

Chapter 4: 1919 to 1930: Difficult Times

The Nineteenth Royal Canadian Henley Regatta The Forty-Second Regatta of the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen July 31 to August 2, 1924

The Henley Aquatic Association began 1924 as optimistic as ever:

NEW STAND FOR HENLEY
IN TIME FOR REGATTA

Niagara District Association
and Toronto Interests to
Wait on Government

(Special Despatch to The Globe.)

St. Catharines, Jan. 10.—It is probable that the new grand stand on the Canadian Henley regatta course will be ready for the Olympic regatta next June. Officers of the Niagara District Aquatic Association are quite enthusiastic over the outlook.

The new stand is to be built on the embankment back of the present decrepit and inadequate structure, and will be situated on Government property on the bank of the old Welland Canal. Local aquatic officials will endeavor to have the Government bear part of the cost, as the Henley is now a national institution. The new building will cost about \$15,000.

A delegation from Toronto and this district will wait on the Government shortly with reference to the matter in an effort to have the stand built in time for the Henley if not for the Olympic trials. [The Toronto *Globe*, January 11, 1924, p.8]

The Olympic trials mentioned above were for eights only. Hilton Belyea was acclaimed as Canada's representative in the single, when the Premier of New Brunswick, Peter Venoit, promised to raise \$250 toward a fund to send him to Paris. "P.J. Mulqueen, Chairman of the Canadian Olympic Committee, reiterated his belief that Belyea was the logical choice as Canada's representative." [The Toronto *Globe*, January 17, 1924, p.8]

The Paris Olympic Regatta had a straight four event:

The Vancouver Rowing club's four will be sent to represent Canada. That four has won the senior championship of the Pacific Coast, United States and Canada for the past two years. British Columbia sportsmen will pay all of their expenses. The four will sail on June 21, and the eight on June 25. [Hilton Belyea was already in France.] [The Toronto *Globe*, June 6, 1924, p.10]

The newspaper does not say, but the Vancouver R.C. four was probably chosen because no Canadian crew had won the Senior Fours at the CAAO Regatta since 1920, when an Argonaut R.C. crew did it.

On June 14, the eights trial was held on the Canadian Henley course over the one mile, 550 yards distance, although the Olympic distance was 2,000 metres. The heavily

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favoured University of Toronto crew won easily, beating crews from the Argonaut R.C., Lachine R.C., and Hamilton R.C., who might have pressed the Varsity crew, had not 5-man lost his oar. [The Toronto *Globe*, June 16, 1924, p.11]

Spectators at the trials watched the finish from the old grandstand. The much-hoped-for new grandstand was not built, nor was it built for the Canadian Henley Regatta which was held, for the first time, over three days, July 31 and August 1 and 2. No reason for the absence of a new grandstand is given in the press, but lack of funds would be a safe guess.

The Canadian Olympic rowing team achieved two silver medals and an honourable mention.

[Hilton Belyea] contracted neuritis in his hip while training in England shortly prior to the tournament. He did not perform well with his condition, but the French government granted him a scroll and an honorary Olympic bronze medal for his sportsmanship. [<https://www.sports-reference.com/olympics/athletes/be/arthur-belyea-1.html>]

Neuritis is a painful nerve inflammation, and “Dr. A.B. Lamb, of McGill University, one of the members of the Canadian Olympic committee, is personally attending the Canadian oarsman, and it is Dr. Lamb’s opinion that Belyea will not be able to row.” [The Toronto *Daily Star*, July 12, 1924, p.12] To his credit, Belyea did row, but placed third in his heat and was eliminated.

The Vancouver R.C. four, made up of Archibald Black, George MacKay, Colin Finlayson and William Wood, won silver.

Also winning silver was the University of Toronto eight: Norman Taylor, Harold Little, John Smith, Warren Snyder, Robert Hunter, William Langford, Arthur Bell, William Wallace, and coxie, Ivor Campbell. Robert Hunter describes his experience at the 1924 Olympics in his history of rowing, *Rowing in Canada Since 1848*.

Even though there was no new grandstand to woo spectators to attend, early signs regarding attendance were positive, as was the condition of the old grandstand.

Present indications are that there will be an unusual large number of spectators. [Regatta] Secretary Charles Rose reports that more reservations for seats than ever before have been made. An extra box has been added as well as seats in the grandstand taken into the reserved section.

The grandstand has been gone over and a few needed repairs made. There are many who think the stand unsafe, but this is not the case, as City Engineer B. Lampson went over it very carefully and reported that with a very few minor repairs it would be good for years as far as being safe. The recommended repairs have been made and the stand is now in as good condition as it ever was. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 26, 1924, p.9]

The photo below shows the crowd in the grandstand watching the action at the 1924 Regatta. The box seats were probably those located in the front row, since they appear to be separated from those behind and to either side.

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From a Bruce Manson negative in the George McCauley Collection, City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 489, Series 2360, File 526

The 1924 Canadian Henley had several differences from previous Regattas. It was three days, with Thursday being reserved for heats for Friday finals, a practice the Americans had been using at their National Regatta. Heats for Saturday's finals were rowed after the finals on Friday. The makeup of the competition in the Senior races was slightly different. The best scullers in North America were at the Olympics and would not compete in Port Dalhousie. Moreover, perennial Senior Eights winners, University of Toronto, were also in France, so that race became open for a new winner. That race, which was always a crowd-pleaser, was to be the last race of the Regatta for the first time. The Senior Doubles had concluded the Regatta in recent years, but those races usually only had two or three, or sometimes, one competitor, and they must have felt anti-climactic. A multi-eight race with the prestigious Hanlan Memorial Challenge Trophy as the prize would send the crowd home excited.

Further proof that the CAAO Regatta had grown in status was produced by Secretary Leslie Fergusson in the form of a letter from the Assistant Deputy of the Secretary to his Excellency Baron Byng of Vimy, Governor-General of Canada:

Government House
Ottawa

July 25, 1924.

Dear Sir:

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I am desired by the Governor-General to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 24th instant, and to inform you in reply that His Excellency will be very pleased to give his patronage to [the] Royal Canadian Henley Regatta to be held in St. Catharines on July 31st, and August 1st and 2nd.

His Excellency much regrets that he will be unable to be present at the Regatta as he will be in Western Canada at that time, but wishes it every possible success.

I am, dear sir,

Yours faithfully,

F.L.C. PEREIRA,

Assistant Deputy of the Governor-General's Secretary.

[The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 30, 1924, p.1]

Vice-Regal patronage was important to elevating the status of the Regatta.

As they had in 1923, the races would be rowed one mile, 550 yards straightaway, every 20 minutes. Something new in the entertainment between races, "two log rollers are being secured from Ottawa to give an exhibition before the grand stand." [The Toronto *Globe*, July 25, 1924, p.8]

In addition, on Friday and Saturday:

The St. Catharines Concert band, under the leadership of Mr. Gerald W. Marks, was stationed upon a concrete scow on the easterly side of the course, opposite the grand stand and gave a varied programme of music. . . . [The St. Catharines *Standard*, August 5, 1924, p.8]

Stake boasts were supposed to be used at the starts. However,

Lou Scholes of Toronto, a winner of the diamond sculls, officiated as starter and elected to dispense with the stake boats. Scholes has advocated a system of starting boat races that has not met with universal approval, but he had his opportunity to demonstrate it today in the absence of Major Heron, [who was in France] who has started the races for many years.

Scholes Makes Good.

The starts were without exception really excellent. It is difficult to conceive how any improvement could have been effected. Starter Scholes was the recipient of numerous congratulations. [The Toronto *Globe*, August 1, 1924, p.8]

Oddly, Scholes' method is not described in the *Globe*. However, the *Standard* gives this description: "He lined up the boats some little distance behind the starting line and let them drift to the starting line keeping them in order during the drift." [The St. Catharines *Standard*, August 5, 1924, p.8] How that method is an improvement over shells held in position by officials in stake boats is hard to imagine.

Frederick Wilson, the *Globe's* correspondent, waxed poetic about the contestants:

Young giants, whose superbly developed muscles of arm and back and leg rippled under skin, tanned to the hue of old copper, strained at their sweeps as they propelled their frail racing

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shells through the waters of the historic old Welland Canal. [The Toronto *Globe*, August 1, 1924, p.8]

So, what happened if a lightweight, or, as the *Star* called them “tackweights,” did not make weight? In the first heat of the 140-lb. Fours (Maidens): “Hamilton had to make a substitution at the last moment. One of the regulars being declared overweight, a high school student was placed in No. 2 seat.” [The Toronto *Daily Star*, August 1, 1924, p.7] Hamilton won the heat.

The finals on Friday were delayed until the steamer from Toronto arrived. This had an effect on the heats for the Senior Quarter-Mile Dash. When only four of the eight entrants appeared for the two heats, the officials decided that there was no need to wait for the others, since they were already an hour late in starting, so one heat was run, with the first three finishers advancing to the final. John Durnan of the Argonaut R.C. beat Charles Sheehan of the West Side R.C. in both the heat and the final.

All the winners and times for the 1924 Canadian Henley Regatta can be found in tabular form at: <http://goldmedalphotos.com/records.html>

All the results from all the races in all the Regattas from 1919 to 1930 are available in an appendix at the end of Chapter 4.

Below is a list of the participating clubs at the 1924 Royal Canadian Henley Regatta. In the parentheses are the number of entries, which gives an idea of the relative size of the club, followed by the number of wins, which suggests the relative strength of the club. The Argonaut R.C. regained its position of leadership after not posting a single win in 1923.

Argonaut R.C.	(16/7)	Toronto, Ontario
Brockville R.C.	(2/0)	Brockville, Ontario
Don R.C.	(14/4)	Toronto, Ontario
Hamilton R.C.	(4/0)	Hamilton, Ontario
Lachine R.C.	(3/0)	Summerlea, Quebec
Niagara District Aquatic Club	(2/1)	St. Catharines, Ontario
Ottawa R.C.	(5/0)	Ottawa, Ontario
University of Toronto R.C.	(2/0)	Toronto, Ontario

American entries came from:

Detroit B.C.	(15/1)	Detroit, Michigan
Mutual R.C.	(1/0)	Buffalo, New York
Pennsylvania Athletic Club	(1/0)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Undine Barge Club	(4/1)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
West Philadelphia B.C.	(2/1)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
West Side R.C.	(6/2)	Buffalo, New York
Wyandotte Legion B.C.	(1/0)	Wyandotte, Michigan

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Because the Saturday morning meetings of the CAAO tended to run into the starting time of the first race, in 1924, the annual meeting in the Welland House was changed to Friday evening. The following Officers were chosen:

Honorary President: Orlando Heron, Toronto

Honorary Captains: Joseph E. Thompson, Toronto, Patrick J. Mulqueen, Toronto

President: Louis Fournier, Ottawa

1st Vice-President: Thomas R. Loudon, Toronto

2nd Vice-President: Sidney F.M. Smith, Toronto

Secretary: J. Leslie Fergusson, Toronto

Treasurer: Charles L. Carter, Toronto

Louis Fournier was the first President of the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen who was not a resident of Toronto. Patrick Mulqueen had declined to stand for the presidency. He was in France serving as Chairman of the Canadian Olympic Committee.

The members of the Executive Committee were:

Richard L. Schram, St. Catharines, T.H.C. Alison, Toronto, Thomas A. Murphy, Toronto, Bertram O. Hooper, Hamilton, James C. McCuaig, Ottawa, E.C. Cossitt, Brockville, J.W. McAllister, Hamilton, J.C. Imlay, Ottawa, V.G. Owens.

The Treasurer Carter's report showed a healthy balance of \$2,899.12.

Secretary Fergusson reported the receipt of Governor General Byng's letter conferring his patronage on the Regatta.

There was good news regarding the duty on rowing equipment imported from England:

Shells and racing equipment imported from Great Britain will be admitted at a duty of five per cent. plus sales tax, according to a communication from the deputy minister of customs and excise. [The Montreal *Gazette*, August 2, 1924, p.11]

The CAAO had been lobbying for a reduction for years.

Lou Scholes made a proposal:

Lou Scholes Donates Trophy.

. . . .

There has been a regrettable lack of new material in the sculling contests, but Lou Scholes of Toronto, one of the few [sic. He was the *only* one.] Canadians whose names appear in the honor list of the Diamond Sculls, and who acted as starter with much satisfaction in the regatta just concluded, has offered a trophy for the association singles and it has been accepted by President-elect Louis Fournier of Ottawa on behalf of the association.

With the abolition some years ago of the intermediate series of contests young scullers who won the junior title were obliged to step up into international competition with the best scullers in America. The Lou Scholes Trophy will provide competition midway between the junior and senior classes, and is expected to prove a boon to sculling. [The Toronto *Globe*, August 4, 1924, p.8]

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The Intermediate Singles had been part of the CAAO Regatta from 1895 to 1919. However, the Association Singles was not yet part of the Canadian Henley Regatta lineup, although it had been part of the U.S. National Regatta programme since 1899. Lou Scholes had won it in 1903 and that may have been part of the impetus which prompted him to offer to donate the trophy.

1924

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The Twentieth Royal Canadian Henley Regatta The Forty-Third Regatta of the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen July 30 to August 1, 1925

At the meeting of the CAAO Executive held on Saturday March 14, several important decisions were made. The date for the 1925 Regatta was fixed: Thursday, July 30 to Saturday, August 1.

For some unexplained reason, Thomas L. Church was present. He was no longer Mayor of Toronto, but now a Member of Parliament. He used the occasion to promote one of his pet projects.

[He] proposed that the regatta be held in Toronto, but objection was taken to this by clubs in the east, stating there was no suitable course in Toronto, that St. Catharines provided better rowing conditions, and was also more neutral than Toronto . . . [The *Toronto Globe*, March 16, 1925, p.9]

One decision would have long-lasting consequences:

It was decided to revert to the old rule that in 140-lb. crews, 140 lbs. should be the top weight, not the average weight with 145 lbs. as the top weight, which was in use last year. To provide for oarsmen just over 140 pounds, two new races will be added, 150-lb. fours and 150-lb. eights, the top weight in each case to be 150 lbs.. [The *Toronto Globe*, March 16, 1925, p.9]

It was a decision which continued the expansion of lightweight rowing.

There was also discussion about a proposal from Henry Penn Burke from Penn A.C. suggesting that the U.S. National Regatta be held on the Canadian Henley course in 1927, and the Canadian Henley be held in conjunction with the sesquicentennial celebration regatta in Philadelphia in 1926. “[T]he officers and club representatives looked with favor on the proposal . . .” [The *Toronto Globe*, March 16, 1925, p.9] and decided to discuss the matter further.

In an article about a CAAO meeting in July, we learn that “[i]t was decided to continue the policy of the association giving medals to winners of all events except high school events and Navy League gigs.” [The *Toronto Globe*, July 8, 1925, p.8]

Frederick Wilson, the Sports Editor of the *Globe*, frequently mentions rowing topics in his daily “Scanning The Sport Field” column. In one column, under the heading “CANADIAN ROWING FROM COAST TO COAST,” he mentions regattas on the Atlantic coast, in the Winnipeg and northern Ontario area, and on the Pacific coast. He concludes:

Rowing is more popular than ever in Canada from coast to coast, but, owing to the great distances and the cost and risk of shipping shells, it is not possible to make the Canadian Henley

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thoroughly representative of Canadian rowing. The regatta at St. Catharines is, however, the chief event of its kind on the Continent of America. [The Toronto *Globe*, July 18, 1925, p.10]

It was a problem which would not go away until transportation costs came down. Until that happened, the CAAO would have to be content with the occasional sculler from Saint John, New Brunswick, or a four from Winnipeg, Manitoba to help legitimize its pretension that winners at the Canadian Henley were champions of Canada. The fact that the sport was healthy in all parts of the country boded well for its future, and the future of the Canadian Henley.

