

DDRA – Survey Results – February 8, 2017

The purpose of the survey of clubs that participate in the Canada Day Regatta, and Dominion Day Regatta Association (DDRA) Executive members, was to determine the Strengths, Areas for Improvement, Opportunities and External Roadblocks facing the DDRA, in advance of its first strategic planning session.

Methodology

Survey invitations were sent to 55 contacts on January 8, 2017, requesting a reply by January 20, 2017. Respondents were sent two reminders and the survey was closed on January 23, 2017. A total of 29 responses were received, broken down as follows:

	Canoe-Kayak clubs	Rowing clubs	Dragon Boat
Number sent	18	33	1
Number responded	9	19	1
Percent response	50%	58%	100%

Clubs were asked only to provide one response if more than one person received the invitation, although some did not follow this direction.

The questions were open-ended and were analysed for themes. The theme analysis and all the responses may be found in Appendix A. This report includes only a summary of the key points.

As there were no quantitative questions in this survey, percent responses are not reported. The number of people who indicated a certain response is, however, included in the report.

Strengths

The Clubs that participate in the Canada Day Regatta (CDR) on Toronto Island were almost unanimous in describing the strengths as “tradition and history” (26 of 29 responses). Others described the location on Toronto Island, the course that is protected from the wind and the Toronto skyline in the background.

A very substantial group (17 of 29) reported on the unique multi-sport aspect of three sports combined in one regatta, and its being the oldest of its kind, as being a strength.

A smaller group (9 of 29) reported that the trophies were a strength and observed that they matter to the adults as well as the youth participants. A similar sized group (8 of 29) noted that the low-key, family atmosphere, the recreational nature of the regatta, the welcoming environment, the fact that it is more like a festival, that is fun, social, comfortable, and referenced specifically the ferry rides as a strength of the regatta.

Another similar sized group (8 of 29) referenced the Opportunities for Masters to race, that it was a fun day of racing, that the modified race distance allowed for multiple racing opportunities.

Improvements

There was a similar level of agreement (20 of 29) who reported that the logistics of getting boat trailers on and off the Island via the *Ongiara*, was difficult, a “really big pain” and that the location is an impediment, as the major areas for improvement. This group also noted that there needs to be an easier way, that perhaps DDRA could reserve a ferry, that the opportunity to cross at the Island airport was a lost opportunity, that it was hard for small clubs to get to the Island, and that getting off is worse than getting on the Island.

Other comments may be found in the Appendix.

Opportunities

There were not as many respondents in agreement on the opportunities, as there were on the strengths and areas for improvement.

One of the larger groups (5 of 29) suggested the use of a drone and a video screen erected near the grandstand, so that spectators could see both the rowing and the canoe start as it was happening. A drone could also provide video coverage of the racing while it was going on, again, broadcast on a big screen.

A similar sized group (5 of 29) identified the opportunity to promote the regatta to new spectators, and introduce them to the sports of rowing, canoe-kayak and dragon-boating. This could be done (it was suggested) by leveraging new technologies, using social media for promotion and communication to elevate the presence of the regatta, provide live streaming of the results, and available at the regatta to answer questions from interested parties.

Other opportunities suggested included a fully buoyed course, adding novel events (e.g., rowing dash races) or a different venue than the Island. Other comments may be found in the Appendix.

External Roadblocks

There were two top roadblocks identified by an equal number of respondents. One, identified by 7 of 29, was a lack of interest from paddling clubs due to competing regattas, the need for

high performance athletes to compete at other events for national rankings/funding, which had the concomitant effect of making it difficult to attract volunteers.

The other, also identified by 7 of 29, was about the facility itself, that is that Toronto Island is not convenient, that it is not a cost effective or accessible facility. Connected with this was the observation that the inconvenience of the Island facility threatens both canoe and rowing clubs' participation; not being able to get trailers off the island faster may make the regatta critically vulnerable.

A smaller group (3 of 29) noted that letting the quality slip may result in the City withdrawing the regatta's permit, on the grounds that the regatta is just too much trouble for the Parks & Recreation Department. Others noted that moving the regatta to Welland would threaten it.

Other comments may be found in the Appendix.

Additional Comments

The largest group of additional comments (7 of 29) were positive and supportive comments: keep up the great work, thrilled you are doing a strategic plan, hopefully volunteers will keep delivering this regatta, hope it keeps going, keep it on the Island, keep doing what you are doing.

Other comments may be found in the Appendix.

Survey results analysed by Judy Sutcliffe.

Appendix – all responses

Strengths

Areas for improvement

Opportunities

External Roadblocks

Additional Comments

Strengths

<p>What do other people and you, the clubs that participate in the Canada Day Regatta on July 1st on Toronto Island, see as DDRA's and the regatta's strengths? Is there anything that the Association does better than most? Better than anyone else? Does the regatta have any uniqueness, any unique resources; something special that no other regatta, no-one else has / does?</p>
<p>Number of responses: 26 - Tradition, nice surroundings, quaint, historic (age), Toronto skyline, location, course protected from wind 17 - unique multi-sport format - 3 sports - oldest combined regatta 9 - trophies, presentation of trophies - silver mugs matter! 8 - low-key, family atmosphere, recreational, welcoming, festival, fun, social, comfortable, ferry rides 8 - another opportunity for Masters to race, fun day of racing, modified race distance so multiple racing opportunities 5 - showcase / public exposure to three sports, potential for random kids to take up sport based on seeing it on the Island on Canada Day 5 - Canada Day - special, multi-culti experience on Island, perfect way to celebrate Canada's birthday 4 - good organization by DDRA, effort to change up program to accommodate athlete interest 3 - please do not change location (to Welland), would expect lower participation if moved off the Island 3 - only regatta (rowing) in Toronto - 1 - need to think about how to change regatta for younger generations 1 - low entry fees 1 - "grumpy" Joe Lyttle is "unique resource" - helpful, accommodating to entry change requests</p>
<p>All responses to this question:</p>
<p>The strengths of DDRA include the tradition and providing the Master Aged Athletes with an additional opportunity to race. Also it is unique in the format of including rowing, paddling and dragonboat races.</p>
<p>- traditional long standing regatta - nice surrounds, quaint and picturesque - sheltered water -</p>
<p>Its history and tradition make it unique. Also the mix of rowing, canoe/kayak and dragon boat is different from other regattas. The association works well as a team to pull off the event every year.</p>
<p>Uniqueness of this event comes from the historical aspect and the trophies that athletes receive if they win.</p>
<p>The strength is in the tradition and the combining of Paddling and Rowing in one Regatta.</p>
<p>The main strength of DDRA is the exposure to the public in attendance of the 3 different sporting groups, The presentation of the awards to the winners surpasses any other similar events. The main uniqueness is the actual site of Long Pond with the skyline of Toronto in the background.</p>

