

STOP PRESS!

Transit Auckland nearly downed Opus in a nail-biting limited overs game at the Onepoto Reserve Oval recently.

Swashbuckling Transit Captain Clive Fuhr led by example, hitting a stylish 20 runs that included two crackerjack boundaries.

Sebastian Reed, wielding his unorthodox willow with menace and cunning, confidently hammered the Opus bowlers for a brilliant 23 runs that included a six and two fours. Transit reached 111 for 6 in 20 overs. Seb also shone in the field taking two sensational catches.

Another on-field star was Sumi (the Grey Fox) Eratne who, despite a crunching finger injury inflicted while going for a brave outfield catch, showed once more that he still has a few more seasons in him at this demanding level.

Based on the performance of young newcomers to the team including Rick Galli (who has still never played the game), Paresh Shingadia, Tom Delaney, Deepak Rama and Mieszko Iwaskow (who brought his soccer ball to the game in error), Transit will remain a force for years to come.

Opus attacked the Transit bowlers from the start of their innings with Peter Mathewson 30 n.o. Despite having to field in the growing evening gloom, Transit's Faazil Hannif had the Opus batsmen on the back foot throughout. He went home with scintillating bowling figures of 2 for 10. Unfortunately, Opus secured the 114 runs to win with 6 balls to spare.

Adam Fuhr (Clive's son) – a late replacement to cover the sick and injured – was voted Man of the Match.

Quick solution for SH1 in Northland

Transit network operations staff swung into action when Mitimiti Bridge in Northland partially collapsed after severe flooding on Waitangi Day.

The bridge on State Highway 1 connects several isolated Northland communities to the rest of the North Island.

Northern Network Operations Manager Joseph Flanagan and Northland Area Engineer Richard Green immediately flew to the flooded area, 40 kilometres south of Cape Reinga, to assess the flood damage.

Within 48 hours a temporary stone crossing connecting the bridge allowed SH1 to reopen. The solution was made possible by specialist consultants and Transit staff brought in to assess the damage.

Emergency work to reinstate the approach to the bridge and specialist work to repair cracks in the bridge piles has restored permanent access for Northland residents.

Transit also repaired damage caused by slips on Cape Reinga Road and State Highways 10 and 12 as a result of the flooding.

As this newsletter went to press, Transit staff were busy again in Northland assessing and repairing damage to the region's state highway network as a result of flooding in March.



Widespread flooding in Northland (left) saw the Mitimiti Bridge (above) collapse.

Hundreds have their say

New Zealanders have had their say on Transit's draft Land Transport Programme (LTP) and 10-year Financial Forecast for 2007-8.

More than 250 submissions from around the country had been received at closing at midday on Friday 30 March. The draft programme proposes Transit's priorities and activities for the state highway network for the year July 2007 – June 2008. Chief Executive Rick van Barneveld says all submissions and feedback provide valuable information for changes and adjustments to the finished programme.

"This is a national planning document and we wanted to encourage people to have their say. It

is adjusted and revised based on information from written submissions and the hearings process, to form Transit's final State Highway Forecast."

The updated State Highway Forecast, when it is published at the end of June, will list projects in the first four years to 2010/11 and a further indicative list of projects for the remaining six years of the forecast.

Transit is particularly interested in feedback on new projects that have been listed in the Programme for the first time, along with the priority in which projects are shown, and planned maintenance. Projects already under construction or committed to construction were not included in the consultation, as this was done during the planning stages for these projects.

The draft LTP has only been amended slightly from

the one published in June last year, following the Government's commitment to a five-year funding guarantee for a package of large projects.

"The five-year plan has provided much greater stability for us to deliver on the 10-year State Highway Forecast," says Mr van Barneveld. "The certainty of Government funding means existing proposals can progress with more confidence. The five-year construction plan will be reviewed in 2008/09 and at the same time be extended to a six-year plan with an associated funding guarantee."

The draft Land Transport Programme and 10-year Financial Forecast is available to view or download on Transit's website at www.transit.govt.nz/planning.

Public hearings will take place at 16 centres throughout New Zealand between 16 and 20 April.

Hiways & Byways

A NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED BY THE AUCKLAND REGIONAL OFFICE OF TRANSIT NEW ZEALAND

APRIL 2007

Dotty about Dotterels



Caspian Tern chick



Pied Stilt chick

The population on the North Shore has recently increased, with the arrival of six fluffy little bundles of joy. The successful hatching of six Northern New Zealand Dotterel chicks in the 2006 - 2007 breeding season marks a milestone in Transit's efforts to protect the endangered species.

