

Team Saquish Rowing Education Society, Inc

Newsletter

8 Feb 2009

Board of directors: President Mike Jenness, VP Tim Snow, Treasurer Cathy Jenness, Secretary Tony Ruocco, Members Dennis Reddy, Lauren Chartier and Hilary Moll.

This is the first attempt at putting together a newsletter to keep everyone informed of what is happening within the club. There will hopefully be updates as time goes by. If you have any topics you would like added, feel free to contact the board of directors. This is our first full year as a registered non-profit organization, we are developing policies and procedures which will allow a consistent view of how the society operates.

The dues were set and it has been stressed that waivers need to be signed each year. Paying dues and having the waiver are required for all members. They have to be on hand prior by mid-February.

In general, we need to be careful with boats and also with the canvasses. We will need to do some major work on boats this spring. Details will be coming out as the weather warms up. The team will need all hands to assist in boat maintenance. Due to a limited number of workers, the Saquish was out of commission in 2008 far longer than was desired. The team has purchased some replacement canvasses. The new canvasses are more durable in terms of UV and environmental protection of the boats. However, they have to be handled with a bit more care. They have to be folded as they are taken off the boats – not simply tugged or dragged off. The new canvass is not designed to be on the boats while the boat is being transported.

On a limited basis, the society will reimburse members for reasonable expenses. However, those seeking reimbursement need to contact Cathy Jenness PRIOR to the purchase to determine feasibility of reimbursement. Reimbursement, if approved, requires submission of a receipt as soon as practical after the purchase.

The society will begin a more consolidated means for fund raising. While being a non-profit organization opens many doors, it also brings in a somewhat confusing set of rules. It is easier to raise funds for the society as a whole, but can be tricky to raise money for a specific event. We are looking at establishing a subcommittee for fund-raising. More details will also be forthcoming, but if you have an idea for fund raising, send it in to the board so it doesn't simply fall off the radar. It would be extremely helpful if you were also willing to head up that particular effort. Doing fund raising on your own and independent of the board being aware of it can be a problem.

### Plymouth Row

The yearly event was a great success. The team received favorable comments for the price (20/person, 100 boat max), speed of results, and certificates. Next year will follow the same basic approach. The registration form will contain a comment requesting teams be present for a team photo prior to the coxswains meeting. New medals will be purchased for the event, but not t-shirts due to costs. The date for 2009 has been set for 7 Nov. The team may have access to a small trailer to use as a bad-weather shelter back-

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up. A discussion ensued concerning the possibility of having an event earlier in the season as well as the November race. Logistic issues, especially use of dock and Nelson's Beach, were considered as major drawbacks. The team will focus on making the November event a premier event, and subsequently investigate if status as a non-profit facilitates access to Nelson Beach and the state pier.

### Snow Row

The process of selecting boats for the snow row has been established as alternating years. That is in odd years of the race the men have first choice, then women, and the third boat is provided a Visiting Team. In even years of the race, the women have first choice, then men, then Visitors. If a selected boat becomes non-seaworthy that team does not have a pre-emptive claim on any other society asset. Since this is an odd numbered year, men have first choice and have selected the Jenness. The team will conduct the annual pre-Snow Row pasta dinner regardless of Cornish participation. Cathy Jenness will be in charge of the pasta dinner. The first choice for venue is the Mason Hall in Bridgewater. Costs will be \$5.00 per person. Details will be forth-coming independent of the Board of Directors.

### Upcoming events

There has been no formal pursuit of teams for participation in the Isles of Scilly. An email will go out announcing a need for commitment if Saquish will participate as a team.

There is an opportunity to participate in an event in mid/late November in Holland. The Muiden Pampus event consists of two days of rowing. There will be a call for participation shortly.

There is a desire to participate in the Great River Race in early September in London England. This will be a first for Saquish. A call for participation will be coming soon.

There is a desire to participate in the Blackburn Challenge. This will require a significant commitment for training as the course is 23 miles. Several have expressed a desire to participate. Formalities of selection will be developed as there is also a desire to establish a new course record.

There was a discussion on selection criteria for various races and events. This discussion followed two distinct tracts concerning lack of criteria. One tract focused on criteria in terms of safety/liability. The other tract focused on selection of rowers. The selection of rowers was established as event specific. The selection criteria will be established initially based on commitment to a training regime, as well as time and financial commitment (particularly for the overseas events). Once committed rowers are identified the criteria for that particular event will be developed under the supervision of an event coordinator and not necessarily the Board of Directors. However, the Board of Directors did agree that rowers/coxswains had to be from the pool of those with valid

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memberships. There was no discussion on allocation of boats for any event. We will need volunteers to head up events to do coordination for training, towing, registrations etc. In the past we have relied exclusively on Mike, Cathy, and Jan but it is really necessary for this type of expertise to be dispersed among a greater number of members.

### Safety

The discussion on criteria for safety/liability indicated a need for general safety guidelines. The board will begin developing general safety guidelines, though there will be provisions based on rower experience, coxswain experience, as well as weather conditions. In terms of coxswains, there was a decision to hold a coxswain certification attendance meeting the Sunday after the snow row. The intent is for coxswains to have a firm understanding of their roll in boat safety beyond simply steering the boat. There is also intent to develop a roster of qualified coxswains, and that only qualified coxswains will cox boats. Under the roster of coxswains will be a subset of those who desire to cox in a social venue and those who desire to cox in competitive venues. Once established, it is envisioned that coxswains will have a significant role in determining whether rowing takes place or not on any given day.

Discussion on boat usage in general raised questions concerning issues of leasing and insurance liabilities. The discussion was tabled until we could attain a legal decision on the actual issues. However, as an interim basis, it was decided that everyone in a boat should have signed a liability waiver. This interim also extends to events where boats may be used as part of larger community events (for example as part of a harbor heritage event sponsored Plymouth)

### What else...

Over the past few years the team has migrated among Duxbury, Kinston, and Plymouth with jackets and T-shirts to show it! Designs, wording and colors have also changed. While there is something to be said about presenting a colorful array of free spirits, it is also time to represent ourselves as a unified, recognizable, organization. Lauren Chartier is heading up an effort to produce t-shirts and jacket designs which will become the official design for the team. Rowers will be allowed to wear their current items, but all new purchases will utilize official designs. We understand that purchasing items is a rower responsibility, but we are asking that, as much as practical, all rowers wear the same shirt/jacket in team events. We also recognize there may be a desire for boats to want special shirts for significant events. Please talk to the board before making independent uniform items!

On behalf of the Board of Directors

Anthony S. Ruocco, Secretary