

Centre Managers Report for 2022-2023 Season – Maroochy Little Athletics Centre

It gives me great pleasure to present the Centre Report for Maroochy Little Athletics for 2022-2023 season.

We commenced the season with two weeks of “Come & Try” days for potential new members to experience a Little Athletics competition and to be introduced to the variety of events. With offers of Discus, Javelin (U11 up), Shot Put, Long and High Jumps and all the track events including Race Walking there is much on offer for the new comer. Our Come & Try nights were a great success and will be adopted again this coming season – the last two weeks of August. Only possible NEW members were able to access this introduction. First full week of competition for Re-registrations and those new athletes who chose to register with Maroochy Centre was held on the first Friday night in September.....Great start to the season, the 2nd competition night was washed out!!! We crossed our fingers and only lost another two competitions for the remainder of the season.

We finished our season in huge gusto with massive performances from the 11 athletes who travelled to Townsville with their families to take part in the State Championships, bringing home 16 medals in total. Congratulations to all those who took part in the Championships.

Financials

Treasurer Brian, has kept a well presented record of our financials throughout the season, with monthly reports presented to the committee, appropriate memberships renewed and a healthy balance of \$17,456 to end our season. Records for the end of our financial year have been presented to the Auditor as this report is being prepared along with Equipment Assets Register totalling \$72,000 and Uniforms stock on hand of \$4,503. We are certainly in a sound position financially which must be carefully managed in any Not for Profit Organisation. Our full Audited Report is provided to the “Office of Fair Trading” as a Centre requirement.

The Assets register is presented to the State Association as part of our Insurance requirement.

Grants & Sponsorships

Unfortunately we were not successful with our QLD Sport & Recreation Grant application last year however we did receive two Special Grants of \$2,500 from the SC Council and \$4,500 from the Maroochy RSL to enable us to purchase 9 Ipads. These Ipads were used most successfully to record all field performances of the athletes at each Centre meet. The program “CompetitionHQ” is supported by the Timing Solutions platform which we also use for all Registrations and Recording under “ResultsHQ” and our track recording “RaceHQ”. Nominations throughout the season for all external competitions is also be done through ResultsHQ and it is a record of your athlete’s performances during the season. We have certainly entered the digital field for most recordings & processes now and we thank members Lachlan & Rebekah for the support given us by their company IT Resolve, along with the financial support of Maroochy RSL and SC Council.

Exam.Success have again sponsored our Age Group Trophies for this season, \$1,000 sponsorship. We are most grateful for their support and also the continuing support of Bendigo Bank and Guzman Y Gomez. We are very appreciative of the many local businesses who supported our Annual Xmas Raffle. Fundraising is a necessary part of all community organisations. Our charter is to provide a healthy and active environment for our athletes through competition but to do this we must remain financially sound and whether this is achieved through our registration fees and/or fundraising and sponsorships, it is VITAL that we continue an equitable way for all members to support maintaining a good financial position.

The support provided to us by the Maroochy SHS is extremely valuable as we enter our 32nd year of competition at their grounds. State LAQ sponsors Coles, McDonalds, Nordic Sport & Robertson Gardens are equally valuable. Support equals happy Centre!!! Happy Centre = Happy Athletes 😊

Registrations

Registrations have remained constant this season with 110 members and any expected “drop off” after the Xmas holidays was negligible, in fact one of best attendance days was at the end of January. Going forward we must ensure that all registrations and payments are done “On Line” thus alleviating additional admin work required at the Centre. Support is there for members but we are not able to have athletes performances showing on the digital recording systems unless they are fully registered on line and this also includes presentation of DOB confirmation for new members. Laura has managed our Registrations very capably for the past 4 years but reluctantly is having to give it away due to other personal commitments. She will still be helping out on our finish line some nights though hopefully!

We found this season that having the Come & Try Night in August assisted with reducing the Triallist numbers although they were still quite popular. We introduced a new monitoring system and this worked well with most triallists registering once that 2 week trial period was over. Triallists register with the Centre (\$10 for 2 nights) however their performances can not be accredited prior to them being fully registered “On Line”. We need to simplify this process going forward next season, particularly now with only fully registered athletes appearing in the digital recording processes. I believe we have been required to do many things on line due to our Covid experiences and we must keep our processes simple and finite.

Athletes are again allowed to keep their previous season Registration numbers which is a bonus not having to replace these every year. We will be offering our “Sewing Service” again this coming season to get athletes’ numbers etc.. sewn on to their polos shirts. It is important to have correct numbers and age groups showing for recording purposes so please avail yourself of this service if you don’t sew!!!

