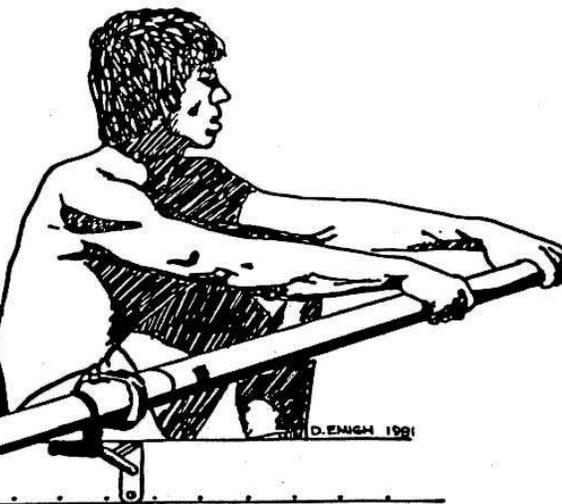


THE PULL HARD



A Washington State University Men's Crew Publication, Fall 2008, Volume XV, Issue I

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Aussie Rowing Adventure

Mitch Williams	Varsity Oarsman
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This semester I traded Pullman and its surrounding wheat fields for Sydney, Australia and its beautiful harbor. I chose Sydney based on three important factors. First, rowing is a very popular sport and there was no shortage of rowing clubs. Living in Sydney also allowed me to meet up with an old exchange student, Jason, that lived with my family for a while. Finally, I wanted to go someplace where I wouldn't have to bundle up and worry about frigid rows in October and November.

Getting off the plane in Sydney, it was clear from the start that my experience would be much different from the other Americans in my study abroad group. They all flocked to downtown and the famous Opera House. On the other hand, I jumped on the 438 bus out to the Sydney Rowing Club, figuring the Opera House and skyscrapers were not going anywhere during the next five months.

The coaches and rowers at the Sydney Rowing Club welcomed me with open arms. On my first day, the head coach wasted no time throwing me in a single scull and teaching me how to row with two oars (sculling) instead of just one (sweeping). I performed rather well that first time, but flipped my boat trying to get back on the dock, much to the delight of my new teammates. I considered it my baptism to rowing in Australia and decided that waking up at 4:45am over the next several months for morning practice would be worth it.

I quickly learned that rowers are the same worldwide. We have the same goofy personalities, work ethic, and level of insanity that only other rowers can identify with. My teammates liked having an American around to tease. They loved making fun of my accent and I would try my best to mimic and make fun of theirs. Nick-



Mitch Williams sitting bow seat after the Cayzer Cup race in Australia

names are very common in Australian culture and I affectionately became known as "Yankee." They were also very impressed with my ability to withstand their "cold" winter temperatures of about 50 degrees Fahrenheit. They were amazed by my descriptions of winters in Pullman and the layer of ice that sometimes forms on the boat before we can put it away in the boathouse!

After a couple months, the warm weather came and I was eager to begin the first half of their racing season. After surprising coach with my 6k erg scores, I was entered in boats with some of the club's better rowers. I got the opportunity to race in pairs, fours, and eights (sweep row boats). I also was able to race in singles, doubles, and quads (sculling boats). One of the highlights was competing at the Sydney International Regatta Center, home of the 2000 Olympic Games. The water was perfect and I even won a few races that day. Standing on the podium at that venue was a great experience.

Continued on Page 6

Cool Happenings:

- An Announcement from the CCAA meeting
- Pictures from the fall racing season on page 3
- Mitch Williams returns from Australia with new experiences
- New alumni opportunity for Class Day 2009

Cougar Crew Events Schedule for the 2008-2009 SeasonFall 2008

October 25, 2008, Saturday - Head of the Spokane - Spokane, WA

October 31, 2008, Friday - Head of the Snake - Pullman, WA

November 9, 2008, Sunday - Head of the Lake - Seattle, WA

November 15, 2008, Saturday - Duel vs. Western Washington - Pullman, WA

December 6, 2008, Saturday - Winter Sprint Dual vs. Gonzaga - Pullman, WA

Spring 2009

February 21, 2009, Saturday (date tentative) - Indoor Erg Dual vs. Gonzaga - Spokane, WA

