

# **Korfball New Zealand Annual Report 2006/07**

## **Report from Executive Committee and Chair**

### **Looking back and forwards**

This is the tenth reporting year since the incorporation of Korfball New Zealand, on 23 September 1997. It offers an opportunity to look back beyond the 12 months under review. With an important change of our governance system proposed at the 2007 Annual General Meeting, and the prospect that we will work somewhat differently in future, this is also a timely opportunity to look forward.

In the ten years since Korfball New Zealand was established we have built a foundation for our sport in our country, with committed and motivated individuals in three cities co-ordinating regular korfball through training sessions, competitions and various promotional activities. However, after ten years what we have achieved is still little more than that: a foundation.

During the past ten years korfball has touched a significant number of people in this country. Auckland Korfball has kept a database of those who have attended each session they have provided since 2004. This database now numbers in excess of 1,000 people. If they were to undertake a similar exercise, no doubt the other regions would come close to matching, or possibly exceed, such a number. However, the number of people who are prepared to make a more significant commitment, whether as players, or in any of the other various roles necessary for our continued existence, has remained relatively static, with the result that those who are involved take on more than they can or should realistically be expected to manage, and either become burnt out or perform at a lower level than would be the case if their role were more strictly defined and they were adequately supported by a more sustainable organisation.

In its first ten years our organisation has created a foundation. We now need to find ways to build on this with much greater vigour and focus. That is what the proposed new constitution and attendant operating framework is intended to enable us to do: to realise more of the huge potential that korfball has to grow and flourish among New Zealanders.

If the proposals for consideration at our annual general meeting are approved there will be six committees working to the board of Korfball New Zealand. These will, respectively, take operational responsibility for finance and audit; national and international representative korfball; coaching and player development; marketing and the development of new regions; officiating; and the establishment of korfball in education.

This is an important step forward that, along with the changes proposed to the constitution, is intended to make us more efficient, productive and focused.

Once the new board has ratified appointments to each of these committees, collectively the organisation needs to work out its vision for the future and a strategy to achieve that. Personally my vision for korfball revolves around increased participation numbers; formalisation of our various structures and processes; developing the tremendous potential of korfball as a sport for primary and secondary school age players; and widening our regional spread. Such a vision, however, needs to be articulated and implemented collectively, not simply from the chair of the organisation, or indeed just from its executive committee or board. The more people we can share this vision with, the more likely we are to be able to achieve it. So long as we can maintain and develop relationships within and beyond our organisation, by adhering to professional processes and good principles of communication, we will be able to achieve such a vision.

## **2006/07 in summary**

During the year under review we did not move a great deal forward. We held a programme of national tournaments, successfully managed by an efficient sub-committee ably led by Tim Asby. The three regions each continued to make steady progress with their own affairs. We put a great deal of energy, effort and financial resource into hosting the Asia Oceania Youth Korfball Championships, which fell just past the reporting date. We also worked extremely hard to fund and prepare the New Zealand team to participate in this tournament. By the narrowest of margins, that team failed to achieve qualification from the tournament. While the tournament was a success in terms of positive feedback from the visiting international teams, we did not manage to repeat the benefits of increased profile for korfball that accompanied the senior Asia Oceania tournament we hosted in 2004.

My personal conclusion from this is that we have placed too much emphasis on competing at international level over the past two to three years, which we are not yet in a strong enough position to do to a high enough standard, meaning our endeavours have not met with success. To a lesser extent, the same is true of our national level competitions. I believe we now need to shift focus onto significantly building the number of people participating in korfball and extending the regional spread of korfball. To do this we need to more firmly embed effective systems that deliver results for all the activities that we undertake.

While it is advantageous and desirable for New Zealand to be represented in international competition, when this can only occur as a result of collective effort that uses all the human and financial resources of the organisation at the cost of us not being able to expand those resources, we need to re-examine our priorities.

We also need to ensure that we retain, develop and fully utilise the many talented and motivated people who become interested in korfball, particularly those prepared to serve in an administrative, officiating or coaching capacity.

## **Funding bodies**

Funding bodies continue to play a major part in virtually every significant project or initiative we undertake. The overall national context in which funding bodies operate, and their susceptibility to political, economic or other external influences, continues to be a critical factor in our success and something we cannot afford to ignore.

Our ongoing relationship with funders, collectively and individually, is crucial. Ensuring we meet their criteria and are able to deliver to the objectives they set is something we cannot let slip from our firm and clear focus.

During the year under review we have continued to enjoy a positive relationship with a number of funding bodies. It is apparent that some of these relationships can be developed significantly further, as we continue the ongoing improvement to our internal processes and are able to set a more specific strategic direction. As outlined, this has been identified as part of the rationale behind the proposed changes to our constitution and operating framework that will follow our AGM.

## **National Provincial Tournaments**

In this reporting year Korfball New Zealand set out a number of goals, one of which was to increase the success of our domestic competitive programme. In line with this, the Competitions Committee was established as a sub-committee of Korfball New Zealand. This group, consisting of representatives from each of the regions, facilitated by a member of the Korfball New Zealand executive committee, was tasked to establish a regular and consistent national tournament programme and to scope the viability of international tournaments.

The major role of this group became the set-up of the systems and structures that we see running now in the National Provincial Championships.

The roll-out of the structures is ongoing and will always be a set of working documents open to improvement, addition and change. Thus far their success can be measured in terms of allowing the teams to focus on playing as much as possible and enabling the host of each event to concentrate on a smaller number of duties, therefore allowing them to give a better local flavour to 'their' event.