Canteen & Fund Raising

Our Canteen has been extremely limited this past season due to not having an elected Canteen Convenor which obviously restricted purchasing certain items. Thanks to Amanda & her girls, also Clare & Crystal who have assisted on some competition nights, we have been able to provide snacks for those hungry mouths. Bananas are supplied throughout the season, thanks to the National Coles sponsorship. These need to be collected each week. Canteen has been supposedly, a major fundraiser for the Centre and we thank those families who have supported it through this tough season. Not a great profit margin but certainly not a loss. Our average profit for Canteen & Fundraising combined over the past 4 years has been \$2,300/yr.

Our Christmas raffle raised just on \$1,000 which was a tremendous effort and thank you to the families who supported this both by donations of prizes and selling their books of tickets.

Administration Equipment

The addition of the Ipads for field recording is covered above in Grants. No additional equipment was purchased this season and we now have two Points of Sale operational during busy purchase nights.

Facilities and Equipment

Constant renewal of the track markings takes up valuable volunteer time and special thanks go to Ryan and his team of Brian & Jon who have managed this season without too many “rain” interruptions. Maintenance of the equipment is continual every week and we often see the line marker loaded onto Ryan’s ute – heading home for repairs!

Lighting is totally our responsibility and we need to attend to some major issues with faulty lighting in the discus area during this “off season” time. Previous instalments of lights in that area has not been successful as they keep shorting out, leaving athletes and parents in the dark. We will need to be seeking a major grant for this improvement as it will be a major expenditure for us. We need to make wiring “Cockatoo Proof”!

Program of Events & Weekly Recording

The weekly program has run very well again this year, rotating every week over a 4 week cycle. During that time athletes are offered a set selection of events, under the guidance of the LAQ standards, however we have had to change the program slightly after rain events during the week when we are not able to, and it is not safe to, conduct High Jumps & hurdles. For these nights we need to turn to our “Wet weather option”. Advice is provided on fb for any changes to the program.

Having the younger athletes U6-U10 do their warmups with their Age Marshals prior to first events has enabled us to get the programs under way in good time of a Friday night. Older athletes still remain doing a group warm up.

It is very important that Age Marshals follow the scheduled program each night to avoid clashing events however, sometimes we do experience build ups at times - communicating with the Starters and Finish line officials can often rectify this. A very special thankyou to our Age Marshals for taking on the tasks of the new digital recording and for managing their groups this year. You all carry a very important Role every Friday night, without your assistance the athletes would just not be able to commence their competition.

Athletes are encouraged to compete in all events being offered as this drives their performance levels.

Our Centre Pentathlon held in March was a great fun night and a change up for the athletes. We encourage Improvement on their OWN performances for all athletes and this was very evident during the pentathlon.

Weekly Awards

McDonalds Achievement cards are issued to each athlete with their registration packs and athletes can monitor these by checking their own performance levels according to their respective age groups. From a committee perspective, levels Green, Red & Blue certificates are monitored through the “ResultsHQ” portal & certificates are distributed on competition nights to the athletes whose particular levels are achieved.

Guzman Y Gomez have supported us again this year by providing encouragement vouchers which are distributed to members throughout the season.

Tiny Tots

We had a very small band of Tiny Tots this season and will be concentrating on a membership drive prior to Sign On next season. Tamsin has run a great night of activities for these athletes over the last 4 years and this coming season she will be sharing the responsibility with Adam. Both families have athletes in the U8s as well.

Coaching & Officiating

We have endeavoured to share our Officiating knowledge through Parent Orientation sessions over the past couple of years but these sessions have not been taken up by members. Currently we have all instructions required to run an event on “Handy Hint” cards placed in the folders at each of the field events and also on the track and we ask that parents helping with the age groups pay particular attention to these cards. A classic example is what ages use the ½ x 1m mat for take off in Long Jump and NOT the board?

With our coaching sessions during the week (Sunday was not a popular time at all and so was dropped during the season) we concentrated on general coaching on Thursday afternoons. Unfortunately, we were unable to cater for some athletes who had other commitments but we will continue the practice of ONE coaching session each week and going forward it will be held on Wednesday afternoons. Our coaches are volunteers so we need to respect the times they have available as well..

VOLUNTEERING IS VITAL. Without Volunteers we would not be able to run any community sports.

Regional Competitions

As far as Regional competitions ALL being held at the SC University track going forward, it makes for an excellent venue for our athletes to compete at where their best performances can be achieved. The stress of a Centre having to prepare grounds and organise all other responsibilities involved in “hosting” a Regional meet is concerned, are GONE. Thank you to the USCLAC for allowing us to use their equipment, again diminishing the requirement of extra equipment having to be brought in. The cost of using this first class facility is borne by all Centres equally according to their registrations and we are very fortunate to have the facility in our immediate area, and geographically central for our Regional Centres.

