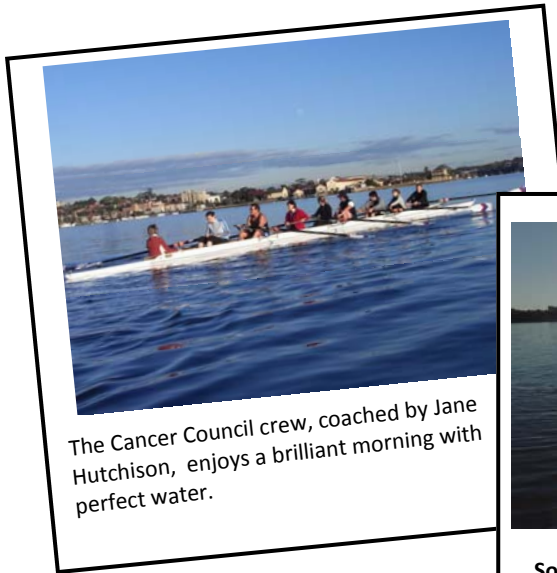




# Corporate Challenge 2009 Issue 3

## On the Pontoon from Dawn til Dusk



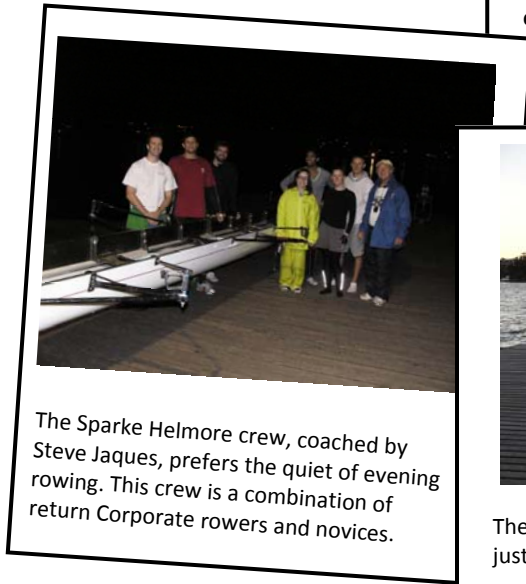
The Cancer Council crew, coached by Jane Hutchison, enjoys a brilliant morning with perfect water.



So that's why we row early in the morning! Two of our corporate crews row off into the sunrise in ideal weather conditions.



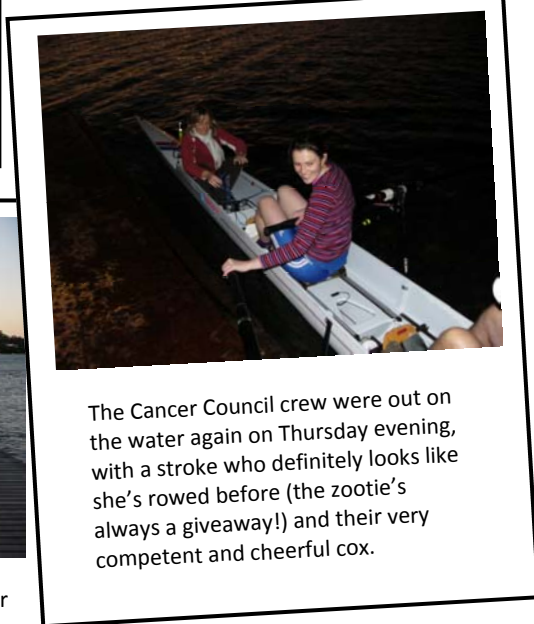
The NSW Maritime crew, coached by Christiaan Fitzsimon were back in the boat on Wednesday morning in calm conditions, in dramatic contrast to their stormy row on Monday night.



The Sparke Helmore crew, coached by Steve Jaques, prefers the quiet of evening rowing. This crew is a combination of return Corporate rowers and novices.



The Hunts crew put their boat onto the water just as the sun goes down over the horizon.



The Cancer Council crew were out on the water again on Thursday evening, with a stroke who definitely looks like she's rowed before (the zootie's always a giveaway!) and their very competent and cheerful cox.

### Tell Us About Yourself!

We've seen the pictures, now we want more information about our Corporate crews. This week, you'll have received requests for further information about yourselves. We need you to complete your Rower Status Forms for handicapping and we also need your team name, the names of your crew members (so we spell them correctly!), the names of any substitutes and a short blurb about each rower for the regatta day program. Our regatta commentator may also use some of this information to talk about the crews on the day. As this is a fun, family and friends event, we'd like you to get a bit imaginative. Nicknames, experiences during training, classic comments, anything along those lines would be great. However, please keep it relatively brief so we can fit it all in! All this information needs to be emailed to Deanna Fekete by the end of Monday next week (14 September).

