

**Reports for**

**Rowing Ireland Annual General Meeting**

**20<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

**The National Conference Centre**

**Sport Ireland Campus**

**Blanchardstown**

**Dublin**

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## NOTICE OF 2022 AGM

I hereby confirm that the Annual General Meeting of the Irish Amateur Rowing Union will be held on Sunday November 20<sup>th</sup>. At 10:30 the fixtures meeting will take place and at 12:00pm the AGM will commence in The Conference Centre, Sport Ireland Campus, Blanchardstown, Dublin. Relevant reports will be issued to club secretaries in due course.

In accordance with the Constitution of Rowing Ireland the following stipulations and deadlines apply:

1. Nominations for the election of President, Secretary and Treasurer may be made only by affiliated clubs and must be notified to [secretary@rowingireland.ie](mailto:secretary@rowingireland.ie) 21 clear days prior to the date of the Annual General Meeting. Every nominee must be a paid-up member of an affiliated club. All candidates for election must be proposed by a paid-up affiliated club (via an officer) and must also be seconded by a paid-up affiliated club (via an officer).  
**Last date for nominations, Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2022.**
2. The Vice President and Branch Representative for each province shall be elected by the affiliated clubs within such provinces prior to the AGM. This year the following director posts are up for nomination or election by the provinces. Leinster and Munster VP, Connacht and Ulster representatives. The names of the successful candidates in each province must be forwarded to [secretary@rowingireland.ie](mailto:secretary@rowingireland.ie) at least 7 days prior to the AGM.  
**Last date for nominations, Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2022.**
3. It is important to note that a new form, attached to this email will need to be completed in respect of each nomination to the Board. This will provide the necessary paper trail for nominations and elections. This same document should be used by clubs when sending their provincial nominations to provincial branch secretaries. Such nominations should be cc'd to the RI secretary. Where more than one nomination is received, branches are advised to coordinate an election by asking RI to notify all clubs eligible to vote in the province and the date of such election etc.
4. The official delegate from each affiliated club at the AGM must be a paid-up member of that club and have written authorisation from the committee of that club signed by the Captain or Secretary to confirm that person to be the official delegate and authorised to speak and vote on behalf of that club. Every club entitled to vote shall have one vote.

## AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Roll Call
3. Approve the minutes of the last AGM
4. Matters Arising from AGMs and EGMs
5. Receive and consider the Annual Report of the Board for 2021
6. Receive and consider the report of the executive and sub-committees
7. Receive and consider the Company Accounts and Balance Sheet for the past year
8. Appointment of Auditors
9. Rowing Ireland 2022 Awards
10. Election of President to 2024
11. Election of Secretary to 2024
12. Election of Treasurer to 2023
13. Ratification of Provincial Directors for 2022 (Leinster VP, Munster VP, Ulster Rep, Connacht Rep)
14. Special Resolutions
  - I. The Company resolves to update its constitution based on legal advice and expert recommendations to improve governance taking account of the outcomes of the special resolutions to be voted on below at this AGM;
  - II. The Company resolves to allow the Chair to be elected by the Board from all Directors and Independent Directors based on skills, availability and experience;
  - III. The Company resolves to revise its constituencies and Directorships to six individual categories to allow new nominations from
    - (a) coastal & offshore member clubs and
    - (b) the athlete cohort (from 2025);
  - IV. The Company shall appoint a Treasurer from the elected Directors or Independent Directors based on skills and experience (from 2023 AGM);

**Note:** *Where any special resolution does not achieve a 75% threshold, the principles of the previous constitution will be adopted*

15. Fixtures Update by DEC and Approval
16. Any Other Business approved by the Chair
  - I. High Performance Director Dial-In
  - II. Safety Update by Chair of Safety Committee

**Rowing Ireland Annual General Meeting  
31<sup>st</sup> October 2021 @ 12.00 including Zoom delegates  
Conference Centre National Sports Campus, Abbottstown, Dublin**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**1. Welcome**

Delegates both in person and via Zoom were welcomed to the meeting.

**2. Roll Call**

A roll call was completed and 32 Clubs confirmed their attendance as follows  
Via Zoom - Athlone BC, Belfast BC, Belfast RC, Enniskillen Royal BC, Galway RC, Killorglin RC, Lee Valley RC, Methodist College Belfast BC, Neptune RC, New Ross BC, Portadown BC, Portmagee RC El Nino, Portora BC, QUBBC, QUBLBC, Ring RC, Shandon BC, Skibbereen RC, St Joseph's RC, Lady Victoria BC, Royal Belfast Academical Institution BC, Tralee RC, Waterville Lake RC, Wicklow RC  
In person – Carlow RC, Commercial RC, Fermoy RC, Lee RC, Monkstown & Cork Harbour RC, Three Castles RC, UCDBC, Waterford BC

**Officers in attendance,**

President – Eamon Colclough, Treasurer – Leo Gibson, Interim Secretary – Brenda Ewing

**3. President's Address**

The President welcomed everyone to the meeting and quoted Charles Dickens famous phrase that in the past year we have "had the best of times and the worst of times". He emphasised how great it was to be back out again after the strict lockdown regulations which affected our rowing activities.

He thanked the Board Members for what had been a very busy year with many meetings, despite very little rowing. He thanked the CEO for doing a tremendous job during difficult circumstances and particularly on securing funding for Women In Sport and being nominated to the Olympic Federation of Ireland and apologised on her behalf as she had to leave the meeting due to illness.

He thanked the Covid-19 Working Group which had been set up early on in the pandemic and met every week to give advice and guidance to Clubs, taking criticism for both being too strict and not strict enough.

He thanked the Championship Committee for making a decision early in the year to host the Championship Regatta in August. This entailed EGM's for Rule changes to give flexibility. The Championships Regatta produced some great racing as HP athletes were competing and those unable to attend due to Covid-19 regulations were able to watch the Event via YouTube. Other Event Organisers stepped up and a Calendar of Events was put in place from July to December 2021. The President thanked everyone involved in organising events like Commercial Regatta and Lough Rinn and those volunteers and athletes supporting them.

The President referred to the HP athletes training from home and Rowing Ireland seeking permission from the Government to allow them to train in isolation at the National Rowing Centre. He praised the work of the HP Director, coaches and HP Committee which culminated in 6 boats qualifying for Tokyo 2020 and the great results putting Ireland 8<sup>th</sup> in the medal table. The President said Rowing Ireland was delighted that Antonio's contract had been renewed up to Paris 2024.

#### **4 Minutes**

- 4.1. 2020 AGM held 12/07/20 and matters arising
- 4.2. 2020 Re-convened AGM held 17/02/21 and matters arising
- 4.3. 2021 EGM held 17/02/21 and matters arising
- 4.4. 2021 EGM held 13/07/21 and matters arising

All Minutes were taken as read. There were no matters arising. There were no queries. Acceptance of all sets of Minutes was Proposed by Carlow RC and Seconded by UCDBC

#### **5 The 2021 Annual Report of the Board of Rowing Ireland to include:**

- 5.1. The President's Report
- 5.2. The Secretary's Report
- 5.3. The Treasurer's Report

All Reports were taken as read. There were no queries. Acceptance of the three Reports was proposed by Neptune RC and Seconded by Clonmel RC

#### **6 Branch reports**

- 6.1. Ulster Branch Report
- 6.2. Munster Branch Report

There were no Reports from Leinster and Connaught. Acceptance of the two Reports was proposed by Lee RC and Seconded by Monkstown & Cork Harbour RC

#### **7 President and Branch Vice President's awards**

The President announced he was awarding the 2021 President's Award to John O'Keefe from Three Castles RC. He informed Delegates that John had been involved in our sport for many years with involvement in UCDBC and Old Collegians BC and always had had a strategic vision for Rowing Ireland. He had founded the Three Castles RC on Blessington Lake and is currently involved with developing a 10-bay boathouse on the Lake. This vision has been assisted by Rowing Ireland and funded by the late Chris O'Dea's family. The President reminded everyone that John was now in his eighties and still sculling and coaching!

John was presented with his Award.

The Vice-President's Awards were postponed until a more appropriate event can allow the recipients to attend.

#### **8 Executive reports**

- 8.1 CEO Report
- 8.2 High Performance Director report
- 8.3 HP Committee Report
- 8.4 Club Support Officer Report

- 8.5 Coach Education Report
- 8.6 Women in Sport Report
- 8.7 Umpires Report
- 8.8 Umpires list to 20/08/21
- 8.9 Commercial Committee Report
- 8.10 Anti-doping Report
- 8.11 Offshore Report
- 8.12 Domestic Events Committee Report

The President stated the number of Reports indicated the large level of activity within our sport. Many of the Sub-Committees and Working Groups were headed up by Board members and he thanked all involved.

All Reports were taken as read. There were no queries.

Acceptance of all the Reports was proposed by Fermoy RC and Seconded by Carlow RC

## 9 2020 Statutory Accounts

### 9.1 Audited Accounts of Rowing Ireland 2020

The President stated no queries had been received before the Meeting. There were no further queries

Acceptance of the Accounts was Proposed by Lee RC and seconded by UCDBC

## 10 Board Governance Proposals

The President stated that RI had taken the unusual step of asking Clubs to cast their votes prior to the AGM. This was based on advice received in case there should be WIFI issues on the day which may have resulted in some Clubs being unable to vote. An external company had been employed to handle the whole process.

