



# Easy Oar

*Newsletter of the Leichhardt Rowing Club  
Issue no. 21  
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## Easy Oar turns 21!

*To the regular and irregular contributors (particularly Onno, Virginia and Margaret and everyone else not singled out!) who so enthusiastically contribute to the newsletter each month in keeping with the well-known LRC club spirit: Congratulations and thank you!*

## Lyall McCarthy's tips for LRC rowers

*Natelle Ball reports on LRC's first guest speaker for those who were not able to hear Lyall's talk. See back page for LRC's next speaker.*

Club members were treated to some seriously expert advice in July with a presentation from Olympic class coach, Lyall McCarthy.

Lyall, the AIS Coach of the Year in 2006, has won more than 15 gold medals at world rowing championships.

He spent more than an hour talking and answering questions about technique: such as posture, breathing, warm up exercises, rhythm and timing, and even gave demonstrations (as best one can off water!).

Much of this time was used to discuss grip, pointing out that this is one of the hardest things for rowers to change, yet one of the most important elements, with most technical faults being due to error in grip. The grip must be loose, no white knuckles, and have the all-important wrist position, especially important for avoiding injury.

He went on to discuss the need to eliminate excessive body rock and the effect going back past vertical has on pushing the boat down into the water. And if your shoulders are ahead of your seat at the last half of the slide, then you have set up the perfect opportunity to maximise the drive on the boat. Lyall jumped on an erg to give a demonstration. He also showed the audience what a 'perfect catch' looks like, as people craned their necks to get a good look.

Definitely one of the more controversial issues he raised was why it is good to bury some of the shaft. He suggested that burying up to 30cm of the sweep shaft would actually give a stronger hold of the water and stronger drive of the boat.

Lyall disagreed with a common technique – that scullers should keep their knees close together. From his experience, he suggested keeping knees in line with the hips and feet instead, as this would provide a stronger row. He gave fantastic advice on how to get full leg drive, showing us how to sustain leg drive at the finish through proper sequencing. He then pointed out the things we often do that actually negate our leg power. His big tip here: at the finish, don't



*Izzy had a personal training session*

think about pulling against the oar, think about pulling against your feet.

The audience was silent when he suggested changes to the typical warm-up routine for technique. He recommended starting with hands only then, for the second step, with the following process – hands away, pause, rock over, pause, stroke, ensuring you maintain full pressure throughout. In his coaching he has found this a valuable exercise to help remove a pause at the catch and prepare a good set up for the stroke. So far, reports back from those who have tried the new warm up are very positive.

After answering our questions, a few lucky attendees even received an impromptu erg tutorial from Lyall, and showed immediate improvement in their drive and timing.

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# Congratulations to our JB Sharp Series competitors

*Virginia van Ewyk's final report on the series*

The last JB Sharp regatta of the season, the Drummoyne regatta, was held in unusually calm conditions on 9 August. Sadly, neither the good weather nor a stupendous effort by our junior rowers could quite get Leichhardt over the line first, with the JB Sharp Memorial Cup for the series going to Tara Boat Club with Leichhardt in second place, just 11 points behind. However, there's still plenty to celebrate with our junior boys winning the Sid Sharp Trophy for Mens Novice and U16 point score (excluding mens novice scull), along with the Kevyn Webb OAM Cup for Mens Novice Scull jointly with Balmain. The junior girls also put in some great performances to come second in the John Sharp Trophy for Womens Novice and U16 races.

Throughout the five-race series, the junior squads, coached by Steve Jaques, Rod Richardson, David Bodell and Stani Slavova, showed great dedication and commitment – rowing three or four

races each regatta and cheerily jumping into boats with a mix of rowers and competing hard. They even boated a mixed eight to finish off the season, racing against the big men of Mosman and Glebe, and beating Balmain into last place. Novice scullers battled their way up the field throughout the series, recording plenty of personal bests, loads of top three placings and some great wins. More experienced racers also achieved consistently



*A study in concentration*

good results in singles, doubles and quads, with the junior girls particularly putting in good performances in the U16 sculls and winning two of the women's novice quad sculls.

