
STROKEWATCH



NEWSLETTER FOR THE BAY AREA ROWING CLUB OF HOUSTON

November 2000

Thanksgiving at the Dixons'



The Dixon Family has graciously offered their home to anyone who would like to share Thanksgiving dinner with other BARC members. The Dixons will provide the turkey and they ask that you bring a dish to share (vegetables, salad, desert) and your own beverage.

People will start gathering at the Dixon's at 3:00pm and dinner will be at 5:00pm (November 23rd)

Please email the Dixons's and then know that you plan to come and what you are going to bring.

billdixon@ey.com or dixonk@tirr.tmc.edu

I will also post a food sign up list in the barchouse

The Dixons live at 2115 Heathergreen and their telephone number is (281) 480-7513

Happy Turkey Day!



BARC Holiday Party

December 3rd, 2000

5:00pm

At the home of Pam Falk

The club will provide the main course. A food sign up list will be posted in the boat house, or you can call Pam at 281-538-1742

Also bring a present for the boathouse!

- And Just in Time for Your Christmas Shopping!

BARCwear: If you've noticed members wearing BARC jackets that you are interested in, I have a "Sew Sporty" catalogue that we can order them from. Jackets range from about \$65 - \$120 depending on fabric and design choices, they will be even less expensive if we order several at the same time. I will be placing an order by the middle of November, if you would like me to order one for you, you'll need to contact me as soon as possible (tftompkins@juno.com).

BARC unisuits are ordered from "JL Design Enterprises" (<http://www.jlrcing.com/jlrcrace.frame.html>). They are very size specific, so I think it is easier if you order your own.

I noticed that the "Sew Sporty" catalogue also has unisuits. They seem to be less expensive than those ordered from "JL Design Enterprises". Anyone who is interested may order directly from them (<http://rowersworld.com/Network/SewSporty/>). I would appreciate any feedback with regard to quality.

Theresa

Also in this Issue:

- Ten reasons the "Great Eight" is slow.
- A Tribute to Our Founding President
- Greetings from a Dutchman
- Rowing Tips
- Head race season review
- Safety tips
- And much more....



Bay Area Rowing Club of Houston
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<http://www.barchouston.org>

For membership information call Jeff **281-326-5098** or email jefftave@ghg.net

Club Officers:

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

Ten Reasons Why The "Great Eight" Is Slow Leaving The Dock

10. Arthritis medication needs time to kick in.
9. It takes longer to empty bladder when prostate is enlarged.
8. Getting pacemakers synchronized.
7. Having trouble turning up volume on hearing aids to hear cox.
6. Drooling on oar handles makes them slippery and hard to hold.
5. Problems getting "Depends" properly situated.
4. Confusion about which seat to get in.
3. Putting on and taking off clothing during "hot flash" moments.
2. Trying to remember where the ginko biloba is stashed.

And the number one reason the "Great Eight" is slow leaving the dock.....

Fighting their way through all the single scullers who are lolly gagging on the dock.

Marilyn Bullard

BARC Membership Reminder

BARCers, please be sure all new members contact me via phone (281-326-5098) or email (jefftave@ghg.net) once they complete their paperwork. That way I can ensure that they are entered in

the BARC Member database for future contact by pony-mail, e-mail, and phone. Also, before any prospective or new member uses club equipment or facilities, they MUST fill out a waiver. This is required by our insurance carrier through US Rowing.

The BARCalendar

Date	What?	Contact
Nov. 23	Thanksgiving Party at the Dixons	The Dixons, (281) 480-7513
Dec. 3	BARC Holiday Party, Pam Falk's house	Pam Falk, 281-538-1742
Feb. 18, 2001(tentatively)	Rice/UT/Tulane Regatta, Mud Lake	Hannes Hofer 713-664-7784
March 18-19, 2001	Heart of Texas Regatta, Austin	www.austinrowing.org

A Recognition of the Founding President on the Occasion of the Commencement of his Sixth Decade

By Bruce Meltzer

I first met Carl over fourteen years ago shortly after I was moved to Clear Lake when we both rowed on Clear Lake. It has been rewarding and educational for me to befriend Carl and to work closely together on Club and Community volunteer activities.

