

STROKEWATCH

BAY AREA ROWING CLUB OF HOUSTON • APRIL 2007



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Hat Races & Space City Sprints

By Alex Parkman

The TAX RELIEF informal HAT RACES will take place on Saturday, April 14th at 7:30 am. Be prepared to row 1040 meters - no extensions! This is an opportunity for intermediate and novice rowers to test themselves and waters in singles and doubles (and quads, if necessary and available) prior to **SPACE CITY SPRINTS**.

Depending on the number of rowers who show up, we can hold multiple races, and mix up the boats. The intent of these INFORMAL races is to prepare for racing, improve one's skills, and meet other rowers who might not otherwise be on the water at the same time as yourself. As a bonus, additional 'race clinics' will be offered to anyone in attendance.

Also, BARC will soon be hosting Space Center Sprints on May 5th. In order to have a safe and successful event, volunteers are needed in a variety of areas. Please contact Claire at csweatt@swbell.net if you can help in any way.

To access an information packet on SCS, go to <http://www.barchouston.org/> ■



A Word from the Prez

By Hannes Hofer

BARC 2006 year-in review

2006 was a another good year for BARC. We started the year by implementing the BARC Distance Challenge, where rowers are encouraged to record their distance each time they row. This turned out to be great success with 74 members recording (at least) some of their kilometers. A total of more than 20,000K was recorded.

Three new boats were purchased early in the year, two doubles and a single. Especially the two doubles have been very popular additions.

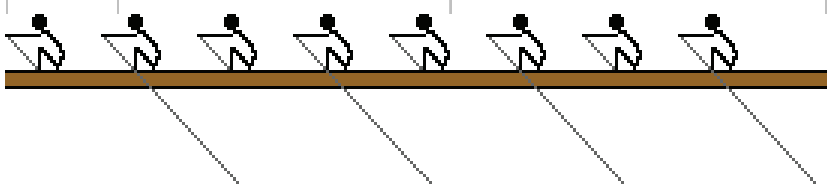
The usual sculling classes were held in the months April through September. As always, the classes were well attended, though we seem to have increasing problems with people not showing up for the classes they have signed up for, especially at the end of the season. This problem will be addressed this year, when students will be required to pay \$25, non-refundable, when they sign up. Thanks to everyone who have been helping with teaching, and especially thanks to Theresa who has done a great job with the often thankless job of coordinating the classes.

Continued on page 3, see "More from the Prez"

Rowing Development Update

By Theresa Tompkins

BARC events schedule		
	Date	EVENT
April	April 7 th , 9-11am	TIYLI - This class is full!
	April 14th	BARC Hat Races
	April 21 st	BARC Workday
	April 28, 29, May 1, 2	Classes
Saturday 9-11am, Sunday 9-11am, Tuesday 6-8pm, Wednesday 6-8pm		
May	May 5th	Space City Sprints
	May 12 th , 9-11am	TIYLI - This class is full!
	May 26, 27, 29, 30.	Classes
	Saturday 9-11am, Sunday 9-11am, Tuesday 6-8pm, Wednesday 6-8pm	
June	June 2 nd , 9-11am	TIYLI
	June 23, 24, 26, 27.	Classes
	Saturday 9-11am, Sunday 9-11am, Tuesday 6-8pm, Wednesday 6-8pm	
July	July 7 th , 9-11am	TIYLI
	July 28, 29, 31, August 1.	Classes
	Saturday 9-11am, Sunday 9-11am, Tuesday 6-8pm, Wednesday 6-8pm	
August	August 25, 26, 28, 29.	Classes
	Saturday 9-11am, Sunday 9-11am, Tuesday 6-8pm, Wednesday 6-8pm	
September	September 29, 30, October 2, 3.	Classes
	Saturday 9-11am, Sunday 9-11am, Tuesday 6-8pm, Wednesday 6-8pm	



This year, we have decided to institute a \$25. non-refundable deposit for registration in the full set of classes. Despite this, both the April and May classes are already half booked! We have really had a lot of interest in the club this year!!!! YEAH!!!!!!