In addition to the strong efforts of the juniors, Ross Tout's mens squad was consistently in the mix throughout the series, recording wins in the quad and double sculls, and making a committed effort

## The littlest rower in the club

*Massimo Michael Fitzsimon was born 2 July at 3.9kg, 52cm long, 'a big unit'. Mum and baby are doing well, and Massimo has passed 5kg already. Father says he was a mess for a while, but judging by his smile these days, it's all happiness now.*



*Poppy Cook & Madz Gibson who tested their skills in the WO 2x events at the JB Sharp regattas.*

to race each regatta despite illness, injury and crew changes. We also saw a number of our masters men and women taking to the water, and some of our latest Learn to Row recruits completed their first race at the Drummoyne regatta.

Congratulations to all the rowers and coaches and thanks to the pontoon helpers, parents and supporters who helped at the Leichhardt regatta and throughout the series.



*More JB Sharp action: Above: M14x (L-R) Dayandra Madanayake, Kristian Bodell, Nick Andronikashvili, Leven Andronikashvili (on deck), Steve Jaques, Dave Bodell. Below: WN4x (L-R): Cassandra Kottaras, Ashley Aubeelaus, Imogen Smith, Maddy Smith.*



## The new pontoon is on its way

The new pontoon is on its way – all approvals are in place, and the contracts have been signed with the builder. The pontoon will be installed on 21 September – immediately after the corporate regatta.

## General preparation for rowing

*Stani is providing this rowing advice for everyone, and welcomes questions and comment.*

The general preparation for rowing requires a broad base of physical development. The base is established during the early years of athletic training and emphasised during the preparation period of each training season.

Therefore, the main features of general fitness training must be emphasised.

Mobility training enhances the learning of good technique, decreases the risk of injury and provides an opportunity for better development of strength and endurance; this type of training should commence early and continue throughout the athlete's career.

Strength is a basic physical characteristic that determines performance efficiency in sport; improvements in strength specific

to rowing is dependent on the proper establishment of a base through using general conditioning exercises, particularly during the basic training stage of athletic development and the general preparatory period of the training season.

Endurance is the capacity of the athlete to resist fatigue during applications of work; as a medium term endurance event, rowing requires the specific development of both aerobic and anaerobic capabilities; but, as the aerobic energy system accounts for about 75–80% of the required energy for the rowing race and takes a longer period to be established and maintained, aerobic endurance training must be emphasised throughout the athlete's career.

TRAINING STAGE	BASIC	ADVANCED	HIGH PERFORMANCE
PURPOSE	All-round development.	Improvement of preparatory base and introduction of specific performance factors.	Development and maintenance of specific performance factors.
TRAINING	All-round physical development with emphasis on mobility exercises, aerobic endurance and general strength to promote health and development of various systems and organs. *** Introduction of the basic techniques of the sport as well as elementary tactics and information on rules and regulations.	Improvement of the physical qualities by individualization and specialisation in training. Development of sport specific motor abilities. *** Improvement of the technical and tactical skills under various conditions including competitions.	Highly individualised, specific and competition oriented. There is a maintenance of general motor abilities while specific motor abilities are enhanced. *** Technical and tactical skills are mastered under various conditions.
METHOD	A variety of exercises during 4 to 5 sessions per week and not regimented by a periodised plan.	Exercises are more specialised during the 6 to 8 training sessions per week. The use of a more controlled periodised plan particularly for important competitions.	Training loads are increased during the 8 to 12 or more training sessions per week in a periodised plan designed for a competition, either single or multiple events.

### Lyall McCarthy's talk (ctd from page 1)

Lyall shared his knowledge with LRC (as well as his stories of overseas races, training, injuries, athletes, and that he's personally learned more in the past year than in the previous nine years). More than just do-as-I-say advice, with a focus on positive improvement he explained the rationale behind why we should do a number of things differently to standard convention, and gave us some great tips for improving our rowing.

