

### Regattas

Our first regatta, the Super 12, was freezing, very wet and we realized we were very unfit, but it was loads of fun! The Auckland sprints were our first true regatta after serious training. We flew on that saltwater! We were actually pretty good! The hard trainings had paid off. We sure did feel proud to be wearing an EW shirt that day. When we got to the nationals in Wellington we were immersed in tent city. There was hype everywhere and we were full of nervous tension as we were finally at the event we had primarily trained for. In the swell of the Wellington Harbour we learnt pretty quickly to use wax to stick our butts to the seat. The swell almost tossed us out! Nonetheless Janie's seat buddy in no uncertain terms told her to "Keep paddling!" "Thanks mate you're a bloody inspiration!" The experience was great there and we made it into the Corporate Championship Final. Yay! Janie maintains that from where she was sitting we won but unfortunately the photos do seem to say otherwise. Still, Janie enjoyed the trip away where she was not woken early by a child screaming "Bottle Mum!" Auckland was a step down from Wellington. But we flew through the water again to win a final! - the money race. "We won the money honey!" We always had to remember to make sure at regattas that we looked good too. Always had to remember to have the purple "for power" part of the paddle forward (or was it "green for go" Blair???)

### Fundraisers

Fundraisers were a necessary evil to get to Wellington but they always turned out to be fun in some weird way and were important bonding sessions. The money raising involved things like a "wee" bit of weeding in Blair's garden, which ended up in Erin playing in the mud with Red and making the biggest roll of weed ever seen with Red and Tama. We also had some early mornings at the stadium. Who in their right mind gets up before 7am on a Saturday??!! After picking up the wet, soggy remnant versions Helen and Erin decided it was necessary to ban chips, beer and plastic tattoos at the game! At Quiz night we ran the bar. Erin (the team's ONLY non-drinker) had the embarrassing experience of having to learn to open a beer while drinkers were in a hurry to quench their thirst with a cold one. Things never turned out as bad as we thought at fundraisers. Even on delivery day for telephone books we expected bad weather but ended up with other extremes and Helen ended up sunburnt.

### An added bonus

One day while Erin was checking out the new Helpdesk guy she realized that she potentially had herself a catch. He'd fit next to her in seat 10! Then she realized he was even more of a catch than she thought! Al said he'd never put a man in the back seat with Erin ever again!

### Last words from the girls

Janie...I was embarrassed when I turned up late at my first training and if it weren't for Keith I would have walked away pretending I was lost and hoping no-one would notice. But after a great first season I'm happy that my feet didn't walk me in the opposite direction that day. Even though I won't be in next season's crew I'd like to say a big GO HARD, STAY HARD and see you the following season. For any newbies out there, keep my seat warm but don't get too comfortable because in the words of my buddy Arnie "I'll be back".

Erin and Helen...As new dragon boaters it didn't take us long to become truly "cultured" getting use to the hard yards at the Eastie. And we realized that you know you're a real dragon boater when you think giving geeky high fives is the norm and pretty cool. The season was hard work but with the comradery and close-knit unit the team becomes - great times and amazing fun...where else would you rather be?



Erin, Janie and Helen