



Easy Oar

Newsletter of the Leichhardt Rowing Club

Issue no. 14

December 2008 / January 2009

Wishing all members a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year
Your committee

We are a club of volunteers

As we all get tied up in our training and competition routines, we need to remember why we do what we do.

We are a large club with a range of skills, backgrounds, abilities and interests but have one thing in common—we all enjoy being at Leichhardt. A point that many other clubs' members comment on and are envious of, is our ability to run successfully such a wide variety of programs.

But we all need to keep remembering that the current state of the club is the result of much hard work from our many volunteers. Running a club the size of Leichhardt is very complex.

Firstly, we need a vision of what we seek to achieve and remember that a primary goal is to provide a good experience of rowing to the general community. This takes considerable time from our committee members to set the goals and continue to drive the club towards achieving those different goals.

Finance. We need finances to run the club and buy new equipment. We are very fortunate that as a club we have built good cash reserves to invest in the club facilities and equipment. Our cash comes from a number of areas including corporate regatta, subscriptions, learn to row and venue hire. Subscriptions aside, all of these activities take an enormous amount of effort from our volunteers to bring in the revenue that we spend on facilities, equipment and coaching. (Not to mention our very large maintenance and insurance bills each year).

Coaches. We have a large group of junior and senior rowers but a small coaching budget to provide development for our members. Most of our coaching effort is voluntary and is very appreciated, no matter how little or how much time coaches can provide.

Regatta management. Collating and submitting entries for every regatta is an enormous task. A special thanks to Kerry who has been doing this job since Frances went overseas, and is sadly stepping down after the Sprint Regatta. Towing trailers plus organising boat loading and unloading is no easy task. We need more members who are capable of providing management and leadership in these areas.

Boat maintenance. We have a small group of people who regularly maintain our boats. Too many of us do not appreciate the time and effort, not to mention the cost required, to keep our fleet in good if not peak condition. We should all be able to help out in simple ways—just cleaning the boats correctly after training is a good start.

It disappoints me that there has been much criticism recently of the efforts of our (volunteer) Club Captain in restating the long-held club policies of boat allocation and restrictions. The criticism apparently stems from not correctly understanding the principles held here and the benefits to club members in delivering the policy. Most clubs have similar restriction policies to Leichhardts', particularly the 'elite' clubs, examples are Sydney, Sydney Uni and Melbourne Uni. The evidence of the benefit of this type of policy is the two new (three and nine years old) double sculls we purchased from Melbourne Uni last week. These boats were restricted substantially to competition, and as a result are still in pristine condition for competitors.

Finally, remember we are all volunteers who provide as much time as we can spare so the club as a whole has the best experience. The principle applies as much off water as it does in a boat—the more we work together, the further and faster we go and the better the experience.

Tim Clare
President

14th December 2008
Leichhardt Rowing Club
Christmas Party
LEICHHARDT
LRC
ROWING CLUB
1886
lets get physical!
90's aerobics

Come to Santa's Sprint
Details - back page

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Taking care of boats—in words and pictures Charles Bezzina

LRC participates in so many regattas, and has so many members competing that we transport many, many boats over long distances. Here's how we can strap boats securely onto the trailer so they are protected from damage.

Strapping a boat

Boat stress

To put things into perspective, a fast crew can typically move a boat at a speed of 18 km/h. The trailer will easily tow boats at speeds of up to 110 km/h. (For all you budding physicists, we know the force applied to the boat to overcome air drag is proportional to the speed squared. In this case it works out to be 36 times higher). What we all tend to forget is that our boats are designed to be rowed, but they are not necessarily designed to be towed.

Transportation by trailer puts significant stress on a boat. A rowing boat is designed to distribute the weight of its crew over the entire wet surface area of the hull. When we strap a boat to the trailer, typically with two straps per boat or section of an eight, we are:

- concentrating all the strapping forces we apply to the boat to the very small area under the straps, and
- concentrating all the drag forces that the wind applies to the boat over the same very small strapped area.