The President invited Martin Hogan, Chair of the Governance Committee to announce the results. Martin thanked all who had engaged with the Governance Review, attended webinars and the Clubs who voted.

Proposal	Description of Special Resolution	Eligible votes cast	Abstained	>75%
1	To make administrative amendments to the Memorandum of Association in Sections 1, 3 (h), 3 (j), 3 (k), 3(l), 3 (r), 3(s), 3 (t) and throughout sections 1-7 for completeness so as to align it with best practice and correct previous typographical errors and incorrect usage of defined terms.	53	1	Yes
2	To make administrative amendments to the Articles of Association in its interpretation and throughout for completeness so as to align it with best practice and correct previous errors, improve language and amend incorrect usage of defined terms. Also to make transparent (i) the difference between operational and strategic sub-committees and (ii) the requirement to allow Company implement findings from audits and best practice e.g. financial, process, legal, safeguarding, safety etc.	53	1	Yes

3	To replace the regional representatives role, update the VP roles and increase the number of Vice Presidents allowing one nominated by Coastal & Offshore and the other by registered athletes. To align the branches for administration and funding : Connacht to Connacht/Ulster and the six counties to Northern Ireland.	54	0	No
4	To increase the allowed Members of the Company from 200 to unlimited	54	1	Yes
5	To implement a gender balance quota of 40% of either gender at Board level	50	5	Yes
6	To appoint a Chairperson from the Board based on experience thereby separating that traditional duty from the President and allowing rotation as required	53	2	No
7	To allow a Treasurer to be elected from of the Board based on experience and competency thereby eliminating the need for an elected Treasurer	53	2	No
8	To require the President to serve a reduced term (previously two years now just one) post-Presidency	51	4	No
9	To increase the number of Independent directors to three from two.	52	3	Yes
10	To improve the administrative provisions for removal of Directors in line with Company law	54	1	Yes
11	To revise the Company notice periods and provisions in line with Company law	53	2	Yes

Martin Hogan announced the results. There were no queries.

## 11 Election of Officers

**11.1** The President invited Board Member Dominic Burke to say a few words prior to the announcement of the result of voting for President.

Dominic introduced himself as an Independent Board director since 2018 and stated the following –

- A query was raised re club affiliation status for one of the Presidential candidates, where one of the clubs – Monkstown Cork Harbour, was re-affiliating after a few years where they were not affiliated and paid up.
- RI investigated the matter and the Board convened to consider it.
- The Board met on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> Oct to discuss and to consider whether the Presidential election could go ahead as scheduled. The Board decided that:-
  - MCHRC had been affiliated in accordance with the Rules of Rowing Ireland
  - Presidential Election could go ahead as scheduled
- The Board did identify a need for improved clarity in the Rules in respect of affiliation of new clubs or clubs who had allowed a prior affiliation to lapse
- Following the Board meeting, the current President consulted with both nominees for President – Susan Dunlea and Leo Gibson, who were fully aligned with the approach taken.

There were no questions.

## **11.2 President**

Martin Hogan announced Susan Dunlea of Monkstown & Cork Harbour RC received 34 votes and Leo Gibson of Old Collegians BC received 20 votes. Martin declared Susan Dunlea the winner and congratulated her as Rowing Ireland's first female President. Martin thanked both candidates for their campaigns and invited Susan Dunlea to say a few words.

Susan thanked all who voted for her and Leo for being a formidable opponent. She thanked the out-going President for steering the ship during the previous 5 years. She thanked the Rowing Ireland staff for their involvement in the AGM organisation and Sport Ireland for the use of the venue. She said she looked forward to working with fellow Board members to keep rowing a top sport.

The out-going President, Eamon Colclough handed over the President's chain of office to Susan Dunlea.

Eamon commiserated with Leo and informed the delegates of Leo's long involvement in the sport of rowing. He also stated he had known Susan since her time as Treasurer on the Board 5 years earlier along with her involvement with merchandising sales at the Championship Regatta which has helped fund improvements at the event without increasing the entry fees.

## **11.3 Treasurer**

The out-going President informed the Delegates that no nominations for this position had been received. He invited nominations. None were made. He stated that as such the RI Board would make the appointment

## **11.4 Approval of Branch nominations**

The out-going President stated each Province had made nominations as required. Acceptance was proposed by Clonmel RC and seconded by Lee RC.

## **12 Election of Auditors**

The out-going President informed the Meeting that the RI Board sought the election of Grant Thornton as Auditor to Rowing Ireland.

This was proposed by UCDBC and seconded by Waterford BC

The out-going President thanked Candor for eleven years of excellent service to Rowing Ireland, however Governance guidance indicated we had to look at a change.

## **13 Approve the Calendar of Events for 2022**

The out-going President invited Brenda Ewing, Chair of the Domestic Events Committee to update the AGM, following the earlier fixtures meeting. She informed the AGM there had been discussion about the date of the Championships along with possible qualifying regattas and it had been agreed that there was need for the new Board to look again at the Calendar through a series of forums for 2023 onwards.

The draft Calendar in circulation had one change, which involved a change of date for Lagan SC Head of the River. All at the Fixtures meeting had no objections to the change of date.

The amended Calendar was Proposed by Carlow RC and Seconded by Commercial RC

## **14 Any other business ruled in order by the Chair**

### 14.1 Address by the HP Director, Antonio Maurogiovanni

Antonio addressed the Delegates via Zoom from Australia. He thanked the outgoing President and the Board of Rowing Ireland for their support throughout. He also welcomed the new President Susan Dunlea.

Antonio stated the results were good across all categories and we needed to be able to do that year after year. He also said it was a big challenge to repeat good results.

He said we needed funding for more coaches and we needed more qualified coaches. There is currently no real pathway for coaches to follow to allow full time work, so coaches leave. He said we cannot depend on volunteers and Clubs, the Board and everyone must look at generating income to employ coaches. This will lead to stronger Clubs which is what HP needs. The out-going president thanked Antonio for his address.

### 14.2 MCBBC query about the MCIB Report.

The out-going President stated that Rowing Ireland had set up a Review Working Group chaired by Leo Gibson which would be looking at everything and reporting back to the Board in March 2022. Clubs would be assisted going forward. He stated this had been a very serious accident and Rowing Ireland hearts go out to Amy Mulcahy and her family.

Clonmel RC proposed a vote of thanks to the out-going President for his 5 years of work for all in Rowing Ireland.

### 14.3 Vote of thanks to Dominic Casey

Lee RC proposed a vote of thanks to Dominic Casey as he had been responsible for coaching two out of the three crews winning Olympic medals. This was agreed by all along with his input into building up Skibbereen RC which is now known worldwide as a result of his efforts.

### 14.3 Vote of thanks to Eamonn Colclough

Tom Fennessy speaking from the floor of the AGM proposed a vote of thanks to the outgoing President. He congratulated him on a fine performance and for providing a steady and through both bad and great times with Covid and the Olympics. He also congratulated the work of the RI staff and the recipient of the President's Award. The proposal was unanimously seconded by those attending during a round of applause.

There being no other business the out-going President thanked all for attending and declared the Meeting closed.

The previously appointed Independent Directors (Dominic Burke and David Hussey) resigned as required by the Constitution on the date of the AGM.

# ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF ROWING IRELAND 2021/2022

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **Martin Hogan**

Interim Chair '22 & Connacht Vice-President since 2021  
Athlone BC, Trustee of Metro, Chair of various regattas, Coach, Umpire and former  
Commercial Captain  
(Company Director, J.B. Barry and Partners)

### **Nessa Foley**

Secretary since 2022  
Anna Liffey BC, former Junior International  
(Principal Officer, Department of Heritage former Ministerial Secretary)

### **Paddy Boyd**

Board Member & Independent Director since 2022  
Sports Administrator (former CEO Sailing Ireland/Canadian Sailing)  
Interim CEO Canoeing Ireland (2018), Basketball Ireland (2021), Pentathlon Ireland (to  
date)

### **Gordon Reid**

Board Member  
Retired Sports Administrator

### **Neville Maxwell**

Connacht Representative, Board member since 2016  
Neptune BC, Chair of High-Performance Committee  
(Financial Consultant, ex-Olympian 1996, 2000 Olympic Games)

### **Carol-Ann Smith**

Leinster Vice-President, Board Member since 2017  
Chairperson of the Audit & Risk Committee in 2018.  
Member of the Governance Committee and the Remuneration Committee  
(Company Director, Leadership & Team Coach and Consultant, Arbitrator)

### **Aoife Habenicht**

Leinster Representative, Board Director  
Neptune RC, Founded the Commercial Committee in 2019  
(Director of Aldi Ireland)

### **T J Ryan**

Munster Representative  
Skibbereen BC, Umpire  
(Removals company)

### **Garth Young**

Ulster Representative, Coach, past captain  
HP Committee Member & former international  
Belfast BC  
(Company Director, Business Owner)  
Past Club President, Event Organiser.

