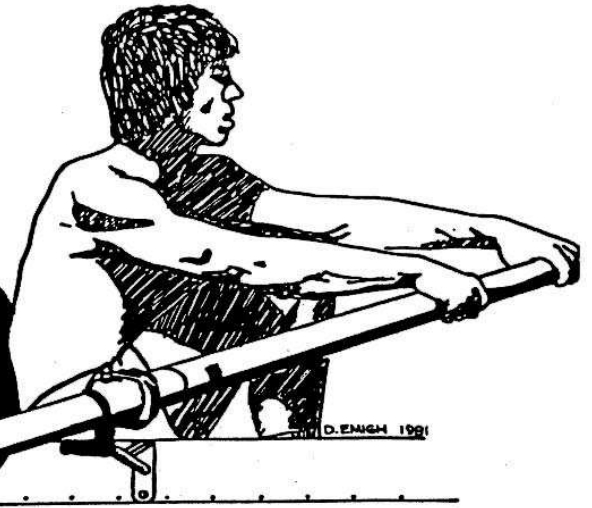


THE PULL HARD



A Washington State University Men's Crew Publication, Spring 2009, Volume XVI, Issue III

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President Floyd Gives Commodore and Crew a Big Hug



Cool Happenings:

- Novice have major success at National
- Cougar Crew days has major successes
- New LWT Women's Program starts next fall
- Spring racing is a huge success. (Recaps online)

Actions speak louder than words. President Floyd gives his only hug of the entire graduation ceremony to Commodore Andy Winters. President Floyd has had several personal meetings with the team's leaders, set up meetings for the team with the Athletic Council, and made an appearance at our annual banquet where a speech was given. On top of all this, President Floyd made a large personal donation to the team.

ATTENTION PULLHARD SUBSCRIBERS:

THE PULL HARD IS GOING DIGITAL!!!

Beginning in the fall, the Pull Hard will only be available as an e-newsletter sent by email. This issue of the Pull Hard is the last printed copy. It is important that we get your email address if you would like to still receive the newsletter.

The Pull Hard has always had the issue of money working against it. The \$6500 annual cost for printing and shipping counts for approximately 6.5% of our operating budget and is not easy to come by. With the team always trying to find ways to run more efficiently, the newsletter was a vulnerable asset. The team often has to not make small purchases in a constant effort to stay within our budget. Though we greatly value being able to send our contact list a hard copy in the mail, the cost of printing and mailing, along with the accumulation of obsolete addresses is paying a heavy burden on the team. It takes the entire team an entire weekend of Rent-A-Rower just to cover this one line item. Just take a look at the crew's wish list to see what \$6500 a year could do. This is why the officers and coaches, with the interest of the team's future in mind, have decided to stop the mailing of the Pull Hard in paper form. Instead, an e-newsletter will be sent out at the scheduled times, if not more often. You as the reader will benefit by receiving information in a timelier manner, making it more current and valuable.

The *ePullHard* will allow for better coverage of events because there will no longer be a limit of space. Color pictures and possibly other forms of media will now have the chance to be infused in the newsletter, creating a more immersive experience into the team's happenings.

We ask you as the reader to follow the instructions below so we may keep sending you the newsletter. We promise you will not receive any spam by signing up. We only plan to send you information that we believe you would like to know.

As a reminder, just like mailing addresses, email addresses change too, be sure to update the website whenever you change email addresses.

This announcement comes with a bright outlook towards the future and excitement for the possibilities that the new format can offer. ■

What you need to do:

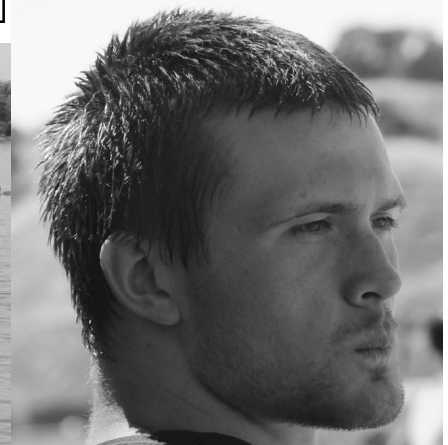
- Visit <http://www.cougarcrew.com/pullhard.php>
- Fill out the form with your **Name** and **Email**
- Make sure that our emails don't end up in your junk mail!!!



