

Vandals wreck boats

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DRAGON BOATING: Fifteen Logan residents have had their 2012 World Dragon Boating Championships hopes shattered by an act of vandalism.

The attack over Christmas caused damage totalling \$20,000 to the Te Waka Dragon Club boats.

Two of the boats are split and broken while the third is unusable.

Te Waka Dragons president Jo Grammatico said she broke down in tears when members returned to training on January 4 to find the damage surrounded by beer bottles.

"Our world championships are in tatters and we were just devastated when we saw the boats," Grammatico said. "We have been there for 13 years and have never had a problem like this.

"There are 40 squad members going to the world championships and all their preparation is under threat."

The club secured its place at the April 2012 World Club Crew Championships by qualifying at the Australian titles last month.

Shailer Park resident Judith Row is one of nine members who represented Australia at last year's world titles and is part of a 15-person Logan contingent going this year.

"It was very disappointing to turn up to training



HEARTS BROKEN: Karen Tattersall and Judith Row from Te Waka Dragons (above), and some of the damage (right).

straight after Christmas ready to ramp up our campaign for states, nationals and our upcoming world titles to find the three boats damaged," Row said.

"Our club prides itself on its friendly and welcoming nature as well as being very competitive on the water and this act of vandalism cuts to our core."

It is a second major blow

for the club which was affected by the floods last year.

Grammatico said insurance would not cover all the costs.

"Each boat costs over \$10,000 and has to be shipped in from China and this can only be achieved when a certain amount of orders have been taken," she said. "It could take between six

and 12 months. We are a small club and have to fundraise for every penny. In the last six months we have ramped it up to try and get us over to Hong Kong and to have this happen is a real blow."

Brisbane River Dragons has allowed Te Waka to use one of its boats for the time being.

☛ **Anyone who can help can phone Jo Grammatico on 0407 659 237**