Often new organizations are conceived and founded only to stagnate and fail a few years later. That our club would grow and become strong was never in doubt under Carl's leadership. Although he seldom mentions it Carl has a long history of successful contributions to his community.

Beginning in the 60's in Massachusetts, Carl organized neighborhood recycling, worked for wetland protection (at a time when these activities were considered radical) and co-founded a Church that recently celebrated its thirtieth anniversary. After moving to Texas to purchase and run a successful small business in the 70's his new Friendswood home was flooded. After a survey of the neighborhood, Carl realized that by simply cleaning, the drainage ditches in the neighborhood would greatly reduce the chances of flood. He organized his neighbors by going door-to-door. The neighbors would meet each weekend to clear and remove the obstructions.

This effort led to his business partner becoming Mayor of Friendswood, the creation of the Clear Creek Drainage District, and successful lobbying in Austin and Washington for funding of the Corps of Engineers flood relief plan for Clear Creek (and our annual canoe race on Clear Creek for many years).

There is one Service Agency that Carl has served on the board of directors for many years. The Agency has gone through many ups and downs. Carl is always planning to resign except one crisis or another pops up and he feels he must stay to see the organization through the next crisis.

From the first day of planning the club Carl under-



Carl Smith

stood the importance of building a consensus among the founders. A great deal of time was taken in deciding on what the name of the club would be. He understood that by getting input from everyone and that we would all be more committed to the goals of the Club. Early on when some objected to the idea of purchasing old wooden boats, we all met at the pizza place and everyone was invited to comment and vote on the plan. He was quick to identify the talents of members and put them to the best use: Marilla Cohen, the Vision Thing, Tom Lotz publicity, Rudy engineering and construction, Don Erwin handbook procedures and rules, Mike Brint recruiting and training, David Gill Legal and Community issues. Carl fostered good relations with the County leading to our signing of a long-term lease. Just as important and more to his credit is that when it was time to turn the Presidency over to the next generation he had developed the people to take the first generation's place and he gracefully stepped aside. The Club has continued to grow and strengthen.

The New Dock - Now You See It, Now You Don't

You have probably been wondering what happened to the new dock. Well - as you may have noticed, it was floating a little too high in the water, making it too hard to launch from. The contractor thought he could solve the problem by weighing it down with concrete blocks, but that didn't work. Instead the whole thing was taken back out and back to the shop for modifications. It should be returned "any time, now".

Rowing Better: Setting the Stretcher

By Simon Foster

Most crews share boats. Also, the composition of a crew often varies. Everyone knows to check their stretcher, when the seat was last used by someone else. But perhaps not everyone really knows why it's important or how to set it for best results.

For a good row, it is vital that everyone finishes together, with their blades at the same angle to the boat. If you don't, a sweep boat won't run straight or balance, and a sculling boat will be inefficient. Getting the finishes right is the first thing you want, because it gives you stability at the point in the stroke from which you start to set yourself up for the next one. Setting the stretcher allows you to get the right finish angle, in spite of the different lengths of leg in the crew.

For sculling boats an easy way to do this is on the water after leaving the dock. Sit at the finish (knees fully down, sitting back ~15 deg past vertical, hands just touching bottom ribs) and check you have ~1+ 1/2 hand widths between the handles. Any more and you should move the stretcher away from you, any less, move it towards you. Provided the rigger span and inboard of the sculls are correct, you will then have the right finish angle.

