



Easy Oar

Newsletter of the Leichhardt Rowing Club
Issue no. 14
October 2008

Notes from the President

Corporates are over, spring is here and a new regatta season is upon us. It is now a good opportunity to outline the club's objectives for the coming season.

In the past three years, LRC has been in the top two clubs in the NSWRA Premiership. The clear goal this year is to win back the pennant from Sydney Uni.

The formula to achieve this is not complicated. We need to have representation at all levels of the club, train and row hard and participate in all point score regattas. It is important that we can focus on both Age and Grade categories if we want to be successful. For last season, the club was very successful at Grade regattas but gave ground to Sydney Uni in the Age Regattas.

The Grade Regatta stream focuses on club rowing development. As a club, we are proud at allowing participation at all levels and at the depth in our membership base.

To support improving results in the Age Regattas, we have started to focus more heavily on a youth development program. Kerry and Frank are developing/ recruiting/ training a strong squad of junior rowers to continue to develop over a five-year program with an end focus of representation at state and national levels. Frank and Kerry will provide ongoing information through the season on the opportunities and development of this squad.

The Corporate Regatta was a very successful event this year. The management team took the event to a new level of professionalism. We are aware that many other clubs and schools are starting to follow our lead in hosting Corporate regattas. This makes it continually more difficult to find participants, particularly in the current economic climate. And more particularly as we are often more expensive than other corporate programs. We believe

we deliver value to the companies that participate through the professional approach we take to management organisation and the friendly spirit of cooperation and participation that the club inevitably generates.

Congratulations and thanks to all who helped, the many coaches, boat repairers, breakfast coordinators, tinnie drivers and regatta helpers. You have made this our most successful event. But particular thanks to Deanna who was the event manager this year. She did an outstanding job in all aspects and the financial rewards for the club are evident. Also thanks to Virginia who published the weekly newsletter including regular crew photographs. This was received extremely well by all companies.

Finally, get into your training and good luck in competition to all crews.

Tim Clare

The ITC TimeTrials



... are continuing – Charles Bezzina navigates the bridge pylons.

RTA work on west side of Iron Cove bridge

The Roads and Traffic Authority will start work on the western side of Iron Cove bridge on Wednesday 8 October and they expect to take six weeks, weather permitting. Divers will work in Iron Cove from 7 am to 6 pm, Monday to Friday.

Watch out for the barge they will use – there will be buoys to guide you.

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Learn to row course starting

We need coaches – if you are able to assist with Learn to Row coaching, please email Jane (janelouisehutchison@hotmail.com).

Invite your friends – Don't forget to let your family and friends know that our Learn to Row program is starts on Saturday. The information and registration session was at the club on 4 October, and the session dates are:

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Sunday 12 October | 2 Sunday 26 October |
| 3 Sunday 2 November | 4 Saturday 8 November |
| 5 Sunday 9 November | 6 Sunday 16 November |

Each session will run in two streams: one from 7–9 am, and one from 9–11 am.



We all know what this feels like ... a moment from the Corporate regatta

Boating licence safety course

Being safe on the water is very important. We strongly encourage people to do the boating licence safety course, particularly if you may drive a tinny. Did you know that you might even be eligible for reimbursement from the club for the cost of the course?

Do I need a boat licence?

You need a boat licence when you drive a recreational powered vessel on NSW waters at a speed of 10 knots or more (the speed at which most accelerating boats will start to plane, i.e. rise up and start to skim the top of the water instead of ploughing through it). So, for our needs you probably don't need a licence, but you might prefer to get one.

What's the safety course?

The first step in getting a boat licence is to complete a boating safety course – and the club is prepared to reimburse you the cost of that course if you are a current financial member of the club, you coach Learn to Row and/or corporate, you successfully complete the course, and you seek pre-approval from the Club Captain. You can do the course online, by DVD/video, or in person at Balmain Leagues Club at 9 am on Saturdays 11 and 25 October (see www.maritime.nsw.gov.au/boatingsafety.html).

