



Australian Rowing News

Issue 36

FROM THE CEO

Welcome to the newest edition of RA news!

We've hit the ground running in 2008 as athletes and officials prepare themselves for the final year of the 2008 Olympic campaign.

Our elite level athletes are reaching a critical period in their training regimes as they compete for places on the Olympic Team. Four years of work can come down to their performances over the next period of time and I am sure that we will see some fantastic racing.

The Australian rowing community was this month buoyed by the news of the qualification of the Men's Eight for the Beijing Olympics which has added to the sense of optimism as we enter this crucial and exciting period. With this in mind I would like to wish all athletes, coaches and officials the very best for their preparations during this time and anticipate some excellent results throughout the year.

In this edition of RA News we will get an update from the January camps, preview the second round of selection trials, as well as the 2008 Australian Rowing Championships.

This month our athlete profile is on Tom Gibson and Noel Donaldson will offer some insight on the coaching front.

Andrew Dee

Rowing Australia CEO

Get closer to the athletes

Make sure you keep up to date with the lives of our top athletes as they continue their preparations for Beijing!

Each week in the countdown to the Olympics, Rowing Australia will feature a different athlete on its website, www.rowingaustralia.com.au, as they answer a set of questions regarding their training, racing and time spent away from rowing.

Also be sure to listen in to ABC Grandstand on Saturday and Sunday afternoons in the lead up to the Olympics as Kim Crow and Amber Bradley feature as two of six athletes being profiled by Dan Lonergan. Every month Kim and Amber will give a short interview along with four other Olympic hopefuls as they continue their preparations for Beijing. Be sure to check the Rowing Australia website for the times of the next interview in early February.

Australian crews draw close to selection

The second round of Rowing Australia's selection trials are only two weeks away, with the selection regatta commencing on Wednesday 13 February at the Sydney International Regatta Centre, Penrith.

Two Australian crews have already been named, with the 2007 World Championship and FISA International Male Crew of Year Men's Pair of Duncan Free and Drew Ginn joining the World Champion Lightweight Women's Double Scull duo of Marguerite Houston and Amber Halliday as starters in Beijing.

Following the selection regatta, which runs from February 13 – 15, a number of the athletes contesting selection will compete in the NSW State Championships, before seat racing will commence from Monday 17 February.



Tom Gibson and Sam Beltz during the 2007 World Rowing Championships

The board will then be presented with the selections, before they ratify these decisions and announce the crews on February 22.

Crews that will be named on this date include the Women's Eight, Women's Pair, Men's Eight, Men's Four, Men's Lightweight Double Scull, Men's Lightweight Four, Men's Single Scull, Men's Double Scull and Men's Quad Scull.

The Women's sculling crews will be named in April, allowing athletes who did not make the Women's Eight or Pair to shift across to this group and compete for selection.

Australia's Lightweight Men's Double Scull crew for the past two seasons, Tom Gibson and Sam Beltz, has continued to impress with their performances over the last few months. Beltz has in particular been impressive, recording some fast times in the National Time Trials on the Nepean River in December.

Beltz and Gibson have finished fourth at the last two World Championships, and if selected will be pushing for a podium finish in Beijing.

The Women's sweep squad is battling for the ten seats available in the Women's Pair and Eight. Both crews finished fourth at last year's World Championships in Munich and with Brooke Pratley and Liz Kell both switching from the sculling group to the sweep group in 2008, the race for positions has intensified.

In 2007 Kim Crow and Sarah Cook doubled up in the Pair and the Eight, so the decision remains for the selectors whether the selected Pair will do the same in the Olympic year.



Drew Ginn and James Tomkins on their way to recording a memorable victory in Athens in 2004

James Tomkins is three weeks away from potentially being selected for his sixth Olympic Games as the Men's sweep squad still revel in the news of the Eight gaining qualification for the Olympic Games.

Tomkins will be fighting for one of the 12 seats on offer in the Eight and Four, with 16 athletes currently in contention for these places. With the Eight considered the priority boat, much attention will focus on who can gain selection for this crew as they aim to win Australia's first Olympic gold medal in this discipline.

