

The Pull Hard

PUBLISHED SOMEWHAT IRREGULARLY BY "FRIENDS OF COUGAR ROWING"
Vol 1, No. 1

1973-1974

THE 1973 ROWING SEASON IN REVIEW

by

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1973 saw the first real effort by WSU to boat competitive crews against other schools. True, 1972 saw Cougar crews in four races, but these crews were only there to get a feel for rowing and racing and to maintain and improve the interest in the sport among oarsmen.

The crews which rowing in 1973 were noted for four things. On the positive side of the ledger they had tremendous spirit and enthusiasm. They badly wanted to win. Additionally, they were in excellent physical condition; probably as well conditioned as any crew in the country. On the negative side of the ledger however, they tended to be on the small side, yielding about an average of ten pounds per man in both heavyweight and lightweight boats. A second major drawback was rowing technique which, though greatly improved over 1972, was still lacking in comparison to the better crews we rowed. This problem was compounded by the relative inexperience of both oarsmen and coaches as well as the fact that the isolated nature of the WSU crew did not offer an opportunity to observe and learn from the other crews except on race day.

WSU entered seven races in 1973. The following is a brief description of each race and their results.

Class Day. The second running of class day saw three boats entered consisting of a junior boat, a sophomore boat and a combination freshman-senior boat. The race started evenly with the boats stroking at 34. It soon settled down to a contest between the sophomore and freshman-senior boat. In the last five hundred meters the freshman-senior boat pulled out to win by about a length and a half.

WSU Invitational. This race saw boats entered from WSU, Seattle University, UPS and PLU. Three eight oared events were run in varsity, junior varsity and lightweight events. WSU took third out of four in the varsity and second in the remaining two for an overall respectable, though not outstanding performance. Perhaps the most exciting of these races was the lightweight event which saw WSU charge from last place and soundly pass and defeat Seattle II while making a good run at PLU, the eventual winner of that event.

WESTERN WASHINGTON INVITATIONAL. Traveling to Bellingham, the crews raced in three races the following weekend; the junior varsity and lightweight eight oared events and a four oared junior varsity event. In the four oared event, racing without the benefit of any practice in a four, WSU placed second in a three boat race. The lightweight placed fourth in a four boat race and in probably the most exciting race of the day the WSU varsity lost by three seats to the Western J.V. crew.

University of Washington. Traveling to Seattle the following weekend, WSU raced the powerful Huskies in varsity, junior varsity and lightweight events. Though losing in all categories the Cougars showed definite improvement and drew praise from the competition.

Corvallis Invitational. One of the more interesting and enjoyable trips of the year was the journey to Corvallis, Oregon where WSU entered crews in the varsity and lightweight eight competition and in the heavyweight four race. Though the four oared crew was out of it from the beginning, again due to the lack of a four to practice in, both eights performed well. The lightweight eight lost to Western Washington by about a length and a half. The heavyweight eight, however, rowed the Western Washington shell to a dead even finish. Unfortunately, the judges were not doing their job and took the word of a lady working in a garden near the finish line that Western won the race. One tenth of a second was then added to WSU's time in order to give Western the victory as the official stop watches for both crews showed identical times. Overall, the handling of this race by the officials was most unprofessional and disappointing.

Washington at WSU. Perhaps the biggest disappointment of the year was when the University of Washington traveled to Cougarville and raced the Cougars in heavyweight and lightweight eight divisions. The WSU crews performed poorly while those from Washington performed well. The results overwhelmingly went to Washington in both races.

Steward's Cup Regatta. Moving to Seattle early in May WSU entered boats in the junior, lightweight and LaFrambois eight categories. In the junior eight race results were encouraging as we were able to soundly beat Seattle U., a boat which had beaten WSU at the WSU Invitational. The lightweight eight finished last while the entry in the LaFrambois eight race was forced to row around children on a raft which caused them to be effectively eliminated from that race and finish last. All in all, the day was most disappointing but was made brighter by the annual ELMS Club banquet, once again under the able direction of Mr. Henry Garpheide.

Western Sprints. Concluding the first full year of competition WSU lightweight and heavyweight crews traveled to Los Gatos, California to participate in the Western Sprints. This was, without a doubt, the highlight of the rowing year. It was here that the Cougar Heavyweights came of age though once again plagued by bad luck. In the initial JV heat the WSU heavyweights performed well and beat two crews. The second chance heat was the one which looked like the Cougars race. However, at the 500 meter mark and battling California for first place, a lane marker broke and drifted into the Cougar shell which effectively eliminated the boat from the race. But even with this they were able to beat two other crews. On a protest the crew was allowed to compete in the JV final the following day. Though the Cougars finished seventh, they were never out of the race and were battling for first place at 500 and 1000 meters.

In the lightweight category the Cougars finished last of all the crews entered which gave them valuable experience and this is already paying dividends this fall.

