

**Speech by Mrs Gina Rinehart
Patron of the Australian Rowing Team
Executive Chairman of the Hancock Prospecting
Group
Hancock Prospecting 2017 Rower of the Year Awards
Saturday 28 October 2017, Sydney**

Good evening Olympians, Paralympians, World Champions, rowers, coaches and the entire rowing family,

It is truly wonderful to be here with you for your night, a night for each rower, your supportive families and your coaches too.

Tonight, I'm here as Patron, but I think much more than that, as I feel, and I hope you know, I feel more than just your Patron. I like and regard very highly your dedication, self-discipline, huge efforts and sacrifices, your wonderful strong desires to represent your country, your modesty, your values, and as I say many times, both your ambassadorship for Australia, and your huge contribution as role models.

Your attitude of achieving things through your own efforts is a very valuable attitude, in days of growing self-entitlement, wanting what others have strived for and worked hard to achieve.

As one little joke goes, but with a message, when a university student was telling her dad how hard she had worked to get good grades at university, going without many things her friends with lower grades had enjoyed, then echoing the views often heard around universities, trying to tell her dad off for his not wanting to pay higher taxes. The dad then tried to explain to his arguing daughter, he had been successful also through working long hours, and going without breaks for many things he'd have liked to do. The dad then said, well, let me explain it like this, you're telling me you've worked longer hours than other university students to achieve higher marks, going without many things you'd have liked to enjoy. Why don't you give up some of your marks to your friends who chose not to work so hard, who had many breaks but want to be given better grades! Unsurprisingly, the daughter didn't like this idea!

Australia has been built by people like you putting everything on the line and 'giving it a go,' built by fine dedicated people working hard for themselves, their families, and ultimately for our country.

Your chosen sport of rowing is similar in so many ways.

You train hard, you live the dream through your own efforts, of achieving at the highest order, in your case, at a national or world level.

Very few people have attained through their own endeavours, a position such as you have. You never have the attitude, I did not win that race, and I'm entitled to do so and want to share another person's medal! Instead, you work harder and achieve more. Your position is also a privileged position not without its responsibilities.

But the greatest responsibility is to yourself... that you have given it your all and with humility.

So in years to come, indeed for the rest of your life, you can look back on your sporting career with the utmost pride and say, I gave it my very best.

At this point, I also want to mention our president, and fellow Olympian, Rob Scott. I am very appreciative as I am sure you are too, of his dedicated efforts and leadership. Thank you Rob. *Applause.*

And, thank you to your coaches, your supportive families, loved ones and rowing staff. *Applause.*

Without them, this could not be happening. Because this is both an individual and a team sport. To get to the very top, you need the help of those you are closest to with your endeavours.

And, speaking of the top, warmest congratulations to all those who won medals at the 2017 World Rowing Championships.

Now, tonight I am delighted to announce the 2017 winner of the Gina Rinehart Leadership Award.

The winner of this year's award has set a great example and performance standard both on and off the water. I recently was able to meet her this morning in person where it was a great pleasure to formally open the fantastic new Hancock Prospecting Women's National Training Centre.

Her crew performed at a very highest standard this year winning a Gold Medal at the World Championship and has also being undefeated throughout the World Cup Series.

In addition, this person has committing much of her own personal time to be a part of the RA Cultural Champions group.

This person consistently demonstrates a strong work ethic, supports their teammates and is prepared to strive for continuous improvement.

Winning five gold medals throughout their rowing career, I am delighted to announce that Lucy Stephan is this year's winner. Warmest Congratulations Lucy!

I'm very fortunate to be your patron and I look forward to being so through to seeing many of you at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

Thank you.