

A photograph of a rowing team in a scull on a river. The rowers are wearing yellow tank tops and black caps. The water is dark and rippled. The scull is white with a green stripe.

The power of Firbank Rowing

The results matter in the Firbank Grammar rowing program, but equally so does the way our students go about their training, racing and approach to challenges. That is what makes the difference. That is what sets Firbank Rowing apart and it is intrinsically weaved into the school fabric.

Eleanor Crute, Head of Rowing, is relatable, respected and fair

Leading the way and setting the standards for this is Firbank's Head of Rowing, Eleanor Crute. Eleanor is a respected member of the Victorian Rowing community. She brings years of passion and experience from her own time rowing. She rowed at an elite level post school for many years before switching to coaching. Eleanor coached for Victoria last season and currently holds the role of Senior Women's Coach at Banks Rowing Club. She is relatable, respected, and fair. Eleanor, along with her Junior Coordinator Sophia Bendall, bring a 'can do' attitude to Firbank Rowing and it is mirrored by the students in the program.

"Being part of a rowing community is something unique and exciting. At Firbank Rowing we want everyone to be themselves and find a sense of belonging. It is important to me that we cater our program to every athlete. We embrace everyone's goals from participation to performance." Eleanor Crute, Firbank's Head of Rowing

Impressive results have been achieved

Firbank's rowing results speak for themselves. The 2022-2023 season saw Firbank step up and achieve significant results at Head of School Girls'. Of the 17 crews fielded, 12 achieved top 5 placings including 2 gold and 3 bronze medals.

Firbank rowers are known for no grit no glory

You can pick a Firbank crew at a regatta by their smiles, their focus and their resilience – no grit no glory. It is their enjoyment of the sport and their determination to do their best for their squad mates that makes the program thrive.

Firbank's rowing program is selective at Year 8. Once in the program, the rowers are tested throughout the season to encourage improvement and consistency of effort. This breeds optimism and resilience into our crews which translates well into results on the river but also in life. Our unique testing structure is designed to identify athletes who excel throughout the training cycle.

James Tomkins stands out in our rowing club

We are incredibly proud that two former Firbank rowers are now part of the Senior Australian Rowing team. And two of our current rowing coaches, Will Achermann and Lucy Burnell (Class of 2019) have represented their country.

James Tomkins is Firbank's Rowing Consultant in Residence – OAM, OLY, Australian rower, seven-time World Champion, and three-time Olympic gold medalist. James is a much-loved role model with an enormous presence on the banks. We are very fortunate to have him as part of our program. His wealth of experience and knowledge is rare.

Rowing families build lifelong friendships

Beyond the program's exceptional coaches and consultants is an active and supportive parent group who are willing to roll their sleeves up and help with regatta duties, fundraising, and events. They are a proactive and social group of parents who are enthusiastic supporters of the Firbank rowing program.

Students involved in rowing at Firbank are passionate about the sport and all it involves. Rowing at Firbank can take you places. It provides great fundamentals of self-discipline, goal setting and organization and most importantly it leads to strong lifelong friendships forged on the banks of the river at the dawn of each day.

"I love rowing because it's the first sport that has really brought unity between my friends, coaches and me."

Rebecca, Year 10 student