March 21, 2009, Saturday - Class Day (Alumni Races and Reunion) - Pullman, WA

March 28, 2009, Saturday - Daffodil Cup at American Lake - Tacoma, WA

April 4-5, 2009, Saturday and Sunday - San Diego Crew Classic - Mission Bay, CA

April 11, 2009, Saturday - Dual vs. UW & Mom's Row - Pullman, WA

April 18, 2009, Saturday - Fawley Cup - Spokane, WA

May 2-3, 2008, Saturday-Sunday - WIRA Championships - Lake Natoma, Sacramento, CA

May 16-17, 2008, Saturday-Sunday - Pacific Coast Rowing Championships and Pac-10 Championships
Lake Natoma, Sacramento, CA

May 23-24, 2008, Saturday-Sunday - ACRA Championships - Oklahoma City, OK

Continue to check online for any scheduling info or other happenings with the team.

Fall Racing Report

Jimmy Johnson

Varsity Oarsman

October 25th, Head of the Spokane - Spokane River - Spokane, WA (5000 meters)

The Bulldogs of Gonzaga University proved to be too much for WSU Men's Crew. In the premiere race, GU's Varsity 8+ topped WSU with a time of 15:58 to WSU's 17:12. GU returns a strong class of Varsity rowers as well as a Novice class that was ranked 13th in the nation last year.

WSU beat two of the three GU V4+ boats in the Varsity 4+ race, but GU's C boat took the heat with a time of 18:06. WSU's 4+ B also beat their 4+ A's time of 18:53. WSU's second Varsity 8+ lost by about a minute to GU with a time of 17:20 to GU's 16:21.

In the Novice 8+ races, the GU C boat won with a time of 16:39, their A boat trailing with a time of 17:31. Following closely behind were WSU's Novice 8+ A, C, and B boats with times of 17:41, 18:40, and 20:38, respectively.

Freshman Sean Stoops said of the WSU Novice squad, "We were really pleased with how the Novice raced today. For the first race our boat has ever had, it really felt powerful and determined." Determination and power may be the motif for both GU and WSU throughout the rest of the 2008-2009 Men's Crew season.

November 9rd, Head of the Lake - Lake Washington - Seattle, WA (5000 meters)

The annual Head of the Lake Regatta has been held for 27 years. This year, the 3 mile course returned to its "classic" roots, starting on Lake Union, continuing east through the Montlake Cut to Lake Washington and finishing near the University of Washington's Conibear Shellhouse. The perennial powerhouse UW crew finished first in the Men's Collegiate Open 8+ with a time of 15:57:34. Following the UW were University of British Columbia and Gonzaga University with times of 16:10:97 and 16:12:80, respectively. Washington State University narrowly lost to the University of Puget sound, with times of 17:15:41 and 17:04:38, respectively, to finish 5th overall in a field of 9. The WSU alumni boat, a composite of former Cougar Crew oarsmen who come together once a year, finished fourth in their event, narrowly missing a medal with a time of 18:05:62.

November 15th, Western Washington Duel - Snake River - Pullman, WA (5000meters)

Matching apples with apples, WSU fielded two varsity and two novice oarsmen into each four towards parity with WWU's similar lineup. The race was too close for most spectators to call with WSU's 4 (rowing the Ron Neal II: bow Jake Logar, 2 Justin Bodolay, 3 Nick Estvold, stroke Mark Hoffman, cox Karri Simao) unable to fend off WWU's final charge.

WWU's all novice 8 hung tough for the first 2k against WSU's 8's (each with 6 novice and 2 JV) but their late start on the water this fall (trimester vs. semester system) gave them less experience to work with. The winning WSU lineup rowing the Ken Abbey was: bow Joe Sudar, 2 Ian Compton, 3 JC Hockett, 4 Chris Culverwell, 5 Josh Wadagnolo, 6 Steve Barnes, 7 Garrett Heiman, stroke Jimmy Johnson, cox Kate Sweitzer.

WWU was presented with a plaque from a 1979 Western Washington DARE race in honor of their fours victory today to begin a perpetual trophy for this annual fall regatta, scheduled to be hosted by Western Washington next year. ■



Top: The very close finish to the 4s event at the Western duel. Western later received the DARE plaque that will be used annually to recognize the winner.