The Club takes safety very seriously and is supporting members to do the same.

Work in Iron Cove *ctd from page 1*

They will be working from a barge, digging trenches on the western side of the bridge to check where the cables are.

They say they will be careful: they will not remove any sediment from Iron Cove, and will place a full depth silt curtain to contain it should it spread.

Row safely!

For more information:

Victoria_Road_Info@rta.nsw.gov.au

Pontoon news:

Keep a watch – it's happening.

Here's how the barge arrived ...



With thanks to the balcony photographers - Dean, Steve and Onno.



and it's business as usual around the works.

The 2008-09 regatta calendar and the revised RGS for Grade regattas

The 2008-09 season is divided into monthly pre-Christmas, and fortnightly post-Christmas, regatta rotations. Pre-Christmas regattas are a regular rotation of Time Trials, Age/Open regattas, Distance Events, and Grade regattas. The post-Christmas regattas will be a regular rotation of Age/Open and Grade regattas.

The rotation offers regular racing for athletes who want to compete in either the Age/Open or Grade regatta streams, although it's possible to race in both.

NSWRA expects the two streams of competition to reduce the number of competitors in any one regatta so they will no longer finish as late.

Age/ Open regattas

The Age competition promotes elite athlete development. The continuation and strengthening of Age racing in regattas was requested particularly by clubs for junior and youth development programs. The Age-based regattas are designed for developing crews who want to compete at State and National Championships and Selection regattas. Age racing also incorporates Masters Competition. In each Masters age division there are quite diverse abilities, so the Grade System may be more attractive.

The Age/Open competition allows composite crews.

Grade regattas

Grade racing is targeted at club development. The aim is to accommodate differing participation and ability within each club, and to promote athlete development in a system that allows different standards of rowers to form a crew from within the club.

This is seen as a more equitable way of promoting participation and allow closer competition between rowers of similar ability.

Grade competition supports club development programs, and allows more flexibility in putting crews together as crews compete at rowers' combined average ranking.

Composite crews (crews with rowers from more than one club) are not allowed in Grade regattas.

How grading works: Rower Grade Score

All rowers have or will be allocated a Rower Grade Score (RGS) for sweep and for sculling.

It's based on each athlete's current competition status, and will be modified according to 2008-09 regatta results.

The starting point for calculating the RGS is:

Senior A	0.75
Intermediate B	1.75
Year 2 Rower C	2.75
New Rower D	3.75

From here each rower's RGS will be altered according to the results of every grade race in 2008-09.

Forming crews

Clubs can form crews for competition in different grades. The grades are:

A Grade 0.00 > 1.2499 points

B Grade 1.25 > 2.2499 points

C Grade 2.25 > 3.2499 points

D Grade 3.25 > 4.00 points

A crew's RGS is the average RGS of all rowers in the crew. Crews can enter at their average RGS grade or higher.

A grade races are open to all competitors. B grade races are open to rowers or crews with an RGS equal to or greater than 1.25. C grade races are open to rowers or crews with an RGS equal to or greater than 2.25. D grade races are open to rowers or crews with an RGS equal to or greater than 3.25.

RGS changes

After every regatta, each rowers' RGS will change according to how they performed, their age and the race distance.

A win in any grade race lowers the RGS (towards 0) by a small increment, and a loss increases it (towards 4) by a small increment. The new RGS will be available shortly after each regatta.

The RGS formula

The formula is regularly reviewed by the NSWRA Competition Commission to ensure that progression and regression of crews and individuals is based on a win-loss ratio of one in five races.

The formula should move successful crews to a higher level and uncompetitive crews to a lower level in reasonable time, maintaining a high standard of close racing in all grades.

Entering crews and substitutions

If updates to the RGS from a regatta are not available in time for close of entries for the next regatta, entries will be accepted based on the RGS at the time the entry is lodged.

