



Australian Rowing News

Issue 25: November 2006

FROM THE CEO

At Rowing Australia we are bound by our commitment to continue promoting and improving rowing as the build to the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games gains full momentum.

A number of key initiatives have been developed which we believe will aid Australia's quest to become the number one rowing nation in the world.

RA Governance Review Milestone Reached

The process of governance reform that commenced in 2005 reached a significant milestone in October. A new draft constitution was distributed to the Rowing Australia Board and Council for comment and consideration ahead of the Rowing Australia Annual General meeting in December.

The new draft constitution marks the next chapter in the evolution of Rowing Australia as it establishes the governance framework for RA to become a Company Limited by Guarantee.

In its current form, Rowing Australia Inc. is an association primarily of state members that is incorporated in the ACT. The proposed transition to a company structure under the Corporations Act recognises the scale, complexity and value of RA's business activities, and is considered to be a natural progression in the growth of our organisation.

State based Talent Identification Programs

Seven state based talent identification programs were recently successful in securing support from the National Programs Department of the Australian Sports Commission. With total support in excess of \$200,000, the successful programs include:

- Gold Coast Talent Transfer – Rowing Queensland
- Rising Talent – Rowing Queensland
- Riverland to London – South Australian Rowing Association
- Different Strokes – Victorian Institute of Sport
- Junior Rowing Passport Program – Rowing Queensland
- Dream Stream – Tasmanian Institute of Sport
- NCAS Talent Search Rowing Program – NSW North Coast Academy of Sport

Breaking the Drought

In 2005, the National Talent Search program, in conjunction with the Australian Institute of Sport and RA, initiated an ambitious talent identification and development program designed to produce the next Australian Olympic champion single sculler.

The program commenced with 51 nominees from which 16 males were identified and comprehensively tested at the AIS. Of these, four full-time AIS rowing scholarships were accepted by:

Mitch Estens
David Neuhaus
Nick Harris
Blair Brown

The results of these athletes have been outstanding, and now all four are attempting to break into the Australian U23 rowing squad.

In 2007, the program will be expanded to include an additional two male and four female AIS scholarships.

Twelve men and seven women nominees will be invited to impress the selectors at a series of identification camps in Canberra in late November and early December.

In addition, Breaking the Drought has also created a new full time employment opportunity for a coach of the women's squad.

Andrew Dee
Chief Executive Officer

ROOKIES EMBARK ON STEEP NEW LEARNING CURVE

The Australian Institute of Sport rowing program has welcomed its new group of scholarship holders as preparations continue for the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008.

The squad, which consists of 8 women and 7 men, boasts a mix of experience and youth.

The women's squad holds an impressive record at International Level with a tally of 15 Senior World Championship medals between them.

Sarah Hubbard, 21, recently returned from study in the United States to join the AIS team. Although having not competed at senior level, Hubbard is the U18 World Record holder for the 2000m ergometre.

Hubbard said she returned to Australia to pursue her dream to represent Australia at the Olympic Games.

"I've been away for 3 years and I wanted to see how I could perform internationally", Hubbard said. "It was important to me to see how I had improved."

In the coming months the AIS squad will be placed under a strenuous training regime to ensure that they are prepared for the 2007 season.

Each morning the squad rows around Lake Burley Griffin between 20-25 kms. This will involve a variety of sprints and time trials each month to compare the progress of each athlete.

Additionally over 200km will also be covered on the bike each week as the athletes cross train to improve their cardio fitness.

Fergus Pragnell, 21, is also a new member of the elite group. He has returned from Sydney University to accept his scholarship.

"I'm one of the younger guys in the group and I've learned a lot already in the first week", Pragnell said. "The training is more intense than other squads I have been involved with but its great being out here not having to think about anything but rowing."

2006 FISA ROWING AWARDS

The annual FISA rowing awards were held on Saturday 4 November at Limassol, Cyprus.

The event was held in conjunction with the World Rowing Coaching Conference.

Adrian David, coach of Australia's women's double and lightweight double sculls, was a finalist for the prestigious Coach of the Year Award.

Despite not winning the award, David's achievements have been exceptional. He guided the Australian women's double scull to gold in the 2006 World Championships, whilst also helping the women's lightweight double claim silver.

Andrew Dee, Chief Executive Officer of Rowing Australia, says it's a fine acknowledgement for one of the world's best coaches.

