



URC newsletter



www.unionrowing.co.nz

SPRING 2019

From President Dorle Pauli

Hello all, here we are again at the beginning of a new season, but this year it will be a summer with a difference. For the first time in many years, URC will be sending junior crews to RNZ regattas, and I am sure we will all keep fingers crossed for our girls as they tackle their first 'proper' races. As pointed out by Danny on page 2, they are all competent in the small and big boats now and the rest they will have to learn from hard-won experience. We wish them all a successful season and the confidence that comes from working together as a mutually supportive team. Go Gwen, Ashlinn, Aleisha, Lauren, Eva, Darcey, Beth, Jaimee and Ashtyn ... and their coxswain Noah, have a good time out there. And never fear, you will hear Danny cheering you on from miles away!



Other than that, I really liked reading the stories some of our former LtR graduates contributed to this newsletter. As far as I am concerned, all I ever wanted for our charges is just that, enjoyment of what I believe to simply be the best sport ever. Mission accomplished, I think, and I hope we can provide the same for our current and largest ever LtR group. Thank you to Deb and all our helpers for organising and looking after our newest recruits. It was good to see a few new faces at this year's AGM, and with the club steadily growing towards the 100 member mark, we are planning to offer more social events and additional opportunities for our recreational rowers especially. We are also up-skilling our coaches to help us look after everybody. As a result of our continued growth, we will have to think about reconfiguring the shed to accommodate us all and our ever-increasing plant, but this will require some careful planning in line with CCC regulations. In the meantime, nothing much has changed in terms of the pressure on the Avon, it is crowded out there already, so stay safe and look after each other. Have a great summer, and enjoy your rowing.

Cheers, Dorle

From Club Captain Deb Hymers-Ross

Congratulations – and there are plenty of them!

- ❖ To Jim Little for his life membership of the Canterbury Rowing Association, in recognition of his life-long dedication to the sport of rowing .
- ❖ for the combined efforts of nationals rowers who brought home the Union Rowing Club Trophy, awarded to the most successful club at the NZ Masters Championships. [The trophy is awarded to the club with the highest aggregate points from first, second and third placings at Masters Nationals, with composite crews ineligible. Union last won in 2017. At this year's nationals, we won with a massive 138 points – 54 points clear of second placed Aramoho.
- ❖ to our gold medalists from the NZ Masters Champs:Kirsty Mahoney A, B single, Dom Mahoney B single, Stuart Wade D single – and Audsley Jones, Kirsty Mahoney and Greg McLaughlin for their gold medal wins in composite crews.
- ❖ seeing Dianna Donald tackle her first singles race certainly inspired me over the weekend!



Club news:

- ❖ Our new quad/four came back with us from NZ Masters National Champs, has been set up and is gracing our waterway. The committee will vote on the name at the next meeting.
- ❖ With Nationals behind us, Stu has kindly put up the "away" regattas for the upcoming season and below it are some long distance races that are closer to home. Please add your name to the list of competitors. The Aoraki Regatta is one Union has not attended previously. It's a fun regatta we are told with lots of flexibility in the programme. They will be able to add in requested races. It's an opportunity for our Juniors to race with our Masters in 50/50 events too.
- ❖ Thank you to those of you who responded to the survey following the coaching clinic, it's good to know we are on the right track and half day sessions, coached in quads twice a year is what we should be targeting as a club.
- ❖ Armed with new skills and drills, whether you are going out as a group who row together regularly or an organised crew, I encourage you to take a moment while you are setting your feet, adjusting the height of your oar locks and cleaning your slides to discuss what the focus of this particular row will be, then go out and execute; following the row take a moment to debrief. Self coaching is paramount.
- ❖ Lastly, thank you to all of you who unselfishly pitch in around the club. A lot of people doing a little achieves a lot!



Nationals gold medalists Stu, Audsley, Kirsty and Dom with the URC Trophy



Learning to Row at Union



Our spring newsletter has a 'learn to row' theme. Five years ago, URC began its LtR programme in earnest. We hear from some of our first graduates from LtR, as well as one of our younger LtRs too, giving us their advice on what attracted them to rowing, their rowing career highlight to date, the most important quality a masters rower needs, why they'd recommend LtR to others – and much more!

Lauren Isitt

Hi, I'm Lauren and I joined the Union Rowing Club at the start of 2018. I started rowing because I was looking for a sport different from my family and I have always loved the water. As my school does not have rowing, I started learn to row last January and have been rowing ever since. I have been fortunate to have some really good coaching from Danny, Liz, Deb and Dorle. The best pieces of advice I have received is to slow down the slide, be confident and not panic, and to lean back at the finish. I am at the very beginning of my rowing career but my favourite thing so far was the Kaiapoi 10k race in May because I got to experience what racing was like. Another highlight was Raff Wyatt's clinic where we got some valuable advice and it was a good chance to bond with the other girls. I think the most important qualities a rower needs are determination and commitment. My advice for anyone wanting to row is to give it a go and just have fun. I am very thankful for all the support and assistance the Union Rowing Club members have given to me and the other junior rowing girls.



Back: Jaimee, Beth, Lauren
Front: Gwen, Aleisha

Junior squad coach Danny Blair

The girls' group are training for their novice season as Union Rowing Club's first junior squad in many years. We have a core group of nine, all of whom scull and sweep row. Seven of the group single scull and the girls are now adept at navigating the river and steering coxless boats safely. The girls have already had a taste of competition at the Kaiapoi long distance and Kerr's Reach head both of which they thoroughly enjoyed, acquitting themselves well. With racing for the season fast approaching we are all getting excited. The first buoyed racing regatta is Aoraki 1000 in early November. The girls are hoping to race both sweep and sculling events including octuple and eight, which will be a proud moment for our club. As their main coach, I can say they are a fun, dedicated and attentive group of young athletes who smile a lot, talk a lot and are a joy to teach! The full squad is Gwen Sidebottom, Ashlinn Sherwood, Aleisha Olds, Lauren Isitt, Eva Bader, Darcey Edwards, Beth Farrell, Jaimee Garland and Ashtyn Hill.