To minimise the stress that the straps place on the boat hull we need to ensure that the strap's force is distributed evenly and over a wide surface area.

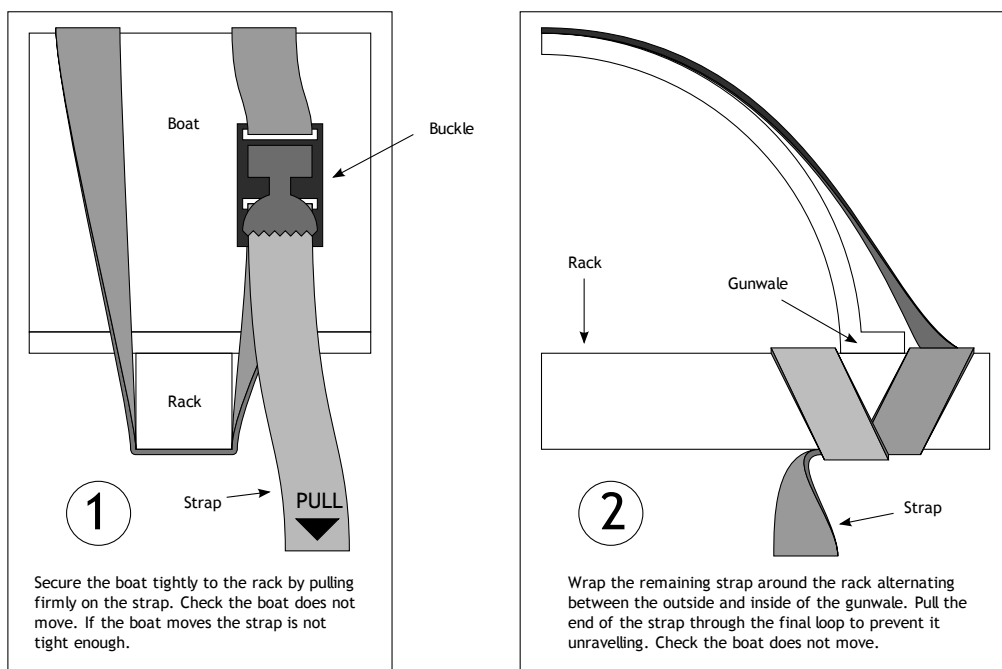
The straps on the hull must be flat, not twisted or folded, and run close and parallel to each other. Twists in a strap are a problem because they:

- concentrate a large amount of force in the small area over the fold, and
- increase the drag forces applied to the trailer.

Securing a boat with the strap

Run the strap over the boat and under the rack, then pass the strap through the buckle making sure the strap is flat and the felt (or soft) side of the buckle is against the hull.

Pull hard on the strap to tighten the buckle—if the boat moves the strap is not tight enough, and you need to pull harder. The boat should be secure.



Recommended method for strapping

Keep the remaining strap short to stop it flapping by wrapping it around the rack, alternating between the inside and outside of the gunwale to prevent a large build-up on one side. Use the last 10 cm to tuck under the last loop to hold it.

All the force that holds the boat to the rack needs to come from tightening the strap buckle, not by tying knots.

Never use the remaining strap to:

- tie knots around the tightly pulled strap that is securing the boat, or
- tie endless numbers of knots over each other to use up the remaining strap.

As straps vibrate in the wind, knots get pulled tighter and the loads they hold get looser—this is why the buckle must provide all the force to hold the boat to the rack. The knot should simply hold the dangling end of the strap so it doesn't flap too much (I've seen knots that have become so tight from vibration that only a screwdriver could undo them).

Wind stress

We reduce the stress that the wind puts on the boat hull when it's on a trailer by running the boats parallel and pointing directly forward. If a boat is crooked, the wind has a larger area to push against. This makes the trailer unsafe as it will swing from side to side when under tow.