Regional Relays held at SC University track in November was a huge success with several Best Performances being recorded. The most important aspect was that the athletes enjoyed their events and making up “TEAMS” created an awesome camaraderie. The team composition introduced last season was implemented again this season with a few minor changes and dropping the 4 x 200m relay for U9 & U10s was so less confusing for athletes and officials alike. Having been involved in relays and team selection since the inception of this event for Qld, I have found the latest concept very acceptable and decisive when selecting teams to compete, it also reduces the complexity of substitutes on the day, and I do hope this current concept is supported by Maroochy & accepted by the Annual Conference in June after this two year trial.

Many of our teams went on to compete at the **State Relays Championships** and I am delighted to be able to advise that our U14 Maroochy girls - Anna, Lyla, Ruby & Amity - now hold the current **Qld Record** for the U14 Girls 4 x Swedish Relay – an awesome time and well done girls.

Regional Championships were conducted on the SC University track at Sippy Downs, providing a first class venue for the athletes to compete on. Again we saw a maximum representation of athletes from our Centre attend these Championships, most achieving their personal best performances and both Ruby (U14G) and Liam (U15B) achieved Regional Best Performances in their 800m & 1500m events.

19 athletes from Maroochy qualified to attend the **State Championships**, this year held in Townsville, however only 11 were able to attend. As I said at the beginning of my report these athletes made us all feel very proud with their respective performances bringing home 7 Gold, 3 Silver & 6 Bronze medals and each one achieving their own personal best. We can't ask for more than that. Congratulations to ALL athletes.

Congratulations to Liam (U15B) in his 800m and Anna (U14G) in her 400m – both setting (TBC) Qld Records.

Special recognition also goes to our U14 athletes Lyla and Rory who have been selected to compete in the Inaugural U14 Australian Junior Athletics Teams Championships (AJAC) to be held in Melbourne in conjunction with the ALACs later in April. Good luck to these athletes.

This year we also saw several of our athletes nominate for the LAQ **Combined Events Championships** where U16G Kayla won the Bronze medal in her Sprints Triathlon. A new concept and exciting experience for those athletes attending.

Complete Results and the new Centre Records have been updated in ResultsHQ & posted on our website.

Communications & Publicity

We altered our website platform in the “off season” to allow easier access for our members and a more “user friendly” format for our posts. Thank you to Rebekah's IT skills, we are now able to post most of the required information for our members on the website and keep folks up to date with new events, photo

gallery, Registration & Competition details, Weekly Programs and a limited record of Historical data along with a snippet of the History of Maroochy Centre.

Our facebook page is linked to the website and monthly newsletters are sent to members via Mail Chimp.

Athletes are issued with a Year Book (printed version!) when they register with Maroochy and this has been compiled not only for your referencing but also as a Memento of those Little Athletic days!! Over the past couple of years we have seen several ex-little Athletes return to the Centre with their own children now and I am sure they appreciate checking out the historical records we have maintained. Obviously being the printed version, we don't update it during the season but this is where technology takes over and we now rely on the Website & Facebook postings.

Recognition & Thanks

A very special thank you to the Committee at Maroochy Centre and the support they have given me throughout the year. We have been fortunate maintaining our current numbers and with the support and enthusiasm of all members helping us on our journey we can uphold the philosophies of Little Athletics and give our athletes the best of both worlds. We are about to enter our 42nd year of operation and it has not always been smooth sailing, but we have managed to "Jump" most of the hurdles sent our way!

Gaining the support of volunteers is always a challenge and it doesn't seem to get any easier as the years roll by. By breaking down the Administrative and necessary Active Roles required of a Little Athletics Centre into smaller and more manageable duties for the next season, we hope to encourage more members to become involved with the Centre (and the athletes) by taking on smaller tasks so we are able to deliver the Best Product we can for our Athletes. Currently we have an Administrative Committee of 9 and we propose to reduce this to 7 for the 2023-24 season with incidental PROJECTS throughout the year where we will require assistance from TEAM MEMBERS and very importantly our Age Marshals are at the top of the Team Member's list. They are the lifeblood of every competition night.

Finally thank you for the support given to me by the members. It has been a privilege working with you all over the past 4 years. I am extremely proud as one of the Founding Members of Maroochy to still be involved at a Centre level, and I wish you all a successful year as we move into the 2023-24 season.

Alison Quirke, Centre Manager 16 April 2023