## Board meetings September 2021 - November 2022

21 meetings in total

2022 meetings attendance noted below

### Governance of Board meetings

Name	Meetings attended
Eamonn Colclough	Attended all – resigned March 2022
Garth Young	9/10
Neville Maxwell	10/10
Martin Hogan	10/10
Lisa O'Callaghan	Attended 4/7 prior to resignation
TJ Ryan	Attended 5/10
Aoife Habenicht	Attended 9/10
Carol Ann Smith	Attended 10/10
Gordon Reid	Attended 9/10
Nessa Foley	Attended 3/3 since appointment
Paddy Boyd	Attended 3/3 since appointment

### Board training: attended by

Name	Attended
Eamonn Colclough	√ (Chair training also)
Garth Young	√
Brenda Ewing	√
Neville Maxwell	√
Martin Hogan	√ (Governance and Director training also)
Lisa O'Callaghan	√
TJ Ryan	None
Aoife Habenicht	√
Carol Ann Smith	√
Leo Gibson	√
Brian O'Flaherty	√ (secretary training also)

# Executive Reports

Looking back on 2021, it's a year where so much was done despite being hampered by not being able to meet in person with clubs, and a year where we could only support a few events. This was so hard for us all. We know it's important to meet our clubs and rowing friends. We are looking forward to returning to normality again and a full season ahead. However, we have adapted well to the challenges faced and we are set in a good way to face the future and act to meet higher standards.

2021 was a difficult year for all of our clubs with the closing of our sport. Although we were lucky enough as an outdoor sport to be allowed back on the water before many other sports.

Through our Club support officer and Covid working group we were able to provide advice to our clubs on a weekly basis with the changing rules.

During this time, we also took the opportunity to look at our rules. A working group took on the task of reviewing the Rules of Rowing Ireland and these were reviewed by volunteers before voting on in the EGM/AGM in February 2022.

*A special funding application ended 2021 well from Sport Ireland with an extra boost in funding of €470,000 and €100,000 for our clubs. This meant that we received €1,900,000 for our clubs through both Covid funding and capital grants in 2021.*

Safety is of the utmost importance in our sport and our safety advisory committee worked in collaboration with our colleagues in British Rowing to launch the IROW Safe initiative. This was a really important initiative and we thank you for your support in this area. IROW safe will be a useful tool if we all record any incidents no matter how trivial. This can help us focus resource on areas that appear to be in need of attention.

In 2021, all clubs were required to fill in a Club safeguarding assessment. This was a requirement by Sport Ireland/Sport NI as a joint initiative. We assisted all of our clubs with this and we are delighted to say out of 76 clubs identified as having junior members registered with Rowing Ireland and required to partake in the club child welfare self-assessment process, we had an over 96% engagement from these clubs.

As an organisation we strove to achieve the highest standards of governance. However, we were hampered significantly in 2020 and 2021 when we were made aware of potential failures in governance. This resulted in a report been written by Sarah O'Shea with key recommendations which were brought to the membership through a series of direct engagement Workshops. We were delighted to discuss these recommendations with you all and meet with so many of you that we didn't have the opportunity to meet with for so long. The governance committee led by John McCarthy and supported by Aoife Habenicht, Carol Ann Smith, Ceara Ni Cheilleachair, Martin Hogan and Gordon Reid did trojan work and our athletes and organisation are indebted to the work that they voluntarily and selflessly took on.

Everyone will be aware that during all of this we were working hard to prepare for the postponed 2020 Olympic Games which took place in Tokyo in July/August of 2021. There were many challenges with making preparations amidst a global Pandemic, whilst ensuring that the health and welfare of our athletes was central to all decisions. The delay provided our athletes with important qualification opportunities whilst at the same time minimising their travel requirements and associated risks. It was a very exciting time for Irish Rowing and even though most of us couldn't be present, it was great to follow on live streaming and our social media channels. ***It was very heartening to see our largest ever Olympic team with six boats qualified, a number we previously could only ever dream of.***

The team went on to outperform at the Games ***winning our first ever Rowing gold medal and Ireland's first ever Women's team medal in any sport.*** With top ten finishes from our Women's pair and outstanding Women's lightweight double scull that have continued to make strides in 2022. Men's Double Sculls (M2x) – Ronan Byrne & Philip Doyle finished 10th overall and Women's Single Sculls (W1x) – Sanita Puspure finished 12th. We are so proud of each and every athlete, our team, their clubs and everyone who helped them achieve such great heights.

Our athletes come from clubs all over the country and we are proud that for 2022 we can see a huge range of clubs involved in developing all our athletes, from Enniskillen/Belfast to Cork in the Men's 4- to Galway, Dublin and Cork in our Women's 4-. We were to conclude an MOU agreement with Queen's University Belfast and thank the HP team and committee for their hard work in achieving this significant agreement.

Our Communications team also put significant work into supporting and profiling our athletes which they richly deserved. Together with spotlights on their clubs. Great credit goes to all of the athletes together with the performance team, coaches both at the event and home coaches and clubs, loved ones and all involved generally in supporting the athletes.

In 2021 our Coach Education team was overrun with the demand for education courses and learning which, thanks to our online programmes, we were in a position to deliver in the form of online modules and virtual training although we were only in a position to recommence the practical area of education training later in the year.

This was very challenging for candidates who were eager to complete their course and achieve certification and we are very grateful for the patience of many during this time.

In order to achieve equality and gender diversity in our coaching, we worked hard to engage our clubs in a number of successful initiatives. Six clubs took part in our Women on the water series and six women were selected for our women in coaching pathway and Rowing Ireland, Women in Sport led the innovation of the Women's student coaching academy that is now running for a second year with the launch event in mid-October.

### ***We are committed to Rowing for all a sport for life.***

In 2021, we committed to supporting a number of new recreational tours. Four tours were organised and supported by our Women in Sport lead. We have an objective to expand this in the coming year and support our clubs with a tour organisation guide for clubs, so watch this space.

Rowing Ireland was a leading organisation in “returning to events”. We hosted a series of preparatory online workshops and documents for event organisers ahead of the government return to events date of June 7th 2021, with local events encouraged initially. In 2021, we were delighted to see the return of a calendar, starting with Neptune Regatta, University Championships and Lough Rinn Regatta and a Junior Festival of rowing in July. Physical supports such as hygiene stations, signage and covid officer visibility jackets were brought to events and all regattas were extremely well supported to maintain safety of all. A committed covid working group, championship committee and club support and events officer worked tirelessly to update covid guidance documents, answering queries and supporting organisers to ensure a safe, successful season of rowing was achieved with a Championship running in late August.

Despite access to schools being limited in this period, we continued to grow and underpin the Get Rowing programme with innovative events for students and young rowers alike. We launched the Get Rowing Team building programme. In 2021, we ran 8 Team building days.

With a planned return to normal, we aimed to follow this up with 14 team building days, 12 in Limerick and 2 in Dublin, over a 66% increase year on year. We are delighted to link our programme and clubs to the community and local sports partnership and are now working with 15 of them ranging from Limerick, Cork, Clare, Tipperary, Galway, Sligo, Carlow, Kilkenny, Kerry, DCC, South Dublin, DLR, Kildare, Westmeath, Offaly. We continue to grow engagement with schools in Northern Ireland through our partnership with Queen's University Belfast.

**We were delighted to endorse the capital grants applications for our clubs in 2020/2021 which totalled €1,900,000.** This grant scheme can only be availed of by affiliated clubs to our sport with Rowing Ireland and we were delighted to see so many clubs being successful with this round of funding.

The Rowing Ireland Board and staff also worked extensively in 2021. We are proud to say that Rowing Ireland as a company continued to be fully operational during the Pandemic and we are welcoming the rebuilding and growth of our sport as we emerge from the Pandemic. We are very grateful to our volunteers, coaches, athletes, parents, officials, and all others involved in our sport who have worked so hard in 2021 and beyond in this regard.

We are delighted to report that the new National Sport Action Plan was published towards the end of 2021 and outlined the sporting priorities for the Nation. Minister Chambers and the Department of Sport have confirmed that Rowing Ireland will continue to be supported as Ireland's leading and fastest growing sport in 2022 in line with Governance compliance, the National Sports Policy and Sport Ireland High Performance strategy which has the potential to be transformative for Irish rowing.

We are not naïve to the fact that there are still many challenges ahead for the organisation and its clubs and members, however we are very positive about the journey ahead especially when we consider the calibre of people involved in our sport.

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the whole team in Rowing Ireland. We are honoured to support you and work with you, our members and clubs. The entire team works considerably hard with a passion for making rowing better. The very real and tangible medal success of our incredible coaching team led by Antonio and supported by Dominic, Giuseppe, Fran, Nico, Leah and Michael is underpinned by the HP committee who

have given tireless hours to support this success. To our core teams in the background working to support you all; Valerie in sports administration, Alec in Finance and operations, Pat in Club support (Learning and Development), Gerry with Coach Education, Ceara in Women in Sport and Lucy coming on board to support vetting and antidoping, Derek with the successful and growing Get Rowing programme and Clara our newest team member working in events and communications.

We would like to heartily thank our sponsors Whoop, Kinetica, Powerhouse Sport, Sanity Systems and Avison Young supported by our Commercial committee.