Once the race draw is completed, crews may only substitute rowers if the substitute rower does not change the crew RGS to a higher standard Grade. A substitution that changes the crew RGS to a lower standard Grade is permitted but the crew is required to race in the Grade entered, not the lower Grade.

Queries?

Your RGS is on the NSWRA website and you may appeal if you think it's unrealistic.

To query or appeal individual status or rower ranking, email: The Chairman, NSWRA Regatta Commission, c/- office@rowingnsw.asn.au

For more information : www.rowingnsw.asn.au/

Corporate wrap - the view from two coaches, and other stars

Coaching the PINK LADIES Sue-Ella Day

It's not often easy telling a client 'what to do', but in the case of the National Breast Cancer Foundation (NBCF) Pink Ladies it was a delight to coach them and the highlight of my recent rowing experiences.



The SIRC pontoon at changeover

NBCF has been a client of my creative agency McDowall since 2001 – we provide pro-bono services for their marketing. We've spent a lot of time together and over the years built an amazing relationship of warmth, trust and respect.

I enjoyed every waking hour coaching the all-female crew and it has deepened our relationship and personal friendships on many levels. This was a first for all of us – I'd never

coached before, none one of them had rowed before therefore we exposed our inexperience to each other.

The Pink Ladies tackled and embraced the sport like true athletes. It was an advantage that some of them were very fit women in their own right, while others who were less fit were eager to do land training leading up to and throughout the four weeks of coaching. By the time 14 September came round the Pink Ladies were fit and ready to race and I had learnt a lot as a coach!

We had an added advantage that NBCF and McDowall's offices are in the same building in York Street which meant rowing briefings very easy to implement. Coincidentally, the lift in our building was



Sue-Ella and the Pink Ladies

under repair during the training period which was perfect for their fitness, since the NBCF are on the third floor, or 72 stairs as they often reminded me.

I am truly proud of what they achieved as a crew and individually. Our wonderful tinny driver David Pixley remarked he saw huge improvements, including many smiles every session.

I love the fact that in week one they were learning the phases of the rowing stroke and four weeks later they could move the boat 500 m and do it three times in race conditions ... something they should be very proud of.

My gratitude to LRC, especially to Deanna and Tim Clare for sharing my vision for LRC to donate NBCF's participation in the 2008 Corporate Challenge.

LRC proudly sponsored the crew as a lead-in to October which is internationally recognised as Breast Cancer Month. For the Foundation it's an opportunity to raise much-needed funds and awareness of this disease which will have an impact on one in eight Australian women.



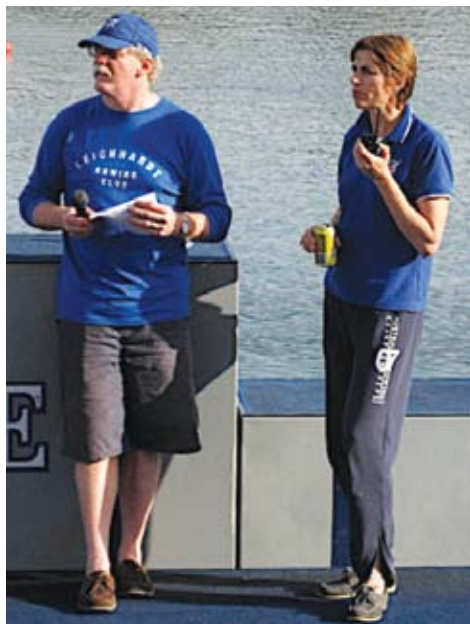
Royal wavers or BROs? Jane Hutchison and John Bransby



David Elliott, the day's starter

of the regatta

Right:
Tim & Deanna -
keeping an eye on
things



Thanks to Onno for
his photos.

To see more, go to:
<http://picasaweb.google.com.au/leichhardtrc>

And rowing hasn't necessarily finished for the Pink Ladies. Some of them have already indicated to me the desire to become LRC members. So you may just see a bit more PINK at LRC in the future!

