A Silver Twin Handled Rowing Trophy, London 1912

Sold

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REF: 30971

Height: 24 cm (9.4")

Width: 13 cm (5.1")

Depth: 8.5 cm (3.3")

Description

1912 IARU Challenge Cup - Senior Eights Presentation Trophy.
An ornate silver rowing trophy in the classical Victorian style, a presentation prize for the prestigious Irish Amateur Rowing Union (IARU) Challenge Cup for Senior Eights. This urn-shaped trophy is a small replica of the original 1912 cup-affectionately known as "The Big Pot", which stands over one metre tall. According to The Big Pot by Micheal Johnson, nine such replicas-nicknamed "little pots"-were created for the winning crew members of that inaugural race.

The trophy features two large scrolling caryatid handles and rests on an intricately embossed pedestal base. Floral and scroll motifs decorate the upper body, with the central section adorned with crossed oars, flowing foliage, and two cartouches-one engraved with an image of an eight-man rowing crew with a coxswain, the other left blank. The absence of an engraved winner's name enhances its appeal as both a collectible and a reusable award. It is topped with a removable lid surmounted by a silver oarsman holding an oar. Both lid and base are hallmarked London 1912; the maker is unknown.

This piece not only exemplifies fine early 20th-century silversmithing but also commemorates a defining moment in Irish rowing history. As a surviving 1912 presentation trophy, it holds both artistic and historical significance-a tangible link to the origins of one of Ireland's most enduring sporting traditions.

The Irish Amateur Rowing Union, founded in 1899, launched the Senior Eights Championship in 1912. That year, a resolution at the IARU AGM approved the purchase of a grand championship trophy for £100-a significant sum at the time. Designed by Messrs. Gibson & Co. Ltd. of Belfast, the main cup and nine presentation replicas were manufactured in England. The first race was held at the Metropolitan Regatta in Ringsend, on the Lower Liffey, in July 1912.

The City of Derry Boating Club won the inaugural event, and each crew member received one of these silver replicas. The final image on our website shows the 1912 winning crew, as featured in The Big Pot by Micheal Johnson. A copy of this book, which chronicles the history of the trophy and includes team photos and results, is included with the trophy.

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