Junior squad training day
at Lake Hood

Ian Dyson

At age 52 I decided to take up the new challenge of rowing. My wife Susan had done the Learn to Row course a year earlier, aiming to race in the World Masters Games, which she did. Our eldest daughter had also started rowing at school.

Like any sport you take up in your 50s, nothing is easy. Concentration on many different aspects always taxes the brain and body. But I love the feeling when it occasionally all comes together...relax and slow the slide. Great for general fitness and getting to meet new people.

My highlight to date was rowing a single, then racing in the Novice Singles at Picton. There was nothing 'nice' about it, but very satisfying to stay upright with waves from the wind, motor boats and ferry.



Pam Van Gestel

After a season of watching my son, Jakob, rowing for school, I met Dorle at a rowing parents meeting five years ago. She mentioned that she was the Club Captain at the Union Rowing Club and said that if any of the parents were wanting to give rowing a go, she would be able to take us out. I jumped at the offer as I had seen some Masters Rowers at some of the Regattas I had been to and had thought that maybe I would like it. I was wrong, I loved it! I enrolled in the first Learn to Row programme and I haven't stopped. At first I had problems with my lack of fitness and quickly learnt that sweep was not good for me, but sculling was awesome and my fitness improved the more I rowed. I have been lucky to have had great (and patient) coaching from Dorle, Deb, Danny, Jim, the clinic with Raf, and lately Fiona for my Double with Sarah (my favourite boat). A big Thank you to all of you for your time and knowledge.

I have also picked up some handy tips from the general membership of the club, like Mike telling me how to get out of a single, it may look ugly but it is effective. Everyone seems to get along and are always ready to lend a helping hand and give encouragement. The atmosphere is always positive.

I love how rowing is low impact and that while rowing, it takes you completely out of your own head. You just have to be one with the boat and with the crew you are rowing with. I love the full noise of the big boats and the quiet of the single. When I get that perfect stroke every now and then, I can't wait for the next one. I'm still hoping to string two or more together! Thanks to all at Union for making it such a fabulous club!



Wendy Duggan

My rowing journey began when my daughter took me out for a row my out for my 50th birthday. I loved it, I was hooked, she told me I should join Union Rowing Club. After an enquiry through the website I joined the learn-to-row that had just started. Learn to row was a great introduction to rowing with very encouraging coaches. It opened the door to competitive or recreational rowing and a lot of new friendships.

The best coaching tip for me were techniques to make legs do the work rather than shoulders, still a work in progress! Career highlight was a gold medal win for the mixed four in Australian Nationals 2018. The most important quality is for a rower is to possess OCD tendencies in order to reach perfection each stroke and a sense of humour to laugh at yourself for thinking you will ever perfect it.



Tanja McDonald

I met Dorle at a function. She was looking to fill a novice quad and needed a fourth rower. So, I thought how hard can it be and gave it a go, being quite a sporty person (mountain biking, surfing, skiing) - but I was wrong. There is nothing like rowing, and I have been hooked ever since.

Luckily I was single at that time so I could spend my time trying to get better. One of the best pieces of coaching advice I got was to row 'like a swan' as it makes you sit tall at the catch rather than hunched up. I love rowing very much and continue to row most days, competing at the highest level of the Masters Regatta programme. I have won national titles in New Zealand and Australia. I love our LTR program as I am able to give back to the sport the knowledge I have learned and pass on the passion I developed for rowing. Seeing our novices (young & old) come through our programme over the last few years is great and very rewarding. New friends, new family :) Thank you all!





For the first time in 11 years, it was beautiful weather and conditions on both days at Lake Ruataniwha! It must know we are trying to change the time of year of this regatta! The competition at the top continues to be strong if not stronger, as more rowers return to the sport. A heartfelt congratulations to Kirsty, Dom and Stuart for winning Golds in their singles – medal results and photos will be up shortly on the [results page](#) on our website. It was equally rewarding to see our Masters rowers, some as recent as this year's Learn to Row completers come up through the ranks and medal. These combined efforts of experienced and newer rowers allowed us to bring home the trophy for the highest aggregate points. Thank you to Tanja and Stu for organising another great get-together and to all participants for coming along and donating to a wonderful meal together. It was wonderful to see 41 of our members and partners together on one night!

Deb Hymers-Ross

2019 Masters Nationals, Ruataniwha



URC OFFICERS 2020

Elected at our recent club AGM:

Patron: Jim Little

President: Dorle Pauli

Vice Presidents: Deb Hymers-Ross, Mike Fowler, Rod McLennan

Secretary: Jan Maister

Treasurer: Ian Dyson

Club Captain: Deb Hymers-Ross

Health and Safety Officer: Tanja McDonald

Committee Members: Wendy Lawson, Astrid Harris, Pam Van

Gestel, Stu Wade

CRA Delegates: Deb Hymers-Ross, Brendan O'Dea, Stu Wade

Leander Representatives: Rod McLennan, Brendan O'Dea, Brent Mirfin

Reviewer: John Drayton

Life Members:

Jim Little, Bruce Knight, Bruce Fraser, Dale Maher, Mark Borgfeldt, Des Borgfeldt, James Sheehan, Brent Mirfin, Brendan O'Dea, Stu Mitchell