HDY-oar-kers coach, Bry Cole

No matter how much rowing you do, there's always something you can do better, something to improve on. Which means in order to stay sane, we have to focus on the improvements we make along the way! And I've got to say, the improvements I've seen over the short four-week program across the 21 corporate crews have been a pleasure to watch. Seeing various technical aspects and mysteries of rowing dawn on you all (followed closely by the sun) is what makes coaching so special to me.

As a first time corporate coach I must say I was a little hesitant to sacrifice those vital two morning sleep-ins, but being able to introduce so many to this amazing sport and seeing the enjoyment it's given them has made it so worth it. I hope to see them again next year!



Barry Moynahan - once again keeping the commentary flowing

Regatta and rowing news

HENLEY ON HUNTER:

The regatta season has begun with a very successful performance at the Henley on Hunter regatta, hosted by Endeavor Rowing Club on 14 September.

LRC had 15 entries and performed extremely well, winning seven gold medals and eight silver medals. This double point regatta gave us 88 points to begin the season. Four junior girls – Issy, Alex, Georgia and Emma – and four junior boys, Elliot, Nick A, Nic and Dayandra – with one senior Sarah M, and one master, Kerry, travelled two hours north of Sydney for an excellent day of racing.

JUNIOR DEVELOPMENT:

The Junior Development rowers are progressing very well with extremely good results at the ITC regatta on 20 September. Twenty-five juniors competed in the 3k time trial, and Issy came third, only 20 seconds behind the leading girl, and Alex just one second later, coming fourth. Connie and Emma competed successfully as well. Elliot came fifth out of the boys. Liz Lester competed in the 5k and was placed 11th.

All the Leichhardt rowers made good improvements in their prognostic results.

Kerry's quote of the month

Food only ever really sings
if you have put your heart and soul into it.

A coffee club for LRC?

Do we want one? Email admin@lrc.com.au and cast your vote.

for the consumers it might work something like this:

- a money jar is placed in the kitchen
- users put some money in the jar when they have a coffee, tea, milo or use the milk that is provided by the coffee club
- the coffee club uses the money to buy milk, nice tasting coffee, fancy tea, milo
- if the coffee club generates sufficient funds, we can buy a coffee machine (fully automatic no less!) for use by all :-)

for the contributors and coffee club runners

- so that the individual(s) who run(s) the coffee club is not overwhelmed, basically the money will be used to reimburse people who bring stuff into the club
- only certain types/brands of stuff would be reimbursed to ensure good quality
- only certain quantities would be reimbursed so we don't end up with too much of the same thing
- only new and unopened stuff would be reimbursed so we don't end up with stale or unwanted foods.

Suggestions and feedback to: admin@lrc.com.au

John Harrison, Frank Cotton and the erg

We all love the erg - here's how it started, and the roles played by two crucial protagonists who had a strong connection with LRC

John Harrison was a rower and inventor and, with Frank Cotton, instrumental in building the ergometer we use today.

A chance meeting with Les Cotton in the late 1940s, nephew of the Professor of Physiology at Sydney University, Frank Cotton, led to John taking up still-water rowing. Professor Cotton was at the time developing a machine he believed could identify sportspeople as runners (sprinters or long distance), swimmers or rowers. Cotton called his machine an ergometer, the erg being the unit of energy. He believed where rowing was concerned that there was too much emphasis on style rather than power.

Les suggested to Harrison that he test himself on 'Uncle Frank's' ergometer, which John described as, 'a basic rowing machine that did not mimic accurately the motion of a rower in a racing boat but was able to effectively measure athlete against athlete'.

So startling were John's results that Professor Cotton persuaded him that his future lay in still water rowing. (John had been a surfboat rower and a runner.)

