

# The Blade

Dallas Rowing Club Newsletter



Spring 2006

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## Backsplash - DRC Goals for 2006

*By Mike Morschauser*

Nearly ten years ago I made my first visit to the Dallas Rowing Club. I became an active member soon thereafter, and I have enjoyed the benefits the club has provided ever since. Now I find myself serving as club President. I would like to see the club continue to hold the positive reputation it has earned, and remain a source of pleasure, good health, and personal development well into the future. In the pursuit of those aspirations, it seems appropriate to share some philosophy and goals with each of our members.

First and foremost, we must continue to provide a safe and functional facility well suited to enable our members to pursue their rowing interests, whatever they may be. We

have the complete spectrum of rowers, from occasional recreational oarsmen and novice high school students to competitive, national team athletes and active college students. Not to mention the Masters level competitors, many of whom started out in search of good health and recreation and found an obsession that seems to get more serious every year. Keeping all of these interests in sight, and providing appropriate support for each with limited assets is a daunting challenge. No matter what your rowing background or future, we can all recognize the need to keep the club the safe and friendly environment it has been in the past. Toward that end, we have time-tested rules and procedures in place, and the first step toward maintaining the club as we know it is to follow those guidelines, and to ensure our fellow club

members do the same. We presently enjoy a well chosen assortment of boats, providing adequate selection for the novice and racer alike. We also have procedures for maintaining the quality our equipment, and all of us are well advised to review those procedures and follow them. You can expect the board of directors to continue to review the needs of our membership, procuring new boats and other equipment as our needs and financing allows. You can also expect the board to begin to take a careful look at the long term needs of the club, specifically in the area of the boathouse and its structural integrity. In projecting club spending, the significant impact of major boathouse renovation on the budget can not be totally ignored in

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favor of near term equipment needs. Much of what we consider should be effectively communicated to the club's membership, ideally through a regularly published Blade Newsletter or a current website.

No discussion of DRC issues can be complete without reference to actual rowing. The effectiveness of our "Learn to Row" program, and the selfless dedication of those members who have made the program thrive must be applauded. This year we hope to provide a more structured follow up opportunity for those rowers who have completed LTR and want to take the next step. I encourage every member to give some thought to participating in the LTR process.

Like many of our members, I find competitive rowing, and the training regimen it dictates, the most compelling aspect of our sport. The club presence in this area has exploded in recent years, and we will strive to continue the upsurge in both the volume of events and the quality of our entrants. This year we envision increased numbers of competitive rowers in a variety of national events, as well as continued support for the

traditional in-state events. Ideally we can help every rower make the most of their potential, and compete as successfully as their circumstances and desire allow. To the rowers who travel to away regattas and enjoy the fruits of their labors, I have to say that in some small ways, at least, there are unsung members back in the boathouse whose efforts contribute to any success we might enjoy. We must continue to remember and respect this vital element of our club. Sometimes that respect is shown just by signing in properly, cleaning up a little, and showing common courtesy around the boathouse. In the process of making sure our most competitive members continue to develop and excel, we cannot overlook the welfare of our least competitive members, and we must not allow an exclusionary atmosphere create discomfort in any phase of our activities.

The Dallas Rowing Club, based on a simple cost/ benefit analysis, is the best athletic opportunity in town. Our task is to keep up the standard, improve it where we can, and plan for the future. If we can be open and responsible in our dealings, treat each other with respect and try to provide positive input

whenever possible, we can continue the progress we have enjoyed, and ensure a bright future.

Personally, I look forward to a year of rowing faster and aging slower. I hope to see improvement in our inventory, more participation in our evening training program, more trips to more regattas, and maybe some point trophies from the local races. I expect to see DRC racers medal at the US Rowing Nationals, and succeed at the Head of the Charles as well. I am confident we will continue to support our tenant schools as they compete at every level. Most of all, I hope we will all support each other, and find gratification in the success of any DRC rower.

# Looking Back and Looking Forward

After a very rewarding increase in the number of new DRC club and school program members in 2004, this past year saw great accomplishments by everyone. From our long standing troop of purely recreational rowers, to the squad of racing novices across a broad span of ages and experience levels, to the highly focused and disciplined cadre of men and women, Youth, Junior, Open and Masters category competitors, there can be no doubt that the year 2005 topped all previous seasons, both in rowing quality and the reputation of Dallas Rowing Club and all its affiliate schools as a force to be feared at any starting line.

The club's strength on the water was matched by an amazing year of building our physical infrastructure. With terrific volunteer help from our DRC partner schools, parents, and many club members, we constructed what many visiting clubs at the Spring B.L.A.S.T. Regatta called the finest 1,000-meter racecourse in the USRA's Southeast region. In addition, we nearly doubled the club's capacity for boat storage, allowing the expansion of the racing and training fleets of all our member schools and of the club itself.

