

The Voice in Munich. Keep up with the worlds: regular results, forecast, tips, news and views. Rowing Voice live from the world championships continuing all week.

RowingVoice is published by Rowing Ink.

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Britain's women's eight lead world champions USA and the People's Republic of China, in Wednesday's repêchage. Photograph: Peter Spurrier/Intersport Images

Eights on finest form

Race by race: where the GB crews finished during the two repêchage days, and where they're going next, by Christopher Dodd and Rachel Quarrell.

Women's eights

Repêchages

Qualified to final — GER, CAN; USA, GBR
Already qualified direct from heats — ROM, AUS

GB crew — Carla Ashford/Baz Moffat/Alice Freeman/Louisa Reeve/Natasha Howard/Alison Knowles/Katie Greves/Jess Eddie/cox Caroline O'Connor

GB rowed a brilliant race to reach Sunday's final. A flying start transformed into a flowing rhythm that put them in the lead after 500 metres. When the Americans changed gear and went past by halfway, the Chinese were trailing and chasing the Brits at 38. NZ, meanwhile, were a canvas down on the China and had pushed past by 1500, where the Americans continued to lead the Brits. That was the order in which they finished. Germany, Canada and Netherlands had a great race for the two qualifying places in the other rep, with the Germans hanging on to first place and the Dutch losing out on the final. The Russians were bounced out of this race because bow seat Svetlana Fedorova was banned for two years for a doping infingement, leaving three crews vying for two places in the final. In the heat on Monday,

Russia finished fifth behind GB.

GB result — second

Next race — final on Sunday

Number to Olympics — 5

Men's eights

Repêchages

Qualified to semifinal — USA, SUI, FRA; GBR, POL, BLR

Already qualified direct from heats — GER, NED; CAN, AUS; RUS, CHN

GB crew — Tom James/Tom Stallard/Tom Lucy/Tom Solesbury/Josh West/Ric Egington/Robin Bourne—Taylor/Alastair Heathcote/cox Acer Nethercott

After the lose-the-plot panic of Monday, which ended in stroke Heathcote being stretched away after overexerting, a much better execution. GB obeyed their coaches and didn't overcook it in the second and third 250m, content to stay a few seats behind leaders Poland rating about 35. They upped the ante a fraction before 1500m and moved past the Poles, still only rating 36, before a short and sweet end sprint to confirm first. "Kept their heads well" was Mark Banks' verdict, and first place ensures they avoid an outside lane in the semis. GBR's women, allowed all the way back up to the start to wind down, yelled their heads off for the lads as they started the race. In the other rep, USA went out to show that 3rd was a cockup on Monday, and grabbed a full length lead then even-split. Same time as GBR, inter-

Weather forecast:

The forecasts are changing rapidly at the moment. The Rowing Voice takes no responsibility for baked or frozen spectators or rowers.

Thu 30: 15-17deg, rain and thunderstorms at times.

Winds 8mph from the NE.

Fri 31: 15deg, sunny and cloudy intervals. ENE winds at 4-5mph.

Sat 1: 17deg, cloudy, warmer, winds 2mph N.

Sun 2: 20deg, cloudy, sunny intervals, wind 2mph NW.

Champs TV/radio:

BBC: coverage on Sat 1 and Sun 2 September on BBC 1, BBC 2 and BBC interactive. Regular updates all days on Radio Five Live.

Eurosport:

Thu 30 August 08:45-11:30

Fri 31 August: 13:30-15:00

Sat 1 and Sun 2 September: live coverage.

WSCN:

Live coverage via pay-per-view online TV available from FISA's website, www.worldrowing.com

Online commentary:

Live from the race course in Munich via the Live Race Tracker on FISA's website.

Results: online from FISA, updated regularly.

estingly. News of the day: neither Kiwi eight has made it to the Olympic stage.

GB result — first

Next race — semifinals on Friday

Number to Olympics — 7

Women's coxless fours**Race for lanes**

GB crew — Georgina Menheneott/Rebecca Rowe/Vicki Etiebet/Vicky Myers

The four has been at the back end of all the recent changes in the women's sweep squad, hence not the easiest preparation for a difficult event. A straight final beckons, but first they had to go through this largely dressage race for lanes against five strong crews. They sensibly paced it, racing hard but not at sprint rates.

Never really up with the leaders, and slipping to fifth as the Germans passed them. USA won, but nobody was giving it their all, so wait for Saturday to see where the medals drop.

