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# STROKEWATCH



NEWSLETTER FOR THE BAY AREA ROWING CLUB OF HOUSTON

October 1999

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## Safety....

By Hannes Hofer

This past June, an Austin rower lost his life after capsizing on Town Lake, just a short distance from the ARC boathouse docks.

While it is hard to point to just one cause of the accident, it seems clear that the tragic outcome of the capsizing could have been avoided if all safety rules had been followed.

From the investigation following the accident it appears that:

- The rower may have been taking out a higher level shell than what he been checked out for.
- The accident happened on a windy day where some other crews and boats had opted to stay on land.
- The rower did not stay with his shell after capsizing but attempted to swim to shore.

Like ARC, BARC has rules and procedures in place which are designed to keep accidents from happening. These rules can be found in the BARC manual, but here are a few of the most important things to remember:

- Row only in shells (levels) you have been approved for. If you feel you are ready for the next level, ask to be "checked out" by one of the BARC board designated people (a list can be found elsewhere in the newsletter)
- Do not go rowing if the weather looks bad - especially not if you are by yourself.

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## BARC Holiday Party

Will be Sunday, December 5th @ 5 PM @ Pam Falk's house (2108 Kemper, 538-1742, in South Shore Harbor, League City). Look for food sign-up, map/directions to Pam's, and BARC's Holiday wish list to be posted at the boathouse.



### And speaking of holidays...

Folks, it's the time of year again to think about Christmas gifts for family and friends and to update your own BARC WEAR wardrobe. Call Ben at 713-339-3180 or e-mail me at [bkjuette@alumni.rice.edu](mailto:bkjuette@alumni.rice.edu) to order T-shirt, tank tops or long sleeve shirts. I will bring the items down to the boathouse.

Tank Tops \$ 10.00

T-shirts \$ 12.00

Long Sleeve Shirts \$ 14.00

Sizes are S, M, L, XL. All items are 100% cotton.

Also in this issue:

Safety lights  
Master's Nationals 1999  
Regatta Results  
BARCalendar  
Sculling Classes round-up  
World Champs

...and much more



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**http://www.ghg.net/derwin/barc/**

For membership information call Ed Hippe 281-470-7982 or email [ehippe@orbitworld.net](mailto:ehippe@orbitworld.net)

**Club Officers:**

President	Jeff Tave
Vice President	Claire Sweatt
Treasurer	Tom Heig
Secretary	Pam Falk
Board members:	Jack Quigley
	Doug Bradt
	Karl Zimmer
Membership Dir.	Ed Hippe
Boathouse Man.	Karl Zimmer
Newsletter	Hannes Hofer
BARCware	Ben Jütte
Webmaster	Don Erwin

Barc will soon lose its BARCwear Coordinator, a board member, and a very active rower. Ben Jütte have decided to leave Houston to return to his native Germany. He will be missed for all his contributions to BARC, he however, he has promised to open a BARC franchise in Munich.

**The Prez Sez.....**

**BARC Work Day**

Thanks to everyone who helped out at the Work Day on Saturday, October 9th. We managed to discombobulate the South dock (known as the "Slip 'n Slide"), initiate repair work on the front doors, and fill in some potholes in our "garden." As a volunteer non-profit organization, it's important to realize that we need YOUR help to get things done! Gracias to Karl Zimmer, Tom Heig, Hannes Hofer, Doug Bradt Stefan X, Beth & Paul Smith, and others that I may have left out. Special thanks to Theresa, Philip & Helen Tompkins for helping and providing some yummy homemade goodies!

**Advancing to the Next Shell Class**

This is just a reminder that for all new class members or Club members that row recreational shells, 20 hours of on the water experience and a check-out by a designate of the Board (sculling instructor) is required before advancing to the next shell class. Since we basically have two classes of 1X's (rec and race trainer), the check-out will allow you to row the race trainers (Maas Elite Lightweight, red stripe for those that weigh less than 150 lbs, Mass Elite Standard blue stripe, and Julien, designed for mid to heavy-weight). However, I strongly encourage those wishing to advance, row the Maas 24 or Felker 1X several times prior to moving up to the race trainers. The purpose of the check-out is to ensure safety of Club equipment (proper boat handling) and the rower (ability to row advanced equipment). Board designates include Bill & Kathy Dixon, Don Erwin, Ed Hippe, Hannes Hofer, Tom Lotz, Bruce Meltzer, Car Smith, Claire Sweatt, Jeff Tave, Tom Topalu, and Karl Zimmer.