I think it is a great opportunity for masters paddlers to come together and have a full day of racing.
I am not an athlete, a coach, or a club member. DDRA is unique by its age and continuously conducting regattas on the same site with different sports. There is an honest effort to change the race card to accommodate athlete interest.
The greatest uniqueness is the history and location. It is a tradition in the sport to participate in the DDRA regatta, and as much stress and heart ache as it is to get o the island, it is always special day once you are there.
Our DDRA regatta has a long and proud history that no other regatta has. It has a unique location - Centre Island, Long Pond course. I think the regatta is more personalized, less stressful, than other rowing regattas. It has a family atmosphere more than most rowing regattas. It is multi-sport and this is unique. The course is nicely protected from most wind conditions. I strongly believe this regatta must stay at Centre Island. If it were to move to Welland or anywhere else, everything we have known would be lost forever. Please do not change the location. The local clubs try to assist in staging the regatta and managing the races even more, I think, than other regattas. The fact that it is held on Canada Day makes it extra special. And every year, the potential is there to have a young boy or girl take up a sport that they saw on July 1st at Centre Island. Our regatta showcases rowing, canoeing, kayaking, and dragon boat racing. Overall, a well run regatta and we should cherish and thank our volunteers who make it a success.
The DDRA excels at running a very unique and historical event on Toronto Island. It is very special due to the history of the event (130+ years), and the uniqueness of the event as a mixed sport regatta (including canoe, kayak, rowing since 1884, and dragon boats since 2003). In fact, one of the longest running mixed regattas still active today. It is run on the very scenic Toronto Island - no regatta can match it's location. It is also very special in that it is a recreational event - very much welcoming paddlers and rowers from any interested club even if they are relatively new to the sport.
I have never personally been to the DDRA regatta as it conflicts with my birthday. I know a lot of people really enjoy the event and the mini goblets that are given out to winners. Being on the island, although a pain logistically, is a unique atmosphere which cannot be duplicated anywhere else. If the regatta was to permanently move to a different location (Welland or St. Catharines) I would expect less participation.
- the DDRA has committee members who committed and have deep knowledge and history of the regatta at the island and changes that have happened over the years. This has positive and negative effect in that members continue to deliver the same way year after year. We need to think about how we will run this regatta with gen X gen Y, millennials and gen Z, etc.
The regatta offers a unique setting, location and schedule of events.
Historical and traditional regatta Unique Toronto setting Modified race distance All positive
The strengths of this regatta are; Tradition; Location; Exposition; Important day to be part of Canadian celebration; Multi sport event. The Association do better; Include various sports, kept the tradition. Uniqueness; Run at the Toronto Island, exposition, multi sport event.
This is a unique regatta, I have personally competed in as a younger athlete. It is a great festival including different water sports outside of rowing which gives spectators exposure to these wonderful and exciting sports
This regatta is always one that the rowers love to attend. The racing experience is unique and offers something different than the standard CORAs in the early summer season. The rowers specifically love the opportunity to win a DDRA silver mug. The trip to the island,

<p>although a trek, again is a unique plus for the historic race. This regatta is at its best when all the top local crews come which allows for a competitive and fun day.</p>
<p>I feel that some of the biggest strengths to the DDRA Regatta is the history that goes along with the event as well as the location of the event. Racing in downtown Toronto is a wonderful experience. The positives of having the race on the island is to take part in the wonderful social environment that goes along with the holiday. I also see the multi discipline water-sports as something special.</p>
<p>1. History of the regatta est. 1884 making it one of the oldest regatta in North America 133th annual regatta.in 2017, Henley being 135 in 2017. 2. Oldest & largest combined Canoe, Kayak & Dragon Boat Regatta in World. 3. Location of regatta & ferry ride to island. 4. For rowing it has one of the cheapest entry fees of other regattas.</p>
<p>Historic value; only regatta in Toronto</p>
<p>great venue, beautiful location, long tradition</p>
<p>1) history 2) comfortable venue 3) unique venue with boat ride to venue 4) mix of events (rowing/canoe/kayak)</p>
<p>Tradition is the first word that came to mind! Location Multi-cultural exposure of being on the island on Canada Day. Visibility for the sport in the city of Toronto Multi water sport event. It must stay on the Island!</p>
<p>The regatta sticks to the traditions if it financially is able to; such as the awards. For even the seniors, the goblets matter. For the new kids, they matter even more. The multi sport regatta makes the event unique as well as being on Toronto Island. Yes it is a hassle, sometimes a HUGE hassle to get to the island but that is what makes it unique. We have talked about the times when there has been a city workers strike and we have HAD to have the regatta elsewhere. When that happens the regatta ends up being just another regatta. A unique resource is Joe Lyttle. The event would be so different without Joe. As grumpy as he tries to be, he is so helpful and accommodating to all of us that have entry changes etc. There are so many challenges with events when working with big clubs, small clubs and everything in between and Joe helps us all.</p>
<p>Festive atmosphere, ferry rides, excellent fun, welcoming atmosphere that is perfect for newer racers and veterans, unique prizes, backdrop of Toronto, perfect way to Celebrate Canada on Canada Day!</p>
<p>Different kind of regatta, 1000m sprints, unique prizes, different location.</p>
<p>Short race early in summer season It is unique in sharing the regatta with canoeing The island atmosphere is nice The silver goblet Ferry</p>
<p>The DDRA has definite historical aspects that should be kept. Having the Regatta on Canada day as a celebration is unique and combining with Canoe/Kayak is a plus. Personally I like the fact that athletes can races 3-4 times as the races are short and can jump into another race quickly. The trophy plaques are beautiful and winning a mug or goblet is a unique memento as a winner and useful.</p>

