

# THE PULL HARD

WINTER 1986

Published by the Cougar Rowing Association  
for alumni and friends of the Cougar Crew



## Cougar Crew in Istanbul?

ISTANBUL via PULLMAN — The Turkish Olympic Committee and the Turkish Rowing Federation have extended a formal invitation to the Cougar Crew to participate in a summer regatta in Istanbul.

The invitation came about through the Turkish National Coach from Bogazici University in Istanbul Recep Akici who is attending Washington State University.

The committee has offered room and board for ten days in late June or early July to be the United States representative in racing against Oxford, Cambridge and Bogazici University. They also offered use of an Empacher shell and oars for the duration.

The offer is simply too much to pass up.

"You bet your sweet bippy we're going," said coach Ken Struckmeyer. "We're going to try very, very hard to get there."

Struckmeyer is especially enthused about the idea of a couple of Cougar eights rowing in front of 400,000 spectators, which was the estimated attendance at the 1986 regatta.

The plan is to fly to London and catch a three-day train ride to Istanbul. Plans also may include stopovers for Henley or the World University Games in Yugoslavia.

The crew is planning a couple of fund-raising events to help offset the cost of transportation.

Anyone who might be interested in tagging along on this international adventure should contact Struckmeyer.

## Endowment fund to receive contributions

PORT LUDLOW — Three parcels of Port Ludlow property, valued at an estimated \$45,000 to \$50,000 was recently donated to the crew's endowment fund.

The three pieces of property are listed for sale and the proceeds from the sale will provide a major boost to the fund.

Cougar Crew supporters Sherry and Darwin Cook were involved in encouraging the donor to help the crew's cause.

Thanks are also due to Bob Apleyard, who generously contributed a radial arm saw to the crew.

The crews are also in search of a video camera and are seeking the donation of new or used equipment to help with coaching.

## New coaches join Cougs

PULLMAN — A former coach of a Warsaw, Poland rowing club has joined the ranks of the Cougar Crew coaching staff.

Piotr Rylski, a veteran of 18 years rowing, is the head coach of the women's crew.

Rylski arrived in Pullman via the University of Washington where he spent four months last year as an assistant coach with Washington's frosh.

He joined the Cougs this fall and has introduced an East German style of rowing and is providing the technical expertise from his many years experience in international rowing.

Rylski has been involved with rowing and sculling coaching for nine years, including coaching several teams that placed in international competition. He has also designed training programs.

He served as a rowing coach for 18 months with the sport club Skra in Warsaw, Poland where his duties involved coaching women age 14 to 25 for domestic and international competition.

Preceding that, he spent three years as the girl's trainer at the School of Athletic Competition in Walcz, Poland coaching teen-age girls. He also served as Boy's Trainer for the University Sports Club in Warsaw, coaching boys ages 12 to 16.

His list of competitive experiences include the Juniors World Championship in Italy, Friendship Races in Rumania and Youth Races in the USSR in 1982 and the Juniors in Bulgaria.

He speaks Polish and Russian.

Assisting Rylski this year is Patty Culleeny, who graduated from WSU last spring after turning out with the crew as a coxswain. Culleeny volunteered to stay in Pullman to work with the novice women's crew.

On the men's side, Head Coach Ken Struckmeyer is assisted this year by two former heavy varsity crew members Rob McDougall and Scott Nowak who are coaching the frosh.

Nowak, from Anchorage, Alaska is a fifth year student in mechanical engineering while McDougall, from Seattle, was forced to stop rowing at WSU because of knee injuries.

## 1987 Racing Schedule

**MARCH 14 — Class Day, Pullman\***

**MARCH 21 — Bellingham regatta**

**MARCH 28 — UCLA lights, WSU  
at Spokane**

**APRIL 4 — San Diego Crew Classic  
Daffodil Regatta at Tacoma**

**APRIL 11 — UW at Wawawai**

**APRIL 18 — UPS, PLU at Wawawai**

**APRIL 25 — OSU, USC, UO, WSU  
Columbia River Regatta, Tri-Cities**

**MAY 2 — UW, OSU, WSU, USSR  
national team  
Open Day, Seattle**

**MAY 16, 17 — PAC-10 Rowing  
Championships, Sacramento\*\***

\*Hey alums! Let this serve as an early warning for Class Day 1987. Make your plans now to head for the Snake River March 14!!

\*\*Once again, the date of the Pac-10 championships are in question because of scheduling conflicts among the schools. We will provide an update on voting by Pac-10 coaches in later editions of the Pull Hard.

