

Friday 8 July

International Youth Cup underway – including Vanuatu!

After a windy few days of training in Sydney and Penrith, the 2011 International Youth Cup Regatta got underway this morning in near perfect conditions at the Sydney International Regatta Center (SIRC).

The Youth Cup is an annual fixture on the Rowing Australia (RA) calendar, aimed at giving the next generation of rowing stars a touch of international competition as they begin their rowing journey on the 'Road to Rio 2016' and beyond. Conducted by Rowing NSW on behalf of RA, the Youth Cup has proven to be an important development regatta. New Zealand has been a regular attendee at the regatta and are current title holders of the 'Rusty Robinson Trophy' – the Champions trophy awarded in honor of one of New Zealand's, and Australia's greatest ever coaches, Rusty Robinson.

The event this year also marks an important moment in Oceania's rowing history, with the team from Vanuatu making its first regatta appearance representing their proud nation.

Vanuatu Association President, Tim Merrick along with coaches Greg Pechan, and Cam Crichton and a team of eight travelled to Sydney to compete in their first ever regatta. For some team members, it was their first ever flight out of Vanuatu.

Oceania Rowing Confederation President, The Hon Pat McNamara, gave high praise to the team of coaches and athletes as they powered down the course in the M1x, LM1x, LM2x, races on Day 1 of the regatta.

"At this moment I think its very fitting that we give credit to Tim Merrick and his committee and to the athletes themselves for even getting here, and being part of the international rowing community. We hope that this is just the start of their careers in rowing, and we wish them well in that journey," commented McNamara.

"I also want to thank a few key organisations. Rowing Australia, FISA (the International Rowing Federation) and Rowing New Zealand have been instrumental in securing added funding that has enabled the team to attend this regatta and to drive the program back home in Vanuatu. I'd also like to thank the IOC and VASANOC – without their valuable Olympic Solidarity funding, this program would definitely not have made such strident gains over the past two years."

The regatta – held in conjunction with the Under 23 National Team's pre-departure camp – will conclude on Sunday lunchtime with the awarding of the Rusty Robinson trophy.

Results can be seen live on [ROMS](#).