Coaching : Through talking to new members and students, besides time constraints, the biggest reasons they have for not staying in the club are difficulties handling the boats (getting them to and from the boathouse) and nervousness about being on the water alone. Hiring a paid coach to help these newer rowers and perhaps even to advance the level of rowing of intermediate rowers was discussed last year by the BOD. A group of volunteers then met to discuss the matter in further detail. A goal and general plan was formed and presented to the BOD last July. The BOD agreed that since the intent would be to retain new members and improve the basic rowing level at the club, the club should pay for this initial investment but that since hiring a coach would be a major change in the way BARC does business, a committee should be formed to draft guidelines and responsibilities of a potential coach, then eventually brought to a vote to the membership. A call was made to attend a meeting regarding this, this committee met prior to the annual holiday party. This committee decided to forgo the previous plans and instead proposed to have a volunteer staffed program. As a result, **Mary Gormanson** has volunteered to take on this project and will shortly devise a schedule and plan for providing help for our newest rowers. She will also recruit volunteers to staff the time slots help will be available.

BARC is an all-volunteer club. As a result, we need YOU to keep it working! Lynn is recruiting volunteers for the classes this year, **Mary** need volunteers for the coaching sessions, and **Claire** needs volunteers for the Space City Sprints! Don't wait for a call, just jump right in!!!!!

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More from the Prez—

Continued from page 1

Space City Sprints was held on May the 5th. It started out with a torrential downpour and for a while it looked like we were going to have to cancel the regatta. However, we hung in there, and about 10 o'clock, the rain gave way to sunshine, and we were able to successfully run all the races, and we got a lot of positive feed back from the clubs that attended. We had great participation from BARC volunteers. Special thanks go out to Regatta Director, **Claire McAdam**, and to **Karl Zimmer** who spent countless hours on setting out the course and also did the registration and timing on his own homegrown software.

BARC rowers traveled to a number of out-of-town regattas, though fewer than in years past. This year, we attended regattas in Austin, the Woodlands, and Natchitoches, Louisiana. As usual, many medals were brought back from the Marathon, though, due to an accidentally damaged boat, not everyone got to row the boats they had planned on.

The Board has continued to work towards an expansion or reconstruction of the boathouse. Unfortunately, we did not make much progress in 2006. We have been unable to find partners or sponsors to help with the funding like we had hoped. The latest blow came when the County turned down our request for a partnership. We had very high hopes in that regard. We have not given up the expansion plans, but our membership numbers seems to have leveled out the last couple of years, so there seems to be less urgency now. The Board has decided to earmark \$50,000 of our current savings this year towards the boathouse expansion, and then earmark a percentage of our annual income towards a building fund. If you have ideas for some serious fund raising, please let us know.

Another initiative I talked about last year was coaching. My idea was to come up with a way to hire a paid coach in order to provide ways for members to improve their rowing skills beyond beginners class. We asked for input from members on this issue, and a committee met several times. In the end, the conclusion was that there is not enough interest in the club for such an endeavor, something I personally find regrettable. One good thing did come out of it: the committee recommended that we start a program where two times a week during the summer months, someone will be at the boathouse to support members who are not feeling comfortable taking boats out by themselves. We will soon post more details about this program and I urge all you experienced members to sign up to help with this. If enough people sign up to help it should not be much of a burden for us.

So, looking ahead, what else is new at BARC? Well I am happy to announce that we have ordered two new quads to replace the Kaschper and the Vespoli. These two boats are probably the most heavily used boats that we have, and they have seen better days. Since they are both in about equally bad shape, we have decided to replace both. The total cost of this purchase is about \$30,000. One of the new boats will be able to be rigged as a sweep boat as well as a quad, though the default rigging will be as a quad. The old boats will be sold if we can find buyers. We have no room for them in the boathouse.

The Space City Sprints have been scheduled for Saturday, May 5th, so mark your calendars. **Claire MacAdam** have agreed to be the Regatta Director again. We are going to need lots of volunteers and also rowers.

Classes start on April 7 with the Try-it-you'll like it. The first 8 hour classes start on April 28, so please pass the word around to your friends who always say that they would like to try rowing.

We continue the BARC distance Challenge. I am hearing that some of last years high mileage people are leaving Houston and BARC, so we will see who will fill their shoes.

We have also lost some very dedicated people on the board of directors. Some are falling to term limits, others have decided to "take a break". I want to thank these people for their hard work.

