

## Day 15 Activity

### Tales of the Todd Role Profiles Commercial Recreation

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#### Role #10- Special Events

You are the organiser of the Henley On Todd Regatta held every year in the dry river bed.

#### Background

In 1962, an idea was taken up to hold a rowing and sailing regatta in Alice Springs - and the fact that the town was 1,500 kms from the nearest large body of water was never seen as a problem. So, to parody the annual boating regatta between Oxford and Cambridge Universities on the Thames, they named the event the Henley-on-Todd.

Watching seemingly sane people race in bottomless "eights", "oxford tubs", "bath tubs" and yachts through the deep coarse sand of the Todd River provides an unique spectacle amongst world sporting events. The multi-event program attracts many local and international participants from the audience who often finish up on world TV news paddling canoes with sand shovels and in "land lubber" events like filling empty 44 gallon drums with sand.

The Henley-on-Todd is run entirely on a volunteer basis by the three Rotary Clubs based in the Alice. The entire proceeds - well over a million dollars raised over the years - allocated to local, national and international humanitarian projects.

Recreation is important for mental and physical health, as well as helping the economy. It requires buying equipment and supplies, and brings tourist dollars to the community as well.


#### Effects on the River system

This event attracts thousands of people to the river bed and there is potential for degradation of the area used as well as pollution by rubbish. However it is limited to one section of the river bed and is very well controlled so that after the event, it is almost impossible to tell where it has been held.

#### Concerns

Some people use the river bed as permanent or semi-permanent camp sites, especially close to town, and this can affect the attractiveness of the river for such special events such as the Henley on Todd.

You don't want too much regulation which costs event organisers money and deters them from using the river bed, but you need to make sure people do the right thing to keep the area beautiful as well.



Drawing of  
"Todd River"  
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Age: 8