



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **NorthWest International Rowing Association Championship Regatta: WINNIPEG WINS COVETED LIPTON CUP TWO YEARS RUNNING!**

Winnipeg MB (August 22, 2016) -- The Winnipeg Rowing Club sent 45 athletes to Kenora's Rabbit Lake this weekend for two days of racing at the 113<sup>th</sup> NWIRA Championship Regatta – and came out victorious, for the second year in a row!

A long and proud tradition that began in 1886, the NorthWest International Rowing Association (NWIRA) Championship Regatta takes place each summer with Canadian and American rowing clubs competing. This year there were 408 entries from 11 clubs: Duluth MN, Long Lake MN, Minneapolis MN, St. Paul MN, Edmonton AB, Regina SK, Saskatoon SK, Kenora ON, Thunder Bay ON, Hamilton ON, and Winnipeg MB.

The beautiful sterling silver Lipton Cup is awarded annually to the club that wins the most aggregate points. The Winnipeg Rowing Club brought home this year's top prize, along with the Masters Aggregate trophy, the Women's Aggregate trophy, and 41 medals consisting of 11 bronze, 18 silver, and the following 12 gold:

- Master Women's Single Under 50 – **Tracy Taylor**
- Open Women's Single Dash – **Casie Gauthier**
- Light Weight Women's Single Dash – **Brandi Smith**
- Open Women's Pair – **Kaelyn Gauthier, Casie Gauthier**
- Open Women's Double – **Kaelyn Gauthier, Casie Gauthier**
- Open Women's Quad – **Kaelyn Gauthier, Casie Gauthier, Rianne Boekhorst, Amy Kroeker**
- Master Women's Quad – **Andrea Lefort, Friederike von Aweyden, Vanessa Brown, Sheila Wilson-Kowal**
- Women's Eight – **Kaelyn Gauthier, Amy Kroeker, Rianne Boekhorst, Casie Gauthier, Tracy Taylor, Brandi Smith, Hanika Nakagawa, Emily Lennox, Chelsea Redecopp**
- Master Men's Double – **Andrew Lamont, Jeffrey Reitberger**
- Master Men's Four – **Andrew Lamont, Satoru Nakagawa, Tom Pundyk, Jeffrey Reitberger**
- Master Men's Quad – **Andrew Lamont, Tom Pundyk, Elliot Garfinkel, Jeffrey Reitberger**
- Mixed Master Quad – **Andrew Lamont, Tracy Taylor, Brandi Smith, Jeffrey Reitberger**

Every Winnipeg athlete contributed to the overall scoring, and helped bring home the Lipton Cup. Winnipeg's victorious team effort was led by WRC coaches **Ralph Penner** and **Ed Kornachuk**, and Manitoba Rowing Association coach **Fiona Rettie**. WRC's **Sandra Kirby** was also at the regatta, in the role of Head Official.

Winnipeg won the Lipton Cup last year as well, and in 2012 and 2004.

### **ABOUT THE NWIRA REGATTA**

[www.nwira.com](http://www.nwira.com)

The NorthWest International Rowing Association (NWIRA) is a regional association of Canadian and American mid-western rowing clubs, founded in 1885 by the Winnipeg Rowing Club, Minnesota Boat Club, and St. Paul Rowing Club. The North American landscape of the time told a story of outlaws and opportunity. In Canada, the rebellious Louis Riel had fought his last fight, and the last spike was driven into the Canadian Pacific Railway. In the US, the notorious Jesse James met his demise, and Thomas Edison introduced methods of generating and distributing electric light, heat, and power. Into this world the NWIRA championship was born, and the race was on...

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The first NWIRA competition took place July 16, 1886, on Lake Minnetonka in Minnesota. What started as a quiet evening erupted into mayhem, as the sound of the starter's gun blast echoed across the lake, and fans began cheering wildly from hundreds of small boats and steamers. Three crews raced down the course with Winnipeg in last place. With a quarter-mile to the finish, Winnipeg sprinted ahead with Minnesota and St. Paul in hot pursuit. In the end, the Canadians crossed the line first and took home a championship that would trade hands many times over the next 113 regattas.

The NWIRA Regatta has continued to grow and thrive since that first race won by Winnipeg in 1886. An annual regatta, it has only been postponed during times of war. The grand aggregate trophy – the Sir Thomas Lipton Cup – is up for grabs annually, and won this year by Winnipeg Rowing Club.

### **ABOUT THE LIPTON CUP**

<http://www.nwira.com/node/60>

The Sir Thomas Lipton Cup stands over three feet in height. In the thoughts of hundreds of oarspersons in the mid-western area of Canada and the United States, who are members of the Northwestern International Rowing Association (NWIRA), the size of the trophy and its valuation are not the paramount significance, but rather, the physical manifestation of the accomplishment.

The Annual NWIRA Championship Regatta is the culmination of the rowing season. All the effort and struggle of a full year's worth of training is reduced to two days of rowing. At the completion of the regatta's races, the huge trophy emblematic of the championship is placed in the arms of the winning rowing club.

The Lipton Cup is a symbol of dedication and hard work, so it is appropriate that the man who presented the Cup to the Association, Sir Thomas Lipton, epitomized these characteristics. As a young man, Tom Lipton stowed away on a ship bound to New York from his native England. Through hard work and determination, he became the millionaire head of the Lipton Tea empire. He was knighted for the great things he had accomplished in establishing good will between England and the United States.

In 1914, he presented the gleaming silver cup to his friend Con Riley of Winnipeg, as a means of promoting the sport of rowing in this area. Since then, the rowing clubs of the Association have battled for the honour of having their names engraved upon the Lipton Cup – awarded each year to the rowing club scoring the greatest number of points at the NWIRA championship regatta.

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*At **135 years old**, the Winnipeg Rowing Club is one of the oldest sporting organizations in Western Canada. It has been in operation since 1881, stopping only twice – during WWI and WWII. A long-time tenant of the banks of the Red River in downtown Winnipeg, the WRC survived the North-West Rebellion of 1885, the General Strike of 1919, the Great Depression of the 1930's, the Great Flood of 1950, and the Flood of the Century in 1997. Over the years the clubhouse has been destroyed by fire, wind, and water, but has always managed to maintain its long and proud tradition. Today, the WRC is a non-profit organization with a rich and successful sporting history, fostering generations of camaraderie and friendships. Members range in age from early teens right up to the 80's, and the club offers programs for all skill levels. [www.winnipegrowingclub.ca](http://www.winnipegrowingclub.ca)*