



GDRA NEWS

From the President

by Jim Wall

The progress of growth, substance and exposure of our Greater Dayton Rowing Association has been enhanced over the years by our partnership with Five Rivers MetroParks. This is particularly true of the junior rowing program.

MetroParks has helped us with funding for the junior program, and with other forms of support for GDRA including advertising, regatta assistance, maintenance, usage of the Wegerzyn offices for our meetings and the attention of their management whenever we have an issue.

Not only has MetroParks supported our own efforts but just look at Island Park as a whole to see the difference they made when they took over management of the park system. Island Park is always clean and safe for families to use, and this is true of all of the areas they manage.

This year MetroParks is seeking voter approval to expand its budget which will go for park improvements, including a possible addition to our boathouse, riverfront maintenance, bikeway expansion, etc.

Attached with our newsletter are "Count On Me!" cards which we are asking you to fill out and return to

the MetroParks Levy Committee if you can see a way to help.

We will also be coming out again with a note in early September with plans to put a group effort together by GDRA to help pass this levy.

If there was ever a group that deserved community support it is Five Rivers MetroParks. As said in a recent Dayton Daily News *Speak Up* column: "Five Rivers MetroParks improves the economy, culture and spirit of the region."

I think it's important and possibly even a obligation that all of us involved with the rowing program do everything we can to support this effort.

MetroParks deserve it.

Becky Doyle Awarded Membership

by GDRA Trustees

Becky Doyle was awarded a Special Membership by the Trustees at their Winter meeting for contributions to the club by a non-rowing volunteer. Last year, Becky stepped up as Membership Chairman and brought with her the real focus that job requires. She has taken on responsibilities for the Annual Regatta, the Junior Program and the Learn-To-Row Program. This year she has also taken on the Secretary job.

Thank you Becky, for all your hard work!

Rowing - Racing

by Michelle Murphy

Maybe it's midlife crisis (which, I'm finding, can be expensive), but the sport of rowing completely hooked me from the start. There's a part of me that wants to try new things (before it's too late) and test my limits. Rowing feeds into that need and many others. For example, what other sport demands the combination of sheer physical strength and endurance coupled with a command of precise technique (as with bladework)? Rowing is as mental a challenge as it is physical.

Sculling in particular can be a very lonely sport, and the most introspective as well. I've done some of my most profound thinking on the water. The repetition of movement and constant assessment of technique serves as meditation. The Zen-like appeal lies in knowing that you'll never have a perfect stroke, but you can try...

Racing is the real proving ground. I've met some wonderful people at regattas, there's such a sense of camaraderie in the sport, there are no strangers. I prefer Head racing to Sprint racing (Head races are longer in distance and the starts are staggered so there is more of a feeling of beating the clock - not the boats beside you). With Head racing there's more time to develop and execute strategy - more finesse I guess. My favorite race was one where I placed third - I thanked the winner at the finish line - she pushed me harder than I ever would have pushed myself. Which comes back to the ultimate reward of this sport - redefining your capabilities. And I'm learning that Rowing is a sport that can teach you a great deal about yourself, regardless of how old you are.

**← Applies to
All Members**

Captain's Test Required to Row Performance Shells

July 31 Deadline

The good news is that we now have quite a few elite quality racing shells. The bad news is that they are ridiculously delicate. Bumps that are easily absorbed by the Maas 24s and Peinert 26 can ruin a performance shell like the Kaschper doubles.

After **July 31**, you will be required to have passed the Captain's Test before you can take out the club's "performance" shells. Scullers will be required to have rowed 100 miles in a single before taking the test. That sounds like a lot of mileage, but it is actually just 20 rows of 2 laps each.

The emphasis here is on demonstrating that you can handle these fragile boats without risk of damage. You will also be quizzed on safety procedures and the like.

The test takes approximately 20 minutes. If you pass, your name will be added to the list of "Performance Shell Authorized Users" posted above the boat signout book. **If your name is not on the posted list, then you are not permitted to row the Club's performance boats.**

The performance boats are:

- 1x Vespoli
- 1x Peinert X25
- 2x Kaschpers
- 4+ Kaschpers
- 8+ Vespoli

The only exception is when you are under the direct supervision of a Club coach or officer.

