

WOMEN IN COACHING SPOTLIGHT



WOMEN IN COACHING INTERVIEW

Name: Heidi Giles

Club/Crew you are currently coaching:

**Tralee Rowing Club, Junior Men &
Women**



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With Heidi Giles

How did you get involved in coaching?

I started coaching because of burpees! When I started rowing I wasn't available the night the adults trained in the gym, so I would work away on a night when there were juniors in the gym, I noticed that if a coach wasn't watching some of them would skip the burpees in their circuits, I thought, I could help with that, I have an evening to spare a week. Many coaching hours have passed since then and I've counted thousands of burpees and even done a good lash of them myself. When my children got a little older, I had a little more time so I got involved coaching on the water and then I really fell in love with it. I have a really good reason to love burpees.



Your coaching highlight:

Right now, having said goodbye to 2020, the strangest rowing year I've experienced, every single event I ever attended that we launched a TRC crew at is a precious memory and highlight that keeps me going. I long for the cold early mornings, long days, camaraderie, bonding, banter, even the stress, of a Head of the River or Regatta, to see juniors wonder at the scale of their first big event, the opportunity for us to get to know them better, for them to create great memories together, and to learn more about themselves. I will never take the opportunity to spend all day in a rowing bubble, to compete and challenge ourselves, to meet other coaches, rowers and supporters, and to experience other waterways for granted again. I really look forward to the day we can pack the trailer and get on the road safely again.

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

Diversity of any sort is beneficial to coaching, coaches should never underestimate the transferable skills they bring from the rest of their life experience. An ability to communicate, administrate, lead, plan, problem solve and collaborate are all vital to be an effective coach, some women approach some of these things differently to men and a fresh approach enables improvement and progress, the more diverse (not just in terms of gender) the coaching team in a club is, the more skills and experience it will have at its disposal. More diversity = more ideas, more solutions, more improvement.



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

Just start, somewhere, anywhere, 1 session a week in the gym or whatever you can manage, it has been one of the most rewarding things I have ever done and each hour I have given (even the disappointing or frustrating ones) has been worth it for the people I've met, the young people I've seen develop and the craic I've had!

If you're starting to coach on the water invest in good outdoor gear, if you are not warm, dry and comfortable you cannot give your best to the crew in front of you. My Santa letter each year is populated with merino wool and gore tex items. I've become an anorak anorak!



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