As the Regatta approached, the perennial problem of shell storage was addressed with the erection of several tents to house the overflow from the Niagara District Aquatic Club boathouse and the gate-yard building.

As far as housing oarsmen goes, the Welland House must have been full to overflowing with crews from the Lachine R.C., Ottawa R.C., Bachelors Barge Club, Detroit B.C., Malta B.C., Penn A.C., Undine Barge Club, and Wyandotte B.C. staying there. [The Toronto *Globe*, July 27, 1925, p.7]

The 1924 Regatta had seen the addition of a third day. The 1925 Regatta saw the addition of four new races: Association Singles, 150-lb. Four (Special) and Eight (Special), and, after years of trying to attract high school eights, a High School Eight.

Thursday was a packed day with 16 heats run at unprecedented 10-minute intervals beginning at 3:00 p.m.. It was the first time a two-referee system was tried, with the starter remaining at the start. The schedule was dictated by the fact that morning heats could not be held because the 25 crews from Philadelphia would not arrive until just before noon. [The Toronto *Globe*, July 30, 1925, p.7]

A new type of between-race entertainment was tried in 1925: "The Toronto Swimming Club are sending over ten of their best swimmers to perform between the races." [The Toronto *Globe*, July 27, 1925, p.7]

Between races [on Friday] the little Misses O'Bryne, well-known Toronto swimmers, gave an exhibition of the various racing and other strokes in the canal in front of the grand stand. These expert young natalors, holders of various championships, were accorded an enthusiastic ovation. [The Toronto *Globe*, August 1, 1925, p.11]

The big story on Friday was the first heat of the Senior Eights featuring the Penn A.C. eight, coached by Joe Wright, and the Argonaut R.C. eight stroked by his son, Joe Wright, Jr.. Joe, Sr. had left the University of Pennsylvania over a matter of principle: someone in the rowing department tried to interfere with his crew selection, so he quit and joined the growing Penn A.C.. Joe, Jr. had stroked the Argo seniors for several years and they had had success in 1924. This was the first time they would oppose one another on the water.

It was a great story, and Frederick C. Wilson, Sports Editor of the *Globe*, expends a lot of ink on it. He concludes:

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Wright Pere, quite naturally an Argonaut at heart, was the subject of conflicting emotions. He wanted his Penn A.C. crew to win, but didn't want to see the famous Double Blue, stroked by his own son, beaten. Mrs. Wright sat in the stand, and experienced no such division of allegiance, admitting quite candidly that she wanted Argonauts, stroked by "Little Joe," six feet three inches, and two hundred pounds, to get home in front of the Pennsylvanians. [The Toronto *Globe*, August 1, 1925, p.11]

The outcome of the heat is summarized in the heading of Wilson's article: "Wright-Coached Penn Eight Beats Wright-Stroked Argos." [The Toronto *Globe*, August 1, 1925, p.11] In Saturday's final, they faced the winners of the second heat, University of Toronto R.C., and beat them, taking the coveted Hanlan Memorial Challenge Trophy out of Canada for the first time.

Fridays's events were rowed with 20-minute intervals between races. Friday featured the first 150-lb. races at a Canadian Henley Regatta, the 150-lb. Fours (Special) and Eights (Special). Unlike in the 140-lb. class, in the 150-lb. class, "Special" meant Junior, a fact which has caused confusion among researchers and historians. The official CAAO definition explains "150-lb. Special" this way: "for contestants who shall not weigh more than 150 lbs. waterside, and who have never won a race other than in the 140-lb. class." [The Royal Canadian Henley Regatta, Official Programme, 1925].

The Junior Eights was won by Detroit B.C., rowing a new shell built by the Club's boat-rigger, Tom Gannon. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, August 1, 1925, p.11] In 1956, the Thomas G. [sic. *His middle name was Joseph.*] Gannon Memorial Trophy would be donated to the CAAO for competition at the Canadian Henley.



St. Catharines Museum. S1949.39.21

With no fanfare, the Association Singles made its debut on Friday. There is nothing in the Regatta coverage regarding the Lou Scholes Trophy [pictured]. We only have what had previously been reported, that Lou Scholes was donating the trophy. There is no explanation for the event, but we know from earlier accounts that the intent was to give singles scullers an intermediate class after they had won the Junior Singles. A second purpose was to limit who could enter the Senior Singles, or what, beginning in 1925, was now called the Championship Singles. Henceforth, only winners of the Association Singles would be eligible for the Championship race. The first winner of the Association Singles was Chester Turner from the Argonaut R.C.. He advanced to the Championship Singles and placed third.

Hilton Belyea did not return to defend his title in the Championship Singles. He had a sprained wrist and could not train.

On Saturday, the twenty minute gaps between races were again filled with swimming demonstrations.

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Between races, Toronto swimmers entertained the crowd by fancy stunts and girls' competitions. George Young, sixteen-year-old champion, made an attempt to lower the world's mile record . . . but he lost time by mistaking the finish mark. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, August 4, 1925, p.9]



City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, Item 9074

The above photo was taken at the 1925 Canadian Henley. The flag on the lower right may give a hint as to which day. We know that there was a strong head wind on Friday, and a light tail wind early Saturday. Of the two choices, the tail wind seems the more likely, so the photo probably depicts the crowd on Saturday. The paved road between St. Catharines and Port Dalhousie was only a couple of years old.

After two years of trying to attract crews, the High School Eights race made its debut on Saturday. It was the last race of the Regatta, following the Senior Eights. The two crews are identified only as "Hamilton" and "Buffalo." The latter won. The crew are listed in the programme as: P. Kuhnell, F. Hewitt, B. Logan, J. Adamski, R. Wall, H. Wall, R. Nichols, I. Walls and A. Atwill, cox. Most sources, including the CAAO record books identify the Buffalo crew as Buffalo Tech.. However, some sources say Lafayette H.S..

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West Side R.C. Past President and Club historian, James Schaab solved the problem: “according to my records it was a composite crew from both schools, Lafayette and Buffalo Technical High School. Correction on the cox’s first initial it was Ed Atwill. Logan, Adamski, R. Wall, H. Wall, I. Wall were from Buffalo Technical H.S. the others were from Lafayette H.S.” [James Schaab. “Re: 1925 High School 8+.” Message to Stan Lapinski. April 2, 2019. Email]

All the winners and times for the 1925 Canadian Henley Regatta can be found in tabular form at: <http://goldmedalphotos.com/records.html>

All the results from all the races in all the Regattas from 1919 to 1930 are available in an appendix at the end of Chapter 4.

Below is a list of the participating clubs at the 1925 Royal Canadian Henley Regatta. Together, the 15 clubs sent 68 crews. In the parentheses are the number of entries, which gives an idea of the relative size of the club, followed by the number of wins, which suggests the relative strength of the club. If the win in the High School Eights is included, West Side R.C. had the most success. If that win is not included, the West Side shares three wins with four other clubs.

Argonaut R.C.	(24/3)	Toronto, Ontario
Brockville R.C.	(1/0)	Brockville, Ontario
Don R.C.	(9/3)	Toronto, Ontario
Hamilton R.C.	(7/1)	Hamilton, Ontario
Lachine R.C.	(5/1)	Summerlea, Quebec
Niagara District Aquatic Club	(8/1)	St. Catharines, Ontario
Ottawa R.C.	(5/0)	Ottawa, Ontario
University of Toronto R.C.	(2/0)	Toronto, Ontario

American entries came from:

Bachelors Barge Club	(14/3)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Detroit B.C.	(12/3)	Detroit, Michigan
Malta B.C.	(3/0)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Penn A.C.	(10/2)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Undine Barge Club	(1/0)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
West Side R.C.	(10/4)	Buffalo, New York
Wyandotte Legion B.C.	(1/0)	Wyandotte, Michigan

The departure of the Penn A.C. senior eight with the Hanlan Memorial Challenge Trophy was marked with some extraordinary pomp:

There was a remarkable scene in this city when the prizes were presented after the return of the crews from the course. The Lincoln Regiment band was engaged by Jim Sullivan to escort the Philadelphians to their train at 8 o’clock. President Henry Penn Burke of the National Association of Amateur Oarsmen, and George F. Malloy, director of the Penn A.C., carried the

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precious Hanlan Trophy through the streets at the head of a procession of citizens, oarsmen from other clubs, and visitors to the regatta, preceded only by Jack Kelly [who rowed 2-seat in the Penn A.C. eight] with a huge Union Jack. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, August 4, 1925, p.9]

A leisurely walk from the Welland House to the train station might take half an hour. They must have had plenty of time before the train arrived, because the *Standard* names 12 men who made speeches at the station and ends the list with “and others.” [The St. Catharines *Standard*, August 4, 1925, p.9]

The Hanlan Memorial Challenge Trophy was not the only one making the trip to Philadelphia. Penn A.C. also took the Hop Bitters Challenge Cup, having won the Senior Doubles. Bachelors Barge Club also took two: the Challenge Cup for Fours and the Challenge Cup for Single Sculls, won by Garrett Gilmore.

The 1925 annual meeting of the CAAO was held in the Welland House on Friday evening. The following Officers were chosen:

Honorary President: Orlando Heron, Toronto

Honorary Captains: Joseph E. Thompson, Toronto, Patrick J. Mulqueen, Toronto, Louis Fournier, Ottawa

President: Thomas R. Loudon, Toronto

1st Vice-President: Sidney F.M. Smith, Toronto

2nd Vice-President: Thomas A. Murphy, Toronto

Secretary: J. Leslie Fergusson, Toronto

Treasurer: Charles L. Carter, Toronto

The members of the Executive Committee were:

Richard L. Schram, St. Catharines, T.H.C. Alison, Toronto, J. Gordon Dunlop, Ottawa, Robert G. Dibble, Toronto. There must have been others, but these four are the only ones named in the newspapers.

The big item of business was a presentation by Henry Penn Burke, President of the NAAO, and NAAO Secretary, J.J. Mulcahey, inviting the CAAO to hold the 1926 Canadian Henley Regatta in Philadelphia as part of the big sesquicentennial celebration regatta in that city. In return, President Burke guaranteed that, if invited, the NAAO would hold its 1927 Regatta on the Henley course in conjunction with the 1927 Canadian Henley.

The matter was referred to the incoming Executive, but the consensus seemed to be that the CAAO would politely decline the invitation, but send the best Canadian crews to Philadelphia instead. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, August 1, 1925, p.11]

The final decision was not made until October.

The weekend meeting . . . decided definitely not to accept the invitation of the National Association of Amateur Oarsmen to hold the Canadian Henley of 1926 in conjunction with the U.S. regatta at Philadelphia The Canadians offer, however, to co-operate as fully as possible

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with the U.S. body, and will send some of their winners to Philadelphia next summer. [The Toronto *Globe*, October 13, 1926, p.8]

One other significant decision was made at that meeting: a coxed four event was added to the programme. This was in response to the growing popularity of that type of boat in Europe and the United States. To promote the event: "Member clubs of the C.A.A.O. have agreed, when purchasing fours, to provide for the inclusion of seats for steersmen." [The Toronto *Globe*, October 13, 1926, p.8]

1925

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The Twenty-First Royal Canadian Henley Regatta The Forty-Fourth Regatta of the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen July 29 to 31, 1926

At a meeting of the Executive of the CAAO held at the Welland House on Saturday, March 20, it was decided to hold the 1926 Regatta from Thursday, July 29 to Saturday, July 31. Three new races were added to the programme: Senior 150-lb. Fours and Eights and Junior 150-lb. Coxed Fours. [The *Toronto Globe*, March 22, 1926, p.7]

[I]t was also decided to permit high school crews to be composed of oarsmen from more than one school in the same city, the only stipulation being that the members of the crew must have attended classes regularly during the term immediately preceding the regatta. High school rowing has progressed at a rate altogether unexpected by the association when the latter agreed to include schoolboy events in the Canadian Henley program. [The *Toronto Globe*, March 27, 1926, p.14]

According to the CAAO, then, “a high school crew” had to be made up of oarsmen who were high school students, but not necessarily at the same high school. Given that the Buffalo crew that won the High School Eights race in 1925 was composed of students from Buffalo Technical H.S. and Lafayette H.S., this rule was a little late.

A new problem appeared on the Henley course in late spring: low water.

[St. Catharines] [s]culler Maurice Brett went out on the Henley course in his new shell, ran into an obstacle that appeared since the water became unusually low, and the frail craft was badly damaged. . . . [I]n view of the condition of the course, the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen would be well advised to give it their early attention. Residents of St. Catharines and Port Dalhousie say the water has not been as low on the course for many years. [The *Toronto Globe*, June 18, 1926, p.8]

Although the CAAO had declined the invitation of the NAAO to hold its Annual Regatta in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, it did promise to send its event winners to the Sesquicentennial Regatta. It also tinkered with the distances high school events were rowed over. The High School Fours event was shortened from one mile to $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, and the High School Eights event was shortened from one mile, 550 yards to one mile. The Navy League gig race, which was still part of the programme, was shortened from one mile to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. [The *Toronto Globe*, July 10, 1926, p.11]

The 1925 winners of the Hanlan Memorial Challenge Trophy, Penn A.C., were not returning to defend their title. Things were interesting at Penn A.C.. Joe Wright only had 12 men in his programme, one of whom was his son, Joe, Jr., who was in the eight and sculling. Another ex-Argo, Chester Turner, was also in the eight and sculling there. [The *Toronto Globe*, July 16, 1926, p.8]

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A reason for the small number of men in the Penn A.C. programme and a comparison with the Canadian practice was offered:

The explanation of the scarcity of crew candidates is that the initial cost to each man for a season of rowing with Penn A.C. is \$132. Rowing is a strictly amateur sport in Toronto. No revenue whatever is derived by the clubs, the crews' and scullers' expenses being cared for by popular subscription by the club members, and in the case of the Argos, additional funds raised by means of football. [The Toronto *Globe*, July 17, 1926, p.10]

So, what could a person buy for \$132 in 1926? A T. Eaton Co. advertisement featuring women's leather coats for wearing in open cars, has an illustration of a model wearing a very fashionable "Saxe blue suede with collar and cuffs of grey squirrel." The price? \$135.00. [The Toronto *Globe*, July 29, 1926, p.16] For \$15.00 more, a person could buy a used 1923 Ford roadster from Duggan Motors. [The Toronto *Globe*, July 30, 1926, p.17]

The CAAO must have been happy with the course and facilities because there are no complaints in the newspapers. "The grandstand here is being fitted up and improved, and added conveniences made for the oarsmen." [The Toronto *Daily Star*, July 19, 1926, p.8] What those improvements "and added conveniences" were, we are not told.

Less than a week before the Regatta, all the signs pointed to another large entry: "Thirteen rowing clubs will send 270 contestants and 62 shell boats to the Royal Canadian Henley regatta at Port Dalhousie next Thursday, Friday and Saturday." The Toronto *Globe*, July 24, 1926, p.13] Sixty of the 270 oarsmen were from the Argonaut R.C.. [The Toronto *Daily Star*, July 28, 1926, p.10] The Detroit B.C. team was composed of "forty-five oarsmen and trainers." [The Toronto *Globe*, July 29, 1926, p.7] The Ottawa R.C. brought 24 oarsmen. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 27, 1926, p.9]

In an effort to impress its readers with the financial spinoff benefits of the Regatta, the *Standard* had this to say: "A very modest estimate reveals that each man will spend about \$25 here, and that means that at least \$50,000 will be left in St. Catharines." [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 24, 1926, p.1] That same article estimates the value of the shells at \$35,000.