Always check that the boat you are strapping is parallel with the trailer by standing in front of the trailer and looking straight down the length of the trailer. If the boat is crooked, align it correctly before tightening the straps.

Washers and how to stack them

When we pull our boats apart, this is how all the parts (nuts, bolts and washers) fit together again.

Nuts, bolts and washers

When we assemble riggers (or any other part of a boat such as the foot stretcher) using nuts and bolts, it is important to use the correct washers, and to place them in the correct position. Tightening nuts without washers will damage the boat and its parts, and using the wrong washers will do even more damage, faster.

There are two types of washers (look in the regatta box). The flat washer is, unsurprisingly, shaped like a flat disc and the spring washer is shaped like a tiny spring—there is a gap, or break, in the disc with slightly curved edges.

These washers serve different purposes and cannot be used interchangeably.

Flat washers

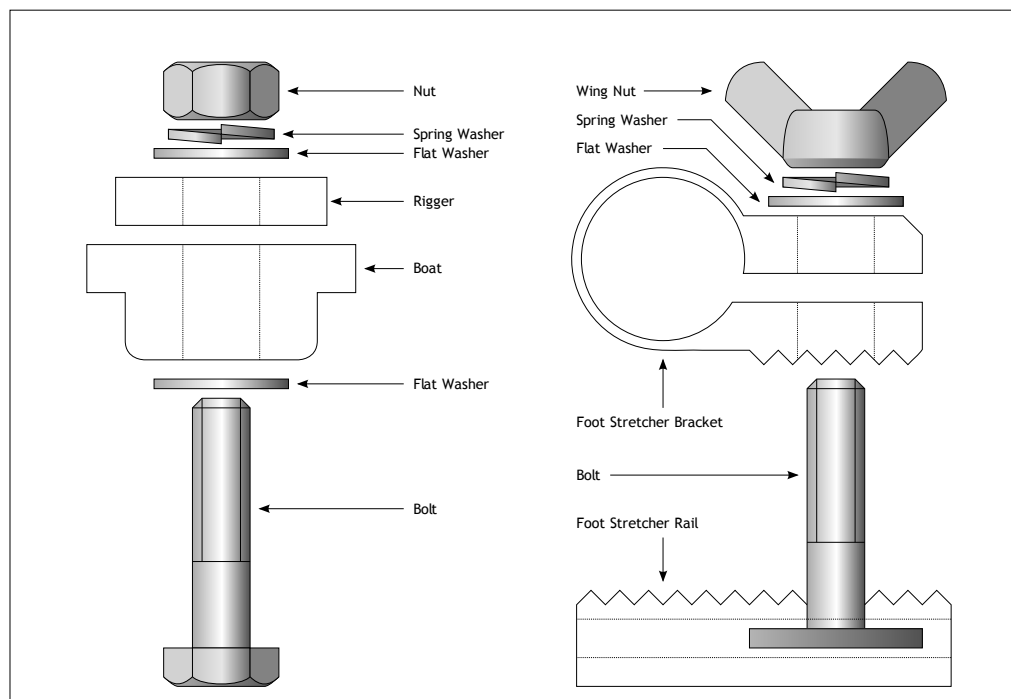
The flat washer protects both the boat and the rigger from the wear brought about by tightening and loosening the nut. It's easy to identify a rigger that has been tightened without a flat washer—the metal surface below the nut is worn.

The flat washer also distributes the force of the nut and bolt over a larger area, reducing the possibility of crushing the boat or its parts.

Spring washers

The spring washer applies a spring force to the rigger and boat, keeping them clamped together despite the large movement caused by rowing. You will have noticed how much the gunwales and riggers flex while rowing, even during light work.

The spring washer also prevents the nut from coming loose when rowing—when a spring washer is compressed, the sharp edges bite into the surfaces that touch it, preventing them from turning.



How to stack washers

This is the rigger and boat killer.

Every time a spring washer is tightened against an aluminium, fibreglass or plastic boat part and then loosened, it removes a significant amount of the boat material. It is easy to identify a rigger that has been tightened with a spring washer but without a flat washer, the metal surface below the nut is very badly worn.

