



New Zealand Olympic Ambassador

Emma Twigg

Olympian number:

1097

Discipline:

Rowing

Specialist event:

Single scull

Emma was born in Napier in 1987. As a child, she stood out as a natural athlete who was talented in a lot of sports. She started rowing in 2000, showing promise right from the start.

When she was in year 12 at Napier Girls' High School, she won the under-17 and under-18 single scull titles at the Maadi Cup national secondary schools regatta. This double win aligned Emma with Olympian Caroline Meyer (née Evers-Swindell), who is the only other rower to win both titles. In year 13, Emma retained the under-18 title. Emma's success at school extended beyond the lake – she was also chosen as the head prefect in her year.

In 2005, Emma won the single scull at the World Rowing Junior Championships in Brandenburg, Germany, making her mark on the international rowing scene. She has been New Zealand's top single sculling female ever since. In 2007, she lived up to her world-class title, by winning the single scull at the World Rowing Under-23 Championships. That same year, she was the youngest by seven years to row in the final at the Munich World Rowing Championships.

Quick facts

Favourite food: Sushi

Favourite movie: *Prefontaine*

Favourite music: Florence and the Machine

Childhood heroes: Caryn Paewai and Sporty Spice

Current favourite athlete: Roger Federer

Biggest injury: Rib stress fracture

Biggest sacrifice: Sleeping in

Job outside sport: Work for ANZ Bank in sponsorship



**New Zealand
Olympic Education**

As a teenager, Emma dreamed of rowing at an Olympic Games. Her hard work paid off in 2008 when she was selected to compete at the Beijing Olympic Games. Emma's performance at her first Games was impressive – she finished third in the B final and ninth overall. The Beijing Olympic Games were a great chance for Emma to gain more international experience. At the age of 21, her rowing career was just beginning.

In 2010, Emma won Bronze at the World Rowing Championships. These championships were particularly special for her, because they were held in New Zealand at Lake Karapiro. Emma was motivated by the support she received from the home crowd. She won Bronze again in 2011 at the World Rowing Championships in Bled, Switzerland. That same year, she won Gold at the World Rowing Cup in Lucerne, Switzerland. Emma turned her focus towards the 2012 London Olympic Games.

Emma came second at the World Rowing Cup in Munich in June 2012. She knew she would be up against some tough competition at the Olympic Games, but was prepared to dig deep for Gold:

“There’s four or five of us who can win on the day. It’s all about getting the processes right... if I can have a satisfactory World Cup campaign, arrive in London in good shape and be the one who produces something special on the day gold could be mine”

(Emma Twigg, Hawkes Bay Today, Tuesday 24 July).

Despite all her hard work, Emma narrowly missed out on a medal in London, placing fourth in the finals. Emma's international success is down to the long hours of training that she does with coach Richard Tonks. On average, she rows 200 kilometres a week. She also attributes her success to the rowers that she trains with, because being part of a great team inspires her to train harder. Rowing is in her family's blood – her brother Jamie has also represented New Zealand in rowing.

Emma is now based in the Waikato but still rows for the Hawke's Bay Rowing Club in national competitions. She graduated from the University of Waikato with a degree in public relations and communications. In 2012, she was named a New Zealand Olympic Ambassador.

Career highlights

- 2012** London Olympic Games: Single scull (Fourth)
- 2011** Lake Bled World Rowing Championships: Single scull (Bronze)
- 2011** Lucerne World Rowing Cup: Single scull (Gold)
- 2010** Lake Karapiro World Rowing Championships: Single scull (Bronze)
- 2008** Beijing Olympic Games: Single scull (Ninth)
- 2007** Under-23 World Champion Women's Single scull (Gold)
- 2005** Junior World Champion Women's Single scull (Gold)

Links

Emma Twigg's Olympic Museum profile:
<http://imuseum.olympic.org.nz/museum/athlete/profile/26385>

Emma's Twigg's website:
<http://emmatwigg.co.nz>

Follow the NZ Olympic Team here:





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Official Olympic Sport

Rowing

Men's rowing has been part of the Olympic Summer Games since 1900 (it was cancelled in 1896 due to bad weather). Women's events have been part of the programme since 1976.

The basics

There are two styles of rowing in Olympic competitions.

- Sweep rowers use a single oar on one side only. They compete in crews of two, four or eight people, with equal numbers of oars on each side of the boat.

Coxed or coxless crews are all sweep rowers. The coxswain is a person who steers the boat, but doesn't row. In coxless boats, the boat is steered by one of the crew, normally using their feet.

- Scullers row with two oars. They compete as singles or in crews of two people (called double scull) or four people (quad scull).

Sculls are slower than other categories of racing boat, so scullers are known as the strongest and toughest rowers. Single sculls are also often used in training for team events to improve rowers' techniques.

The course

All Olympic rowing races take place over a 2,000m course. There are six lanes in each race, and the first boat across the finish line wins.

Rowing is the only Olympic sport where competitors cross the finish line backwards.

Important points

At the Olympic Games, each country is allowed to have only one boat for each rowing event. This can mean selections are strongly contested, such as during the trial series raced between Rob Waddell and Mahe Drysdale in 2008.

There are lots of things for rowers to be aware of in their races. Some important ones are:

- getting a good start (a false start results in disqualification)
- staying in their lane (crossing into another lane results in disqualification)
- working as a team to get the most distance out of every stroke
- saving just enough energy to push to the finish.



Olympic events (at the London 2012 Olympic Games)

Men

- Men's single sculls
- Men's coxless pair
- Men's double sculls
- Men's coxless four
- Men's lightweight double sculls
- Men's lightweight coxless four
- Men's quadruple sculls
- Men's coxed eight

Women

- Women's single sculls
- Women's coxless pair
- Women's double sculls
- Women's lightweight double sculls
- Women's quadruple sculls
- Women's coxed eight

