



# ***Australian Rowing News***

**Issue 26: December 2006**

## **FROM THE CEO**

**December hit with a flurry of activity and before we knew it we were only a few days from the end of the year.**

On behalf of all Board and staff of RA, I would like to wish you all a very happy and safe Christmas and thank you for your dedication to your sport. We all look forward to working with you in the New Year.

### **Annual General Meeting**

The 2006 Annual General Meeting was held in Perth on the weekend of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of December.

A key component of any AGM is the election of Office Bearers. In this year's Presidential election Patrick McNamara was re-elected unopposed. In other elections John Boulton and Bob Pennington were elected for terms of two years and join Peter Crawford and Colin Smith whose terms continue until the 2007 elections.

The main item of business for the meeting was a review of the new draft constitution for Rowing Australia. Significant progress was made during the weekend and we look forward to being able to announce the outcome from these discussions in the near future.

In other discussions, the Council considered the impact on the sport of rowing of various state Governments around Australia introducing legislation for the compulsory wearing of Personal Floatation Devices. In response, RA will respond to the national inquiry into marine safety currently being held and assist in providing a consistent national response to all governments considering the introduction of such legislation.

In addition to the formal meetings, RWA President, Craig James, and General Manager Pierre Pougault, hosted a tour of the new 2000m course at Champion Lakes, Perth with the WA Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, Alannah MacTiernan. RA President, Patrick McNamara, acknowledged the considerable progress that had been made since his last visit and congratulated the Minister on her commitment to the \$26 million project that is scheduled to host its first event on 29 April 2007.

## **Rower of the Year Awards**

The RA Rower of the Year Awards was held on Saturday 9 December at the National Museum overlooking Lake Burley Griffin in Canberra.

The night was a fitting occasion and a tribute to the success of our athletes, coaches and officials this year. A list of award winners can be found later in the newsletter.

## **National Team and Olympic Selection Policy**

Yes, it is that time again already. In recent months RA has been working with the Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) in combining the RA National Selection Policy with the nomination and selection requirements of the AOC for the Beijing Olympic Games.

I am pleased to advise that the process has almost been completed and that the documentation will be available for all Olympic aspirants to review in the very near future.

## **2010 FISA World Masters Regatta**

Following a review of the expressions of interest submitted to RA in mid December, we have commenced working with Rowing Queensland and Queensland Events on a bid to host the event at Kawana Waters on the Sunshine Coast. FISA recently extended the deadline for receipt of submissions to 30 April 2007.

## **Athlete Profiles on the Web**

All national team aspirants that went through their paces at the recent national training camp also undertook a number of media and team building activities in preparation for the off water pressures of the next couple of years.

As part of this process, the athletes completed personal profiles that have now been posted to the RA Website together with a recent photograph.

The 4<sup>th</sup> edition of Rowing Press is now available at [www.rowingpress.net](http://www.rowingpress.net).

**Andrew Dee**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

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## **2006 Australian Rower of the Year Awards**

**The 2006 Australian Rower of the Year Awards was held on Saturday 9 December at the National Museum of Australia, Canberra.**

Michael Milton was the guest speaker and he entertained the crowd with a collage of stories, including a vivid retelling of his record breaking run down Les Arcs in France.

Brooke Pratley received the prestigious **Rowers' Rower of the Year**, which is voted on by her peers. This was due recognition for her fantastic achievements in her first season in International rowing. Other awards presented on the night were:

### **Volunteer of the Year – David Deeble**

David Deeble was President of Rowing Victoria for a period of three years and oversaw a period of significant change and development. David also served as a Rowing Australia Councillor during this time and he is highly respected for his contribution.

In addition, David has also been a driving force behind the RA Rowing Online Management System (ROMS) project and continues to Chair the ROMS Steering Committee that has met on a weekly basis for the past 18 months. ROMS will become fully operational in the next couple of weeks and will revolutionise the administration of rowing in Australia.

### **Coach of the Year – Adrian David**

In 2006 Adrian David guided the Australian Women's Double Scull to a gold medal at the World Championships, along with the Australian Women's Lightweight Double Scull to a silver medal at the same event. Both medals were in Olympic boat categories. The gold medal in the women's double was the first ever for Australia, and was one of the biggest upsets of the 2006 World Championships. Adrian was also nominated for the 2006 FISA coach of the year.

### **Women's Rower/Crew of the Year – Brooke Pratley/Liz Kell**

The Australian Women's Double Scull – comprising Brooke Pratley and Elizabeth Kell - won gold at the 2006 World Championships – the first ever for an Australian in this event. The crew was up against current Olympic and World Champions, the Evers-Swindell sisters of New Zealand, and brought the grandstand to their feet in achieving what was thought to be impossible. The win has been described by many as "the most exciting race and gutsy win, ever!!"

### **Men's Rower/Crew of the Year – Duncan Free/Drew Ginn**

The Australian Men's Coxless Pair – comprising Drew Ginn and Duncan Free – won gold at this year's World Championships. The win capped off a very successful year for the pair, after a trying start, which also included a gold medal at the Poznan World Cup.

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## **AOC announce updated incentive scheme**

**The Australian Olympic Committee has increased the Medal Incentive Funding (MIF) for coaches and athletes in the build up to the 2008 Beijing Olympics.**

The news is an added incentive for the Australian rowing team which is striving to remain as one of the foremost rowing nations.

