
STROKEWATCH



NEWSLETTER FOR THE BAY AREA ROWING CLUB OF HOUSTON

February 2000

Jeff Tave completing 4 years as BARC President



May the force be with you Jeff

The BARC Board of Directors would like to offers its sincere gratitude to Jeff Tave for serving as the Club President for the past four years.

Jeff was elected to this office in 1996 and re-elected for a 2nd term in 1998. Jeff has given a significant amount of time, energy, expertise and enthusiasm to this position and to the club. He has coordinated the purchases of new club equipment, taught many sculling classes to novice rowers, networked with other rowing clubs in TX, actively participated in local, state and national regattas, and worked tirelessly to keep the operations of the club running smoothly. Jeff will continue to serve the club on the Board of Directors. Thank you, Jeff!

Rice need a few good BARCers

Rice is hosting its annual regatta with Tulane, UT, and A&M on February 26, 8am to 1pm. If you want to help, please e-mail Hannes at hofer@mac.com or call 713-348-5347.

Annual Membership Meeting, February 28th 7:00 PM

Agenda:

Elections

1999 Recap

2000 Look Ahead

Open Discussion

Elections for BARC Officers will occur at the meeting which will take place at the Clear Lake Meeting Room. If you have nominations or wish to be nominated for the positions of President, Secretary, or Board member, please contact Jeff Tave at 281-326-5098. The term of office for these postions will be Feb 2000- Feb 2002. The following individuals have consented to be nominated:

President - Karl Zimmer

Secretary - Pam Falk

BOD Member - Jeff Tave

BOD Member - Nadia Hijazi.

Also in this issue:

Rowing in the Movies

Head of the Chuckie '99

Regatta Results

BARCalendar

Sculling Classes

Club equipment

...and much more



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For membership information call Ed Hippe 281-470-7982 or email 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	Position vacant
Webmaster	Don Erwin

The Prez Sez.....

BARC Holiday Party

Quite a few members turned up for the Holiday Party this past December. Everyone had a great time and the Club received a bunch of great presents.

Thanks to the following for their gifts: Tina Bryan Pam Falk, Colleen Fultz, Tom & Dorie Heig, Troy Roques, and Claire Sweatt (Toolbox with tools) Max Floyd (Home Depot Gift Certificate); Bil Geissler (water hose); Frank & Marsella Springett (water hose); Fred Schultz (wrenches); Ben Juette Hannes Hofer, and Jeff Tave (boat straps); and the Tuesday evening 4X (\$40). Special thanks to Pam Falk for hosting the party for the third year in a row!

Rigging of Club Equipment

Just a reminder that rigging changes to Club boats (not maintenance adjustments) require Board of Directors (BOD) approval per your Membership Handbook (yeah, I KNOW everyone has it memorized by heart! ;-). The reason for this is three-fold:

- 1) An awareness measure to ensure changes are done correctly (with proper know-how)
- 2) If the change was done incorrectly or if something were to break after the change, the party who made the change could be notified to rectify the situation,
- 3) Changes made to configuration have to be run by the equipment scheduler (currently Troy Roques) to ensure there are no conflicts.
- 4) Permanent changes (i.e. leaving a boat as starboard stroked) must meet the needs of the Club and crews rowing that particular piece of equipment.

Note that as crews come & go, the usage of a piece of equipment may change, and the equipment may need to be configured back to it's standard configuration. Please direct any comments on this Club policy to any BOD member for discussion/consideration.

The BARCalendar

Date	What?	Contact
Saturday Feb.26, 8 am	Rice Invitational Regatta at Mudd Lake	Hannes Hofer 713-285-5347
Monday Feb. 28, 7 pm	Annual Meeting at Clear Lake Meeting Room	Jeff Tave 281-326-5098
March 18-19	Heart Of Texas Regatta, Austin	
April 1	Try it, you'll Like it, Mud Lake	Pam Falk 281-538-1742
April 15	Space City Sprints, Mud Lake	Claire Sweatt 713-729-2470
April 29	Sculling Class	Claire Sweatt 713-729-2470
May 13	Dallas Sprints, Bachman Lake Dallas	

BARCers debut at the Head of the Charles



By Hannes Hofer

Last winter, four Houston rowers got together and decided on a goal for the upcoming season. The goal was to go to the famous “Head of the Charles Regatta” (HOCR) in Boston. For those who don’t know, The Head of the Charles is one of the largest regattas in the world. Each year it draws more than 5000 rowers from all over the globe.