The week of trials in Penrith is sure to throw up some great racing, some surprise results and its own share of drama as Australia's elite rowers vie for places on the Australian Olympic Team.

Full race results will be available during the selection regatta along with regular reports at www.rowingaustralia.com.au

Training camps prove successful as Beijing selection beckons

Rowing Australia conducted a number of camps in the middle of January as the countdown continues to the Beijing Olympics in August.

The second selection trials are to be held from February 13–20 at the Sydney International Regatta Centre in Penrith and following these trials a number of Australian crews will be named.

With the news that the Russian Eight was disqualified from the 2007 World Championships after three members of its crew was found guilty of doping violations, there was an air of relief in the men's sweep camp.



David Crawshay and Scott Brennan narrowly missed a spot in the A Final at the 2007 World Championships

After the obvious disappointment of missing out on Olympic qualification last year by one place, the squad was priming itself for their final chance of qualification this year. The Final Olympic Qualification Regatta to be held in Poland offers one extra Olympic berth in the Men's Eight boat class.

Head Coach of the Men's sweep squad, Brian Richardson, said that planning for the year will now change.

"We will now change the program and we will have to re think", Richardson said. "It's a great relief. If you are trying to peak for the qualifier, which you have to, then your performance at the Olympics may not be as strong."

In Tasmania, the Men's sculling group, who has qualified all three of their boats for Beijing, trained out of the solitude of Lake Barrington as the race for seat places quickens. David Crawshay and Scott Brennan were placed in the priority Double Scull boat last year, but a number of athletes are pushing for their positions.

With 12 athletes currently contesting the 7 seats on offer, Crawshay says that the intensity of the group is noticeable.

"The reality is that 12 into 7 doesn't really go", Crawshay said. "I think we're all pretty mature about it. We have some pretty intense battles on the water, but I think we realise that off the water we can all be friends."

The women's sculling group trained in Sydney for a week and then moved down to Canberra, while the Men's Lightweights were based in Perth.

Australia's two pre selected Olympic crews have also been placing in a lot of work behind the scenes. Drew Ginn and Duncan Free have been training together on the Gold Coast over the Christmas and New Year period as they continue their quest for the perfect row. The dual world champions have had their sights set on Beijing for some time and will be the crew to beat come August.

Amber Halliday and Marguerite Houston, who have been selected as the Women's Lightweight Double Scull crew, will look to back up their world championship success with Olympic gold in Beijing.



Halliday and Houston soak up the glory of World Championship success

Halliday and Houston, under the watchful eye of Coach Adrian David, spent the three weeks after New Year's Day training on the Tamar River in Launceston. This camp has become an annual fixture but this year has not been as strenuous following the pre - selection of the duo for the Olympics.

"The bonus of the pre-selection is that we don't have to peak for the domestic season and the selection trials", Halliday said. "The three weeks we have spent down here has still involved a lot of hard work but it will only get tougher from here on in."

Men's Eight sprung into action by Russian ban

It has been two weeks since the news broke that the Russian Men's Eight had been disqualified from the 2007 FISA World Rowing Championships in Munich last year.

Three of the Russian crew had been found guilty and subsequently banned for using intravenous infusion, a method prohibited under the World Anti-Doping Code.

The news came as much welcome relief for the Australian Men's sweep squad, as the Eight from last year had missed out on qualifying for Beijing by only one position.

With their inclusion in the 2008 Olympic Games now guaranteed, focus can shift to ensuring the best preparation possible for Beijing, and not the worry of peaking for the Final Olympic Qualification Regatta in Poznan, June 15 – 18.



The Men's Eight receive a talking to by Coach Brian Richardson during the January training camp in Canberra.

The Men's Four is now the only Australian male boat that needs to gain qualification at Poznan and they are required to finish in the top 2 to progress to Beijing.

Men's Head Coach Brian Richardson said there was a lot to be worked on before August and admitted that 2007 was a steep learning curve.