Middle: The Varsity 8+ heads up river to confront Gonzaga at the annual Head of the Spokane.

At Left: A Novice boat practices on the Snake on a hot summer day. The novice have shown great improvement from race to race this fall



Varsity Spotlight: Garrett Lyman

Jake Logar

Publisher

First impressions of Garrett Lyman include two admirable traits; his focus, and on a good day, an adorable smile. Knowing Garrett for just over a year now, I have come to notice how he quietly sets the standard for the level of intensity that needs to be put into each and every activity. Garrett is very much a silent leader on the crew team whose focus radiates outward to those around him.

Garrett knew for a long time that he wanted to join crew in college. His Uncle Tim "Haole" Richards was commodore of the '79-'80 WSU Men's Crew team and surely more than a little bit of that passion rubbed off onto Garrett. "He told me to look into it and so I did," says Garrett.

It wasn't long until Garrett was completely convinced about how great crew was, but obstacles made it difficult for him to enjoy his freshman year. "I don't quit things once I start them, but I could only make two practices a week freshman year and I gave serious thought towards quitting," Garrett recalls. Those left of the '05-'06 novice class are only Garrett and this year's commodore Andrew Winters, exemplifying Garrett's dedication and perseverance. Although no races were won his novice year, he still considers the time spent to be full of great experiences. Of his fondest memories was San Diego and the fields of boats that pointed out towards the bay

Along with great memories of his novice year, Lyman also recalls his worst of days on the water. "We were rowing a freshman four my novice year before a dual against Gonzaga on our home course when we flipped it." While this may seem bad enough, it actually got worse. Right as they were coming into the breakwater, cold, soaked and pulling their swamped boat behind the launch, Gonzaga pulled up in their bus to see Garrett and the rest of his boat in their most embarrassed and cold state.

Garrett's proudest race was the only race he won and got a tank from. Tanks were bet against Cal lights two years ago at 2007 PCRCs in the lightweight eight event. The Cougar lightweight 8+ was down by half a boat length with 500 meters left when they began to walk through Cal, stroke by stroke in their final sprint to the finish. The end result was a win of epic proportion. He and his boat won by just over a second to a crew that they had lost to by 3 seconds just the week before at WIRAs. To come back and beat Cal created a proud memory that Garrett will carry for many years to come.

Garrett is not a person who only appreciates the sweetness of victory. When most of your time is spent practicing hour after hour, day after day, you learn to love it. Enjoying workouts in the stadium after a night of snowfall and ultimate Frisbee when it's warm, he has found a new love to add to his list of training memories: Mark Hoffman. Not Mark as a person, but as a workout challenge and as an equal. During an inevitable and mostly dreaded hour test he and Mark pulled stroke for stroke throughout the entire piece, with Garrett falling short of Mark by only two meters out of an entire hour. Even though Garrett did not beat Mark, the loss is not without its benefits. Garrett constantly reminds Mark that there will be another hour test with a sure chance at redemption.

Garrett is majoring in Civil Engineering and is excited to get out and into the working world. He has a great amount of love for his family and wishes them the best. Garrett is ready to see what the world has to offer and experience new things despite his initial shyness. Taking with him his memories of the past four years, he looks forward to his future filled with friends made during his time on the crew team.

Everyone on the crew team wishes Garrett the best no matter where life takes him and we hope to see his adorable smile many times in the years to come. ■

CLASS DAY 2009!!!

Saturday March 21st

Mark your calendars now Class Day 2009! We will be racing our traditional Class Day races and we are looking for alumni to race 500-meter sprints as well. Saturday night, Cougar Crew will be holding a banquet dinner for all Cougar oarsmen and coxswains of past and present. Come meet, mingle and share stories and good times with WSU Men's Crew. We recommend the award winning Holiday Inn Express (509-334-4437) for those who will require lodging. Additional details will be forthcoming as the date approaches. We will see YOU there!