Use a flat washer when you use a spring washer, to protect the boat and its parts—it's essential.

Spring + flat = happy boat

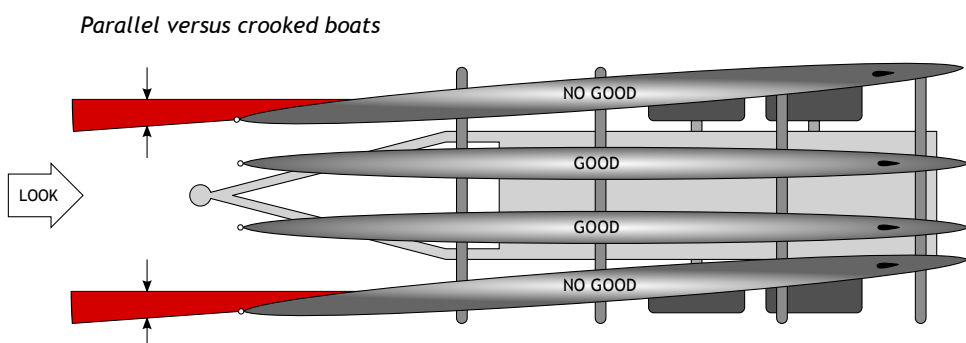
Any washer, regardless of its type or outer size, should have a hole that fits neatly on the bolt. Both flat and spring washers should be the correct hole size for the bolt.

In summary:

- always use a flat washer on both ends of a nut and bolt when assembling parts of a boat
- always use spring washers, they prevent boats from coming apart while they are being rowed
- always use a flat washer to stop spring washers from touching any part of a boat, and
- washers must be the correct size for the bolt.

Check the straps you use to secure a boat—if a strap is visibly damaged, cut the buckle off and throw it away so it can't be used.

A strap with a tear or hole in the weave will fail, and at 110km/h the unsecured boat has zero chance of surviving the fall.



Regattas and more

Onno, our resident photographer, continues his intrepid ways—not only competing in the Head of the Parramatta, but taking the camera along too.



For all those who tangled with the Rivercat on that Saturday, Onno thought this extract from Three men in a boat (Jerome K Jerome 1859-1927) might amuse.

When we got down to the landing-stage, the boatman said: 'Let me see, sir; was yours a steam-launch or a house-boat?'

On our informing him it was a double-sculling skiff, he seemed surprised.

We had a good deal of trouble with steam launches that morning. It was just before the Henley week, and they were going up in large numbers; some by themselves, some towing houseboats.

I do hate steam launches: I suppose every rowing man does. I never see a steam launch but I feel I should like to lure it to a lonely part of the river, and there, in the silence and the solitude, strangle it.

There is a blatant bumptiousness about a steam launch that has the knack of rousing every evil instinct in my nature, and I yearn for the good old days, when you could go about and tell people what you thought of them with a hatchet and a bow and arrows. The expression on the face of the man who, with his hands in his pockets, stands by the stern, smoking a cigar, is sufficient to excuse a breach of the peace by itself; and the lordly whistle for you to get out of the way would, I am confident, ensure a verdict of 'justifiable homicide' from any jury of river men.

They used to HAVE to whistle for us to get out of their way. If I may do so, without appearing boastful, I think I can honestly say that our one small boat, during that week, caused more annoyance and delay and aggravation to the steam launches that we came across than all the other craft on the river put together.

'Steam launch, coming!' one of us would cry out, on sighting the enemy in the distance; and, in an instant, everything was got ready to receive her. I would take the lines, and Harris and George would

sit down beside me, all of us with our backs to the launch, and the boat would drift out quietly into mid-stream.

On would come the launch, whistling, and on we would go, drifting. At about a hundred yards off, she would start whistling like mad, and the people would come and lean over the side, and roar at us; but we never heard them! Harris would be telling us an anecdote about his mother, and George and I would not have missed a word of it for worlds.