The four rowers were Jeff Tave, Karl Zimmer, and Yours Truly from BARC and temporary BARCer Graeme Knight, who normally rows with Greater Houston Rowing Club in Sugarland. Since we wanted to row a coxed four, we needed to find a coxswain, not an easy task since the job description for that position calls for, among other grueling things, sharing a boat with four very opinionated individuals three times a week through the very hot Houston summer. I am not sure Claire Sweatt knew what she was getting into, but we were all thrilled when she accepted our offer of pride and glory.

So we trained and trained. We went to several regattas and did well at some, not so good at others. Our biggest thrill was perhaps when we came very close to beating a team from Dallas on their home court at Bachman Lake. It was the same team which took 3rd place in the '98 HOCR, so our spirits were high as race day drew near.

We arrived in Boston the Friday before the Sunday’s

big race. Jeff provided the excitement on the trip when he missed the flight from Ellington and didn’t show up at IAH until everybody else on the plane had buckled their seat belts. The program for Saturday was to have breakfast and then locate Community Rowing, the club that had agreed to rent us a boat for the race. Neither of these two events worked out as expected. The Hotel’s restaurant opened late, so we wound up having \$15 bacon and eggs at the Hyatt. We then took a taxi to the address that was listed in the phone book for Community Rowing. The place we stopped at did not look like a boathouse. In fact, it looked suspiciously like a police station, State Troopers to be precise. Well, one of the nice policemen told Jeff that this was indeed the home of CR, so we sent the taxi off. The cop sent us upstairs and after some searching we finally found a room with a sign saying “Community Rowing”. We soon realized that this was the winter office for the club. The boathouse was about 3 miles down the road. How did we finally get there? Why.. in a cop car, of course. No siren, though. The place we got to didn’t look like a boathouse either. In fact, it was a skating rink, but it was indeed where CR kept their boats. As soon we got our boat rigged, we made our first acquaintance with the Charles River. The plan was to row the 7 miles down river to the start line, then row the actual course upstream, and then return back downstream to the boatyard at Magazine Beach.

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Charles.. Continued from page 3

All in all, 13 miles of rowing on a cold and windy day with intermittent rain. It all went fairly well, except for me and Claire yelling at each other because she couldn't understand a simple standard rowing term like "drooping tree". Later that afternoon, we watched the club races. Rice's Men's four did very well by taking 4th place in a field of 66 boats and the Rice Women took 17th of 55.

Race day arrived and everything was ready to go, well almost. We had discovered during our practice row that the oar handles were very slick, so I borrowed a rasp so we could rough them up a little. When Jeff put the file to his oar, he discovered that his wooden handle had loosened from the shaft. Time to panic! We were 5 minutes from launch time and we had a defective oar. I soon came up with a strategy: I asked everyone I knew on Magazine Beach for help, and when that didn't work I proceeded to ask everyone I didn't know. Finally someone from New Haven University (I think) had enough of my whining and lend us an oar, and soon we were on our way. The race was exciting. We didn't get off the start as well as we had hoped, and we were soon passed by the boat starting right behind us. As the race progressed we picked up the speed, and before the race ended, we had passed two boats ourselves. We all felt pretty good about the race, though we knew we hadn't exactly won it.

We proceeded past the finish line to return the boat to Community Rowing. Here we were faced with a new problem: The oar we had borrowed had to be returned to Magazine Beach, and carrying a 12' oar in a taxi could be problematic. I thought of calling the State Troopers again, but before we resorted to such desperation, we found another solution to the problem. This black Mercedes Benz was parked outside the ice rink with a set of Empacher oars on the roof. Upon further investigation, we found out it belonged to Bill McGowan, the US Empacher rep and one of my "internet buddies" that I had never met in person. It didn't take much persuasion to talk Bill into taking us - and the oar - back to Magazine Beach, so once again we were traveling in style. On the way back, Bill entertained us with some pretty funny rowing stories, and I even managed to talk him out of an Empacher hat that he had promised me on-line years ago. Back at Mag Beach, we were anxious to see how we had placed. We looked at the board and saw that we were only number 24 - not at all what we had

hoped for. The Dallas team we had come so close to beating just a few weeks before took 4th place. Despite the disappointing result, we all thought the thrill of rowing in the race was well worth all our efforts. The atmosphere at the regatta is phenomenal. You have one big mix of rowers - Olympic class rowers mixing it up with college kids and master rowers like us. It all comes together in a higher entity. It is truly a celebration of our sport.