Head of the Lake Regatta - 1973. Washington State entered four eights in the 1973 Head of the Lake Regatta in Seattle. Results were as follows:

Novice - 15th out of 20
Lightweight - 5th of 8
Elite 8 - 11th and 12th of 12

Though these results were most discouraging, Coach Struckmeyer indicated he thought all boats were rowing the best WSU has ever rowed.

COACHES CORNER

(By Bob Orr, outgoing Coach)

Ah sweet reminiscences, ah glorious memories. Yes fans, it was a grand year for the old crimson and gray crew. Aside from our gr-e-a-t spirit(s) and traditions, our handsome coaches, and our burly, bouncing oarsmen, you know, we had fun. Yes indeedy, it was a BIG year.

Hark, let us call the roll. High finishes in several races. Flex Dmigh elected Mr. Body Beautiful. Jim Verellen, a man of humble origin. Mike Klier, talents unlimited. Rollicking, riotous events, like interval training, coed stroking (now, that's not what you think it is), Keggers, swamping in the Cougar Crew version of the S.S. United States. But let us be modest.

Yes, avid audience, contrary to popular opinion we did ordinary things also. We did eat hot lunches, we did have daily turn out, and we did participate in the Western Sprints. We chloroformed the Huskies, served tea to California, and drank warm beer in our shell house. Yes, there's more life to the '73^o Cougar Crew. But there were too many stars, too many standouts to tell you about on this page, so keep turning fans, or better yet, drop on down to turnout sometime, and we'll tell you all about it over a bucket of auds.

Struckmeyer Takes Over (By Ken Struckmeyer, new coach)

It is with a great deal of humility and the realization that my rowing background is not the best that I assume the responsibility for the fortunes of WSU rowing. I realize that only one other crew has a Wisconsin graduate as head coach, that being the University of Wisconsin itself. Added to that is the fact that there have been three sterling examples of Husky manhood in the forms of Dave Pratt, Ken Abbey and Bob Orr guiding the fortunes of the WSU crew. Thus, I, a man of humble origin, with divine help from those previously mentioned and truly great gentlemen, know that the kind of help I will receive will enable the Cougar Crew to row gloriously into the sunset amid the blaphamies of Mike Klier as he observes Austin.

STRUCKMEYER ANNOUNCES OAR DRIVE

It is a sad but true fact that oars are a usable item. Every crew continually needs replacement oars for those broken or retired after their usefulness has expired. At about \$90.00 per oar the cost factor rises.

Right now the WSU crew needs a number of new oars. Three sets of tulip blades or 30 oars is the goal that has been set in order to make the changeover from standard to tulip blades and to supply equipment to increasing numbers of oarsmen.

To attain this goal an oar club has been formed. To join, one must donate the cost of an oar (\$90.00). The donor's name is then inscribed on the back of the oar shaft and each year for three years the oarsman who uses the blade will write a personal letter to the donor describing its history in competition for that year. When the oar breaks or is retired it is returned to the donor as a keepsake.

So, how about it alums? Can you help us out. If so, drop your check in the mail in the self-addressed envelope provided.

NEW SHELLS

Money to order two new shells has been obtained. Now under construction are a new four and a new eight (both as yet unnamed). This should really help the fortunes of Cougar rowing. Hopefully, this is only the start of a fine fleet. Desperately needed are another four and at least two pairs. Donations would be gratefully accepted.

UDDER ROWING

Wisconsin Varsity Beats Washington. Yes, the Badgers did it. They won two for two at 1000 meters at Nottingham, England, beating Washington by a half length each time. At the junior varsity level the Huskies whipped Wisconsin two out of three times over 2000 meters in various races held at Nottingham.

Moving on to Henley, both crews advanced to the semi-finals at varsity and junior varsity levels before being eliminated by other crews. Unfortunately, the luck of the draw did not pit these two fine crews against each other so there was no further chance to test which was superior.

HELP US KEEP GROWING

Your help, as a recent graduate, is desperately needed to enable the WSU crew to continue in its development. Over the past two years a fine tradition has been started in Cougar rowing. The shellhouse has been reconstructed and thoroughly painted as has the dock. Three serviceable eights have been obtained and a new four and a new eight are under construction. Three and half sets of standard oars are available. But, coaches Pratt and Struckmeyer indicated that even with this much equipment more men want to row than there is equipment available.

Recently enough money was donated to order a new eight, a new four and one set of tulip blades. But, this money will not cover the entire cost. We need your help. Please, please take the time to drop a five dollar bill (more if you can spare it) in the return envelope provided and put it in the mail. It's not a lot of money, but if everyone comes through it can add up to a sizable amount.

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

We want to know about you and what you are doing. Let us know. Fill in the information asked for below and any other that you think we ought to know and we'll print it in the next issue of the Pull Hard. Keep us informed, won't you.

Name

Years Rowed

Address

Occupation

Family News

Other