GB result — 1st

Next race — Straight final on Saturday

Number to Olympics — 0

Lightweight women's singles**Repêchages**

Qualified to semifinal — Melanie Kok (CAN), Laura Tasch (GER); Marit van Eupen (NED), Michaela Taupe-Traer (AUT); Fabiana Albrecht (SUI), Valentina Galmarini (ITA); Andrea Dennis (GBR), Ilona Hiltunen (FIN)

Already qualified direct from heats — Benedicte Dorfman (FRA), Maria Pertl (DEN), Jen Goldsack (USA), Mirna Rajle (CRO)

GB crew — Andrea Dennis

Dennis faced a pretty uphill battle this summer, but proved herself recently when she met the time standard to come as a competitor.

Her base speed has clearly been improving, as proved in the rep when she was able to sit out ahead of the competition and watch Spain and Finland battling it out for the second qualifying place. She's now assured of a B-final place at least. In the previous heat, Marit van Eupen

(who had not been beaten internationally for eight years until Jen Goldsack demolished her on Sunday) unsurprisingly made it look even easier, and is unlikely to have lost any confidence or real form after her loss in the heat.

GB result — first

Next race — semifinal on Thursday

Number to Olympics — 0

Women's single sculls**Quarterfinals**

Qualified direct to semifinal — Q1 Zhang Xiuyun (CHN), (NZL), (POL); Q2 Rumyana Neykova (BUL), (RUS), (SWE); Q3 Michelle Guerette (USA), Sophie Balmay (FRA), (ITA); Q4 Ekaterina Karsten (BLR), Mirka Knappkova (CZE), (ESP)

GB crew — none

Still a bunch worth watching, who give a masterclass in sculling every time they race. Karten and Neykova are old rivals, with Karsten holding the upper hand for many years. Zhang has joined the party this time, but even she probably doesn't have the speed to get ahead of the physically and mentally resilient Belarussian. Recently the joker in the pack has been American Guerette, who has a world bronze and is A-final quality through and through. She has a secret weapon, being coached by Charlie Butt, whose crews always peak well for world championships. No surprise to see these four heading the quarterfinals: they are the ones most likely to be contesting medals on Saturday.

Next race — semifinals on Thursday

Number to Olympics — 9

Men's single sculls**Quarterfinals**

Qualified direct to semifinal — Q1 Lassi Karonen (SWE), Aleksandar Aleksandrov (BUL), Andre Vonarburg (SUI); Q2 Olaf Tufte (NOR), Tim Maeyens (BEL), Ondrej Synek (CZE); Q3 Mahe Drysdale (NZL), Alan Campbell (GBR), Peter Hardcastle (AUS); Q4 Marcel Hacker



With Tom James still substituting for the ill Tom Parker, Britain's men's eight stick to their race plan and win their repêchage

Photograph: Peter Spurrier/Intersport Images

(GER), Sjoerd Hamburger (NED), Santiago Fernandez (ARG)

GB crew — Alan Campbell

Quarterfinals feature in the single sculls where entry numbers are high, so the top three scullers qualify for two semifinals while the bottom three go to two semifinals to sort out who goes to finals D for rankings 13-18 and E for rankings 19 and below. None of the top men were exercised in the quarterfinals, all the major suspects getting through, including the Olympic champion Olaf Tufte who was the only top ranker not to win a heat. The Tideway Scullers comrades Campbell (GB) and Drysdale (NZ) cruised home in Q3, Drysdale leading at 28 with a huge run on his boat.

GB result — second

Next race — semifinal on Thursday

Number to Olympics — 11

Women's coxless pairs

Repêchages

Qualified to semifinals — GBR, RUS, NED

Already qualified direct from heats — AUS, BLR, GER; CAN, CHN, DEN; NZL, ROU, USA.

GB crew — Beth Rodford/Natasha Page

This was a four-boat repêchage to drop one from the semifinals and it was a tussle all the way, with the order changing. Italy eventually lost out after being in the lead a halfway. Rodford and Page, who had the misfortune to be in the fastest heat on Sunday, were third at 500, second at 1000 and 1500 and overtook Vera Pochitaeva and Alevtina Podvyazkina (Russia) to win by less than a second. Nienke Kingma and Helen Tanger (Netherlands) were the third qualifier.