# Why is Rowing Good for Business?

There is no better full-body workout than rowing. But the same thing that makes rowing beneficial and beautiful also makes it difficult and frustrating: the stroke. Achieving proper technique is a never-ending challenge. Competition is an incredible motivator, but training / rest, being in good mental health, sharpening skills, and other contributing factors are essential elements in being competitive. Rowing rewards focus. There are many external variables—the wind, the current, the temperature—while internally, eight people are trying to move together. In a race, there are crews on each side of you, which means uncustomary noise. The successful athlete, like the successful businessperson or negotiator, is able to focus entirely on the moment, taking all these factors into account and making minute adjustments every instant.

Some people think that such things as 'guts,' 'will to win,' and the ability to push oneself to one's limit are simply part of one's basic personality. In fact, these qualities also depend on psychological, as well as physical training. For optimal rowing, the athlete needs "the highest possible threshold of pain. This generally follows the same pattern as their level of physical fitness. But how does this come about? Psychological training consists, in part, in learning to recognize that you can go beyond the level of effort you think is possible.

As in business, selecting a successful team isn't as easy as putting candidates on an ergometer or running tests to find the strongest, as there are people who make a boat go, when, on paper, they shouldn't. For a crew to win depends upon many elements, including effective procedures, clear roles and extraordinary levels of trust and belief. The "stroke" is the leader, sitting in the stern, looking backward and setting the rhythm. The stroke must have a great sense of self, rhythm and consistency. Just as all leaders have to feel and use their senses and attune themselves to what's going on, the stroke feels subtle changes in pressure and tempo in the

boat without seeing it. Every time a rower puts the oar in the water it leaves a puddle, a tangible, physical reminder of their presence. That puddle has a look and feel to it—it is an individual statement within the team.

At first glance it may appear that a rowing race is won by the physical strength of the rowers themselves, but power alone will not succeed without the guidance and direction of the coxswain. The coxswain monitors the progress of the boat and the performance of the rowers, steers and issues orders to keep the boat on course. This frees up the rest of the crew to concentrate on the business of rowing the boat. There is a very special relationship between the rowers and their coxswain. The process by which they learn to work together and develop mutual respect is essential for winning crews.

In rowing, as in business, everybody has their own agenda. Some want to pull really hard at the beginning of the stroke, others at the end. The coach's job is to get everyone to apply power at the same time. In business, sports and politics, getting everyone to apply power evenly is really about controlling egos. It's getting everyone to sublimate their own agendas for the company's agenda so that energy is not wasted. Harness star power and individuals' ambition for the good of the team. Understand that everyone wants to be both valued and a part of something bigger.

When I was training towards the Olympics Games, it was vital to not only engage in a massive workload of training, but also to develop an unshakeable belief by holding a well formed vision of success and goals to hit along the way. I could only put in the hours of training by being clear on what the goal really was and why it was meaningful to me and my crew. This goal was then broken down into manageable chunks to make it achievable and a step towards greater success. A team works best when members clearly understand its purpose and its goals. Everyone wants to be a part of something bigger. Don't strive for intermediate goals, strive to find the potential within you.

**By Stani Slavova, Head Coach, LRC**



The **Corporate Challenge Regatta** will be held on Sunday, 20 September at the **Sydney International Regatta Centre** at Penrith. It's a great opportunity to get your colleagues, friends and family along to cheer you on and celebrate your achievement. **SIRC** has excellent facilities, including a covered grandstand, bike and walking tracks (perfect for kids), snack bar, catering and a large grassy area where you can set up a marquee. Specific Regatta Day details, directions and times will be sent out next week. If you want to hire a marquee, the best contact is : Penrith Party Hire on [www.penrithpartyhire.com.au](http://www.penrithpartyhire.com.au) or 4731 1313. They will deliver and erect, but please let Deanna know so she can co-ordinate with SIRC. Catering is available from the Regatta Centre, contact Vince on 47293222 or email [enquiries@regattakitchenandbar.com](mailto:enquiries@regattakitchenandbar.com). Also, please be aware it's the day of the Sydney Half Marathon so check RTA website for road closures on the Harbour and Anzac Bridges.