



# Outpost Africa

Newsletter - Issue 4 November 2001

This issue is devoted to the Rowing Regatta held at Victoria Falls over the weekend of the 27<sup>th</sup> October. Despite a last minute withdrawal by many of the foreign competitors, we are delighted to report that the inaugural “Henley on the Zambezi” was a great success.



The objective of this regatta was participation and fellowship as a basis for establishing a permanent event. Our inspiration was the World’s Single Sculling Championship rowed adjacent to our course on the Zambezi in 1910. The race between resident World Professional Sculling Champion, Dick Arnst of New Zealand and Ernest Barry of the UK (pictured respectively, left and right) was part of a large Regatta at the time.



We contested the races over 2 days over a 900-meter course, approximately 5 kilometers from the lip of the Falls. Originally the intention was for a 2 lane 1000 meter course but on the morning of the race a pod of 7 hippo had taken up permanent residence at what should have been the start line and safety marshals had to shorten the course,

a fact that was much appreciated by competitors who had “over enjoyed” the welcoming braai on the night before the regatta.



Professional hunter, Adrian Read, coordinated our safety boats and each boat included a race official, pilot and armed professional hunter. Apart from a cursory appearance from our resident 4-meter crocodile and bemused observation from the hippo, the two days proceeded without incident. The officials including judges, Ray Stocker and Jacqui Cuffley performed very well, particularly in

view of the fact that most had never seen a rowing regatta, let alone participated in one.

Whilst the sad events of September 11<sup>th</sup> had whittled away most of the international competitors, the event was very well supported by Zimbabwean Rowers, particularly Hunyani and Barnhill Clubs who made the 2000 kilometer round trip from Mazoe Dam to Victoria Falls. We were delighted though to welcome a number of overseas competitors, notably Lindie Rudover from Canada (above), who participated in almost



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every Woman's event and Bryan O'Shaughnessy from Limerick in Ireland (standing left in Vic Falls Team photo) who managed to be in every winning Men's crew except the Men's Single Scull, which was won by Robin Barrett from Hunyani Club.

The events contested and no of crews included:

## Women

Double Scull (6)      Quad Scull (3)  
Four with Cox (3)

## Men

Single Scull (7)      Double Scull (6)  
Quad Scull (4)      Four with Cox (5)

We also held a number of mixed events.

Conditions were excellent of the first day of the regatta with almost no wind and around 30 degrees temperature. Sunday saw more challenging conditions with milder temperatures.

In addition to the rowing competition, we held an ergo meter competition over 500 meters. We were lucky to have in our small town, 3 Concept 11 Model C Ergo meters. Our intention was to involve indigenous participants who had not before been exposed to rowing and also spectators as well as oarsmen participating in the rowing.

Despite the illusions of grandeur of the more experienced oarsmen, the men's event was won by a 45 year old farmer from Mazoe, Chris Ashton, in a time of 1m 26.9s. This event, run in the break between racing on the second day of the regatta, proved enormously popular with the crowd and attracted a wide range of participants from local gyms and rafting companies. The ladies event was won in a time of 1m 48.3s by Alyssum Rowett of Hunyani, defeating by 1/10 of a second, Victoria Falls own Trish Pritchard (pictured above with partner Amanda Norman) who took up the sport only 2 months earlier.





Hunyani and Barnhill Rowing clubs fielded some excellent Master's and Club crews. Ian Hunter (seen stroking the Barnhill Master's Four in the Coxed Four semi final and wife Susanne are lynch pins of the

Zimbabwe Rowing Scene which to date has mostly centered around a very active and competitive Youth scene rowing on Mazoe Dam to the North of Harare. One of the Barnhill Men's Fours is pictured below on the start line to the west of Kalinda Island. The opposite Bank is in fact Zambia. The River forms the boundary between, Zimbabwe and Zambia at this point. A final acknowledgement should be made regarding equipment. All races were contested in "matched" boats built locally by Zimbabwean Builder, Graham Cawood, who was kind enough to attend the regatta doubling as boat master. Equipment is one of the critical issues in Zimbabwe/ In Victoria Falls, our entire team trained with one double and one single scull!!



It is our intention to build on our experience gained in hosting the event to plan for an annual event and we will post you in due course.

Adrian Norman

Victoria Falls

November 2001.