

Sunday, August 1, 1999
1520 Lakeside Drive, Oakland, California

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

What an incredible day we had this year at Lake Merritt. I don't know whom to thank first, but I think that the Oakland Park and Rec. Department win. Diana, the goddess of the grass-cutting machine, turned what looked like a disaster on Friday night into a great regatta on Sunday. She was out there cutting and scooping the grass all weekend to make sure that we could have the clearest racecourse possible. So to Diana, we all owe a big round of applause!

To all our volunteers and officials, without you, this regatta could not have happened. Those out at the starting boats (I hear that paddle boats aren't that comfortable), freezing in the early hours of the day, and baking in the sun during the afternoon, did a great job of making sure our rudders were clear, and that we all had a good start. The finish line timers, runners, announcer and results crew, were dedicated to getting the most accurate results recorded and available as quickly as possible. The results crew had to switch to manual calculation after the computer program crashed just before the first race of the day. What a great way to refresh those math skills! All of the other volunteers during the regatta helped out with so many tasks, and kept the regatta running smoothly.

Anyone that has been involved in running a regatta knows that race day is just the final 'sprint' after weeks of work. The Sprints regatta committee began planning this regatta in early spring, and much to our dismay, our fearless leader, Mickey Kossa, was struck ill by a stroke in late May. I am very happy to say that Mickey is on the road to recovery, and was able to visit the club during the races Sunday for the first time. We had to find a new leader (me - oh no!) and try to reconstruct the 'who does what' and the 'where is that' from memory. The endless energy of the committee members (thanks you guys) and those LMRC members, both new and old, worked for weeks prior to the regatta to make sure at 7:30am on Sunday morning we would be ready.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of the participants this year (all 439 of you). The energy and dedication that the sport of rowing requires is very special, you work all year, every year to improve and find that 'swing' that makes rowing such an incredible experience. The payoff comes during the regattas that you enter. It doesn't always mean a first place medal, but it means time to put yourself to the test. The patience, cooperation, and unsurpassed level of sportsmanship exhibited really make the difference for everyone, participants, officials, and regatta volunteers.

Thank you all for making the running of this regatta a great experience for me - I hope to see you all again next year at Lake Merritt for Masters Nationals 2000. The Lake Merritt Sprints regatta will return in 2001.

Sincerely,

Nancy Blom
Regatta Director/Registrar