Novice Spotlight: Ryan Blum

Julia Gamache

Novice Coach

The weather may be getting dreary but with Ryan Blum around, the Novice team will continue to smile. This may sound a little cheesy but if you met Ryan Blum you would see what I am talking about. He has an ability to make everyone on the team laugh with his goofy voices and always perfectly timed retorts. Coming from Puyallup, WA, Ryan decided to come to Washington State University because they had many different majors to choose from. Now that he is here though, he cannot see himself anywhere else; "I love everything about Pullman" Ryan has said. He enjoys the tight community that Pullman has to offer, so it was no surprise that he took to rowing so well.

A golfer in High School, Ryan had no intention of joining the Rowing team at WSU until Coach Arthur approached him. Ryan says "I had never really considered the fact that I would be able to compete athletically at the college level." The Novice team this year is at 27 members currently; we have a large group of very determined Rowers and Coxswains so to stand out is difficult.

Ryan is someone who has made so many improvements it is hard not to notice him. Athletically, Ryan has made huge strides, improving over 9 minutes on his 6k Erg test, as well as losing almost 20 pounds since the season has started. On the water, Ryan started very solidly as a "C" boat rower but quickly made his way into the "A" boat for all of our Fall races. To paint a clearer picture, making the "A" boat this fall was a challenge to say the least, we considered Erg scores, fitness test times, seat racing and over all attitude. Considering the Novice squad had 14 rowers who could have made the "A" boat with only 8 spots available. To earn one of those 8 spots required 100% effort everyday on the water as well as choices they made off the water. Nutrition and attitude contribute to the speed of a Novice crew as much as push-ups and erg scores. Ryan was very involved in our meeting with the nutritionist, asking questions and making suggestions to others on the team, it is obvious that Ryan has made changes in his diet in order to contribute to the speed of this team.

It is hard to maintain a good attitude during these long weekends when your friends are sleeping in. Our first Rent-A-Rower is when Ryan really showed his true colors. His workmates were surprised at how much fun Ryan was having, even saying before hand that he really was in the mood to "dig a hole today." When they arrived at the house and the job turned out to be, in fact, digging a hole, Ryan was beside himself. This is the kind of attitude that is contagious and is a coach's dream come true.

Ryan has expressed his fondness of the sport by saying; "I love the fact that rowing is the most mentally and physically challenging thing I've ever done. Every day on the team, I'm proving things to myself that I never thought possible. I've learned to push myself harder than ever before, to keep going when my body and mind both want me to quit. I love the fact that rowing is such a unique sport that most people don't know much about it, so when I tell people that I'm on crew, it leaves opportunity for really interesting conversations." Ryan has joined the rowing team in his junior year, when most people have found their routine in college, Ryan was ready for a challenge in his life. He only regrets that he did not join the sport earlier. As a criminal justice/pre-law major, Ryan brings a sense of humor and a positive attitude to every practice and competition. To leave with a great Ryan Blum quote, he makes the team his "BFFF, best freaking friends forever." Keep up the hard work and GO COUGS! ■



At Left: Garrett Lyman

Middle: Garrett Lyman leading by example.

Bottom: Ryan Blum spreading his joy.

Photo by Kramer Wahlberg



Recap of Fall CCAA Board Meeting

Tim "Haole" Richards

CCAA Chair

Happy Holidays to all the friends and families of Cougar Crew and the Cougar Crew Alumni Association (CCAA)! On Saturday November 8, 2008 we again held the fall meeting of the Cougar Crew Alumni Association Board of Directors meeting in Seattle. This year it was held at the Pocock Rowing Center instead of the Seattle Yacht Club as a football game at Husky Stadium caused a parking conflict. In attendance were 20 plus; alumni, team members, coaches, and interested people. The topics of discussion during the meeting continued revolving around developing more support for the Cougar Crew. Reports from Coach Arthur Ericsson, Commodore Andy Winters, and Treasurer Garrett Lyman gave great insight as to where the crew is currently sitting as a team and as an organization. Updates from the Board members included the financial report from Doug Engle and how the CCAA is doing with the endowment funds at the Washington State University Foundation. Lisa Coble Curtis report detailed the newly established Parent Booster Club that has been organized to help the team at the regattas. A big success as it brings more family involvement to the crew and gives the team a "home base" in the form of tents and an area at the races to gather. Some other topics discussed were the Varsity Club Status, future fundraising auctions, board succession planning, and Cougar Crew Days / Class Day coming up March 21, 2009 in Pullman. For a complete summary of the meeting, I encourage you to go to www.row.wsu.edu and review the minutes of the meeting. (As a reminder, all Board meetings are open to all members of CCAA. One and all are always welcome.)

