



## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2017 ANNUAL GENERAL** **MEETING**

The 2016-17 season was predicted at last year's AGM to be one of considerable hazards as we contemplated the threat of our cash-less society. We did cope I am happy to report via some meticulous planning and management from our Treasurer and Secretary General meant that we survived a potentially tough situation for the 8 months of the season.

Another real threat was the ongoing impact that this economic meltdown brought to the table for our extremely loyal and generous sponsors. All contributed to our Sport in so many ways and to this end we again are extremely grateful to their continued support. Particular public mention must be made to our season sponsors, Introwise Commercial Catering, Ilala Lodge, who also sponsored the resurrected Penhalonga event, Bonaqua & Coca Cola, Schweppes Holdings, Bokomo and Snickers via Cold Chain Zimbabwe and our new sponsors, Homestyle Bricks.

For the Troutbeck event, we again thank our title sponsor Bonaqua and Coca Cola, Hyundai and CFAO Holdings, new, but most welcome, Brands to the event, DHL and Bon Marche. The inclusion of the latter two sponsors now further enhances the Troutbeck Brand and I am comfortable that this event is now achieving a status of its own that will attract more competitors and potential sponsors to become involved.

As a summary for the season just passed, the total participants exceeded our expectations and stopped the downward trend witnessed over the last few seasons. Part of this increased participation was the introduction of Aquathlon to our normal event formats.

To summarise,

2015-16 recorded 1356 participants over 14 events; this was the lowest number of athletes to partake in our events over the previous 4 seasons.

I am happy to report that the 2016-17 season recorded a total of 2639 athletes that participated in our events.

To break this down further, 1771 participated in the triathlon events, and 868 participated in the aquathlon events. It must be noted that aquathlon constituted 50% of the triathlon field over the 14 events, however there were only 6 actual aquathlon events staged during the season.

This trend cannot be ignored and must be encouraged to ensure that our sport and events remain viable. This is extremely important for our negotiations regarding continued sponsorship.

This initiative was the tireless work of Pamela Fulton who stuck to her guns with regard to this project and ably assisted by Caroline Hawgood, Carol Pakenham and Team launched this multi-sport into the school system.

A disappointment for us this last season was the failure of the Schweppes Corporate Team Challenge. This platform was developed to increase our adult participation within the sport and to also engender a healthy and friendly competitive arena for Corporate Companies, and I might add, Gyms, to participate in our events.

The secondary initiative was to also introduce the sport to these Companies who in turn may consider becoming our partners in sponsorship initiatives to further develop the sport into other areas that at this time we cannot afford to resource.

In addition, the support of coaching and development systems not only grows the sport, but will also allow us to therefore support directly, Elite level Junior and U23 athletes so that they can perform and learn externally and thereafter, support for Elite level athletes to compete at onward destinations such as the Olympic Games.

Returning to the Corporate Challenge, it has been agreed with our sponsors Coca Cola and Schweppes that we missed the boat last year

in the late promotion of this concept. I am to meet with these sponsors on Wednesday to finalise the marketing plan to promote this Challenge early enough for the Corporates to plan and budget for. This will include an aide memoire assisting them with all facets of preparation to participate. We thus do hope that we can improve the participation levels in this key area of growth for us all.

The Penhalonga event was reintroduced to the calendar last season and for those who did make the effort to compete must agree that this is an event that should be experienced and it will grow as we develop supporting multisport disciplines to enhance the great venue that is available to us. Our sincere thanks to Jim Brown and Ilala Lodge for their dogged support of the event and for agreeing to continue and grow this event. Our thanks also for the LOC team that did a great job in managing the event on extremely limited equipment resources.

Troutbeck continues to be our flagship event for each season and this year we celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this event as an ITU sanctioned event. No other ITU or ATU event has such a legacy on the African continent and this is a huge compliment to those who work so unbelievably hard to ensure that this event produces a highly professional yet incredibly hospitable event year on year. Our sincere thanks go to our sponsors for supporting this event and also to Legacy Resorts for their continued support of ourselves as we invade their quiet domain.

Mount Pleasant Pool has now settled down after the introduction of the new filtration system and the related teething problems and we can boast an efficient and a more cost effective maintenance programme. We still struggle with some areas of this venue but we are working hard to resolve all of these areas of concern. As of the new season we will be contracting a Cleaning Service to maintain the Change rooms and ablutions on a weekly basis as the current impasse between the City of Harare and their employees continues and as a result, very little or no responsibility for local up-keep is undertaken by the resident staff.