For sweep boats, sit at the finish (knees fully down) and check where the rear rim (i.e. towards the bow) of the back wheels of your seat reach to, behind the "line of work". This term means a point in line with the working face of the rigger swivel (the vertical flat bit the oar pulls against during the stroke). A typical club measurement is 66cm (26in) for men and 62cm (24.5 in) for women. You can mark this point with tape. A quick'n'dirty alternative is to see where the rear rim of the wheels reach, relative to the bracing rib in the hull behind you. The distance to the sternward edge of this is usually about 66cm. So men can line up with this, or women about a thumb joint short of it. This can be done on the water, if the stretchers move easily and the crew is experienced. If not, it may have to be done at the dock, before you leave.

Incidentally, this explains why novice VIIIs take a while to get away from the dock.

From The Board:

Thanks to everyone who helped out this year with the Sculling Classes. We had another successful year

* 23 individuals attended a Try It You'll Like It Class...and, guess what...many of them "liked it" and signed up for the full Sculling Class

* 32 individuals attended the 8 hour (4 two-hour sessions) Sculling Class

* 5 individuals received private lessons

The classes continue to help us meet one of our primary goals which is to promote the sport of rowing in the Greater Houston area. An added benefit is the money it brings into the club to help with new equipment purchases...this past season, the classes brought in ~\$2600.00

We still have a significant demand for the classes...a greater demand than what our current set-up can accommodate. Those individuals closely involved with the organization of the classes will continue to look for ways to improve this system. Please call Claire.

BARC Membership Survey Coming Soon

Watch for it in your mail. As BARC continues to grow, the Board of Directors is mapping a plan for the future of BARC. This can only be done with input from the membership. Very soon, you will receive a Membership Survey titled "Charting Our Future". It's only two pages and the BOD would be very grateful if each member would take a few moments to complete the survey. Addressed return envelopes will be included for your convenience.

Rowing Development Coordinator...a new role at BARC

The Board of Directors recently established a new position within BARC:

Rowing Development Coordinator. Jeff Tave has accepted the offer to fill this position. He currently serves as Membership Director so there will be a transition time for him to move from one role to the next.

The role of Rowing Development Coordinator includes:

1. Facilitate Skills Development
2. Facilitate Crew Formation
3. Promote Regatta Participation
4. Support Web Page Maintenance

The Fall Regatta Season



By Hannes Hofer

The fall Head race season has come and gone. Only a few BARC crews chose to race this year, but those who did had a good time doing it, and most of them were rewarded with medals for their efforts.

Head of the Red, October 7:

BARC fielded a Men's Open Eight, A Men's Open Four and a Men's and Women's Single.

The Eight, consisting of Andy Johnstone, Demos Pafitis, Ryan Owen, James Mcfarlane, Hannes Hofer, Carl Williams, and "loaners" Chad Shaw, Ben Scrace, and Cox Amy Scrace won gold, as did the four with Andy Johnstone, Demos Pafitis, Ryan Owen, James Mcfarlane, and Hannes Hofer coxing. Karen Weimar won the women's Single while Tom Topalu placed 5th in the Men's Single.

At the **Pumpkin Head** in Austin two weeks later, the same boats competed (only change was in the eight where Mark Zeller took the place of Chad Shaw). The competition here was a lot tougher, so the four had make do with a 6th and the eight with a 5th place. Karen Wiemar repeated her 1st place per-

formance, and Tom Topalu took 5th in the Open lightweight single and 3rd in the Masters Single. Hannes Hofer also competed in the Lightweight Single where he took 6th place after colliding with a Novice Eight and amassing 140 penalty points (Oops!). The biggest surprise of the day was when Breff Cooling and Theresa Tompkins took gold the Masters Mixed Double. This was their first race together. Demos Pafitis, in his third race of the day, took 2nd place in the Open Mixed Double with Karen Weimar.

The last BARC attended race in the season was the **Marathon Championships** in Louisiana. Three BARC crews signed up for the 26 mile race. Hannes Hofer, Ryan Owen, Mark Zeller, new member Raj Sareen, and a coxswain named Greg rowed the Men's Club Four in 4:46.36, which was just fast enough to beat the Masters Quad with Bruce Meltzer, Ben Newcombe, Jack Quigley, and Fred Schultz by 15 seconds. Both teams got gold medals as did Tom Topalu in the Men's Club Single.

