

26 June 2010



Dear Reader:

Over the past 20 years I have had the privilege of being a member of Orenda as an athlete, a committee member and coach. I would like to highlight all of the great things that this club has brought to my life, but in reality this club *is* my life. With very few exceptions, all of the friends I have made were made during my years at the club. The characteristics that make up the person I have become were learned (both formally and informally) through sports and Orenda. This club provided me with the avenue to dream and to realize these dreams. I began paddling in “kiddie canoe” and got my first dose of confronting fear after blowing away down the lake then returning for a second try the next week. I soon developed a competitive spirit and learned the values of fair play and hard work once the races began. Having the opportunity to look up to four Olympic team members from my own club taught me that dreaming big was not necessarily just dreaming. It is now just short of two years until the London Olympic



Games and I firmly expect to be representing both Canada and my home club Orenda. During my years at university, coaching at the club allowed me to work while still paddling so I could afford to train at the level I needed. The ability to train at an Olympic level in Nova Scotia only exists, with few exceptions, in the sport of canoe/kayak and I am so happy to be able to remain part of such a great club.

Throughout my years on the national team I have spent time at many other clubs across Canada and have noticed one distinguishing feature about Orenda: no matter what your goals or abilities, there is a place for everyone. This club has always been so welcoming to anyone and everyone. Whether your goals are the Olympic Games or having a fun place to hang out during the summer, you’ll have a great time doing it at Orenda. The coaches have always made a special effort to include everyone and even make hard work fun. The programs cover ages 3 to 90, giving literally everyone a chance to participate how they choose.

There aren’t many things that make me happier than hanging out on the docks at Orenda in the summer. Knowing what it’s like to have so much fun as a kid, and the satisfaction of guiding them towards great things as a coach makes me so proud to be part of it. No matter how far away my goals in the sport take me, I always know that when I get back Orenda will be there to welcome me home.

Thank you for your consideration,

Genevieve Orton, National Team Member, Canoe/Kayak Canada.