Improvements

What could DDRA do better? What should be improved? What is DDRA criticized for? What activities does DDRA do poorly or not do well, what resources does it need but does not possess, in delivering the regatta?

- 20 - logistics of getting boat trailers on and off the Island via Ongiara, difficult, really big pain, need easier way, reserve a ferry, lost opportunity to cross at airport, hard for small clubs to get to the Island, getting off is worse, location is an impediment
- 5 - improve rowing start line: add Marshal at the start, start platforms, need warm up area
- 5 - communication about nature of boat transportation could be improved
- 4 - marketing and promotion - attract more media attention, attract general public, promote member clubs, add more pictures to website—post the photo contest winner's photos; promote historic aspects,
- 4 - ferry times communication to athletes always seems to be wrong - 7:30 or 8:00 AM? Could be improved
- 4 - better race course (more buoys); buoys are old and tired - need to purchase new ones
- 3 - expand Masters racing for rowers, scrap 1xs, add 4s, 8s
- 2 - none
- 2 - no regatta program, examine how paper program delivered
- 2 - need more volunteers
- 2 - need docks for launching/landing
- 2 - difficult to engage / attract athletes to regatta, too many competing events, paddlers no longer want to come because of weeds, commercial boats - dangerous
- 1 - weekend CD regattas are better attended as not everyone takes the holiday on a weekday
- 1 - succession plan needed for DDRA
- 1 - stay on schedule
- 1 - rowing umpires swamp scullers
- 1 - regatta no longer viable for us
- 1 - no interaction among paddlers and rowers, no sense of camaraderie, of a joint event
- 1 - location could be better
- 1 - leverage technology, social media, update regatta website,
- 1 - held on Canada Day when many athletes & families want to go to their cottage or elsewhere
- 1 - getting results out reliably
- 1 - get more boat drivers, leverage sailing clubs of volunteers
- 1 - get coaches and clubs to support the regatta
- 1 - find partners to support promotion & support paying for more buoys
- 1 - engage the City more
- 1 - dedicated and marked trailer spots staked, so that 2 big clubs not fighting for space all day
- 1 - DDRA not open to new ideas e.g., special awards, celebrity (Olympic medallists) rowers/paddlers
- 1 - better range for the sound system to let spectators know what is happening
- 1 - be more professional, not such a gong show, no-one knows what is happening

All responses to this question:

<p>We are having a hard time engaging our athletes in this regatta. There are too many competing events to compel them to attend DDRA. Also the logistics of getting equipment on to Toronto Island have become a major pain point for us. We truly believe that this event is no longer viable for us.</p>
<p>similar to most regattas difficult to get boats on and off of the island needs an easier way of getting off and on the island</p>
<p>Needs more volunteers. Better access for trailers. Although rowers and paddlers participate, there is absolutely no interaction between the two. No camaraderie or sense of a joint event.</p>
<p>DDRA could better communicate ferry times for athletes, as the times communicated always seem to be wrong. As one of my athletes told me, every year they say there will be an early ferry, she comes late, because there is no early ferry. And every year they say that the first ferry is at 8am, she comes early. And she says she's right most of the time. It is a really big pain to get the boats across to the island. This year you said that only 1 boat trailer per discipline would be going over, and it ended up that there were 2 less boat trailers than 2015. This caused a lot of confusion for us and what was acceptable, and did not leave us a lot of room to plan. It is on Canada Day, which most athletes want to be at their cottages or elsewhere.</p>
<p>Toronto Island is no longer a venue that our paddlers are interested in racing on. The weeds and the presence of commercial boats has made the race course unappealing and at times dangerous.</p>
<p>The real improvement would be the movement of equipment to and from the regatta site. I believe the only thing we can be criticized for but there is really nothing presently we can do is getting on and of the site. If they ever get a bridge or tunnel to the island the movement should improve.</p>
<p>Location could be better, getting boats on and off the island is inconvenient.</p>
<p>I have no issue with the delivery of the regatta. The issue is the complexity of preparing the site, getting to and from the site.</p>
<p>Reserve fairly to get trailers on and off the island.</p>
<p>It's too bad that the DDRA regatta lost the chance to keep transporting trailers across Billy Bishop Airport instead of the Ongiara. The airport did not cancel this, in so many ways. The real truth is that a few trailer drivers yelled at the airport staff for issues (details, I do not know) and possibly delays in crossing the airport runway. It's too bad the DDRA couldn't emphasize strong enough to the drivers, ahead of time, to keep quiet, be polite and courteous to airport staff, in order to ensure that we'd continue to drive our trailers across the airport tarmac. We blew a golden opportunity to travel quite quickly back and forth to the regatta. Now we're back to the Ongiara, and later times getting off the island more than getting on the island. //The regatta buoy markers are tired and old. The DDRA should try and find funding to purchase an updated buoy marker and course cables. //Lack of docks also is challenging. The DDRA should investigate buying docks and working with Parks and Recreation to store them after the regatta is finished. //Referee coach boats roar too close to single scullers. I mention this every year but no one seems to change their behaviour, and I get swamped by waves and water the last 50 metres of the race. Please tell the boat drivers to SLOW DOWN and stay BEHIND the scullers. Or put a safety boat half way and another near the launch area so that if there is a problem, they can reach athletes quickly.// I am disappointed that there will be no regatta program but I am considering paying for a hard copy program printing myself and preparing it. Once every five years, on the years with "0" and "5" or on significant DDRA anniversaries. Perhaps this year, it being Canada's 150th anniversary, July 1, 2017. //Also, there needs to be more willingness on the committee to encourage ideas. I suggested celebrity canoeists and/or rowers to do an</p>