**BARC Youth Members: A Note to Parents & Guardians**

For those that have children under the age of 18 rowing in BARC, the Club is required by our insur-

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**The BARCalendar**

<b>Date</b>	<b>What?</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Oct. 23.	Head of the Charles, Boston, Mass.	
Oct. 30.	PumpkinHead Regatta, Austin, TX	
Nov. 13	Rowing Marathon, Narchitoches, LA	
Nov. 7 6:30 PM	BARC BOD Meeting (: Jeff Tave's (1222 Ferndale, El Lago)	
Nov. 9	Karl Zimmer is 1 year away from 4 DECADES of life	
Nov. 28	Ben Jütte hits the big three oh.	
Nov. 13	NSU Marathon Championships Natchitoches, LA, 11/01 entry deadline	
Dec 5 5 PM	BARC Holiday Party (12/05/99): Pam Falk's (2108 Kemper, South Shore Harbor)	

## The 1999 Masters Nationals



In the heat of August, Six BARC members, including yours truly, traveled to Gainesville, Georgia to participate in the 1999 Masters National Championships. The event took place at the very site where the Olympic rowing events were held in 1996, so the accommodations, as well as the course, was 1<sup>st</sup> class. They don't really have a boat house at Lake Lanier. What they have can more accurately be called a "Boat Palace", and what they call their "equipment shed" closely resembles our own BARC-house, both in size and architecture.

The good folks at Lake Lanier Rowing Club, including BARC's own Jack Quickley who holds "dual citizenships", did an excellent job organizing the regatta. All races through all four days of the regatta were on schedule, quite a feat! The only complaint we heard was from softie northerners who thought the 95° fahrenheit weather was too hot. Still, everyone seemed to have a good time.

For the BARC members who competed, the event was a learning experience. Most of us had never competed at the national level before, and we quickly learned that we still have work to do before we can become a force in that company. The quad and four of Hannes Hofer, Jeff Tave, Graeme Knight, Karl Zimmer, and Cox Claire Sweatt did not qualify for the finals, and Tom Topalu in the lightweight single exited early as well. Hannes Hofer and Jeff Tave took seventh place in the lightweight double final (A victory of sorts was won here as Hannes and Jeff successfully lost 7 pounds in four days to make weight). Still, we did not come home completely empty handed: Graeme won a silver medal in the "C" four category when a former club mate from Sugarland invited him to row two-seat on a boat with rower from the Rocky Mountain Rowing Club. In addition, Hannes won a unisuit in the regatta raffle.

Despite the meager results, a good time was had by all. We sampled many of Gainesville's fine restau-

rants, and that they are diverse was confirmed when we visited a Japanese restaurant, and the Chef entertained us by singing "Bridge Over Troubled Water" and telling bad jokes, thick Japanese accent and all, while cooking at our table. Other entertainment consisted of walking tours in a nearby cemetery and a tire change on Claire's rental car. We also spent time socializing with other rowers, who had come from all over the country to row. Our fellow Texans from Dallas were there in force, and they, together with Austin Rowing Club saved the honor of the Lone Star State by placing 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> in several races. Next year's Masters Nationals will be held in Oakland, CA. Hopefully, BARC members will once again be making the trip, and since, we now know what it is all about, we can bring back some medals. Even if we don't, it is well worth the trip to go if it is as well organized as the one in Gainesville.



### Coaching Clinic

We had great participation in the Coaching Clinic held on September 18th & 19th. Two 4+'s, a 4X, and twelve singles received coaching, had their styles video-taped, and received on the water feedback from Maureen Simpson who was in from Great Britain. For those that reconvened at the JaloGill's Saturday afternoon, Maureen reviewed the video-taped sessions and gave additional comments and skill critique. I will have a copy of all the taped sessions, so if you need to borrow it to make a copy, just let me know. Thanks to Maureen Simpson for coming out and spending her time to give us some much-needed coaching and Norine Jaloway for driving, providing breakfast morsels, and opening her home (et tu, Dave). I apologize to those that might not have fit into the schedule (I tried to hold to the final version published), we'll try to do better next time (though I need more advanced notice for schedule changes/constraints).

