



# A LIFETIME OF COMMITMENT TO LAKE KARAPIRO

Don Rowlands C.B.E., M.B.E

Don Rowlands, born in 1926, has achieved many things including world class success in sporting performance, administration and business. Along the way, he has made a huge contribution to national and international rowing and to the ability of New Zealand rowers, in particular, to shine on the world stage.

Don's love affair with rowing and Lake Karapiro began early. He competed in his first ever rowing regatta, held here, in 1948. Two years later, in 1950, Don tasted international success, winning a silver medal at the 1950 Empire Games where he was a member of New Zealand's rowing eight. The rowing competition for those Games was held at Lake Karapiro.

Just four years later, at the Commonwealth Games in Vancouver, Don won gold in the single sculls. That performance, and others like it, cemented his place in New Zealand's Olympic Games team which competed in Melbourne in 1956.

Between 1948 – 1957 Don won nine New Zealand rowing titles before turning his attention to other aspects of the sport. From 1960 – 1977, he was a New Zealand rowing selector. He managed the 1962 New Zealand Commonwealth Games rowing team and also managed the 1997 world championships team.

From 1971 – 1979, Don was president of the New Zealand Rowing Association of which he is now a life

member. From 1974 – 1992, he was the New Zealand and Australian representative to FISA (the World Rowing Council) of which he is also a life member.

Don chaired the organising committee for the 1978 world rowing championships held here at Lake Karapiro, marshalling volunteers and helping make the event one of the most successful and most popular world championships ever held. From 1979 – 1996, he was a director of the New Zealand Sports Foundation.

In 1982, Don was awarded a Bronze medal of the Olympic Order; awarded to a person who has "achieved remarkable merit in the sporting world and rendered outstanding services to the Olympic cause".

In 2006, he was given the prestigious SPARC Leadership Award, presented at the Halberg Awards to "one outstanding sports person whose service to sport inspires New Zealanders".

Since 1948, Don has played an integral role in rowing at Lake Karapiro and has been a leader in the maintenance, development and event management of world class rowing events. His contribution has, and continues to be, enormous.

Don Rowlands is currently the Patron of the Karapiro 2010 World Championships to be held here, at Lake Karapiro, in November 2010.