***Someone recently commented that they have never seen people with such passion for a sport as they have with rowers. It's that passion and commitment that has driven us forward to be one of World Rowing and Ireland's leading National Governing bodies both on the water with our clubs and also with our HP success and through many of our core programmes that are innovative and forward thinking.***

2021 was a great year for Rowing Ireland. We achieved so much and yet we know we have so much more to do and that is thanks to everyone who is involved in the sport from club members, clubs, partners, staff, volunteers, committee members, board members, supporters, parents and friends. We have an exciting future ahead of us as the Rowing Ireland crew.



Michelle Carpenter  
Chief Executive Officer

# HIGH-PERFORMANCE REPORT

Antonio Maurogiovanni, High-Performance Director

## HP COMMITTEE

Chair Neville Maxwell (2021)/Garth Young (2022)

Con Cronin

Michelle Carpenter

## Executive Summary

As a post-Olympic year, 2022 has been a very busy and challenging one. An overall of 19 medals were won across all of the categories (male/female/para) at the following competitions: Coupe, World Cup, European Championships and World Championships. It needs to be noted that 15 out of the 19 medals were on Olympic Boats. Based on this year's International results and based on the Sport Ireland's International Carding Criteria Program, we are entitled to apply for **27** athletes. Looking at the overall results, we can say that the island of Ireland has a Rowing High Performance Team across all the categories: Heavyweight and Lightweight – Scullers and Sweepers – Female and Male. This is an outstanding outcome.

### 1. Background by Category

#### 1.1 Senior Category

2021-2022 has been a post-Olympic year but has also fallen into year two (2) of the 2024 Paris Olympic Cycle. The Tokyo cycle was a very unique Olympic cycle because of COVID-19 and the extension of the preparation cycle from four (4) to five (5) years which did have an impact on the team (athletes and coaching staff), contributing to physiological challenges but mainly psychological challenges.

For the above reasons, the decision was made to provide flexibility to all the HP Tokyo team allowing them to focus on their own parallel careers. This enabled a group of athletes to prioritise their Master's course, University, additional courses and jobs.

#### 1.2 Reg the U23 and U19 category

Unfortunately, the number of the athletes invited to the trials and of them meeting the criteria was very low. For instance, we had no U23 females at the selection, and the U23 selected were the ones that were based in Cork at the NRC. Unfortunately, the date of the Irish Championships clashed with the selection and training period for the U23 and U19 World Championships. This had a negative impact on the Clubs, the University club coaches and rowers, putting them in the unfavourable position to have to make a choice between attending the National Championships or the selections and training camps for the National Team.

### 2. Outcomes by Category

#### 2.1 U19

Two (2) main international competitions were held and attended in 2022:

1. 2022 Coupe de la Jeunesse – Castrelo De Mino (Spain)

Coach: Ray Morrison, Andy Purdy, Miles Taylor

**Saturday Results**

JM2x – Gold medals

JM1x – 5th A Final

JM4+ – 6th A Final

JW4- – 1st B Final

**Sunday Results**

JM2x – Gold medals

JM1x – 6th A Final

JM4+ – 5th A Final

JW4- – 6th A Final

2. U19 2022 World Championships – Varese (ITA)

HPD as Head Coach

Team Manager: Michael O'Rourke

Coaches: Leah O'Reagan, Janet Walsh

JW2x - 6th

JM2x - 13<sup>th</sup>

JW4x - 9<sup>th</sup>

This was a transition year considering the very low number of U19's being part of the trials. Overall this can be seen as a positive result although we were anticipating one medal and one final.

2.2 Under 23

Two (2) main International Competitions were held and attended in 2022

1. 2022 U23 World Championships – Varese (ITA)

HPD as Head Coach

Team Manager: Michael O'Rourke

Coaches: Leah O' Regan, Nicolo' Maurogiovanni, John Armstrong

BM2x - Bronze

BLM2x - Silver

BM4- - Bronze

BW1x - Bronze (World Record)

2. 2022 U23 European Championships – Hazewinkel (BEL)

Coach: John Armstrong

BLM1x - Silver

BLW1X 7<sup>th</sup>

BM1x - 10<sup>th</sup>

Across the two top U23 International competitions (World and European) there were Seven (7) crews represented and six (6) medals were won. This is a great achievement which will

be very difficult to repeat, as most of the athletes were part of the past Coupe, U19 and U23 teams having demonstrated an initial solid pathway.

### 2.3 Senior A

Across 2022 three (3) main international events were attended.

#### 1. 2022 World Cup 2 – Poznan (POL)

HPD as Head Coach

Team Manager: Michael O'Rourke

Coaches: Dominic Casey, Giuseppe De Vita, Conor Moloney, Leah O'Reagan

W2x - Silver

W4- - Bronze

W2- - Bronze

LW2x - Bronze

LM1x - Silver

PR2mix2x - 4<sup>th</sup>

PR2 W1x - Gold (World record)

#### 2. 2022 World Cup 3 – Lucerne (CH)

Coach: Dominic Casey

LM1x - Gold (World cup record)

#### 3. 2022 European Championships – Munich (GER)

HPD as Head Coach

Team Manager: Michael O'Rourke

Coaches: Dominic Casey, Giuseppe De Vita, Conor Moloney, Leah O'Regan

LM2x Gold

W4- Silver

PR2mix2x 4<sup>th</sup>

LW1x 4<sup>th</sup>

W2- 4<sup>th</sup>

LW2x 4<sup>th</sup>

#### 4. 2022 World Championships – Racice (CZE)

HPD as Head Coach

Team Manager: Michael O'Rourke

Coaches: Dominic Casey, Giuseppe De Vita, Fran Keane, Nicolo Maurogiovanni, Conor Moloney, Leah O'Regan

LM2x Gold

W2x Bronze

LW2x Bronze

PR2W1x Gold

PR2mix2x 5<sup>th</sup>

W4- 6<sup>th</sup>

M4- 8<sup>th</sup>

W2- 8<sup>th</sup>

LW1x 9<sup>th</sup>

M2x	13 <sup>th</sup>
M1x	13 <sup>th</sup>
W1x	15 <sup>th</sup>
M1x	15 <sup>th</sup>
LM1x	21 <sup>st</sup>

## 5. Reflections

As a Rowing Federation the High Performance program has consolidated last year's ranking position within the International map across all categories except for the U19's.

The main pillars for the success of the program which need further improvement are:

1. SI, SNI, RI and Sport Institute support
2. A centralised program
3. Quality of the training program
4. Uniformity of the technical model
5. Coaching team
6. Service Providers team with some of them Cork based
7. Exclusive use of the NRC
8. Positive and enthusiastic training environment

The main challenges to keep and even improve the current level are:

1. Club coaches
2. University's support towards the Rowing Program
3. Pathway strategy
4. Funding commensurate to the results/achievements of the program

## 5. Recommendations

### 5.1 Regional Pathway

The NI Regional Pathway has been successfully implemented. The collaboration between Sport NI and RI affiliated NI clubs and RI was already in place and has now been even more productive. This year, for the U23 national team, four (4) HP rowers, all QUBBC members, all of which won a medal. Other five (5) NI athletes were members of the Senior team racing in Racice. Three (3) coaches' formed the NI pathway by collaborating with RI coaching at the U23 and U19 at a Rowing Ireland squad level. The vision is the right one for an organisation like Rowing Ireland and I'm confident that it will also work for other regions of the organisation. Although there is no formal agreement with UCC, the collaboration has been effective. The University is very supportive and flexible, helping the HP program as much as they can in the best interest of the athletes. Work is also being undertaken with UL with the objective of reaching a clear, transparent, and productive agreement. Trinity and UCD part of the RI pathway is still a realistic one and will be a key priority for 2023. An attempt has been made to launch a European U23 University based team involving the Head Coaches of Dublin's based University. There has been an initial interest but more work needs to be done if this is to come into effect. A positive outcome has been the increase of athletes (across all categories) from a diverse number of clubs around the island of Ireland.

## 5.2 National Rowing Centre (NRC)

The team size centralised at the NRC can go from a minimum of 20 to a maximum of 35. The number will be dependent on the carding application's program process, and the number of the U19 and U23 crews selected later in the year. A significant amount of work has been undertaken in the last two to three years at the NRC, to make sure that the centre is as suitable and appropriate for High Performance Athletes and Coaches. The 2016 Rio report states the NRC as "a toxic environment". Since the pandemic the restrictions recommended by Sport Ireland and the Government, the NRC was exclusively utilised by the different High Performance team's athletes and coaches, with a strong focus in creating an ideal training environment; by ensuring it was safe, enjoyable, and positive. There has been a positive impact also from a logistics point of view, with renovations planned and being finalised for the Coaches' office and athlete's lounges. Thanks to all the national coaches, NRC staff and all the athletes, the Centre is very close to being seriously classified as a High-Performance Rowing Centre. Across the last three (3) years the performance of all the teams, must be equally seen as a merit to the safe and conducive environment which would not have been possible without the exclusive utilisation of the Centre by High Performance. The support offered by Rowing Ireland during the last three (3) years has played a positive impact to resolve some of the existing "discomforts". A positive environment of trust is imperative to be maintained in order to ensure and even improve upon the current level of the national team's performances.

