



J. B. SHARP MEMORIAL REGATTA SERIES
Sponsored by BMG Aviation
Established 1924

J B Sharp Series Report – 2018 Series



On behalf of the JB Sharp Memorial Regatta Series Committee, I am pleased to provide our 2018 Annual Report.

2018 saw the 94th JB Sharp Memorial Regatta Series successfully held on Sydney Harbour, continuing the long tradition originally started by the late John Bennett Sharp back in 1924. In that year, the late J. B. Sharp presented the "Bay Clubs" with a magnificent perpetual trophy which was first raced for and won by Balmain Rowing Club. The original conditions of the racing were designed to measure the all-round rowing strength of the clubs. No premium was placed on senior rowing nor on the comparative numerical strength of each club.

In modern times, the series has been open to all competitors from clubs in NSW, not just the traditional 'bay clubs' of Iron Cove, and Blackwattle Bay, who host the regattas. School rowers have also had a huge impact on the series, although only Clubs remain eligible for the perpetual trophies which have now increased to cover all categories of the series, with the overall trophy remaining the original and impressive J B Sharp Cup.

The other great change to the series has been the emphasis placed on both novice and junior rowing, with the unique format of the Novice Single Sculls guaranteeing a safe and enjoyable introduction to rowing for new competitors, while the triple points accrued by the winners and place-getters ensures motivation for the competing clubs to continue to find, foster and develop new athletes in the sport.

The Sharp series has seen enormous growth in the 20 years since the series was opened to all competitors in the Harbour, and especially since the wonderful support of BMG Aviation, which has enabled it to continue as an independent regatta series affiliated with Rowing NSW, but also to offer scholarships targeted at the development of rowers and officials, and prizes for young rowers to inspire and enable them to continue their journey in the sport.

I am incredibly proud of the efforts of the Sharp Series Committee over the past years in this area, as we now see that many of the Sharp Scholarship recipients have gone on to participate in representative crews or to compete at the 'elite' end of the sport. It is both a testament to them as athletes, but also a poignant reminder of the importance of 'beginner' programs like the Sharp Series in helping to unearth and develop the next generation of talent within the sport, and to support the health of grassroots club racing in NSW.

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In this regard, we cannot overstate the assistance provided by our Sponsor, BMG Aviation, Specialist Insurance Brokers, and to the ongoing support and assistance rendered by Rowing NSW, our affiliated state sports organisation, who has graciously provided regatta secretary assistance and organisation in more recent times.

The series continues to flourish as we travel towards the centenary year, but as always new challenges emerge which I am sure the Committee of the series will ably steer the series through. The most significant challenge emerging is unfortunately one which may be the most difficult to overcome, which is an apathetic lack of understanding of the importance of the series to the health of the participating clubs and to the sport more generally. Comments have been received and noted from representatives of some clubs to the effect that 'there is too much racing at this time of year' or 'why do we need the series' or 'the sharp series isn't relevant to us.' These opinions misunderstand both the target audience of the series, and what the series is truly focused on.

The Sharp Series, by being conducted in Winter, provides a convenient counterpoint to the club racing of the Summer Series. In recent times however, the Summer Series, conducted by Rowing NSW, has (due to pressures of its own) lengthened considerably, ultimately often not finishing until April, with a brief series of regattas for masters rowers occurring thereafter in April-May. This Autumn series is targeted at a completely different type of rower to the JB Sharp Series, being targeted at experienced older 'masters' rowers. Put simply, these are not the types of rowers that we focus on in the Sharp Series (although the series is absolutely welcome to all rowers).

What needs to be acknowledged is the work done by Rowing NSW in scheduling the various parts to the season – from the longer format Spring 'head-race' series, to the Summer Club series, the Elite competition of February and March, and the Autumn Master's competition. Within this framework, the Winter Junior and Novice series of the Sharp fits neatly, and (some may say) forms a solid springboard for the start of each Summer series.

Recognition must be given to the stability of the Sharp Series, and to its importance within the overall framework of the sport.

In relation to this years' series, we continue to utilise the 'home' courses of each of the host clubs, with the opening regatta at Blackwattle Bay, hosted by Glebe Rowing Club. However, it was disheartening to see a lack of support for the Glebe Club, as their relative strength enabled them to field crews in almost every category, but a relatively weak turnout from other clubs meant that the regatta itself was much smaller than those of previous years, and also of the later regattas of the series.

As mentioned in previous years, consideration should be given to publicising the regatta series earlier on in the rowing calendar to encourage competition, and to ensure clubs can be organised with their representation, which I am pleased to say has now occurred for this coming year, as well as ensuring a larger break between the final regatta of the Summer/Autumn season and the start of the Sharp Series, to enable more time to develop new competitors and for clubs to 'recharge' before the start of the series.

Pleasingly, it was wonderful to see the competitors return for the UTS Haberfield regatta, though the danger to the clubs of missing a regatta in the series was demonstrated when wind and adverse weather forced the cancellation of the second half of the regatta, further establishing Glebe's lead in the series' pointscore. However, until the cancellation, the regatta saw particularly spirited competition in the Under 16 single scull events, for both men and women, and also the novice single sculls.

