

7th May 2017

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***Life Membership & Meritorious Awards presented by  
Dr Warwick Darcey, Chair Honours Committee at the  
GymSports NZ Annual General Meeting, Basin  
Reserve, Wellington***

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*On behalf of the Honours Committee of Life Members Martin Gotz, Tony Quirk, Mike Ranger, Marie Stechman, Margaret Woolf and myself I have pleasure in presenting to this meeting three individuals for major awards.*

*Our first recommendation is that Life Membership be conferred on an individual in recognition and appreciation of selfless, distinguished and/or innovative service to Gymsports New Zealand.*

The nominee and I first appeared on the national stage as provincial delegates at a Council meeting in 1979, and whereas I only pop out from the shadows once or twice a year, our nominee is still operating on full throttle – running a club, establishing its programmes, coaching gymnasts, liaising with schools and spending virtually every weekend either presenting courses or judging at competitions.

Jane Sheldrake started coaching in 1975 and in 1977 she helped to establish the Hadleigh Homes Junior Competition – the forerunner of our Junior Artistic National Championships. She was an elected member of the Women's Technical Committee from 1984 to 2006 – a term unlikely to ever be exceeded. During that time, she served for two periods as the Technical Director – late 1984 to 1991; 1994-95.

*Making movement matter*

It was a time of significant changes. On Jane's watch, many of them were directed at enhancing the gymnastic experience for the bulk of our competitors – the national stream gymnasts. The levels grading system was introduced in 1991, closely followed by ribbon awards, which provided encouragement and recognition to all competitors, not just the medal winners. Levels cards followed and by mid 1994 the levels badges were in place. Further support for the levels programme was provided following the engagement of a National Coaching Director in the years 1992 to 1996.

Jane was a strong supporter of national stream gymnasts experiencing overseas competition. In the 80's, she was the coach and/or manager with representative teams to several Australian Levels competitions and to the Aloha Gymfest. She was the manager of the critical pre 1990 Commonwealth Games tour to Britain and the World Championships in Stuttgart, judge to the 1992 Sanyo Cup and Head of Delegation to the 1994 Pacific Alliance.

Jane has been a course director and lecturer at our National Gym School and has judged at countless Junior and Senior National Championships; she held an international brevet during the cycle following the Beijing Olympics. She was the driving force behind the transformation of a relatively small club working out of school halls to the highly successful and flourishing Omni Gymnastic Centre housed in a purpose built fully equipped gymnasium and offering an extensive range of gym sport activities to all sectors of the community. It is at the Omni Centre that Jane runs the annual Central Zone Clinic – the country's most successful Women's Artistic clinic, attended by clubs from all over New Zealand.

Jane is a Life Member of the Hawkes Bay Poverty Bay Association and received a Meritorious Award from this organisation in 2000. In 2009, she was awarded Rotary's prestigious Paul Harris Fellowship and in 2012 received a Watties Volunteer of the Year Award.

Jane is a person of boundless energy who has given her heart and soul to gymnastics. She is an ongoing source of inspiration and encouragement for so many people involved in this sport.

Mr Chairman, the Honours Committee recommends to this meeting that the distinguished service of Jane Sheldrake to GymSports New Zealand be recognized by making her a Life Member of this organisation and I would ask you to so move.

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*Committee member Martin Gotz registered a conflict of interest and took no part in the consideration our second recommendation for Life Membership.*

Theodora Gotz – Dido – first became our Women’s Artistic National Champion in 1963. In fact, in the space of seven years, she was our national champion on five occasions – an achievement yet to be matched. She competed at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, at two World Championships (1962 in Prague; 1966 in Dortmund), and at the 1965 Gymnaestrada; in 1969 she was our Gymnast of the Year. At that time, there was just a single award across the then three codes. That record inspired a generation of youngsters, graphically showing them that a young gymnast’s Olympic dream could one day become a reality.

Her standing in the gymnastic community was well evidenced in the 80’s when she was elected to four consecutive terms as convener of the women’s selection committee.

Earlier, Team Gotz had been the coaches with the two NZ gymnasts at the 1972 Munich Olympic Games. Then during the 90’s, Dido was either the manager or judge with teams to six Australian Levels competitions; later in 2000 she judged at the Pacific Schools Games and then managed the team to the 2001 Australian Clubs event.

She started coaching in 1972 and had been involved with the Tristar Gymnastics Club since its formation in 1987. During the 80’s she worked as an administrator with the then Auckland District Association. For many years, she has been the driving force behind the ongoing success of the Auckland schools gymnastics competitions and must have been gratified to see the reinstatement in 2000 of the National Secondary Schools Championships after an absence of over 30 years.

Further, she has judged nationally since the early 70’s, consistently officiating at competitions in the greater Auckland region and in neighbouring provinces across the full spectrum of events, from Incentive Awards, novice events and schools competitions through to provincial Championships. And of course at Nationals, there even when not on an official panel she can be seen, pad in hand, judging a routine, comparing her assessment with that of the panel, honing her skills.

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Dido holds a 20 year service award and in 2002 received an IOC Volunteer of the Year Award.

In summary, she has been deeply involved in all aspects of gymnastics for over 60 years – either as a competitor, a coach, a judge, an administrator, a team official or a mentor.

Throughout she has been an outstanding ambassador for our sport.

Mr Chairman, the Honours Committee recommends to this meeting that the distinguished service of Theodora Gotz to GymSports New Zealand be recognized by making her a Life Member of this organisation and I would ask you to so move.

*Our final recommendation is that a Meritorious Award be made to an individual for service to Gymsports New Zealand that warrants recognition beyond that provided by service awards.*

Gareth Brettell was appointed to the Mens Sport Development Committee (SDC) in 2008, becoming its chairman in 2010. Earlier, he had been a GymSports NZ representative at two Australian Levels Championships, three Trans Tasman challenges and at the 1999 Peter Vidmar Invitational.

During his time on the SDC, he has provided assistance to coaches in exercise composition, officiated at novice competitions and been active in judge education – delivering courses, developing resources to support them and mentoring younger judges. He was the instigator of the MAG Apparatus Challenge which has proven to be a very popular addition to the men's competition programme and he has been instrumental in the implementation, administration and promotion of the current men's high performance programme – MAG 360.

Gareth's judging career started nationally in 2000. He has officiated regularly at our GymSports National Championships, undertaking the control judge role on several occasions. He gained his international brevet in 2005 going on to achieve Category 1 status in 2012. Since 2006, he has officiated at 20 major

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international competitions including four World Championships and two Commonwealth Games.

He won the 2011 Sport Auckland Official of the Year Award and in the following year was a recipient of a Prime Minister's Scholarship.

Most significantly, Gareth was an FIG invited judge at both the 2016 Olympic Test Event and the Rio Olympics. As the GymSports NZ announcement noted at the time: "As it is for an athlete, the Olympics represents the pinnacle level of achievement for a judge."

Mr Chairman, the Honours Committee recommends to this meeting that Gareth Brettell's service to GymSports New Zealand be recognized by presenting him with a Meritorious Award and I would ask you to so move.