With the women's and men's rowing teams both achieving at a high level in recent years, Andrew Dee, CEO of Rowing Australia, said the financial windfall of the new funding increase was a bonus.

"Rowing Australia is always seeking new avenues to improve our results and the added incentive offered by the new MIF scheme is a positive initiative", Dee said. "I believe our rowers and coaches will respond in a positive manner to gain benefit from the AOC's scheme."

John Coates, President of the AOC said it was important that the Australian Olympic body supported its athletes.

"In taking the decision to increase MIF ahead of securing our sponsorship target, we have prioritised as critical the need to provide additional support to our best athletes and coaches and even if a deficit in the accounts of the AOC for the 2005-2008 quadrennium results."

An outline of the new funding levels is available on the Rowing Australia website [www.rowingaustralia.com.au](http://www.rowingaustralia.com.au).

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## **Rowing Australia National Training Camp**

**Between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of December Rowing Australia conducted the first of two national rowing camps at the AIS in Canberra.**

Nearly 100 rowers and coaches attended the camp which ran over two weeks and incorporated the annual rower of the year awards.

The camp allowed Rowing Australia to conduct clinical performance evaluation on all the rowers with some athletes completing up to 20 rotations in 5 days.

The attendees at the camp also participated in team building exercises which were aimed at promoting a united team approach leading in to the coming season and beyond.

Leading Teams, who specialise in team building exercises, ran some sessions which have already produced some preliminary results regarding certain trademarks and behaviours.



Marguerite Houston, Verena Stocker and  
Amber Halliday

The Rower of the Year Awards provided a welcome break from the intensive training schedule and allowed athletes leaving the camp the following day to experience a taste of the Canberra nightlife.



Elizabeth Kell and her brother James

Special mention must be made to Noel Donaldson, Lyall McCarthy, Brian Richardson and their fellow coaches who worked tirelessly for 13 days to ensure that the camp was a success.

The athletes will return for a second camp between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of January at various stages depending on their boat class.

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## Tomkins attracts large media gathering

**James Tomkins held centre stage at the AIS rowing sheds in Canberra as the Australian National Rowing Squad continued their preparations for the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing.**

The squad was in Canberra for two weeks as part of a national training camp and Tomkins' return to competitive rowing was always guaranteed to draw the cameras.



James Tomkins' return to the Australian rowing squad gained widespread media coverage.

A large group of media including WIN, ABC, The Canberra Times, Fairfax and AAP gathered to take footage of the five times Olympian in action on Lake Burley Griffin as he was put through his paces along with the rest of the squad.

Tomkins, 41, who has not competed internationally since the Athens Olympic Games in 2004, openly spoke to the media about his desire to add to his collection of Olympic medals in Beijing.

"I have returned to rowing with the same desire I have always possessed", Tomkins said. "I am not just here to make up the numbers and I can see no better way to finish my career than with a medal in Beijing."

Tomkins fielded a range of questions from the media and left a positive impression of his commitment to the sport and his desire to compete at his 6<sup>th</sup> Olympics.

Tomkins and the National Squad will return for a second rowing camp in January before the 2007 World Championships squad is chosen in April.

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## 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.

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## COACHES TIP

Whilst we have outlined our 2007 and 2008 centralised training squad plans it is critical all athletes and coaches focus on the specific preparation required during each phase of the season rather than the effect of any possible outcome. Medals in Beijing are the aim.

**Noel Donaldson**  
High Performance Director

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## 2006/2007 EVENTS OF INTEREST

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
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
1-3 June, 2007	World Rowing Cup 1	Linz, Austria
22-24 June 2007	World Rowing Cup 2	Amsterdam, The Netherlands
13-15 July 2007	World Rowing Cup 3	Lucerne, Switzerland
27-29 July 2007	World Rowing U23 Championships	Strathclyde, Great Britain
8-11 August 2007	World Rowing Junior Championships	Beijing, China
26 August – 2 September 2007	World Rowing Championships	Munich, Germany

## ATHLETE PROFILE

Each month, RA News will feature an athlete profile. In this edition we feature Brooke Pratley.



**Name:** Brooke Pratley

**Nickname:** Brooklyn

**Home town:** Crookwell, NSW

**Place of residence:** Canberra

**Occupation:** Physiotherapist

**Club:** Sydney University

**Began rowing:** 2002

**Date of birth:** 06/04/80

**Height:** 191.5cm

**Weight:** 77kg

**Favourite food:** Rum and raisin dark chocolate...yum... and anything my boyfriend cooks!

**Favourite book:** Birds without wings – Louis de Bernieres, Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy – Douglas Adams

**Favourite movie:** Donnie Darko

**Personal achievements:** Physiotherapist Australian flat-water kayaking team 2005; World Cup Tour

**School:** Crookwell High School, NSW

**Current coach:** Lyall McCarthy

**Institute/Academy:** AIS

**Rowing career highlight(s):** 2006 Gold in the World Championships Double Scull with Lizzy Kell

**Professional goals:** Masters of Sports Physiotherapy in the post rowing period; continued work with various sporting teams

**Interests:** Playing tennis, watching tennis, reading, eating, music, travelling adventures, basketball, sleeping in, vegetating on days off training

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