Frederick Wilson, Sports Editor of the *Globe* was a strong supporter of rowing in general, and the Canadian Henley in particular. Two days before the start of the 1926 Regatta, he had this to say in his "Scanning The Sport Field" column:

PERMANENCY OF HENLEY REGATTA COURSE.

For a good many years there have been spasmodic attempts to hold the Royal Canadian Henley regatta on various courses other than that on the old Welland Canal at Port Dalhousie. A desire to transfer the annual rowing carnival is said to have been primarily responsible for the formation of the Eastern Association, which has held regattas at Ottawa, Brockville and Montreal. On each of the three courses it has been necessary at times to postpone regattas from day to day because of rough water. It is not an uncommon occurrence at the above-mentioned places for boats to fill and sink during races. Nothing of the sort happens at the course at Port Dalhousie, with its high, protecting cliffs on either side. . . . Housing for shells,

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quarters for contestants, accommodations for spectators, transportation and other features might be vastly improved, but the course itself is ideal. [The *Toronto Globe*, July 27, 1926, p.6]

It's good to be reminded of how Regattas used to be before 1903 and why the old Welland Canal course was chosen.

An old problem was still affecting oarsmen and their supporters:

St. Catharines is full of oarsmen, and their friends tonight and the city is hard pressed to accommodate all of the visitors, some of whom have had to go to Niagara Falls [about 20 km from St. Catharines] for hotel accommodation. The local hotels are putting cots in every available space, and many private homes are providing rooms for regatta visitors.

The St. Catharines club [i.e. the Henley Aquatic Association] has made the best possible arrangements for housing the valuable shells of the numerous oarsmen, but there has naturally been some crowding. [The *Toronto Globe*, July 29, 1926, p.7]

The situation was probably not as dire as this, since the Winnipeg R.C. submitted post entries and arrived the afternoon before the start of racing and yet managed to find accommodations at the New Murray Hotel in St. Catharines. [The *Toronto Globe*, July 29, 1926, p.7]

In a sad irony, the Winnipeg R.C. double shell had travelled safely from Winnipeg to Port Dalhousie, but while the team was occupied with unloading the eight from the *S.S. Northumberland*, the ship's crew began to unload the double and dropped it onto the deck. "The bow of the shell sustained two breaks in the fall. Due to the kindness of the boatman of the Argonauts repairs were made last night and the shell was ready for the water in a short time." [The *St. Catharines Standard*, July 29, 1926, p.1] The damage did not impede the Winnipeg scullers. E.R. O'Donnell and J.N. Conacher won the Senior Doubles.



This photo does *not* show the incident described above. However, it does illustrate what was involved in loading a four from shore onto the deck of the *S.S. Northumberland*. The photo was taken in Toronto, probably in the 1920s.

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F.H. Leslie Limited post card. <https://sailstrait.wordpress.com/2014/02/02/the-s-s-northumberland-of-northumberland-strait/>

The *S.S. Northumberland* was one of two steamships (the other was the *S.S. Dalhousie City*) which carried Henley spectators, crews and shells across Lake Ontario between Toronto and Port Dalhousie.

The Winnipeg oarsmen were not the only ones who experienced problems moving their equipment. William Nelson from the Undine Barge Club

had trouble passing his shell through the Customs at Niagara Falls, and when all the regulations had been conformed with, the train had gone, Nelson hired a truck, loaded his shell onto it, clambered aboard and steadied the fragile craft for the twelve-mile trip to the regatta course. [The *Toronto Globe*, July 30, 1926, p.9]

Heats and finals were run at 20-minute intervals.

Readers who have been in races with floating starts will sympathize with the Argonaut R.C. eight in the second heat of the Junior Eights on Thursday. Len Johnston of the Lachine R.C. was the starter.

When everything was finally ready the double blue boat had drifted a few yards over the line. "Back up Argos," came the stentorian voice of the starter. Then when Stroke Jack Hand and the

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seven men were still backing, “bang” went the gun and the Toronto boat was left floundering around in the water. [The Toronto *Daily Star*, July 30, 1926, p.15]

Detroit B.C. beat them by more than a length.

Although the *Star*’s article does not say, the regular starter, Lou Scholes may have been absent from that start because, first, the officials’ boat had motor problems and had to be towed off the course by the press boat, and then, when the press boat was [ahem] pressed into service as the officials’ boat, it ran out of gas and had to be paddled to shore. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 30, 1926, p.17]

The newspapers rarely mention anything related to the mechanics or style of rowing, other than to give estimates of the number of strokes per minute crews rowed. However, a new style which had originated at the University of Washington had moved eastwards through the United States made its debut at the 1926 Canadian Henley, and Murray Sinclair of the *Star* mentions it in the context of Toronto crews being beaten by Detroit B.C. crews on Thursday.

Different Styles.

Two different styles were used. Varsity and Argonauts used the long shoulder swing that has carried so many of their crews to victory, while Van Vliet’s men, who is an old Philadelphia coach, used the new leg drive and arm movement which has been so successful in the University of Washington. This is new for Detroit, and it was not thought that it would be able to compete with the Canadian movement, but it is good, very good. [The Toronto *Daily Star*, July 30, 1926, p.15]

Frederick Wilson of the *Globe* also comments on the new style.

So-called “short rowing,” the washing stroke, which has become popular since the victories of University of Washington over supposedly unbeatable Eastern crews, is having its inning. Veterans of the C.A.A.O., while not altogether converted to the style affected by the Pacific coast crews, are faced with the fact that it is getting results here, and after all it is results that count. The time honored “follow through,” the body swing, which has been considered absolutely necessary to good form and victory is for the moment at least taking second place to the western style. [The Toronto *Globe*, July 31, 1926, p.12]

Maurice Brett, the entry in the Junior Singles for the newly revived St. Catharines R.C., had had a rough spring. In June, when the water level on the course was low, he crashed his new single into a pylon which was normally under water. The St. Catharines Lions Club came to his rescue and purchased a boat for the use of the Rowing Club, and it was in that shell that he won the Junior Singles. Unfortunately, in the Association Singles race two hours later, the energy he expended in the Junior race, plus the oppressive heat and head wind all contributed to a wrist cramp, and he had to stop rowing. His coach was a familiar figure at the Canadian Henley; Everard Butler. He had won the Senior Singles for the Argonaut R.C. in 1910 and 1911, and the bronze medal for Canada at the 1912 Stockholm Olympic Games.

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Grandstand ticket sales were brisk for Saturday. "A record crowd is looked for at the races tomorrow as [Regatta] Treasurer Carmichael reports a record sale of tickets in advance. The boxes are all taken and a number of reservations for seats in the stand made." [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 30, 1926, p.1]

The winner of the Senior Eights race is listed in the record books and newspaper coverage as American Legion B.C. from Wyandotte, Michigan. The same crew were also the winners of the Junior Eights, and in the record books and news coverage they are identified as Theodore Roosevelt H.S.. Two wins, two names, one crew. How cool is that? Although they had been identified as the Wyandotte Legion B.C. in 1924 and 1925, probably because their shell house was located behind American Legion Post 217, and they launched from a dock directly in front of the Legion building, [<http://wyandotteboatclub.com/site/about-wbc/history/>] the club had been called the Wyandotte B.C. since its founding in 1876, so, to avoid confusion, that's the name that should be in the record books, and that's the name used here. To be clear, there was a different eight from Wyandotte rowing for Theodore Roosevelt H.S.. They placed second in the High School Eights race.

The star on Saturday was Walter Hoover, sculling for the Undine Barge Club. He had won the Diamond Challenge Sculls at the Henley Royal Regatta in 1922, and was arguably the best singles sculler of the day. At the Canadian Henley, he won the Senior Quarter-Mile Dash and the Championship Singles.

A Junior 150-lb. Coxed Four event had been announced, and two crews, the St. Catharines R.C. and Argonaut R.C. were entered. However, Argonauts scratched and the race did not happen. The boat was a novelty in Canada, so the CAAO decided to introduce it to Saturday's crowd. This notice appears in the programme: "The St. Catharines Rowing Club will row over the course in a new Coxswain Four Shell, other crews' shell not having yet arrived from England." [The Royal Canadian Henley Regatta, Official Programme, 1926]

All the winners and times for the 1926 Canadian Henley Regatta can be found in tabular form at: <http://goldmedalphotos.com/records.html>

All the results from all the races in all the Regattas from 1919 to 1930 are available in an appendix at the end of Chapter 4.

Below is a list of the participating clubs at the 1926 Royal Canadian Henley Regatta. In the parentheses are the number of entries, which gives an idea of the relative size of the club, followed by the number of wins, which suggests the relative strength of the club. Sadly, the Hamilton R.C. does not appear here. The last of the Hamilton rowing clubs had folded. The decision to close wasn't because of a lack of oarsmen. The problem was raising the money to keep the club going. [The Toronto *Globe*, July 28, 1926, p.8] On the plus side, McGill University made its debut at the Canadian Henley, Winnipeg R.C. returned for the first time since the end of the War, and the Niagara District Aquatic Club had become the St. Catharines R.C..

Argonaut R.C.	(17/2)	Toronto, Ontario
Brockville R.C.	(2/1)	Brockville, Ontario

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Don R.C.	(11/4)	Toronto, Ontario
Lachine R.C.	(8/2)	Lachine, Quebec
McGill University	(2/1)	Montreal, Quebec
Ottawa R.C.	(8/1)	Ottawa, Ontario
St. Catharines R.C.	(5/1)	St. Catharines, Ontario
University of Toronto R.C.	(5/0)	Toronto, Ontario
Winnipeg R.C.	(4/1)	Winnipeg, Manitoba

American entries came from:

Detroit B.C.	(10/2)	Detroit, Michigan
Undine Barge Club	(4/3)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
West Side R.C.	(9/3)	Buffalo, New York
Wyandotte B.C.	(3/2)	Wyandotte, Michigan

The 1926 annual meeting of the CAAO was held in the Welland House on Friday evening. The following Officers were chosen:

Honorary Captains: Joseph E. Thompson, Toronto, Patrick J. Mulqueen, Toronto, Louis Fournier, Ottawa

President: Thomas R. Loudon, Toronto

1st Vice-President: Sidney F.M. Smith, Toronto

2nd Vice-President: Thomas A. Murphy, Toronto

Secretary: J. Leslie Fergusson, Toronto

Treasurer: Charles L. Carter, Toronto

The members of the Executive Committee were:

J. Gordon Dunlop, Ottawa, Robert G. Dibble, Toronto, Bertram O. Hooper, Hamilton, James C. McCuaig, Ottawa, E.C. Cossitt, Brockville, J.W. McAllister, Hamilton, J.V. Owen, Montreal, Richard L. Schram, St. Catharines, and T.H.C. Alison, Toronto.

The meeting was brief. The financial report showed a healthy balance and all the Officers were re-elected by acclamation.

“The meeting decided to gradually introduce the four-oared shells with coxswain and as the present shells wear out to replace them with new ones.” [i.e. coxed fours] [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 31, 1926, p.13]

Thanks were extended to the Henley Aquatic Association, the press, and the Welland House.

1926

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The Twenty-Second Royal Canadian Henley Regatta The Forty-Fifth Regatta of the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen July 28 to 30, 1927

The good news story at the beginning of 1927 was that organized rowing had returned to Hamilton, Ontario. Although the newspapers of 1927 call it the Leander Rowing Club - the name of a long-defunct club - its name was the Leander Boat Club. The first coach was Captain Cornelius, who had had success with the Hamilton Collegiate Institute crews when they rowed out of the moribund Hamilton R.C..

While rowing was picking up in Hamilton, the Don R.C. was suffering from problems not of their making and they were taking a toll on membership. The clubhouse had been located on Ashbridge's Bay since 1912, but recently

the city decided that this isolated spot was where the septic tanks should be erected The sewage beds made it impossible to have social events or regattas and slowly but surely the members began to leave. [The Toronto *Daily Star*, May 28, 1927, p.19]

Memberships plummeted from 250 active members to 25.
The problem was more serious than the stench of sewage:

The poisonous water got in cuts and sores and caused serious infection. Boils were caused by their clothes getting touched by the filthy muck. The oarsmen's very lives were jeopardized. [The Toronto *Daily Star*, May 28, 1927, p.19]

Fortunately, the Club had several politicians on their side who were trying to find a new home for the oarsmen. One of those politicians was club-member, Alderman Robert Dibble who was as determined to find a solution as he had been to win when he competed. However, the issue was not resolved in 1927. The Don R.C had to endure those conditions until 1932, when a fire destroyed the clubhouse and a new one was erected on Stadium Road, well away from the sewage plant.

In our era of clean water, we might forget that rowing clubs in the late nineteenth and early to mid twentieth centuries had to row in filth. The wood chips in the Ottawa River have already been mentioned, and the Don R.C. was not alone in having to row in sewage. Other clubs had to endure oil slicks at best and industrial waste at worst. I have a memory from a regatta in the 1960s in which one of my crew mates looked at the brown "water" we had to row in, turned to me and said, "At least there are no chunks in it."

In Port Dalhousie, the quality of the water was not the main concern; the grandstand was:

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There will be no new grandstand for this year's regatta, but the general impression here [St. Catharines] is that there should have been one years ago. The C.A.A.O. should spend the needed money not later than next year, followers of the water sport here think, because the old grandstand has taken on a pretty dilapidated appearance.

A new, modernly appointed grandstand on this permanent course is what is needed to foster the sport, according to general opinion. [The Toronto *Daily Star*, June 11, 1927, p.13]

On the plus side, there was no suggestion of moving the Regatta to Toronto.

The grandstand may have had a "dilapidated appearance" but it was structurally safe:

The grandstand has been inspected by City Engineer B. Larson and Harper Wilson. The repairs as recommended by these two men are being made. While the outside of the stand is not the best, the structural work is in good condition having had necessary repairs made each year. When the big event comes on it will be in real safe condition. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 20, 1927, p.9]

The first out-of-town arrival was Frank Adams, a 21-year-old sculler from the Vancouver R.C.. He came three weeks early to acclimatize himself and get used to the course. And, as though scripted by a publicist, not only would there be an entry from the west coast, but Ronald Ingraham from the east coast, the Saint John R.C., would also compete. While Adams was a Senior, the 17-year-old Ingraham was entered in the Junior event. Both were highly successful in their regional regattas. Frederick Wilson, Sports Editor of the *Globe* may have said it first, but he was not the last to proclaim: "Scullers will be on hand literally from the Atlantic to the Pacific." [The Toronto *Globe*, July 22, 1927, p.8] He also used his "Scanning The Sport Field" column to lobby for improvements: "Further growth of the C.A.A.O. annual tourney will mean that four days will be required, the course straightened and otherwise improved, and additional accommodation provide for spectators, oarsmen and shells." [The Toronto *Globe*, July 22, 1927, p.8]

The article in the *Standard*, quoted above, also mentions the growing number of entries and speculates that the time was coming when the Regatta would have to expand to four days.

To support his contention that the 1927 Regatta would be "[t]he greatest Henley in the history of the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen, and that means in the history of rowing in Canada," [The Toronto *Globe*, July 23, 1927, p.12] Frederick Wilson supplies these figures: 38 eight-oared crews, 27 fours, 21 singles and five doubles. Those numbers would go up when the Winnipeg R.C.'s entries were received.

