

lifestyle: SPORTS



BOTH OARS in the Water

Local club rowing and growing

For the past five years, John Krecker has been joining a group of thirty other individuals outside The Old Oyster Factory, climbing into the chilly Broad Creek waters in the early morning, three times a week, to pursue a sport he never thought he'd experience again: rowing.

Krecker joined the Hilton Head Rowing Club in 1999, "I was retired and was just looking for something to do. I used to row a bit when I was younger." He gave it a try and hasn't looked back. "Time spent rowing is not deducted from your lifespan," Krecker explained, was the group's motto. "Whether you're rowing for competition or recreation, it is the most cardiovascular and aerobically intense sport out there."

The Hilton Head Rowing Club was founded by Bill Killhour in 1986. Once solely comprised of male retirees, the club has increasingly attracted a much more diverse crowd of people. The Old Oyster Factory joined in, offering much-needed space for the ever-increasing amount of equipment the club was generating.

The Rowing Club then began supporting Hilton Head High School, offering rowing as an extracurricular sport. Dane Williams, a member of last year's team, explained with some pride that, "We are one of the only public high schools in the country that offers a rowing team." Williams

said that he looks forward to rowing again this spring.

"It slows down a bit in the winter," Krecker explained, "but there are a few of us that stay with it until the following spring." When asked what really kept Krecker involved with the sport he mentioned the visual aspect of riding low in the early morning water, watching the birds and dolphins moving along side him and his peers.

"And the health benefits aren't bad either," he added with a chuckle. The Hilton Head Rowing Club hopes to assist the Bluffton School District with establishing a rowing team of its own, but formal plans have not yet been made.

For more information about the Hilton Head Rowing Club, please contact John Krecker at (843) 842-6984 who can help you set up a training session. Because rowing is considered to be a highly intense cardiovascular sport, individuals must complete a screening and classroom session prior to joining. Both of these are open for anyone interested.

— Scott Kirkpatrick

Editor's note: Sadly, Hilton Head Rowing Club Founder Bill Killhour passed away recently at the age of 79. The Monthly staff extends its deepest sympathies to Mr. Killhour's family.

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