

Competitive Rowing Online

Competitive rowing, like any pastime, has an online presence these days. Rowing *history*, curiously, is not well represented online, but a 2004 essay titled “**The Dangerously Neglected Legacy of Rowing**” at <http://rowinghistory.net/neglected.htm> provides some considerations as to why this is so. Nevertheless, from rowing history to real-time racing results, there’s a bit of something for any rowing enthusiast. The UK’s **River & Rowing Museum** (<http://rrm.co.uk>) is more interesting than it’s web site, but the site is nonetheless worth noting and exploring. The London-based **Fishmongers’ Company**, founded some time before 1272(!), has a page about the oldest continuous sporting event in the UK, and perhaps the world: **The Doggett’s Wager**, a rowing race in London that was first held in 1715. The Fishmongers have been sponsoring the race since the 1720s, and they describe it online at <http://www.fishhall.org.uk/Heritage/TheDoggettsWager/>.

The **Rowing History** site, at <http://rowinghistory.net> looks quite dated, but its content is not as old as the layout would suggest. It compiles numerous histories on various aspects of rowing and has an extensive collection of historic regatta results, general essays, lists of crews and teams, and more. Its content is definitely worth investigating even if its appearance is not exactly cutting edge. The **National Rowing Foundation’s** site (<http://natrowing.com>) includes images from the National Rowing Hall of Fame, now a permanent installation at Mystic Seaport.

The online presence for today’s rowing scene is quite different. The **row2k.com** site (<http://row2k.com>) offers extensive daily updates on current rowing events, lots of recent results, many rowing-related videos, and much, much more. As always, blogs are often a good place to turn for up-to-date information. Several blogs of note include “**Hear the Boat Sing**” (<http://hear-the-boat-sing.blogspot.com/>), which focuses on rowing history, and the UK-based **Rowing for Pleasure**, at <http://rowingforpleasure.blogspot.com/>. Both are updated regularly.

All of the major regattas of course have their own websites, though few focus on the historical sides of their races with any great emphasis. The **Henley Royal Regatta**, begun in 1839, has a presence online at <http://hrr.co.uk>. The Wikipedia entry at

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henley_Royal_Regatta has much more historical information than the Henley’s own site. **The Boat Race**, the 150-year-old regatta between Oxford and Cambridge universities, is online at <http://theboatrace.org>, and features a BBC Replay of the most recent race. Boston’s famous **Head of the Charles** has an impressive site at <http://hocr.org>, where, like the Boat Race, it highlights its many corporate sponsors.

Pocock Racing Shells (<http://pocock.com>) are among the most advanced racing shells available today, and these boats have been manufactured in and near Seattle for nearly a century. In an interesting move in the goal of physical and virtual preservation, when the Pocock company ceased building the wooden singles, the owners transferred their tools, jigs, templates, and other gear for building single cedar shells to the **Northwest Maritime Center** in Port Townsend, Washington. The old web site was transferred to the boatbuilding program as well, and is regularly maintained at <http://pocockclassic.org>.

Though the rowing events in the first modern Olympic games were cancelled due to weather, rowing has been on the Olympic program since the inception of the modern games. Most Olympic rowing teams have online presences; the Americans are at <http://usrowing.com>, the Canadians are at <http://rowingcanada.org>, and the British are at <http://britishrowing.org>. The **London 2012** website offers a smattering of information about the rowing events in the next Olympiad: <http://www.london2012.com/games/venues/eton-dorney.php>. The **World Rowing** site at <http://worldrowing.com> has extensive information about current racing, with a focus on national teams. The site includes thousands of images and many videos from races going back nearly twenty years.

Rowing history is not as strong online as other sports or maritime topics, but there’s no lack of information about current racing. If you’re interested in rowing, there are plenty of ways to spend lots of time online!

Suggestions for other sites worth mentioning are welcome at peter@shipindex.org. See <http://www.shipindex.org> for a free compilation of over 140,000 ship names from indexes to dozens of books and journals. †



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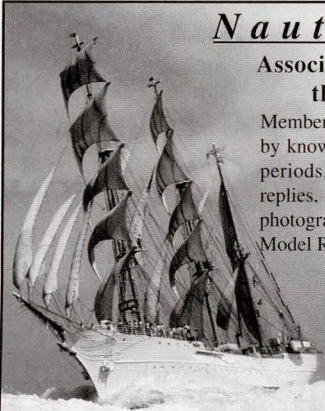

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