

## Suggestions for Alternative Ways of Getting Publicity

When most people think about getting publicity for their regatta or event, they think about coverage in the sports section of the newspaper or on the sportscast during the six o'clock news. But when you think about publicizing your event, go beyond the traditional sports media in your thinking.

- **Morning newscasts** – Morning newscasts are always looking for stories where they can go live during the 6-8 a.m. hour. Rowing fits the bill perfectly. The athletes are already in their element. Talk to the producer of the morning show or the “features” talent. Don’t assume that just because the sports department knows about the event, the rest of the station knows as well. **It probably doesn’t.** A Learn to Row program is a great opportunity to get a feature reporter or a sports reporter in a boat. Don’t be afraid to ask them to participate in the program.
- **Local Weathercasts** – Many local weather reporters go out to events to do their weather reports live. Learn to Row day would be a good fit. There is naturally beautiful scenery for the weather report and there is a whole different audience to reach. See if the weather reporter would come out earlier in the week in order to promote the day. Have club members rowing in front of the dock or boathouse for good shots and ask the weatherperson to announce Learn to Row Day is coming up.
- **Sports Talk Radio** – This may seem like an obvious choice, but it is one of the least utilized forms of sports media. If your town has a local sports radio station that does a local talk show, your regatta is a perfect fit. It is hard to fill 2-3 hours of sports talk, five days a week without it getting stale or boring. An upcoming event is the perfect break from the monotony. Another suggestion – have the station broadcast live from Learn to Row Day. Work with them. It is great publicity.
- **Weekend or Community Sections** – Weekend and community sections love to feature interesting events in their cities and sporting events are fair game. Just because it’s a sport, doesn’t mean it has to be in the sports section. The cover of a community or weekend section will reach a larger portion of the readership than a page five story in the sports section. Talk to the section editor well in advance, particularly in regards to a weekend section, because those features are planned out months in advance.
- **Alternative Press** – Many large cities have free, weekly newspapers that focus on entertainment and events around town. Make sure these papers are on your press list. They have larger readerships, particularly with people who work

downtown and with the younger demographic. You also may be able to barter a sponsorship deal for free ad space.

- **Local Calendar Entries** – Don't forget to get in all of the local calendars, whether it's the local television station or newspaper's online community calendar, the Convention and Visitor's Bureau's online calendar, the Visitor's Bureau's print magazine that is distributed at the local hotels or the community calendar in the local weekly newspaper.
- **Deliver Memorabilia to the Television Stations** – Personal contact is very important in public relations and television is, obviously, a visual medium. Prior to the event, take a couple of shirts, a pin and an event program to the local sportscasters for them to show on air. While a station may not come out to preview the event, these items provide great visuals for a brief mention of the upcoming regatta as the sportscast is beginning or ending. It also provides another tangible reminder for the reporters to come out and cover the event.