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The St. Louis Rowing Club News



Head Coach's Report

Spring has passed, and the summer heat is upon us. I'd like to take this opportunity to explain the rationale behind some of the things we've been doing and where I believe we're headed.

It is my feeling that fast and fit boats come from fast and fit programs. To that end I have continued to try and raise the level of performance across the squad and concentrate less on the line-ups that may or may not be racing in August. Having done the base work, we are moving into a phase of fitness maintenance and speed development. Some have wondered why we haven't spent more time doing speed work. Well – I don't believe it's been necessary. It takes less time to build speed than it does fitness. Being strong and fit will mean that we are able to perform the repetitive task of rowing more competently for a longer duration of time. If we focus on the high rate work too early – well you might be quick off the line, but you'd fade. You will still be quick off the line – and you won't fade. Learning how to get the rate up together – how to shift into race pace – these tend to be very crew-specific issues, and you will spend more time with the folks who will race with you in August.

For those not racing in August, the club and I will continue to do all we can to provide the input and opportunity for your progress. Please be patient, and know that mileage is still your best friend (without the 5 minute stops at either end of the lake – so stop asking me questions just to prolong your rest time – I'm on to you now!)

The next few months will be busy and will scoot by very quickly. For those racing, attendance is vital. Attendance is always vital, but when we're trying to build the speed and gel as a unit – you need to be there.

We'll see you on the water.

--John Wetzstein

President's Report

“Look the devil in the eye, and say, ‘F*** you, man.’!”

I was horrified to find this quotation prominently featured, in fact permanently cast, as a large, paint/graffiti art display high up on a Tampa bridge during a spring training trip several years ago. Absolutely eye catching, visible, quite profane, it was identified as a quote from --- Ahsan Iqbal, St. Louis Rowing Club, in our colors.

It had taken a great degree of ingenuity to complete. First, the perps had to get past the most notorious chaperones of all time, noted for roaming the halls of the Ramada Inn at all hours, dozing in stairwells, even taping miniature face shots on the outsides of peepholes in the doors of hotel rooms so that when the kids looked out, they got a full view of a virtual chaperone standing ever vigilant, ever on guard. As Pinkie Lee was known to say, “That oughta hold the little b*****ds”.

Dang, whoever did that had got past the Roewes.

They had had to sneak out and get paint, without any transportation. They had to secure it until the moment. They had to situate themselves during darkness, hanging from bridgework, and they had to get the colors and design right without the perspective afforded by distance, each step a formidable challenge.

But why did they have to write that? Why did they have to sign our club's name to it? Because of its location, I had to be assaulted by it in seeming perpetuity every time I looked upstream from the University of Tampa's docks, at least 100 times a day for the following week. Why did they have to write that? Did Ahsan really say that to junior rowers? I had to admit, yup, he probably did. So what did he mean by it, and why did he deliver his message in such profane manner, had to be a point that he was trying hard to get through.

Did he say it when imploring his crews to row through pain and perform their best? Did he say it to encourage his juniors to behave on a higher standard? Or was it a Gumpism, stated in response to a mundane and specific circumstance, but having profound implications.

We all have our personal devils. Pet peeves, petty dislikes, irritations. We all have personal challenges, obstructions, limitations we need to get past.

Right now our rowing club is facing a number of demons. Capital fundraising, equipment limitations, a juniors rowing program that needs reinvigoration, uncertainties in our coaching staff. Defining common goals while meeting individual expectations (that Vision Thing)

To get through, individually and collectively, we need to look the Devil in the Eye and Say, F*** You, Man.

--Steve Giddings

A Proposed Mission Statement for the Club

The following is a draft for a new St. Louis Rowing Club mission statement. A committee was formed following the 5/22/04 general membership meeting to utilize the values and goals expressed by juniors, adult rowers and parents in order to formulate a general mission statement.

Mission Statement

The mission of the St. Louis Rowing Club is to encourage the development and expansion of rowing in the St. Louis metropolitan area. We promote an atmosphere of rowing excellence that fosters well-coached and motivated athletes.

Objectives

Are in the process of being written.

Example: To provide safety equipment, training and rules in order to maintain a safe rowing environment.

