

## National Rowing Championship 2025

**What are the National Rowing Championships?** It is the National Rowing regatta for NZ; when rowing clubs from all around the Motu come to compete for determining who are the fastest rowers that year.

The 2 images below show my crew for the 4+ and the 8+ (I'm in 2 seat in both boats). I'm also in the 4x which is sculling (2 oars).



**Where was it held this year?** This year the Regatta was held in Twizel, on lake Ruataniwha, which is named after a Māori chief who drowned in the 12th Century nearby when his canoe sank. The National Rowing Championship alternates each year between lake Karapiro in the North island and lake Ruataniwha in the south island.

**Who went there?** All the clubs and some of the high schools around New Zealand attended.

**Why did I go to the National regatta?** Because Wellington High does not have rowing as a sports option. But I wish it did because then I could attend the Maadi regatta, which is one of the biggest sporting events in the southern hemisphere, that high school rowing teams compete at. The Maadi Regatta has many legends told about it from old boys and girls who participated - who relay that it was one of the highlights of their time at high school.

**How did I qualify to compete at the National Rowing Championships?** I had to go out to train four times a week out at Petone Rowing Club, constantly rowing, erging (which is a rowing machine) and configuring the different boats (called rigging and derigging) for the various races. Then just before the regatta starts we have to load the boats on the trailer (which is over 15m long), cutting the longest boat in half so it will fit, ready to drive to the regatta. Loading the trailer can sometimes take us a whole day.



**How well did we do?** We all did pretty well, considering Wellington is a rough water club where we don't get as much water time as the other clubs that have (smooth) lakes to train on. We got bronze in the 4+ (sweep) mens intermediate and came close to podium finishes in several of our other races. Overall it was a very good experience and I learnt a lot. Although I didn't get a medal (this time), one of the highlights was in the 4x B-Final (which we raced against our other Petone boat) and we beat them - so now we have bragging rights at the club.

Something very special about our rowing team is that one of our rowers is blind. This means we all have to communicate and work really closely together to help him keep in time. Toby is a real strength to our team and we are lucky to have him as he shows us how with determination and tenacity you can overcome anything. Toby is hoping to represent New Zealand at the paralympics one day in rowing.

*(fun fact)*

The New Zealand Rowing Championships were first held in 1888 in Whanganui.

*(fun fact)*

The championships have been held every year since with the exception of two short intervals during the World Wars.

**What things did I do whilst there?** At the end of the regatta there is a tradition where we go to the old



Twizel bridge and jump off, which is over ten meters high, which is very scary.

Valor Firestone