The Varsity 8+ up on the Jumbo-tron in San Diego. From Left: Alan Scott, Paul Ehlers, Weston Spivia, Mark Hoffman, and Kramer Wahlberg

The Varsity Lwt 8+ heads out for their event at PCRCs. This year two novice came up to the varsity level to make the 8 possible. Thanks Ky and Chaps.

James Dorsey became known for never smiling in pictures. He would somehow go from laughing uncontrollably to a face like the one below instantly in order to maintain his captured image.



It Was A Barn Burner!!!

Julia Gamache

Novice Coach

Racing season is over and all the results are in, the Novice team has successfully proven that they are a force to be reckoned with. I have had the honor of participating in the development of these athletes; watching them fall in love with rowing and seeing the impact they have on the sport. An example of that impact was at the Pac-10 championships where the top novice 8 was able to row past Oregon State University, leaving WSU only 1.5 seconds behind Stanford. WSU finished 4th in the final against top varsity teams including the University of Washington and Cal. As coaches we cannot force athletes to understand the magnitude of their accomplishments, we can only stress the importance of their successes as well as our joy in them. What I have been able to observe in this Novice class is that they hold themselves to a very high standard, almost to a fault in fact. Teaching them to want more out of themselves has almost backfired in the sense that they have a hard time seeing through the desire to be the best. When it comes to their race at the Pac-10's, they will not realize how big that was until their last year of rowing. It has been wonderful to see the drive and passion for this sport grow in them throughout the year, they truly are competitors and the competition of their choice is rowing.

The most recent of the Novice accomplishments is winning

second place at the ACRA championships, this is a national championship for club programs and is one with great competitors and top teams. Since the beginning of spring, the Novice has been determined to go to this regatta; they worked extra fundraisers in between finals just to pay for the trip. That alone was impressive, however the resilience and enthusiasm when we arrived in Oakridge, Tennessee was what turned heads. It was nice to be one of the big dogs for once, the boat was seeded 7th a few weeks before, then 4th, then the day before the racing started, 2nd. This gave the guys confidence, too much confidence in fact that they disregarded the heat as a real race, they paid for this mistake. We have spoken as a team about this mistake, probably one of the worst that a team could make. They were able to recover and raced that afternoon, winning the rep and making the grand final. With this team, the lesson was learned, that one time is all it took, it was a hard pill to swallow and it almost cost them the hard work it took to send them to the race. In the final they proved themselves, showing to everyone involved that their speed is not a fluke, it is not something easy to obtain, it is the result of a years worth of hard work and dedication.

It has been incredibly gratifying to coach this team; I know that they will help me to find another Novice class as fast as they were. I wish them well as varsity rowers and know they are in great hands. Fantastic job Cougs, keep it up! ■



Left: The novice stand in order to show off their silver medals. The rollercoaster weekend ended in 8+ smiles.

Below: The lightweight 4+ gets ready to push off the dock for a practice row. Placing fifth, the lightweights left the weekend proud of their PR and performance in the very close race.

For detailed results of the spring racing, please visit the website. At the site, you will find race recaps, links to official times, along with hundreds of pictures.



Daffodil Delight

Joe Sudar

Novice Oarsmen

Anyone who rows will tell you that it is all about sacrifice. From waking up at 5:30 AM for morning weights to spending hours on an ergometer, rowers give up time and energy to improve and be the best. They will also tell you, however, that blazing across the finish line with a foaming wake and four other boats rushing alongside you makes every minute of exertion worth it.

The moment that I heard that an old friend would be racing for a competing school was the moment that I found what I was training for. From that point onward going to morning practice wasn't about grumbling and envying the good night's sleep that my fellow WSU Cougars were getting. From then on the erg wasn't a torture device, it was a tool to help me prove that I could be a great rower. In many ways it was the moment when I truly found my passion for crew.

Daffodil Cup was the first race of the season, as well as my first chance to square off against my friend. We arrived in Tacoma with perfect racing weather: freezing temperatures, thick drops of rain, and snow from time to time. Spirits were as low as the temperature and my hands were frozen solid, but I was still blazing with an urge to race. It was the first day of my racing season as a Novice oarsman, and I couldn't have been hap-

pier.

When we made it out onto the starting line, I locked eyes with my friend, who was sitting alongside me in the opposing boat. You could practically see the electricity arcing between us. The official shouted, "ROW!" into his megaphone, the still water frothed like a smoothie in a blender... and our boats steered directly into each other. After untangling our oars, we lined up again, there was a quick start, and we had two thousand meters to prove who wanted victory more. It was over quicker than I ever expected, but WSU had taken first and second place with our first and second boats. At that point I fell in love with the sport, and I was ready to sacrifice even more. ■



Joe Sudar, with teammates Lukas Jonoubeh and Josh Wadagnalo in back, soak in what has come to be known as a typical Daffodil Cup

CLASS DAY 2010!!!