In his column, "Doings at the Henley Course," Murray Sinclair has some harsh words for employers who refuse to give employees who row time off to compete:

Two manufacturing firms are going to cause Argos' 150-pound eight to go down to defeat. S. Johnston, powerful stroke, has had to drop out of the crew because his firm would

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not let him away for three days at the Henley. Alan Garlick, another of the best men, is in the same position and has had to give up his place in the boat.

....

There are many men at the head of firms who cheer and welcome victorious athletes back from their conquests but when it comes to allowing one of their own men away for three days out of 365 it is a different matter entirely. [The Toronto *Daily Star*, July 26, 1927, p.8]

Argonaut R.C. sculler, Joe Wright, Jr., or "Young Joe" as the Toronto newspapers called him, to differentiate him from his father, was the focus of much media attention. He had lost the Diamond Challenge Sculls at the Henley Royal Regatta at the beginning of July, when, while ahead of his opponent by a length, his right scull snagged on a rope hanging from a punt behind a boom ten yards from the finish, and he was unable to extricate himself in time to regain his lead. In almost every article in which the Championship Sculls event at the Canadian Henley was mentioned, the focus was on beating him. So, Frank Adams had come from Vancouver, not just to compete in the Championship Singles, but to challenge Young Joe. And, according to the newspapers, it was a forgone conclusion that Young Joe would beat Garrett Gilmore in their heat, which he did. To make things interesting, he appeared in practice wearing a bandage on his left arm from wrist to elbow. "He said he had sprained a tendon in training at Toronto." [The Toronto *Globe*, July 28, 1927, p.7] Even the Canadian National Steamers Co. cashed in on his fame, using his name to entice Torontonians to take one of their steamers to Port Dalhousie to watch him compete. All the pre-Regatta hype was warranted; he won the Senior Quarter-Mile Dash and the Championship Singles.

Civic Holiday
Enjoy a Boat Trip
Special Week-End Events

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY
ROYAL CANADIAN HENLEY REGATTA
Come and see Joe Wright with the Argos.
Lv. Toronto (Friday) 7.45 and 8.30 a.m., 2.15 and 6.00 p.m.
(Saturday) 8.30 a.m., 2.15 and 5.40 p.m.

GREAT MOOSE RALLY AND PICNIC
LAKESIDE PARK—PORT DALHOUSIE
SATURDAY—JULY 30TH

Wonderful Meals at Lakeside Inn

SUNDAY
Lv. Toronto 9.00 a.m., 2.15 and 5.40 p.m.
Cornfield's Symphony Orchestra on the 2.15—Return Fare \$1.00

MONDAY
Lv. Toronto 8.30 a.m., 2.15, 5.40 and 10.00 p.m.
A DELIGHTFUL TIME FOR A TRIP TO NIAGARA FALLS OR BUFFALO

Afternoon Sail, 2.15 p.m.
Mr. Cecil C. Cox—Radio Baritone
Low Fare—Holiday \$1.50. Other days \$1.00.
EVENING DANCE TRIP 5.40 P.M.
R. N. Cornfield and his Orchestra
Fare \$1.00

SPECIAL HOLIDAY RATES—Good going Saturday, Sunday and Monday and returning up to Tuesday, August 2nd.
A BIG DAY'S PROGRAMME AT LAKESIDE PARK

Steamers leave from new Duck-Harbor Terminal Building end of Ferry Car Line—City Ticket Office, Phones Elgin 6211-6216. Dock Office, Phones Elgin 4925-4926.

Canadian National Steamers
(Niagara-St. Catharines Line)

"Page 9." *Toronto Daily Star* (1900-1971), Jul 29, 1927, pp. 9. ProQuest, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.torontopubliclibrary.ca/docview/1437190808?accountid=14369>.

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The September 1 issue of *MacLean's Magazine* contains an article entitled, "Canada Pulls Her Weight" by Aleck Sinclair, about the state of Canadian rowing, looking towards the 1928 Olympics. Fortuitously, the article is accompanied by photos of the four scullers who were the focus of many newspaper articles before and during the 1927 Henley. The photos are not great, but they are an improvement over the ones which appear in the newspapers. [photos: *MacLean's Magazine*, September 1, 1927, p.12]



Jack Guest - Argonaut R.C.



Joe Wright, Jr. - Argonaut R.C.



**Frank Adams
Vancouver R.C.**



Ronald Ingraham - St. John R.C.

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All heats and finals were rowed at 20 minute intervals.

Thursday was uncomfortably hot. The programme consisted of 10 heats for Friday finals. Some things have not changed:

Charley Haney, the thirteen-year-old coxswain who steers the [Argonaut] lightweight crew caused a great deal of comment. He was supposed to weigh 105 pounds, but only tipped the scales at 85, so he carried a [20 lb.] seat of lead. [The Toronto *Daily Star*, July 29, 1927, p.8]

Haney has the distinction of being the coxie of the winning crew of the first coxed four race at the Canadian Henley, Junior 150-lb. Fours (Coxswain).

On Friday, in the final of the Junior Singles, the race of Ronald Ingraham from the Saint John R.C. came to an ignominious end as he caught a crab half way down the course and was thrown out of his shell. He was behind Jack Guest of the Argonaut R.C. who was steering erratically, and while alternately looking over each shoulder to keep an eye on Guest, Ingraham became distracted and caught the crab. Guest beat M. Kelly from the Brockville R.C. and advanced to the Association Singles which he also won. To make matters more embarrassing for Ingraham, his mother, who had travelled from New Brunswick to watch her son race, was sitting in the grandstand. Although Guest had won the right to compete in the Championship Singles, he scratched from that and the Senior Doubles to row seven-seat in the Argonaut R.C.'s eight in the Senior Eights.

After Joe Wright, Jr. easily beat the Bachelors Barge Club's Garrett Gilmore in their heat of the Senior Singles in a new course record time of 7:53.6, one veteran coach had this to say:

"I've seen most of the amateur scullers of the world in the past 40 years," said Nat Scholes, the veteran Don coach at Henley yesterday, "and I give it as my candid opinion that Young Jie [sic] Wright is the best I have ever seen. He is the 20th century Edward Hanlan." [The Toronto *Daily Star*, July 30, 1927, p.12]

There seems to have been a phantom race on Friday. The CAAO record books list a High School Eights race won by Malvern Collegiate in 5:26. However, neither the draw published before the Regatta, nor the results published on Saturday, list that event.

The photo below is unusual because it does *not* show the winning McGill University crew. The puff of smoke at the left is from the finish judge's gun after it was fired when they crossed the line. It was the first race of the day, the 2:00 p.m. event, the Senior 140-lb. Eights, and the grandstand was packed. The second place crew, the crew closest to the photographer, was the Winnipeg R.C.. The photo belonged to Charles Steven Booth who is in two-seat in the Winnipeg boat. On the back of the framed photo, Steve Booth has written something we might find in a diary: "We travelled by way of Chicago & our Stroke Culver Riley got a bad case of Summer Flu - otherwise we might have won." [Charles Stephen Booth. photo inscription, July 30, 1927] The stern of the third place crew, Detroit B.C., is visible at the left. Also of note is the large "St. Catharines Rowing Club" sign on the boat house.

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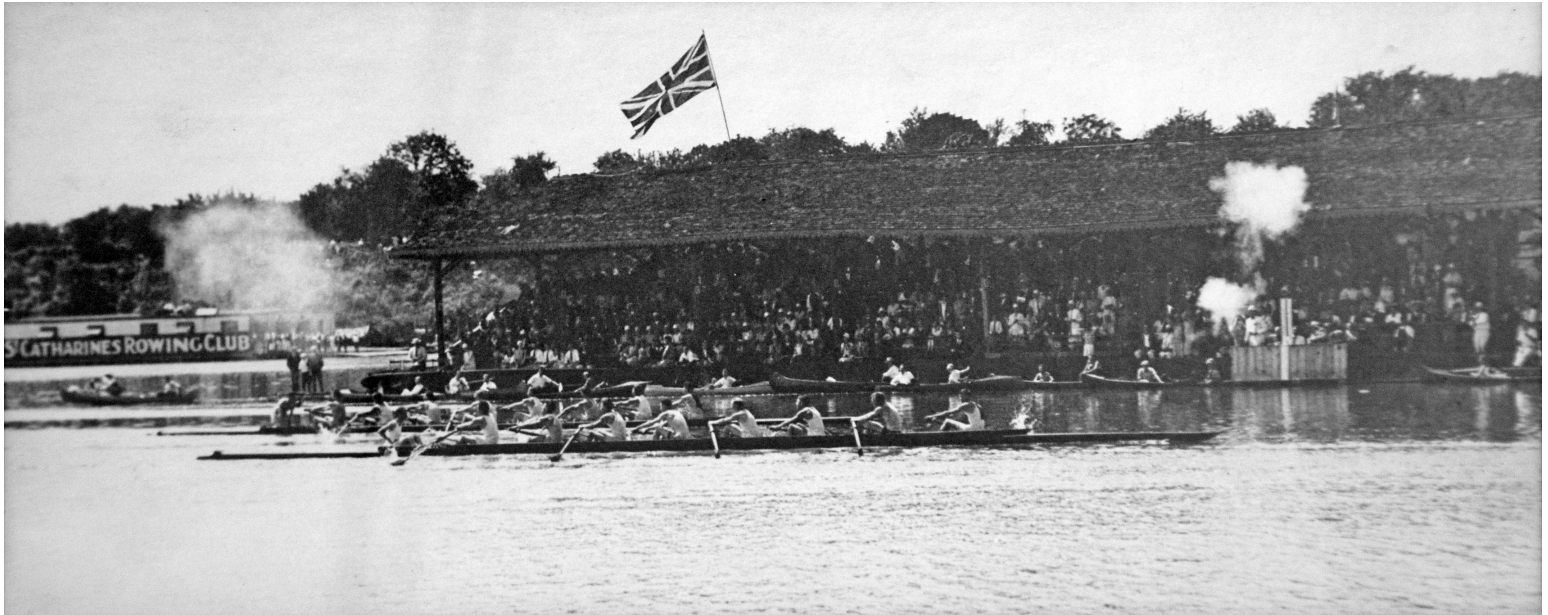


Photo from the collection of Sandy Rogan.

The heat on Saturday took its toll on Nat Connacher, the stroke-man of the Winnipeg R.C.'s senior eight. After the gruelling race which they lost to Wyandotte B.C. by 2/10 of a second, he collapsed and was taken to a hospital.

All the winners and times for the 1927 Canadian Henley Regatta can be found in tabular form at: <http://goldmedalphotos.com/records.html>

All the results from all the races in all the Regattas from 1919 to 1930 are available in an appendix at the end of Chapter 4.

Below is a list of the participating clubs at the 1927 Royal Canadian Henley Regatta. In the parentheses are the number of entries, which gives an idea of the relative size of the club, followed by the number of wins, which suggests the relative strength of the club. The five Don R.C. entries were fewer than half the number which the Club entered in 1926. Some of their members, including six-time Henley champion, Fred Burns, and the Malvern Collegiate Institute had moved to the Argonaut R.C.. The 1927 Regatta could arguably be called Canada's first "national" regatta. There were clubs from five of Canada's nine provinces, including one each from the west and east coasts.

Argonaut R.C.	(18/10)	Toronto, Ontario
Brockville R.C.	(1/0)	Brockville, Ontario
Don R.C.	(5/1)	Toronto, Ontario
Lachine R.C.	(9/1)	Lachine, Quebec
Leander B.C.	(3/1)	Hamilton, Ontario
McGill University	(3/3)	Montreal, Quebec
Ottawa R.C.	(5/0)	Ottawa, Ontario
Saint John R.C.	(2/0)	Saint John, New Brunswick
St. Catharines R.C.	(7/1)	St. Catharines, Ontario

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University of Toronto R.C.	(4/0)	Toronto, Ontario
Vancouver R.C.	(1/0)	Vancouver, British Columbia
Winnipeg R.C.	(4/2)	Winnipeg, Manitoba

American entries came from:

Bachelors Barge Club	(5/1)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Detroit B.C.	(9/1)	Detroit, Michigan
West Side R.C.	(4/1)	Buffalo, New York
Wyandotte B.C.	(2/1)	Wyandotte, Michigan

The 1927 annual meeting of the CAAO was held in the Welland House on Friday evening. The following Officers were chosen:

Honorary Captains: Joseph E. Thompson, Toronto, Patrick J. Mulqueen, Toronto, Louis Fournier, Ottawa, Thomas R. Loudon, Toronto

President: Sidney F.M. Smith, Toronto

1st Vice-President: Thomas A. Murphy, Toronto

2nd Vice-President: J.V. Owen, Montreal

Secretary: J. Leslie Fergusson, Toronto

Treasurer: Charles L. Carter, Toronto

The members of the Executive Committee were:

J. Gordon Dunlop, Ottawa, Robert G. Dibble, Toronto, Bertram O. Hooper, Hamilton, James C. McCuaig, Ottawa, Richard L. Schram, St. Catharines, T.H.C. Alison, Toronto, Russell Froest, Hamilton, H.B. Burgoyne, St. Catharines, and W. Bovey, Montreal.

Two agenda items are reported in the press. One concerned the selection of the eight to represent Canada at the 1928 Olympic Games to be held in Amsterdam, the Netherlands:

The C.A.A.O. officials quickly squelched the suggestion for a composite eight from Canada for the Olympic games next year. At the annual meeting last night it was stated emphatically that the Olympic selection would be made from the club crews if they were considered of Olympic calibre. This is the proper method. The Olympic trials will be held next year in connection with the Henley, which will necessitate an earlier date for the regatta. [The *Toronto Daily Star*, July 30, 1927, p.12]

The second major agenda item concerned the course and facilities:

P.J. Mulqueen, Toronto, H. Pulford, Ottawa, R.J. Magor, Hon. J.E. Thompson, M.P.P., T.A. Murphy, M.P.P., and Major H.B. Burgoyne, St. Catharines, were named on committees to interview federal and provincial governments with a view to securing assistance in putting the

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course in condition in readiness for erection of a contemplated \$30,000 grandstand. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 30, 1927, p.13]

1927

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The Twenty-Third Royal Canadian Henley Regatta The Forty-Sixth Regatta of the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen July 5 to 7, 1928

There was a lot of rowing news in the press in 1928. Joe Wright, Jr. and Jack Guest went to the Henley Royal Regatta; there were trials for the Olympic Games, and then the Games themselves; and of course, the Canadian Henley Regatta which suffered reduced coverage in the press as a result - the Toronto *Daily Star* did not even report the Canadian Henley results.

Because the Olympic rowing was scheduled for August 2 to 10, and the CAAO had decided to hold the trials in conjunction with the Henley, the Regatta was held a month earlier than usual, Thursday July 5 to Saturday July 7.

To accommodate Joe Wright, Jr. and Jack Guest who were leaving for the Henley Royal Regatta on June 9, an invitation was issued to any other double in the country who wanted to challenge them for the right to represent Canada in the Doubles event at the Olympic Games. The trial was scheduled for June 2 on the Toronto waterfront. No other crew took them up on the invitation.