First, I want to thank **Lynn Leenhouts** for her 4 years of being the Treasurer. She has done a fantastic job in keeping track of our money. She has been tireless in her efforts of keeping up with membership dues, bills, taxes, fees, purchases, you name it, and she has done it all with a smile. Thank you Lynn!

I also want to thank **Alex Parkman**, who has been on the board continuously for, I think, 6 years, save for 6 month tour to Iraq. He served, first as a president, and since as board-member at-large. His dedication to the club is unparalleled, and I hope we can keep counting on him as boathouse and equipment manager, even when he is no longer on the board.

Other board members up for election were **Marilyn Bullard**, our VP and **Maxine Epstein**. Thank you very much for serving! I hope we can keep drawing on your expertise and dedication. ■

Help Needed

By Hannes Hofer

During the summer season, about 30 students take the BARC Sculling Classes. Unfortunately, on average, less than a handful of those 30 renew their membership when their one month free membership expire.

When asked why they don't continue, most say that they don't feel comfortable handling the boats and be on the water by themselves.

Now, a BARC committee has come up with great idea on how to retain our new members: Experienced BARC volunteers would be at the boathouse at two scheduled time periods during the week, not to row, but to lend support to any member who wants to go rowing.

We will soon post a list at the boathouse for volunteers to sign up for being at the boathouse for 1 1/2 - 2 hours, either on Wednesday night or Saturday Morning from May through October. If enough people sign up, it shouldn't be much of a burden, and we hope that most people will sign up for two or more times. I think this is a great initiative, and it is also a great way for new and old members to get to know each other. ■

A Big THANK YOU!

By Theresa Tompkins

The first line of our handbook states that "The purpose of Bay Area Rowing Club of Houston is to promote the sport of rowing..." I wanted to share with you how this has been demonstrated to my family over the years. Around 1993, I was involved in two fairly bad car accidents. After healing, the orthopedist told me that I really needed to get back into exercise to strengthen up my back. Running had always been my habit, but that was out of the question, so I turned to swimming. With two little kids in tow, laps proved to be impossible, so after a time, I looked for a new addiction. We started with "lessons" at HRC... I eventually rowed across the lake on one of my days off (and the kids were in school) and found BARC. We all took lessons in 1997 (we still remember Philip pulling Pam in the water – she was NOT going to let her student float away!). **Philip** was 11, **Helen** was 9. By the time they were teens, they were hooked. Though Philip also loves the sport, Helen is the competitive spirit.

Heather (Mathis) Moore first took **Helen** and partner at that time under her wing and really hammered out the basics (left hand over right - every time!). As **Helen** started rowing her single, though young and not really fast, **Cory Logan** took the time to give her coaching tips and challenged her on the water. When she needed a video to send to her coach, **Alex Parkman** helped **Philip** get the shots needed and **Hannes Hofer** put it all together to create the video that is now on BARC's website – this is the same video that got her accepted to USRowing Junior Development Camp! These are just a few examples of the help we have all received over the years from many others in the club as well.

The most recent example of the help **Helen** in particular has received was this past summer. She was accepted to USRowing Junior Selection Camp. **Tom Lotz** (who has been rowing longer than everybody), recognized the costs involved in competing at this level, organized a group of BARC members to help **Helen** out financially. Together, this group of eight donated enough money to help defray the cost of that summers camp fee's and airfare - it was such a blessing. Though **Helen** only made first alternate to the team who represented the US in Amsterdam, this extraordinary gift reminded her that she always has a team of her own routing for her back at home!

We cannot express our gratitude enough to these individuals and all the rest who have helped **Helen** along the way. ■



Tom Lotz and Helen Tompkins

BARC Sends Rowers to Lake Woodlands Championships!

Bay Area again sent rowers to the Lake Woodlands Championships held March 24th in the Woodlands, Texas. BARC enjoyed seeing old friends and new from Dallas, Greater Houston, & Fort Worth. The 1000m race marked the beginning of the season for many BARC rowers and is a good test for things to come at Space Center Sprints.

Hannes Hofer, along with fellow rowers Karl Zimmer, Patrick Breagy, & Carlos Westhelle, rowed to a 3rd place finish in the Men's Masters 4x. BARC joined forces with RCTW & brought home another 3rd place victory in the mixed master's quad race. Not being tired at all, Karl & Hannes rowed to yet another strong 3rd place finish in the men's doubles race.