exhibition race but no one thought this was a good idea, so it seemed at meetings. I also suggested a race be named in honour of the Oldershaw family but the idea was side-tracked. My view is, if the DDRA simply does the same routine every year, then there are no special memories to make it extra special and memorable, and an exhibition race brings attention to our regatta, perhaps in the newspaper, and certainly greater interest among the spectators and athletes. Why not have Mark Oldershaw go down the course? Why not have Marnie McBean or Kathleen Heddle row down the course? This kind of approach would "elevate" the sports. I think we need to be "inspired", we need to show we truly appreciate ideas, not just put them aside because they don't fit our vision of what the DDRA should be about. Example: When Hanlan brought the coastal oarsmen and women, wasn't this exciting? And it didn't impact the regular schedule, to my mind. Just some thoughts for your consideration.

While understanding the difficulties, the DDRA should... - promote itself more and attempt to get more attention in the media and spread the word to the general public (and promote its member clubs - where people can go to to join in). Find some partners? - have better race course (more buoys). If this is a cost issue, then sponsors will help. And volunteers can also be obtained through existing volunteer coordination. - have better Island access and exit for the key drivers of trucks and their trailers. But this is known to be a constraint so good communication is critical.

I cannot comment on this. All I know is that getting trailers to and from the island needs to be as simple and painless as possible and that the city needs to make more of a commitment

- need to leverage technology. We are starting to do this with social media which is awesome. - need to update the regatta website. promote it with pictures. we ran a photo contest 1 or 2 yrs ago but I don't think we followed through with posting the winner's photo on the site. - look at how we are delivering the paper program - I worry that the DDRA is not looking at resourcing or a succession plan - we are getting better at sourcing boat drivers but need to be more creative. Can we leverage the sailing clubs? They run sailing regatta's all summer and have boat drivers with the appropriate licenses.

None that I am aware of.

Challenge for small clubs is getting boats across to Island.

Do Better; Run a better regatta in general, Better organized, Run it more professional, Criticized for; Some parts of the regatta look like a gong show, no one knows what is happening. To improve; better Control, you can put a control referee on the water and organize the traffic at the start, Starting Blocks, boys lines, on Schedule. Involve all participants to be more serious and take serious the regatta.

I cannot give a meaningful response as our club has not participated in this regatta in quite a long time

The ferries are always hit and miss as a trailer driver. 2016 was not an issue for our club but in 2015 we were stuck on the island until midnight after the race due to mis-communication. I appreciate that this is an issue that is continually on the radar for improvement and hope that it runs smoothly this year. Regarding races there are limited masters events. If there was a way to increase these events, perhaps the mixed categories that seem to be so popular too, that would encourage more masters from our club and others to attend.

I think the biggest hurdle to the event is the logistics associated with the island. Transporting equipment and people to the racing site is always difficult. However I do think that the organizers do put a lot of effort in making this process run as smooth as possible and that most ferry issues are outside the organizers control. I wish I could provide a solution to this issue but I think we are all doing the best we can do.

The only complains I know about is going trucks & boat trailers on and off the island. I don't know what we can do about it unless we can get the ferry boat people work for us We have to find away to gets clubs and coaches to support the regatta.
- timing - results reliable and available - medal ceremony - fun other than racing - communicating to people the historic importance of the regatta
big problem is not being able to take trailers off the island; also it is the middle of CORA regattas
1) More Masters Events 2) improve the start line 3) Dedicated ferry for trailers and trucks 4) promote your event
Improved buoing system Dedicated ferry for trailers both on and off the island . This is 1 day per year-surely the City could make it happen. Further improvement to the sound system -greater range so even spectators know what is happening. Start area, lack of warm up area. More Masters events- scrap the Masters 1x and do 4's and 8's Dedicated and marked trailer spots staked out so that 2 big clubs are not side by side jockeying for space all day
Confirming and policing all aspects of getting on and off the island for the athletes and the trailers. Hard to think of other areas to improve as they change every year. If there is a concern one year, it doesn't show up the next year. Weather was a concern in 2016 but there is nothing that anyone can do about that. A thought that came to me is trying to implement heats and finals? Limit the events more but offer a progression so that athletes are racing more?? Please don't do anything silly like add mixed events. Having a dock to use would improve the safety concerns of launching and landing shells.
Ensuring that the trailers get on and off the ferries in a timely manner is always a priority. Ensuring that everyone attending knows about ferry process and the tickets and timing would be good.
Location is a bit of an impediment. Regatta is always better to attend on a Weekend, not everyone always takes the July 1 as the holiday.
This comment is not what ddra doesn't do because I know it isn't something the organization control. The transportation of club trailers is an experience of frustration every year.
I think that having a proper starting platform or stakeboats would be a good improvement.