Example: To include and coach all individual rowers to their best skill level in order to better the team as a whole.

Example: To make rowing a more inclusive sport for at-risk youth of various ethnic, social and economic backgrounds.

Please send your comments or suggestions for the mission statement to Cathy Chamberlin at cmc8@sbcglobal.net by July 31. The committee will meet again after this date to write a final version for our club.

St. Louis Gateway 2004

The 2004 Gateway Regatta on June 27 was a special event, marking the 100th anniversary of the 1904 Worlds Fair and Olympic games in St. Louis. Rowing events of that Olympiad were at Creve Coeur Lake, making our training venue one of the few in the world that has hosted Olympic rowers of past games.

This year's regatta was well-attended by clubs we know: Chicago Rowing Center, Lincoln Park Boat Club, Topeka Rowing Association, Quad Cities Rowing Club, Washington University Crew, and the Indianapolis Rowing Center. First-timers, Charlottesville Postal Workers Rowing Club from University of Virginia, also made a showing.

Weather conditions were optimal: partly sunny with little wind, a high temperature in the low 80's. The course was 1000 meters. Races included junior, open, and master events. Results are on our club website, SLRC.net.

New to this regatta were the stake races, single scull events with separate races for men and women. Stake races started at the finish line of the 1000 meter course. Racers rowed 400 meters down the course, turned around a stake, and rowed back to the finish line. The stake races were fun for spectators, who could see the start and finish of the race. I have received many requests to repeat this event in future years.

Other events included presentation of the 1904 Olympic trophy, won by George Dietz in the straight four, to our club. This trophy was kindly donated by his grandson, Carl.

Of note, George's great granddaughter, Christina Bonenberger, raced at the regatta in a single scull event and did very well, especially since it was only her sixth time in a single.

Memorial trophies were presented to honor two SLRC members who died this past year. The Quad Cities Rowing Association donated a plaque to commemorate Ron Suerrman. The winner of the men's veteran single will have his name displayed on this plaque, which will remain at our boathouse. The winner of the men's master double received the Colin Allsop Award, in memory of Colin and his favorite event.

I want to thank all those who helped organize and run the regatta. Special thanks to the stalwarts: Scott Allison, Steve Giddings, Cameron Carter, and Rein Zeidler. A special thanks to Terry Friel-Portell for doing her usual great job as head referee. Karl Heilman put together a beautiful program that did justice to this year's special event. I especially want to thank Megan Mraz who deserves the majority of the accolades for this year's great production of Gateway. She put the event together beautifully.

I am happy to hear suggestions on how to improve our summertime regatta in the future.

--John Mason

National Learn to Row Day

More than fifty visitors sampled rowing on June 12, National Learn-to-Row Day. Our guests toured the boathouse, rowed on the ergs, and tried "dock rowing". Several expressed an interest in Learn-to-Row classes this summer. At least one registered for LTR (and wrote a check) on the spot! Thanks to the many junior and adult rowers who volunteered time to make National Learn-to-Row day a success.

Cub Scout Rowing

On the evenings of June 15 and 17, the club hosted about 90 Cub Scouts. The boys erged and dock rowed. Some went out on the lake for a "real" row. They're young now but, who knows, we might have sparked an interest in rowing. Some of the boys may recall this experience when they're old enough to join the Junior program. Once again, thanks to all of those who introduced the Cub Scouts to rowing.

A Not-So-Starry Night

SLRC hosted the first Moonlight Row of the season on Friday, July 2nd. Torrential rains and thick clouds chased away any notions of rowing under a full moon, although the moon did peek through the skies by 11:00 pm, as the party was winding down. (Did four people really take out the quad late that evening?)

The great news is that the boathouse is a fabulous place for a celebration - even in the rain! Some 40 rowers and friends brought delicious food to share, and grill-master Anthony Vitale wowed us all with his delicious meats - (grazie, Anthony!) Thanks to Kathy Halley, we all had a chance to write a quick note to our Australian crewmate, Kate Patterson, who was with us in spirit on that wet and moonless night. Cathy Chamberlin's decorations (Moonpies? You guessed it!) were much admired.