March 20th - 21st

Mark your calendars now Class Day 2010! 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!



Varsity Spotlight: Jimmy Johnson

Jake Logar

Publisher



Top: Colby Farvour and Jimmy Johnson brainstorm about a new business idea involving alpacas.... (Don't ask)

Bottom: Jimmy stands proud after yet another PR on a notorious fitness test. Jimmy was able to PR on every fitness test this year.



Early in the spring semester of 2008, Weston Spivia sat down on an erg at the REC to do a make-up workout, unaware that the student next to him that he was about to recruit would make such an impact on the team. Joining the team is a commitment enough, but joining in the spring when all your teammates have already been “Strokin’ the Snake” for 4 months previous is a direct challenge to the gods. Jimmy Johnson was recruited on that day, beat the odds, and would go on to become an irreplaceable part of the team in no time at all.

Jimmy is sporting minded. He hails from Federal Way where he played center for the Decatur High School football team. In Pullman, he is majoring in Kinesiology with an emphasis on movement studies. He plans on applying his major towards a career in either physical therapy or public health promotion. Analogous to his fellow Eagle Scouts on the team, outdoor stuff is Jimmy’s specialty. Climbing, kayaking, backpacking, camping, skiing and waterskiing are just a few of his favorite things when not in a boat. Jimmy also likes music quite a bit and fancies himself as a wizard of obscure classic rock trivia.

Not knowing about rowing until he joined the team, Jimmy used the sport as a way to get in shape and pursue a healthy lifestyle. As time progressed, he became obsessed with the sport and becoming fast. He has become fond of any port seats and engine rooms where he is in the middle of the action.

In his first full year on the team Jimmy has done things such as plan a meeting for the team with a nutritionist and organize extra Rent-A-Rowers for those going to nationals. The members of the team cannot thank him enough for all the work he put into RAR. He has made such a strong impression since joining the team that his fellow teammates most recently elected him Vice Commodore for this next year. Being elected Vice Commodore is a true testament to the work ethic and attitude that Jimmy brings to the team everyday.

So where does all this passion come from?

“I first realized how big of a thing Cougar Crew is at the 2008 banquet. I was amazed at how many alumni were there, all of the support, and all of the history behind everything. It made me realize that the program is more than a group of guys making boats go fast; it’s a huge part of many people’s lives.”

It can be fairly certain that Jimmy aims for a lifelong relationship with crew.

As far as favorites go, Jimmy loves the atmosphere of Sacramento racing. Be it the racing, the sun, or a big old burrito from Dos Coyotes, Jimmy finds these experiences to be memory-makers.

As a teammate, Jimmy is always helping everyone to find that extra edge. You can find him helping others shave that extra split second or maintaining the attitude to finish a workout with the same intensity as in the beginning.

His naturally strong work-ethic and leadership shines through in his advice to his fellow teammates. “Always be on the lookout for recruits, I wouldn’t be on the team if Weston hadn’t tried to get me to show up, you never know who will turn out to love the sport.”

Cougar Crew has done its deed on Jimmy just like is has so many others before him, creating an obsession that will last a lifetime. ■

Cougar Lightweight: Men (and Women) Wanted

Arthur Ericsson

Head Coach

There I was one morning lying in bed not having yet opened my eyes, when it hit me; lightweight women at WSU don't have a way to row, we should start a team as part of Men's Crew. We have boats and oars, all we need to figure out is how to provide coaching and then we can put the word out and start recruiting and it will enrich a whole bunch of athletes' lives and bring even more energy and support to our club team.

Isn't this already something that the varsity women do? They don't prohibit lightweights from joining their team, but one needs to be of national team caliber to find a spot in their varsity boat. Only two lightweight women have met this standard in the past seven years.

We all know that throughout our history lightweight oarsmen have always been a big part of who we are. And as one of our alumni from the late 70's commented, "it's like going back to our roots when we were all part of the same club." Rowing often doesn't have the legs to begin, but we already have the tools to make this happen, a boathouse with lots of boats, coaches that want to see it happen; I sort of felt that to grasp all that we can for ourselves but to do nothing towards offering it to a large section of our student body would be irresponsible on our parts.