Opportunities

Now, could you consider the opportunities facing the DDRA? A useful approach might be to look at DDRA's strengths and ask yourself whether these open up any opportunities. Alternatively, you may want to look at DDRA's weaknesses and ask yourself whether DDRA could open up opportunities by eliminating them. What's happening out there that DDRA can capitalize on? What new, useful technologies are coming that should be incorporated into the regatta?
5 - use a drone to film the events, and broadcast on a big video screen to see start and 500 M mark, video coverage of the racing
5 - leverage new technologies - social media for promotion & communication to elevate the presence of the regatta, live streaming of results, use to attract crowds and introduce them to the sports of rowing, canoe. Kayak and dragon-boating, use NT members to promote the events, be present, answer questions.
3 - properly marked course, buoy lines all the way, help junior rowers steer

- 3 - potential for novel events to attract more participants (not sure what they might be), dash races (rowing), more Junior events for rowing (U17, U19)
- 3 - limited opportunities from paddling perspective, other competing events,
- 3 - a new venue, not on Island
- 2 - no comment, happy to discuss
- 2 - Make the 150th Canada Day event special - attract previous DDRA athletes, past Presidents, e.g., Jack Guest, revive the after-regatta party, on-Island lunch? Invite US clubs—Wyandotte, Buffalo West Side, Syracuse, invite the Mayor for award presentation, given long standing history of the event, really big celebration—banner, flags, event programs
- 2 - improved finish line technology (video), loud horns that all athletes can hear as they cross
- 2 - better start, help junior rowers
- 2 - better method to post results online or on message board on athletes' side, post current and past results online, winning points club should get an award/trophy
- 2 - add charity component to event to raise profile, attract partners/sponsors, media coverage?
- 1 - use TREIM to measure economic impact so that media reports can include this information
- 1 - speak to Councillor Pam McConnell about commitment to getting a dedicated vehicle ferry for the day and getting boats off the Island after the regatta
- 1 - need a sponsor --someone young and fresh—on the DDRA
- 1 - Joe does too much, he is very valuable
- 1 - improve sound system
- 1 - if CK'ing leaves, add more rowing events
- 1 - high performance (paddling) athletes refuse to attend because peers not there
- 1 - grow the dragonboat event, use it to attract money for DB'ing and for DDRA
- 1 - get a government grant for the 150th
- 1 - encourage clubs to provide more volunteers
- 1 - document the regatta and store online; document course set-up so that more people know about how the regatta runs and is delivered
- 1 - better way to get on and off the Island—would attract more participants
- 1 - better communication within umpires (control, start, on-water, finish line) - rowing
- 1 - ask the clubs what they want in races on the program. More masters (rowing). More Juniors
- 1 - More races to attract broader swath of participants

All responses to this question:

A new venue?

Opportunities seem to be limited from a paddling perspective as participation is waning and other events compete with DDR. Some novel approach may attract more participants - no idea what that may be.

N/A

A change in venue, more races to attract a broader swath of participants. With the proliferation of regattas in the past 10 years the DDRA July 1st regatta is no longer the big draw that it was in the past. In fact with many competing Canada Day community celebrations across the country in conjunction with the country's 150th birthday it may be difficult to drum up interest in this regatta.

Our sporting group would rather travel on land to a site where there is a properly marked course with some improved technology (video) on the finish line in the selection of the

winner crews. Our high performance athletes are looking for competition with their peers and with the travel to and from the island other clubs outside the Toronto area refuse to attend due to the access to the island.

A better method of results posting, either on line or message boards on the athlete side.

New, useful technologies are unknown to me. The site is picturesque but it poses challenges for young athletes and para athletes. We have learned to manage and work with tour boats and motorists nearby or through.

I don't think technology plays a factor. the biggest discourager of the regatta is getting on and off the island. If there was a better way to do it, more would participate.

This is not an easy question but it must be asked. Well done on asking it. I have one idea. Because it is Canada's 150th anniversary, could we seek out previous DDRA athletes, alumni, and past DDRA presidents such as Jack Guest, and put out a special invitation and make a positive fuss over them? The other big discussion is an after regatta party. One interesting piece of history. Years ago, it seems as though the DDRA had a lunch, quite the event, at some point, on the island. How on earth did they do that, and still run the regatta? I'd love to know because the old programs and meetings mentioned this. Age old problem of people being tired afterwards. And having to get home as quickly as possible. It's too bad. I know the island would be perfect but then this delays everyone getting off the island, unfortunately. I really believe that we could approach the American rowing clubs, in person, and really make a pitch to come back to the DDRA, especially with the U.S. dollar at 0.75 cents. Wyandotte Boat Club, Buffalo West Side (or equivalent, because there have been changes there), Syracuse and any others. Perhaps an extra effort to coax them north for our 150th anniversary year for Canada. I'd be willing to try this. I have to say how valuable Joe Lyttle is to our DDRA. Joe is doing so much and too much to help us and frankly, we need to help Joe more in the years ahead. I think we should speak with James Dann to really see where the City is coming from regarding the Ongiara and trailers. I'd speak with Pam McConnell (Toronto Island councillor) and try to persuade her that we need help, that is, predictable ferry schedules, especially returning from the island and thinking of acquiring an extra passenger ferry for Dominion Day to take pressure off the Ongiara. The councillor has to have the willpower to make it happen, not just state platitudes. We are doing very good work at making this regatta fun and a success but there is always more to do to make it even better. We must never settle for "status quo".