We're ready for the next moonlight row, with boat lights, batteries and flashlights. And, again, thanks to Anthony Vitale - the boathouse now has its own propane grill. Watch for details - we will try this again!

--Kathy Bosin

Boathouse Capital Campaign

We've been hard at work contacting every SLRC member, seeking contributions to this first phase of our Boathouse Capital Campaign. As of June 30, we have collected **well over \$60,000** in contributions and pledges from our membership. This is a huge step toward raising the \$285,000 needed to pay off our boathouse loan by 12/31/06.

Fully 80% of SLRC's membership has contributed something to the Boathouse Fund. This is a giving level that is truly worthy of celebration! Thank you to each and every booster, master and St. Louis University family who has so generously supported this effort. And thank you to BCC Committee members who have worked so tirelessly contacting members. Barb Seely, Cathy Chamberlin, Kathy Bosin and Scott Allison gave vital additional help to ensure that everyone was contacted. And Debbie and Jeff Hall deserve special thanks for their work printing campaign material and preparing mailings.

With 11 Masters and 18 Boosters not meeting the 6/30/04 contribution deadline, we have lost the \$9,300 originally pledged for achieving 100% participation. This was probably an overly ambitious goal... but attaining it certainly would have been nice!

Our 80% participation, while fabulous, obviously also falls short of the level required by the 90% challenge. The total amount of money pledged for attainment of the 90% goal was \$12,250. **It is our good fortune that the 8 families who pledged this additional money for 90% participation have agreed to extend the deadline for giving to 12/31/04.** To earn all of this money however, we must reach 90% participation and the 29 families who have not yet given must contribute (combined) a minimum of \$3,000 by the end of the year. In light of all that we have achieved to date, this goal seems well within our reach!

More good news: A very generous member would like to contribute \$5,000 to the Boathouse Fund in 2004 if we are able to obtain an additional 9 matching donations by the end of this calendar year. This means \$50,000 for the Boathouse Fund!!!!

Conditions:

- All donations must be made by 12/31/04
- Individuals, not corporations, must make donations (Professional practices and personal businesses are welcome to participate in this. The spirit of the challenge is that gifts from major corporations are a separate solicitation.)
- Gifts can come from non-members.

Any contributions already made in 2004 count toward the \$5,000. (If a gift of \$1,000 has already been made in 2004, an additional \$4,000 paid in 2004 qualifies.)

We already have one gift of \$5,000. Another 8 and we're there. If you are considering a gift of this amount, think about completing it in 2004. It will be an enormous help. If you're with a company that will provide matching funds, this is an even better opportunity!

Coming Up:

In addition to continuing to contact our current members, the BCCC will be contacting friends and former members of the Club to encourage their participation in boathouse funding. If you have ideas about people to get in

touch with, please let us know. Because of the scope of this project, we may be asking for additional help.

Corporate solicitation will be starting soon, although this effort is being preceded by an update of the website, a finalization of our new mission statement and a redesign of Club marketing materials. If you have ideas about businesses to contact, or if you have a personal connection at a potential donor company, please contact jrechter@klingrechter.com. Think creatively! We all know people in business!

- There are two games remaining in our Busch Stadium concession stand work. If you'd like to help out, get in touch with Barb Seely at Barbara.seely@eoc.gov.
- There are several additional fundraising initiatives currently under consideration. If you have ideas about specific projects, or angles we might pursue, please let us know.

As always, thanks for your support. And stay tuned....

Linda Greensfelder
BCCC Chair
lgreensfelder@charter.net

Selling Nachos

SLRC club members manned concession stands at Busch Stadium on June 16 and July 3 during Cardinals baseball games to raise money for the boathouse.

We still need volunteers on August 22, during an afternoon weekend game. Anyone who can work should contact me at barbara.seely@eoc.gov.

SLRC.net

The Club's website is intended to serve as a communication tool for SLRC members and for outsiders to learn about rowing in St. Louis.

If you are looking for information about an upcoming Club event, want to see the results of past regattas or learn the schedule for upcoming ones, need to know when the lake will be closed or to find another member's e-mail address, the first place that you should look is on SLRC.net. Items of current interest are posted on the "Newsflash" and "Club Calendar" pages. An up-to-date e-mail directory is also available on the site.