Contact Charlie or Becky Doyle at to arrange for your Captain's Test.

Learn-To-Row

by Becky Doyle

Huge Demand for LTR

80 people have signed up for the 2000 Learn-To-Row program. Michelle Murphy got things off to an early start with the graduation of eight students in May. Alexis Krivian has now joined Michelle to handle the coaching load. They are teaching 20 students in June and will do more classes in July and August. The four week course meets twice a week for two hours each class. We keep the class size at four students. The program fee is only \$75.00 for the entire 4-week session.

Advanced Rowing Lessons

Advanced Rowing lessons will be offered for those who want additional instruction in the art of sculling. These are intended both for recent LTR graduates and for experienced scullers looking for some structured coaching. They would also be a great way to tune up for the Captain's Test. We are planning on doing these in August, but we can also react to demand, so sign up now!

Sweep lessons may be added if there is enough enthusiasm and participation from members.

Info & Pictures

Stop by the boathouse and pick up a Learn-To-Row brochure near the bulletin board in Bay #1 to pass along to a friend, colleague, or relative. Then you can see the pictures of recent graduates. All of May's graduates went ahead and joined the Club, so we should be seeing more of them!

Watch for more LTR news or information. Check the website at www.truesport.com/GDRA or call Becky Doyle or email doylelam.

Trustees:

Todd Sobol
Jim Wall
Doug Barker
Charlie Doyle
Michelle Murphy
Barbara O'Hara
Steve Herbert

Officers:

President	Jim Wall
VP Operations	Doug Barker
Treasurer	Linda Clemens
Secretary	Becky Doyle
Junior Director	Charlie Doyle
LTR Director	Charlie Doyle
Regatta Director	Jim Wall
Membership Chair	Becky Doyle
Boathouse Mgr.	Doug Barker
Publicity	Barbara O'Hara
Corp. Relations	Jim Wall
Competition	Michelle Murphy

Coaches:

Junior Men	Ben Boehm
Junior Women	Mary Kunes
Learn-To-Row	Michelle Murphy Alexis Krivian

GDRA Web Page

Webmaster: Linda Clemens

www.truesport.com/GDRA

The club website has lots of information and has proved to be a real source of new members and Learn-To-Row students. The web site now includes printable copies of membership forms, USRowings waivers, etc.

GDR Club Boats

by Doug Barker

The GDRA club fleet is gaining four new boats this year. Just arrived from Kaschper are two brand new fours and a double. By June 23, we should have a new Peinert X25.

Singles

The Peinert X25 will answer a big need for many of our members. It is designed for lightweight and midweight rowers. It is a racing geometry hull that can handle a maximum 170 lb rower. For folks that are under 140 lb, this may be the first time they feel at home in a performance shell, since the boat will settle down into the water properly. The new Peinert will be classified as a performance shell, so you will need to pass your Captain's test before you can take it out by yourself. The rest

of the singles fleet includes an Alden, a Julian, two Maas 24s, a Peinert 26 and a performance class Vespoli.

Doubles

The Kaschper double that we bought in 1998 has been in such high demand, that we bought another one just like it. That should alleviate the pressure for performance class doubles, and it will enable us to do side by side training/racing in doubles now. The wooden CruSader double will be back again this year with new seats, tracks and decking courtesy of Jim Wall's handiwork over the winter. The CruSader sets up more easily than the Kaschpers.

Pair

The old yellow pair was pretty much neglected last year. It is still there, if anyone wants to spend a bit of time fixing it up and try their hand at what many consider to be the most elegant form of rowing.

Quad

The beautiful wooden Hudson was used quite a bit last year by Learn-To-Row. It's also a lot of fun when experienced scullers hop into it.

Fours

The Junior program made a philosophical/coaching decision to make heavy use of fours this year, so we added two new Kaschper fours. That gives us 3 honeycomb Kaschper fours and the wooden Squatty. As in years past, there is at least one adult crew getting together to row a four, but the heaviest use will be by the Juniors.

