



Part of the big Head of the River crowd at West Lakes yesterday

Oarsome veterans recall glory days of the '40s

THE color and splendor of the annual inter-school Head of the River rowing regatta on West Lakes is more than just a hotly contested sporting contest — it's also a celebration of tradition and history.

But yesterday history was there to watch proceedings for itself — in the form of the surviving members of Scotch College's First VIII rowers from 1939-44, when the school dominated the premier race, winning in four of the six years.

Rowers from those glory days have reunited this year to celebrate Scotch's 75th year of rowing and came away from yesterday's action invigorated, proud and excited by

the changes that have occurred since they were pulling the oars.

"In our day, we were rowing on the River Torrens. West Lakes wasn't even thought of then, but this certainly brings back memories," said Mal Davis, who stroked for Scotch when it dead-heated with St Peter's College in 1940.

For some of the aged oarsmen, the most touching aspect was renewing the strong bond that develops between crews — and nearly all felt emotional at the sounding of the college bagpipes. One thing that has not changed since 1939 is the Scotch College tradition of piping its crews on and off the water.

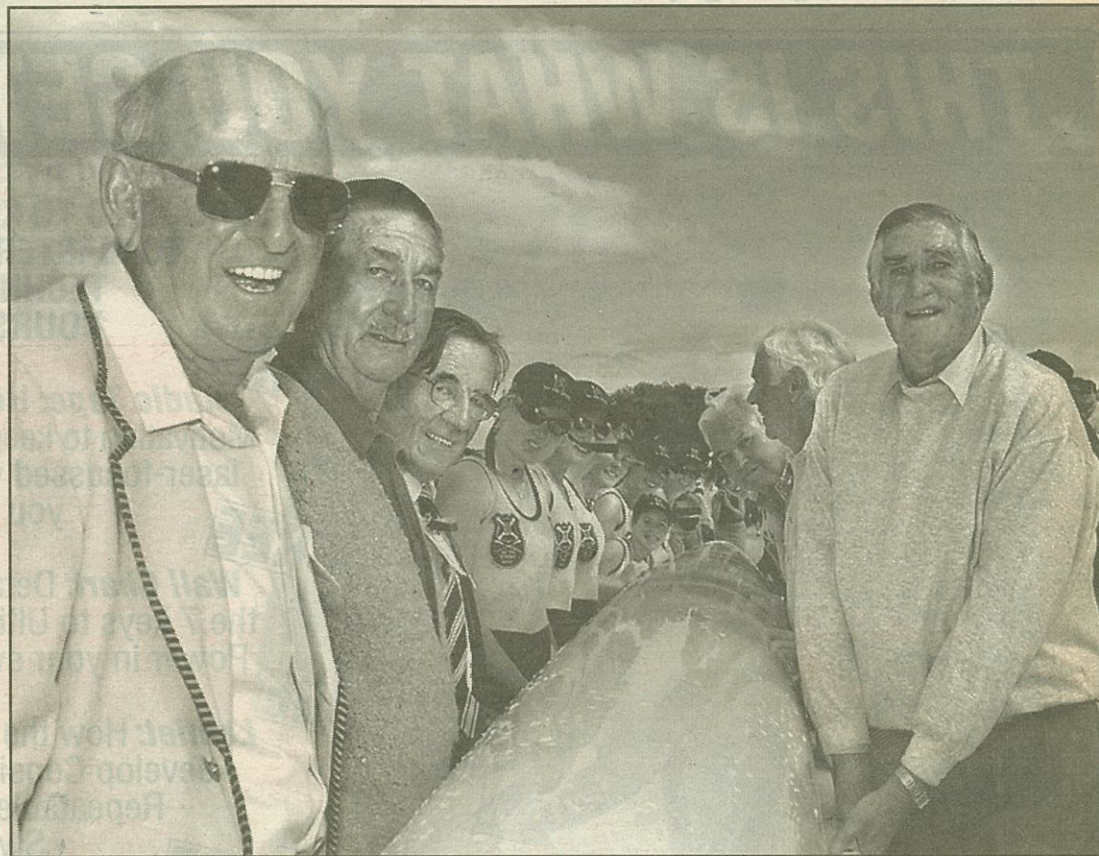
Scotch has won only six Gosse Shields for the schoolboys' First VIII — with the greats of the war years winning four of those.

So, yesterday, to have the Scotch boys power into second behind St Peter's and then to finish the day seeing the Scotch girls' crew comprehensively win the Florence Eaton Cup made the reunion and the 2000 Head of the River something to remember.

"It was lovely to see the girls win with such style — they were beautiful," Peter Trumble said.

"It just shows what the bagpipes can do."

— DAVID VALENTE



Scotch College's 1939-winning eight with the current successful girls' crew

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