The information on the website needs to stay both accessible and current. If you are organizing a Club event, have photos taken at a recent one, or have any concrete suggestions for improving the site, please pass them along to Scott Allison. Only with your help will our website be an up-to-date and useful communications tool.

SLRC Race Schedule

July 17 – 18, Chicago, IL Chicago Sprints (Juniors and Masters)

July 31, Indianapolis, IN Midwest Masters Regionals (Masters)

August 3 – 8, St. Catherines, Ontario Royal Canadian Henley (Juniors and Masters)

August 19 – 22, Oak Ridge, TN Masters Nationals (Masters)

Learn-to-Row

One last session of Learn-to-Row will be offered this summer, August 2-August 30. Instruction will be held on Mondays and Wednesdays from 6:00PM to 8:00PM and Saturday from 9:00AM to 11AM. Space is limited. The cost is \$200.00. If you know someone interested, consult the SLRC website at www.slrc.net or call Scott Allison at (314) 965-9456.

Of course, SLRC volunteers to teach the LTR classes are welcome. Contact John Wetzstein if you can help.

--Scott Allison

Raw Nucks

This year's Raw Nucks is scheduled for the weekend of September 10-12, 2004. Raw Nucks is a great way to introduce your friends and co-workers to the sport. Boats are mixed, with experienced and inexperienced rowers. Several practice sessions are recommended, but not mandatory.

Bob Eilers is chairing this event in 2004. Information on entering a boat will be on the website soon. Or you can contact Bob Eilers directly.

Raw Nucks is a traditional SLRC event that you will enjoy. So sign up... sooner is better.

Rowing with Attitude

It's not what you think! A different perspective by Linda Gibbons.

DO CALM ROWERS WIN RACES?

When it comes to racing – more speed, more strength, more oomph isn't necessarily more. Rowing is a relaxed approach to exertion. Getting into a "flow" or "zen" is when you're calm but energized. There is a lot of precision that goes into rowing, and that evolves into an action with natural grace. It is a state of being relaxed and energetic.

Even the famous Canadian coach, Mike Spracklen doesn't allow his crew to show any expression while they are racing--performing an action this way conveys you are successful and strong.

To practice this, take 6-8 deep breaths and empty your mind of thoughts. Then visualize yourself rowing in a calm but energized way. This sounds easy, but getting there takes work.

There are books written by sports psychologists explaining this phenomenon. In fact, research showed that when you hook up chess masters to an EEG machine, "the better the players, the more their brain waves registered as a straight line without the jigs and jags that indicate effort."

To get more from your workout or race, program yourself to perform in a calm but energized way. The mental and physical boost will be rewarding.

--Linda Gibbons

Lake Closings

Creve Coeur Lake will be closed the following days in summer.

July 30 – 31 (same weekend as Midwestern Masters Regional Championships)

August 18 – 23 (same week as Masters National Championships)

Dues

Many of you elected to pay your dues in two installments. If you did, your second payment is due this month.

Make your checks out to the SLRC, and send them to: PO Box 411094 St. Louis, MO 63141

Keys to Boathouse

Keys were given to several of you before the boathouse was complete. For the most part, they went to people who had their own singles. Since the keypad locks now provide access, we'd like to collect the keys. Please return your keys to Scott Allison.

Treasurer's Report

This is traditionally the time of the year when our financial reserves get a bit low. Our current account balance is barely sufficient to cover a typical month's expenses. The picture is not too bleak, however, because revenue is expected soon from a variety of sources. The summer learn-to-row classes and the summer juniors and open programs are underway and will provide income. Also many of the master and intermediate rowers elected to pay their annual dues in two installments. Dues from the second installment will restore financial reserves.

--Scott Allison

USRowing Memberships

Please note. All rowers and coxswains racing in the following events **MUST** have a USRowing membership:

USRowing Nationals July 21- 25, 2004, Indianapolis, IN

USRowing Masters Regionals July 31, 2004 in Indianapolis, IN

USRowing Masters Nationals August 19 - 22, 2004, Oakridge, TN

Due date for a group membership is past. Write your check, and send to USRowing now, if you plan to race any of these events.

