



BMRC Newsletter – January 2022

Summer is here and a new competitive rowing season is well underway. Happy New Year to all!

From the President

I begin this newsletter by reflecting on the passing of ACT rowing personality Rodney Palmer. Rodney had been connected with a number of clubs in the ACT, and most recently called BMRC home.

To quote from the Rowing ACT Facebook page:

‘Rodney was a boat race official, coach, and mentor within our community. He has coached many junior rowers within the ACT, and helped them learn and love the sport. Rodney was the recipient of the Cliff Hills Trophy for the 2020/21 season, in recognition of his contribution to Rowing ACT. His sense of humour and cheerful demeanour never failed to brighten the moods of those around him and he was always willing to share guidance and support to any who asked. ‘

As I mentioned in a Club e-mail, friends and fellow rowers are invited to a **memorial for Rodney at the grassed area next to the Canberra Girls Grammar Rowing Club (please see the attached image) at 10 am on Sunday 23 January, for a 10.15 start**. There will be some short eulogies and flowers placed on the Lake, where he spent so much of his time. It is expected to take about half an hour. You may wish to bring chairs and snacks and stay awhile to enjoy the venue. [Venue location](#)

BMRC held its AGM at the shed on Saturday 30 October. As part of the AGM, I gave an update on the proposal from John and Jeanette Gasson to build a new larger Big Red Shed for BMRC located next door to the Radford Rowing shed.

The generosity of John and Jeanette is a tremendous opportunity for BMRC to move into a new shed, while retaining the current shed as a valuable asset. While an agreement between BMRC and the Gassons was previously in place to support earlier plans for a new shed, this agreement has lapsed as a result of difficulties with approvals. I would like to thank John and Jeanette for their continued persistence in pursuing this opportunity for BMRC with a revised proposal and plans.

The Committee will carefully consider the proposal from the Gassons, and may call an Extraordinary Meeting of the Club if warranted.

The AGM also accepted the Financial Statements as presented by BMRC Treasurer Kate Freebody. Kate reported an operating surplus for FY20/21 of \$27, 509; net assets \$703,295, and 139 members. The bottom line is that the Club is viable and is in a sound financial position.

As part of the AGM a new Committee was elected:

I started rowing as a junior here in Canberra and then picked it back up when I moved to Sydney a couple of years later. Whilst in Sydney, I raced in most boat classes, initially in grade and then later in masters regattas, and enjoyed both the shorter races as well as getting involved in some of the head racing. After being away from rowing for almost 10 years, I've been talked back into the boat and am now trying to get used to it all over again.

- President – Leigh Gordon
- Secretary – Judith Abercromby
- Treasurer – Kate Freebody
- Captain – Ian Mongan
- Vice Captain – Jenny Simmons
- Committee members – Dave Nash (Safety Officer), Alistair Gregory, and Leslee Hodgson (Covid Safety Officer)

As I stated at the AGM, I very much appreciated the efforts of outgoing Committee members Mary Bonney and Alex Leitch, and I thanked the new Committee for taking the time to volunteer.

At the first Committee meeting, David Nash kindly volunteered to be the BMRC Safety Officer – and he would appreciate the support of a couple of Lieutenants to help him with the responsibilities. If you have an interest in safety, and would like to help David, then please get in touch with the Committee.

See you around the shed,

Leigh Gordon
President

Main points from Committee meeting – November

- The planning approval process for the new shed continues. The National Capital Authority has conducted a Public Consultation about the shed proposal and will hopefully approve the works in early 2022.
 - A link to the NCA Consultation is as follows:

<https://www.nca.gov.au/consultation/block-11-section-67-acton-black-mountain-peninsula-community-rowing-facility>
- Planning has started in earnest for boat transport to the Australian Masters Rowing Championships (to be held in Perth in May 2022). ACT clubs are aiming to send one (large) boat trailer to Perth, which should keep transport costs to a reasonable level.
 - Club members who are intending to race at the AMRC were asked to pay a transport deposit by **31 December** – so get onto that pronto if you haven't done so already.
 - A Club working bee and boat naming ceremony will be held in February 2022. Keep **Sunday 13 February 2022** pencilled in for this event. [The date will be confirmed closer to the day.]

From the Captains

Boat damage and repairs

There have recently been a few cases of damage to boats not being reported. We can't fix problems we don't know about and you won't be shamed if you report it – accidents happen! So please report any boat damage or repairs that are needed, by either using the 'Repairs Book' (on the table in the Club room) or by contacting Ian or Jenny.

Boat maintenance – wash your boat with love and care

The more love you show when washing our boats, the longer they will last.... and the better shape they will be in for the next user.

Washing your boat at the end of a session is never something that should be rushed. Take your time to do it properly and look for wear or damage that can be repaired before it becomes a major issue.

Dirt and grit inside the boat is far worse than a scum line on the hull. The scum line can be easily removed, and won't really damage the hull, whilst grit off your shoes is like sandpaper on the rails and duck poo on the seats is a major health hazard to all Club members.

