

# **St.Catharines Rowing Club**

## **President's Report to the Annual General Meeting, January 19, 2016**

I first want to thank our Board of Directors and Manager and Head Coach Mark Welsh for their hard work leading our club. I also want to thank our outgoing directors, Tom Kent, Karen Rickers, and James Walker. On behalf of the Board and all the members, I want to thank our volunteer coaches who mentor and train our athletes and commit so much of their personal time and resources to the SCRC.

The year started and ended with two different award ceremonies recognizing St.Catharines members for their contributions and success in rowing.

### The Rowing Canada Aviron Awards

Long Service Awards

40 YEARS: **Brian Thorne, Ed Szaszi Ken Campbell, Mike Purcer**

50 YEARS: **Harry Edmondstone**

Male Sweep Crew of the year - Joint Winners: **Taylor Ashwood, Tanner Cookson, Branden Decaire, Scott Klassen & Jonathon Blazevic, Matthew Druken, Brad Iafrate, Harrison Vincent**

### The Row Ontario Awards

ROWONTARIO Umpire Lifetime Achievement Award: **Jim Stone**

ROWONTARIO President's Award: **Harry Edmondstone**

ROWONTARIO Club of the Year: **St. Catharines Rowing Club**

We have had a busy year that started with the reconstruction of the bridge to the island, replacement of the main water main to our facilities and the resurrection of the 1500m pylon. We had a successful high school season that saw us attracting slightly more athletes to rowing. This spring we held our first "Try It day" and open house to encourage newcomers to try our sport. It was a very successful day and we plan to have another scheduled for this spring. It is these types of events and opportunities we will continue to pursue in order to continue our recruitment efforts to all of our programs.

Our summer programs were challenged with the scheduling of the TO2015 Pan Am games rowing events. For ten days in July our region hosted crews from all over the Americas. This required our club programs to "pack up" and move to both Welland and Jordan in order to continue their training. We want to thank both the South Niagara Rowing Club and the Niagara Rowing School at Jordan for being such gracious hosts of our crews. "Pan Ams" also required our popular Adult Recreational Rowing League to take a slight hiatus from their daily training as we welcomed the international crews to the island. Despite this the "Rec League" continued their recruitment success from their previous 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary season adding additional rowers into the program.

With change comes opportunity, and one we took advantage of in our Youth Rowing School Program. We successfully implemented a new schedule and format to fit with our compressed season; this was very well received by our participants and their parents. We also introduced an advanced rowing school component that was very popular. Both programs were at capacity for all sessions and will be further expanded with additional weeks scheduled for this upcoming summer. Thank you to Marion Markarian, Janet Lancaster and Dan Ducroix who lead these changes and implementation so successfully.

Many of our club members participate in the games either as volunteers, officials and a number of club alumni and current members as competitors. Congratulations and thanks to all of those who helped make the rowing events for the TO2015 games so successful.

The regular racing season continued with our SCRC Invitational Regatta, CORA Regattas, Ontario Championships (both masters and youth) and the Royal Canadian Henley Regatta where the Cerise and Blue were well represented and very successful. At "Henley" the SCRC was the top large Canadian club in the overall efficiency standings.

This year we hosted the Rowing Canada Aviron National Rowing Championships. This was a first for our club for this regatta that took place over 3 days on the Thanksgiving weekend. Hosting the event gave our club and athletes the opportunity to organize and compete in a high level "international" format that saw the best in Canada racing for their spot in the national rankings. Congratulations to all of our athletes, especially our younger rowers, who took advantage of this event being held on our home course to experience this level of competition. It was a superbly executed event with Brian Fisher taking the lead as regatta chair. Kudos to Brian and his team of volunteers who helped illustrate how well regattas are run on Henley

Island. A special thanks to our partners in this event, the Canadian Henley Rowing Corporation, The Henley Island Helpers, the St. Catharines Rowing Alumni and Rowing Canada Aviron. We were also very excited to have the announcement of the establishment of the Canadian Rowing Hall of Fame made at the medal ceremonies for the NRC regatta. George Darte and Bill Stevens, two long time SCRC members, lead this initiative along with Dave Derry with RCA.

I want to recognize our donors and supporting organizations the Henley Island Helpers and the St. Catharines Rowing Alumni Association, for their ongoing philanthropic support and for everything they do for rowing in St. Catharines.

On a sad note I want to recognize the passing of a number of great friends of SCRC rowing; Greg Romak, Liz Ikonikov (HIH Member), Bill Dickson (SCRAA member) and most recently Frank (The Silver Fox) Dwyer. They proudly competed, coached and volunteered for our club for many years and will be long remembered as friends and mentors to many and supporters of rowing.

The Board of Directors has already started planning for the upcoming on water season. We are continuing to plan for and reinvest in our racing shell and coach boat fleet and have conducted detailed reviews of our membership fee structure and comparative costs to ensure we are charging participants at an appropriate level for the programs they participate in. This has been challenging as we pride ourselves in offering rowing at low cost but also realize we must remain fiscally responsible to ensure sustainability for our club. What has become evident is that fundraising, grants and other donations are more important than ever to our club and required to allow us to continue to purchase much needed equipment and as we continue to move forward with plans for a new training centre.

It has been my privilege to represent you as President these past three years and I look forward to more great rowing moments in 2016. I congratulate all of our athletes who have gone on to the ranks of the national team and are now representing both the SCRC and Canada when they compete. I also wanted to congratulate all those athletes who joined our club and the sport of rowing for the first time this year. It is a sport for life and one which we at the SCRC encourage and support you to stay with for many years. Forge Ahead!

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Kerr  
President