Mention must go to our Community involvement in the area of our race routes. We managed a lot of road and pothole repairs, grass cutting and rubbish clearing during the course of the immediate past heavy rains and to this I thank the efforts of Colin Weston, Shaun

**Shelton, James Soper and Dave Ellis for all of their time and hard, dedicated work with regards to the pool and the surrounding area.**

**To our athletes, we congratulate you all on your spirited and excellent performances, week in and week out, and also when out of the Country.**

**Special mention must be made to Gabby de Chassart who qualified for the 2016 World Championships in Mexico in September. Gabby was young for this age group and in global terms she found that the difference in standard was awesome. Gabby did not finish the race unfortunately but I am sure learnt a lot from the experience and will be able to adjust and share these experiences with all young athletes aspiring to climb the ladder. Again our exposure to higher level International events is critical to our Elite development but has to be resourced.**

**In particular our congratulations go to the Team that travelled and medalled so well at the South African Championships, Gold to Keith Elliot, silvers to Marcel Paulser, Liam Jones and Andie Kuipers, bronze medals to Erin Elliot and Gabby de Chassart.**

**Also to those who travelled in our vastly depleted National Team to Tunisia, this was an eye-opener for many of us who managed to get to Tunisia as it now showed us just how far and dedicated our Northern Hemisphere friends have become. No longer is South Africa our only major threat. These countries to the North have superior numbers and resources and are making their presence felt and doing it quickly. Of interest is the relationship between the North African and European National Federations, particularly the Franco-phone countries. This can only be a massive benefit to their athlete development going forward.**

**The number of ATU/ITU sanctioned events in Africa is now dominated by North Africa and again this can only benefit these countries as their Start lists are dominated by European athletes that vastly swell their Elite participation numbers in comparison to those hosted in Southern Africa. This is facilitated by a geographical advantage where cheap and short travel combined with a good variety of local resources and support, ensure that these events become very attractive and viable.**

**On a related subject, an ITU Level 2 Technical Officials' Course for Africa, was held in Harare at the end of last year and I am happy to**

report that 4 of our Technical Officials passed this demanding course and are now certified Level 2 ITU Technical Officials.

Our continued influence in this area of African Event Management included the following appointments to ATU events, Cath Jennings as Assistant TD at Troutbeck, Dave Ellis as the appointed TD to the Mauritius event in October, Shaun Shelton as the TD to the Agadir event in Morocco in November.

Our continued concerns relate to the lack of qualified Coaches within our own system, something that is raised year on year. There are some developments that will start to take place in this area for the new season which is a positive step-up from where we are currently, sadly this is the one key area that does require funding and resources and we have touched on this matter regarding Development resourcing going forward and coming sadly, only from the Commercial sector.

I again have to compliment the ongoing assistance and support that we receive from the Zimbabwe Olympic Committee year on year. This coming season will see this relationship continue as we work together towards the African Youth Games to be held in Algiers in July 2018 where Africa Triathlon will hold their qualification event for the Youth Olympic Games to be held in October the same year in Buenos Aires. An exciting time for this group of young athletes.

A noticeable tightening up of Governance is the theme of the Sport & Recreation Commission guided by the energy of the Minister of Sport. Long overdue are these policies and the associated mind-set for sport in Zimbabwe. I am delighted to report that Triathlon Zimbabwe is one of 8 National Federations that are fully compliant with all SRC requirements.

This governance is a critical stepping stone in our relationships with International and Continental Federations, National Olympic Committees and related organisations and most importantly, absolutely vital to our ongoing partnerships with sponsors, new and old alike.

I would like to formally thank my Executive Board and all of the associated sub-committees involved in Development, Selection, Technical, Tour Management and last but not least, our Race Management who make our Sunday events a safe, fair and a happy

**time for our participants and their families alike. Your time and dedication is greatly appreciated by us all.**

**Finally, I have decided to give notice on my tenure as President of this Association effective the next AGM of 2018.**

**Effective 1 May of this year, I accepted a salaried position within the African Triathlon Union as their Continental Coordinator for Events, Technical and Development. I have had to resign my Board position on the ATU for obvious reasons although I am now a co-opted non-voting member of the Executive Board.**

**This position will mean that there will be a conflict of interest particularly in 2018 as the new plans evolve for Africa, I therefore will resign after this next season has been completed.**

**I will not be walking away from Triathlon Zimbabwe in any way and will continue in any way acceptable to the new Board at that time, but I will not be in a position to remain as an Executive Board member.**

**I thank you for your time as we look forward to yet another triathlon season starting in September.**

**RICK FULTON-PRESIDENT, 02 JULY 2017.**