Lyall's tops tips for LRC:

- sequencing recovery is the key to it
- have the body completely set from the back chocks
- timing should be a ratio of 3:1
- make sure you use effective blade coverage.

### Enough to make you weep -

- after a storm at the U23 World Championships in July



## LRC guest speaker series Rowing technique with Matt Draper Date: TBA

LRC guest speakers: an opportunity for members, your families and partners, to learn more about rowing and to socialise.

Our next speaker is Matt Draper, Operational/High Performance Manager for Rowing Australia. Matt Draper has represented Australia as rower and a coach. He has coached not only Australian crews but European rowers to the World and Olympic Games, and also does a lot work with FISA.

Stani Slavova



Scenes from the maintenance days - many thanks to everyone for their hard work.

## Iron Cove bridge

For the next 12 months at least, construction of the new Iron Cove Bridge will impede navigation as we train.

Tim Clare met with the Inner West Busway Alliance to discuss safety during bridge construction. Note these significant points.

The exclusion zone covers arches 1 and 2 – it will continue for the next 5 – 6 weeks, and then extend to the third arch.

A 4 knot restriction applies to power boats within 150m of the zone. A \$1500 fine applies. Any fines incurred by club members will be the responsibility of the driver.

It is hoped that a construction program will be published giving a minimum one week notice of arch closures. It is anticipated that as few as two arches may be open at various times.

Should there be any unplanned variation from the published arch closures, LRC (Deanna) will be alerted by SMS.

Over the period of the construction program, regattas will not be conducted through the bridge – regattas will be limited to 1000m on the LRC course or 1500m on the UTS course.

It has been requested that lights on the bridge be visible from a distance of 2km, and be placed on the bridge each day highlighting which arches are open for passage.

## The corporate crews start training Sunday 23 August Corporate crews have priority

We welcome our Corporate teams who will begin training on Sunday 23 August in preparation for the Corporate Regatta on Sunday 20 September. The shed and pontoon will become very busy as boat handling and on/off pontoon skills are developed.

Expect a few eights to go out most weekdays at 5 or 5.30 am, and coming back to the pontoon by 7 am.



Leichhardt Rowing Club  
**Corporate Challenge 2009**

## Corporates have priority getting on/off the water.

Our boats are expensive and fragile – keep a lookout for the corporate crews when they are on the water.

Please be encouraging, helpful and assist when needed:

- they might need help or space when manoeuvring the sweep blades out of the shed
- remember that lifting an eight is slow, heavy and precise work so the corporate crew may need assistance or lots of room.
- watch out for blades on the pontoon - are they safe?
- you might see some corporate participants thinking 'it's 5 am, it's cold and dark, what am I doing here?' so be positive!

LRC members: the breakfast is for corporates only! LRC is a great club, but even so, we don't get breakfast.

Any questions?

Call Deanna on 0405508623, or email [wheat5@bigpond.net.au](mailto:wheat5@bigpond.net.au)

## Calling for roving reporters and budding photographers

Do you feel the urge to write? See your name in print? Follow a story? Why not start here? Start your writing career with *Easy Oar* and see where it can take you. Any and all writers, photographers and ideas are welcome. Contact me (Anne, [aparbury@gmail.com](mailto:aparbury@gmail.com)).

A special thank you to all the contributors to this issue: Virginia, Natelle, Stani, Steve, Deanna, Tim and Margaret.

## Diary dates

Sunday 23 August 11am – annual general meeting & festivities

Sunday 23 August - Corporate training begins

Saturday 12 September - Newcastle University regatta, Morpeth

Sunday 13 September - Henley on Hunter, Morpeth

Sunday 20 September - Corporate regatta, SIRC

Monday 21 September - new pontoon arrives

Saturday 26 September - NSW Masters Challenge, SIRC

Saturday 10-14 October - World Masters, SIRC