More results can be found on www.barchouston.com

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!)

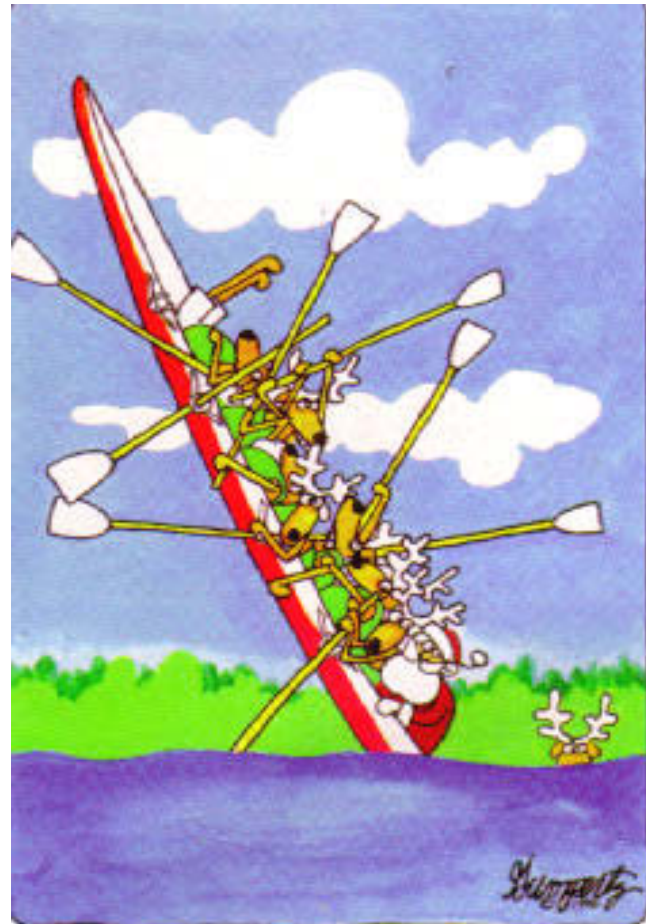
I am currently using a VistaLight VL700 Eclipse which has 7 forward-facing LED's and 2 blink modes; I bought a woven nylon dog collar so I can attach the light to the back of my neck. Webster Bicycle and Bike Barn used to carry it. Karl Zimmer uses Trek lights, which are smaller since they have fewer 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.

- And Speaking of Safety....

Jeff Sipek writes:

We may want to remind all of our members (individuals, RICE....) of the pattern that BARC has established for making a lap in Mud Lake. I have noticed that there are those who are "making their own rules" on this issue. As I understand the rule (which is in place for safety reasons) the pattern is to stay approximately 100 feet or so from the shore line. The direction is to stay on the boat house side of the lake as you row towards the telephone posts. Then, as you row towards the bridge (going out to Clear Lake) you should be on the opposite side of the lake. That way the center of the lake is left open and we do not have a chance for collisions. The same rule applies when going under the telephone poles, ie - do not row in the center space as it is dedicated for a "buffer zone."

One last comment, is there any way that we could politely ask those in motor boats who are video taping or coaching others to be cognizant and courteous to those of us who are in single shells? I know others have experienced the wake of these boats and have the same thoughts.



A View From the Netherlands

Frans Kets, visiting from Europe, was a guest at BARC for a weekend. After his return to Holland he wrote the following:

I would like to extend my thanks for the hospitality which I experienced at BARC through the same medium by which I have found out that BARC existed. Typing in a search for "Houston AND Rowing" brings one quite automatically to BARC, and that is how I came to see you.