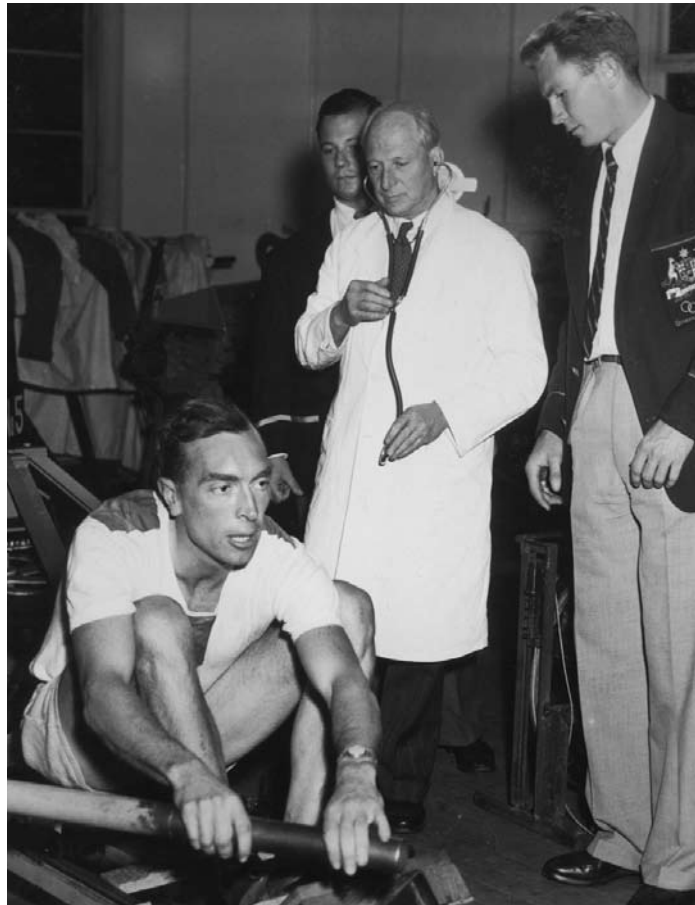
Harrison was similar in build to the reigning Olympic single sculls champion Merv Wood, and had an equivalent 'horsepower'.

Given that much of their training was done on the ergometer rather

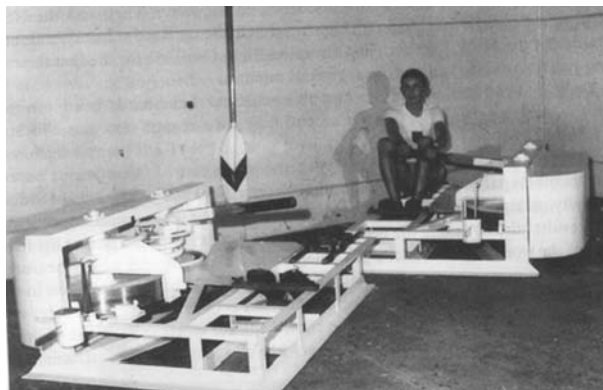
than on the river, Harrison and others tested and approved by Cotton became known in rowing circles as 'Prof Cotton's guinea pigs'. To the surprise of many, these members of Leichhardt Rowing Club found almost immediate success. Indeed, so successful was John Harrison at his new sport that he almost gained selection in the 1950 Empire [now Commonwealth] Games in Auckland.

In March 1950 John went to England to continue his engineering career, but not before distinguishing himself one weekend by helping Leichhardt win the New South Wales state eights title on Saturday, then on the Sunday taking out a beach sprint event at a northern beaches surf carnival. John was lured back to rowing, however, by Leichhardt clubmate Peter Evatt, a 1954 Empire Games gold medallist, aiming to gain selection in the squad for the Melbourne Olympic Games in 1956.

In a boat designed and built by Harrison in Newtown, the pair were to bid for a place in the coxed pairs, but on the eve of the test race, on Lake Wendouree in Ballarat, Harrison fell victim to a health problem, and Evatt and another oarsman failed to qualify. But the winners were so impressed by Harrison's boat they used it at the Olympics!