GB result — first

Next race — semifinal on Thursday

Number to Olympics — 8

Arms-only women's single

Repêchages

Qualified to final — Helene Raynsford (GBR), Martyna Snopek (POL); Svitlana Kuprianova (UKR), Laura Schwanger

Already qualified directly from heats — Liudmila Vauchok (BLR), Claudia Santos (BRA)

GB crew — Helene Raynsford

Helene was unlucky to suffer an asthma attack on Monday while racing, which severely affected the world champion's ability to exert, especially in such a hugely upper-body-dependent discipline. She got herself towed in by the rescue boat after the finish, and was visibly fine afterwards, which she proved by winning her rep. There's a difference in styles developing in the arms-only singles, and both Raynsford and other reps winner Vauchok tend to use less swing and higher rate. However, the Ukrainian may well have saved some energy, as she was well ahead of the titanic battle between the American and Canadian scullers. Raynsford

was harder pressed by the Pole. GB adaptive coach Chad King was delighted at the end of Raynsford's race. "That's put her firmly back in the hunt for medals", he said before cycling off to watch the double.

GB result — first

Next race — Saturday's final

Number to Paralympics — 8 (correction to earlier note)

Trunk/arms double sculls (1000 metres)

Repêchages

Qualified direct to semifinals — GBR, CAN, ISR; POL, UKR, BLR

Already qualified direct from heats — ITA, USA; CHN, GRE; BRA, AUS

GB crew — Karen Cromie/James Roberts
Cromie and Roberts were fifth fastest in Monday's heats and dominated their rep, winning ahead of Caitlan Renneson and Wilfredo More Wilson (Canada) who came through Igor and Mary Kogan of Israel for second place by a twentieth of a second. The second rep was won by the Poles Piotr Majka and Jolanta Pawlak in a time nearly ten seconds faster than Cromie and Roberts, with Ukraine and Belarus bringing the semifinals up to the full compliment of

GB result — first

Next race — semifinal on Thursday

Number to Paralympics — 8 (correction)

Men's coxed fours

Race for lanes

GB crew — James Orme/Marcus Bateman/Tom Wilkinson/Oli Moore/cox Phelan Hill
The coxed four is the reservoir of extra brawn for the men's sweep squad, so the first to be sacrificed when things go wrong. Original stroke Tom James was shifted up into the eight when Tom Parker fell ill on Monday, which made rowing him in the fours race for lanes somewhat idiotic when the massively important eights repêchage was looming on the same day. Parker is better and out of bed, but still not quite 100% and is being kept away from the rest to ensure no infectious spread. Meanwhile coxed fours coach Richard Tinkler undertook a large re-rigging job, reorganised the lineup to put Oli Moore at stroke (and on strokeside, whereas James is bowsides), and fitted spare Tom Wilkinson in at three. The result after very little practice was fourth, having been third earlier in the race. No knowing what will happen in the straight final on Sunday, except that James cannot now be moved back in to help them, because he did not leave the crew for medical reasons.

GB result — fourth

Next race — Sunday's final

Number to Olympics — 0

Who's left in

There are 27 events in total, of which 14 are Olympic-class, 9 non-Olympic, and 4 Paralympic (adaptive). Here is the roll-call of how the top rowing powers (large teams and/or good medal count) are doing so far:

Germany (full house, 25/25 crews entered) — 14 Oly, 9 non-Oly, 2 adaptive still in running.

Great Britain (23/24 entered) — 12 Oly, 7 non-Oly, 4 adaptive still in.

Australia (19/20 entered) — 13 Oly, 4 non-Oly, 2 adaptive.

USA (24/26 entered) — 12 Oly, 8 non-Oly, 4 adaptive.

Netherlands (12/14 entered) — 5 Oly, 6 non-Oly, 1 adaptive.

Canada (15/18 entered) — 8 Oly, 4 non-Oly, 3 adaptive.

New Zealand (8/11 entered) — 7 Oly, 1 non-Oly, 0 adaptive.

Italy (18/25 entered) — 7 Oly, 8 non-Oly, 3 adaptive.

France (13/25 entered) — 9 Oly, 3 non-Oly, 1 adaptive.

China (14/21 entered) — 8 Oly, 3 non-Oly, 3 adaptive.

China are host nation for the Beijing Olympics next year. So if they do not qualify for an event in Munich, they can be allocated a 'host place', which may otherwise be given away at the Final Qualifying Regatta or used by FISA to increase Olympic universality.

What they said

"I get no fame out of it, no money out of it. I am paying for almost everything myself, therefore I might as well be relaxed and enjoy it. Being stressed out is pointless. The experience might as well be positive." — Ivan Baldychev, USA LM1x, who began sculling a year ago.

