**September 2024**

**Barbara Ramjan OAM**

Thanks for inviting me to submit a short piece for the newsletter. I have relished reading the Member of the Month pieces. Reading those pieces reminds me that anyone can achieve anything and while on the path to success, can find joy, laughter, and fun in the doing.

Over the past 16 years, I have coached a squad of rowers with disabilities. My squad range from rowers who have a limb amputation; those classified with an intellectual impairment; the majority with a diagnosis of Cerebral Palsy [and all its many and varied levels] as well as rowers with a visual impairment. Let me focus on those with a CP diagnosis and the extraordinary courage and resilience they have shown and continue to show.

We are in a temporary site but it requires a difficult bush walk of some 800 metres–around rocks, over tree roots, down hills and through mud after rain. One of my rowers, classed as a PR1 because of the intense level of his CP, takes 25-30 minutes to manage that path, yet he does so. He holds multiple records in indoor rowing, including the NSW State on water Championships, but he sees the pathway as a warm up training exercise. That is an athlete with determination, grit, and the will to win.

Several of the others have represented Australia, returned with gold, silver, and bronze medals; raced at the Rowing Australia National Championships and returned victorious. Most of them have taken part in the Krazy Kosczi Klimb, and the entire club supported them.

We are delighted to invite any CPSARA member who would like to try rowing or even just drop in for a visit to come on by, say hello and meet some pretty exceptional athletes. I hope over the next several months you will get to read some of their stories and understand that rowing is a sport for all – irrespective of age or ability. If you would like to read about us please click this link:
[http://www.communityrowing.com.au](https://cpsara.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=2825c1aa42ac89e7af3326742&id=158ee27e36&e=a84daa7db2)