Peter Evatt, Professor Cotton and David Anderson (also an Australian representative rower)



The John Harrison erg - a development of the Ted Curtain erg

Ted Curtain [LRC's former patron], a boilermaker and welder, asked John to inspect a rowing machine he was developing. Curtain's machine incorporated an oil-filled hydraulic loading device. Harrison thought it was useful for general exercise but could not adequately measure the power expended by a rower. He devised a piece of equipment comprising an oar, sliding seat and foot stretcher attached to intricate machinery. The oar connected to a horizontal flywheel, and to scales that could be adjusted so those using the equipment could be tested against their own weight. The machine also contained a spring at the end of the oar acting as a form of brake to which constant torque was applied. This reproduced the flexibility found in an oar. With a 'rev' counter and a stroke rate monitor, the machine could now measure a rower's power output. Another important element of the new design was

that separate stroke side and bow side machines were produced. Harrison and Curtain began building the new machines, which were largely donated to Leichhardt but sold to other Sydney clubs, including Sydney University, Glebe and Haberfield. Given their size and the costs involved in building them, however, production was limited to approximately a dozen pairs.

The River and Rowing Museum, Henley, UK has two of these machines. They found at Nepean Rowing Club by noted oar maker



It was around this time that LRC won the Champion Eight of NSW, 1954-55, in world record time, completing the 3 miles (approx 4.8 km) in 13 mins 30 secs. You may recognise some of the names in the crew: Bow Bob Stone, 2 Steve Roll, 3 Joe Cooper, 4 Ted Curtain, 5 SA McKenzie, 6 Peter Evatt, 7 Geoff Williamson, Str David Anderson, Cox Lionel Robberds (our new club patron). Coaches: Prof Cotton and Lance Robinson.

Howard Croker, of Croker oar fame. They were lying on the grass – the club had decided it had no further use for them. But Croker knew better, and arranged their transportation to Henley.

According to Howard Croker, Harrison is a ‘legend’, ‘he is one of the very few guys who can make what he develops, such as oars and boats.’

Late in his rowing career Harrison developed oars featuring a blade or ‘spoon’, some eight inches [~20 cm] shorter but two inches [~5 cm] wider than ‘conventional’ oars, believing this provided more ‘lock’ in the water and improved both length and blade surface efficiency. In the 1980s he developed, with Sargent & Burton of Sydney, boats that were slightly shorter than ‘conventional’ craft. Using computer technology, John examined the shape, weight and submersion of racing shells, and introduced design innovations such as shorter and flatter transom sterns. Not surprisingly, the craft became known as ‘computer boats’. Even in his eightieth year, John Harrison continues to experiment with and provide advice on boat design – notably for lightweight women’s crews – based on crew weight and power potential, and on blade area determination for both sweep and sculling oars.

John Harrison made significant and diverse contributions, not only to Australian rowing but also to industry and the medical profession. There is little doubt, though, that it his ergometer, the forerunner to the Concept and Rowperfect machines used nowadays by countless thousands of rowers around the world, that is the most significant.

With thanks to Robin Poke for his permission to use material from his article on John Harrison that he prepared for the River and Rowing Museum at Henley-on-Thames.

Caring for tinnies, and calling for a temporary property master

Property master news

How to get the best use from tinnies and motors:

- run the motors at high/full throttle for a few minutes each time they go out
- remove any water from within them each time it rains or water gets in
- restart a flooded motors with no choke and full throttle to clear any petrol/oil buildup in the carbies. No more than three pulls should do it
- turn the tinnie motor off while talking to crews (don’t run the tinnies on idle for too long) and restart it when it is time to go.
- any excess Liechhardt tinnies will be shelved on the trailer until required so we don’t have to move these boats in and out of the shed each day but never using them)

– use the sponges provided in each of the tinnies and use them to remove any excess water.

