

# **Feedback Report on the 2024 NZ Masters Championships**

## **1. Overall Experience with Race Officials**

The feedback concerning race officials was overwhelmingly positive, with a significant majority of participants expressing satisfaction with their experiences. Out of 72 respondents, 41 rated their experience as "Excellent," while 26 rated it as "Very Good." Only 4 participants rated it as "Average," and just 1 as "Fair." This distribution illustrates that officials are generally perceived as effective, professional, and capable in their roles.

### **Positive Highlights**

Participants frequently noted the professionalism and friendliness exhibited by the officials. They appreciated the efficiency with which the races were conducted, particularly emphasizing that the officials maintained a well-organized environment that contributed to the overall smooth running of the event.

## **2. Overall Experience with Volunteers**

The volunteers received even more positive feedback than the officials, with 52 respondents rating their experience as "Excellent" and 20 as "Very Good." This feedback highlights the crucial role that volunteers play in ensuring the success of events like the NZ Masters Championships.

### **Key Strengths**

Participants expressed deep gratitude for the time and effort that volunteers invested in the event. Comments frequently mentioned the effectiveness of boat drivers, safety personnel, and commentators, emphasizing their importance in creating a supportive environment for competitors. The volunteers' friendly demeanour and willingness to assist contributed significantly to the overall atmosphere of the event, making it enjoyable for all involved.

### **Impact on Event Atmosphere**

The positive energy and camaraderie fostered by the volunteers were noted as key elements that enhanced the experience of participants. Many respondents appreciated the fun and less formal tone maintained by the volunteers, which helped alleviate the

pressure often associated with competitive races. This supportive atmosphere encouraged participation, especially among less experienced competitors.

### **3. Communication at the Regatta**

Communication was rated positively overall, with 31 respondents giving it an "Excellent" rating and another 31 rating it as "Very Good." This indicates that 86% of participants felt that the communication during the regatta met their expectations.

#### **Strengths**

Effective communication is vital in maintaining the flow of an event, and respondents acknowledged the clarity of instructions provided during the regatta. Most felt adequately informed about race schedules and protocols.

#### **Areas for Improvement**

However, some participants reported instances of confusion, particularly during staggered starts. A few noted that the usual callout process was not consistently followed, leading to uncertainty among competitors. Addressing these inconsistencies could enhance the communication strategy at future events.

### **4. Preferences for Mixed Events: Divisions vs. Heats and Finals**

The debate over whether to continue with mixed events as divisions or transition to heats and finals elicited a diverse range of opinions from respondents.

#### **Preference for Divisions**

**Convenience:** Participants felt that divisions kept the program flowing smoothly and reduced the likelihood of scheduling conflicts.

**Fatigue Management:** Many noted that heats and finals would extend the duration of the event, potentially leading to fatigue, especially for older competitors.

**Fairness:** Age-based divisions were seen as a more equitable way to categorize competitors, ensuring that similar skill levels race against one another.

#### **Preference for Heats and Finals**

**Competitive Integrity:** They argued that this structure would lead to fairer races, allowing the fastest crews to rise to the top without the impact of random factors affecting race outcomes.

**Structured Racing:** Supporters believed that this system could lead to better organization in the event of large entry numbers, helping avoid small races.

#### **Recommendations**

Overall, the participants leaned towards maintaining divisions for mixed events, particularly to preserve the relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere and accommodate the varied experience levels of participants.

## **5. Race Programme and Boat Issues**

Responses regarding boat issues related to the race programme varied across clubs. Some clubs faced significant challenges, while others managed without any major problems.

### **Common Challenges**

**Tight Turnarounds:** Several clubs reported difficulties with timing between events, especially when quick transitions were required for competitors to re-rig boats or make necessary adjustments.

**Scheduling Conflicts:** Smaller clubs were particularly affected by scheduling conflicts, as overlapping events made it difficult to participate in multiple races.

**Finals and Heats Scheduling:** Some clubs noted that finals scheduled immediately after heats created challenges, particularly regarding equipment adjustments.

### **Positive Feedback**

Conversely, larger clubs reported fewer issues and often managed the challenges presented by the schedule effectively. Some clubs also suggested improvements, such as separating similar events with more time to facilitate smoother transitions.

## **6. Overall Experience at Lake Karapiro**

Participants rated their overall experience at Lake Karapiro very highly, with 44 responses indicating "Excellent" and 26 stating "Very Good." This remarkable level of satisfaction reflects the venue's facilities and the overall environment provided for the event.

### **Key Strengths**

The facilities at Lake Karapiro were praised for their accessibility and amenities. Many participants noted that the location provided a picturesque setting conducive to competitive rowing. Additionally, the organization of the venue contributed to a seamless experience, with ample space for both participants and spectators.

### **Areas for Enhancement**

While the overall feedback was positive, gathering more specific comments about what aspects of the venue were particularly appreciated or where improvements could be made could further enhance future events.

## **7. Overall Experience at the 2024 NZ Masters Championships**

The 2024 NZ Masters Championships received largely favourable reviews, with 32 participants rating their experience as "Excellent" and another 32 as "Very Good." This indicates that 89% of respondents felt positively about the event.

### **Successes**

The organization of the championships was recognized as a significant factor contributing to participants' enjoyment. The well-planned schedule and efficient execution helped create a positive environment for competition.

### **Potential Improvements**

To further enhance the experience, it would be beneficial to examine the feedback provided by those who rated their experience as average or poor, allowing organizers to address specific concerns and make targeted improvements for future events.

## **8. Preferred Timing for the NZ Masters Championships**

Participants expressed a wide range of preferences for the timing of the NZ Masters Championships, indicating varying opinions based on personal experiences and regional weather conditions.

### **Popular Choices**

September: Many respondents favored September, noting that it works well within their training schedules.

April/May: Others suggested these months, citing the potential for more stable weather conditions.

October: A significant number highlighted October as a preferable option to avoid the unpredictable weather of September, particularly in Twizel.

### **Recommendations for Scheduling**

Some respondents suggested combining it with other major regattas to improve logistical efficiency.

## **9. Recommendations for Improving the Regatta**

To enhance the overall experience at future regattas, several recommendations emerged from the feedback:

**Advance Publishing of Race Order:** Providing the race order three months in advance would allow crews to better prepare and prevent confusion.

**Adjusting Race Schedules:** Modifying the schedule to prevent overlaps could increase participation and create a more equitable competitive environment.

**Medal Criteria:** Tightening the criteria for medal awards could help maintain the competitive integrity of the event.

**Improving On-Water Marshalling:** Efficient marshalling could reduce delays and keep the event running smoothly.

**Enhancing Social Events:** Incorporating social activities could foster camaraderie among participants and enhance the overall atmosphere.

**Safety Boat Positioning:** Strategically placing safety boats could improve response times and safety coverage during races.

**Reciprocal Boat Leasing System:** Establishing a boat leasing system could help alleviate logistical challenges for clubs traveling across regions.

**Differentiated Finals Schedule:** Scheduling heats and finals on separate days could improve recovery and performance during finals.

**Novice Rowers Inclusion:** Introducing a new masters category for novice rowers could attract more participants and create a more balanced competitive environment.

**Communication Improvements:** Enhancing communication regarding race schedules and procedures could minimize confusion among participants.

In conclusion, the feedback from the 2024 NZ Masters Championships reveals a generally positive perception of the event, particularly regarding the performance of race officials and volunteers. While there are areas for improvement, the overall feedback reflects a strong commitment to maintaining and enhancing the quality of the regatta experience. Implementing the recommendations discussed could help further elevate future events, ensuring they meet the needs and expectations of all participants.