

**Buffalo Regatta Report
15th, 16th, & 17th February 2007
East London**

This past weekend the NMMU Rowing Club traveled to East London to participate in the oldest rowing regatta in Africa, the Buffalo Regatta. Being one of the most prestigious regattas in the world, the competition is of the highest level with Olympians, members of the South African National Team, University and Club oarsmen and women competing side by side.

The main attraction of this regatta is the two magnificent trophies on offer. The Grand Challenge Trophy for the Men's Coxless Fours and the Silver Skulls Trophy for the Men's A Skulls. Both trophies are priceless as they are made out of pure silver, although they are insured for over two million rand each.

The oarsmen and women from the NMMU Rowing Club had their heats on Friday morning starting at 5:30am, with a slight tail wind the NMMU rowers managed to do something the Club has never accomplished before, out of the 11 events entered into NMMU made the A final for all of them.

Division	Event	Result
Men's D	Single Sculls	A Final
Men's B	Double Sculls	A Final
Men's B	Coxed Four	A Final
Men's B	Single Sculls	A Final
Men's C	Single Sculls	A Final
Men's B	Pair	A Final
Men's B	Eights	A Final
Women's C	Single Sculls	A Final
Women's B	Single Sculls	A Final
Women's B	Eight	A Final
Women's B	Coxed Four	A Final

The day started off with David Pearton winning his scull final in a close battled with a UKZN University Sculler, where he just crossed the line 2 tenths of a second ahead to take home the rewards.

The Men's Coxed Four then took to the water hoping to win the Pimms Shield, unfortunately the water turned on every one and the racing conditions were near impossible, pulling the 6th fastest time in the heats, the Men's Coxed Four took a respectable 5th place in what was a fiercely contested race and where unlucky not to make top three.

The Men's B Skulls final is of the highest standard and in a close fight for 1st place, Shane Reynolds found himself just going down in the last 100 meters to a South African Rowing Academy Sculler. The two oarsmen left the rest of the field to fight for third place as they finished a good 30 seconds ahead of the nearest competitor. This second place was the highlight of the weekend for the NMMU rowers.

The Women's C Scullers had very good races, both Nicole Thompson and Pauline Hulbert making their finals. Nicole came in a solid 3rd place which is an excellent result

considering it was her first regatta rowing for the University. Pauline did well to come 5th in a competitive race.

The Men's Eight then took to the water in terrible conditions, howling winds made for extremely difficult racing conditions. The team was disappointed with their 5th place finish, but they should be proud of this result as very little training was done in the Eight due to the damage it sustained in the 2006 floods.

The C Scullers, Nick Jones, Benjamin Ekron and James Crawford, took to the water soon after the Eights race. This is the first time that the NMMU Rowing Club have had 3 boats in an A Final, the close battled race was a show of character as the conditions were sinking boats and just to finish would be an achievement, the Scullers showed true determination to take 2nd, 3rd, 4th and place and were unlucky not to have the whole podium to themselves.

The Women's B Eight's race was another tightly contested race, with many of the top University Clubs putting their A crews in the B division. The women did extremely well to come 3rd against some stiff opposition and in very difficult rowing conditions.

The last final for the day was the Men's Double Scull, consisting of Stacey Howcroft and Shane Reynolds, after their win the previous weekend at the ECRA Championships; they had high hopes of a repeat performance. It was a hard fought battle and in the end it was all about the boat, unfortunately the heavier NMMU boat filled with water in the rough conditions and the lighter boats had an easier time of it. The men pulled there hearts out and crossed the line, lucky not to sink like some of there opposition, and took an awesome 3rd place. A great achievement against some very stiff opposition.

A great weekend was had by the Rowers of the NMMU. The University can be proud of their representatives and the way in which they conducted themselves on and off the water and the Rowers of the NMMU Rowing Club should be extremely proud of their results. The results obtain at the Buffalo Regatta show great promise for the season ahead.

Division	Event	Result
Men's D	Single Sculls	1 st
Men's B	Double Sculls	Scrapped
Men's B	Coxed Four	5 th
Men's B	Single Sculls	2 nd
Men's C	Single Sculls	2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th
Men's B	Pair	3 rd
Men's B	Eights	5 th
Women's C	Single Sculls	3 rd , 5 th
Women's B	Single Sculls	Scrapped
Women's B	Eight	3 rd
Women's B	Coxed Four	5 th

David Pearton
Vice-Chairman
NMMU Rowing Club