers, the mantras we spearos have chanted for decades "safe, selective, sustainable" and "promote, preserve, protect" are now woven into the fabric of our lifestyle and the informed public know spearfishers do the right thing.



Education has always been the master key for the survival of spearfishing. Spearfishers who represented us at the Sutherland Shire meeting (noting here to you all the line fishing clubs membership who came in our support, so too Mark Banasiak of the TSFFP) convinced the Councillors of this and we won the day here. Unfortunately, the Department of Primary Industries, and the Department of Environment and Heritage do not see it this way, they did not go for education, surprising our NSW Fisheries and to their obvious disgust, the DPI Minister blocked education on this matter and made the decision to ban line fishers from taking these abundant fish.

Alarm bells, that a decision as contentious like this can be made with no consultation to the recreational fishing panels should be concerning for all with a recreational fishing licence, the need for transparency from our bureaucratic "custodians" is never more apparent. Thankfully, the Rec fishing peak body in NSW the Recreational Fishing Alliance, who the USFA is associated with (and supports in full) is pursuing this matter and how it came about through Freedom of Information, it is time consuming, let alone financially costly yet the truth will come out and the good fight will go on for our right to fish, to have safe access to dive-able waters, and to be consulted and to have our say before restrictions of any kind are brought in.

I'll finish with the Groper incident by saying that we must always fight the good fight to keep spearfishing thriving, and anyone reading this who feels they may be able to contribute in some way to support the cause please contact me.

One National Spearfishing Association



Over this past year several club committee members around the country have contacted me, and their desire to have one stand-alone Australian Spearfishing Association is becoming contagious. More so after dealing with the Groper incident where two local clubs in that area, both from the different associations, were working together for the betterment of spearfishing it should be a no brainer. The current USFA committee, as have our prior committees have always wished for an independent national association, free from other underwater sports and greenish attributes, to occur

and look forward to working with others around the nation to make this happen. It is needed, it is time.

New Spearfishing Club

A new club has joined the USFA, situated on the north Central Coast – the *Norah Hammerheads*, cracking name, are based loosely around Norah Head up to Swansea. The committee and its members are so keen as you will see in their club report below. Welcome aboard Hammerheads! USFA look forward to seeing you grow and develop spearfishing along with us all.



Shallow Water Blackout evening

SWB is always in the back of our minds that it could happen, yet how many of us know how it occurs? One of the most important things I have been involved in with spearfishing was hosting an evening the USFA and St George Club (more collaboration of the two associations) organised at Adreno. Dr Paul Cozzi lost his son Lachie to SWB and he presented a medical view on SWB and he was courageous enough to share the video that Lachie filmed of his last dive as he blacked out, the footage recovered from the camera on his person. With the assistance of Jack Hatfield from Basic Instinct, and Adam Malski who successfully recovered Harry Weston several years ago at Fairy Bower (showing some of that footage) the Q&A was a torrent of new found safety information for the majority of the divers in attendance, it was a packed house. USFA will continue to hold events such as these.



Thank you.

Thank you to you all who have assisted the Association the past year, our major sponsor Adreno, thank you. The divers who help make the Kingfish Cup the amazing event it is; those of you who put your hands up to be a part of the USFA committee; to those divers who play a part in your club's committee; thank you too to all of you who attend your club meetings, you are all absorbing and then spreading the message of safe and ethical spearfishing to all out there. Keep it sustainable and selective and continue to fight the good fight!

Simon Trippe

President USFA NSW



3 | Committee Reports

Vice President's Report

As vice president for I am happy to see the USFA continue to strive with the ethos of supporting our members and striving to do what is best for spearfishing in NSW.

Continuing to support members to participate in spearfishing whether in a social setting or competition. I believe both are equally as important, perhaps social being even more important as it reaches a larger proportion of the spearfishing community and largely traditionally fails to see representation. Events such as the king fish cup sees a larger outreach due to the subject matter being of particular interest to spearos up and down the coast. This has given largely social divers the opportunity to connect with the more established community within clubs and allows an opportunity to promote the USFA and club community and the benefits they present not just the individual but spearfishing in general.

USFA 75th anniversary October last year was a great success. We had a huge turn out of young and old, new and long-standing members with an overwhelming sense of passion for the sport and pride towards the spearfishing community as it has continued throughout the years. Another special moment was the send off we were able to give Peter Saunders on the morning of the anniversary. It was a special day for those who participated and I was honored to be a part of it.

Issues such as the blue groper being speared by an individual who was not club affiliated or seemingly aware of the rules regarding such an act saw the great value of the association when fighting for the rights of spearos. Regardless of the outcome, the USFA committee and members were at the forefront of fighting for our rights while facing I believe an obviously pre-determined and damning reaction to such an action to force a resolution which would see the blue groper being completely protected by disallowing even fishing for them. However, the huge takeaway I got from all of it is the great relationship the USFA has grown with the larger and more powerful Fishing community.