Great change is always accompanied by great stresses on all members of an



organization such as ours, but, having completed my final year as club president, I feel that most of us have now joined on the much healthier road of mutual trust and respect, and that the years ahead will see once again a membership unified by the one thing which brought us together in the first place, a love of the sport of rowing. I want to personally thank all those who contributed to the resurgence of DRC, who communicated and continue to communicate openly and positively with new ideas and initiatives to continue our growth in the years to come. Without that spirit of discovery, we would surely wither and die.

Finally, I thank all those members who sent their prayers and strength our way in this second half of 2005. My favorite recollection of this entire four years is that of Diana Palms, covered in Bachman Lake mud, proudly grinning and holding up the last red racing buoy to be clipped into place at the finish line. She never raced, but she showed us all the spirit of a champion.

As we prepare for this coming year of rowing - recreation, training, and competition - let's all remember that we need each other.

We must draw strength and keen satisfaction from one another's accomplishments, above and in addition to our own; we are honored to wear DRC colors, proud to row in the best fleet of equipment in the state, to train on the best racecourse in the region. Above all, lighten up and have fun together.

*Tony Palms*



## Meet the DRC Board 2006



Mike Morschauser - President

I rowed in college when I ran into resistance making the regular teams, i.e. football, basketball and baseball. I walked away from rowing in 1968, but came back in 1997, mostly because I was trying to get my son interested. Then I rowed at the Master's Nationals in 1997 and have been hooked ever since. My ambition is to develop respectable sculling ability and maybe move on to coach at some level in the future. I expect to retire from my present position this year.



Ann Scherbarth - Vice President

Born and raised in Dallas, Texas. I graduated from The College of Charleston in SC with degrees in Art History and Studio Art. As the Swim Pro at The Cooper Fitness Center, I teach and coach swimming to people of all ages. As well, I run Cooper Swim Academy, which is a swim school for children ages 1-12. My husband, Albert and I have been married for 3 years. We live in the Cedars where he has a studio, workshop and our home that we share with our dogs, Gretal and Eudora, as well as our cats and chickens. Flying kites, taking hikes, hanging out with good friends, making art and working the garden are just a few of our favorite things to do. And of course, there is rowing. A complete novice when I joined DRC just over 2 years ago, I have learned a great new sport and made many friends along the way.



Ashlee Branan - Secretary

I started rowing in 1996 in college in Florida and continued at Georgetown during Law School before coming to DRC in 2003. This is my second year as DRC's Secretary and Membership Chair and I'm looking forward to an even better one than last year. We have over 115 members and keep growing. Learn to Row will start again in February, hopefully with a new crop of budding talent. Please let me know if you have any questions about meetings, membership or Learn to Row at [abranan@hotmail.com](mailto:abranan@hotmail.com)



Lene Andersen - Treasurer



Tony Palms - Boathouse Captain

### Members-At-Large

Bob Bauge,  
Hermann Bockelmann,  
Katelin Burton-Smith,  
Kate Bystry,  
Timo Carl,  
Patt Clagett,  
Will Forteith,  
Bruton Lynch,  
Troy Howell,  
Mary Humm,  
David Sperry,  
J.D. Werle,  
Ian South (in the U.K.)

# DRC Holiday/Christmas/Awards Party

Once again, DRC Members and Guests gathered on Sunday evening at Café Espresso in Preston Center to celebrate another great DRC year and to recognize our accomplishments. Among our 50+ attendees, only one arrived in a vintage Mercedes with the top down to start the evening; none other than our President, Tony Palms, a little chilly but ready to host the festivities. After an hour of cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and cheer, all enjoyed the fabulous buffet created by Dieter Paul, his wife Christa, and the marvelous staff at Café Espresso. We look forward to returning this year because no other venue would be as special and treat us so well. Many awards were presented and we applaud all the efforts of our members but perhaps the one that represents 2005 best was “The

Bungle Bucket” awarded to Anonymous. Unfortunately, Anonymous was unable to attend because he, she, or it did not step forward to claim the award. Oh well, we all hope that is history, ancient history! Later in the week, Hermann Bockelmann was pleased to deliver the toys generously donated to the Dallas Police Department when his blood alcohol level was once again below the legal limits. Thanks again for attending and be sure to check the bulletin board at the boathouse for upcoming events. Keep rowing and celebrating, life's too short to S.W.E.A.T. the small stuff.

*Hermann Bockelmann*



## Rowing Home: From LTR to My First Regatta

Once the well kept secret of the Dallas Rowing Club was out, my fate was sealed. Within days, I was haplessly applying to join my current obsession. I didn't know what to expect, but the warm face full of smiles that met the new recruits at August's Learn to Row, Ashlee Branan, foretold nothing of the adventure ahead.