## 5.3 PARA

Several discussions and meetings were held during these last two (3) years. The High Performance Para program forms part of the High Performance Strategic Plan but is reliant on funding. Considerable work still needs to be done within the Para program. The determination of Katie and Stephen with their coach is admirable. But a sustainable and resourced program needs to be planned and implemented which must include a national Para talent identification plan and a club and coaches' development strategy. This year's results have shown the potential to qualify a boat for the 2024 Paris Olympics but pending of commensurate financial support.

## 5.4 Rowing Coaches

This year, there was a significant number of clubs and national coaches as part of the National Teams. They all did a massive and excellent job and I want to take the opportunity to thank all of them for their exceptional dedication and enthusiasm. It is second to none. However, the situation of the Rowing Coaches in Ireland is critical. This difficult situation also makes it a great opportunity for the Rowing Ireland Board to develop a strategy specifically designed to increase the number and quality of the Coaches in Ireland. There is a need to shift the current paradigm of coaches not being seen as a high priority and integral part of a successful Rowing program in Ireland. This is equally true in other high performance sport programs.

Two (2) main and well linked problems have been identified:

- 1) The specific rowing education and preparation: an excellent job has been done in the past regarding the enrolment, classification and graduation of a significant number of coaches with a Level 1, 2 and 3 certificate. Unfortunately, these qualifications are currently not appropriate and adequate anymore since the level of Rowing is substantially different and specific abilities are required which are

essential. As recommended last year, completely different Coach Education Courses needs to be put in place.

- 2) The Rowing Coach as a profession: it is well known that the number of full time paid coaches in Ireland is limited and definitely inadequate to the level of its athletes and the number of Rowing domestic Associations. I have been strongly recommending Rowing Ireland to elaborate a strong and productive strategy in order to help all of the clubs to be in the position to self-generate an income and employ one or more full and part time **paid** coaches. The volunteer coaches are a great resource, but must be in addition to a paid coach. There is no HP well ranked country in the world without a significant number of well prepared and paid coaches.

#### 5.5 Finance (more funding to support bigger number of carding)

Rowing in Ireland appears to be one of the top sports, based on medals won and the potential to succeed at the 2024 Paris Games. Based on this year's International competitions, Rowing Ireland could and should have the highest number of athletes on the carding international program. This further confirms the position of the HP of Rowing within the Island. However, there is a high risk of the funding not being allocated based on the number of HP athletes. An increase in HP athletes means a need to increase coaches, an increase to costs for camps, events, equipment, etc. If the funding were to remain the same there would be no choice but to take the difficult decision to downsize the team, which in turn would create a high level of discontent. As such the discussion around funding levels must be of the highest priority for Rowing Ireland.

#### 5.6 Annual Plan

The final 2023 Annual Plan will be shortly finalised. HP athletes and coaches are hoping to see the RI AGM confirm a suitable date for the Irish Championships to allow all HP athletes (SA, U23, Jun) to compete with their clubs and still pursue to represent Rowing Ireland in the world.

HPD  
Antonio Maurogiovanni

# Sub Committee Reports

## Audit and Risk Committee

Chair: Carol Ann Smith

Members Conor O'Boyle, Garth Young

### Introduction/Mission

The Committee's responsibilities relate to audit, financial reporting, periodic review of risk register, and other duties as required from time to time by the Board.

Responsibilities include, and are not limited to:

- Recommend to the Board the appointment of external
- Auditor and audit fee
- Agree with the Auditor the scope of the audit
- Review Rowing Ireland's procedures with respect to
- appropriateness and adequacy of financial controls
- Review the year-end financial statements before
- submission to the Board
- Monitor compliance with regulatory requirements.

### Key achievements

The Committee met on several occasions during 2021, and 2022.

### Change in Committee Members

After many years of service, Paul Gallen of Athlone Boat Club stepped down from the Committee. Paul was instrumental in the establishment of an Audit Committee and served as Chair and then member of the committee. Rowing Ireland is enormously grateful to Paul for his leadership, guidance and support, and we continually strive to achieve the high standard set by Paul.

We were equally grateful to the outgoing Treasurer, Leo Gibson, for his years of service on the Committee, both as member and Treasurer. Without a Treasurer either nominated or appointed at the AGM in 2021, the position of Treasurer as a member of the Committee became vacant. According to the Terms of Reference in place at the 2021 AGM, the composition of the Committee required two Directors and the Treasurer. Ordinarily, the Treasurer fulfilled the second Director requirement.

## 2021 Audit

Following a necessary and temporary change to the Terms of Reference by the Board pending the appointment of a Treasurer, Garth Young joined the Committee to fulfil the requirements to have at least two Directors of the company on the Committee. 2021 Audit

Following the appointment of new Auditors, Grant Thornton, the newly formed Committee recommended to the Board that the Board and the Audit & Risk Committee come together for the purposes of conducting the pre-audit, and post-audit meeting with the Auditors. Typically, this work is undertaken by the Committee, which then makes its recommendation(s) to the Board. This is a key new relationship, and involvement of the Board throughout the process was considered an important step for this audit. During the period between the commencement and completion of the audit, the audit team changed in Grant Thornton and the relationship management was transferred from the Dublin office to the Cork office.

The Auditor issued an unqualified audit opinion, and the Board approved the accounts.

The Audit & Risk Committee assisted the Board of Rowing Ireland to prepare the Directors Report in order to showcase the achievements during the year, with the assistance of the CEO and her staff colleagues.

## Looking Forward - 2022

### Two key tasks for the Committee in 2022 are:

1. Review the company's internal processes and procedures, policies, and Terms of Reference that relate to the Committee's responsibilities.
2. Recruit new members to the Committee.

## Conclusion

The Committee is seeking additional members to support its work and to welcome members of the rowing community to both share and gain experience as part of this important committee. The burden of work is limited, shared, and relatively predictable. Please contact us at [auditcommittee@rowingireland.ie](mailto:auditcommittee@rowingireland.ie) for information.

# SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Pat Kiely

**Chairperson**

## **Safety Advisory Introduction/Mission**

To advise the board of Rowing Ireland on all safety matters arising in our sport. To identify trends in incidents and accidents and to advise clubs on resulting required actions to maintain safety standards.

## **Key Achievements/Activities for 2021**

### **Monitoring of IROW Safe the new online reporting system**

Assistance was provided to the Covid-19 working group during the weekly meeting of the group. The group met every Monday evening to review the current restrictions in place in The Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland and to establish and communicate appropriate guidance to clubs.

iRow Safe reports were examined to identify any trends in accidents or incidents during the year. The uptake of incident reporting on the iRow safe system was very low during the year.

The committee was aware of incidents occurring around the country but no reports were made on a number of these incidents and occurrences.

### **Introduction of Safety Bulletin**

Positive feedback has been received on items covered in the Rowing Ireland safety bulletin

## **Looking Forward - 2022**

Continued Development of a certified launch drivers' course.

Highlighting the hazards and risk associated with Rowing and the measures that can be undertaken to ensure the continued high compliance standards within our clubs.

Developing standards of safety to ensure inclusivity with all our regulations.

Seek representation from Para Rowing onto the safety advisory committee.

## **Conclusion**

I would like to thank the committee for their commitment and passion towards safety in our sport.

Covid made normal life very difficult during 2021. The work of the Rowing Ireland Covid – 19 working group and the support of the Rowing Ireland Safety Advisory Committee helped to keep Rowing Ireland members safe and to allow rowing activities to proceed safely where and when possible.

For a group of volunteers to take on the responsibility of being part of the Rowing Ireland safety advisory committee shows the type of characters within this organisation.

The Rowing Ireland community owes a debt of gratitude to those members that have agreed to actively take part in making our sport safe and inclusive for all.

# DOMESTIC EVENTS COMMITTEE

David Webb  
**Chairperson**

## **Introduction/Mission:**

The purpose of the Domestic Events Committee is to plan the development of and to oversee domestic competition in Ireland with a view to maintaining and raising standards.

## **Key achievements/activities since September 2021:**

1. The committee had significant input to the quadrennial **Rules Review exercise** both in terms of helping to review suggestions from clubs/Branches and in drafting clarifications and additions to address inconsistencies and gaps in the existing rules.
2. A long awaited return to a more normal rowing season also saw a welcome (sort of!) upswing in the committee's normal workload relating to **scheduling** (and re-scheduling) **of events, appointing Observers** for events and reviewing feedback, handling **Tracker queries** (generally Registration queries and points allocations), overseeing **Kit and Blade approvals** (updates and new club affiliations) and **reviewing Overseas entries** (to ensure that all RI athletes are correctly registered to participate in overseas events and that points for overseas wins are correctly awarded.)
3. The committee also provided practical support for the use of the **RaceClocker** app for timing at the Championships, replacing the now ageing custom-built system which had served RI well for a number of seasons at Championship and Grand League regattas.
4. A number of personnel changes in the **core RI team** took place during the year. A warm welcome to Lucy and Clara (and thanks to Ceara who moved to a new RI role). Brenda did an excellent job mentoring the new team (and me!). Everyone has bedded in very well and from the perspective of Domestic Events a spirit of friendly and enthusiastic professionalism abounds.