Call for volunteers

We need volunteers to:

- finish the painting
- put the eights back together and carry out repairs as required
- maintain the premises etc.
- suggest further improvements are welcome.

Calling for a temporary property master

Tim will be away from 11 October until 5 December, and then most of January 2009, so Happy New Year.

Please give nominations to Tim.

Tim Tindale

Regattas: LRC close of entry deadlines and calling for trailer drivers

DATE / TIME	EVENT	TYPE	DISTANCE	LRC CLOSE OF ENTRIES
11/10	Drummoyne / Balmain Iron Cove	Grade	1000	29/10
18/10 Sat 7.30 am	NSWIS TT 4 Nepean River	Time Trial	5000	11/10
18/10 Sat 8.00 am	St George Rowing Club Nepean River	Age/Open	2000	6/10
19/10 Sun 8.00 am	Nepean Rowing Club Nepean River	Age/Open	2000	6/10
25/10 Sat 8.00 am	NSWRA Spring Regatta SIRC	Grade	2000	13/10
1/11 Sat 9.00 am	Head of the Shoalhaven Shoalhaven River	Time Trial Bohemia	7000	20/10
1/11 Sat 11.00 am	Shoalhaven Sprints Shoalhaven River	Club	400	20/10
8/11 Sat 8.00 am	Loreto SIRC	School	2000	20/10
15/11 Sat	NSWIS TT 5 Nepean	Time Trial	5000	8/11
15/11 Sat	Head of Parramatta	Bohemia	4000	3/11

Regatta entries: A reminder to all rowers to get their entries to Kerry as soon as possible and definitely before the published close of entry date.

Regattas in October include Drummoyne/Balmain (Grade), Nepean and St George (both age), and the spring regatta. Upcoming regattas in November include the Head and Sprint at Shoalhaven, North Shore/Roseville and the Head of the Parramatta.

Trailer drivers: All members who are willing and able to tow the trailer to or back from a regatta please let Kerry know by close of entries.

Kerry Thorn

Pymble pontoon priority

Pymble will be back at the shed from Friday 10 October. From then on, you will need to give Pymble pontoon priority on weekdays between **5.45 am and 6.00 am**, and between **6.55 am and 7.10 am**.

Saturday morning changeover times will be at **6 am** (getting on the water), **8 am** (changeover), **10 am** (changeover) and **12 pm** (getting off the water). We will let you know if these times change.

Are you looking for a coach? Assistance in maintaining your allocated boats?

A message from Steve Roll - who is at the club on weekends as well as weekdays.

I am an experienced fleet maintenance man, having spent many years doing routine fleet maintenance at Leichhardt and Haberfield and eight years as boatshed manager at St Josephs College.

I am available to show anybody who needs to know, the best way to clean and maintain any rowing equipment. They just have to ask me and we shall make an appointment to go through things like:

- (1) How to tighten rigger nuts, why the nuts and not the bolts are tightened, why the use of washers is important.
- (2) Why it is important to pay the extra money for 316 grade when buying any stainless steel rowing equipment.
- (3) Why riggers should be put back onto boats immediately on their return from any regatta.
- (4) Why seats and axles should be cleaned and oiled regularly.
- (5) Correct stretcher angles.
- (6) How and why we use pitch plugs.
- (7) How to rig a boat.
- (8) Boatshed discipline and courtesy.

I am available to coach crews and scullers and hope to have a roster on the board in the not too far distant future so that I am able to remember just what crews and scullers I have to take out on particular mornings. I am also available to coach scullers in the afternoon/evenings as required.

[Ed: Note: Steve will be away for 3 weeks from 11 October]

Diary dates

Pymble pontoon priority

Friday 10 October

Learn to row sessions

Sunday 12 October

Sunday 26 October

Sunday 2 November

Saturday 8 November

Sunday 9 November

Sunday 16 November

Boat safety courses:

Saturday 11 October and 25 October

LRC Regatta

7 March 2009