"We had some difficulties with the rhythm in the middle of the boat and had a new combination from the year before and on paper it had been training stronger and faster but under the pressure of competition it broke down and the speed and efficiency was lost", Richardson said. "That's been a huge learning curve for me as the coach and for the crew so in the end it's actually going to make us stronger."

But large measures to ensure the perfect preparation for Beijing have already been taken according to Richardson.

“Well the first thing we have done this year is have them all here now (in Canberra) until the Olympics and although there is not a crew picked yet there is a squad of 16 and that in itself helps build the similarities through the team so that everyone is rowing the same way”, Richardson said. “We train in fours (coxless fours) a lot which we didn’t do last year which will help us break it down into smaller units and then I think eventually the Eight will be a stronger, faster boat.”

The Men’s Eight will be named at the conclusion of the February selection trials.

Shirlaw receives award for services to rowing

Rowing Australia would like to congratulate Robert Shirlaw on receiving a Medal of the Order of Australia.

He received the award for his service to rowing as a coach, administrator and competitor, and to education.

Shirlaw represented Australia at the Olympics on two occasions, the first in 1964 in Tokyo and then four years later in Mexico City.

In 1964 he competed in the Men’s Coxless Pair and finished in ninth place, while four year’s later he rowed the bow seat in the Men’s Eight as they won the silver medal, missing out on the gold medal by less than a second.

Upon retiring from the sport as a competitor, Shirlaw began coaching at Shore School in Sydney and has been an integral part of the rowing program ever since.

His desire to give back to the sport he loves has filtered down through the students he has mentored and he is a deserved winner of the medal.

Patrick nominated as torch bearer in Olympic flame relay

Congratulations to Lizzy Patrick who has been nominated as one of the 80 participants in the Australian leg of the 2008 Olympic torch relay.

Patrick, who will be coxing the Women’s Eight at the Olympic Games, will carry the flame on April 24 in Canberra.

It is widely thought that she will hold it on board the Women’s Eight as they row across Lake Burley Griffin.

Adaptive Rowing

Rowing Australia's Adaptive Rowing Program is please to announce the 2008 Paralympic Preparation Program and the Monitored Athlete Squads.

PPP Squad

Surname	First Name	Athlete	Coach	Cox	State	Boat Category	National Rank	Class Rank
Ross	Kathryn	√			NSW	TA	1	1
Monypenny	Domini	√			TAS	A	4	2
MacLean	John	√			NSW	TA	5	2
Barrett	Gene	√			NSW	LTA	7	2
Albisser	Pedro		√		NSW			
Bryan	Rik		√		TAS			

Monitored Athlete Squad

Surname	First Name	Athlete	Coach	Cox	State	Boat Category	National Rank	Class Rank
Taylor	Peter	√			NSW	A	2	1
Heger	Andreas	√			ACT	LTA	3	1
Houlison	Ben	√			NSW	A	6	3
Muir	Cam	√			VIC	LTA	8	3
Cooke	Carol	√			VIC	LTA	9	4
Neilson	Nick	√			QLD	LTA	10	5
Demetrios	Matthew	√			NSW	LTA	11	6
Sam	Reding	√			SA	LTA	12	7
Peter	Siri	√			QLD	LTA	13	8
Brandie	O'Connor	√			ACT	LTA	14	9
Brown	Lisa			√	VIC			
Holmes	Neil		√		NSW			
Poole	Hilary		√		VIC			
Butt	David		√		ACT			

We are also looking forward to the National Selection Regatta to select Australia's Adaptive Rowing Team to be nominated to the Australian Paralympic Committee to attend the inaugural Adaptive Rowing regatta at the 2008 Beijing Paralympics. We wish the best of luck to all rowers vying for selection.

Australian Rowing Championships



Entries have opened for the 2008 Australian Rowing Championships which are being held at the Sydney International Regatta Centre, March 3 – 9.

NSW Rowing will be hosting the event as schools, clubs and institutes travel from around Australia to take part in the showpiece of Australian rowing.

The website for the event will be up and running on ROMS from February 4 and a link will be available from the Rowing Australia website.