The trial for the single was also scheduled for June 2. No singles scullers challenged Wright and Guest for the right to represent Canada. The singles representative at the Olympics would be whichever sculler had the better result at the Henley Royal. That turned out to be Joe Wright, Jr. who avenged his loss in 1927 by winning the Diamond Challenge Sculls, becoming the second Canadian to do so, Lou Scholes having done it in 1904. To make his victory even sweeter, he beat R.T. Lee who beat him in 1927.

Although Wright had more rowing experience than Guest, they were both 22 years old, and were both born on March 28, 1906.

The trials for the other events were held on July 5, the first day of the Forty-Sixth Regatta of the CAAO. The crews competed over the Olympic distance, 2,000 metres.

As had happened in previous years, the Henley grandstand was the subject of repairs. Some other unspecified improvements were also carried out: "Messrs. Smith, Loudon and Schram reported progress is being made in connection with improvements at the course." [The Toronto *Globe*, April 6, 1928, p.9] In addition, "[t]he course has been carefully surveyed and buoyed, . . ." [The Toronto *Globe*, June 30, 1928, p.13]

Peripheral to the Regatta was an eights race between McGill University and the University of Toronto. It was the third time the universities had met, in what the press called "the Intercollegiate Championships," but the first time the race was held on the Henley course. McGill had won the first two races, but the University of Toronto won the 1928 meeting. It was hoped that the competition would encourage other universities to form crews. The race was not publicized and was held on the Tuesday before the Canadian Henley began in front of a small crowd:

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Few knew the race was coming off and there was only a handful of spectators in the stand, most of them being competitors in the regatta The senior Argonaut eight, candidates for the Olympic team, witnessed the race from their shell, lying away from the finish line. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 4, 1928, p.9]

Thursday's programme consisted of 10 heats beginning at 2:00 p.m. running at 20 minute intervals, followed by the Olympic Trials in the Four with Coxswain, won by the Argonaut R.C., Straight Four, won by the Winnipeg R.C., and two heats in the Eights, the first won by Winnipeg, the second by Argonauts.

Argonauts won the final on Friday. At the CAAO meeting that evening, it was decided not to send the fours. "The committee has reached the decision that the results of the trials did not measure up to the Olympic class. It was decided just as definitely, however, that the winner of the eights would be sent." [The Montreal *Gazette*, July 7, 1928, p.21]

The story which captured the interest of the crowd and the press on Friday, concerned a heat:

The crowd was treated to a surprise in the first heat of the senior eights. The heavy senior Wyandotte crew which has been competing in the American Olympic finals at Philadelphia this week, arrived on the afternoon train and just had time to rig their shell and step into it in time to start and defend the Hanlan memorial trophy, which they carried off last year along with the junior championship. The newcomers showed no ill effects from their trip. They romped right into first place at the start [and won their heat]. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 7, 1928, p.11]

In the final on Saturday, however, they were beaten by the Winnipeg R.C. crew that had come second in the Olympic trials. The Winnipeg crew rowed with a handicap; after the trials on Friday, the stroke-man had collapsed and had to switch seats with the 6-man on Saturday.

Fred Burns of the Argonaut R.C., formerly of the Don R.C., and a lightweight, won the Championship Singles, beating John Durnan, who had switched from the Argonauts to the Dons. The move may have been the result of the sudden death of his coach and father, Edward, on May 27. Eddie Durnan had won the Senior Doubles in 1892, before becoming a professional. At his death, he was still the professional sculling champion of America.

Saturday's newspapers were full of coverage of Joe Wright, Jr.'s win at the Henley Royal Regatta. It was the lead story, complete with large headlines and photos of Wright and Jack Guest in both the St. Catharines *Standard* and the Toronto *Daily Star*. That win finalized Canada's Olympic rowing team: it was composed of the Argonaut eight, Joe Wright, Jr. in the single, and Wright and Guest in the double.

Saturday also saw the announcement of the donation of a new trophy:

The Wyandotte Club this morning announce the gift to the Association of a trophy to be known as the Wyandotte Cup for a new competition at C.A.A.O. regattas—Junior 150-pound

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Eights. The offer will undoubtedly be accepted. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 7, 1928, p.1]

The offer was, indeed, accepted. At the presentation of prizes on Saturday evening:

The Wyandotte Club presented a magnificent cup to the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen. Dr. Ashley of Wyandotte made the presentation and told of the most enjoyable relationships that had been re-established with Canadian oarsmen after a lapse of about 40 years. The trophy will be known as the Wyandotte Cup. President "Sid" Smith energetic chief executive of the Canadian association accepted the cup on behalf of the Canadians. [The Toronto *Globe*, July 9, 1928, p.11]

The first winners of the Wyandotte Trophy was a Detroit B.C. crew.

The prizes were presented at the Welland House by Hon. George S. Henry, Minister of Public Works and Highways in the Provincial Government. He had watched the

Senior Eights race from the officials' launch, and no doubt, those officials took the opportunity to lobby for government support for course improvements.

All the winners and times for the 1928 Canadian Henley Regatta can be found in tabular form at: <http://goldmedalphotos.com/records.html>

All the results from all the races in all the Regattas from 1919 to 1930 are available in an appendix at the end of Chapter 4.

Below is a list of the participating clubs at the 1928 Royal Canadian Henley Regatta. In the parentheses are the number of entries, which gives an idea of the relative size of the club, followed by the number of wins, which suggests the relative strength of the club. Although the Argonaut R.C. had the most entries and the most wins, the Detroit B.C.'s four wins from five entries deserves special mention.

Argonaut R.C.
Brockville R.C.

(23/6)
(6/3)

Toronto, Ontario
Brockville, Ontario

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Don R.C.	(10/2)	Toronto, Ontario
Lachine R.C.	(9/3)	Lachine, Quebec
Leander B.C.	(4/2)	Hamilton, Ontario
McGill University	(1/0)	Montreal, Quebec
Ottawa R.C.	(7/1)	Ottawa, Ontario
St. Catharines R.C.	(5/0)	St. Catharines, Ontario
University of Toronto R.C.	(2/0)	Toronto, Ontario
Winnipeg R.C.	(2/2)	Winnipeg, Manitoba

American entries came from:

Detroit B.C.	(5/4)	Detroit, Michigan
West Side R.C.	(6/1)	Buffalo, New York
Wyandotte B.C.	(3/0)	Wyandotte, Michigan

The 1928 annual meeting of the CAAO was held on Friday evening. The following Officers were chosen:

Honorary Captains: Joseph E. Thompson, Toronto, Patrick J. Mulqueen, Toronto,
Louis Fournier, Ottawa, T.R. Loudon, Toronto
President: Sidney F.M. Smith, Toronto
1st Vice-President: Thomas A. Murphy, Toronto
2nd Vice-President: J.V. Owen, Montreal
Secretary: J. Leslie Fergusson, Toronto
Treasurer: Charles L. Carter, Toronto

The members of the Executive Committee were:

C.S. Riley, Winnipeg, James C. McCuaig, Ottawa, Richard L. Schram, St. Catharines,
T.H.C. Alison, Toronto, Robert G. Dibble, Toronto, J. Gordon Dunlop, Ottawa, Russell
Froest, Hamilton, H.B. Burgoyne, St. Catharines, W. Bovey, Montreal, and Harvey Pulford,
Ottawa.

Nothing of the agenda is reported in the press, although a front page article in Monday's St. Catharines *Standard* suggests that the condition of the grandstand and course were topics of discussion.

An unnamed "high official in local rowing affairs" intimated

that unless some very important improvements and changes were made on the Henley rowing course here, there was grave danger of the annual regatta being staged somewhere else after next year.

....

The grand stand is woefully inadequate and has been for years, thus precluding the possibility of inviting the Governor-General, the Lieutenant-Governor or securing the patronage of prominent leaders.

....

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In addition to the grandstand which should be rebuilt, the course itself requires dredging. It is becoming filled with silt, and the expense involved in deepening the course—there is now practically no channel left—is problematical and is a matter for engineers.

The whole situation is being reviewed with the object of carrying out what amounts to an ultimatum from the C.A.A.O. annual meeting held here last Friday. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 9, 1928, p.1]

The Olympic-bound Argonaut eight sailed on the *Albertic* from Montreal on July 11.

Every member of the Canadian team won a medal. Joe Wright, Jr. lost in the quarter-finals (round 3) and was eliminated. However, Wright and Jack Guest won silver medals in the Double Sculls, and bronze medals were won by the eight: John Donnelly (cox), Frank Fiddes, John Hand, Frederick Hedges, Athol Meech, Jack Murdoch, Edgar Norris, Herbert Richardson, and William Ross.

1928

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The Twenty-Fourth Royal Canadian Henley Regatta The Forty-Seventh Regatta of the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen July 25 to 27, 1929

The first Henley-related news story of 1929 concerned the push to standardize lightweight classes in Canada and the United States. The weights at the Canadian Henley were 140 lbs. [63.5 kg] and 150 lbs. [68 kg]. The U.S. National Regatta had one weight, 145 lbs. [65.8 kg]. Representatives from the National Association of Amateur Oarsmen met with representatives from the CAAO in Toronto in February.

For some years an effort has been made to unify the weight classifications. In Canada provision is made for 140 and 150 pound crews, while in the United States regattas there is only one class, 145 pounds. The contention of the visitors that the 145-pound class was a logical one was based on the statistics of the United States army that that was the average weight in the draft of 500,000 men. And it might be said that this was practically the only reason advanced for the selection of such a weight limit. The members of the C.A.A.O. committee ably combatted this statement with the statement that the draft included only mature men, who were, in the main, untrained [i.e. not in shape]. Further, in the opinion of the local oarsmen, an untrained man at 145 pounds would be a man of 140 pounds in rowing condition.

Another argument presented by the local men was that the universities of the United States made provision for 150 pound crews and these men, when through university, would be available for club-racing, which is under the jurisdiction of the N.A.A.O. Should the latter body make the changes suggested it should also give an added zest to the regattas in both countries.

Col. Bovey of Montreal produced statistics to the effect that the average weight of college men in McGill, taking men up to the third year, was only 137 pounds. This average was only exceeded in the case of football teams, in which sport added weight is of an advantage. [The Toronto *Globe*, February 11, 1929, p.9]

A delightful irony to the reference to the 150 lb. standard in United States university rowing, is that one of the Canadian hosts of the meeting was Toronto Alderman Joe Wright, the person who had introduced university lightweight rowing when he was a coach at the University of Pennsylvania in 1916. He had established the 150 lb. standard.

The committees must have reported back to their governing bodies, but nothing changed.

Later that month, a delegation from St. Catharines went to Ottawa to lobby the federal government regarding improvements to the Henley course. The group was made up of Mayor John D. Wright, Alderman Frank C. McCordick, City Engineer, George Treble, Henry B. Burgoyne, President of the Henley Aquatic Association, and B.F. Lamson.

The delegation saw Hon. Mr. Henry, Deputy Minister of Railways and Canals, to request that the department do something to help improve the Henley course in the way of a money

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grant and dredging. . . . The channel requires dredging and a new stand with accommodation underneath for shells, is very much needed. . . . Hon. Mr. Henry was well impressed with the arguments put forth by the delegation and stated that he would inform the Minister. [The Toronto *Globe*, February 25, 1929, p.11]

W.T. Munns, sports writer for the *Globe* responded to the above article at great length in his column "Play Up, Play Up, and Play the Game" and in doing so raised the old issue of moving the Regatta to Toronto:

Attempts made by Alderman Joseph Wright and other aquatic sportsmen in the City of Toronto to undertake what was commonly called the Brule Lake extension in order to establish a regatta course second to none in North America are evidently viewed with alarm by the sportsmen of St. Catharines. . . . Should the extension scheme planned for the Humber River be carried out, there would not be a finer place for holding of a regatta in Canada, and Toronto has what the Garden City lacks, adequate hotel accommodation. [The Toronto *Globe*, February 25, 1929, p.11]

The Brule Lake extension was a proposed widening of the Humber River to form a course to be used for aquatic events of all kinds. Like most of the other proposed regatta courses in Toronto, it existed in theory only. In 1929, only quarter-mile events could be held on it. [The Toronto *Globe*, May 4, 1929, p.14]

The Brule Lake proposal was not a pressing threat to the Canadian Henley course. However, a violent storm which did serious damage in Port Dalhousie and St. Catharines, was. It struck around noon on April 1, and among its casualties was the Henley grandstand:

ROYAL CANADIAN HENLEY GRAND STAND GOES DOWN UNDER STORM FOLLOWING MARCH LION

Chimneys and Trees Blown
Down and Fences
Broken

COMMUNICATION IS INTERRUPTED

Street Car, Telephone and
Telegraph Services All
Affected

An April gale, which followed the exodus of the March lion, in addition to wrecking chimneys, fences and several old shacks, completely demolished the grandstand at the Royal Canadian Henley course at Port Dalhousie this morning.

The grandstand, which was built about twenty-six years ago, was not strong enough to withstand the blasts of the gale and collapsed about noon. The building is a total wreck and is

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half in and half out of the water. Not a stick is left standing. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, April 1, 1929, p.1]

This, was good news for the Brule Lake proponents in Toronto. W.T. Munns, in his “Play Up, Play Up, and Play the Game” column had this to say:

Demolition of the historic stand at the Canadian Henley regatta course at St. Catharines by yesterday’s gale provides just one more argument to be used by those who favor bringing the regatta to Toronto. The high winds completely wrecked the stand and added that much more to the expense involved if the St. Catharines course is to be brought up to date for the big aquatic carnival. [The Toronto *Globe*, April 2, 1929, p.10]

Lou E. Marsh, in his “With Pick and Shovel” column had one additional wrinkle to add: another course east of St. Catharines:

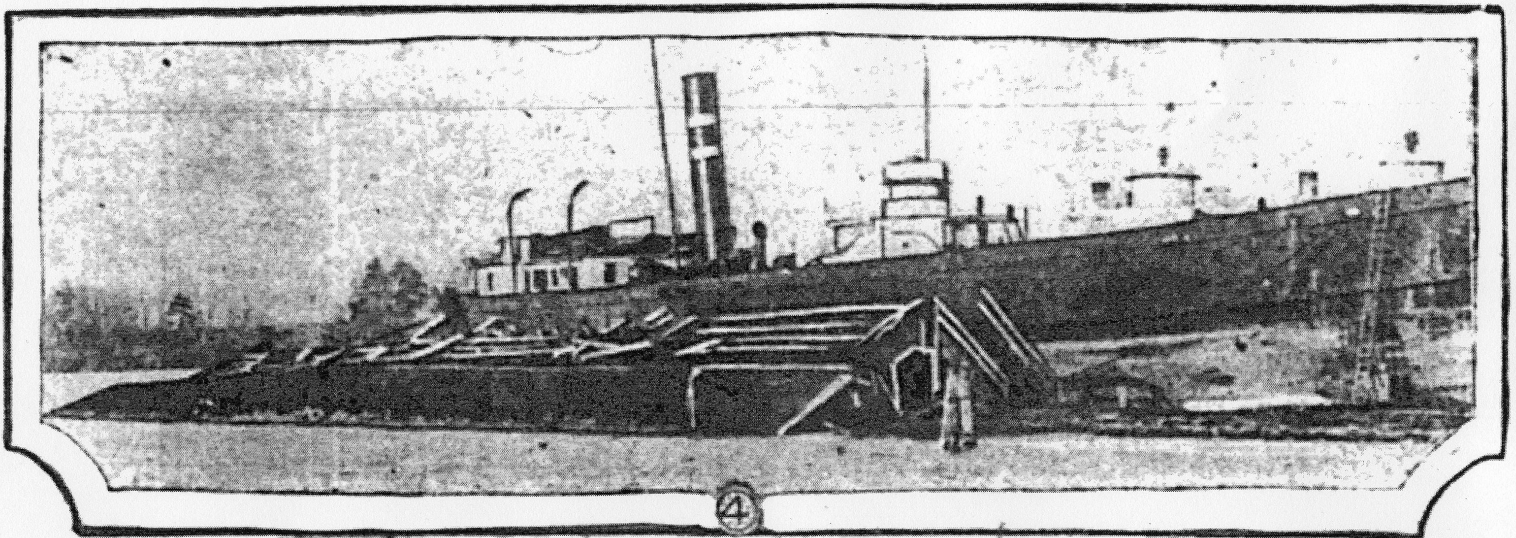
The Canadian Henley grand stand at Port Dalhousie was completely destroyed yesterday by the violent storm in that district. The structure collapsed on its face across the finishing line and was wrecked beyond repair. This makes new problems for the executive of the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen, who, it was learned to-day, at a private meeting held on Saturday, had decided to visit the Henley course on April 9 with engineers and decide on the best means of renewing the course for future Henleys. The destruction of the grand stand—inadequate as it was—might mean the abandonment of the course that has been identified with Canadian rowing for many years. There is talk of the Henley regatta being moved to Toronto to the proposed course on the Humber River. St. Catharines people don’t want to lose the regatta and Captain A.H. Falcolmsen [sic, it should be “Malcolmsen”] suggests a change from the present course to one on the two-mile stretch of water weir on the Welland Ship Canal near Homer on the provincial highway between St. Catharines and Niagara Falls. This pond, he points out, would make an ideal course, entirely land-locked, as the present course is, and not subject to stormy weather. [The Toronto *Daily Star*, April 2, 1929, p.8]