Then that launch would give one final shriek of a whistle that would nearly burst the boiler, and she would reverse her engines, and blow off steam, and swing round and get aground; everyone on board of it would rush to the bow and yell at us, and the people on the bank would stand and shout to us, and all the other passing boats would stop and join in, till the whole river for miles up and down was in a state of frantic commotion. And then Harris would break off in the most interesting part of his narrative, and look up with mild surprise, and say to George: 'Why, George, bless me, if here isn't a steam launch!'

And George would answer: 'Well, do you know, I THOUGHT I heard something!'

Upon which we would get nervous and confused, and not know how to get the boat out of the way, and the people in the launch would crowd round and instruct us: 'Pull your right—you, you idiot! back with your left. No, not YOU—the other one—leave the lines alone, can't you—now, both together. NOT THAT way. Oh, you—!'

Then they would lower a boat and come to our assistance; and, after quarter of an hour's effort, would get us clean out of their way, so that they could go on; and we would thank them so much, and ask them to give us a tow.

But they never would.

... boats *Our standard of care meeting a new standard*

The increased focus on boats in the first part of this season had the aim of improving boat maintenance, improving how we care for boats, making sure we are safe when we are in boats, and restricting the use of some boats in an effort to keep our boats in the best condition possible, particularly for regattas.

Unfortunately, this campaign has coincided with what appears to be an increase in damage to the boats, and most unfortunately, a lot of damage to our best and newest boats.

So once again, this is a plea to take care—when in the boats, when moving boats and when cleaning boats. (See pp. 2–3 for tips)

On the brighter side, the club has five new boats (they came back on the trailer from Melbourne after the Head of the Yarra). There are three brand new singles, and a pair and double—both from Melbourne Uni (do they go faster if Olympians have trained in them?). The singles are for the A category rowers, and the pair and the double are filling the gap in the boats available for the B category rowers.

If you don't understand why there is such emphasis on caring for boats and preventing damage, look at the pair (three years old) and the double (nine years old)—they are in better condition than some of our newest boats. This is the standard we are aiming for.

Head of the Yarra 2008

LRC sent a record seven crews to the Head of the Yarra this year, where a good time was had by all as well as a rather long row. There were 180 crews and around 1700 rowers competing in the 8.6 km race, and the winning margin was 0.32 secs. Congratulations to Pymble who again won the schoolgirl A category.

Below, at the start—the starter is in the tower. Right top: the boat sheds nestle the banks of the Yarra near Southbank with Melbourne Uni shed in view on the left, and right below, waiting for the start.



Reminder: Accommodation for the Taree regatta 2009 *Steve Duff*

On behalf of the club I have booked all the rooms at the Jolly Swagman for Friday 16 and Saturday 17, and some for Sunday 18 January 2009.

Accommodation is limited and will be allocated on a first in first served basis. Please email me (steven@cityextra.com.au) by **COB Wednesday 10 December** at the latest with the following info:

- name and a contact phone no or email address
- how many people want to stay (and their full names)
- which nights you want to stay (Fri, Sat and/or Sun nights), and
- any special requests - i.e. four friends together.

Email Steve: steven@cityextra.com.au



L-R: Barry Moynahan on the banks of the Shoalhaven commentating another medal celebration; Barry coaches a group of rowers who seem to spend all their time thinking about breakfast; eating the breakfast with Steve Roll before he decided the call of the west was irresistible.

Two messages from Jane

Learn to row—thank you

The club has been abuzz through October and November with Learn to Row-ers, training squads (including Head of the Yarra crews) and the Pymble camp and RowPerfect regatta.

We had a greater-than-expected number of Learn to Row participants which required extra organisation and management. The program was held later this year due to the pontoon works, which meant it was a tighter fit with regattas and Head of the Yarra training. This year we trialled a new system of two streams which worked very well, and we will be considering other improvements to the program to ensure there is as minimal impact as possible on club members during the Learn to Row time.

