



# COMMERCIAL ROWING CLUB

## Pre AGM 2015 BULLETIN

The club is busy and humming with lots of members getting on the water and enjoying great water and fabulous company.

### Crews and Squads – what's a'happnin!

#### Open Program:

- Our Open high performance members including Maddie Edmunds, Harley Moore, Darcy Wruck, Adam Bakker and Charlotte Travers are all at the QAS which rows out of Terrace shed at Oxley Creek. Everyone is training for national selection and is also in the current Queensland squad for their respective categories. While Maddie's quad has qualified for the Olympics next year, the crew has to go through the selection process to continue to row in that boat at the Olympics. Trials are currently being held with the first round of selections occurring in December. Good luck to all our athletes.
- Also out of state are Adam Kachyckyl who is training in Tasmania and is seeking to represent Commercial at next year's State and National Championships;
- Jacinta Edmunds is studying and rowing in the USA at the Uni of California and rowed for Australia in the U23 World Championships;
- In addition to these athletes, we have a number of open athletes who are working towards boating a Commercial mens eight at the State Championships early next year. Some of these men are currently training in Bill O'Chee's Yarra eight and will continue to work with Gary Lynagh, Noel Langton and Bill after November.
- A couple of our senior women, Fleur and Christine are also seeking State representation in the Queens Cup at Nationals next year. A phenomenal effort for two women who ably compete against women half their age for selection.

#### School programs:

- Peter Toon has a squad of schoolgirls currently training 3 mornings a week with also a gym and erg session at the club. Peter's squad, with assistance from Noel Johnson are coaching the girls in preparation for some of them to travel to New Zealand for their annual campaign including rowing competition and sightseeing. They plan to attend the Qld State championships in January and continue onto Nationals in Sydney in March of next year.
- Dave Dancer has a squad of St Aidans schoolgirls who are training and aiming for selection in the Schoolgirl Eight next year. The girls will be attending various regattas including States and Nationals. They are at the club 3 mornings a week rowing mostly in singles and you will also see them in the gym.
- The CRC Senior Schoolgirls Off-season program has coach John McGuinness with assistance from others, and this squad rows from the shed on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Their aim is to improve their technical and race ability to improve their place in boats in next year's schoolgirl season.

- Sunday mornings at 7am sees approximately 30 junior schoolgirls from various schools enjoy rowing and gain more skills in preparation for next year's school season. They will primarily be rowing small boats and quads at that time and are being coordinated by Lachie Balfour and John McGuinness.

#### Masters Program:

- Head of the Yarra
  - Three men's crews and two women's crews are training for the Head of the Yarra on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November in Melbourne.
  - Brian Parmenter is coaching two male crews and Bill O'Chee the other, 'slightly' younger crew.
  - Bill O'Chee is also coaching one of the female crews and the other is being coached by the coaching consortium of Jo Cook, Mary Fenn, Jen Hart and Penny Dixon.
  - All crews are on the water at least twice weekly and are also doing ergs. Some crews are also doing gym and yoga sessions.
- Transition and post-corporate regatta rowers
  - Steve Monkman is our sterling Learn-to-Row coordinator who teaches new rowers the basics of our fine sport, with 4 - 5 LTR courses per year
  - We also have many enquiries from rowers who have been bitten by the rowing bug in corporate regattas and wish to continue their journey to greater skill and enjoyment
  - Following on from the LTR sessions and corporate regattas, we are now finding that we need to have a more formal process to introduce new rowers to be more independent on the river and to be very aware of the inherent risks of rowing on the Brisbane River.
  - At present we have transition sessions on Mondays, Fridays and Saturdays
  - Any coaching assistance that you can offer with these groups would be gratefully appreciated
- Thursday mash-up for women and some honorary women
  - a great initiative from Barb Hall has seen many newer female rowers get to row with some of our more experienced members
  - the idea is to expose less experienced rowers to those who can provide some in-boat coaching
  - this has been coordinated by a group of supportive members and has been shown to be really well received

#### **Some serious stuff - Commercial's future direction:**

It must be noted that some members have expressed concern at what they see as a diminishing of Commercial's previous standing as one of Australia's most competitive clubs and home to a significant high performance program.