### Ordering New Boats for BARC!

The BOD discussed this at the September meeting and would like to proceed with ordering some new boats for the club. Ideas included ordering more Maas Aeros, Maas 24's, and Mass Elite shells. We are eager to have club member input regarding the type of boats we order.

Please contact any of the BOD members to share your opinions and ideas regarding the ordering of new boats...thanks!

## Or My Trip to World Rowing Championships

By Heather Mathis

Escaping the heat of Houston during the summer would have been enough reason to visit Canada, but adding world-class rowing into the bargain was more than enough to convince me that a trip to the World Rowing Championships in St. Catharines, Ontario, was in order! Held the last week in August on the Royal Canadian Henley course, the event lived up to my expectations and beyond.

A former co-coach and I drove from Ohio for the weekend finals and were treated to world-class organization and a big-time regatta. Not only was the viewing from the general admission area great (the grandstands were more costly!), but we were also treated to big-screen viewing of each race from start to finish, accompanied by play-by-play down the course. Sunny conditions and either a scorching tailwind or relatively mild winds made for two great days of watching the world's best.



Although we missed the B Finals of the eights (only the sport of rowing would start its finals weekend at 7:45 in the morning and be over by noon!), we made it to Martindale Pond in time on Saturday to watch Rob Waddell of New Zealand prove overwhelmingly that not only is he the world's fastest man on the erg,

but deserves that title in the single as well. Saturday's other highlights included the U.S. lightweight men's "Mystery Team" eight proving they were no mystery with a gold medal and Britain's "Oarsome Foursome" dominating the men's four without for a gold. Even the B Finals had outstanding racing, as the top finishers in these races would guarantee their teams a berth at the Olympics next year.

Sunday's highlights were of course the A Finals of the eights. The U.S. women kept us screaming all the way down the course as they valiantly tried to overcome the Romanians, but to no avail; they came in second. (Note: Former Rice rower, Torrey Folk, was part of the silver-winning crew. Congratulations!) The men's eight proved they were once again the world's best, winning gold for the third year in a row. Perhaps the funniest part was watching the cox trade places with six seat as they rowed back to Henley Island after the medal ceremony!

Definitely the best part of the entire weekend was the accessibility and camaraderie of all the crews and spectators. It is refreshing to be a part of a sport that is still small enough to be down-to-earth, even at the elite levels. For instance, on Saturday, we ended up sitting with part of the U.S. women's eight during the races, and met members of the Portuguese and Croatian teams at a bar that night (okay – so they were trying to pick up two good-looking, or anyway unaccompanied, women! And as far as that comparative study, the Croatians had much better technique!). The Irish team coach even approached me as I was wearing my Dublin Crew rowing jacket (the high school I coached) and asked which Dublin it was (Ohio).

Although I was upset not to see the U.S. women's double row in the finals (what motivation to a relatively new masters sculler – the women were in their mid to late 30s, one of whom didn't start rowing until her early 30s), I thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Lots of people I met were impressed I traveled all the way from Texas to cheer for the U.S., but overwhelmingly I told them that I didn't care whether the U.S. won or not (I can't even tell you the medal count), but came only to see great rowing. I was not disappointed.

## 1999 Sculling Classes

We have just wrapped up another season of Sculling Classes. The interest in our classes this year has been phenomenal! We offer a class each month (April through September) with six individuals per class...we can accommodate 36 individuals over the summer. This year we have received over 90 inquiries for the classes! As you may know, we have tried to be real creative this summer in an effort to reach as many folks as possible. Several class members have provided private lessons to individuals that REALLY wanted to learn how to scull this summer but couldn't get into the classes.

The BARC Board of Directors realize that we need to reconsider the current situation regarding the Sculling Classes and try to come up with a better plan for 2000. A special meeting will be held in October or November to address this issue. Please contact me if you are interested in participating in this discussion. The main issues to be addressed are:

\* Is there anything we can do to further promote retention of class members following the completion of the class? (We currently range between 15% - 25% retention)

\* Can we redesign the classes to better meet the demand without asking too much of the "volunteer" members?

A heartfelt "THANK YOU!" goes to all of those who have helped with the classes and/or have provided private lessons!