I have received a number of very positive comments from participants about the program and coaches. I would like to give a big special thank you to all the Learn to Row coaches, helpers and pontoon-organisers who assisted. We could not have run the program without you.

You should feel proud that you've helped:

- the club raise the most it's ever raised through Learn to Row and recruit new men's and women's novice squads
- members of the public gain an appreciation for our wonderful sport, and
- yourself (I hope) gain a better understanding of your own rowing through coaching others.

Thanks all. I personally, and the committee, very much appreciate your efforts.

Wanted—trailer drivers: we desperately need them!

Can you tow a large trailer? We are often able to lend a suitable car, so if you have the skills and are available please let Jane know (janelouisehutchison@hotmail.com). If we don't have a trailer driver, we can't get the boats to a regatta, and we can't participate in the regatta ... so any help would be much appreciated by all in the club!

Jane

Breakfast with the stars

Kerry Thorn and seven juniors in the junior development program went to a 'Breakfast with the Stars' held by Womensport and Recreation NSW, on 30 October.

There was a presentation designed to motivate young sportswomen by meeting the female sporting heroes from the recent world championships and Olympic Games. The speakers spoke very passionately about their journey to elite level, their successes and triumphs.

The LRC girls came away feeling stimulated, setting short and long term goals with big plans for their future in sport.

There were 50 schools attending. One of the organisers commented that LRC was the only club of any sport who had a table, and they were very impressed that we had the initiative to attend.

LRC breakfast club?

Are any parents or rowers interested in running a breakfast club for the young (and not so young) rowers on weekends?

Would you be interested in contributing, networking and meeting other parents, and ensuring our young athletes eat well after rowing—perhaps we could draw up a roster a roster for the contributions and shopping.

Interested? Email admin@lrc.com.au with your ideas.

REMINDERS:

Email addresses

Make sure your email address is up-to-date, otherwise you will miss out on all the news in admin@lrc.com.au emails.

Boat usage book

Remember to record the boat you use, every time you go out—put it in the boat usage book (on the blue cupboard at the entrance to the shed).

Repairs

If something in the boat wobbles or moves when it shouldn't, doesn't wobble or move when it should, then repair it or find someone who can show you how. Don't ignore problems in the boat—we all know how annoying it is to pick a boat and find it needs repairs someone else should have done.

LRC equipment is for all rowers to use

The majority of LRC's equipment is freely available for all members to use.

Please remember that the equipment must never be removed from the club for the personal or priority use of a club member or crew. This particularly applies to the smaller and more portable items such as:

- cox boxes
- stroke coaches
- two-way radios.

These, as with all other items, must be treated with care.

Property Master

Boat safety course

The Boat Safety Course scheduled for 3 December has been postponed—we will organise a new date in the new year.

Your committee strongly recommends that you do the course so that you can learn the waterway rules. We are making it easy for you to do the course and the exam: the club will pay for both—whenever you do them.

If you can't do the course at the club, you can do it:

- online, at the NSW Maritime website, www.maritime.nsw.gov.au
- watching a DVD/video (one person/licence per DVD), or
- by attending a course run by Maritime or an accredited agency and sitting the exam at any Maritime Office or RTA Motor Registry.

Contributions to Easy Oar are welcome, very welcome
Send them to Anne, aparbury@gmail.com



Above: Waiting for the start of the Head of the Parramatta (in a post-industrial landscape).

Thank you Kerry

After putting in thousands of entries, chasing up and cajoling too many rowers, organising crews and chasing yet again, Kerry has decided it is time for someone else to experience the joy of being regatta secretary for the club.

So thank you Kerry for doing such a great job, chasing us all and getting us on the water.

New regatta secretaries

Dianne Williams and Virginia Van Ewyk have kindly offered to share the regatta secretary role.

Important: New system for regatta entries

Dianne and Virginia are introducing a new system for the club. Please read this carefully, and note the changes.