"Playing rugby I had spent my entire career being told to put on more weight, protein shakes over my cereal, lifting weights, and still I was the runt. So when I took up rowing I could sit down and was exactly the right size." — Jen Goldsack, USA LW1x, late of the GB team.

"I've never seen so many GB coaches on the side of the course for a lightweight women's single sculls race" — Ian South, Goldsack's (British) coach.

"Improvement is possible in technical performance. All the measurements of forces are made during the stroke. But the most mistakes in rowing technique are made between the strokes, on the recovery." — Klaus Filter, boatbuilder



Steve Rowbotham and Matt Wells turn on the power against Italy and Belgium in the doubles quarterfinals on Tuesday
Photograph: Peter Spur-

Women's lightweight quads

Repêchages

Qualified to final — CHN, USA, GER, NED
Already qualified direct from heats — AUS, GBR

GB crew — Sophie Hosking/Laura Greenhalgh/Matilde Pauls/Jane Hall

GB qualified for Sunday's final from last Monday's heats, along with Australia. Four more crews join them from the repêchage won by China who led all the way.

Next race — final on Sunday

Number to Olympics — 0

Men's double sculls

Qualified direct to semifinal — Q1 GBR, AUS, BEL; Q2 USA, BLR, CRO; Q3 SLO, NZL, EST; Q4 FRA, GER, POL

GB crew — Matt Wells/Stephen Rowbotham

Two of these quarterfinals sorted themselves out into two races — one for places between the leading three who would move to semifinals, and one for the three stragglers. Fastest were world champions Jean-Baptiste Macquet and Adrien Hardy (France) who had the fourth quarterfinal sown up, while the Germans and Poles scrapped behind them for second. Wells and Rowbotham won the first quarterfinal, moving up from third at 500 to second at 1000 to first at 1500. Scott Brennan and David Crawshay (Australia) pressed them hard at the finish. Luka Spik and Iztok Cop (Slovenia), Olympic champions in 2000 and world champions in 2005, won the third quarterfinal, taking the lead from the Estonians Tonu Endrekson and evergreen Jueri Jaanson after 1000 metres. Matthew Trott and Nathan Cohen (NZ) finished second, ahead of the Estonians. Samuel Stitt and Matthew Hughes (US) dived with the Belarussians Dzianis Mihal and Stanislau Shcharbachenia all

the way to win the second one.

GB result — first

Next race — semifinal on Thursday

Number to Olympics — 11

Men's lightweight quad sculls

Repêchage

Qualified to final — GBR, GER, USA, DEN
Already qualified direct from heats — FRA, ITA

GB crew — Simon Jones/Robert Williams/Chris Bartley/Dave Currie

GB won the rep by leading all the way. Serbia and Hungary were dropped; Germany, US and Denmark qualified behind GB in that order, although their positions changed during the race. Heat winners France and Italy await these four in the final.

GB result — first in repêchage

Next race — final on Sunday

Number to Olympics — 0

Lightweight women's doubles

Repêchages

Qualified to semifinal — CAN, ITA, POL; GBR, JPN, USA

Already qualified direct from heats — FIN, CHN; GRE, DEN; AUS, GER

GB crew — Helen Casey/Hester Goodsell

Casey and Goodsell weren't noticeably bothered by losing to Germany in the opening heat: they remarked that their event is always tight, and got on with training. The rep was a smoother day at the office, with the GB girls holding a strong position and then sneaking through Japan just after halfway. Once that was decided both eased off a tad and let USA worry about staying far enough ahead of Ireland to qualify. The other rep was much less competitive, Hungary in fourth nowhere near worrying the Poles.

GB result — first

Next race — semifinals on Thursday

Number to Olympics — 8

Lightweight men's doubles

Quarterfinals

Qualified direct to semifinal — FRA, GER, CAN; DEN, JPN, AUT; ITA, HUN, AUS; GBR, GRE, CHN

GB crew — Zac Purchase/Mark Hunter

To convince you of just how incredibly tight this event is, a mere two seconds (2/3 length) would have covered all twelve semifinalists at the 500m mark today, and you can make that one second if you ignore the slow-starting Austrians and Canadians. Purchase and Hunter were narrowly led by Greece for a while, before their stronger rhythm took them ahead. "That's four-one", said Purchase, who detested losing to Greek stroke Vasileios Polymeros the one time they raced each other in the singles (2005 LM1x final). Highest-profile casualty was double Olympic champion Robert Sycz of Poland, who flaked before the race, possibly due to problems making weight. Rescued, Sycz was ambulated away, but Tomasz Kucharski clearly knows his rules - he got back in the double and rowed the course solo, so that the duo have officially registered a time (16-41.99) and can contest the C/D semifinal rather than being out of the competition completely. The reigning Olympic champions now only have one chance to qualify for Beijing, at the Lucerne final regatta in June. Quarterfinal three was meant to include Russia, disqualified when both Moiseev and Varfolomeev were caught for doping.