## **Looking forward 2022:**

The Rules Review and the return to a normal activity level following the Covid years has meant that progress on other planned activities has slipped into 2022/23.

In the coming year we will therefore be involved in a number of initiatives:

- **Event Workshops** – aimed at encouraging new ideas and initiatives to make the racing calendar and the scheduling of events as effective and successful as possible
- **Ongoing review of rules and points system** – are we maximising participation and promoting strong and fair competition across domestic events?
- **Event Guidance** – providing practical guidance and assistance for organising committees, especially to support new events and to help new volunteers get involved in organising and running Heads and Regattas
- **Tracker Upgrade / Replacement** – Tracker remains an invaluable tool and a source of much critical data that can help inform and support the development of our sport. The committee will continue to play a key role in helping to maintain the existing functionality and in developing a new and upgraded system that will

continue to serve the needs of clubs, athletes and administrators in the years ahead.

- **Draft 2023 Calendar** – the calendar has been published for final discussion at the fixtures meeting and ratification at the AGM. It is the intention next year to publish a 2-year 'look ahead' covering both the 2024 and 2025 seasons. In pulling this together we will draw upon ideas and discussions from the Event Workshops mentioned above.

The Domestic Events Committee expects to be extremely busy in the year ahead. Almost all official business can be very efficiently transacted by email and I am extremely grateful for the experience, expertise and constructive input which the other members bring to the metaphorical table.

As with all of RI volunteer committees we are actively seeking new members, especially amongst the younger cohort of the rowing community (I've done what I can to lower the average age – but not by much!!) For anyone who loves rowing, participating in any of the committees (and Domestic Events in particular) is a genuinely fascinating and rewarding experience. All you need is a little spare time, an open mind and a sense of humour.

# IRISH ROWING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Report written by Pat Kiely, Committee Member

This year's event included Junior 19 category in the men's and women's to allow the athletes that missed out on the opportunity to race in the championship at junior 18 level last year due to the covid-19 pandemic. Due to the Coronavirus, there were no J16 or Master events held this year. For the first time we used a drone service to live stream the event with people from different parts of the world being able to view the competition from afar.

The table below shows the entries in each category.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Numbers</b>
Senior Men	130
Senior Women	105
Light Weight Men	8
Light Weight Women	9
Intermediate Men	144
Intermediate Women	111
Club Men	138
Club Women	123
Novice Men	15
Novice Women	43
Junior 18 Men	224
Junior 18 Women	230
Junior 19 Men	59
Junior 19 Women	29

We would like to take the opportunity to thank all our volunteers that made a huge contribution to the running of our Championships this year. The Championship Committee, Umpires, Championship facility staff, Time keepers, launch drivers, commentary team, Slip Marshalls, Bow Number distributors and the many, many, more whom without their help and support we could not run this competition.

From all involved thank you, for your often unheralded, but always appreciated contribution

# UMPIRES COMMITTEE

Andrew Tubman  
**Chairperson**

## **Introduction/Mission:**

- To evaluate and re-licence new and existing umpires
- Be able to interpret Rowing Ireland rules and make any recommendations on the use of rules at Irish regattas
- To ensure athletes are provided with safe and fair racing
- To provide training and support to new and existing umpires
- To ensure transparent pathways towards World Rowing umpiring for suitable candidates
- To increase the number of active Rowing Ireland umpires

## **Key achievements/activities for 2021:**

- Following covid there was a need to update the existing umpires database to ensure that the list is up to date and accurate. This continues to be a work in progress.
- To ensure we are GDPR compliant umpires most opt in to the mailing list. Disappointingly there was a 42% return rate.
- Two exams were held for new umpires in Dublin (11 successful candidates) and Shandon (6 successful candidates).
- Two online renewal seminars were held this season

## **Looking forward 2022:**

- 4 exams will be held in Ulster, Leinster, Connaught, and Munster in Jan-March 2023. Dates to be confirmed shortly.
- 2 online renewal exams will be held in Jan-March 2023.
- Umpires committee are revising current written exam questions, ensuring these are up to date and relevant to umpiring
- Discussions are ongoing about the introduction of an Umpires association. Further information will be circulated in due course.
- The committee is committed to the development of Rowing Ireland umpires and ensuring there is a transparent pathway towards World Rowing umpiring for suitable candidates. Further information to be circulated to umpires.
- A new online sign-up form will be introduced for the 2023 regatta season, allowing umpires to register their availability to umpire at events.

## **Conclusion**

The committee would like to thank all umpires who assisted at events across Ireland during this season. The committee is particularly thankful for umpires who have retired from umpiring this season after many years of support.

## UNIVERSITIES COMMITTEE

### Chairperson

Shauna Fitzsimons

### Key achievements/activities for 2021:

The 2022 Irish University Championships took place on the 9th of April 2022 at the Lough Rinn Regatta course in County Leitrim.

The following third level institutions took part in the Championships: University College Cork, University of Limerick, Trinity College Dublin, University College Dublin, National University of Ireland Galway and for the first time, Royal College of Surgeons Ireland, Technological University of the Shannon, and Munster Technological University all took part in the event.

### Acknowledgments:

- Ceara O' Connor, Pat Kiely, Eamonn Colclough and Brian Richardson who volunteered their time and expertise on the day of the regatta.
- The umpires who volunteered on the day.
- John Lowe and Mick O'Rourke from Carrick-on-Shannon Rowing Club and the junior members of Carrick on Shannon Rowing Club who volunteered to stakeboat for the event
- Derek Holland and Steven McCann for providing lunches at such short notice.
- Sligo Rowing Club who provided a launch for use on the day as well as driving the launch to Lough Rynn.
- Leitrim Sports Partnership, Sergeant Ronan Mooney and his colleagues in an Garda Síochána from Mohill Garda Station and Richard from Lough Rynn Caravan Park.
- Ciaran from Lough Rynn Castle for providing catering on the day as well as generously providing a free lunch to all volunteers.

### Conclusion

#### Areas for improvement:

While the regatta committee were exceptional in the lead up to the event, not all institutions were represented on the regatta committee. The university rowing community in Ireland is small and the running of an event this size requires a contribution from every institution competing.

Communication with one-day affiliated institutions could have been better and this is something that has been noted going forward.

We will look to strive to promote the event prior to it taking place this year.

Sponsorship to cover some of the costs such as the marquee and PA system would result in more funds being diverted to other areas such as a donation for each of the local rowing clubs who provided equipment and personnel on the day.

Overall, the event was a resounding success. Thankfully there were no safety incidents on the day and some key working relationships were established, namely between the University Regatta Committee and Lough Rynn Castle. These relationships will allow us to develop the event further thus developing university rowing in Ireland.

# COACH EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Gerry Farrell, Coach Education Coordinator

## **Introduction/Mission**

Coaching is an essential support for rowers allowing them to develop and maximize their athletic ability. The coaching pathway is primarily linked to the rower's pathway. It offers appropriate training and courses to coaches who wish to work with rowers in the different stages of their development.

## **Key Achievements/Activities for 2021**

The constraints imposed by COVID allowed us to reimagine how to best deliver our courses. By taking advantage of developments in online teaching models we have produced hybrid courses allowing coaches to learn through a combination of online learning and hands-on experience with our experienced tutors. To date we have put over 250 through our Assistant Coaching Course.

The Level One Course comprising over 27 hours of learning had 60 coaches registered and were delivered in Cork, Dublin, Belfast.

A Level Two Course is in progress in conjunction with the Women in Sport coaching initiative and further courses are planned.

## **Looking Forward - 2022**

Along with delivering more Intro and Level One courses, we will offer places on the new Level Two course in the new year. We will also establish a Coach Licensing System to provide a better service to coaches through offering specialist courses and once off workshops.

## **Conclusion/Closing statement**

Continued rolling out of our courses relies on our volunteer Coach Developers. I would like to record, on behalf of everyone in Irish rowing, our thanks to them for the many hours they put into developing and delivering courses throughout the island.

# CLUB SUPPORT OFFICER

Pat Kiely, Club Support Officer

## **Introduction/Mission**

The main aim of the club support officer was to support club growth internally by helping clubs increase in membership and capacity, and externally by encouraging and facilitating the joining of new rowing clubs in all codes of rowing to become part of our organisation.

## **Key Achievements/Activities for 2021**

COVID-19 continued to dominate our lives this past year a number of club initiatives and webinars were launched to support clubs in engaging members and furthering the knowledge base of club volunteers. Event planning, club COVID Officer, event COVID Officer and safety webinars were conducted with a very high turnout from clubs throughout the country north and south. The Rowing Ireland Safety Bulletin was published by the safety advisory committee and supported by the club support office.

The club support officer continued engagement with the Offshore and Coastal committees regarding further integration into Rowing Ireland. The numbers involved in Coastal and Offshore rowing continue to grow, more support for these growing aspects of rowing in Ireland is required. Support was given to the flatwater championship committee, this committee continues to work tirelessly at promoting our championship and making the experience one that rowers, coaches, volunteers, spectators and officials can participate in and enjoy safely, while being able to compete at the highest level.