Use water and detergent to wet and wash all surfaces, inside and out, on your boat. Pay particular attention to the rails and deck, then the foot well in front of and behind the foot stretcher. Once you have soaped up all surfaces, rinse them off with the watering can. Job done.

Use a clean chamois to dry the hull paying particular attention to the washboards and the bow and stern canvasses. Water left here will stain these surfaces with the impurities left behind so make sure you wipe it all off.

Safely rack your craft and give yourself a big tick for doing your bit to care for our wonderful fleet.

Coaching Corner - Finding Speed (with Philip Winkworth)

Regardless of your skill level, finding more speed is the common goal of everyone on their journey through our sport. This is because speed is the hallmark of efficiency and the measure by which we all ultimately come to be judged.

Where then do we find this elusive commodity and how can we get more of it for only a little extra effort? The obvious answer to this question is to row with better people. That way you get a free ride. Failing that, you could think about losing weight or finding a lighter boat. Yeah..... nah.

Seriously though, here are a couple of suggestions for you to look at:

1. Get a coach. You only *think* you are rowing well. Srsly, get a coach. You can't do it from within the boat. Fortunately, your coach doesn't need to come with an Olympic pedigree, although so much the better if they do. All your coach needs are a smartphone and preferably a tinny licence. Simply have said coach take video and stills of your crew in action, share the files with everyone, watch frequently, and repeat in 1 week to assess the change. Everyone can do this.

2. Do the Drills. Drills build skills. If your program is to just go out there and visit the dam wall and the white poles, then sack your coach (see above) and change your program. Drills are more than just a party trick. They become the spice of your outings and the measure of your skill. They will challenge you and find your weakness. Pick just a couple of drills and commit to mastering them completely. Watch the NTC crews training. They all do drills. Would they waste their time on this stuff if it didn't help?
3. Have a clear understanding. To improve, you first need to know what good rowing looks like. YouTube is your friend here. There are countless hours of top-class videos just a click away (including on Decent Rowing, to which the Club now has a subscription) so grab your crew, order the pizza, and settle in to watch the best of the best. On the way you will improve your eye for good rowing, and this will help you agree upon which aspects of your stroke you are going to work on. Don't believe that you can find speed sitting on the couch eating pizza? Try it.
4. Get strong. This one is for the keen beans. You need to get off the couch for this one. Join a gym, buy some weights, and start carefully. Forget about hypertrophy, power, speed, or endurance. Strength is the foundation for all of these, and it is the one thing you can't properly develop in a boat. Being strong also has other benefits such as increased bone density, reduced risk of falls and lots of admiring glances at the beach. What exercises should you do? Start with the 'core 4' of squats, dead lift, bench press and bench pull. Five sets of five repetitions is a good place to start.
5. Row cleanly. Forget the rest, this one's the biggie. If you can't row cleanly from the finish of one stroke to the beginning of the next, then there's no amount of video or drills that will find the speed you lose through dirty rowing. Clean rowing is the essence of what we do. It's where the joy comes from, and it separates the players from the wannabes. To acquire this skill, you need to know how to make it happen, see point 3 above. You also need a laser like insistence that any dirty stroke will never be tolerated. In sculling, one oar on the water at a time is perfectly OK. No points deducted. If both oars are on the water at once, then you need a good excuse. Lower your hands and find the balance.

So there you have it. A few simple suggestions guaranteed to help you go faster without the pain and misery of rowing into the red fog. Try just one or try all of them. Either way, don't keep doing the same old same old and hoping you will get better. You know better than that.

Upcoming Events 2022

January

23 January	Farewell to Rodney Palmer	Canberra Girls Grammar Shed
29 January	CLRC Sprint Regatta	Lake Burley Griffin

February

5 February	ANU Boat Club Regatta (standard)	Lake Burley Griffin
13 February	BMRC Working Bee (TBC)	BMRC Clubhouse
19 February	Canberra Grammar Regatta (standard)	Lake Burley Griffin

Shout Outs

- Frank Briggs and Darrell Ninham for helping to get the BMRC tinny motors serviced
- Darrell Ninham for also constructing new trolleys for the BMRC tinnies
- Paul Williams for donating a Club subscription to the Decent Rowing online resource

New Member Profile

Rebecca Storen has recently joined the Club. On request, Bec offered these few modest words about herself....

I started rowing as a junior here in Canberra and then picked it back up when I moved to Sydney a couple of years later. Whilst in Sydney, I raced in most boat classes, initially in grade and then later in masters regattas, and enjoyed both the shorter races as well as getting involved in some of the head racing. After being away from rowing for almost 10 years, I've been talked back into the boat and am now trying to get used to it all over again.

From the Editor

Newsletters are published roughly once per month after Club committee meetings. Short articles or photos about Club life are always welcome for inclusion, or suggestions for content. Please contact me on 0417668916 if you would like to send in a contribution. Regards, Leslee