We spent the rest of our time in Boston visiting some of the historic places the city is famous for. Jeff and Claire were particularly fond of Marshall's Department Store. I preferred the USS Constitution. We also sampled the City's fine cuisine. The steamed lobster was quite tasty as was the authentic New England Clam chowder. All in all, we had wonderful weekend in Bean Town. I highly recommend going to the HOOCR, should you ever have the chance.

In Memoriam Jim Casey

BARC lost a good friend on January 4, when Jim "Thunderbolt" Casey passed away.

Casey, a resident of Dickinson, was a native of Ireland where he and his brothers became sports heroes, excelling in boxing, wrestling, tug of war, and rowing. They were so good at their sports, they earned a place in the Irish Sports Hall of Fame. The brothers immigrated to the US in the 30s where they continued their exploits in sports. Among many other things, they won the World Wrestling Championship and many rowing races on the Charles River in Boston during the 40's.

Casey moved to Galveston County in 1960s where he opened a kennel, which is now operated by his son, James. He also taught rowing to many area youth, and even to NASA astronauts.

Despite his advanced age and failing health, Casey would show up at Clear Lake Park on weekends to watch BARCers row and he was always on hand for major events such as the groundbreaking for the boathouse and regattas. It was always fun to hear him tell his stories about rowing in the days of old, and he was always ready to give rowers tips on correct rowing style. He will be missed.

Casey, who was 87, is survived by his wife, Myrtle.

Club Equipment

By Jeff Tave

Folks, as a reminder, here's the Club shell list. Please remember that all private equipment should be marked with 2 bands of red tape. All hanging equipment is privately owned and may not be used by those other than the owner unless written permission is provided.

[R] = Recreational shells for people just out of class & less than 20 hrs on the water

[M] = Mid-range shells for people who have had at least 20 hrs in [R] shells & have been checked out by instructor

[T] = Race trainer shells for people who have had at least 20 hrs in [M] shells & have been checked out by instructor

[X1] = Shells which require a bow person who is cleared to row [T] class shells and the other rower should be at least an [M] class

[X2] = Shells which require a bow person who is cleared to row [T] class shells and the other rowers should be at least an [R] class

[X3] = Rice Crew shells which BARC may use with Rice Crew approval

(schedule) Shells which require a bow person who is cleared to row [T] class shells and the other rowers should be at least an [R] class

Locations (when looking into the 2 Boathouse "bays" from front doors)

Sculling Shells (right bay: left, front rack)

[R] 2 Graham Trimlines w/ white drop-in unit

[R] 2 Smallcraft w/ black Piantidossi drop-in units

[T] 1 Orange Jullien Race Trainer (designed for hvy weight people (> 180 lbs))

Sculling Shells (right bay: right, front rack)

[R] 3 Maas Aero 1X's (#1, 2, &3) with delta rigger

[M] 2 Maas 24 1X's ("Quig" and another) with wing/boomerang rigger

[M] 1 Felker Recreational 1X (red/black deck)

[T] 1 Orange Jullien Race Trainer 1X (designed for hvy weight people > 180 lbs)

Sculling/Sweep Shells (right bay: left, rear rack)

[X1] Filippi 2X/2- racing shell (mid weight)

[X1] Hudson 2X/2- racing shell (mid weight)

Sculling Shells (right bay: right, middle rack)

[T] Maas Elite 1X, blue strip standard weight 1X

[T] Maas Elite 1X, red strip light weight (for people

150 lbs or less)

[T] 1 Orange Jullien Race Trainer (designed for hvy weight people > 180 lbs)

[T] 1 Felker Race Trainer 1X (designed for hvy weight people > 180 lbs)

Sculling/Sweep Shells (left bay: right, rear rack)

[X2] Vespoli 4X/4- racing shell (mid weight)

[X2] Vespoli 4+ racing shell (hvy weight)

[X2] Kaschper 4X racing shell (mid weight)

Sweep Shells (left bay: left rack)

[X2] "Stroke-n-8tor" Schoenbrod 8+ (mid weight, currently outside)

[X3] "Flynn" Vespoli 4+ racing shell (hvy weight)

[X3] "Sellinger" Kaschper 8+ racing shell (hvy weight)

Redesigning the Sculling Classes

By Claire Sweatt

Several BARC members recently participated in two meetings to discuss our current Sculling Class arrangement. The goal of this group was to redesign our existing process to better meet the needs of class members and club members. The main two concerns needing to be addressed were

- 1) significant demand for the classes (last summer ~90 individuals expressed interest in our classes which can only accommodate 36), and
- 2) a desire to improve the percentage of individuals continuing to row with BARC following the sculling classes.