Within a few embryonic days of paddling around Bachmann in a Maas, I joined Ian South's training program on his “come as you are-stay if you dare” open invitation. That's how I discovered the profundity of physical degeneration that a decade of high stress deskwork could cause. But I also discovered what a group of dedicated, synergistic, and focused club mates could bring to each other for no reward other than to share their love for rowing. I quickly realized that I was here to work hard, but more importantly, that I'd stumbled into a place to hang a hat and call home.

In the fleeting two-and-a-half months between Learn to Row and my first regatta, we put together a novice quad to compete in a 4x Open event at October's

Pumpkinhead: Stuart Thomas at stroke, Beau Brady and I at two and three, and Karun Tahlramani at bow. Being an Open event, it didn't hurt that we were the only boat entered. So long as we stayed upright, we had a shot at some semblance of glory if the race was not cancelled for lack of interest.

Testing our initial optimism, we met with the two other eleventh hour entries at the start. “Now those guys have eaten a lot of red meat!” I thought to myself in stunned silence. Yet undeterred, and with the mighty thrust of freshman arrogance, we pulled hard from the start to our first bridge just a few strokes ahead. That would be the bridge where the Texas Rowing Center's oars and ours sparred in discourteous interchange, although they started heartily behind us. Add to that injury the hurled indignity of “Are you steering impaired?!?”, and the omens fared unwell with three miles of water to go.

I'll spare the sordid inventory of every mental collapse, but suffice it to say that bushes springing forth as though appearing from nowhere were involved.

I will, however, share with you the salient positives of my first regatta:

1) friendships were forged in that boat that continue unabated; 2) the winners, in a show of encouragement and sportsmanship, congratulated us on a race well done although our boat was but a speck on their horizon; and 3) my first medal ever for anything has found a home of its own draped down my dresser mirror ... the bronze that's golden to me; the bronze I brought home.

*Jules P. Slim*



# Letter from our youngest Rowers

Dear Dallas Rowing Club,

This letter is an expression of our appreciation for allowing us to participate in the Learn to Row program. Hilary would like to say, "Thank you for allowing us to come this far. I am looking forward to continuing crew. Ian, Ashlee and Michelle have been great teachers. I was inspired to join rowing because it has always been a part of my life, since my Dad rows. I feel rowing has been a great experience and has helped me develop determination and teamwork."

Margaret feels that, "When we go into high school, we will have the advantage of already being experienced in the sport. The sport is also excellent exercise. I was inspired to join this sport because it looked like a beneficial sport

for me. It helped me gain coordination. I have gained determination. For the last month, we have appreciated the Dallas Rowing Club for giving us the opportunity to learn a new skill."

Janie would like to express her appreciation by saying that "I enjoy crew because with my hip problem, it is one of the few activities I can enjoy without pulling my hip out of socket. I also feel very thankful to Ian and Ashlee and Michelle for immersing me in this program. Michelle, my cousin, introduced me to the sport and I have been interested in it ever since. I enjoy spending time with my cousin while developing physical strength. I would also like to add that it helps me stay healthy which goes along with my personal motto 'Be Happy, Be Healthy, Eat Cheerios.'"

I, Katie, am also thankful for being allowed to participate in crew. Hilary asked me if I was interested in doing crew and I immediately agreed. The sport attracted me because I am always looking for a way to keep myself physically fit. I have appreciated the time and effort that Ian, Ashlee and Michelle have put into teaching us how to row. The club has given constant support by letting us use their equipment. Without the Dallas Rowing Club, I would have never been able to learn how to row. Crew has been a fun and positive experience and I would love to continue rowing with the Dallas Rowing Club.

Thank you!

*Katie, Margaret and Hilary*

## Volunteer for Learn to Row!

Learn to Row provided a lot of new talent last year. From the 13-year olds to the Masters, we had a 65% initial retention rate and we're hoping for similar numbers this year. Classes will begin at the end of February and be held once a month through November. We're always looking for volunteers to help teach and "boat wrangle". So, if you're free on a Saturday or Sunday from about 1:30pm to 5:00pm on a Learn to Row weekend, please stop by and lend a hand. Even better, offer a lending hand to those Novices who decide to join us!

*Ashlee Branan*



## Fall 2006 Newsletter

The next issue will be published in Fall 2006. Therefore we need the help of every member! We would like to write about your success at the spring and summer regattas and about your experiences with rowing in general. Never mind, if you are Novice, Champion, Master or another category, please collect all results and send them right away to Ute at [uspindler@web.de](mailto:uspindler@web.de).

Otherwise it will be impossible to keep track and publish complete information. Also pictures are very important! So, please send us some, if you were able to take them at any event. We appreciate your help and wish you a successful season! If you are interested in helping with the next newsletter, go ahead and send an e-mail to Ute. Volunteers are very welcome!

The Blade Newsletter

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