Rather than chastise the spearfishing community for the poor actions of that individual, or for the resulting reprimand imposed on fisherman as a result, the fishing community and the heads of that community showed nothing but support and understanding towards the spearfishing community, and condemnation towards the authorities who decided to react the way they did. I have seen firsthand how much time and effort people like Simon Trippe, Bob McComb and others have given towards cultivating this relationship and would like to extend a huge thank you on behalf of all members, whether they are aware of their efforts or not, for giving so much for what they are so passionate to protect. These efforts are what make the USFA so important moving forward for the betterment of spearfishing for all its members, and I believe continuing to grow these connections and relationships will only benefit our members.

These efforts extend to countless hours organizing, meeting with departments heads, parliamentary members, and generally putting out fires on behalf of the USFA, and I would once again like to thank the USFA committee for their hard work, efforts and sacrifice.

Parry Gryllis

USFA Vice President



Evan Leeson

USFA Treasurer

Treasurer's Report:

Transaction Account: \$773.43

Savings Account: \$9,866.84

Public Liability Insurance Annual of \$12,404.13 and Personal Accident Insurance Annual of \$8,363.54 were paid in July. We need to build up funds by July 2025 in preparation for the next annual payment which is likely to be \$22k-\$25k. We will likely face an additional \$3000-\$3500 in expenses during the year for TidyHQ, the website, KFC shirts/costs etc. KFC income and average membership incomes have us on track to cover these pending expenses whilst maintaining our reserve of \$10k.

I'm open to an increase in membership fees but we won't need it to survive the year. I think we should meet in the middle. A \$5 per year increase minimum would be wise.

Sports Secretary Report:

Alliman

3 Alliman's held so far this year (Kurnell x 2 and Gunnamatta). Cancellations for the other 4 (Terrigal, Long Reef, Watsons Bay, Bayview).

Kurnell held on 7th July.

- Location: Kurnell
- Competition Round: 7
- Competition Host: Port Hacking Penguins
- Number of divers competing: 31
- Weather conditions: Challenging conditions with rough seas and varying visibility.
- Individual results: 1st = Warren Carter (PHP), 2nd = Gary Baxter (PHP), 3rd = George Manolias (SSD)
- Club Results: 1st = North Shore, 2nd = Sans Souci, 3rd = Port Hacking
- Comments: Great to see 31 divers sign on for the competition. Pleasing to see some female competitors and new junior faces this round. Well done to all clubs for generating interest in this round. Despite the weather it was a great day and even better seeing so many people sign on for this comp.



Alliman Overall Results 2024

1. Warren Carter
 2. Gary Baxter
 3. George Manolias
1. PHP
 2. SSD
 3. NS

Remaining Alliman competitions for 2024:

- 4th August – Little Manly
- 8th September - Kurnell
- 13th October – Long Reef
- 3rd November – Bayview
- 1st December - Gunnamatta

Canada cup held 14th April

- 20 divers signed on including 1 junior, nice weather but terrible viz. 9/20 divers weighed in fish.
1. Aaron Puckeridge took out top place (huge score 786)
 2. Alastair Cook
 3. Kearin Timp

Heaviest – Aaron Puckeridge – Kingfish @ 8kg

MM – Aaron Puckeridge – Yellow Spot Surgeon @2.845kg (113 points)

State Titles postponed in May (18th & 19th)

Pat Ireland, USFA Sport Secretary

4 | Club Reports

4.1 | Sans Souci Dolphins



2024 has seen the club continue to thrive in delivering a place for like minded individuals to live and learn spearfishing. The club driven by President Vita and a diligent committee has been providing monthly club meetings with presentations of various topics from gear maintenance and safety, to collecting and cooking seafood. These presentations seem to be of great interest by members (especially the newer members) and enthusiastically delivered by club members with greater knowledge and experience.

Current membership is 71 financial members plus life members. We see regular new members coming along to club meetings throughout the year, particularly in the warmer months.

So far this year we have had 3 successful club social dives with the rest cancelled due to bad weather. 2 in particular were our club trip to Broughton island with around 20 divers over 3 days diving, and a club trip up to Forster where we joined up with the Central Coast Sea Lions for a weekend dive. Dives out of local waters are always of great interest and much anticipation for new and experienced divers alike.

The competition aspect of the club has also seen a rise over the last couple of years which is great to see, and as long as the interest is there the club will encourage members to participate

4.2 | Port Hacking Penguins

4.2.1 | Club committee

- 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

- No changes to the committee below since the last meeting.

4.2.2 | AGM & Members

- AGM is held in December (last was 9th December 2023)
- Financial club members increased to 54 (previously 49)

4.2.3 | 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

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 held its own 'KFC' in April 2024. Event was run for the whole month of April and was restricted to NSW waters.