Eights

Last year we bought two used eights from UD and Jim Wall refurbished a light-weight wooden eight. The best of these boats, a Vespoli, suffers from many annoying maladies, including a broken rib. The Junior program would love to get a new eight (or two), but we don't see any funding sources at the moment.



Junior Rowing

by Charlie Doyle, GDRA Junior
Rowing Director

The Winter

The GDRA Juniors began their 2000 campaign in February with a successful trip to the Cincinnati Ergometer Sprints. Several of our rowers achieved very high places with most participants recording personal best scores. Although ergometer work is rarely enjoyable, a corps of rowers were coached by Ben Boehm and Mary Kunes and practiced hard throughout the winter in donated space at "Reality Fitness," a fitness club in downtown Dayton owned by GDRA member John Drake. The athletes' diligent work on the ergometers paid off then with an increase of rowing skill and physical conditioning and will continue to pay off as the year progresses.

Springing Onto the Water

The "on water" racing season finally opened April 15 in Columbus. Subsequently, the crews competed in two regattas in Cincinnati and Columbus, and once each at Oak Ridge, TN and Toledo for a total of six regattas this past spring. Results were reasonable with the women's first 4+ winning bronze medals at two of regattas and a men's lightweight 4+ winning a silver medal in Oak Ridge. One of the limiting factors for our GDRA Junior entries is that since we currently have such a small number of experienced rowers, instead of logically racing in novice events due to certain regatta regulations, they are forced to compete in the varsity events. This affects the crews' won/loss record adversely, but there is a remedy: See "Program Size" below.

Plans for Summer & Fall

Summer rowing season will kick off with a regatta in Detroit on June 24 with competition at four other regattas planned for the remainder of

the summer. The fall schedule then brings longer, normally three mile head-style, racing and will begin in late September in Cincinnati.

How the Team Works

Although everyone is encouraged to row year round, if a young rower is unable to participate in any season, they are welcome to come back and try their luck in the next season. The GDRA rowing club takes care of paying all entry fees and for shell transport to away regattas for the GDRA Juniors. It is the individual's responsibility to pay for his/her uniform, food and occasional lodging, and transportation to and from the regatta site. Rowers' transportation is ideally accomplished with parental carpooling. However, if there are not enough parents to drive them, then a vehicle will be rented and the cost will be divided among the rowers whose parents do not share in driving the athletes to regattas. If any parent would like to assume the duties of organizing transportation for the crews please contact the coaches!

Experience and Competitiveness

Anyone who rows knows that this sport is hard work and there are no short cuts (we have all looked for them but cannot find any). Right now, many of our rowers are new to the sport and have not logged the practice miles to compete most effectively. However, the good news is that we have an advantage over the established high school programs that have rowers with years of experience: They do not row during the summer! This is where the GDRA Club program is able to level the playing field by practicing and competing throughout the summer. We are confident that the GDRA Juniors' win/loss record will soon reflect the amount of good, hard and regular rowing practice that it takes to build a strong competitive rowing program!!

Program Size

It is clear that successful junior rowing programs have a large number of rowers. Due to the widely divergent skill levels of new and experienced rowers, all rowers need to be boated in crews of similar ability. The separation of skill levels encourages and challenges novice and experienced rowers alike. This can be accomplished by increasing our numbers with a viable GDRA Juniors *Novice* Crew.

You Can Help Recruit

We ask that you contact anyone 13+ in junior high or high school whom you think might benefit from rowing. Give them the coaches' and director's phone numbers, the club's website, or a GDRA Juniors brochure available at the boathouse. Encourage them to try rowing during one of the FREE introductory sessions being held this summer at the boathouse.

FREE introductory courses

In June, we are offering free four day introductory courses for students age 13+. A new rower can simply show up at the boathouse at 4pm on Monday, sign up and begin the four day course that runs from 4-6pm on Monday-Thursday of that week. The courses begin on June 12th, 19th or 26th. After this introduction, they can join the GDRA Junior Novice Crew for a nominal fee through the end of 2000.