"Adrian is an outstanding coach and mentor for our rowers", Dee said. "He deserved his nomination after the hard work and enthusiasm he has placed into rowing in Australia."

David, who began coaching in Romania in 1976, would have been the first Australian to claim the Coach of the Year Award.

AIS ATTEMPTING TO BREAK THE DROUGHT

Australia has not won a World Championship or Olympic medal in the men's or women's heavyweight single sculls since the Melbourne Olympic Games in 1956.

The AIS rowing hierarchy are attempting to reverse this trend through their "Breaking the Drought" program.

A national talent search was launched in 2005 to find the next crop of young stars that could lead Australia's charge towards the 2012 Olympic Games in London.

Andrew Douglas, Program Manager of the talent search, is excited by the potential gain from running such a program.

"Australia has always had an excellent school rowing program", Douglas said. "However lots of rowers leave the sport after school. If we can convince some of the elite juniors to continue after they finish school our rowing will grow stronger."

Blair Brown, David Neuhaus and Nick Harris were all offered full scholarships at the AIS under the "Breaking the Drought" program.



David Neuhaus

Brown, who left school after Year 11 to become an apprentice carpenter, was a perfect candidate for the scheme.

"I rowed at a pretty high level as a junior but stopped after I started my apprenticeship", recalled Brown. "Everything has been excellent since joining the AIS and my first goal is to be selected in the Australian U23 squad for the World Championships next year."

These three will be joined by three extra men and four women following a training camp to be held in early December.

Twenty young rowers have been offered the chance to attend the camp and will be placed through a series of rigorous tests to determine who will be offered scholarships.

COMPETITION

Australian Youth Olympics Festival

The Australian Youth Olympics Festival will run from 17 to 23 January 2006. 1600 athletes from 23 countries will be competing in various sports, including rowing.

Rowing Australia is looking forward to seeing some rising stars from this festival. More information, including competition results, will be included in the February 2007 newsletter.

COACHES TIP

I have witnessed a continuing change in the office demands on the professional coaches and an increased independence of athletes in regards their time management. Much of this has to do with the requirements and opportunities provided by the electronic communication methods – internet, emails and mobile phones.

In my travels around the States I often see unsupervised training of young athletes either due to the coach being busy or the busy athlete training outside of normal coaching hours. The result of this often allows the athlete to practice poor technique either on or off the water.

I heard recently of a program that demands coaches to turn off their mobile phones whilst in direct supervision – well done. Despite the demands placed on us all perhaps we should encourage both athletes and coaches to organize their time to spend more quality time together both seeking feedback and offering support. This does not take away the athletes independence and need to think for themselves but rather enhances how this process is to take place and offers consistency in direction. It is too easy to set the ergo rolling and head for the office to answer those emails and it is too easy to row badly as well. Some food for thought.

Noel Donaldson
High Performance Director

2006/2007 EVENTS OF INTEREST

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
4-16 December, 2006	National Camp	Australian Institute of Sport
7-28 January, 2007	National Camp	Australian Institute of Sport
20-21 January, 2007	Australian Youth Olympic Festival	Sydney International Regatta Centre
5-11 March, 2007	Australian National Championships	Nagambie Lakes, Victoria
13-22 April, 2007	Selection Trials	Sydney International Regatta Centre
1-3 June, 2007	Australian Masters Championships	Sydney International Regatta Centre

ATHLETE PROFILE

Each month, RA News will feature an athlete profile. In this edition we feature Sarah Hubbard.



Name: Sarah Hubbard

Nickname: Hubs

Place of birth: Auckland, New Zealand

Place of residence: Canberra, ACT

Marital status: Single

Height: 194.5cm

Weight: 96kg

Degrees/Diplomas: ¾ completed Anthropology degree at University of Washington

Occupation: Rower

Favourite food: Strawberries and Vanilla Ice Cream

Favourite movie: The Note Book

Favourite book: The Lovely Bones

Sporting hero: Martina Hingis

Hobbies: Shopping

Coach: Lyall McCarthy

Best results? U18 world record for the 2000m ergometre

How did you get into rowing? A friend introduced me to the sport in Year 8

How does rowing in the United States compare to Australia? The mileage and cardio work are of a similar level. At the AIS a greater emphasis is placed on individual work

What is your favourite event? The 8's

Why did you choose to come to the AIS? To test myself at an international level. I have been away for 3 years and want to see the progress that I have made.

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