Although the initial articles regarding the wrecked grandstand sound like obituaries, the CAAO Executive and Regatta supporters in St. Catharines were not quite ready to abandon the Port Dalhousie course:

The executive of the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen is losing no time in getting busy over the loss of the Canadian Henley grand stand. The C.A.A.O. Executive is to visit St. Catharines next Tuesday, and they will be met by H.B. Burgoyne, a member of the executive; the officials of the St. Catharines Rowing Club, and the members of the City Council, who will present plans for the erection of a suitable grand stand to meet all the requirements of the Board of Governors of the C.A.A.O., with a view to the permanent retention of the Henley in this city. It is the proposal to erect a steel and reinforced structure that will adequately accommodate the attendance at the regatta, with provision for housing all equipment and facilities for rowers in the same building. [The Toronto *Globe*, April 3, 1929, p.11]

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So, what did the CAAO Executive see on their tour of inspection? The photo below shows the scene. The *Standard's* photo engraver has tried to give the photo depth by outlining some features in white. The short, parallel, angled lines at the right end of the structure are the banisters bordering the steps up to the grandstand, the only part of the original structure left standing. The solid dark feature lying in the water is the roof, and the feature between the roof and the ship is the back side of the grandstand.



Picture shows all that is left of the grand stand from which the Canadian Henley was viewed in years gone by. The stand was wrecked by the high wind of a week ago.

The St. Catharines *Standard*, April 9, 1929, p.9

Upon viewing the scene, the CAAO Executive decided that the grandstand was not worth rebuilding and should be demolished. In addition, "it was ascertained that parts of the Henley course are filling in with silt and the immediate need of dredging was apparent to all." [The *Toronto Globe*, April 10, 1929, p.13] Questions left unanswered included whether or not the CAAO was going to add its voice to the appeal for help from the Federal Government, and what arrangements were to be made for seating at the 1929 Regatta.

To complicate things even more, the City of Hamilton was preparing for the first British Empire Games in 1930, and part of those preparations involved a rowing course in the Dundas valley. So, naturally, that city declared its intention to bid for the Canadian Henley if the CAAO decided to move it from Port Dalhousie. [The *Toronto Daily Star*, April 3, 1929, p.8]

Finally, given the turmoil which existed, it should not be a surprise that someone suggested reinstating the policy of moving the Regatta from city to city. That idea received short shrift: "... the consensus of opinion was that it would not do." [The *Toronto Globe*, April 10, 1929, p.13]

The silting problem had been mentioned in passing in previous years, but it seems to have significantly worsened. We can thank an unnamed "prominent official" from St. Catharines for revealing what the silt on the Henley Course was composed of:

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"It just amounts to this: If the Canadian Henley course is not dredged out, we will lose the annual regatta," said a prominent official of the St. Catharines end of the regatta management to-day. He said that for half a mile from the starting point of the races the channel has filled in seriously, due to sand, sewage and the grape skins dumped into the water by the near-by winery.

"We think the Canadian Government will dredge the channel in the interests of sanitation, if for no other reason," he added. "If the dredging is done, the material taken out can be deposited on the western bank near Ann Street as a foundation for the new grand stand." [The Toronto *Globe*, April 13, 1929, p.11]

To be clear, the silt affected the first half mile [800 m] of the course. The water near the finish was deep enough for lake steamers to have access to the Muir Bros. Dry Dock.

Three weeks after the collapse of the grandstand, the situation was reassessed and found to be less dire than first thought:

According to R.L. Schram, local manager of the Canadian Henley Regatta, the wrecked grand stand on the course will be used this year for the regatta. He said that the body of the stand is fit to use, and that a canvas top will be put on it to protect the spectators. "But the course has got to be cleared of the sand accumulation," he said, adding that at places it was piled nearly to the top of the water. [The Toronto *Globe*, April 25, 1929, p.11]

To allay any lingering doubts, Dick Schram issued an official statement on July 4 declaring that the 47th Regatta of the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen "will be held July 25, 26 and 27 on the local course, or not at all." [The Toronto *Globe*, July 5, 1929, p.11]

An update was provided three days later:

The grandstand has been examined, and though it lost its roof in the April 1 storm, it is still staunch, contractors say. It will be used as it is now without covering. The fallen roof will be towed away.

The course will be fitted out for the regatta this year and at the annual meeting of the C.A.A.O. the whole question of the Canadian Henley's future will be fought out. It is claimed here [i.e. St. Catharines] that a quarter century ago when St. Catharines put up the first clubhouse. located about where the start of the races is now, the C.A.A.O. gave this city its assurance that the Canadian Henley would be permanently located here. The course is situated right in the centre of North America and the best proposition would be to dredge it out, build a modern grandstand and settle forever the question of the home of the Canadian Henley, heads of the local club contend. [The Toronto *Globe*, July 8, 1929, p.20]

Five days before the start of the Regatta, we get a final status report on the grandstand:

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The carpenters have made a good job on the Canadian Henley grand stand and it is now as good as ever, barring the absence of a roof. As it stands now the structure makes a good set of bleachers, perfectly sound and safe. The roof and the front of the stand which were torn away by the storm of April 1, have been taken out and the front rebuilt. The only difference is that there will be no boxes this year. [The Toronto *Daily Star*, July 20, 1929, p.11]

The Henley Aquatic Association was busy on several projects:

Many improvements have been made around the clubhouse here as well as on the grand stand. New steps down to the clubhouse have been built and a new platform in front, making it easier for the shells to be launched. It was stated Sunday that a dredge is being sent here to clean out the course where needed.

The plans for the new grand stand involve changing the course somewhat. It will run diagonally to the present flag line, the start being over the east side of the course and the finish across near the west side. The proposed new grand stand will be built southwest of the present stand, backing on the cliff and the finish line will be right in front of it, or near where the clubhouse now stands. [The Toronto *Globe*, July 22, 1929, p.11]

The state of the grandstand and the course did not affect the size of the entry: 426 competitors from 23 clubs were expected. They would be using 74 shells with an estimated value of \$50,000. [The Toronto *Globe*, July 20, 1929, p.11]

Stories not involving the grandstand or course were also developing in the days leading up to the Regatta. The first sculler to arrive was Joe Reardon from the Jubilee Amateur Aquatic Club in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He would be making his debut in the 140 lb. Singles (Primary). And there was drama in the Argonaut camp. There seemed to be some friction between the two premier Argonaut R.C. scullers, Joe Wright, Jr. and Jack Guest. Wright had beaten Guest when he collapsed one stroke from the finish line in their second round heat of the Diamond Challenge Sculls at the Henley Royal Regatta. Wright did not successfully defend his title, but lost to Dutch sculler, Bert Gunther in the final. On the return trip to Canada on the *Regina*, Guest and his father stayed in a room on a different deck from the rest of the Argonauts and avoided their club mates. Wright and Guest were scheduled to face each other in the Senior Quarter-Mile Dash and the Championship Singles. The Argonaut R.C. eight had also lost their heat of the Grand Challenge Cup at the Henley Royal Regatta when they had to re-row against the London R.C. after their first attempt was a dead heat. They were entered in the Senior Eights at the Canadian Henley.

Murray Sinclair, staff reporter for the Toronto *Daily Star* concludes his article on the arrivals and preparations of the crews with an observation which describes a Henley tradition:

For the rest of this week St. Catharines will be alive with industry. It will be packed with young men who look in perfect condition. Until Saturday night will the city be quiet. Then bedlum [sic] will break loose when the losing crews break training and generally proceed to

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make “whoopee.” St. Catharines is an excellent place to remain away from on the last night of the Canadian Henley if you want peace or quietness. [The Toronto *Daily Star*, July 23, 1929, p.9]

The university race on Wednesday was still a two-boat race between the University of Toronto and McGill University, despite the fact that other universities had been invited to send crews. The University of Toronto crew won. Unlike 1928 when a small number of spectators were on hand to witness the race, the grandstand was three-quarters full.

A meeting of the Rotary Club of St. Catharines was the venue for some reassuring words from the CAAO:

“There is absolutely no official backing to the statement made in a Toronto paper that this will be the last regatta held here,” Prof. Thos. Loudon [sic], coach of the Toronto University crews, and acting secretary of the C.A.A.O. said at today’s meeting of the Rotary Club.” I do hope that we may come back for many years to come,” Mr. Loudon [sic] added.

“It is still ideal in many respects,” he said. “It is straight and free from rough water. It has filled in to some extent during the last few years. There is one thing about holding the regatta here that is particularly attractive. If we hold it in a large city the oarsmen row their races and disappear into their hotels. There is no companionship and that is what makes us like St. Catharines.” [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 25, 1929, p.1]

Since the Executive of the CAAO were in attendance at the meeting, we can safely say that Professor Loudon was stating the official position of the Association.

As had been the practice for the past several years, heats for Friday’s finals were rowed at 20-minute intervals on Thursday.

Although the Toronto newspapers do not mention it, the *Standard*, in its Friday edition, boldly declared that “the attendance . . . was the largest in the history of the Henley for opening day . . .” [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 26, 1929, p.19] That assertion is explained by the fact that three St. Catharines R.C. eights and one sculler were competing in heats that afternoon.

One of those eights advanced to the final of the Junior Eights which they won on Friday, beating crews from the Detroit and Wyandotte Boat Clubs. It was the first win by a St. Catharines R.C. eight at the Canadian Henley, but it had importance beyond that. One of the arguments regularly raised by people wanting to move the Regatta out of St. Catharines was that there was no interest in rowing in St. Catharines. The fact that the local club could boat three eights, and one of those could win, belied that assertion and helped to anchor the Regatta in Port Dalhousie.

One event was quietly dropped from Friday’s programme. The Junior Fours in Working Boats disappeared never to reappear. The “Junior Clubs,” like the St. Catharines R.C., for which the event was designed to promote the sport in small, young clubs, were now competing on an equal footing with the larger, longer-established clubs and no longer needed the event.

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Something new in 1929 was the live broadcast of Henley races:

On Saturday afternoon beginning at 2.30 p.m. (daylight saving time) CFCA (Daily Star) will broadcast a running account of the important races at the Canadian Henley being held at Port Dalhousie. This broadcast is sponsored by the St. Catharines Standard and Foster Hewitt, CFCA's sports announcer, will describe the races direct from the course. Such outstanding races as the Joe Wright - Jack Guest struggle for the singles and the senior eights featuring the famous Argonaut eight will be followed stroke by stroke in a graphic way by Foster Hewitt. [The Toronto *Daily Star*, July 25, 1929, p.30]

To emphasize the uniqueness of this broadcast, here is an excerpt from the *Globe's* radio listings. This is the *entire* broadcast schedule of CFCA for Saturday, July 27:

CFCA—TORONTO—357m.

7.15-8.00 a.m.—Recording program: news.
12.00 noon-12.45—Adams Furniture Com-
pany hour of music.
12.15—News, weather, Ryrie-Birks time,
O'Hearn stocks.
2.30—Description of rowing races from
the Canadian Henley at Port Dalhousie,
sponsored by the St. Catharines Standard
of St. Catharines. Foster Hewitt at the
microphone.
5.55—News, weather, O'Hearn stocks,
baseball scores.
6.30—Ryrie-Birks time.
7.00—Musical program sponsored by the
New York Shoe Store.
9.00—Ryrie-Birks time: dance program
by J. Wilson Jardine's orchestra from the
Palais Royale.

["Other 41 -- no Title." *The Globe (1844-1936)*, Jul 27, 1929, pp. 26. ProQuest, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.torontopubliclibrary.ca/docview/1352169507?accountid=14369>.]

The radio broadcast story was front page news in the *Standard*. That article added details not contained in the Toronto newspapers:

For the first time in the history of St. Catharines, a local broadcast will be made and never were the Royal Canadian Henley results sent over the air for the benefit of the radio listeners all over the world.

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....

Through the co-operation of the St. Catharines Sea Cadets, one of their signallers will accompany the official boat and will wig-wag the race, from the start to the last 100 yards, to the receiver stationed on the roof of the Maple Leaf Rubber Factory, who will, in turn, repeat them to Mr. Hewitt, for transmission “over the air,” enabling the radio listeners to follow the major events continuously up to the roar of the judge’s gun at the finishing line. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 25, 1929, p.1]

It is not clear why Foster Hewitt needed the help of the Sea Cadets since he had the best view of the course available. All he needed was a programme and a pair of binoculars. However, there is a slim chance that he was in the CFCA studio in Toronto and doing what was called a “ghost broadcast” — relating what others were telling him over the telephone — then the spotters would have been a necessity. However, the *Star* says Hewitt “will describe the races direct from the course,” and 36 years later, relying on the memories of members of the 1929 victorious St. Catharines R.C. Junior eight, Jack Gatecliff, Sports Editor of the St. Catharines *Standard*, in his “Through the Sports Gate” column says: “Hewitt called the races from the top of the old Maple Leaf Rubber Co. factory situated neat the finish line.” [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 31, 1965, p.27] Many readers will remember Foster Hewitt as the long-time voice of the Toronto Maple Leafs on the CBC’s Saturday night hockey broadcasts.

To put the Henley broadcast in some context, in 1929, Toronto had four radio stations and Hamilton had two. Each of those stations was on the air for between 12 and 18 hours a day. The 1931 Canadian census reported that Toronto had 149,438 households of which 91,088 (61%) had radios. [Canada. Dominion Bureau of Statistics. *Seventh Census of Canada, 1931*. Ottawa: Patenaude, 1933, Table 58, p.980] Cost was probably a factor in why more households did not own one. In 1929, for example, DeForest Crosley was selling 10 models for between \$88.00 to \$1,250.00. [The Toronto *Globe*, January 2, 1929, p.13] Even the lowest-priced model was out of reach for many. Radio was still in its infancy.

Since St. Catharines had no radio station, the *Standard* posted the results of Friday’s and Saturday’s races on a bulletin board at its Queen Street office within five minutes after the finish of each race.