GB result — first

Next race — semifinals on Friday

Number to Olympics — 11

Lightweight men's fours

Quarterfinals

Qualified direct to semi-final — Q1 ITA, POL, EGY; Q2 AUS, DEN, USA; Q3 FRA, CHN, IRE; Q4 CAN, GBR, NED

GB crew — Richard Chambers/James Lyndsay-Fynn/Paul Mattick/James Clarke

In quarterfinals, three crews progress to semifinals, and in this case the four races were completed in similar times. France won Q3 ahead of world champions China, with Ireland in the third qualifying place (Cathal Moynihan/Eugene Coakley/Richard Archibald/Paul Griffin), having been in second place for some of the time. Canada overhauled GB to win Q4 — the Brits were leading at 1500. Italy and Australia were the other quarterfinal winners, both fairly comfortably.

GB result — second

Next race — final on Sunday

Number to Olympics — 11

Men's quads

Qualified to semifinal — BLR, USA; AUS, CUB

Already qualified direct from heats — POL, EST; GER, FRA; CZE, UKR; ITA, RUS

GB crew — Simon Fieldhouse/Sam Townsend/Alex Gregory/Ian Lawson

It had to happen eventually — the quad became the first GB crew to be cut out of the Olympic qualification zone. Nastily tough race in a nastily tough event. The fact that GB beat Cuba on Monday didn't count for much, as the Cubans found a new lease of life and burst out, leading for most of the course. Australia eventually pulled a bowball's width ahead of them, but Britain could not quite do the same, despite sprinting as hard as possible. In the other heat, USA pulled a blinder, coming back from fourth to beat Canada in a photofinish.

GB result — third

Next race — C/D semifinals on Thursday

Number to Olympics — 11

"You can get in a dogfight and let other crews in behind you"
— Mark Banks, co-coach with John West of the GBR M8+

"That was the weirdest reaction from a cox ever" — Jess Eddie, GBR W8+ stroke, after their race was stopped due to misalignment and their cox, Caroline O'Connor, shouted "Yes!!" ecstatically.

"The heat was all raggedy and fighting. This time we were zipping along"
— Baz Moffat, GBR W8+, on their repechage

"We had evidence which led us to the Russian team" — FISA Executive Director Matt Smith, on the doping scandal

"When our suspicions were confirmed we immediately tested everyone else who could possibly be suspect. All of those tests were negative"
— Matt Smith, FISA

"It's my first Olympic qualifying regatta and I'm learning something new every day" — GBR LM2x Zac Purchase.



Tough men: GBR LM2x Mark Hunter and Zac Purchase.

Photo: Peter Spurrier

Schedule for semifinal days

Thursday's racing

LW1x A/B semi 9:50 to 10:00
 LM1x A/B semi 10:10 to 10:20
 W1x A/B semi 10:30 to 10:40
 M1x A/B semi 10:50 to 11:00
 W2- A/B semi 11:10 to 11:20
 M2- A/B semi 11:30 to 11:40
 W2x A/B semi 11:50 to 12:00
 M2x A/B semi 12:10 to 12:20
 M4- A/B semi 12:30 to 12:40
 AM1x A/B semi 13:10 to 13:20
 TA2x A/B semi 13:30 to 13:40
 LTA4+ A/B semi 13:50 to 14:00

LM2x C/D sem 14:30 to 14:36
 LM4- C/D sem 14:42 to 14:48
 M4x C/D semis 14:54 to 15:00

LM1x E final 15:06
 LW1x D final 15:12
 LM1x D final 15:18
 W1x D final 15:24
 M1x D final 15:30
 M2x D final 15:42
 M4- D final 15:48

Friday's racing

LM2x E final 9:30
 LM4- E final 9:36
 LM2x D final 9:42
 LM4- D final 9:48
 M4x D final 9:54
 LW2x C final 10:48
 LM2x C final 10:54
 LM4- C final 11:00
 M4x C final 11:06
 M8+ C final 11:12

LW2x A/B semi 11:30 to 11:40
 LM2x A/B semi 11:50 to 12:00
 LM4- A/B semi 12:10 to 12:20
 M4x A/B semi 12:30 to 12:40
 M8+ A/B semi 12:50 to 13:00