UPDATE

## Attention Pull Hard Readers:

The Cougar Rowing Association address has changed to the following:

**1319 Lei Garden Road  
Burlington, WA 98233\***

**(206) 757-1747**

All correspondence, contributions, letters to the Pull Hard editor or questions may be forwarded to that address. We are always looking for written memoirs or commentary for the Pull Hard. Please, keep those cards and letters coming!

\*In other words, no more Sedro-Woolley!!

## Cougs report good turnout

PULLMAN — Fall turnout has brought plenty of oarsmen and women to the Snake River and into two races with Gonzaga University.

On the water practices ended Nov. 1 and the Cougs have turned their attention to campus workouts.

Ken Struckmeyer reports 65 men are turning out for the crew, plus nine coxswains. He has more than two eights of varsity lightweights plus a novice light four, frosh four and a heavy varsity eight.

Meanwhile, 49 women — 28 novice and 21 varsity — are turning out.

In fall racing, the Cougs swept all events in an Oct. 18 regatta with Gonzaga at Wawawai in what Struckmeyer described as an "informal fun time."

On Oct. 25, in racing against Gonzaga, Edmonton and Calgary crews, Washington State won 9 of 14 events.

"We're going to do very well. We've got a lot of people working very hard," Struckmeyer said.

The men's lightweight 8 will be a strong contender again this year. So strong, in fact, that UCLA will fly their lightweights to Pullman during Spring Break for a race.

"They think we're going to be the boat to beat," Struckmeyer said.

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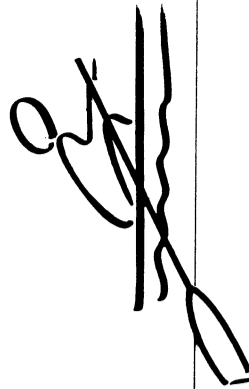
## You Tell Us

To assist us in our goal of keeping track of Cougar Crew alumni and friends, we need to know where you are! We have new software for our computer to help us with our address system and would appreciate receiving current information on your whereabouts. Please send any address changes or corrections to Craig Illman, 5543 38th Ave. N.E., Seattle, Wash., 98105.

Kari would be interested in any comments or ideas for future editions of the "Pull Hard" which she and Kathy Randall will be putting together on a quarterly basis.

Please call or write — Kari Ranten,

Cougar Rowing Association  
1319 Lei Garden Road  
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sleigh ponies through miles of sullen fog and bitter snow! And, as the toughest of the Marginals disappear altogether, some of the weaker-willed Shoo-ins, their confidence buoyed by the withdrawal of the dark-horse candidates, begin to excuse themselves intermittently for a clever but predictable variety of reasons. With every set of exams and every fresh snowfall, the true survivors watch the backsliders slide back, and wonder silently whether the voluntary absentees are not the wiser ones among us.

As for the Premies, they rarely miss a workout — neither flu nor quiz nor erg machine can keep them from their daily rounds. As the ranks continue to dwindle, acute observers will notice the Premies begin to exaggerate those personal mannerisms to which undisciplined coaches can become almost morbidly sensitive: the gleam in the eye, the spring in the step, the brisk bursts of palm-rubbing satisfaction which seem to say: "There is great disorder under heaven, and the situation is excellent!" Premies do not grimly submit to winter workouts, they thrive on them.

**Flip's coaching memoirs will continue in the next edition of the Pull Hard**

victims of an almost pathological compulsion to participate in an activity for which they are congenitally unsuited. They are torchbearers for one of the undying (and heartwarming) myths of our sport: the splendid illusion that rowing is for everybody.

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Autumn rowing is an idyllic time of recruiting fresh, unsuspecting troops, of shared thermoses of hot, spiked beverages, clandestinely consumed whilst peddling programs and paraphernalia at football games, and of long, sometimes graceful practices on glassy water. It is a pleasantly deceptive interlude.

With the abrupt onset of winter training, the mildly intoxicating rewards of air, sun, water and the hypnotic rhythm of the blades, are rudely exchanged for a dark, dank trial of fire and ice. So begins the annual erosion of the body politic. With sinking hearts, coaches everywhere watch helplessly as their glorious autumn dreams begin to shrivel and fade.

Always first to flee are the Marginals. Fewer and fewer the erg tests and stadium sessions for these folk — better far, they quickly deduce, to quaff suds in cheery taverns than trot like puffing

## Meatwagon (or Meatloaf) rows again

SEATTLE — September marked a reunion of sorts for the successful "Meatwagon" four and several other Cougar Crew alumni who participated in the national Masters rowing championships on Green Lake.