The Drummoyne regatta saw a further increase in the competition in these key events, together with the Novice Quads, and pleasingly both the Men's and Women's Open eights. In particular, special mention of the Tara School should be made, as a long-standing supporter of the series, for their competitive entrants. It has always



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been exciting to watch their success in the Series, and great to see them competing in the bigger boats (such as the eights) as well as the junior and novice events.

Similarly, it is lovely to see crews from clubs as far afield as Penrith, or from the revitalised University of NSW competing in the series, as was seen at the Drummoyne and Balmain Regattas, though as a proud Balmain Rower, I (in a somewhat biased fashion) must also make a passing mention to how happy I was to see the black and gold win the Open men's eight at the BRC regatta – something which has not been seen for some time.

The final Regatta at Leichhardt saw both fine weather and great competition, and Leichhardt certainly put on a great show including a final win in the Men's Open Eight. I suspect that some clubs had by then worked out the pointscore results as the final race of the day was more of an exhibition race for Leichhardt, who flew down the course but were always assured of the win in a 'row over.'

In the end however it was Glebe R.C. who convincingly won the point score for the series, making it the tenth time Glebe has retained the Cup since their first win in 1951, and the third time since 1986. A well-deserved win, and a great portent of the future success of a resurgent club with a strong focus on club-based competition. It will be very exciting to see where they go in the season ahead!

Once again, we recognise the efforts of the Rowing NSW Regatta Secretary, Owen Nix, for his role in not just recording and publishing the results of the regattas, but for his time and investigative skill in tracking down the correct rowers in the winning crews at each regatta – a job made all the more difficult by clubs not sending their crews out with bow numbers, or in improper uniform.

The series continues its restoration program for each of its perpetual trophies, shields and trays in advance of the Centenary of the Series in 2024. Thanks to those involved with this effort.

Thanks finally to the wonderful volunteers, boat race officials, and the dedicated JB Sharp Committee and office-bearers, without whom this series would not take place – in particular to Terry Maher and Barry Moynahan OAM for their tireless work both prior to and during the course of the series. It is wonderful to have such a committed and experienced committee who do well to liaise both with the clubs and Rowing NSW, but also to guide the series in the pursuit of its goals.

RESULTS

Following the Leichhardt Regatta, the winning clubs and crew were presented with their silverware.

The **J.B. Sharp Memorial Cup** – overall point score – **Glebe RC (241)**, UTS Haberfield (127), Leichhardt (112).

The **Walker & Hall Chalice** – Handicap Scull point Score – (Male) **Peter Waldерsee** (22), Cameron Ogilve (18), Eoghan Kilbridge (12); (Female) **Daniela Bogert** (16), Maxine Franz (14), Claire Robinson (14).

The **Sid Sharp Silver Tray** – men's novice & U16 point score – **Glebe (49)**, Penrith (24), UTS Haberfield & University NSW (19).

The **Kayser Shield** – Women's Open & Intermediate point score – **UTS Haberfield (43)**, Leichhardt (36), Glebe (33).



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The **Glebe Centenary Shield** – men's open & intermediate point score – **Glebe (76)**, Leichhardt & UTS Haberfield (23).

The **Balmain Rowing Club Bullock Horn** – men's and women's open eights point score – **Leichhardt (13)**, Glebe (8), Balmain, Drummoyne, Sydney University (4).

The **Kevyn Webb OAM Cup** – men's novice scull point score – **University NSW (32)**, Leichhardt (30), Glebe (26).

The **John Sharp Vase** – women's Novice and Under 16 point score – **Glebe (51)**, UTS Haberfield (42), University NSW (20).

The **Lea Insurance Brokers Trophy** – women's Novice Scull point score – **University NSW (14)**, North Shore, Penrith, Shoalhaven all (8).

The **Combined Men's & Women's Under 16 Scull** \$ 500 BMG Aviation prize was awarded to Glebe Rowing Club.

The **TRAINEE BRO OF THE SERIES MEDALLION** was awarded to Charles Appleton for his work during the series.

BEGINNER OF THE SERIES MEDALLIONS were presented to Kieran Phillips of University of NSW and Gilbert Kirk of Glebe.

BMG AVIATION SCHOLARSHIPS

Two BMG AVIATION scholarships of \$ 1,000 each were awarded to 3 young aspiring champions, one male and two female, who equally split this year's scholarship.

The BMG AVIATION Scholarship recipients for 2018 were **Cameron Ogilve** (Glebe), **Zoe Reid** (Glebe) and **Amelia Cooper** (UTS Haberfield). Congratulations!

On behalf of the Sharp family and the Committee I would like to thank the many competitors; the Boat Race Officials; Rowing NSW and BMG Aviation for their support and contribution to another successful series.

Liam James
Convener

2019 – 95th J.B. Sharp Memorial Regatta Series



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