I look forward to seeing all of you at Class Day 2009 in Pullman! ■

Aussie Rowing Adventure, Continued

Mitch Williams

Varsity Oarsman

Continued from Page 1

In addition to all the rowing, I got the opportunity to travel around Australia a bit. I snorkeled and scuba dived at the Great Barrier Reef, visited the cities of Melbourne and Adelaide, and experienced the Great Ocean Road and Kangaroo Island. I didn't do as much of the "touristy" stuff as the rest of the Americans in my group, but I was fine with that because I was rowing every day and creating my own unique set of experiences. The Americans all tended to cling together and only spend time with other Americans, so it was great for me to be able to break away and also become friends with my Aussie teammates.

All in all, my time in Australia was incredible. The only downside of the trip was classes at the university. They were all very large and impersonal. The grading system was very different and made academics much more stressful. I greatly missed the WSU atmosphere, but being at the University of Sydney gave me a greater appreciation for what WSU offers its students.

I am excited to be home for the holidays and begin training again with my Cougar teammates. I have heard nothing but good things about the new novice team. It will be fun to get to know them. However, I'm not looking forward to the Pullman weather. On those bitter cold March and April days on the Snake River I will close my eyes and pretend I'm rowing shirtless on the Parramatta River, watching the sun rise over the Sydney skyline. ■

Cougar Crew Lettermen Jackets

Jake Logar

Publisher

Due to some recent coordinating and complete satisfaction by Coach Ken Struckmeyer, Cougar Crew Lettermen jackets are now available to order through TM Athletics. Just the way you remember the jackets, Cardinal (Crimson) body with what can best be described as a dark cream or "Palomino" arms. (There is also "Cougar Crew" w/oars on upper left chest) All of the color coordination and official "Cougar Crew" w/oars patch have been set-up for all involved with Cougar Crew to access.

Due to the price and challenge in sizing each person's unique build, we have decided to refer all those involved with WSU Men's Crew to the representative that worked with Struckmeyer himself. If you are interested in a jacket, simply contact TM Athletics either by phone or email and ask for Jim Hopkins. Mention that you are with WSU Men's Crew and Jim will guide you with ease toward a very good looking jacket.

Prices are estimated to run at \$227.00 before tax. (\$175 Jacket, \$27 "Cougar Crew" logo, and \$25 shipping) There is no time restriction as to how soon you must order your jacket, but you may want it before Class Day so order early!

I look forward to seeing some nice jackets when Class Day rolls around. Enjoy!

To order, contact Jim Hopkins of TM Athletics at tma@tmathletics.com or by phone at 253-588-3060



New Alumni "Slow Row" Event for Cougar Crew Days by Robb Obom

Winter is draping his cold, wet mantle over a grey Puget Sound. Must be time to start thinking about Pullman in March and Cougar Crew Days; time to start stretching out and warming up for a long Slow Row.

Every time I've returned to Pullman for Class Day – both times – I heard many Alumni say they'd like to "go out for a row," but they aren't really interested in, or in condition for, a 500m race.

What if there was another option...? An option combining both Alumni rowing with supporting the crew? Cougar Crew Days 2009 will feature the Alumni "Slow Row" – a non-competitive, non-racing option that puts Alumni back into a racing shell, and under the kind, *gentle* care of the one and only Coach Ken Struckmeyer – I'm sure many of you remember him: big guy, always smiling, and very encouraging.

A mere \$50 reserves a seat for the inaugural Alumni fun row – a "paddle only" journey for about 2000 meters down memory lane, plus a few starts just to remember how real "crab" tastes. We've engaged former oarsman and photographer Ryan Hui to capture all participants mid-stroke as proof that "we still got it" for family, co-workers and – let's face it – our own egos. Only UFOs in the background would increase the value of what are sure to be priceless images.

