



Creating a National Plan

By Julian Hardy.

Manager, Motorsport Manawatu.

1/10th Offroad NZ 2WD Stock Champion 1992

Interested Party in the future of RC racing in NZ

My Background.



Firstly let me introduce myself. My name is Julian Hardy, and I was a NZ Champion in this sport in 1992, and a active participant from 1989 to 1993. Since that time, I have spent my time running and competing in Motorsport events.

In 2007 I was employed by the Manawatu Car Club to manage its motorsport activities. In 5 years I took a club with a Laptop and a printer into now arguably the most successful club in New Zealand. Through hard work, we have now assets over \$250000.00 solely for the purpose of running motorsport events.

In 2010 I was lucky to be selected to participate in a clinic run by then SPARC (now Sport NZ) about strategic planning and management of Sport. What this course did was take our model which was judged to be one of the best models seen by SPARC in New Zealand for growth and self funding, but lacking anything to substantiate this, into a plan that has outcomes, targets and secures our clubs future.

The rest they say is history , as now we are growing by the rate of 7-12% per annum in participation and our financial position is secure.

I would like to help the NZRCA and its member clubs work towards a similar set of goals to raise the profile, increase membership and achieve competition goals to reward those who are gifted in this sport.

Currently



All sports are exactly the same. We all think we are different because of reasons that we like to protect, but the reality is in RC Racing, when you strip back the personalities and rules, it is only 2 things. Fairness and enjoyment.

I have 3 key sayings that I refer back to.

1. Everyone has history. We need a future.
2. The business of sport is not the sport of business.
3. NZ is nothing more than a banana republic with 4 million residents.

Since I left the sport in 1993, the speed of technology is absolutely astonishing. It is faster than Formula 1 in my mind. The downfall of this, is that what was great this week, will be superseded next week. I refer to point 3, and it is difficult for NZRCA members as a sport to keep up. Infact we cant. Sorry 1or 2 can, and then alienate everyone else. In Motorsport we have made the incredibly foolish mistake of trying to make an entire sport keep up with the elite. It has ultimately failed and nearly desecrated the top end of the sport. Club level racing however is booming. I believe that the NZRCA is in a similar position.

Focus Point A: What is most important to the NZRCA? Nationals or Club events.

Currently



Now that trading restrictions are off, anyone can import anything. Trademe has become NZ favourite market place. The best and worst thing for RC Racing. NZ has access to so much gear, it does not know what works, and the NZRCA is for all intensive purpose's is NZ's best kept secret. You and your members know what works, what has good parts supply and what will see new people join and participate.

This huge variety adds further to the NZRCA dilemma's as there are now so many variations and classes, that it is spread so thinly across the country, that the top guys eventually get bored, loose enjoyment and leave the sport, due to limited competition. RC Racing is ultimately a sport, it determines winner and losers through rules and regulations.

Focus Point B: Why do we have so many classes?

Focus Point C: How do we get more people to participate?

Focus Point D: How do we retain the new, the existing and develop our sport?

I stated previously the I think the NZRCA is NZ best kept secret. RC Racing is a fantastic sport, it allows everyone to compete equally, it offers insight to technical suspension and car setup and is easy for everyone to do. Yet is struggles in participation numbers.

Create a National Plan



So far I have told you nothing you did not already know. I am sure you have tried individually to achieve some of these points, but ultimately failed, or did not achieve the outcomes you and your club desired, and simply went back to what you have always done.

I challenge you to all work together for a National outcome with measurements, growth and a change of mind set, and a doing things that you may not see the short term benefits in, but long term there are significant rewards for such thinking. And more importantly, your sport will be in very good health, and have a solid future and potentially more funds to keep all this happening. After all money isn't everything, but you cant do a lot without it and you can do a lot more with it!

As I am so far removed, it would be my recommendation to ask the most successful clubs how they operate. No point asking the struggling, you are building a success model. The NZRCA will need to ask these clubs how they operate, how they retain members, how they attract new members, and the most important question of all – Do you have any succession planning.

National Plan.