With respect to dragon boat racing, there is a huge potential to grow the event and use it to attract attention and money (money for DDRA, and money for better value for the participants). A separate proposal on this will be submitted to the DDRA for review by the Rusty Dragons. I believe adding a charity component to the event will raise attention and partners and participants to the event. In my case, I am proposing that we partner with the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation (CBCF). This will also contribute to my goal of attracting more breast cancer survivor teams to this special event. I also coach my own BCS team who would be event hosts for other BCS teams. I need more flexibility to be able to do this, all the while guaranteeing the DDRA the funds they need to run the event and make it better.

I think drone footage from one years events would be an invaluable promotional tool for future regattas. Drone footage combined with "action side" video could create a fantastic visual and also help draw more public attendance

I mentioned some thoughts in the previous question. Please look at that. - need to encourage all clubs to provide volunteers day of or for planning - leverage technologies such as social media. - need to document (AI) this regatta - need to consider course setup and how we can eliminate the requirement to have a (full) course. If we need it, We need to document-video how the course is setup as very few ppl actually know what needs

to be done. It is also challenging to find resources for this task as it happens on June 30 and most times this falls on a weekday.
Love that the regatta is on the Island. So unique! Also the fact that rowing and canoe/kayak are combined in one regatta. If C/K don't want to continue to be involved hopefully a Rowing event will be able to continue
Opportunities; review the program of races with the involve people, For example there are only a few races of master's in Rowing. Talk with Dragon boat and Kayak and create a "actualized" program that is attractive to more participants and better racing. In Rowing should be focused in Junior and Master Rowing. Improve the sound system, Put a TV screen that you can see the start and 500 m. mark. Better communication between control, referees, starters and Finish line (and announcer). Buoys line, Clear Finish line, Clear starting line, some competitors are lost. Shot gun or a buzz when they finish.
No comment
I think that the main strength of the DDRA is that it is a historic regatta and is indeed unique not only because of the location but because of the silver mugs for awards. The DDRA should play on and build itself up as one of the historic Canadian regattas. Perhaps the DDRA can really pump itself up as a Dominion Day / Canada Day "classic" sorting event for Canada's 150th. Special government grants? It would be a perfect fit in any official Canada day celebrations. A presence on social media leading up to and during the event would elevate the visibility of the regatta. Current and past results should be posted online. The overall winning club should be presented with a points Trophy which would create a greater drive for clubs to field larger teams to try to win it and give crews who don't have a shot at winning be able to fight for that 4th or 5th spot knowing their points would help the team overall, similar to the NWIRA Lipton Cup. I know that there is a points winner right now, but what about building a new tradition and history around a big prize or Trophy!
I think that the ferry issues are the biggest issues but the location of the island in the biggest strength. Therefore I would like to focus on other opportunities. For the technological side of things I think that video coverage of the racing is becoming much more feasible and this could have a positive impact on the spectator experience.
I think if can get better coverage from media and maybe a major sponsor
- drone camera + rented big screen is my dream - financing from the city - dedicated 'money chaser'? - get sponsors on board - somebody younger and fresh..
1) live streaming results 2) dash races
Capitalize that it is on Canada day- have a political presence (e.g. John Tory) even for a cameo appearance or award presentation to promote the long standing history of the event. Big screen to be able to see more than just the last 100 m of the races. Make it a big celebration not just another small regatta -banners, flags, event programs
Not sure If you have something specific in mind I would be happy to discuss
I think that every sport event held within Toronto needs to ensure that they are using a Tourism region economic impact model (TREIM) so that pre and post media events or reports can emphasis the importance of having events like the DDRA which may be perceived as being inconvenient to the citizens of Toronto. I have spoken to the DDRA folks and I believe that they do this already. They need to continue do this and keep up the good work of an excellent event.
DDRA should look at the regatta program and consider other events or "maximizing" events. ie. U17 and U19 events and then OPEN events. It has become more of a "Junior" Regatta.
Some plan to make the course easier to start and steer for junior rowers

Canada Day attracts crowds to the island for the day. Introducing them to the sport of rowing would benefit the sport in new rowers of all ages. This could be advertising the event as a FREE spectator sport at the grandstands; Utilizing the local National Team Members to be present and answer questions etc.

External Roadblocks

What external roadblocks exist that block DDRA's progress? What obstacles does DDRA face? Thinking back to the weaknesses you identified, are any likely to make DDRA and the regatta critically vulnerable? Is there significant change coming in the sports of canoe-kayak, rowing and dragon-boating that you are aware of that would affect DDRA? Are economic conditions affecting the Canada Day Regatta's financial viability or other viability?

- 7 - lack of interest from paddling clubs, competing regattas, can't attract volunteers, high performance athletes need to compete at other events for national rankings/funding
- 7 - Toronto Island is not convenient, cost effective or accessible facility, threatens canoe clubs participation, and threatens rowing clubs' participation as well; not being able to get trailers off the island faster may make the regatta critically vulnerable; access to the Island
- 3 - we cannot let the quality slip or the City may pull our permit, as we are too much trouble.
- 2 - moving to Welland would threaten the regatta - would be just another CORA, no longer unique; a regatta on the same day at another site with same entry fees and trophy mugs
- 2 - sell the City on the regatta - tradition, etc., City should be more supportive
- 2 - none
- 2 - no changes anticipated
- 2 - continue tradition, roadblocks make it special
- 1 - would encourage more trailers to stay overnight. Incentive through free island accommodation?
- 1 - trailer for small out of town clubs to load onto, ahead of time
- 1 - new RCA membership structure will reduce entries
- 1 - new people are not attracted to the regatta, we are not motivating anyone to be active
- 1 - member clubs don't support regatta
- 1 - if national masters' championships move to a costly location, canoe masters' participation will decline
- 1 - downtown hotel with regatta discount might help
- 1 - distance is wrong for rowing and future of DDRA regatta is more with canoe and dragon-boating
- 1 - cruise or sail boats passing through race course
- 1 - continued cooperation with the City to operate the regatta
- 1 - coach boats may not be available, wonder about driving through the western gap which is dangerous
- 1 - CDR is not viable; many paddling clubs will have their own celebrations of Canada Day this year on the 150th, and will not attend
- 1 - better course is needed if we want to attract more dragon-boats.
- 1 - add more junior sculling events

