**President’s Report 2023**

The 2023 season was one of significant change for the PCCCT. After running in the order of 25 or 26 races per season for many years, a decline in race entries and the increasing workloads on our committee and volunteer base deemed that change was required. Therefore, the decision was made to reduce the number of race weekends to 17 in 2023.

This season was run from April to September with regular breaks within the season to avoid public holidays and allow members time to recover and relax between racing blocks.

I am pleased to report that this initiative appears to have been successful. Feedback from members has been, for the most, positive and race entries increased for the first time in several years.

Teams races, an introduction in recent years, have continued to be a significant part and the best attended, events in the calendar. In 2023, the club ran four such events, with teams races concurrent with the marathon and half marathon, and the standalone 4 by 5km opening our season at Penguin. The fourth teams race was a new event run at Turners Beach. This saw teams of 3 each completing two alternating laps of the 3.5 km course. The continued popularity of these events is satisfying and a point of difference for the club in an increasingly saturated running market. These races have also proven to be a successful way of introducing new members to the club.

One new course was introduced in 2023 - a mass start event over 7 km of footpath in Devonport, held as a Friday night twilight race to avoid racing on Father’s Day. This proved to be popular as a hard hit out for those going for the win or just testing their legs ahead of the Feature Race the following week.

Due to the reduction in race weekends, many long-standing races courses were not used in 2023. Increasingly busy roads have made some courses unsafe to run and they are unlikely to return without significant change. However, several other courses are likely to return in 2024 as the club rotates through a pool of courses. Hopefully, this helps keep such courses fresh and attractive to members into the future.

Throughout the season there was some fantastic racing; often with close and exciting finishes. Of the 15 individual events, the gap from first to second in 13 was less than a minute. Five races were decided by 10 seconds or less including a near dead heat at Spreyton.

The winners of all our races in 2023 are to be congratulated. However, I wish to highlight the winners of some of our major races.

The Mountain Classic was our first major race of the year. After, showing strong form in the lead up, club stalwart Greg Smith lead the field home. This was despite missing the turn into Ridgely Oval and being forced to backtrack.

The Half Marathon was taken out by Kim Steven in tough conditions brought on by a strong westerly wind.

However, the back half of the 2023 season proved to be one for our female members. The Ironman was taken out by Dayna Cutting running off a middle mark in perfect conditions. In the Marathon, Narelle Jacobs who was running her first ever Marathon held off a small but formidable field.

Our final race of the year, the Wynyard to Burnie Feature Race, proved to be a handicapping masterstroke with 11 runners on West Park oval when the tape was broken. Ultimately, Ellen Burgess proved too strong on the day.

Overall, despite some fears associated with reduced racing, I feel the 2023 season has left the PCCCT in a solid and more sustainable position going forward. Financially, the club is now in a strong position as we will hear later in this meeting.

Thanks are due our numerous and generous sponsors. Without them the club would not be able conduct races. I urge all members to where possible support the businesses and generous individuals that support us.

It is a truism that volunteers are the lifeblood of community sporting clubs such as ours. In 2023, we celebrated two outstanding people in Barry Ling and Mitchell Tate as our Volunteers of the Year. However, beyond them I personally wish to thank every club member, family member and friend who donated their time as a race manager, marshal, timekeeper, starter, caterer or any of the other numerous jobs that need doing each week.

A large thanks is also due to the members of the PCCCT Committee for 2023. These are the people that keep the club running week in week out. I especially want to acknowledge the contributions of our outgoing committee members. After 5 years our handicapper Pat McMahon has decided it is time to hang up his spreadsheets. His able assistant and club life member Greg Smith is also stepping back after having gifted his two sons-in-law to the committee. Lastly, club Vice-President Darlene Jacques will not be continuing in 2024. I thank all three for their large contributions over many years and hope we continue to see them around the club long into the future.

Lastly, I thank all members for their ongoing support, but more importantly their positive attitudes and enthusiasm for the sport of running. It is these qualities that makes our club an enjoyable and pleasurable environment each season.

Jason Scott

President 2023