There have been a few club trips away over the last quarter which included Far North QLD (June)

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.

Junior member, Dom Stepan, was awarded a certificate for breaking the USFA State Junior Record for Eastern Australian Salmon weighing in at 3250g.

4.3 | Norah Hammerheads

4.3.1 | Club Activities over last quarter



Norah Hammerheads has quickly become a familiar name around the northern end of the central coast and southern end of Newcastle.

What started as an idea between 5 mates (part of that being father and son) quickly turned into what has been an amazing community of 50 members in a matter of 4 months. We have created a great bond with the local community to the point our local club the Norah head sporties have given us our own area call the "Shark Shack".

We have held 3 competitions so far due to larger seas meaning our latest comp was postponed and turned into a club house clean up. In these comps we have see some amazing things, like people getting their first fish through to people like Mick M weighing in 16-17 species. Some great

catches in comps include a Mulloway by Eric M, a 19.6kg king fish by our American member Bradley L, and a Mangrove jack by Alex b.

Our meetings are held every 3rd Sunday of the month at Norah Head Sporties at 430pm.

For any information check out our Facebook page Norah Hammerhead spearfishing club.

4.4 | North Shore Underwater Club

4.4.1 | Club committee

- President: Henry Blaker-Morgan
- Vice President: Ryan O’Gorman
- Secretary: Lee Dalli
- Treasurer: Julian Chan
- Sports Secretary: Ian Terley
- Assistant Sports Secretary: Matti Hallanoro
- Safety Officer: Brice Lamarque
- Weigh Master: Tristan Anne
- Social Party Officer: James Williams
- Club Liaisons: Christian Murace, Sergio Sanchez Serna, Carmen Bolton
- Inter Club Rep USFA: Ian Buck
- Inter Club Rep SMSZ: Sam Dalli
- Training Coordinators: Connor Sangster, Ali Gordon
- Membership Team: Alec Walecki, Connor Sangster, James Williams, Zac Werrett



4.4.2 | Club Activities over last quarter

To celebrate reaching 100 financial members the club ran a lucky door prize raffle at our monthly meeting, with the winning ticket receiving a \$100 Extreme Spearfishing voucher.

NSUC has had representation at all Alliman competitions so far this year and the club continues to encourage members to participate while promoting it as a fun, social event.

The club ran a beach cleanup event at Manly Cove on 20/07 which was a great success. Over 200 kg of rubbish was collected. Participants enjoyed a BBQ afterwards and amazing prizes were given to the people that collected the most rubbish. A Rob Allen Tuna 1100 was kindly donated by Dive Spear Sport,



Wholly Shrink donated multiple “Shrinkers” (an innovative soft plastic compacting device) and 3 x \$50 vouchers Extreme Spearfishing were given to the winners also.

Running alongside our beach clean up, we also introduced an initiative for “plastic free July”. Soft plastics were introduced in our monthly Internal Species Club Competition. A prize will be awarded to the person that collects the most soft plastic throughout the month.

The club had a camp trip to Seal rocks in March and has booked and started organising a camping trip for August at Depot Beach.

We have received our first batch of NSUC merchandise and we plan to add to our selection of garments throughout the year.

Regular monthly meeting training events have been held at Club Totem. Topics covered included, rigging your own gear, diving for lobster, improving your diving skills for spearfishing, blue water spearfishing, understanding weather conditions and reading charts. Fisheries resources have been provided at every meeting including cray/abalone measuring tools, measurement stickers and reading material on protected species.

Quality fish have been landed in great numbers despite the recent spell of difficult conditions, including numerous 1m+ kingfish from new members.

5 | Election of New Officers

#	Role	Name	Nominated
1	President	Simon Trippe	Lee Dali
2	Vice President	Parry Gryllis	Ian Buck
3	Secretary	Ian Buck	Simon Trippe
4	Treasurer	Evan Leeson	Pat Ireland
5	Sports Secretary	Pat Ireland	Lee Dali
6	Assistance Sports Sec	Lee Dali	Simon Trippe
7	Records Officer	Daniel Coelho	Pat Ireland
8	Historical Officer	Mel Brown	Simon Trippe
9	Web Master	Sam K	Parry Gryllis
10	Public Officer	Alby cooke	Parry Gryllis
11	Membership Officer	Ricardo Casquete	Ian Buck
12	Indigenous Officer	David Leha	Simon Trippe
13	Assistance Sports Sec	Lee Dali	Simon Trippe

6 | General Business

- Replace TidyHQ (Rico)
- Minister consultation spearfishing.
- Price increase, first time in 10 years – Fees will be set at end of September. Going from \$99 to \$110.

Meeting closed 2145