Although fewer rowers participated this year, a good time was had by all. ■



Hannes Hofer (bow), Susie Jones (3), Sue Dougherty (RCTW—2), Karl Zimmer (stroke) row to a bronze medal

BARC's Boat Names (A series continued)

By Martha Hood

Each issue will discuss yet another bird species which is named on one of the Club's boats.

"Egret" - Maas Elite 1x

There are several different kinds of egrets which can be seen while rowing, but I'll just write about one, the great egret.

The great egret is best known for its feathery nuptial plumes or "aigrettes". This species lives in both North & South America, and was almost hunted to extinction in Florida. These devoted parents were cruelly exploited by egret hunters in the 19th century. Egret plumes were in great demand for ladies' hats, and greed coupled with

vanity pushed the price of egret feathers to twice that of gold. In the 1890's, almost 150,000 "scalps" were sent to milliners in New York. Parent egrets won't leave their young even if in danger themselves. Hunters decimated rookeries, often leaving dying, scalped parent birds to rot and their nestlings to starve. In 1905, there was a public outcry, when a Florida warden tried to arrest egret poachers and was shot to death, leaving a wife and two small sons. During this time, insurance companies cancelled coverage for feather factories. In 1913, an act of Congress restricted the use of plumes on hats. The Audubon Society, continues to protect birds around the nation.

A Great Egret in breeding plumage displays a beautiful green on his face.



BARC "Juniors" Shrieking!

By Becky Morlier

BARC "Juniors" are losing 2 of their steady rowers this summer. **Melanie Jacobi** and **Katie Sears** are moving away to start down new roads in their lives. **Mel** is moving up to Connecticut to work for the Norwalk River Rowing Association as the Director of the Reach Out & Row (ROAR) program and Coach. She'll be developing and running an after school rowing program for the local kids. She also plans to attend Columbia University to complete the Social Work Program in Social Enterprise Administration. **Mel**, the only pure and proud southerner in our jaunty crew, is a bit concerned about the winters even though we continually inform her they aren't "that bad" and rebuke her worries with comparisons to Buffalo.

Katie Sears will be moving to Palo Alto where she has been accepted for her Clinical Psychology residency in the Palo Alto VA Hospital; after a year she will have completed her PhD. **Katie** is well familiar with the area as she attended Stanford University several years ago. Perhaps she will run into our other friend **Genevera Allen**, who graduated from Rice earlier this year and is currently working on her PhD at Stanford.

We will greatly miss our friends and their constant cheerful outlooks. Who will we turn to now for answers to all our grits and broccoli concerns? Who will provide the oddly concocted yet extremely yummy baked goods - I doubt Andy will take up this slack. From where will we get great anecdotes on Florida farm life and alligator wrestling?

Good luck guys, and keep your door open for visitors - especially in August when it's too darn hot down here....■



*Melanie Jacobi (center) with fellow teammates
Front Row L-R: Brooke Saari, Melanie Jacobi, Katie Sears
Back Row L-R: Christine Troy, Jordan Bell*

Another Successful Heart of Texas

Bay Area Rowing Club sent 22 rowers to Austin this year to compete in one of the biggest regattas here in Texas. Congratulations to all.■

1. Bob Albright
2. Michael Appel
3. Jordan Bell
4. Marilyn Bullard
5. Henry Epstein
6. Hannes Hofer
7. Melanie Jacobi
8. Andy Johnstone
9. Susie Jones
10. Lynn Leenhouts
11. Cory Logan
12. Candy Ludwick
13. Alex Parkman
14. Elaine Peltier
15. Larry Price
16. Zac Putnam
17. Cynthia Reiser
18. Katie Sears
19. Lisa Takagi
20. Christine Troy
21. Carlos Westhelle
22. Karl Zimmer

Kilometer Queen Missing?

