

## Summary of Meeting of SONZ Board of Trustees held 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022

The purpose of this summary is to provide transparency on Board matters and provide club members with an overview of our discussion, an update on progress on key initiatives and any other matters of interest to the SONZ community. In this meeting the key points to note were:

**Sports participation.** Club athletes have been training hard as the start of the NSGs approaches. There were 10 club events held in Term 1, 28 in Term 2 and 17 in Term 3. Schools programme numbers also show healthy participation, with over 1,500 athletes participating in Term 2 and over 1,600 in Term 3.

**Regional Forums** were held across New Zealand (except in Upper South Island) during 2022, with excellent participation and positive feedback. The Forums had a wide range of topics covered, with external speakers, RSC and Sports Director, Gary Peacham on the plan to offer Level 3 coaching opportunities for SO Coaches who want to gain a recognizable qualification in their sport. The first of these sessions on Football Coach training was cancelled due to low numbers of registrations. The next coaching opportunity is for Basketball coaches and is planned for March 2023.

**Olympic medalist Dylan Schmidt** nominated Special Olympics New Zealand as his chosen Charity when he appeared on Celebrity Treasure Island on TVNZ recently, battling to win the prize of \$100,000. SONZ were the lucky recipients of \$10,000 from the challenges that Dylan won on the show.

"I want to help to give people with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to play sport and to compete against each other, just like I have done in my sporting career," said the star trampolinist who claimed a bronze medal at the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games (New Zealand's first ever Olympic gymnastics medal), amongst a host of national and international trophies.

The 25-year-old has had a strong connection with people with intellectual disabilities since an early age through his mother Jen, who has been working in the special needs sector for most of her life.

Dylan hopes to be able to attend the Freemasons New Zealand Special Olympics National Summer Games in Hamilton on December 8-12. "I am really looking forward to watching the athletes compete the different sports and support them in whatever way I can."

**Update from Athlete Leader** – Representative Grace Payne updated the Board on the Athlete Input Council (AIC) which continues to meet by Zoom. Grace provided updates from our Athlete Leaders across New Zealand.

Grace reported as follows on her role on the Regional Athletes Leaders Council (RALC). We had our last meeting on the 3rd of September. Next year at the World Summer Games, each member of the RALC is going over to Berlin and attend the Global Athlete Congress. Before we head to Berlin, we all have to create an athlete-led project, do the project and present it at the Congress. My project is to go to our local high schools that have Duke of Edinburgh Programme and present workshops and educate them about Special Olympics, Inclusion and Unified Leadership, and how they can use Special Olympics as their community hours service.

SOAP also announced the launch of our new website called “Youth for Inclusion” (<https://www.youthforinclusion.com/>) where they will share stories and their ‘Best Practices’ from youth with and without an Intellectual Disability. Have a look at the website and let me know what you think!

**National Summer Games.** With only weeks to go, the Risk Committee continues to monitor the Covid 19 situation around the Country to ensure the Games can go ahead safely and with minimal risk.

The Board wanted to thank the SONZ team for their work and preparation for the NSG, its an incredible amount of work to pull this together and the work of the SONZ team was acknowledged.

**Cultural intelligence:** SONZ is committed to working on our commitment to Te Ao Māori, the Board is currently exploring a number of options for the wider organisation and we will continue to update the clubs in the work we do in this space.

## Who we are

You can find out who is on the Board at [www.specialolympics.org.nz/about/the-board](http://www.specialolympics.org.nz/about/the-board), and this will shortly be updated to show the formal and informal committees, their composition and the remit of each committee. Also beginning soon, you can find out more as follows:

- the schedule of Board meeting dates (5 during the year) will be published on the Special Olympics website.
- after each meeting we will send out a summary like the one above.
- Online webinars – to be hosted during each year with one or more Board Trustees – to which any and all members are welcome to attend, ask questions and hear updates from the Board directly.

**Working together.** Your Board sets the direction of SONZ and your executive team gets the job done. Along with the grassroots organisation at club level we all want to work together so that we can be a stronger organisation to meet the many challenges that we face on a daily basis. The Board looks forward to sharing with you more effectively this vision for the future and how we’re going to get there together.