W4x reps 13:10 to 13:20

AW1x B final 14:10
 AM1x B final 14:20
 TA2x B final 14:30
 LTA4+ B final 14:40
 AM1x C final 14:50
 TA2x C final 15:00
 LTA4+ C final 15:10

Sat: A finals 11:55 to 14:10

Sun: A finals 13:00 to 15:30

All times CET = GMT+2

Voices off in Munich

Shouts and murmurs

Tom James of the coxed four replaced **Tom Parker** in the bow seat of the British eight for their rep, as he had in the heat. **Liam Molloy** of Ireland withdrew from the lightweight singles before the rep round because of illness. **Nikree Phuttharaksa** of Thailand withdrew from the lightweight singles before the semi-final round because of sickness. The **Ukrainian women's double scullers** capsized during a rep, putting them out of the semi-finals, and Ukraine's single sculler **Svitlana Spiryukhova** was relegated to last place in her quarterfinal because her boat did not meet the minimum weight requirement. **Martin Yanakiev** was unable to row for medical reason, causing the Bulgarian double scullers to scratch.

Let the band play on

Racing has been livened up no end by a superb trad band which plays cheerful bursts at the completion of every race. The short intervals between races mean that some slow coaches on the course have not crossed the line by the time the band has given way for the commentary on the next race. For example, "Look for a silver lining" was being played when an Albanian sculler was somewhat dejectedly trying to get out of the way of the next race. Mind you, their song choice is apt, if a trifle un-PC: "Waltzing Matilda" greeted a winning Aussie, and "Slow boat to China" serenaded the arms-only adaptive single scullers during their repêchages.

Empacher nearly sunk

Reiner Empacher, the boat entrepreneur and photographer, was in a flat spin on Tuesday when his camera and bazooka-sized zoom went missing from the Empacher workshop and hospitality suite outside the boathouse. Reiner worked up quite a sweat until he found that a good Samaritan had hidden it away unless someone nicked it.

Bend ze knees

The Australian lightweight head coach had a disastrous Wednesday. Ducking under a boat while rigging, he tore his meniscus - a chunk of cartilage in the knee - in half. Munich University Hospital came to the rescue and by the time of going to press on Thursday morning he was being operated on to mend it. Ouch.

Achtung bitte

Germany's national federation is clearly trying to play down any element of militarism: the security at this worlds is the most lax in years. For two days there was no attempt whatsoever to stop those without passes from wandering around the course. Things tightened up

on Tuesday a little and by Wednesday a few staff were to be seen checking ID tags on the grandstand. The tightest security is however at the finish-line end of the media area, where those who can scam their way in hang about for the free food at the media cafe. The poor ladies who run the cafe are mightily concerned: they only have to put a plate out and within seconds it's been hoovered up.

Towels on the deckchairs

The German booking cock-up which led the BIRO supporters' club (who pay a premium to be FISA Friends and have a prime spot in the grandstand) to be relegated to block M, 200m down from the finish line, is still causing trouble. The Brits have now taken things into their own hands and are steadily moving further right. They were last spotted in J and may be able to get to block A by Monday morning.

Moonlighting

The closed circle of the international coaching community can cause embarrassment and problems. The coach of the Chinese W1x is an Italian, who was sacked from his national coaching team last year. He also coaches Belgium's W1x, and brought both scullers back to his favourite training location, Varese, for much of this summer. Meanwhile the Dutch M8+ are up in arms because every time Rene Mjinders comes to coach the Holland W8+, he can find out exactly how the men are progressing. Mjinders also helps the Swiss M8+, so nips straight back off to Switzerland with the information.

Rock-a-bye-baby

Hacks Martin Cross and Richard Wearne (both former internationals) were sharing a bed for a few days early in the regatta, to save on expenses. "Don't tell him", confided Wearne, "but I'm sleeping better than I ever do at home."

Fiddling the finish line

The Munich organising committee has been a tad slapdash, content to finish off facilities slowly through the regatta. The finish line was beepless for a while, then they started giving a beep just for the first crew to cross the line, which may have confused the rest. The bubble line marking it was only installed on Tuesday, but is less frothy in the even-numbered lanes. It all nearly went wrong for Spain's W1x, who was set to qualify for the semifinals until she eased early. Fortunately she had enough of a margin to successfully restart and cross in front of fourth-placed Portugal after all.

Hammer Smith

Tittle and tattle to voice@rowingservice.com