Oarsmen John "Yumbo" Holtman, Rich "Flip" Ray, Chris "Squishy" Gulick and Doug Engle, along with Al "The Shack" Fisher were reunited for the first row since winning the IRA in 1979.

Also participating in masters rowing during the two-day regatta Sept. 13 and 14 were Kathy Randall (who won two medals!), Tim Malkow and Olympic gold-medal winners Kristi Norelius and Paul Enquist.

The "Meatwagon," commonly referred to these days as the "Meatloaf" boat successfully made the final for masters fours in the 27-year old category. The crew took fourth in the final, after being nipped in the final strokes by some old foes from the University of Washington with last names like Hess and Zevenbergen.

The difference? A few years older. A little less hair. And a few more pounds at the coxswain's seat where the familiar nickname "Shack" was replaced by "The Fridge."

It was a weary group who pulled themselves out of the shell and onto the dock after that second 1,000-meter piece.

Coach Ken Struckmeyer was on hand to watch the reunion race and offered the following comments:

"I wish they would have been able to beat that group of Dawgs, but it was fun to watch old friends like that get together."

## Coach recalls challenges of first boat politics

Former coach Rich 'Flip' Ray writes about a few of his experiences with coaching and the dreaded SEAT RACING.

During my second season of coaching I had the typical, but disquieting experience of seat racing an excellent athlete out of the varsity eight and consequently off the roster. When the emotions of the moment died away, word came through the grapevine that the vanquished attributed her demise to what she unflatteringly referred to as "first boat politics." She believed she had lost her seat for reasons other than simple athletic merit. She was right. For as any coach knows, comparative physiology and numbers from a stopwatch rarely tell much about how to boat a good crew.

Fortunately for the mental health of coaches, most athletes select themselves. By committing their money and time, by habitually attending practice, by enduring long season of ugly rowing in bad boats (To Huskies, these are "ham-and-egggers." In Garcrewco parlance, "dog-do boats."), survivors earn the respect of their teammates and learn to operate a sweep oar with reasonable competence and consistency. In any given shell, three quarters of the qualified athletes come from the ranks of the survivors, whom I shall designate "shoo-ins." Shoo-ins pose no particular problem for a coach, except for their susceptibility to a sometimes-debilitating inflammation of the tissues surrounded by the cranium. Ancient Greeks called the malady "huybris." We call it "crew-jock ego."

The remaining 25 percent are consid-



erably more problematic. These I call "Marginal Shoo-ins." Marginals are usually experienced athletes who lack the requisite Shoo-in physique or have yet to master completely the basics of the art. A smaller proportion of Marginals are "late-bloomers" (read: upperclass novice) blessed with an unusual asset, such as a set of thunder thighs or a casual attitude toward pain. Whatever their abilities, Marginals apparently share a common characteristic which coaches, in one of their typically optimistic euphemisms, refer to as "athletic potential." Among coaches, it is an unspoken, and possibly unfounded, article of faith that Marginals lack only the melodious wheedling of the well-tempered bull-horn to translate them into the beau ideal: the confirmed Shoo-in.

There is a third general classification from which coaches may, in time of crisis, choose a victim. Drawn from a very select segment of the human continuum which my father used to refer to as "gluttons for punishment," these rare individuals I call "Fiercely Competitive Pre-Marginals," or "Premies." Premies are frequently

continued



## MAIL BAG

We enjoy putting "Mail Bag" in as a regular feature of the "Pull Hard" but sometimes have trouble inspiring participation. Please, let us know if you have moved, done something terrific, are expecting a baby, ran in your first marathon, or whatever, so we can share the news with friends and fellow alumni. Send your notes, post cards from exotic places or letters to Kari.

► **Jim Flynn** checked in to bring his crew friends up to date. He finished law school at UPS in December 1982 and sold his waterbed business at about the same time. Since passing the bar exam in spring 1983, he has been involved in real estate development in south King County and reports "I've dabbled in everything from being a slumlord to fine restaurants and professional centers." He married Marcia Muto, a fellow Coug, last August and they built a home in Maple Valley. "Other than this, I've just kept my Cougar spirit and stayed mellow," he said.

► **Tammy Boggs** is coaching with the University of Washington women's crew this year and is working in the university hospital's microbiology lab, "but I'm still a Coug at heart!" she writes. She has also been helping the Cougar women's crew set up several fund-raising events. She and **Sara Bolson**, among others, were set to staff a coffee and donut booth at the rest stop just out of Washtucna during Apple Cup weekend.