Strong spirit on display at Head of the River

SPORTSMANSHIP at its best was on display when The Armidale School held its own at the 117th Athletic Association of Great Public Schools of NSW (AAGPS) rowing regatta in Sydney on Saturday 15 March.

From a single coxed ‘four’ three years ago, TAS raced in three events over 2000m, at what is many regarded as a pinnacle of schoolboy rowing.

The Third IV finished in sixth place in a time of 7.31:38, ahead of two large Sydney schools.

After being first out at the start, the Second IV struck tragedy only five strokes into their race when a bolt snapped on the rigging. The crew brought the boat home, in a display of true grit and commitment.

In the First IV event – the only one in which all nine GPS schools competed – the TAS crew picked up momentum throughout their race. Coming last at the 1500m mark, they surged some speed to cross the line in seventh place in 7.14:10, with just a second and a half separating fifth, sixth and seventh.

TAS Headmaster Murray Guest paid special tribute to the Seconds and said good comes out of adversity.

“When I saw you bringing the boat slowly down the course but still with your heads up as other schools applauded your courage, that was a proud moment for me,” he told the TAS contingent and supporters after the regatta.

“You are all going away from the regatta as better men than you were before.”

Rowing MIC Will Caldwell said the camaraderie between the crews and boys of different ages was a hallmark of this year’s efforts: “the boys did not think of themselves as being in the Firsts, Seconds or Thirds, but as the name of the boats they were racing, and that says a lot about their teamwork and character,” he said.

Around 10,000 students from the nine NSW GPS schools and their families were estimated to have been at the Sydney International Regatta Centre for the event. The TAS crews have been training since November on Malpas Dam near Black Mountain, and also took part in camps at Grafton and Southport during the school holidays.

ENDS
Photos:
(1) Assistant coach Harriet Bawden gives some last minute advice to the TAS Third IV (from left) Angus Tullie, Nick Murray, Samuel Jackson-Bolton, Ben MacDougall and (cox) Henry Hughes.
(2) The TAS First IV (closest to camera, blue and white striped kit) surge to the finish line, not far behind Newington College (boat 7), St Joseph’s College (furthest from camera) and ahead of St Ignatius College Riverview (bright blue).
(3) The TAS First IV (cox) Dan Lethbridge, Harry Lloyd, Ben Mulligan, Dan Allen and Ben Broster about to pass St Ignatius College Riverview, at the GPS Head of the River in Sydney on Saturday.
(4) Rowing co-ordinator Will Caldwell congratulates the TAS contingent.

For more information on this release contact Tim Hughes on 0409 662 420