



## What is the West Regional Rowing Council, and how does it affect me and my club?

### What are Regional Rowing Councils?

The Amateur Rowing Association has had a large growth in the employment of professional staff in the last few years. Despite this the organisation continues to be very much governed by volunteers. The ARA's national council is a voluntary body made up of one elected representative from each of the country's 24 divisions. In addition there are 12 Regional Rowing Councils (RRC), who provide governance at a local level. Each RRC is made up of volunteers from local clubs and associations.

The role of each of the 12 RRCs is to provide local organisation, and a point of contact through which the ARA can provide support to each region. Prior to the advent of professional staff this is how each region organised and managed itself. The role of the ARA staff is simply to provide professional support to the regions, the development of which continue to be organised and led by volunteers from local clubs and associations.

### Why was the WRRC formed?

Historically Devon and Cornwall is unique compared with other areas of the country, in that rowing in the region was not run by an ARA Regional Rowing Council, but by a number of other associations, such as the West of England ARA (WEARA) and the Cornish Pilot Gig Association (CPGA).

The WRRC was formed with the purpose of bringing the region's structure in line with the rest of the country, thereby ensuring Devon and Cornwall was represented fully on the ARA's national council.

However, the separate associations continue to retain their own identity and independence, and are responsible for their own competition and development. The WRRC principally acts as a central point through which the ARA can support the development of rowing in the region, and provide clubs with access to national projects and initiatives.

### What is the role of the WRRC?

The central role of the WRRC, aside from what has already been mentioned, is the development of rowing in the region, through the regional development plan. The most recent plan for 2005-2009 is based around development in the following areas;

- Organisation/Communication
- Coach Development
- Club Development
- Competition Dev.
- Increasing Participation
- Junior Development
- Volunteer Dev.

In addition the plan looks more specifically at the development of; fixed seat coastal rowing, indoor rowing, recreational rowing, and adaptive rowing.

The WRRC also acts as the local organiser for courses and events for clubs. For example the WRRC is responsible for organising coaching courses, as well as events for juniors such as the regional J16 sculling camp, and junior inter-regional team.

### WRRC Structure and Committee

The WRRC committee meets bi-monthly. In addition there is an annual AGM for all member clubs held in February. At the most recent AGM in 2005 the current committee were elected. Also formulated were sub-committees (commissions) in the areas of; Safety, Juniors and Coaching. It was agreed in these areas to form separate sub-committees for sliding seat and fixed seat clubs, to reflect the different concerns likely to be encountered depending on boat type.

**Voting Rights** - Any club affiliated directly to the ARA is entitled to vote on RRC matters. Associations affiliated as a group, where clubs are not individual ARA members, are entitled to one vote per association.

**Chair/Divisional Rep** - Ray Mallett (Exmouth RC); **Secretary** - Claire Elwell (Salcolmbe RC)

**Treasurer** - Alastair Barr (Castle Dore RC)

**Juniors** - Vacant (sliding seat rep); Robin Anderton (CPGA, fixed seat rep)

**Safety** - Hilary Baston (WEARA, sliding seat rep); Shane Sullivan (CPGA, fixed seat rep)

**Coaching** - Vacant (sliding seat rep); Robin Anderton (CPGA, fixed seat rep)

**Recreational Rowing Rep** - Peter Cameron (Castle Dore RC); **Adaptive Rowing Rep** - Sharon Letori

**Seine Boat Group Rep** - Jo Palmer (River Teign Rowing Club)

**Offshore Rowing Rep** - Tony Lovering (Mayflower ORC)



## Outline of Associations and Clubs

### Fixed Seat

There are 4 fixed seat rowing associations within the West region;

**Cornish Pilot Gig Association (CPGA)**

**Isles of Scilly Gig Association (ISGA)**

**Cornish Rowing Association (CRA)**

**Seine Boat Group (SBG)**

The boats used by these groups are built to specific designs, based upon traditional boats rowed historically within the region. The Gig is a 6 oared coxswained vessel. The Seine boat is a 4 oared coxswained vessel and the CRA boats (flashboats and randans) can accommodate 1 to 4 rowers in several combinations and are also coxswained. The CPGA has a current membership of 43 clubs, ranging from Lands End to Swanage in Dorset. The SBG are mainly centred in Teignmouth and number some 45 boats with an active rowing number of 750. The ISGA are based on the Islands situated off the Lands End Peninsular. They consist of 3 different island clubs and an active membership of 200. The CRA comprises 8 member clubs with a rowing number of 260. Each association hosts its own annual regatta series and championship events.

### Sliding Seat

Sliding seat rowing in the West region has traditionally been represented by the **West of England Amateur Rowing Association (WEARA)**. The association comprises of 17 clubs, the majority of whom row in narrow carbon-fibre shells, as used at the Olympic games. However a number of clubs row in sliding seat coastal and offshore boats. The association organises its own regatta circuit, with many of the clubs also competing in ARA events outside the region. The WEARA circuit winners represent the association at the annual South Coast Championships.

## West Region Volunteer of the Year Awards

2005 was the Year of the Volunteer, a year-long celebration of the amazing work volunteers do and a call to action to get more and more people volunteering. To mark this event, each ARA region organised its own volunteer awards, recognising the effort of some of rowing's most prominent volunteers, in open, junior, and higher education categories.

At Dartmouth regatta in August certificates were awarded to Adam Gitlin of Plymouth University, for his efforts towards the development of university rowing in the region, and the Glenn Wilkins of Bideford Reds for his work with his club's large junior section. Subsequent presentations were made to Anne Curnow-Care of the Cornish Pilot Gig Association, for her work towards the continued development of the association, and Bob Board for his many years of work as West of England ARA secretary and Exmouth RC member. Bob and Glenn are pictured, right, receiving their awards.

## How and Why To Get Involved?

Involvement in the WRRC enables individuals to influence the organisation and development of rowing in Devon and Cornwall. One aspect, which sets this RRC apart for the other 11, is that the West supports a unique in the variety of rowing types, which have the benefit of learning from each other, and working together where appropriate. However, the WRRC is not simply a forum for the different types of rowing, which is a commonly held misconception. Its principle purpose is no different to that of the 11 other regions, existing as the central body in developing the sport of rowing across the region, through which the ARA can provide support, and access to national projects and initiatives. In the key organisational areas of safety, juniors and coaching, the WRRC has separate fixed seat and sliding seat sub groups.

As such involvement in the WRRC provides the best of both worlds; the ability to influence the development of the type of rowing in which you participate, whilst also aiding the development of the sport of rowing as a whole within the region.

If you are interested in being involved in the WRRC, or any of its sub-committees please contact [wrrc@dial.pipex.com](mailto:wrrc@dial.pipex.com)

## Upcoming Events

**26<sup>th</sup> January 2006** - WRRC Committee  
(Mount Batten WSC, Plymouth)

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2006** -  
WRRC AGM 11.00 - 12.30  
Club Development Conference 13.30-17.00  
(Mount Batten WSC, Plymouth)

