

The Burnsco Trophy A complete History

The Burnsco Trophy was born in the mid 1970's. As Commodore of the North Shore Outboard Boating Club I attended an AGM of the New Zealand Trailer Boat Federation in New Plymouth. Several "Marine Orientated" Clubs in the area held an Annual Challenge which could take the guise of anything from a Fishing Contest to Gumboot tossing to tiddlywinks. This promoted a huge camaraderie between the participants and gave them a strong voice when dealing with the local Councils or other groups. I was most impressed.

Meanwhile back in Auckland's big smoke NSOBC's Club Captain (Ossie Tait) came across a searchlight which he was assured had come from a WW1 submarine. The wire controlled pivoting system was one of the points indicating its authenticity. Rather than see it sold to scrap (it is after all solid brass) Ossie suggested we turn it into a Club Trophy and was very enthusiastic when an "interclub" Contest was suggested.

We called a meeting of the Club Captains of the Federation member Clubs to get their input and all agreed to participate.

The basic rules for the first year were that we would run an Interclub fishing competition to be organised by NSOBC and held at OBC Auckland's facilities. Maraetai Beach and West Auckland Trailer Boat Club were also participants. The fishing area was limited to allow all members (dinghies to launches) to have an equal chance. The winning Club would be the one whose total weight of their biggest 5 snapper was the highest. This in turn meant that they had the job of organising the next year's event (in this case out of Maraetai BBC). Like most new things the day was extremely successful and for many years was held annually - usually in November. Sadly the "family fun" day was turned by some in to a strong rivalry with rule changes allowing larger boats to travel far and wide in search of "the big ones" which tended to defeat the purpose the trophy's inception. Down the years all Clubs have had many changes of Executives and the format originally agreed to have been lost in time. West Auckland TBC was replaced when they closed down and were replaced by the Hibiscus Coast Boating Club.

The Trophy?? It was amazing how flash the searchlight looked after the efforts of a metal polisher-but it still needed a base and to this end North Shore boat builder John Rae donated his time and talent to create the base it now stands on. Likewise we needed it named and the sponsor of the NSOBC's "King of the Gulf" public fishing contest Burnsco agreed to sponsor the Trophy and cover any costs.