



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WRC CAPTURES SEVERAL WINS AT HISTORIC REGATTA

Winnipeg MB (August 26, 2009) -- The Winnipeg Rowing Club had a good showing at Lake Elmo, Minnesota, at the 106th NWIRA (NorthWest International Rowing Association) Championship Regatta. Rowers competed over two days of racing August 21 and 22, at a regatta that boasts a long and proud history and tradition. Winnipeg athletes placed Top 3 in the following events:

- Men's Single – 1ST place – **Kevin Kowalyk**
- Men's Single Dash – 1st place – **Kevin Kowalyk**
- Men's Double – 1st place – **Kevin Kowalyk & Pete Helfer**
- Women's Single – 1st place – **Emily Cameron**
- Women's Single Dash – 3rd place – **Emily Cameron**
- Women's Lightweight Single Dash – 3rd place – **Sheila Wilson**

ABOUT THE NWIRA REGATTA

The 106th NWIRA Championship Regatta took place on Lake Elmo, Minnesota, with 12 rowing clubs participating (Winnipeg, Regina, Rochester, Minneapolis, Thunder Bay, Twin City Youth Rowing, St. Paul, Kenora, Milwaukee, Duluth, Quad City, St. Croix). The grand aggregate trophy – the Sir Thomas Lipton Cup – is up for grabs annually, and won this year by Minneapolis Rowing Club.

The NorthWest International Rowing Association (NWIRA) is a regional association of Canadian and American mid-western rowing clubs, founded in 1885 by the Winnipeg Rowing Club, Minnesota Boat Club, and St. Paul Rowing Club. The North American landscape of the time told a story of outlaws and opportunity. In Canada, the rebellious Louis Riel had fought his last fight, and the last spike was driven into the Canadian Pacific Railway. In the US, notorious Jesse James met his demise, and Thomas Edison introduced methods of generating and distributing electric light, heat, and power. Into this world the NWIRA championship was born, and the race was on...

The first NWIRA competition took place July 16, 1886, on Lake Minnetonka in Minnesota. What started as a quiet evening erupted into mayhem, as the sound of the starter's gun blast echoed across the lake, and fans began cheering wildly from hundreds of small boats and steamers. Three crews raced down the course with Winnipeg in last place. With a quarter-mile to the finish, Winnipeg sprinted ahead with Minnesota and St. Paul in hot pursuit. In the end, the Canadians crossed the line first and took home a championship that would trade hands many times over the next 105 regattas.

The NWIRA Regatta has continued to grow and thrive since that first race won by Winnipeg in 1886. An annual regatta, it has only been postponed during times of war. **The next event will be held in Winnipeg in 2010.**

At 128 years old, the Winnipeg Rowing Club is one of the oldest sporting organizations in Western Canada. It has been in operation since 1881, stopping only twice – during WWI and WWII. A long-time tenant of the banks of the Red River in downtown Winnipeg, the WRC survived the North-West Rebellion of 1885, the General Strike of 1919, the Great Depression of the 1930's, the Great Flood of 1950, and the Flood of the Century in 1997. Over the years the clubhouse has been destroyed by fire, wind, and water, but has always managed to maintain its long and proud tradition. Today, the WRC is a non-profit organization with a rich and successful sporting history, fostering generations of camaraderie and friendships. Members range from 13 to 85, and the club offers programs for all skill levels. www.winnipegrowingclub.ca