These plans were approved at the meeting:

- Continue to have 1 class/month for April through September with 6 individuals/class
- Establish more formal and regularly scheduled follow-up classes for new rowers to help them further develop their skills and to form new crews or join existing crews
- When someone calls about the classes, he/she will be strongly encouraged to take the Try It You'll Like It (TIYLI) class first
- Try It You'll Like It classes will be offered for \$10 once per month. This should help address the desire of those individuals who are only interested in experiencing rowing but are not necessarily interested in rowing on a regular basis.

What do we still need to do as a club? Good question. We need to:

- Pick an individual to coordinate our Try It You'll

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Have you rowed a good movie lately?

While only a few movies are strictly about rowing, many films contain segments of rowing. The following list of movies with rowing in them was compiled by some geek who had nothing better to do. It was discovered on the web by Tom Topalu and typed and brought to this newsletter by Don and Robin Erwin.

- **College** 1927 Silent film with Buster Keaton as an incompetent but eager coxswain. He quickly learns where not to step in a boat. Special appearance of the boat named Damfino.
- **Blondie goes to College** 1942 Blondie and Dagwood have their collegiate experience a little late in life. Dagwood's usual *savoir faire* has an immediate effect on the set of the boat.
- **Peter Pan** 1953 Smee rows Captain Hook away from the marauding crocodile. He is clearly pulling too deep, but the fact that he is rowing around 50 is impressive. As soon as he loses a little weight, we can think of a few masters boats that would be happy to have him.



- **Moby Dick** 1956 Rowing in leviathan filled waters is an interesting diversion and having a harpooner in the bow would probably make racing more interesting. The original Melville includes some fairly impressive coxswain's monologue: *"Pull, pull, my fine hearts-alive; pull, my children; pull, my little ones," drawingly and soothingly sighted Stubb to his crew, some of whom still showed signs on uneasiness. "Why don't you break your backbones, my boys? What is it you stare at? Those chaps in yonder boat? Tut! They are only five more hands come to help us - never mind from where - the more the merrier. Pull, then, do pull; never mind the brimstone - devils are good fellows enough. So, so; there you are now; that's the stroke for a thousand pounds; that's the stroke to sweep the stakes!*

Hurrah for the gold cup of sperm oil, my heroes! Three cheers, men - all hearts alive... Why don't you snap your oars, you rascals? Bite something, you dogs! ... That's it - that's it - long and strong. Give way, up there, give way! The devil fetch ye, ye ragamuffin rascallions; ye are all asleep. Stop snoring, ye sleepers, and pull. Pull, will ye? pull, can't ye? Pull won't ye? Why in the name of gudgeons and ginger-cakes don't ye pull? Pull and break something! Pull, and start your eyes out! Here!" whipping out the sharp knife from his girdle; "every mother's son of ye draw his knife, and pull with the blade between his teeth. That's it—that's it. Now ye do something; that looks like it my steel-bits. Start her - start her, my silver-spoons! Start her, marling spikes.

- **Ben Hur** 1959 There isn't a cox out there who hasn't wanted to ask for "RAMMING SPEED!!" In the original by Edward Bulwer-Layton, it mentions that Ben Hur asked to be switched from port to starboard and back so that he would develop evenly. I guess he aspired to be a sculler.
- **Half A Sixpence** 1967 Tommie Steele stars as a lower class bloke around the turn of the century who inherited a lot of money. The stoffs then invite him into their rowing circle. For those rowers who think that life is just one big musical, there is a Gilbert and Sullivan-esque version of Henley not to be missed.
- **The Magic Christian** Peter Sellers and Ringo Starr. A single priceless scene where, for a big bucket of cash, one boat sinks the other at the Oxford Cambridge race. The clueless revisionist commentary from the chase flotilla is hilarious.
- **Boy in Blue** 1987 Stars Nicholas Cage as 1810's champ Ned Hanlan back when rowing was as popular as Football is in the US and Football (soccer) is in the rest of the world. High stakes with lots of money changing hands.
- **Oxford Blues** 1984 Rob Lowe in a film that purports to show that you don't need to do maintenance on the boats while still on shore since you can fix your boat during a race and still win. For you purists, boat-burning takes place only after eights, not after ad hoc coxless pairs grudge matches against Harvard. Update of A Yank at Oxford.

