

WOMEN IN COACHING SPOTLIGHT



WOMEN IN COACHING INTERVIEW

Name: Anouk Delimata

Club/Crew you are currently coaching:

Castleconnell BC, J15/16 Men



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with Anouk Delimata

How did you get involved in coaching?

For the craic my husband and I entered the mixed doubles at Carrick regatta. Because I hadn't been around the club since college days the current coaches and committee didn't know I used to row. We're always looking for coaches so once we'd come off the post-race supplementary oxygen (first race in 20 years AND it was 430 metres...) I was asked if I'd like to help out. I said yes but only for a day a week... So, I coach 5 days a week and I'm trying to find room for another day.

If I'm not at home I'm at the club. The car can pretty much drive itself there at this point. I imagine this is repeated at many clubs around the country. Certainly, at CCBC we all seem to be there all the time (in the happy pre-covid days).



Your coaching highlight:

Honestly, most sessions have highlights. I get a great kick from coaching. The fact that the lads keep coming back to train week in, week out no matter how hard it's going to be, that's pretty cool. Winning the J14 and 15 8x+ and the J14 4x+'s at the Champs was fun (although the stress of watching the races wasn't). Bit of a "one for everyone in the audience" vibe that day. I was incredibly proud of their effort, focus and attitude. Winning was the cherry on top.

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ARE THE POSITIVES FEMALES BRING TO COACHING?

I hope I bring a holistic approach to coaching, I endeavour to see the whole person rather than just an athlete. We have to remember that most of our athletes are juniors and therefore children and can struggle at times with the physical and mental strain of training. The lads I coach know they can come to me if they're struggling and there'll be a listening ear. Often times poor rowing performance is coming from somewhere outside of rowing and women are maybe better at picking up on this and following up with the athlete.

In training I always ask for feedback and questions. We have a saying "there's no such thing as a stupid question ". Admittedly they strain that statement at times but it just means the lads aren't fearful of asking for clarity about the what and why of what they're being asked to do. Female coaches are possibly more open to questions and discussion.

Being a female coach of junior men speaks to the idea of "If she can't see it, she can't be it". Traditionally, men coach both women and men but women only coach women. There's no reason for this but it perpetuates the idea of men naturally being more suited to leadership roles. Girls and boys need to see men and women in equal leadership roles and to benefit from the different perspectives.



WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A NEW COACH OR SOMEONE CONSIDERING GETTING INVOLVED?

Go for it! Encourage open communication.

Maintain a healthy balance of discipline and humour.

Training is hard so factor in some time for silliness or it can all get a bit po faced. It'll usually involve some ritual humiliation of you as coach but that's kind of the point! Command respect from your athletes but give it too. Don't be afraid to ask for help from fellow coaches and keep looking for ways to improve. Be prepared to have no life outside of coaching (or is that just me...?)

Lastly, remember that being a coach is a serious responsibility and a privilege. The influence you have on a young person can be lifelong so make damn sure it's positive.



PREPARED AND PRESENTED BY:
ROWING IRELAND, WOMEN IN SPORT

If you would like to highlight any of your female coaches as a role model for this interview series, contact Claire at claire.lambe@rowingireland.ie