A number of factors have impacted on the club necessitating a review and critical analysis of our position in the Queensland and Australian rowing community.

These factors include the move by Rowing Australia to isolate their representative athletes in training venues away from their home clubs. This has meant that our most recent national and international representatives are not rowing out of Commercial but either at QAS in Tennyson or interstate. Thus with our athletes away from the club, there is no sense of an active 'high performance' program.

The other issue is that athletes in the top end of the school rowing community appear to lack the drive to continue to row after school – perhaps due to being trained hard during their school

campaigns. Also importantly we must recognize that Brisbane has a small pool of talent and there are at least 3 other clubs on the river vying for their membership.

We have found that the other major impact has been the rise of the 'professional' high performance coach. If we are to 'attract' high performance athletes it is our assessment that we require a coach with pulling power and that would require a significant financial commitment by the club over a number of years.

In order for the club to contemplate such financial commitment we must have a regular and sustainable income source. We have found over the past three years that despite all efforts, it has become impossible to undertake a corporate regatta through lack of interest in the business community to fund such activities for their employees. Other fund-raising activities have been considered however have been found not to be reliable or particularly successful. Importantly we must be financially responsible to the whole of our membership to ensure the ongoing robustness of Commercial for many years to come and not over-commit to the detriment of our continuation.

In taking these factors into account a great deal of time and effort has been spent on clarifying, developing and consolidating the strategic direction for the club over the next five years.

We have found that we have existing resources within the club ie coaches and equipment to meet the needs of junior rowers – those that are at school. Over the past 3-4 years we have successfully provided rowing programs for both boys and girls resulting in a percentage of those rowers returning in following years. In addition we have established connections with school rowing coordinators who are actively encouraging their athletes to be part of the club and row for Commercial.

We believe that this framework affords us the best opportunity of establishing a sense of belonging and hopefully loyalty, with the junior athlete who will then want to continue their rowing journey with Commercial. As we gain numbers and momentum we will encourage some of our older high performance athletes back to row when possible. We will be encouraging and supporting former high performance coaches back to the club to assist our club coaches with further development and nurturing the youth development program.

While this strategy may not immediately satisfy the desire for an active 'high performance' program, we believe that establishing strong connections with our young members now will bear fruit in 3-4 years time and into the future.

**To all owners of private equipment such as oars and boats, please note the following:**

With numbers growing and space becoming a premium in the Commercial shed, the committee is undertaking an audit of all private equipment housed within the shed.

To enable this audit to be completed, we request the following:

- That all owners of equipment including boats and oars, identify their items with your name and mobile number;
- Please do this by clearly sticking a label on your boat and or oars in an easily accessible place when the item is racked;
- A Dymo label maker will be available at the shed for this purpose
- A paint pen is also available for this purpose

If you are unable to come to the shed to do this, please send me the details of your equipment and I will label the items.

We request that the labeling of equipment be **completed by Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November.**

Please note that after that time if any items are not labeled, attempts will be made to contact the last known owners.

After an additional month, if all reasonable attempts to contact the owner has failed, the equipment will be housed or used as the Committee sees fit.

**Boat usage:**

For those singles where the identified owner does not use the boat regularly, the Committee will be requesting that the boat be de-rigged and stored in a manner determined by the Committee. In this instance all riggers will also need to be labeled as well as the boat.

Please contact Jo Cook, Club Captain if you have any queries.

[captain@commercialrowing.com](mailto:captain@commercialrowing.com)

**Annual General Meeting:**

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November at 6:30pm

Come along and have a drink with the Committee, past and present.

If you would like to make a contribution to future newsletters, please contact Jonathon Brett –

[ibandcoptyltd@gmail.com](mailto:ibandcoptyltd@gmail.com)

Future editions will be circulated at least 3-4 times per year depending on the number of contributions made.

