



Dear Rowing Community members,

RE: The 'Look' of our sport

As I think you are aware, for the first time for many years our National Rowing Championships and King's Cup will be broadcast live online through World Championship Sports Network. WCSN are our broadcast partners, and will provide similar coverage to what is available through them for World Championships and World Cups (and a range of other international sports). This is very exciting indeed, and will be a major showcase of our sport across Australia and Internationally.

Broadcast coverage of our sport forms part of our on-going endeavors to promote our sport and to position it for future success. To that end, I am seeking your considered input and thoughts regarding improving the 'Look and overall Quality' of our sport on TV, the print Media and indeed, at the venue itself.

Clearly for the King's Cup Regatta, all our crews look like a crew and present a very solid 'image' (eg; wearing the same racing or training uniform). There is nothing better than standing with thousands of colleagues at the Interstate Regatta, or in the grandstand at the World Championships – and seeing the light Blue of NSW, Big V of Victoria or the Red of SA, or the Green/Gold of Australia advancing towards the finish line – fighting it out against the Green of Tasmania or the Royal Blue of the Italians. The effect is heightened when we watch it on TV - and frankly it is critical for the broadcast of sport on television.

Our immediate challenge however, is definitely the National Championships. How can we present these same incredible images with *composite* crews – with all their disparate Club uniforms?

The actual image or picture of composite crews projects to the viewing public, with eight or four different racing uniforms - is messy and almost impossible to define for the viewing public. It is actually a challenge for us - to be able to pick out the various Club zooties when they are racing on the water in eight different uniforms.

The problem is how to project a more uniform and viewer/public friendly 'look' – and *maintain* the identity of each Club.

- page 2 over -

Personally think the possibilities are best summarized as:

1. We could do nothing. We have been going fine until now – but without broadcasting a major sponsor and without television that looks professional and viewer friendly.
2. We decide now a policy for a consistent crew racing uniform:
 - in the club colors of the majority of athletes
 - in the club colors selected by the crew
 - in a neutral non club color/s
 - in SIS/SAS colors
3. We could provide 'bibs' prior to getting onto the water for the Finals
4. Whilst racing in uniform zooties, for the finals each crew use Club stickers (either logo or 3- 4 letter Club code) on the side of the boat - under each rower. This initiative was used in the recent 'Greatest 8' promotion in the USA. Certainly for TV and spectators near the land, this idea proved to be a valuable addition to the telecast. A little time consuming, but possible.

Each club must still be clearly notated in the Event Program and daily run sheets/results.

As you can see, there are a wide range of issues and many alternatives to consider.

However, I think as this regatta is the showcase of our sport and the timing opportune, can we please take a serious look at how we project the sport to ourselves and to the public. Especially for broadcasting.

I would welcome your considered thoughts and ideas. ASAP please.

Closing date for comment is 11th February, 2010

Send your email to: info@rowingaustralia.com.au

We will collate the responses and present them to the Board and to the States for their consideration.

Kind Regards,

Colin J Smith

President, Rowing Australia

20 January 2010