Despite the problems with the course and facilities, the size of the crowd on Saturday is described as “the largest attendance in the last decade.” [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 29, 1929, p.9]

Rough water and a strong tail wind were factors in the races on Saturday. The Senior Quarter-Mile Dash was supposed to be the first show-down between Joe Wright, Jr. and Jack Guest. However, their shells were rigged too low for the conditions, while John Durnan’s boat was not, so the Don R.C. sculler beat the two Argonauts. A further embarrassment to Guest was the fact that he caught a crab in the first 100 yards, was thrown into the water, and had to be rescued by the officials’ boat.

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However, rigging was changed for the Championship Singles, and the wind and water conditions were calmer. In that much-publicized and highly-anticipated race, Jack Guest beat his nemesis and club mate by three lengths.

The Senior Eights race was won, as expected, by the Argonaut R.C. crew that had competed at the Henley Royal Regatta. The local favourites, the St. Catharines R.C. crew that had stunned many by winning the Junior Eights, finished a respectable second, beating perennial contenders, Wyandotte B.C..

An extraordinary display of poor steering — which, at one point, had them *behind* the grandstand — by the Humberside C.I. crew in the Working Boat Four, High School Crews race had CAAO officials threatening to eliminate the event from future programmes.

Although Joe Wright, Jr. and Jack Guest received the greatest attention from the press before the Regatta, their races and the Argonaut senior eight's race were overshadowed by the accomplishments of four lightweights from the Don R.C.. A. Green, R. Jones, P. Thompson and L. Stanfield won gold medals on Friday in the Junior 140-lb. Eights and the 150-lb. Fours (Special). On Saturday, they started their afternoon by coming second in the Senior 140-lb. Eights before winning the Senior 140-lb. Fours and an hour later, the Senior 150-lb. Fours. All the newspapers dubbed them "the iron men."

"The Henley Regatta was a great success, and attracted a much larger crowd than last year. The weather was all that could be desired, and all caterers did a rushing business." [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 29, 1929, p.5]

All the winners and times for the 1929 Canadian Henley Regatta can be found in tabular form at: <http://goldmedalphotos.com/records.html>

All the results from all the races in all the Regattas from 1919 to 1930 are available in an appendix at the end of Chapter 4.

Below is a list of the participating clubs at the 1929 Royal Canadian Henley Regatta. In the parentheses are the number of entries, which gives an idea of the relative size of the club, followed by the number of wins, which suggests the relative strength of the club. The Don R.C.'s achievements are note-worthy because they were accomplished with 11 men; a lightweight eight, and scullers John Durnan and Phil Kirk. Only Kirk did not take home at least one gold medal.

Argonaut R.C.	(21/6)	Toronto, Ontario
Brockville R.C.	(5/1)	Brockville, Ontario
Don R.C.	(10/5)	Toronto, Ontario
Jubilee Amateur Aquatic Club	(3/0)	Halifax, Nova Scotia
Lachine R.C.	(5/1)	Lachine, Quebec
Leander B.C.	(9/3)	Hamilton, Ontario
McGill University	(5/2)	Montreal, Quebec
Ottawa R.C.	(2/0)	Ottawa, Ontario
St. Catharines R.C.	(10/1)	St. Catharines, Ontario
University of Toronto R.C.	(2/0)	Toronto, Ontario
Winnipeg R.C.	(3/2)	Winnipeg, Manitoba

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American entries came from:

Bachelors Barge Club	(4/0)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Detroit B.C.	(6/0)	Detroit, Michigan
Pennsylvania Barge Club	(1/1)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
University Barge Club	(1/0)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
West Side R.C.	(6/1)	Buffalo, New York
Wyandotte B.C.	(3/0)	Wyandotte, Michigan

The 1929 annual meeting of the CAAO was held on Friday evening at the Hotel Leonard. The following Officers were chosen:

Honorary Captains: Joseph E. Thompson, Toronto, Patrick J. Mulqueen, Toronto, Louis Fournier, Ottawa, Sidney F.M. Smith, Toronto

President: Thomas A. Murphy, Toronto

1st Vice-President: J.V. Owen, Montreal

2nd Vice-President: Richard L. Schram, St. Catharines

Secretary: Thomas R. Loudon, Toronto

Treasurer: Charles L. Carter, Toronto

The members of the Executive Committee were:

George T. Fulford, Brockville, C.S. Riley, Winnipeg, Robert G. Dibble, Toronto, James C. McCuaig, Ottawa, T.H.C. Alison, Toronto, J. Gordon Dunlop, Ottawa, Henry B. Burgoyne, St. Catharines, W. Bovey, Montreal, and Harvey Pulford, Ottawa.

Richard L. Schram was the first man from St. Catharines to be elected an Officer of the CAAO.

Treasurer Carter reported that the Association had \$2,195.44 in the bank.

After months of speculation about moving the Henley, the meeting's handling of the topic was anticlimactic:

The Royal Canadian Henley will not be moved from St. Catharines next year or for many years to come.

This was definitely decided at the annual meeting of the Canadian association of amateur oarsmen here last night.

In fact no change was even considered, no recommendation was put forward and the matter was not discussed. [The Toronto *Daily Star*, July 27, 1929, p.10]

The *Globe* stressed one important detail:

"Notwithstanding what has been said in the press and otherwise, we are convinced there is no other place to hold the Canadian Henley," said the President [Sidney Smith], and in this view he was seconded by the meeting as no one offered any objection. [The Toronto *Globe*, July 27, 1929, p.13]

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This display of unity was important. When the CAAO, Henley Aquatic Association, and civic delegates had met with federal officials to request that the course be dredged, those officials "had replied that they were prepared to do all in their power, if representation from all the clubs in the association were presented to them." [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 27, 1929, p.3] The manner in which the subject was handled at the meeting was the Association's way of demonstrating to the federal government that all the member clubs were unified in their desire to keep the Regatta in St. Catharines and to have the course dredged.

HAA President, Henry B. Burgoyne addressed the other important topic by

announcing that an option to purchase property on which to build a new grandstand had been secured. All that was necessary was a guarantee from the CAAO that the Henley would continue to be held in Port Dalhousie. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, July 27, 1929, p.3]

To conclude the discussion about course improvements, the CAAO went on record to have the HAA conduct all negotiations with the federal government on their behalf.

Two new trophies were announced:

The University of Pennsylvania presented the Canadian oarsmen with the Joe Wright cup, to be competed for annually by the 150 pound eights. This cup is given to Canadian oarsmen in appreciation of the work Coach Wright did at the university and in the United States in the interests of rowing. While coaching the university crew Mr. Wright introduced the 150 pound class.

....
The [George F.] Galt trophy was also presented to the C.A.A.O. for annual competition by senior singles.

The cup is given by the Winnipeg rowing club in honor of Mr. Galt who founded the club. [The Toronto *Daily Star*, July 27, 1929, p.10]



Above is shown the "Joe Wright Cup," given by the University of Pennsylvania to the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen to be competed for by 150-lb. eights annually at the Royal Can-

adian Henley. The cup is donated by the University to honor Ald. Joe Wright, Sr.; Argo mentor, and former coach of University of Pennsylvania crews, for his efforts in establishing the 150-lb race for college crews in the United States.

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No one seems to have noticed that the Canadian Henley already had a trophy for the Senior Singles, or what was then called the Championship Singles. The original 1880 Challenge Cup for Single Sculls was still in competition.

George Frederick Galt (1855-1928) did more for rowing than found the Winnipeg R.C.. He stroked the Argonaut R.C. Four to victory at the First and Second Regattas of the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen in 1880 and 1881. In 1881, he moved to Winnipeg where he helped organize the Winnipeg R.C.. In the early years, he was a competitor, Captain, President and coach. He retired as the Club's first Captain in 1903, then served as a Vice-President of the CAAO from 1903 to 1910. Galt was a respected businessman, and so, during WWI, Prime Minister Borden appointed him to the War Purchasing Commission for four years. He refused remuneration for this work, and declined a knighthood.

A West Side R.C. crew were the first winners of the Joseph Wright Challenge Cup. Although the name of the 1928 winner of the Championship Singles, Joe Wright, Jr., appears on the George F. Galt Memorial Trophy, the first recipient of the trophy was Jack Guest.

Both trophies are still in annual competition.

To learn more about these, and all the other trophies which are presented at the Royal Canadian Henley Regatta, go to: <http://goldmedalphotos.com/trophies.html>



The Brule Lake scheme continued to be a topic of discussion. The Toronto Board of Control supported the idea and the Harbor and Parks Commissioners compiled a report which estimated that "the dredging and filling work would cost about \$415,350." [The Toronto *Globe*, October 31, 1929, p.16] To add a road along the east side would increase the cost to \$700,000.

At the final City Council meeting of 1929, a sum of \$566,715 was approved for the Brule Lake development. [The Toronto *Globe*, December 17, 1929, p.16]

Readers who have been keeping the year - 1929 - in their minds have already guessed what happened to the Brule Lake proposal. The Wall Street Crash started on October 24 and continued until October 29, when share prices on the New York Stock exchange collapsed. The stock market crash happened on Canadian exchanges at the same time and with the same general impact on the economy. The only saving grace was that the big chartered banks in Canada stayed solvent due to tighter banking laws. By 1930, 30% of the Canadian labour force was out of work, and wages were falling for those who still had jobs. As a consequence, the Toronto City Council of that year had trouble rationalizing a half million dollar expenditure on what was being called a luxury.

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The project was kept alive throughout 1930 by its strongest proponent, Alderman Joe Wright. However, when the Federal Government, who were responsible for the dredging, asked the city to sign an agreement which made the city responsible for any subsequent flooding along the Humber River, the city's Legal Department advised against it. The city had signed a similar agreement when the Don River was straightened years before, and it was still paying for damage. Council did not want to repeat that mistake. In the end, it was Alderman Wright who bowed to strong public resistance and made the motion to study the project further, a motion which passed, and effectively put an end to the Brule Lake course. [The Toronto *Globe*, November 7, 1930, p.13]

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The Twenty-Fifth Royal Canadian Henley Regatta The Forty-Eighth Regatta of the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen August 14 to 16, 1930

Dredging the Henley Course was on the minds of many people in 1930. In his inaugural address to the new St. Catharines City Council, Mayor Frank C. McCordick “said that it should be one of the first duties of the Council to send a deputation to Ottawa to interview the Minister, asking that the Henley course be dredged.” [The *Toronto Globe*, January 14, 1930, p.10] If he had said, “another deputation,” he would not have been wrong. That same article says categorically that the CAAO “will put up a new grand stand with suitable accommodation for the oarsmen and their shells, and before the date of the 1930 Henley regatta.”

High profile celebrities marrying high profile celebrities is not a new phenomenon. On March 15, one of Canada’s most popular and successful scullers, Joe Wright, Jr., married one of the best swimmers in the world, Martha Norelius, a Swede. Her father had been an Olympic swimmer who now coached American swimmers and his daughter. She competed for the United States at the 1924 and 1928 Olympics, winning a gold medal in the 400-meter freestyle at both, and a gold medal in the 4x100 meter freestyle relay in 1928. Norelius won 11 individual Amateur Athletic Union titles between 1925 and 1929, and between 1925 and 1928 she set 19 world and 30 American records. In 1929, she was suspended by the AAU because - I’m not making this up - she gave a swimming exhibition in Miami, Florida, in the same pool as some professionals. That bone-head decision cost the AAU its biggest star, because at that point, she turned professional in a big way, winning the ten-mile, Wrigley Marathon and its \$10,000 prize, in Toronto, where she met her future husband. After their marriage, Mrs. Norelius-Wright gave up competitive swimming. [data from: <https://www.sports-reference.com/olympics/athletes/no/martha-norelius-1.html>]

Despite repeated declarations that the Canadian Henley would not be moving from St. Catharines, the Detroit B.C. asked the CAAO if it could host the 1930 Regatta, a request which was politely refused. [The *Toronto Daily Star*, March 25, 1930, p.8]

In early April, the CAAO was occupied with two items: dredging and the British Empire Games:

A number of officers of the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen and representatives of individual clubs are going down to Ottawa to-night to interview the federal government as represented by the minister of public works for the purpose of getting \$40,000 placed in the estimates to dredge and improve the Canadian Henley course at Port Dalhousie. A meeting of the C.A.A.O. will be held at the Athletic Commission offices in Queen’s park tonight to discuss the request of the British Empire games committee that a number of the Canadian championship rowing events be transferred to the aquatic program of the games which are to be held in Hamilton in August. [The *Toronto Daily Star*, April 8, 1930, p.10]

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The Ontario Athletic Commission had its offices in Queen's Park because it was an organization created by an Act of Parliament in the Ontario legislature in 1920 to promote amateur athletics for youth in the province. It was a branch of the Ministry of Health and Labour and funded by a tax on professional sports. The CAAO had no permanent office, and usually met in the office or home of the President, or a hotel room. Since Thomas A. Murphy, President of the CAAO, was a Member of the Legislative Assembly, and Chairman of the Commission, it was a convenient place to meet. The proposal to transfer some Henley events to the British Empire Games was rejected.

That meetings in Ottawa went well. The St. Catharines delegation was led by Mayor Frank C. McCordick who spoke for the City, and Henry B. Burgoyne who spoke for the Henley Aquatic Association. The CAAO members who attended to lend their support to the appeal were led by President Thomas A. Murphy. The delegation met with the Minister of Railways and Canals, and the Minister of Public Works. When the delegates returned home, they were cautiously optimistic that their request would be granted. [The Toronto *Globe*, April 11, 1930, p.12]

They were right. After years of being lobbied by Canadian Henley interests, the Federal Government finally appropriated \$12,000 for the dredging of the new course. The new course would cut diagonally across the old course, with the new start east of the old start, and the new finish in the bay behind the old grandstand. It was hoped that the dredging would be completed before the 1930 Henley although the old course was to be used for the last time at that Regatta. The next order of business for the Henley Aquatic Association was to raise money to build the new grandstand. [The Toronto *Globe*, June 3, 1930, p.9]

On April 26, the CAAO decided that the British Empire Games rowing events would be held on Wednesday, August 20. In addition, there would be an international rowing regatta on August 18, 19 and 20 in Hamilton. Unfortunately, since the Canadian Henley was scheduled to finish on August 16, the crews and scullers who were to be selected at that Regatta to represent Canada would not be able to participate in the opening ceremonies which were set for that same day. [The Toronto *Globe*, April 29, 1930, p.19]

On July 5, Jack Guest became the third Canadian to win the Diamond Challenge Sculls at the Henley Royal Regatta. The big question on the minds of the Canadian Henley organizers was, would he compete for his new club, the Don R.C., at the Canadian Henley. If he did, and if Joe Wright, Jr. also entered the Championship Singles, the Regatta would be in the unprecedented position of having two winners of the Diamond Challenge Sculls competing against one another in the same race.

To make things even more interesting, Bob Pearce, who had won the gold medal for Australia in the Single Sculls event at the 1928 Olympic Games was in Canada with the Australian team to compete at the British Empire Games. There was hope that he might compete at the Canadian Henley, but if not, then he would face Guest and/or Wright at the Games.