Until 2003, the little birds were nesting in what was to become the Northern Busway construction zone. So Transit established the Shore Bird Technical Working Group,



Northern New Zealand Dotterel chick rescued from a man-hole at the construction site

which would make sure someone was looking after the interests of these tiny natives while construction went ahead.

The group, chaired by ecologist Dave Slaven, includes a leading NZ dotterel expert and representatives from the Department of Conservation, Auckland Regional Council, and the Ornithological Society of New Zealand.

The team developed a plan to construct a dotterel-friendly environment at Shoal Bay – complete with five new shell banks to give the birds the best possible breeding environment. Busway construction work was carefully programmed to cause least disruption to the birds during their breeding season. The new area is not just protected from construction, but also from predators and other dangers.

Most recently, in response to the growing number of NZ dotterel pairs coming to Shoal Bay to breed, Transit has changed some of the landscaping to provide additional safe nesting sites alongside the Busway.

If nests are found within active areas of the construction zone, they are either protected or relocated to Auckland Zoo for hatching. Once fledged, the juveniles are released back into the wild at known dotterel flocking sites.

Now the team's efforts have come to fruition, with the successful hatching of not just dotterel chicks, but also Variable Oystercatchers and Caspian Terns.

The working group is confident that the Shoal Bay population of NZ dotterels will continue to grow and make a valuable contribution to the long-term survival of this endangered species.

SH20 Pedestrian Bridges keeping communities together



Mt Roskill MP Phil Goff crosses the Keith Hay Park pedestrian bridge, flanked by local students.

Two new pedestrian bridges have been opened in Mt Roskill recently, to the delight of local school principals and students.

Auckland's first cable-stay pedestrian bridge was opened in mid-February, spanning the SH20 extension from Keith Hay Park to the grounds of Mt Roskill Grammar School. It is expected to be used by up to 2000 pedestrians and cyclists every day.

Students from Mt Roskill Grammar, Intermediate and Primary schools were the first to cross the Keith Hay Park bridge, after the official opening by Peter Spies and Mt Roskill MP Phil Goff.

Featuring a 4.2m wide deck supported by 12 cables secured at the top of a 25m central pylon, the bridge's unique cable stay design is visually appealing as well as practical, with the wide path allowing shared use by cyclists and pedestrians.

The northern approach to the bridge starts in the grounds of Mt Roskill Grammar School on Somerset Road, leads up to the main crossing over the motorway and finishes down a circular ramp to meet an existing path in Keith Hay Park.

In March the second pedestrian bridge over SH20 was opened. Ernie Pinches Bridge was named in honour of one of Mt Roskill's borough councillors and Deputy Mayor for 33 years. The bridge allows students from Wesley Primary and Wesley Intermediate schools to cross SH20 from Richardson Road and is expected to carry 500 pedestrians a day.

"These bridges provide a safe and direct link across the Southwestern Motorway for local residents and school students," says Regional Manager Peter Spies.

Staff see new side to bridge

Transit staff recently saw another side of the Auckland Harbour Bridge, when Regional Administration Manager Shona Hutchinson offered tours over and above the iconic Auckland structure for staff.



Flags are flown from the bridge to commemorate national days of other countries



Looking out over the city from the top

New Esmonde Road motorway connections



The complex system of looping roads, bridges, tunnels and bus lanes that make up the new Esmonde Road interchange is almost complete, bringing improved connections between the Northcote, Takapuna and Devonport communities and safer pedestrian and cycle access to AUT and surrounding areas.

The \$42M interchange, which began construction in 2004, includes an underpass for a two-way busway and a new bridge that was built over live motorway traffic. In total six bridges were constructed as part of the interchange.

In addition to being a vital component of the Northern Busway, the interchange improves

connections for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists by enabling east to west cross-city movement, northbound access to the Northern Motorway from Akoranga Drive and Esmonde Rd and a southbound off-ramp from the motorway.

During construction the team faced a variety of challenges. These ranged from the physical challenge of constructing a road on top of soft, coastal mud flats to the environmental challenges posed by the need to protect endangered coastal bird species.

The team developed solutions as unique as the challenges of the site. For example, to combat the sinking caused by the mud, they made use of lightweight polystyrene fill to add buoyancy underneath the road.

"We even had to compact an old rubbish dumping site from the 1960s," says Mark Johnson, Senior Project Manager. "This held a risk of volatile gases seeping into the air, so we used special lighting cables and connections to reduce the risk of igniting the gases."

The area has now been landscaped and planted, leaving little sign of its subterranean challenges.