Bulletin 2 is also available which includes all the information you need if you are travelling to the event, or interested in following it from the comfort of your home. An indicative program is also now available with preliminary race times for the regatta.

This year one of the highlights will be the 50th anniversary of the Penrith Cup. A full preview of the regatta will feature in the next edition of RA News, which will be released on February 25.

Vale Tim Willoughby

WA Olympic Council President, Tim Willoughby, passed away on January 9 whilst on board a flight from the United States to Singapore.

Willoughby represented Australia for rowing at the Olympics in 1980 and 1984, winning a bronze medal with the Men's Eight in Los Angeles.

He was also part of the *Kookaburra* crew that attempted to defend the America's Cup in 1986.

Willoughby, who was a prominent stock broker, became president of the WA Olympic Council in 1997.

Rowing Australia would like to pass on its condolences to the family of Tim Willoughby.

COACHES TIP

Remember, young or beginning athletes should not attempt to develop maximum strength either during maturation or the first year of training. It is recommended that young athletes emphasise exercises that utilize their own body weight, working with a partner or simple equipment.

During the latter stages of maturation, the young athlete should be taught proper barbell lifting techniques in conjunction with a more structured training programme. These types of exercises (that establish and maintain a preparation base) and the proper teaching of barbell lifting techniques should be continued throughout the athlete's career.

Before maturation or during the first training year of older athletes, the athlete should follow a programme of increasing loads by utilizing sets of 10-25 repetitions at 60-75% of maximum. This level of training is used to develop an anaerobic base that will translate into greater work capacity in ensuing years. It also offers advantages of muscle growth and markedly reduced risk of injury.

Athletes should only progress to 80% of maximum or higher after one solid year of training. It should be noted that it is not necessary for beginners or even experienced athletes to test for maximum load capability for one repetition. This should only be attempted by experienced athletes with a high degree of skill.

Noel Donaldson
High Performance Director
Rowing Australia

2007/2008 EVENTS OF INTEREST

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
13 – 20 February 2008	National Selection Trials	Sydney International Regatta Centre, Penrith
3 – 9 March 2008	Australian Rowing Championships and Interstate Regatta	Sydney International Regatta Centre, Penrith
8 – 10 May 2008	World Cup 1	Munich, Germany
30 May – 1 June 2008	World Cup 2	Lucerne, Switzerland
15 – 18 June 2008	Final Olympic Qualification Regatta	Poznan, Poland
20 – 22 June 2008	World Cup 3	Poznan, Poland
17 – 20 July 2008	2008 World U23 Rowing Championships	Brandenburg, Germany
22 – 27 July 2008	World Junior and Senior Rowing Championships	Linz, Austria
9 – 17 August 2008	2008 Beijing Olympic Games	Beijing, China

ATHLETE PROFILE

Each month, RA News will feature an athlete profile. In this edition we feature Tom Gibson



Nickname: Gibbo

Home town: Hobart

Place of residence: Hobart

Occupation: student

Club: Huon Rowing Club

Began rowing: 1999

Date of birth: 6/5/82

Height: 182cm

Weight: 73kg

Favourite food: meatloaf

Favourite book: Marching Powder

Favourite movie: Shawshank Redemption

School: The Hutchins School, Hobart

Current coach: John Driessen & Antonio Maurogiovanni

Institute/Academy: TIS

Rowing career highlight(s): 2005 Worlds Championships, 4th LM4-; 2004 World Championships, Bronze LM8+; 2003 U/23 World Championships, Gold LM4-; 2002 U/23 World Championships, Bronze LM4-; Penrith Cup winner, 2006, 2005 & 2004; 2006 World Championships 4th LM2x, 2007 World Championships 4th LM2x

Professional goals: Finish my sport science degree and either continue study or obtain a job in the area of cardiac physiology and rehab.

Interests: cycling, festivals and fishing

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INSTITUTE OF SPORT



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ACTAS
ACT ACADEMY OF SPORT



South Australian Sports Institute



Wais



EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION



Going beyond expectations



TRAVEL DESIGN
International



CROKER



SKINS