Dianne and Virginia look forward to working with you to make regatta entries as efficient and stressfree as possible, and welcome your feedback and suggestions for improvements once the new system is in place.

What you will have to do now:

- squad coaches put crews together from their squads
- individual rowers who are not in squads: organise your own crews and nominate a 'crew captain'
- squad coaches and the 'crew captains' email Virginia and Dianne giving them the event name and number for each rower by the cut-off dates (see table below for these dates)
- squad coaches and crew captains check the order of events to avoid clashes for rowers doing multiple events.

Remember to put your regatta entry in, because Virginia and Dianne will not:

- chase you if you don't put an entry in
- accept late entries
- place individual rowers in crews or create crews, or
- chase up squad coaches or crew captains for entries.

Tim Clare will review entries before they are submitted to NSWRA.

Please submit substitutions or scratchings by email to Virginia or Dianne as soon as possible, or in person on the day of the regatta.

Remember—get your entries in on time or you may miss your favourite regatta.

Email Virginia: virginia@vanewyk.com.au

Email Dianne: dwil0780@bigpond.net.au

Deadlines for regatta entries

DAY	DATE	EVENT	TYPE	DISTANCE	LRC CLOSE OF ENTRIES
Sat	17-18/1	Youth Olympics / SIRC	NSWRA	2000	
Note: the entry deadline for the Port Macquarie and Manning River regattas is now 21/12 to allow processing before the silly season.					
Sat 8 am	17/1	Port Macquarie / Manning River	Grade	2000	21/12
Sun 8 am	18/1	Manning River / Manning River	Age	2000	21/12
Sat am	7/2	NSW State Championships / SIRC	State Champs	2000	TBA
Sun	15/2	Host to be determined / Iron Cove	Grade	2000	1/2
Sat 8 am	21/2	Sydney Rowing Club / SIRC	Age/Open	2000	8/2
Mon-Sun	2/3	Australian Rowing Championships / Lake Barrington, Tasmania	Age/Open	2000	TBA
Sat 8 am	7/3	Leichhardt / Iron Cove	Grade	2000	22/2
Sat 8 am	14/3	Kings/PLC/NSWRA / SIRC	Age/Open	2000	1/3
Sun 8 am	15/3	AHIGS/IGSSA / SIRC	Schoolgirl	2000	1/3
Sat 8 am	21/3	Riverview Gold Cup / Lane Cove	School/Age/Open/Grade	2000	8/3

Come and join Santa's Sprint on Christmas morning



Sprint from the Opera House to the Harbour Bridge. It's the only day of the year we can row under the bridge, so come along, bring some Christmas cheer with you and join the fun.

More information will be posted on the noticeboard at the top of the stairs, and you can add your name to the list to book a space. Some tinnies go, as well as the eights and other boats. The race starts at about 7am, so it's an early start at the shed: 5.30 am, and 6 am on the water.

For more information, go to the website (www.lrc.com.au/34.html), and the noticeboard.

Santa and reindeer hats are not compulsory—but they are popular



Dream boat shed, with space for the property master

Tim Tindale sent these photos of a boatshed in Boston (below and right)—I think it means he's angling for a real work area for working on boats.

January rowing camp

The camp at the shed will run from 2–16 January (the Taree regattas are on 17–18 January).

If you are interested in attending, keep an eye on the notice board and add your name to the list when it appears.

Breakfast will be provided, for a small charge to cover costs.

Calling for volunteers

See Rod Richardson if you can help with the coaching or general running of the camp.

Barbara Champman will be running the kitchen, providing breakfast for the participants and is looking for volunteers to help.

More information

Check the notice board at the top of the stairs and the website, www.lrc.com.au/34.html.



Diary dates

- 10 December: email Steve Duff for accommodation in Taree
- 14 December: Christmas party
- 2-16 January: Rowing camp
- 12 January: LRC committee meeting
- 9 February: LRC committee meeting
- 7 March: LRC regatta