The NZRCA is the Governance body. It is a body setup by the clubs, it is owned by the clubs for the benefit of fairness. It's primary role then is to:

- Manage and administer the rules of the sport
- Liaise with overseas bodies to meet international requirements

Its secondary roles, as it is owned by the clubs should be to provide promotional concepts, material for publication, investigate opportunities for the sport and report back to its members, and provide a framework for the member clubs to follow for the growth of the sport ***as agreed by the members.***

You all have a responsibility here. If the NZRCA acts fairly and without prejudice on a plan, reports back to you and a MAJORITY agree, then as a group you must all act inline with the recommendations. In the case of the NZRCA, I would roll out a regional plan, concentrating on the stronger clubs as you are most likely to get the best returns on investment in time and energy, and then offer that plan to all the other members in a stage by stage roll out for maximum reward. Remember if it achieves it goals you will all benefit.

National Plan.



As part of the National plan I would strongly recommend that the NZRCA become an affiliate of Motorsport NZ. This then gives you a pseudo access to Sport NZ, and then the rewards will start to arrive.

There are 17 regional sport authorities in NZ. Every 3 months they distribute funds to sport clubs for development of sport and participation, primarily aimed at School children. This is the breeding ground of the NZRCA new members, and then they can go through to Motorsport. Motorsport NZ has a youth academy for gifted kids, the NZRCA could then nominate its gifted youth for this course.

The funds are very specific, I have investigated them, but the lack of sport recognition holds you back. Sign some papers, get involved and get some growth happening around the country through this scheme.

National Plan.



Another key reason to affiliate with Motorsport NZ is that the world has made this move. Key manufactures have linked their products to their full sized counterparts. The NZRCA could have a series that followed motor racing around the North Island, attending race meetings, so further bond the two organisations. This offers both parties extra exposure and can have its own title. It should also help the regional clubs where the racing is.

It may also be worthwhile the NZRCA being a agent for a brand of car, which it can make available to clubs as a proper entry level vehicle across the spectrum of RC Car size and surface. This could be seen as Anti-competitive, but as you are all aware this is a huge international business, and when new people show up with Trademe specials they are lost before they even start. There are financial benefits from this association to the NZRCA, that should also be considered.

National Plan.



Clubs

Clubs

Clubs

Clubs

Clubs

Create a Board. It should compromise of the President and 2 outside people, recommend 1 Sport NZ person and 1 other from outside your sport.

The board will set the targets and strategic plan for the sport.

Appoint a Manager/CEO who's responsibility it is to advise the board of the progress and how this is to be achieved.

We can't afford that you all scream, remember my first saying. Everyone has a history, you need a future. The real question is you can't afford not to have one, so lets work out how to get there. It would probably be a part time role, but would require a strong work ethic and an ability to work unsupervised. For example my club only has 186 members paying a \$75 subscription and we have a full time position. It can be done, and no I don't get paid \$13950.00 exc GST.

This person will be of enormous help to your volunteer team running the sport at present and be far more effective at achieving results.

National Plan.



Clubs

Clubs

Clubs

Clubs

Clubs

Change can be hard. The hardest part is letting go, once it kicks on you will wonder what the fuss was all about.

Most importantly you all need to want the change. It cant be a “jobs for the boys” deal, it has to be well thought out, planned and then executed. In my opinion the NZRCA and its members are missing out on so much, and could be in a far better position with a bit of help and a national plan to roll out.

Funding is tight, but use it for strategic purposes, spell out the plan, and you should be able to get it. Imagine if every club had a indoor facility. What would the sport look like then? A weekend sport? A week day sport? Could you host international events?

If you do nothing you will get what you have always got. If you are prepared to make some changes, and they would be small and incremental, at first but measured and reported on, how would that help your club and it s members? I would like to work with you to achieve some of this.

Contact:



Thank you for reading this. It is a lot to consider and probably too much to consider with such short notice. RC Car racing is one of the greatest sports in New Zealand and the world. It has enormous potential for growth that is sustainable and affordable, which could bring this hobby back into more kiwi homes.

RC Racing gave me so much, I would now like to use some of the skill sets that I have to help a sport that could do with a little bit of help. Not as a competitor, just a guy trying to give a little back.

Julian Hardy

027 523 8290 Mobile

06 3555 820 Home

manawatucarclub@xtra.co.nz

Quote OCR Australia “ The Biggest Little Motorsport in town” . This is RC Car racing.