All responses to this question:

We believe that the amount of organizational, volunteer, staff and athlete time and resources need to sustain DDRA are not viable. This year is Canada's 150th Birthday and

club's have local obligations which will preclude them from participating or fielding volunteers for DDRA.
Biggest threat for paddling is lack of interest among some clubs, other regattas on same weekend and inability to attract volunteers.
N/A
There are simply too many competing events, many of which are mandatory for athletes to advance through their divisional, provincial and national rankings to compete at the highest level to make DDRA a viable event for canoe-kayak in the future. The Toronto Island is also no longer a convenient, cost effective or accessible facility.
The only external roadblocks are other competitions during this period with the possibility for our high performance athletes to get great competition to test their position in the pecking order for national funding. The future of the regatta for canoeing will be the continued support of our masters competitors based on the location of our national championships. If our championships are moved to a costly location our membership is usually lower.
Location and inconvenience threatens involvement of canoe clubs at this regatta.
I am not familiar with future changes to the airport or to the water course. There needs to be continued cooperation with the City in order to conduct a regatta.
no.
I don't know of any changes to rowing that could affect this regatta. And I do not know about canoeing, kayaking, or dragon boat racing. One thing I would stress is to encourage more trailers to stay overnight on the island, July 1st to 2nd, to take the pressure off the trailers lining up to get off the island. Perhaps incentive, such as free island accommodation, paid by the DDRA, for each trailer driver. I do not believe economic conditions are affecting the regatta much. The trailer issue may make the regatta critically vulnerable if it doesn't become a little better in the sense of getting trailers off the island a little faster. I don't believe there are external roadblocks. There is the national canoeing regatta every year that draws people away from us. This is very very sad. Don't know if there is an answer to this.
Access to the Island for equipment is a big risk and needs to be kept a priority (as it has been). The drivers need to be taken care as best we can (creatively if needed). Attracting more dragon boat teams requires a better course (more buoys). That may ultimately require more heats allocated to dragon boating and that is not a priority at this time. Dragon boat registration fees could be used to try to get more buoys for everyone's use. Lack of promotion may ultimately cause the City of Toronto or other key supporting organizations to say we are not worth the trouble, or we may not be able to afford the basic quality of the event that we demand. We can't let the quality of the event slip (it is already done well - just saying we need to treat all participants special).
- additional cost of transportation to the island - costs of getting equipment to the island - volunteer availability - city permits
Not sure what is going to happen with the waterway at the islands. Is there an environmental risk. What about driving the coach boats to the island. That western gap can be nasty. What if Argos is not located where it is today. Our waterfront is changing. Coach boats may not be available. Not all clubs are able to provide coach boats. I saw that row Ontario has a mobile regatta can we leverage their supplies including coach boats?
I think that the future of the DDRA regatta will revolve more around canoe/kayak and dragon boat than it does rowing. The race distance specifically works against the sport of rowing.....it works specifically for both canoe/kayak and dragon boat.

Having a downtown Hotel with a regatta discount might help? A trailer or trailers available for singles and double from small out of town clubs to load boats ahead of time would be helpful.
Involve the City, express DDRA strengths (Tradition, Multi Sport, More the 600 participants, etc), DDRA has to sell this event to the city as important as it is.
N/a
The talk in past years to move the DDRA to welland would weaken the event. It would create just another CORA and lose much of what makes it unique.
I do not see any roadblocks in the future from our club's point of view.
1. I think that the RCA & Rowontario user fees may reduce entries to our regatta. 2. Member clubs not supporting regatta 3. A regatta at an other site on the same date offering the same entry fees and prizes. 4. City of Toronto not allowing regatta on Toronto Island. What other sites are available
- I think we're failing to attract new people - as we don't give them a chance to have an impact - everything is as always was - and that is not motivating anybody to be active - Maybe we just need to 'rejuvenate' the regatta
1) growing volunteer base 2) promote event to drive revenue
Boats that hold up races by coming through the race course during the day. The pond should be closed to all other recreational traffic that day! This should be a big part of Canada Day in Toronto- the City needs to get on board with promoting and assisting in making it happen. Tourism Toronto !
Coming from a rowing club that hosts a few events I can agree that there are economic conditions in the rowing world. There is no doubt that clubs are travelling less and are very choosy about what events that they attend. A regatta has to be economical which means to rowers that there must be valuable race experience for the money spent. DDRA also has the added bonus of being on the island and therefore accessible to beach, parks and theme park. It is no surprise that there are more and more young scullers and less young sweepers. It is sad to see and it is showing at all levels. A junior age kid would likely make the national junior team in a pair easier than the single. I do suggest a push to more junior sculling events for both age categories but try to keep the eights or the big clubs will go elsewhere as we still have eights. Seniors are another challenge as I feel less and less of them continue to row competitively.
PRC will continue to support this regatta because our members who have attended again and again demand it and talk up the fun and competition they have at it every year. I know that Toronto is busy on Canada Day and there will be pressures from the Island airport and increased on the water activity, however, this tradition of the DDRA should be preserved.
Location is the one vulnerability. Not easy to get boats to etc. Extra travel required etc.
Transportation to the regatta site but the road blocks are also what makes Dora special
I see the location as a threat as well with the cost of trailering and time involvement for transporting our equipment.