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However, before Guest, Wright or any others who had hopes of representing Canada could go to Hamilton, the CAAO laid down some prerequisites. On July 28, it issued an official statement which reads in part:

The Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen have made the ruling that eligibles for the British Empire Regatta at Hamilton Aug. 20 must be selected from the contestants at the Canadian Henley Regatta at Port Dalhousie Aug. 14, 15, and 16. No Canadian not competing at the Canadian Henley will be allowed to row at the Empire Regatta, and of those competing at Port Dalhousie only those selected by the Selection Committee of the C.A.A.O. will be accepted for the Empire Regatta. The events for the Empire Regatta are all senior singles, doubles, fours and eights. [The Toronto *Globe*, July 29, 1930, p.10]

In other words, the Canadian Henley would serve as the trials for the BEG.

Although the CAAO's decision regarding the trials was not universally popular - there were fears that scullers and crews who rowed difficult races on Saturday would not be sufficiently rested to compete at their best on Wednesday - everyone connected with the Canadian Henley was happy to read this headline and the article below it: "TWO DREDGES WORK ON HENLEY COURSE." [The Toronto *Globe*, August 6, 1930, p.17] The dredging and removal of the debris to Lake Ontario was being done with haste to be finished before the Regatta. The article ends optimistically: "The grand stand will be put in better condition, and it is expected that next year will see a new grand stand erected."

That good news was followed the next day by an announcement from Jack Guest that he had not been able to return to his Henley Royal form and was stopping training for the year; he would not compete at the Canadian Henley. Support for his decision came from Joe Wright, Jr., who understood better than anybody what Guest was going through:

"I know just exactly how he feels," he remarked. "I was the same way after I won the Diamonds in 1928, and then went on to the Olympic games. The let down after the Diamonds was terrific. . . . I had no ambition—and I guess I rowed like it. That is just how Jack feels right now. I can't blame him very much for hanging up." [The Toronto *Daily Star*, August 8, 1930, p.8]

In the days leading up to the Henley, some international crews were on the course preparing for the British Empire Games, because the course in Hamilton was plagued with rough water. [The Toronto *Globe*, August 13, 1930, p.13]

The 1930 Henley course was not perfectly straight. It had a dogleg. The starting line was moved eastwards to take advantage of the newly-dredged course and to avoid the shallow water of the old course. However, the finish line was not changed, so competitors had to make a turn from the new course to the old course. Making their return to the starting line were stake boats. [The Toronto *Globe*, August 14, 1930, p.17]

The *Standard* reporter had concerns about the dogleg:

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The course was given its final going over yesterday and was slightly altered again to give more room at the half way bend. Whether the starting boats will be arranged so as to allow for this bend will be among the details to be settled by officials today.

Bad Feature

This has promise of proving a bad feature if not remedied. The bend is rather stiff and will mean a great deal to the inside crew in event of a close race. However, the officials have been figuring on this and doubtlessly will make a concrete move today to ensure equality of distance and water. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, August 13, 1930, p.15.]

The “starting boats” also known as “starting punts” were not a success. On Thursday, eights had trouble backing in and after two heats, they were removed.

Times were generally slower in 1930 compared to 1929. The *Standard* reporter suggested that the dogleg may have been the cause. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, August 18, 1930, p.7]

For reasons not explained in the press, races on Thursday and Saturday were run at 20 minute intervals, while the races on Friday were run at 15 minute intervals.

The Montreal *Gazette* had its own reporter, R.A.C. Ballantyne, on the scene, and after some comments about the ideal weather on Thursday, he continues:

Henley Day at St. Catharines is a gala occasion and it seemed as though all the townsfolk had time to journey out to Port Dalhousie for the regatta. Two new grandstands erected for this year’s Henley were filled to capacity and crowds thronged all the available points of vantage along the banks of the disused canal. Gaily-dressed women and members of the competing rowing clubs wearing the bright-colored sweaters of their rival organizations added more color to the scene and launches and canoes decked in ribbons also had their share in the spectacle. [The Montreal *Gazette*, August 15, 1930, p.13.]

The second grandstand referred to by Mr. Ballantyne was an area with seats on the shore opposite the main grandstand. The *Standard* reporter mentions it when he writes about the new amplification apparatus in the grandstand:

A real addition to this year’s Henley, is the amplifying outfit which coupled with signallers of the St. Catharines Sea Cadets, gives grandstanders a complete report of the race while it is being run. A cadet in the press boat signals the positions of the shells as they come down the course. Those signals are picked up by another cadet in the grand stand who translates them for the announcer. His amplified report can be heard in the grandstand and on the other side of the canal near the Rubber Works where seating accommodation has been arranged. This is a great improvement on the old megaphone idea. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, August 15, 1930, p.15]

The Sea Cadets must have done a good job in 1929 when they provided race information for Foster Hewitt, since they were called into service again in 1930.

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A new event, the 140 lb. Junior Double made its debut on Friday. The inaugural race was won by Andrew Carnegie and Norman Cameron from the Detroit B.C., who beat the only other entry, Leander B.C., by five lengths.

Saturday's 140-lb. Senior Singles event was the beneficiary of a new trophy. William Crawford, Jr. and C.A. Reed donated the William Crawford Memorial Challenge Cup. [The Toronto *Globe*, July 29, 1930] The first winner was Fred Burns from the Argonaut R.C..

The race with the most drama on Saturday was the Senior Doubles. Winnipeg R.C. were leading at the half way point, but they were interfering with the other crews, and hit the Bachelors Barge Club shell. The Referee, Patrick Mulqueen, stopped the race and disqualified them. The race was restarted from that point but one of the scullers in the the Bachelors Barge Club double got a cramp and had to stop. Underdogs, University Barge Club won.



Pictured above is the St. Catharines R.C. coxed four going up to the start for their 3:20 p.m. race. They placed second to the Detroit B.C. in the 150-lb. Junior Fours (Coxswain). In the background of the blurry photo can be seen the back of the packed, roofless grandstand. This is one of the last photos taken of that grandstand.

A McGill University crew also rowed in that race to try to qualify for the British Empire Games. They were not Juniors, so they were not eligible to officially enter the Henley race. They placed second to Detroit and ahead of St. Catharines, and their time was good enough to qualify them. At Hamilton, the Mc Gill crew won silver medals.

The Leander B.C. crew which won the Junior Eights and placed second behind the Detroit B.C. in the Senior Eights was also selected to represent Canada at the BEG, where they won bronze medals. They were coached by Robert S. Hunter, silver medal-winner with the University of Toronto R.C. eight at the 1924 Paris Olympics, and author of *Rowing in Canada Since 1848*, which would be published in 1933.

The Jubilee Amateur Aquatic Club, from Halifax, Nova Scotia, winners of the Senior Fours won silver medals at the Games.

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The Winnipeg R.C. double which had been disqualified in their Henley race were selected to compete in Hamilton. They were the only double entered, so organizers co-opted a couple of American doubles, who were on site for the international regatta, to provide the Canadians with competition. The Canadians won.

To no one's surprise, Argonaut Joe Wright, Jr. won the Championship Singles, and the Senior Quarter-Mile Dash at Henley and was picked for the Canadian team. To the shock of many, he placed fourth. The event was won by Australian Bob Pearce. In Wright's defence, rough water had caused a postponement for two days. On the third day, when he was told the race was postponed again, Wright started back to Toronto, but was intercepted *en route* by officials and told to return to the alternate course on Burlington Bay. He arrived just before the race was called. He was not in a good frame of mind when the race began.

Pearce was an unemployed carpenter when he came to Canada, his expenses being paid by friends. While in Hamilton, he was offered a job as a salesman for John Dewar & Sons who were then expanding their Scotch whisky business into Canada. Pearce accepted and soon joined the Leander B.C..

All the winners and times for the 1930 Canadian Henley Regatta can be found in tabular form at: <http://goldmedalphotos.com/records.html>

All the results from all the races in all the Regattas from 1919 to 1930 are available in an appendix at the end of Chapter 4.

Below is a list of the participating clubs at the 1930 Royal Canadian Henley Regatta. In the parentheses are the number of entries, which gives an idea of the relative size of the club, followed by the number of wins, which suggests the relative strength of the club. American clubs, West Side R.C. with eight wins, and Detroit B.C. with five, dominated the Regatta. Detroit R.C. was able to enter 17 events because they brought 60 competitors. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, August 13, 1930, p.15] Detroit's five wins, six seconds and three thirds made them the Regatta Champions.

Argonaut R.C.	(29/4)	Toronto, Ontario
Don R.C.	(8/0)	Toronto, Ontario
Jubilee Amateur Aquatic Club	(2/1)	Halifax, Nova Scotia
Lachine R.C.	(9/0)	Lachine, Quebec
Leander B.C.	(15/4)	Hamilton, Ontario
McGill University	(1/0)	Montreal, Quebec
Ottawa R.C.	(2/0)	Ottawa, Ontario
St. Catharines R.C.	(4/0)	St. Catharines, Ontario
University of Toronto R.C.	(2/0)	Toronto, Ontario
Winnipeg R.C.	(5/0)	Winnipeg, Manitoba

American entries came from:

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Bachelors Barge Club	(5/0)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Detroit B.C.	(17/5)	Detroit, Michigan
Princeton University	(2/1)	Princeton, New Jersey
University Barge Club	(1/1)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
West Side R.C.	(12/8)	Buffalo, New York
Wyandotte B.C.	(4/0)	Wyandotte, Michigan

On Saturday evening, competitors and their friends had a choice of two dances to attend. One was at the Hotel Leonard, and the other was at Lakeside Park in Port Dalhousie, not far from the grandstand. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, August 18, 1930, p.7]

The 1930 annual meeting of the CAAO was held on Friday evening at the Hotel Leonard. The following Officers were chosen:

Honorary President: Sidney F.M. Smith, Toronto
President: Thomas A. Murphy, Toronto
1st Vice-President: J.V. Owen, Montreal
2nd Vice-President: Richard L. Schram, St. Catharines
Secretary: J.L. Murray, Toronto
Treasurer: Charles L. Carter, Toronto

The constitution was amended to add three more members to the Executive Committee, bringing the number to 12. The new members broadened the geographic scope of the Committee, with an addition from the east coast and one from the west coast. The 1930 Executive Committee was made up of:

Retiring 1931: W.A. MacDonald, Vancouver, T.H.C. Alison, Toronto, Harvey Pulford, Ottawa, and Thomas R. Loudon, Toronto.

Retiring 1932: John Rankin, Halifax, George T. Fulford, Brockville, Robert G. Dibble, Toronto, and C.S. Riley, Winnipeg.

Retiring 1933: E. Phillips, Ottawa, James W. Tice, Hamilton, Henry B. Burgoyne, St. Catharines, and W. Bovey, Montreal.

The big items on the agenda were the new grandstand and the new boathouse. A new boathouse had become necessary because the current one was going to encroach on the new course and block the view of the course from the new grandstand, so it would have to be razed. It was the plan of the Henley Aquatic Association to build the new boathouse on the site of the old grandstand. [The St. Catharines *Standard*, August 14, 1930, p.3] The projects had one hurdle to get over:

Mayor F.C. McCordick of this city [St. Catharines] and Major H.B. Burgoyne of the local club [i.e. the Henley Aquatic Association] explained to the meeting that St. Catharines was ready to back

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a project if they were guaranteed that the Royal Henley would continue to be held here. [The *Toronto Globe*, August 16, 1930, p.11]

That guarantee was forthcoming:

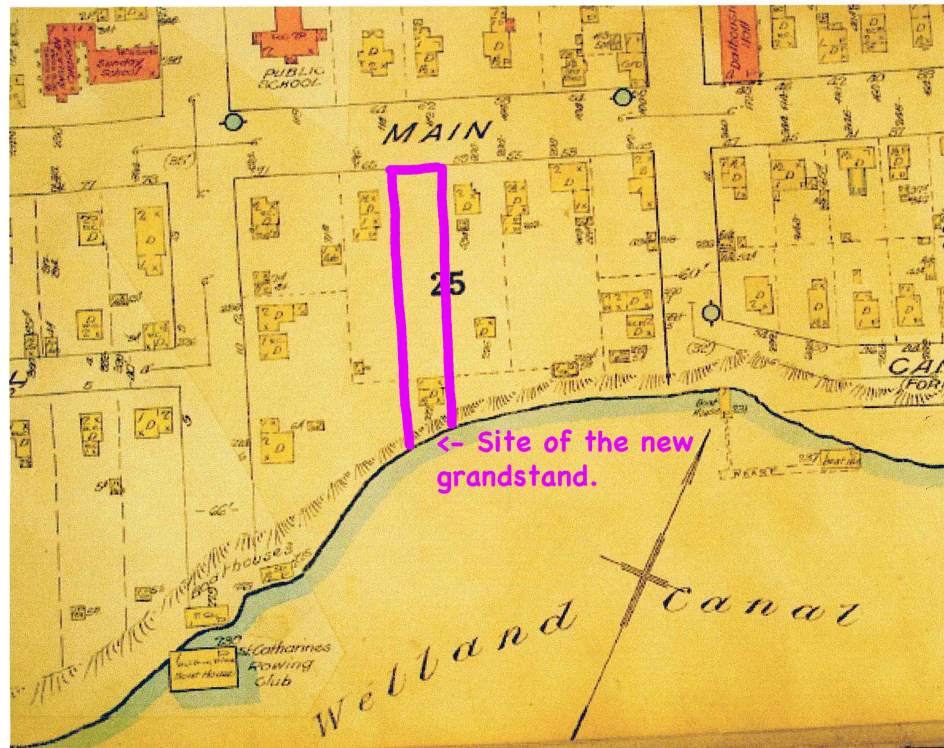
A motion for the C.A.A.O. executive to enter into an agreement with St. Catharines regarding the permanency of the Royal Canadian Henley at St. Catharines was then moved by Col. W. Bovey of McGill and seconded by Professor Loudon [sic] of Toronto University. The motion was unanimously favored. [The *St. Catharines Standard*, August 14, 1930, p.3]

The HAA could begin the campaign to raise the \$50,000 for the projects.

Toronto Alderman Joe Wright made an appeal for support for his Brule Lake project and made it clear that he was not trying to take the Henley away from St. Catharines. His intent was to provide a practice course for Toronto crews. [The *Toronto Globe*, August 16, 1930, p.11]

The final item on the agenda was an announcement that the tariff on oars was to be removed. The Association had been lobbying the Federal Government for years to remove or reduce the tariffs on all rowing equipment, so this was exciting news.

The map below was published in April, 1929. Since some of the homes marked on it still exist, we can make a safe guess as to what property was to be purchased for the new grandstand to be erected in 1931.



Canadian Fire Insurance Plans. Port Dalhousie, Ont., 1929.[sheet] 1

1930

For the benefit of readers who enjoy rankings, here are the winningest clubs from 1919 to 1930 as they would finish in a six-boat race. The number following the club's name is the number of finals won by that club. Dashes are included in the number, but not high school events. The number in parentheses is the club's standing from the Chapter 3 (1903 to 1915) list:

1. Argonaut R.C. 53 (1)
2. Don R.C. 38 (2)
3. Detroit B.C. 31
4. West Side R.C. 23
5. Lachine R.C. & Leander B.C. 10

Four clubs from the Chapter 3 (1903 to 1915) list either disbanded or declined and did not make the 1919 to 1930 list:

- Ottawa R.C. & Toronto R.C. (3)
- Winnipeg R.C. (5)
- Hamilton R.C. (6)

PLEASE NOTE: This History is a work in progress. I will post chapters as I finish them and I will make changes to chapters which are already posted as I become aware of new information, or have errors pointed out to me. This version was completed on April 20, 2024. If you find errors or omissions, use the Contact link at <http://goldmedalphotos.com/> to point them out to me. Stan Lapinski.