The interchange will be officially opened in mid-May, with the rest of the Northern Busway scheduled to open in early 2008.

New Appointments



From left to right: Neil Cree, Tom Delaney, David Greig.

Neil Cree has recently begun work as Senior Transportation Planner in Transit's Auckland office.

Neil has a degree in Mathematics and a Masters in Transportation and Engineering from Salford University, Manchester.

His first job for Transit is to manage a study looking at the future roles of SH1 and SH16 between Auckland and Wellsford including public transport, cycling and land use as well as roading.

Neil and his partner have lived in Auckland since they arrived from Edinburgh in July last year. They have recently had their residency application approved and are planning to buy a house.

As a graduate engineer on Auckland's Waterview Connection project, **Tom Delaney** is looking forward to working with the consultant team to help design and develop the Western Ring Route.

Since graduating with a Masters Degree in Civil Engineering from Warwick University, Tom has worked in general construction as a project manager and site engineer in central England.

Outside of work hours Tom likes to stay active. He plays hockey and intends to take up other outdoor activities such as sailing, biking and snowboarding.

David Greig joins Transit as a Senior Resource Planner in the Auckland office.

David has worked on road and rail projects in Auckland and the Waikato, as a field geologist in the South Island and Australia and completed short assignments in Tonga and the Cook Islands.

With a BSc in zoology and geology, a master's degree in marine geology and a diploma in engineering geology, David brings unique qualities to his new role.

David is also active in maintaining his Cook Island heritage, although he was born in Auckland and supports Auckland "in most things."



Mark Newsome has recently been appointed as Graduate Engineer in the Auckland Network Operations team.

Mark completed a Bachelor of Engineering (Civil) at the University of Auckland. To further his specialist knowledge

he is now starting a part-time Master of Engineering Studies in Transportation.

Mark enjoys fitness pursuits. He cycled in the Rotorua-Taupo 100k flyer in late March and is training to run in the Rotorua Marathon at the end of April.



Yujun Luo has recently joined the Northland office in Whangarei as a Graduate Engineer. He is a recent graduate with a Bachelor of Civil Engineering from the University of Auckland, majoring in transportation and structural design.

He is currently writing a report on the health of the roading network and conducting the monthly maintenance audit of Northland state highways.

In his spare time Yujun plays tennis and table tennis, swims and plays the guitar. He returns to Auckland each week to meet up with friends.

Who are those people on the 16th Floor?



Vincent Lin, Peter McCombs, Leon Wee and Graham O'Connell monitor Auckland's traffic with the help of camera footage rotating on large television screens at the front of the control room.

Far above Queen Street's traffic, in a bright room on the 16th floor, a team of engineers monitors the ebb and flow of Auckland's traffic. Their CCTV cameras zoom in on rush-hour queues as they form, and analyse the changes in motorway traffic movements.

Operational management of the unit is in the hands of Mike Daley and Graham O'Connell. They are key members of the development team led by Travel Demand Project Director Peter McCombs.

"We concentrate on daily traffic flows," says Peter. "This is different to the staff at the ATTOMS unit at Northcote Point, who focus on incidents and unusual events that may affect the traffic."

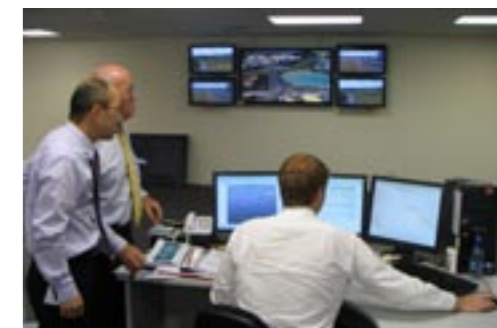
If the ATTOMS staff notice any faults or technical breakdowns in the signal system, they contact the operators on the 16th floor who attempt to isolate and fix the problem.

The operators are assisted in their efforts by a set of high-speed algorithms that calculate traffic flows at 30-second intervals. The data

for the algorithms is gathered by a series of monitoring loops under the road surface, which detect how quickly the traffic is moving and whether queues are forming.

The calculations are especially important for the newly installed ramp signals, where a variance of a tenth of a second in a red-light phase can be the difference between smoothly running traffic and frustrating queues.

"It takes about a month to calibrate each set of ramp signals," says Peter. "During that time the monitoring needs to be very intensive and the operators are vital in keeping everything moving. But we balance that with the need to monitor all the other traffic in the region and make sure the whole system is running smoothly."



Vincent, Peter and Graham review daily traffic counts.