Continued next page

Movies.. continued from page 6

- **A Yank at Oxford** 1938 Lionel Barrymore in a tale of the crass American who crosses the pond to save the day.
- **Mad Love** 1995 West coast shots of Chris O'Donnell who doesn't need a body double since he can actually row quite well. Shows that you have to be crazy to go out with a rower.
- **The River Wild** 1994 Meryl Streep took some lessons to learn how to scull and did quite well, but I'm told that Liz O'Leary backed her up as a body double for the close up shots of everything but her face. The sequence takes you from Boston Community Rowing down to the Longfellow bridge by Union Boat Club.
- **A Hard Day's Night** 1964 Ringo along the shore during the "This Boy" piece while a couple of scullers are off in the background. Look hard for the sculler who has flipped.
- **Indochine** 1992 Catherine Deneuve and the French presence during the thirties in what was to become Viet Nam. Good shots of a race between two eights, one with the French Navy contingent, and the second filled with the local favorites and coxed by Deneuve's father. The Vietnamese easily win. Some one said their boat was named Dien Bien Phu but I doubt it.
- **Dead Poets Society** 1989 Anyone interested in where the Diamond State Masters Regatta is rowed can take a peak at this film shot at St. Andrews in Delaware.
- **Exorcist III** 1990 The Washington & Lee High School 4+ is shown. Later in the film George Scott is at the top of the exorcist stairs while a boat is being carried past. Makes as much sense as seeing an 8 being carried through Harvard Yard.
- **The Firm** 1993 Opening sequence on the Charles by the Weeks Bridge.
- **Striking Distance** 1993 In this cop thriller with Bruce Willis and Sarah Jessica Parker, Bruce lives on a barge and waves to an eight from Univ. of Pittsburgh. No one in the eight gets shot at in

this film.

- **GoldenEye** A quad rows in the background and is one of the few things in the movie that doesn't get blown up.
- **Silken Lauman Story** 1996 Made for TV movie about a very impressive woman.
- **Three Men in a Boat** 1975 Remake of the 1956 remake of the 1933 film of the same name. The 1975 version stars Michael Palin, Tim Curry and Stephen Moore. Seen in the US as a PBS production about a camping trip where the transport is rowing of the Thames around 1900. Fabulous scenery, interesting stuff. Written by Jerome K. Jerome who is no relation to William Carlos Williams, but may be the cousin of Ford Madox Ford.
- **Hey Babu Reba** Yugoslavian film with a strong rowing presence.

Race results

Pumpkinhead '99

Several BARC crews went to Austin in late October to participate in a rainy and windy head race on Town Lake. Many of the morning races were canceled because of the weather and the regatta was about to be called off when all of a sudden at noon the weather cleared and racing could. This is how BARC crews fared:

Men's Open Four with cox:

5th: Johnstone, Ziengs, Pafittis, Lamczyc, cox: Tave 19:44

Men's Masters Four with cox.

2nd : Tave, Knight, Hofer, Bradt, cox: Jütte 20:38

Men's Open Double Scull:

2nd: Hofer, Jütte 21:19

Men's Masters Single Scull:

2nd: Graeme Knight 22:39

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Like It classes;

Pam Falk has agreed to lead the first TIYLI on April 1st

- Pick an individual to coordinate the Follow-up Classes for our novice rowers
- Have as many BARC members participate in these activities as possible! Since we'll be having a TIYLI class once a month and a Sculling Class (4 2-hour sessions) once a month, we need as many volunteers as possible so that the work load is evenly distributed.

Please say "I would love to help" when we call you thanks!

A big "thank you" goes to the following individuals for participating in this process: Jeff Tave, Karl Zimmer, Hannes Hofer, Pam Falk, Tom and Dorie Heig, Fred Schultz, Carl Smith, Ben Julette, and Jack Quigley.

Claire Sweatt
Sculling Class Coordinator



So, you thought 4 people dragging one coxswain around was tough?. – Thanks to Bill Dixon and Brenda Jamison Claire for the picture

Results.. Continued from page 7

The Louisiana Marathon

This year, BARC fielded a men's eight for the 26 mile course near Natchitoches, Louisiana.

Andy Johnstone, Jantinus Ziengs, Demos Pafitis, Tom Topalu, Hannes Hofer, Jeff Tave, Graeme Knight, and "loaner" Ivan Koeck from New Orleans won their category by rowing the course in 3:16:59. A BARC Double with Bruce Meltzer and Ben Newcomb placed 2nd by completing the course in 4:20:58.