



British Rowing

Indoor Rowing Case Study

Dan Hetherington

ABOUT THE NGB

British Rowing is the governing body for the sport of rowing (both indoor rowing and on water rowing). We are committed to ensuring that the sport continues to thrive from the grassroots right up to winning medals at the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

We are responsible for participation and the development of rowing and indoor rowing in England and for the training and selection of individual rowers and crews representing Great Britain.

The development and support of rowing in England is managed through six rowing areas, which cover all the counties in England.

British Rowing supports over 550 affiliated rowing clubs with a membership of 30,000+ individuals.

Within the School Games, British Rowing offers direct support for county level events (around 20-25 events per year), and in some cases for larger inter school events. The School Games programmes see approximately 10,500 participation opportunities through indoor rowing yearly.



WHY

The School Games programme has been an essential part of development for indoor rowing activity within schools since its inception. The network has helped introduce the sport to new participants who would have never had the opportunity to try it otherwise.

For the talent end of the programme we successfully applied, in a joint bid with British Canoeing, for inclusion in the national finals, where we look to use some selection from county School Games activity to identify new talent to the sport.



ACTION

As part of our on-going developments for indoor rowing, British Rowing commissioned research for both the youth and adult markets to help shape and understand what offers might appeal to more individuals. Research concluded that there is latent demand of 15.6 million new indoor rowers that include individuals looking at sport in a more health and fitness orientated way.

We commissioned the Youth Sport Trust to review our current offer and the thoughts of the network around indoor rowing within the School Games which included research, interviews conducted with the SGO network about our current offer, and ideas taken onboard from the network as to how we could improve our offer.

THEME OF CASE STUDY

Embedding the Principles of Competition.

Supporting the development of a sustainable workforce.

LEAD CONTACT

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BRITISH ROWING

In order to open the sport up to more individuals who might be less motivated by competition and more about personal improvement we added personal best formats within our school games offer at Inter and Intra level activity. The aim of this is to engage and educate less sporty individuals on how indoor rowing can help them make personal improvements to their own fitness, but also sway peer to peer competition in their favour to aid and motivate confidence so they can compete on a more level playing field.

SCHOOL GAMES



IMPACT

Indoor Rowing activity has seen a 16% increase in participation from 2017/18 to 2018/19 and an increase in community club exit routes of 14%.

Over 90% of School Games events follow the School Games format, which with its growing flexibility will hopefully continue to increase.

The SGO network is key for all impact on the ground for the development of the sport in the programme – some of the network have kindly shared their experience around the direct impact the sport is having in tier local areas.

"Indoor rowing has been a hugely successful sport within the School Games for the East Dorset Area. The participants and teachers have loved competing at inter school competitions so much that as an area, have entered the most talented performers into the National Junior Indoor Rowing Competition. Annually we take about 45 students from different schools and backgrounds to this huge national competition.

Indoor Rowing highlights determination, self-belief and in the relay event, teamwork. However, it attracts a host of different types of participants. We have had lots of success in showing the potential of good swimmers to convert to rowing.

These students often do not play in school teams due to their swim training schedule and it is great for their ability to be recognized in a different sport. We have also had a number of schools involve their disengaged students in rowing and others have offered rowing to the disabled or visually impaired."

KC East Dorset SGO

"This Indoor Rowing Format has engaged a new group of students of which I do not see at any other point of year. Its accessibility, unique mix of individual and team interaction makes for a great atmosphere alongside the use of technology, with projected real time race positions furthering the excitement and determination shown by all.

The link with local providers allows for further involvement post the one off events."

JH Cheltenham and North Tewkesbury SGO

[Read more quotes here.](#)



NEXT

British Rowing is working on rolling out a new Go Row Indoor School website platform for school teachers and the SGO network. This new portal will provide a range of new resources including activity ideas that reflects the current PE and healthy lifestyles curriculum. The portal will also include a basic online virtual challenge system which will host regular events, challenges and competitions for schools to participate in and win prizes.



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