

# Commonwealth Games inspires Heriot Watt v Waikatu rowing match



Well we should explain that there was no travel involved. The students did do the rowing – except they weren't in the same place at the same time!

Rowers from Heriot-Watt Rowing Club took on New Zealand opposition from the University of Waikato for a Glasgow 2014 inspired international challenge match. The event took place over Skype in Zeros in the University's Student's Union on Tuesday of this week from 8.15 to 9.45pm.

The event was organised on the back of the ['Support a 2nd Team'](#) programme led by [sportscotland](#), the national agency for sport in Scotland. The programme provides an opportunity to create partnerships with nations participating in the Commonwealth Games with each local authority in Scotland paired up with a commonwealth country, providing inspiration for schools and organisations to develop links and learn more about sport and culture.

The rowing event, held on 1<sup>st</sup> April, was organised to celebrate Edinburgh's 2nd team of New Zealand, bringing together two similar projects from Scotland and New Zealand; the South-West Edinburgh Community Sport Hub based at Heriot Watt University and the East Hamilton Sport and Recreation Hub in partnership with University of Waikato and others. The Hub model unique to Scotland and the Sportville model unique to New Zealand sees clubs and community groups come together to share best practice, combine resources, make use of the same facilities, share costs and services and develop new ideas. A partnership

between the two Hubs/ Sportvilles, on the back of the 'Support a 2nd Team' programme, aims to increase awareness and the number of people of all ages participating in sport and physical activity in local communities, through shared learning.



The rowing event began with the two national anthems, with the Scots providing an added feature to the event with their very own Hakka. [DanceBase](#), the National Centre for Dance based in Edinburgh, taught a group of students the Hakka prior to the event, as part of a national project around the Commonwealth Games to [Get Scotland Dancing](#). After the Hakka, the student's from University of Waikato and Heriot-Watt University locked horns, with 2 men and 2 women making up a team who each contributed 1000 meters in the quickest time they could. The University of Waikato came out on top with a time of 14 minutes and 29 seconds for 4000m compared to 13 minutes and 27 seconds for Heriot-Watt.

The next race saw a celebrity match-up over 500m between James Hilterbrand and Ollie Atkins from Edinburgh Rugby and Ellen Halpenny and Brooke Leaver from New Zealand netball outfit Kia Magic. Despite the Magic players having a 15-second head start the Edinburgh Rugby guys caught up and pipped them at the line. The fastest time recorded was 1 minute 18 seconds from Ollie Atkins. Edinburgh Rugby's Grayson Hart was also in attendance and was challenged by the New Zealand MC and local MP for Hamilton East, David Bennett. Both were no match for Grayson who recorded a time of 38.3 seconds over 250m. Heriot-Watt Rower, Steve Mallon, rowed alongside Grayson and recorded an impressive 39 seconds over the same distance.



The final race saw two random students who had not experienced competitive rowing before have a go. Unfortunately for the two Heriot-Watt students were beaten by their New Zealand opponents.

Jessie Nelves, the International Officer for Heriot-Watt Sports Union, was pivotal in organising the event in partnership with the Community Sport Hub. On reflection, Jessie said "the event was fantastic, everyone got involved and looked to have really enjoyed themselves. As a Kiwi myself, it was fantastic to be able to raise awareness of sport and celebrate New Zealand as part of the celebration around Glasgow 2014, even if it did make me slightly home-sick!"

Here is the film to prove it!