Booster Update

What a great year this has been for our kids and families! The rowers had a great time developing new friendships and new skills, while their parents got to know each other and learn more about rowing. In addition, we are blessed with a beautiful new boathouse to call home this year.

We had a surprising turn-out at our annual awards banquet on Friday, May 28th. And what an event it was! Thanks to Kim Heil and Fluffy Aitken for the decorations and to Bet Stapleton for reserving the hall. Also, thanks are in order for Elaine Sloan for volunteering to put together the statistics about the rowers, which were on each table.

Elaine rushed to get this accomplished when she was asked at the last minute. (My apologies for any incorrect information.)

The Boosters hosted their **first silent auction**, which raised \$4000 for the boathouse fund. Barb Johnson chaired this event with help from Deb Aliperti. It was not only a fund raiser, but a “friend raiser” as well. The family that bought the Cajun dinner has plans to share it with friends they made at the boathouse event the week before.

Kerry Bryan, senior varsity woman, created a fabulous photo CD that documented the fall and spring seasons for our juniors. A copy will be made available for each athlete, compliments of the Boosters and Kerry. Thanks so much for all your work, Kerry.

Important Dates

Varsity Fall Sign Up: Sat., Aug. 21 9-11AM at the boathouse

Bring: 1) A copy of both sides of **health insurance card**
2) **Checkbook** for Booster dues and to order uniforms.
3) A **parent** to sign a medical release. We will have a notary available.

Varsity Parent Meeting: Sat., Sept. 11 1-3PM at the boathouse

Bring: Your own **chair**.

Novice Sign Up & Recruiting Session: Sat., Sept. 11 10 am-Noon at boathouse

Bring: Potential **rowers** for fall season

Boosters Officers 2004 - 2005

We have some wonderful volunteers for the booster board for 2004 – 2005.

President: Kevin Curran

Vice-President and Handbook Editor: Mary Ellen Campbell

Secretary: Valorie Adrio (second term)

Treasurers: Mark and Kiki Jordan

Regatta and Volunteer Coordinator: Sue Portwine

Travel Coordinator: Jeff Remus (second term)

Publicity: Deb Aliperti

Clothing and Uniforms: Donna Harper (second term)

Grill Team: Cliff and Joan Faddis

Team Parents:

Varsity Women: Maryclare Krusing

Varsity Men: (still open)

Novice Women: (still open)

Novice Men: (still open)

Events Coordinator: (still open)

Recruiting Coordinator: (still open)

Fundraising Coordinator: (still open)

Boosters are very important to the quality of your athletes’ overall experience. Please let the board know if you can help. You can call Kevin Curran at 314-863-5837.

Thank you to this year’s board for all of their hard work. Such a fun group of people to “hang out” with! It was a pleasure serving with all of you.

Thanks for all you do for our kids!

--Pat Hoye

SLRC Coxswains

Allison Fortune and Katie Hilton are coxing the Masters this summer and we are grateful. Thank you Allison and Katie!

The Masters still need more coxes. Will train. If you know of anyone interested in coxing, please tell John Wetzstein.

Masters Admin

Please contribute your administrative talents to provide John Wetzstein, head coach, with needed assistance. To volunteer, contact John Wetzstein.

SLRC Coaches

Head Coach: John Wetzstein
Varsity Men: Ben Boyd
Varsity Women: Olivia Giddings
Novices: Anne Williams
Intermediate Coach: Scott Allison

SLRC Executive Committee

President: Steve Giddings
Vice President: Cathy Chamberlin
Secretary: Barb Seely
Communications Secretary: Kelly Vogel
Treasurer: Scott Allison
Captain: Rein Zeidler
Lieutenant: Andrew Lambert
Boosters President: Kevin Curran

About the Newsletter

Thank you for contributing to the SLRC newsletter. Articles are published as submitted, with a few exceptions. To submit an article for the 2004 September-October SLRC newsletter, attach a Word file to an email message, and send to me at: vogelka@charter.net.

--*Kelly Vogel*