Claire Sweatt, Sculling Class Coordinator

## Bringing In New Members

We have had a wonderful influx of new members this summer! Some have joined the club after having taken the Sculling Class...some have joined the club after finishing private lessons...and some have received a "Check Out" because they have rowed before and now want to start rowing at BARC. We are currently putting together a flowchart to help organize the process of bringing in new members (i.e. "Who should be contacted if an individual wants private lessons or a 'Check Out'?",

What paperwork does the individual need to complete?, What is the accurate membership fee for the individual?, Where should they send the money and paperwork?, etc.). Please look for more information in the near future at the Boathouse or feel free to call Ed Hippe, Jeff Tave, or Claire Sweatt if you have questions.

## Row Safely: Lights By Jeff Tave

Well, we've lost our evening daylight so I just wanted to remind everyone that if you row at dusk or dawn, you should be using some type of safety light. Also, before you go out, it's a good idea to check the log book to note other boats out on the water. The best system is to mount light on the bow and stern, however that's not always possible, so here are two alternatives: lights mounted on the shell gunwales or lights mounted on your bod that can be seen from the bow. I've seen lights that you can attach to the back of a cap, clip to a shirt, or strap around your upper arm or neck.

Bicycle shops carry a variety of lights. You can also order them from sports catalogs. Be sure to get one that's water resistant (look for one with rubber o-rings between sections where the unit comes apart to change the batteries. Get ones with as many LED's as possible and depending how you'll be mounting it, LED's visible from the side are probably an important consideration. Many lights have multiple modes: steady on, flashing, etc. The steady on mode burns up the batteries quickly (20 to 50 hours of use); those with a flashing mode last between 100 to 200+ hours. For those that will mount them to their bod, think about weight as well as some lights take AA, AAA, or watch batteries. The ones that take watch batteries should be the smallest/lightest, but may not have enough LED's or be very bright. Ones that take the AA batteries usually have 5 or more LED's, but these tend to be larger/heavier. Look for ones with stiff belt clips (so they won't slip off your shirt) or those that come with a strap. I'll bet a nylon dog/cat collar would work if you can't find one with a strap (you might get annoyed by the bell, though!)

I am currently using a VistaLight VL700 Eclipse which has 7 forward-facing LED's and 2 blink modes; I bought a woven nylon dog collar so I can attach the light to the back of my neck. Webster Bicycle and Bike Barn used to carry it. Karl Zimmer uses Trek lights, which are smaller since they have fewer LEDs, but they can be clipped to your sleeves or to a bow marker. Hannes recently found some flashlight sized lights that have a suction cup mount. As a final thought, when your batteries are used up, PLEASE DON'T just toss them in the trash. Save them and dispose properly; the University of Houston Clear Lake has a hazardous materials day at least twice a year. Some recycling centers may take them as well.

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*Safety - continued from page 1*

- Do not go out if you see white caps on the lake or if waves run over the dock. It is a good rule of thumb that if the wind speed is more than 10 miles per hour from the north or from the south it is too windy.
- Do not go out if the fog is so thick that you can't see the opposite shore from the dock.
- Do not go out within 15 minutes of anyone at the boathouse hearing thunder or seeing lightning.
- If you capsize, try to get back in the boat. If you can't, then stay with the boat and swim it to the shore or wait for help to arrive. The boat works as a life raft, even when upside down.
- If you row in the dark, make sure you have a light on the boat. BARC does not provide lights, the ones you find in the boathouse belong to others. Each crew or individual is responsible for bringing their own. See Jeff's article elsewhere in this issue.

**Following only some of the rules most of the time, instead of all of them everytime, puts holes in your safety net.**

*The Prez Sez - continued from page 2*

ance coverage through the United States Rowing Association (US Rowing) to provide adult supervision for all on-the-water activities. This requires you, the parent/guardian, to accompany your child on the water in a rowing shell, motorized launch, or other water craft and remain in close proximity in the event of an emergency. Other rowers on the lake do not count as adult supervision unless they've agreed in advance and also remain in nearby. I know I try to stress this when talking to prospective members who'd like their children to learn to scull. Sometimes it's a turn-off, but in some of the cases, it inspires the parent to take the class as well. I'm sorry if not all of you have gotten the message clearly. Over the years, several individuals in the Club have talked about putting together a Juniors program (which would also require adult supervision), but it hasn't happened, yet. Maybe at some point in the future ... let me know if you'd like to help organize & run one!