Though partially outside this reporting year, we have seen a continual increase in the number of participant teams at the NPC events. At the time of writing it is hoped that the upcoming tournament in Auckland in November will continue this trend. The consequent effect of increasing the quality of korfball across the country, which is the primary purpose of the tournaments, is also apparent with both of the younger regions at the May and September tournaments pushing the established region hard and seeing the title leave Canterbury for the first time.

Looking to the future, with the establishment of a new region (reported below) and the Oceania Regional Korfball Championships scheduled for Auckland in March 2008, the continuation and growth of this programme appears positive, suggesting we should see a corresponding improvement in the quality of competition between the regions.

### **Oceania Regional Tournament Adelaide, 9-12 March, 2007**

In March a squad of 16 players, plus manager Christine Clark and coach Rob Smith, traveled to Adelaide for the Oceania Regional Korfball Championships, on 10-11 March. The squad, representing New Zealand, consisted of nine Canterbury players and seven Auckland players. All players involved were eligible for the New Zealand Under 23 squad and the tournament was used as part of the preparation for the Asia-Oceania Youth Korfball Championships four months later.

The build up to this tournament was rushed, with only two weeks notice of confirmation of funding. However, despite the hurried final preparations, logistical aspects were satisfactorily managed, with the squad being provided with playing and traveling uniforms, and all accommodation, travel and catering arrangements successfully co-ordinated.

The tournament was also used by Korfball Australia as preparation for the subsequent AOKYC, so there was a strong emphasis on youth eligible players. On the court, New Zealand was close to the Australian teams for long periods of each game. The major difference between the New Zealand and Australian teams was in the level of competition each has previously been exposed to, where New Zealand is at a disadvantage. Unfamiliarity with Australian refereeing interpretations was also a factor in our players falling just short of beating the local teams.

A weekend of korfball was successfully completed. Considerable discussion and relationship building with the Australian players and officials was also an important part of the trip. It is expected that significant and tangible benefit from this interaction will be seen in the future.

The playing squad for this tour consisted of Haley Astwood, Alex Clark, Sarah French, Stacey Mason, Michaela Pluck, Melissa Robinson, Lima Taupo, Scott Bovaird, Simon Cooper, Reuben Fitzgerald, Ryan Gibson, Gibran Janif, Bevan Lawson, Wayne McKenzie, Dennis Tuisamoa and Alex van Schaardenburg.

## **Counties Manukau**

Another positive development that has been achieved, albeit subsequent to the reporting year, is the establishment of Counties Manukau Korfball, which has been welcomed as the fourth regional member of Korfball New Zealand. Congratulations to those involved in this important step forward, particularly Christine Clark, Auckland Korfball and the members of the inaugural executive committee of the new region.

## **Report from U23 squad**

Preparing an Under 23 squad for the Asia Oceania Youth Championships was a significant focus of financial and human resources during the reporting year, subsequent to which it eventuated that such a goal was just beyond our grasp.

There are many reasons that we did not qualify, however the collective commitment of the players and the level of domestic competition they experience are the two primary ones.

While individually there are exceptions, and this seems to be gradually trending up over the years, the collective commitment of the players has not been what would reasonably be expected from members of a national team. This is the case in terms of their commitment to training and their commitment to finances and funding.

Personal and team preparation sets the foundation for any team and korfball is truly a team sport. The inconsistency of attendance at training and to personal fitness affected the overall performance of the team. Those prepared to put the work in clearly benefited. If all had matched the most committed in their attitude to preparation, we would have qualified from the tournament with ease, and would have challenged Australia hard for the silver medal.

At every international korfball tournament New Zealand has attended it has been clear that there is a large step between the level the players are used to playing domestically and the level at which they need to perform to succeed in international korfball. For reasons of cost and distance, means to overcome or reduce that step are elusive. Until we can raise the level of regular korfball in each of the centres, and therefore the level at which national provincial tournaments are played, taking the extra step to international korfball is always going to be difficult. Local or national competitions should, of course, respectively be an end in itself. Whether we can more effectively motivate more of the players who have played international korfball to assist with recruitment and development of others to play with and against them on a regular basis in local korfball remains to be seen. After the work done with this squad and tournament, it seems some of the players do understand that vision more clearly.

Self-belief is also an ongoing issue. By the end of the tournament the players were beginning to believe that they could compete effectively with the other teams. By then it was too late – for this tournament, at least: in future hopefully the self-belief will arrive sooner.

## **Refereeing**

Largely due to the efforts of Ian Harding, two further courses were organised to train referees during the period under review. These were in Auckland in October 2006 and in Christchurch in February 2007.



Qualification in the theoretical part of the accreditation was achieved at the Auckland course by: Fiona Chalmers, Andrew Hamilton, Cameron Wasley, Kerry Wilson, Elise Bergeron, Jim Gardner, Roddy Copeland, and Hilary Osborne.

In Christchurch the following achieved theory qualification: Steve Cooper, Simon Cooper, Bevan Lawson, Helen Timms, and very recent converts to Korfball, Maree Hamilton and John Hamilton.

Subsequent to the reporting date Ian Harding has resigned as facilitator of the Refereeing Committee. As noted above, the reconstitution of this committee has been identified as part of the review process proposed to follow our AGM.

### **Acknowledgements**

My thanks and acknowledgement in the 2006/07 year to the Korfball New Zealand executive committee: Tim Asby, Brenda King (treasurer), Stacey Mason, Cam Wasley, Kerry Wilson and Helen Timms who was co-opted to the role of secretary during the course of the year.

Thanks also to all those who have served on the committees of the three members of Korfball New Zealand as at the reporting date.

**Rob Smith**  
**Chair**  
**Korfball New Zealand**  
**November 2007**