

FAQ

WOMEN IN COACHING

A THREE YEAR PROGRAMME

1. DOES IT REALLY MATTER IF THE COACH IS A MAN OR A WOMAN? SHOULDN'T IT JUST BE THE BEST COACH FOR THE JOB?

Of course we want the best coaches for the job. They are the ones who have the most appropriate experience, skills, qualifications, values and behaviours for the particular coaching context that they are in. Without a move to accelerate the increased number of females coaching, RNZ are missing out on the values and skills that women bring and we know that environments flourish with diversity.

2. WHY SHOULD WOMEN WHO COACH BE TREATED DIFFERENTLY FROM MEN WHO COACH?

We don't believe they are being treated any differently however we do believe we have some catching up to do. Currently RNZ does not have many women nominate for

international teams or RPC positions. We want to ensure that everyone is being given an opportunity to progress and in order to do this we need to be able to up-skill our female coaches. Special measures are sometimes needed to provide equal access for both men and women to participate in sport and hold positions of responsibility.

3. WHY SHOULD WE BE TRYING TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF WOMEN COACHES?

Although our sport sits at around 50% gender split for rowers at all levels, the percentage of women coaching at all levels is significantly lower. Our records currently estimate 30% female coaches at school and club level, with a small portion of Head Coaches. Of the 28 coaching positions at the RNZ level we have had a maximum of three women a year in RNZ coaching roles and we are yet to have a full-time elite female coach.

With so many female athletes and coaches having different levels of experiences means there is a huge loss of knowledge and potential expertise.

4. WHAT'S THE POINT OF WOMEN-ONLY PROGRAMMES? DON'T THEY JUST DISCRIMINATE FURTHER OR PUT THEM IN POSITIONS WHERE THEY ARE NOT READY?

Of course women need to be able to operate in all environments and with their male counterparts. However, history in RNZ coach courses shows the majority of the participants have been male. So yes, the women's programme has been created to provide a measure of catch-up.

Research has also shown that women are more likely to put their names forward for female only groups, they feel more supported and confident in a female only environment to enhance learning.

5. WOMEN ENTERING THE COACHING RANKS WILL EVENTUALLY WORK THEIR WAY UP. WHY BOTHER WITH CATCH UP PROGRAMMES WHEN CHANGE WILL HAPPEN NATURALLY AND IN ITS OWN TIME?

Rowing NZ currently provides opportunities to try and increase the opportunity for men and women to increase their coaching potential and fulfil their ambitions and yet there has been minimal movement in the number of female coaches at the international level. There is little evidence that the wait and see approach has ever produced any significant change.

6. WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH PROGRAMS FOR COACHES AS IT IS. WHY SHOULD VALUABLE RESOURCES BE DIRECTED AT SUCH A SMALL PART OF THE COACHING POPULATION?

Rowing NZ currently has multiple programmes of similar investment with the majority going to male coach development. We are simply trying to provide equal opportunity. Failure to bring women into coaching ignores a large, untapped pool of resource.

7. WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF WOMEN COACHING WITH NATIONAL TEAMS?

We are always looking for ways to strengthen our coaching and with more women coaches means different life and leadership experiences, beliefs, values and attitudes. One of the reasons that corporations have focused on advancing women into leadership roles is to ensure a full range of perspectives to confront business challenges. Sport too, should be more active in tapping into these expertise. The low numbers also translate to a lack of role models for female athletes. We want to show that it is a viable career option for both men and women.