The COVID-19 working group met every Monday evening when required during the pandemic to interpret restrictions, to liaison with Sport Ireland and Sport Northern Ireland and to create guidance to keep our clubs and their members safe. A huge debt of gratitude is due to the individuals that volunteered to take on this role. A lot of work went into the AGM preparation regarding the proposed rule changes. The rule change working group, and the extended group worked tirelessly during the year to prepare the proposed changes for the clubs to review and to vote on at the AGM.

## **Looking Forward - 2021**

Further improvements in club support will take place over the coming months with affiliation, registration and entry to competition needing to be streamlined and updated. A working group is already working on a new tracker system with ease of functionality for club administrators and their members a priority.

## **Conclusion**

I would like to acknowledge the assistance from a large number of people (too many to mention) for the support given to me during the year. Rowing clubs continued to grow in strength, numbers and success. After a very successful year, club support looks forward to building resources, contacts and knowledge to share with our clubs to sustain growth and enjoyment of the wonderful sport of rowing.

# OFFSHORE EVENTS COMMITTEE

Margaurite Deasy  
**Chairperson**

## **Introduction/Mission:**

The mission of the Offshore Rowing Committee is to organise, develop and promote World Rowing Coastal (Offshore) rowing and Beach Sprints in Ireland in a safe and fair manner. For those not familiar with this type of rowing, it is rowing in single, double and coxed quad sculling boats with a sliding seat. The self-draining boats are wider and heavier than traditional flatwater boats and are designed for competition on the open sea. When Rowing Ireland created this division in 2017 there were approximately 30 offshore boats in the country. Since then, the interest in this form of rowing has exploded and it is anticipated there will be close to 400 offshore boats in the country by the end of the year. Beach Sprints is tipped to be the next Olympic Sport. The committee are making strides in the development of the sport.

## **Key achievements/activities for 2021:**

One of the first activities of the new committee was to put in place a comprehensive regatta calendar. The 5th Irish Offshore Rowing Championships were hosted by Bantry Rowing Club. This was a challenge for the local club but is known for running an excellent regatta each year spoiled with the location of the Aerodrome in Bantry. The Offshore Committee ran a number of webinars on safety, rigging, and tracker to educate the clubs on its use and the feedback was highly positive. The World Coastal Rowing Championships saw a big number of competitors attend the World Rowing Coastal Championships and World Rowing Beach Sprints Finals in Portugal with covid measures in place for each event.

## **Looking forward 2022:**

The Offshore committee are making preparations to put a pathway in place for Beach Sprints qualifications as well as planning for the 2022 Irish Offshore Championships in Wicklow, WRCC ranking Regatta in Loughros, Beach Sprint Ranking in Duneen in 2022 and the Inaugural Home International Beach Sprints, and the Inaugural ERCC.

## **Conclusion:**

Offshore rowing continues to be the fastest growing form of rowing in Ireland. While the 4k endurance racing is by far the most popular discipline, we also need to examine and put a pathway in place for the 500m beach sprints which are likely to be the future Olympic coastal format. In that regard the committee are preparing to host a beach sprint ranking regatta event for crews to qualify for the WRBSF, ERCC, and the Home International. It is our ambition to have Irish crews competing for podium positions in both endurance and beach sprint events at World level in the coming years and qualifying boats for the Beach Sprint Games.

# COASTAL EVENTS COMMITTEE

Danny Hayes  
**Chairperson**

## **Committee Members**

Marie Kinsella  
Robert Dunne  
David Hussey  
Ted McSweeney  
Aoife Murphy  
Bernie O'Donovan  
Shane Russell

## **Introduction/Mission:**

The mission of the Coastal Division is the provision of Coastal Rowing, which is inclusive and Club led, with clear communications and transparent administration. This type of rowing takes place in traditional timber boats or a fiberglass coxed four, all of which are fixed seats. Crews attach to a buoy at the start of the race and race a straight course before turning a buoy and returning.

## **Key achievements/activities for 2021:**

The Irish Coastal Rowing Championships took place at the NRC in August. The regatta was held under Covid restrictions and spectators were not permitted to attend. Extensive planning took place in advance to ensure the safety of the competitors and the officials. 207 crews competed in what was widely viewed as a safe and successful regatta.

Coastal Safety: A coastal safety webinar was held in March as part of Rowing Ireland Safety Week. This covered topics included boat handling, trailer towing, water safety and the use of PFDs.

Two Coastal Stewarding (umpiring) education sessions were held online in advance of the Coastal Championships. This standardised the approach to umpiring at the Coastal Championships.

A complete review of Coastal Championship race categories was undertaken, to examine whether the current offering is appropriate and if it is having any impact on athlete retention. A report was compiled and, while no changes were recommended at this time, it will form a useful reference for future reviews.

## **Looking forward 2022:**

The Coastal Championships is planned for 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> August, to be held in Schull in West Cork. This is the first time the Coastal Championships will be held outside the NRC and in a coastal venue. This is a key component of helping to rebuild coastal clubs' membership base which has been severely reduced during the pandemic.

# GET GOING GET ROWING PROGRAMME

Derek Bowen, Get Going Get Rowing Programme Lead

## Introduction/Mission

The Get Going Get Rowing programme started in 2014 with funding from Women in Sport and Sport Ireland. We have seen an increase in participation year on year until the pandemic hit in 2020. We have seen a steady growth in participants from over 4000 in 2014 to over 30,000 in 2019. Our mission is to introduce 1000s to the sport of rowing and to make teenagers think differently about being active and participating in sport.

We are raising the profile of Rowing and creating an awareness among young people who would probably not have considered rowing as an option for them. We create a pathway from the machine to the water with our programme and our on-the-water sessions and camps.

## Key Achievements/Activities for 2021

In 2021, we successfully delivered programmes to 120 schools nationwide with over 23,000 students participating in programs, this figure has shown a strong recovery from 2020 with only 17,000 students involved in programmes. As the pandemic was still a factor in 2021, we had still not arrived back to the pre-pandemic participation figures of 32,000 students but school bookings and figures from September to December 2021 show we are predicted to be back to pre-covid numbers for 2022.

We continued in 2021 to deliver many more outdoor programs including our "On the Water" PE classes in Cork, Limerick and Dublin. We successfully delivered "On the Water" PE classes to over 1900 students in Limerick, Cork and Dublin in 2021 with over 100 classes delivered nationwide.

In 2021 we also launched schools team building days in Limerick, a combination of "On the Water" rowing activities and land-based team building games, these proved very successful with 9 schools actively participating in 2021. These 9 schools plus 4 further schools have already booked again for 2022 showing nearly a 50% growth in this programme year on year.

The participation in our summer camps has continued to grow by over 50% year on year over the past number of years. In 2021 we expanded our Summer Camps out of Dublin and into Cork. During the summer of 2021 we saw over 220 teenagers take part in our camps with 120 teenagers taking part in our Cork camps. Many of these teens have continued to row in local clubs in Cork and Dublin as these camps continue to be a strong feeder system into local clubs.

## Looking Forward – 2022

With the lifting of all pandemic restrictions, 2022 is expected to be a bumper year for Get Going Get Rowing and we are hoping to surpass our 2019 figure of 32,000 people engaged in our programmes. We have added 40 Rowing machines to our fleet of machines to enable us to deliver more programmes than ever before. We have added 3 touring quads to our fleet of boats to further enhance our delivery of "On the water" PE classes and team building days in Cork, Dublin, Limerick and now Leitrim (Lough Rinn). We have renewed our partnerships with many of the local sports partnerships including Dublin

city and South Dublin and we have agreed new partnerships in counties such as Clare, Tipperary and Kilkenny.

In 2022 we hope to hit a milestone of over 400 teenagers involved in our summer camps as we look to expand our camps into more counties. We will engage more schools than ever before in our "On the Water" PE classes at more locations around the country. We will deliver our TrY Leadership programme to over 1500 teenagers nationwide bringing these 1500 students onto the coaching ladder and hopefully creating the coaches of tomorrow.

### **Conclusion**

We are looking forward to a very successful school year 2022/23. We have more equipment than ever before to allow us to deliver more programs than ever before throughout the country, our aim is to get more and more people "hooked" on rowing. Our Dublin Coordinator has now branched out and has become our Leinster Coordinator and we have just announced the appointments of a new Limerick and Cork Coordinator. We are constantly bringing on more coaches to coach rowing in schools and are continuously on the lookout for new coaches. If you are interested in trying to grow rowing in your locality, please contact [Getrowing@rowingireland.ie](mailto:Getrowing@rowingireland.ie)

# WOMEN IN SPORT

Ceara O'Connor, Women in Sport Lead

## **Introduction/Mission:**

Achieve gender balance in all aspects of the sport of rowing in Ireland – participation, coaching, officiating, governance and visibility.

## **Key Achievements/Activities for 2021**

2021 was a historic year for women in sport in Rowing Ireland with our first Olympic medal for women's rowing and 9 female Olympians.

Row with the Pro's - participation support via online erg sessions continued from 2020 as sport was still restricted by the pandemic. The sessions were extremely well attended and featured female HP athletes such as Sanita Puspure. Women in Sport lead Claire Lambe led Friday Core sessions.