I have very much appreciated that I could do my normal weekly exercise on Mud Lake, and do it in quite a good boat. I have never experienced a Moss Elite before in my life, but I must say it was a pleasant experience - a robust elegant boat, with the riggers at the proper height, and everything thus setup that one could just get in and have a very pleasant rowing experience. In general I must say that I am impressed by the boats I have seen at your site. The bias towards racing is quite clear, and I hope that your club performs well in the variety of regattas here in the States. Success in Austin in the first place!

There are a few differences between US rowing clubs such as BARC and the rowing clubs as I know them in the Netherlands. Just for fun:

- one will rarely see a boathouse without dressing rooms and cafeteria in Holland. Rowing is quite social, and after rowing we normally sit down at the bar, drink something and talk (about rowing of course). Hence we change dress first - get the sweaty clothes off, and other clothes on. Perhaps there is another reason: temperature is not such that one can really travel in rowing clothes from home to rowing club.

- you will see in Holland a number of quite broad recreational boats - we call these "wherries". They are made for recreational touring, and we tour in Europe along all kinds of canals and rivers. A nice trip for instance is apparently rowing part of the Danube (I have never done it). Rowing these types of boats is quite different from rowing racing sculls. The rowing club I am part of, "Rijnland", has both racing sculls and "wherries". Touring around in Holland is quite popular - as Holland is as flat as a pancake, and as there are lots of canals and rivers, one can really enjoy that kind of activity. There are people who only do "touring", people who are only interested in racing, and people who do both.

- Our rowing club "Rijnland" has still quiet a lot of wooden boats - presumably a sign of age (35 years old



rather than 10). We do not use smoothies that much - we stick to standard "big blades". We ("Rijnland") do not have wing rigged boats thus far (presumably the European ship builders are more conservative? or just a matter of budget from our side?). Hence my appreciative comments on the quality of your fleet.

But more importantly - there are things which are not different: the relaxed atmosphere in the boathouse when people gather to get into the boats; the same relaxed and calm attitude, when working on the boats, changing riggers or making repairs; the same care for the material. On the water very much the same - saying hello to each other, the coaches giving instructions (in Holland from the water side, with you from the motor boat), the coxes with their firm voices, the sound of the blades in the water.

Also common across the ocean: the same kind of hospitality.

In short: I liked the visit to BARC, and travel schedules permitting, I hope to come back one day. Please do not hesitate to contact me or the rowing club Rijnland when one of you is in the Netherlands.

Frans Kets
Rowing club "Rijnland"
Leidschendam
Netherlands
email: fbkets@euronet.nl

The Aggies Complete a Successful Fall Campaign

By Bruce Meltzer

Texas Aggies earned a medal in the Mxd 8+ of the Marathon Row at Natchitoches on November 11 besting their previous time by over 20 minutes. Boats won medals in all of the fall regattas. The Crews worked hard, with 4 times a week rows and more impressively twice weekly Gym workouts to build their strength and endurance. The Varsity Crews are rowing out of their new facilities in Galveston.

The Club is stronger than ever; having fielded 30 competitors compared to a club half this size last spring. They have nominated the candidates who will take leadership positions when the current officers graduate. Crew has received great school and parental support.

The Club is now beginning a campaign to purchase a Women's 4+. The athletes have developed a plan to sell "inches of the boat" They price is \$15.00 per inch and several feet have already been sold.
Congratulation Aggies!

-As Does Rice..

By Hannes Hofer.

At the Head of the Red In Shreveport the team won four of the five races they attended.

A Men's and a Women's four went to the Head of the Charles in Boston, and the women came back with a medal for taking 5th place in the prestigious race.

The Novices got their first taste of racing in Austin where both the Novice Men's 4 and the novice Men's 8 took first place.

Rice also traveled to Georgia for the Head of the Chattahoochee where five of the eight boats entered finished in the top half of their races.

Finally, the team sent 3 eights to the Marathon Championships, where the Experienced Mixed boat won, while the Men's and Women's novices took silver and bronze respectively.
Congratulations Owls!

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