Additional Comments

<p>Are there any more comments you would like to make about DDRA and the Canada Day Regatta that will help the DDRA Executive as we work together collaboratively to develop the strategic plan in the coming months?</p>
<p>7 - keep up the great work, thrilled you are doing a strategic plan, hopefully volunteers will keep delivering this regatta, hope it keeps going, keep it on the Island, keep doing what you are doing</p> <p>4 - no further comments</p> <p>2 - regatta doesn't fit well with timing of junior rowing crew selection, training is more important than racing; need more youth participation</p> <p>2 - effort for a one-day event is no longer viable for our canoe club, it's had a good run, but its over now, no longer relevant, paddlers no longer interested in attending</p> <p>2 - make it bigger & better, make it attractive to attend, get clubs excited about the race, more exposure—online results and stats on the races—great way to engage clubs—what clubs have won what events over the years? Points trophy winner over the years?</p> <p>1 - Olympian to showcase the sports</p> <p>1 - need new blood with newer ideas on the DDRA Executive -foresight to make the DDRA a must-attend event</p> <p>1 - need list of duties, each role should have a “job description” to bring in more younger people</p> <p>1 - move it to Welland</p> <p>1 - more rowing events</p> <p>1 - keep TREIM going, celebrate heritage sports</p> <p>1 - involve all Toronto rowing clubs</p> <p>1 - get commemorative t-shirts for the day</p> <p>1 - finding someone to drive our trailer is a challenge</p> <p>1 - book a dedicated ferry for trailers</p>
<p>All responses to this question:</p>
<p>DDRA has had a great run and is only made possible by a large number of volunteers across a variety of clubs. The effort for a one day event is no longer viable for our club.</p>
<p>N/A</p>
<p>I truly believe that this event has run it's course. It filled a void at one time but is no longer relevant. Our paddlers are no longer interested in this regatta.</p>
<p>It would be great if we could get some new blood with some newer ideas on the executive that might have some foresight in making the DDRA the event you MUST attend.</p>
<p>Move the regatta to a more accessible location i.e. Welland</p>
<p>I have no other comments.</p>
<p>Book a ferry for the trailers.</p>
<p>Again, I would like the DDRA Executive to give more consideration to ideas to enhance the profile of the regatta by having, for example, an Olympic athlete do an exhibition race. People comment that they would like more publicity. The way to do it is to invite a "Wayne Gretzky" type athlete to the island. We try to invite the Mayor of Toronto but Canada Day seems to always trump every other event, including our event. Let's give some thought to a very special guest this year, to celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary. How about sending out a broadcast e-mail, asking for any photos of the regatta, so we can assemble a collage of memorable photos, to mark Canada's 150th year? Respecting someone's ideas</p>

are the strength of any Executive Committee and our DDRA is no exception. Congratulations on this survey. I hope the comments will be helpful.
Keep up the great work! The event exists because of the volunteer work of many people, and that volunteer work should be recognized more and perhaps rewarded more in some way. This includes both the committee and the day of event volunteers. Note that this summer is Canada's 150th birthday. I will be playing that up in dragon boat planning. It is also the 15th anniversary of dragon boats at the event. I am planning commemorative T-Shirts for the event that promote the DDRA and the event. This should be done by the DDRA in general to help promote their event outside of the actual event. I would volunteer for this in conjunction with existing plans. This can also be a small fundraiser. (Tim M)
I am thrilled we are doing this strategic plan
I think the regatta offers a unique format and opportunity when compared to our traditional racing calendar. Unfortunately, for my program (junior based) it doesn't fit well with the timing of and selection of our crews. As a result we are usually just putting crews together at this time of year and racing is a lesser priority than training.
Hopefully the volunteers who organize this regatta are willing to keep the regatta going!
You have to make this bigger and better, that beside the logistic problems (get in and out from the Island with boats and equipment), Make interesting the event that "everybody" wants to be part of. Right now with all the complications and the "lack" of professional running of the event itself. A lot of Rowers in my club don't want to race it anymore. Should be a prestigious event that all athletes want to be part of.
I hope that this event continues to thrive, our club has trailering limitations, meaning having someone who is willing and able to take the trailer on the ferry and spend Canada Day in Toronto. Hopefully our club will participate in the future.
More exposure to get the clubs excited about the race. It is one of the most fun regattas of the summer for our rowers. Providing online results and stats on the races could be a great way to engage rowers and clubs. What clubs have won what events over the years? What years did each club win the overall points? Have a running total like they do for Stanley Cups. Wouldn't it be great if the Don's knew this was their 50th appearance at the DDRA or that Leander upset SCRC for overall points for the first time in 30 years. Statistics can make the regatta come alive and make it worth racing. Just a thought.
I would like to see more youth participating in event in all disciplines.
For Rowing how many more entries can the regatta handle.
I think we need a list of duties around the regatta; then have an 'opening' for specific duties Also, it would be good if existing 'workers' had in their 'job description' to bring in future replacement, groom them, teach them... But, in short and simplified - old folks are not 'allowing' potential new folks to do much. (I had a vision for the Programme, poster, media relationship, sponsors - and all that fell apart as that would be making too much waves with certain members...)
No further comments
No
Keep it happening and keep it on the Island. We need to ensure that ALL the Toronto area clubs assist in putting it together not just the few people who come out every year.
Good for you for asking for the opinion of the clubs. Forecasting change is a challenge and I am highly aware of the challenges from grumpy clubs about trailering equipment on and off the island. I would be happy to share the perspective of a large club after you have met, or when you have ideas to discuss. Good luck to you
Please keep doing what you are doing. Update your emergence plan each year. Keep those Economic Impact numbers current year over year to provide to the media. This year

emphasis Canada's 150 and the celebration of the heritage sports and activities that made Toronto's waterfront a mecca in past and preserve it so that future generations can celebrate it as well as a place of competition, physical activity, and fun.

none at the moment