

Petone hauls in shield in opening regatta



► Warming down after their win in the women's division one open fours race is the Petone crew (from left) Erin Pickard, Caroline Robertson, Christie Carswell and Ellen Wilson. Sean Manning coxed.

PETONE ROWING Club has launched its 2004/05 campaign in style, winning the first regatta of the season, the Redding Shield, on Saturday.

Wind was chopping up the water at Lambton Harbour so the action was switched to Petone Foreshore. There the Petone teams pipped Star Boating Club 48 points to 46 to claim the shield. 2003 holders Wellington Rowing Club were a distant third with 25 points.

One notable result was the fact

that the Wellington Interprovincial Women's Quad Sculls - including Petone rowers Erin Pickard and Ellen Wilson - raced in the Men's Open Fours and finished second. That's a good boost as the quad heads for the interprovincial championship regatta at Karapiro on 1 and 2 October.

The Rowing Challenge Shield (later renamed after H G Redding) has been competed for since 1921. Traditional opening day regattas were held as quarter mile or half mile sprints; these days the racing distance

is 500 metres.

"The idea is to give the rowers a bit of a 'lung opener' to start the season off - short dashes rather than endurance stuff," regatta secretary Kerry Lee said.

Saturday also saw 14 men's, women's and mixed corporate teams race off for the Spicer Shield for the fourth year running. The Beca Carter men's crew were first in line honours and the winners of the shield after handicapping.

- by Simon Edwards