The first Women's Student Coach Academy was launched in collaboration with Student Sport Ireland. 2 female student coaches were supported through a year-long programme consisting of networking, mentoring, leadership and coach education.

1000+ viewers online of the 'Balance is Better' exercise classes.

250 women participated in the 'Give it a Row' day, a try rowing participation initiative timed around the Olympics and increased visibility for rowing clubs.

2021 saw the launch of the Women on the Water - a National adults learn-to-row programme, a pioneering programme which saw 76 women complete an 8 week course. In 2021, the programme sold out in locations across Ireland (Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway).

3 Female leaders in rowing were supported on to the Swim Ireland leadership programme where they learned leadership skills and accessed a network with female leaders in other sports.

9 regional Women in Coaching Networks established across Ireland. Over 160 coaches continued to engage in a coaching network. The networks have enabled direct communication between Women in Sport Lead/NGB and female coaches in clubs.

Webinar Series - In 2020 a series of webinars took place on various women in sport topics and this continued into 2021 including a highly attending webinar on menstrual health (over 500 sign ups).

## Women in Sport Week

A review of Gender Balance on the Rowing Ireland Board and recommendations were made for approval by the board. Constitutional change was made for a 40% minimum gender balance on the board. At the end of 2021, 31% of the board were females. On our committees, the ratio of female to male chairs was 6:9.

HerOutdoors Week - a series of learn to row camps in Dublin, Cork, Limerick and recreational tours marked the celebration of HerOutdoors week with tours in Limerick and Graiguenamanagh and a return to rowing drive around the country.

### **Looking Forward – 2022**

Celebrate International Women's Day with a collaborative creative video of female rowers and coaches from clubs all around Ireland

- Continue our HP Coaching Pathway – 6 coaches gain support with personal development workshops, mentorship, technical workshops with HP directors and access to the HP coaching environment. Programme is ongoing.
- Launch a club leadership programme with Triathlon Ireland aimed at female club committee members where they will learn leadership skills, network and have a mentor.
- Host HerOutdoors Week 2022
- Continue the growth of the Women on the Water Programme
- Support the return of the Grand Canal Challenge and any other GGGR school girl events
- Develop a female umpires pathway programme
- Continue monthly sessions for the Female Coaches Network with monthly sessions planned for January to April.

### **Conclusion**

Whilst 2021 continued the challenges of Covid until the return to sport in June 2021 and the majority of our planned initiatives moved online, progress was made towards our Women in Sport short term goals.

The number of initiatives and WiS agenda in 2021 focussed on adult female participation and recreational rowing. More focus is needed on umpiring - increasing women and support in officiating. A club development and leadership programme for female committee members in 2022 would further our members ability to influence gender balance and parity at grassroots level.

## **ANTI-DOPING REPORT**

Lucy Hanrahan, Anti-doping Officer

### **Introduction/Mission**

A component of funding through Sport Ireland is the annual reporting of the Anti-Doping Officer to the AGM. As the new Rowing Ireland Anti-Doping Officer, I look forward to continuing Anti-Doping education within our sport and continue to meet all requirements of the ISC.

### **Key Achievements/Activities for 2021**

In 2021 we had 44 Anti-Doping tests from March to December. Five of these were In Competition tests. There were NO Positive Results in 2021. We had seventeen athletes registered in the Registered Testing Pool and continue to support and educate these athletes in all areas of Anti-Doping. We continue to provide up to date information to the Anti-Doping Unit on dates and locations of International Regattas, Training Camps and Trials. We also provide a list of domestic events to the ADU where testing of competitors can be carried out.

### **Looking Forward – 2022**

We continue to operate several Anti-Doping initiatives as detailed below;

- Wallet card distribution to all Clubs, RTP & HIGH-PERFORMANCE athletes, Coaching Courses & Workshops.
- All RTP & HIGH-PERFORMANCE athletes will be required to complete an athlete onboarding course in which they will be educated on Anti-Doping, testing and the responsibilities of the athletes.
- Workshops facilitated to the HIGH-PERFORMANCE squad detailing their Anti-Doping responsibilities' and updating them on the latest issued by the ADU and WADA
- Posting of Anti-Doping Policy and other information to the Rowing Ireland website and social media.
- Anti-Doping education being provided through workshops and educational courses.
- Communication of Anti-Doping information to all Club Secretaries.
- Anti-Doping information contained in detail within the High-Performance Selection Strategy document.
- Anti-Doping Notices on all event entries. General messaging is the possibility of athlete testing at both Domestic and International events.

### **Conclusion**

Our athletes continue to lead the way by showing that rowing is, and continues to be, a clean and drug-free sport. By continuing to protect the spirit of rowing through educational learning of Anti-Doping, it will hopefully continue our success at all levels of the sport both on and off the water well into the future.

# COMMERCIAL

Aoife Habenicht  
**Chairperson**

## **Introduction/Mission:**

To secure additional financing for Rowing Ireland through Sponsorship agreements and supplier contracts with external companies.

The overall KPI of this committee is to match 15% of Sport Ireland funding each year (€164k currently), either in monetary value or product which will lead to less outgoings. To assist the CEO to manage all public relation activities and media channels.

**Maximise Sponsorship Opportunities:** Enter into appropriate sponsorship agreements that best benefit Rowing Ireland and our athletes.

**Better Manage Sponsor Relations:** Ensure valid contractual documentation for all monies received from any organization going forward as well as to preserve a good relationship with all outgoing sponsors. No sponsorship deals can be accepted without being ratified by three of the four members of this committee in order to ensure tight control.

**Drive Brand Awareness:** To promote Rowing Ireland within the commercial sector through simple but well-executed sponsorship arrangements and continuing to create a healthy brand image after the success of Tokyo 2020 and leading into Paris 2024.

**Marketing:** To assist the CEO with all marketing, PR and GreenBlades any issues arising.

## **Key achievements/activities for 2021:**

A partnership with Sport Sponsorship experts; Onside, was entered into. As part of this, research was conducted in order to ensure Rowing Ireland were approaching potential sponsors showcasing the correct elements of our sport. The areas recommended to focus on were identified as:

1. Sustainability
2. Female empowerment - HP athletes but also keeping teenage girls in sports for longer
3. Potential growth within our sport over the coming years - focus on growth at club level

The Commercial Committee was formed in 2020 and the following funding has been achieved:

2019 - pre-committee being formed

2020 - +51.5% YoY

2021 - +11.2% YoY during Covid and a lack of competitions

**2022 - (+62.4% YoY)**

This was achieved through the following existing partnerships:

SPONSOR
TECHCRETE
AVISON YOUNG
POWERHOUSE
BOYNE VALLEY
SANITY SYSTEMS
MG MOTORS
DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL
WHOOP!

2023 Targets

### **Target of bringing in 15% of Sport Ireland funding**

- To enter into an agreement with a textile company who will offer the leisurewear/travel kit for the HP team.

To drive views/followers on social media - a target of 20,000 followers by December 2023 (current: Rowing Ireland followers: 9,397 plus 2,023 Rowing Ireland Offshore = 11,420)

- To create inextricable links between Rowing Ireland and our partners/suppliers
- To highlight our athletes and maximise positive PR
- To better communicate with clubs to showcase a united entity

### **Looking Forward – 2022**

Whilst 2022 was an extremely successful year in terms of funding and sponsorship, a focused approach towards managing current sponsors and official suppliers is to be the aim for 2023. There is currently nobody within the Rowing Ireland staff who has been given this remit. This is to be considered going forward.

## TREASURY REPORT (Finance officer)

Year end – 31/12/2021.

The audited accounts for what was another difficult year in 2021 were reviewed by the Audit Committee Chaired by Carol Ann Smith. They were subsequently approved by the Board of Rowing Ireland. On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank Carol Ann and Conor O'Boyle for their work and diligence.

I would also like to acknowledge the work carried out by the operational team.

Some of the main items in the annual audited accounts for the year ended 31st December 2021 are analysed against previous performances in the various tables below

<b>Overall:</b>	<b>2,021</b>
Income	3,227,203
	-
Expenditure:	3,243,291
Other income	<u>20,441</u>
Operating Surplus/Deficit	<u><u>4,353</u></u>

<b>Main Income:</b>	
Grant income	2,288,097
Amortisation of deferred grant income	429,768
Sponsorships, advertising & other income	190,064
Development Income	106,538
Registration fees	76,658
Championships	38,264
Athlete contributions	32,250
Affiliation fees	29,033
Fees from courses & conferences	27,172
NRC	6,100
Home internationals	<u>3,259</u>
	<u><u>3,227,203</u></u>

**Main Expenditure:**

HP programme	1,566,325
Depreciation of tangible assets	570,851
Administration costs	468,047
Development programme	304,646
NRC	133,379
Championships	108,431
Coach Education	48,932
Online Shop	20,848
Branch & Coactal rowing development	11,000
Audit fees	6,050
Board & Committee costs	<u>4,782</u>
	<u><u>3,243,291</u></u>



## Other Committee Reports

No other sub-committee reports were made available at the time of going to press

## **Officer Nominations 2022**

The following nominations were received for the Rowing Ireland officerships  
(to be updated following checks)

## **Attachments**

**Domestic Events Fixtures Calendar 2023**

**Audited Accounts 2021**