BARC's kilometer queen, Cynthia Reiser, recently moved to beautiful Austin in March. She is now rowing with Texas Rowing Center. She misses everyone including the pelicans! I know your rowing spirit will be missed around the club. Good luck & hopefully we will see you at the Sprints!■



Left to right: Brooke Saari, Melanie Jacobi, Cynthia Reiser, Katie Sears, Susie Jones, Zac Putnam, Christine Troy, Andy Johnstone, Lisa Takagi, & Zac Putnam at Heart of Texas

Regatta Schedule



May 5	Space City Sprints—Clear Lake, TX
May 19	BLAST—Dallas, TX
June 2-3	Tulsa Sprints—Tulsa, OK
June 21	US Rowing National Championships—Mercer, NJ
August 9-12	Master Nationals—Oak Ridge, TN
October 20-21	Head of the Charles—Boston, MA
October 27?	Pumpkinhead—Austin, TX
November 3	Head of the Hooch—Chattanooga, TN
November 10	Marathon Championships—Natchitoches, LA

25th Vesta International Veterans' Head Of The River Race For Eights

By Andy Johnstone, BARC's London correspondent

Saturday's **Head of the River Race** (31st March 2007) was abandoned in scenes of mayhem after only 29 of the first 45 crews finished. Horrendous conditions on the Thames caused many boats to sink and pitched up to a hundred rowers into a cold river. The strong easterly wind blowing against the ebbing tide was the problem for the race run between Mortlake and Putney on the tidal Thames, London, England. This was a big disappointment for the 420 men's eights, many of them international crews, who boated and spent 3 hours on the water for a race that was not to take place.

The course is the same as the University Boat race, an annual event between two provincial British Universities, but rowed in the opposite direction.

Due to the tide times, Sunday's **Veterans' Head** was rowed upstream on a slightly shortened course between Hammer-smith Bridge to the University Stone in Mortlake. This time the blustery wind with the tide provided ideal conditions for the 180 old men's eights. Your correspondent was in the Curlew Rowing Club first eight with a start number 3. After starting at a brisk rate of 35 the crew settled to a rate of 33 for the remainder of the 3½ mile race. Overtaken early by Danske Students Roklub (surprisingly **Hannes** wasn't in this boat) we held off several other crews, including the Italian AS C Moto Guzzi. Unfortunately a collision with another crew under Barnes Bridge, with 4 boats fighting for the best line, rather dented our chances of a good finishing time. We picked up the race well after the clash despite a rather shaken cox who had taken a nasty blow from an opponent's blade. The final finish position was 139 with a time of 13:25.02. It was good to be out on the tideway again and nice to see old friends at Saugatuck RC who host Curlew for the Head of the Charles. ■

1 Taurus BC 11:41.85

2 University of London Tyrian 11:58.30

3 TSS/Occoquan (US) 12:01.42

4 TSS/Occoquan (US) 12:01.44

5 Crabtree RC 12:02.63

108 Saugatuck RC (US) 13:05.11

139 Curlew RC 13:25.02

155 Curlew RC 13:47.72



Andy Johnstone and his Curlew Rowing Club crew.

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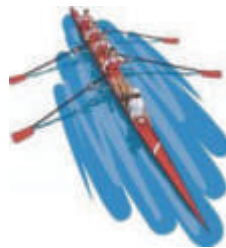
www.barchouston.org

For membership information visit us
 on the web or e-mail us at
 membership@barchouston.org

Club Officers

- President Hannes Hofer
- Vice President Marilyn Bullard
- Treasurer Karl Zimmer
- Secretary Theresa Tompkins
- Board Members: Bob Albright
 Henry Epstein
 Mary Gormanson
 Larry Price
- Membership Dir. Theresa Tompkins
- Rowing Dev. Theresa Tompkins
- Equipment Chair Alex Parkman
- Newsletter Martha Hood
- Webmaster Hannes Hofer

BARC offers members the opportunity to sweep & scull. The club owns an eight, a four, quads, doubles, pairs, & singles, & can provide storage for privately owned boats. We also offer sweep & sculling classes, as well as 'Try It, You'll Like it' sessions for those new to rowing. Members' rowing objectives range from racing to recreation. BARC has a very good feeling of camaraderie & has frequent social outings.



Rowing Quote

Faintly as tolls the evening chime,
 Our voices keep tune and our oars keep time.
 Thomas Moore

A Little Humor



"Yoo-hoo! Oh, yoo-hoo! ... I think I'm getting a blister."