Strengthening a junior rowing program is not unique to the GDRA Juniors, but we are working on solutions to make them a highly successful crew.

Thank you!

Director:

Charlie Doyle

Women's Coach:

Mary Kunes

Men's Coach:

Ben Boehm

Collisions

Oh s#^t!

We had one reported safety incident last fall. It was a classic.

In the pre-dawn darkness, a double collided with an eight that was at a stop. The bow of the double rode up into the cockpit of the eight, striking the coxswain. Fortunately, no one was seriously injured.

The incident was reviewed by the Joint UD/GDRA Safety Committee. They issued a one page analysis which included four key recommendations:

1. Reiterate the importance of steersmen looking ahead regularly.
2. Reiterate the rule that a boat “at a stop has an obligation to keep a lookout for boats underway and to call out ‘look ahead!’ well in advance of any possible collision.”
3. Make both stern & bow lights mandatory in darkness.
4. Distribute Island Park Rowing Rules and post in the boathouse.

How to Avoid Collisions

Never count on anyone else to do what you expect them to do. That was the big lesson from last Fall’s collision. Both boats were doing what they thought was right, but didn’t keep an eye on the other boat.

Read the Traffic Pattern section of the Island Park Rowing Rules. The most important of these are:

- Keep to the right of the center-line at all times.
- If you stop, pull over near the bank. Do NOT stop in the center of the river or near bridges.
- When you are passing a slower or stopped boat, you move toward the center of the river, leaving them near the bank.

GDRA Officially Named Manager of the Boathouse

This past summer, GDRA was officially named the manager of the Island Park Rowing Facilities by Five Rivers MetroParks.

In many regards, this is merely an acknowledgement of the status quo. Since the construction of the boathouse, GDRA has assumed responsibility for most aspects of the boathouse operation, such as paying the utility bills every month. GDRA has also taken the leadership role in recent years in soliciting support from the City of Dayton (for building the boathouse) and from MetroParks (for paying for materials for the dock).

In other regards, this breaks new ground. It means assuming a greater degree of responsibility for running a clean and a safe operation. It also means that we should continue to offer programs open to the entire community, such as the Junior Rowing and Learn-To-Row programs.

Theft & Security

We are very fortunate that we have not had big theft problems at the boathouse. A lot of credit goes to the MetroParks Rangers who really cleaned up places like Island Park when they assumed control in the mid 90s. But, we do have occasional incidents (one member’s car was broken into last year). So remember to not leave wallets, purses, etc in plain sight in your car or lying around in the boathouse.

Lockers available: There are several lockers in Bay 1 available for Day Use. Just bring your own lock, stash your stuff in the locker during your row and remember to take your stuff back out.

Wash Your Boat on Saturdays

Rub a dub dub...

Cleanliness is next to godliness.

A clean boat is a fast boat?

When you row a club boat on a Saturday, please wash it down afterward with soap and water. That way, our club boats will get a good washing once a week.

So, before you take the boat off the rack on Saturdays, set a pair of slings out in front of Bay 1, so they are ready for boat washing when you finish your row.

On other days of the week, you should at least wipe the boat down with a towel, or hose it off if the water was nasty.

The bucket, soap and sponges should be left in Bay 1 next to the hose.

WANTED:

Old towels for wiping down boats! Bring them down to the boathouse and leave them in the wooden crates in Bay 1.

GDRA Club Rules

The GDRA Club Rules give a lot of details about use of club boats, memberships, guests and safety guidelines. There have been some minor updates from last year. *Changes and clarifications are in italics.*

Greater Dayton Rowing Association

c/o Doug Barker
6351 Adams Circle
Centerville, Ohio 45459



All members should
read about the new
Captain's Test on
page 2

Club Picnic June 17

A GDRA Cookout/Row is planned for Saturday, June 17th, 4-8 p.m. There's a sign-up poster in Bay #1. All current club members and their guests and past, present, and future Learn-To-Row students are invited and encouraged to join the fun that day! There will be video-taping sessions, sweep rowing demonstrations, boat washing, good food, and fun.

*Call Becky Doyle for more information
or email*