The basic itinerary looks something like this:

- Sign up for the Alumni Slow Row on the Cougar Crew website; provide your pertinent data (name, age, Port/Starboard preference, Class, etc).
- Saturday morning, meet at the Abbey Shell house (time TBD, after CCAA meeting); sign the Waiver
- Shells/oars will be pre-staged on the docks; the event marshal will have assigned seats posted, gather rowers by assigned boats, load and send you off
- Shells head towards the 1000m mark with Coach Struckmeyer "commentary" from the launch. Run thru a "Normal" warm-up (no slide - arms only, full body swing, then 1/2 slide, 3/4 slide, full slide)
- Paddle to 1000m and enjoy Coach Struckmeyer's highly motivating and caring instructions. Smile for the photographer. Really.
- At 1000m, turn 'em around and practice a few starts (1/2, 1/2, 3/4, full, full); head back to 500m mark.
- Finale At 500m: Normal start, row for 10 strokes, settle for 10, and weigh enough. We will reinforce that this is NOT A RACE, just having fun. Paddle to the Finish line, and back to the dock

An EMT will be in the launch - just in case, and we'll have a "tap out" signal to ensure anyone who needs help gets it, no questions asked. We want to have Fun, re-connect with rowing, and not hurt anyone in the process. Seriously, even this mellow, non-race event requires preparation, so if you're considering the event, please ensure you are ready for a fun "Slow Row." You have 15 weeks before "Ready all – Row!" ■

New Mentorship and Internship Program by Mitch Williams

The WSU Men's Crew Team is creating a mentorship and internship program to provide career advice, support, and opportunities to current members of the team. The team always receives great feedback about how employable our men and women are. Recognizing this, Steve Huhta, father of former commodore Karl Huhta, came up with the idea for the program and the team would like to make it happen. Steve Huhta and the team feel this could be a great way to connect with alumni, family, and friends of Cougar Crew.

We are looking to create a database of contacts which will be compiled into booklets. These booklets will be given out to members of the team, providing them with professional contacts in a variety of areas. Feel free to sign up for one of or both of the programs.

Mentorship Program

We are looking for people who would be willing provide career and professional advice. This could include helping look over a résumé, helping with interview skills, or simply answering questions the team member may have. If you would like to join this list, please send the following information...

1. Name
2. Profession and/or Corporation
3. Phone #
4. Email
5. A couple sentences describing your connection to the team and also your career/professional background

Internship Program

If you are in a position to possibly help our team members land internship or job positions, we would love to add you to our internship program! Please include the following information...

1. Name
2. Corporation and location of your office/headquarters
3. Phone #
4. Email
5. A couple sentences describing your connection to the team and your line work. Please also include the variety of departments or divisions available to interns, to provide an idea about the range of potential positions.

All of this information and any questions you may have can be sent to Mitch Williams at mensrowing@wsu.edu. We will be in contact with you about upcoming Cougar Crew races and events where you will have the opportunity to meet and interact with our team! We really appreciate the support we receive from family, friends, and alumni of Cougar Crew! ■

The Pull Hard
Washington State University
Men's Crew Newsletter

Coaches Campaign: Danger on the Racks

Arthur Ericsson

Varsity Coach

I have worked here for over four years now and have decided that this can't wait any longer. Safety concerns do not just exist on rough water days. We are regularly using all six of our 4's and all six of our 8's. But the challenge of getting a boat off the top racks (located eleven feet above ground) is an extremely difficult and dangerous maneuver.

Let me paint you a picture: 3 guys shimmy up the racks that hold the boats on the wall side (they can help lift off one side of the boat as they lean over the boat below them), 3 more tall guys shimmy up onto the 2 inch edge of the rack on one foot with nothing to really hang onto (they will have the most dangerous position as the entire boat must be lowered from above their heads to those below). 3 more guys await the decent of the 250 pound shell atop rickety two-foot high step ladders; while everyone else holds their breath.

Please support the purchase of two industrial rolling ladders that will allow us to safely and efficiently access our top racks/shells! Your donation will be going towards two Cotterman Series 1000 industrial 60 inch 6-step rolling racks with a 20" deep and 30" wide top step and handrail. After shipping and tax the total for both racks is \$2366. Please contact Coach Arthur Ericsson at mensrowing@wsu.edu if you would like to help.

Thanks! Coaches Arthur (and Julia)