Now back to reality. Coach Julia and I drafted a proposal to give to the officers for consideration. Many questions surfaced concerned with protecting the resources of the Men's Crew. What boats will they row? When will they row? Who will coach them? We don't want to dilute the coaches we have for the men, but we can't afford to pay another coach. We don't have an extra coaching launch. We might not have enough ergs in the winter. What if it creates tension with the varsity women? What fund-

raisers will they do? How will they get to practice? You get the idea.

We answered each of their concerns to the best of our ability. The underlying theme of our responses was "where there's a will there's a way." And if Men's Crew has one thing going for it, it's a strong will. A more detailed proposal was drafted for review. More discussion took place. Half of the officers were favoring the direction and half still had concerns about it. The women's head coach gave her support saying that she'll appreciate having a place to suggest for her lightweight walk-ons who aren't at the level they demand. UREC then gave their support reasoning that the more opportunities for people to participate the better. Next a donation of a small motorboat from an alumni's mom came in. Then we had three very strong coaching candidates interested in the position for a very modest salary. The officers now threw their full support behind it and we began to move forward on a one-year trial set to start this coming fall.

We are proud to announce the hiring of Emily Kohl as the new Lightweight Women's and Assistant Coach. In the last several weeks a steady stream of interested rowers has begun contacting us to express their interest, many with previous rowing experience.

One of the things that has made Cougar Crew what it is is that anyone who puts in the commitment for the team is an integral member of the team. Now this will be even more true.

Please visit CougarCrew.com to find out more about the team, Coach Kohl's bio, and how you can help Men's Crew to launch this exciting new team.



A close race between the alumni and the Sophomores set the mood an evening of great festivities.

Cougar Crew Days 2009: A Success On All Levels by Tim "Haole" Richards

Greetings and Aloha to Family and Friends, Team Members, Alumni, and Supporters!

The weekend of March 21 and 22 found current and "historic" Cougar Crew participants making their way back to the Palouse for the annual gathering of Cougar Crew Days and the Class Day Races. As you might recall, last year a new parents "Cougar Crew Booster Club" was formed. It was decided that this spring event should include this new group and thus was born Cougar Crew Days.

The weekend started with the "ice breaker" BBQ at the old Stock Pavilion. For those of you who have not made it back as yet, you will not recognize the stock pavilion; it has been entirely redone as a hospitality facility. (It is a far cry from the cinder floors of yore where we used to refinish the wooden shells!) Under the ever present and even keeled Doug "D'Engle" Engle's stewardship, a combination of 80 or so alumni, parents, and friends showed up over the evening. Our greeter, none other than Ken and Marge "Crew Mom" Struckmeyer stayed the entire night. With burgers and bratwurst, stories were recounted and friendships rekindled.

Saturday morning started with the annual Cougar Crew Alumni Association Board of Directors Business Meeting. Many topics were covered; most revolving around the future and direction of Men's Cougar Crew. During the winter and early spring, the team had met with WSU's President Elson Floyd and put forth the concept of a Varsity Club. The Team was invited to make a presentation to the Athletic Council several weeks ago. (The Athletic Council reviews and makes recommendations to the President and the Athletic Director on things concerning university athletics.) The reception from the council was positive but not overly optimistic in the near future due to the current fiscal problems. The team was invited to represent again in the future. (For details of meeting go to the minutes on our website.)

Adjournment was at lunchtime and then all dashed to the river for the "races" and "fun rows". We tried something new this year; Rob Obom organized a "fun row" for those who did not want to attempt anything too stressful for fear of trading one type of "stroke" for another..... Several 4's and an 8 made the ranks with a voice out of the past as Celebrity Coaching; Struckmeyer! Being on the water with all those same guys and that voice booming over the water..... Déjà vu! I swear Mike Pabisz and Tim Zeiler had flashbacks to Fall Saturday rowing of mile after endless mile.

Another celebrity group showed up as a team to remember and just slightly relive history; The MeatWagon 4! (They won the IRA National Championship in 1979.) Rich "el Flipper" Ray, John "Yumbo" Holtman, Doug "D'Engle" Engle, and Chris "Squishy" Gulick under the direction of none other than Al "Horsehack" Fisher! Talk about a stumble down memory lanes.

The weather was perfect. The wind had quit and temperatures hit in the upper 60's/low 70's. (Alumni informed the current team that we had called ahead and arranged the weather. We also told the team we would teach them how to do it AFTER they graduated..) The Sophomores had won the right to race alumni during their Class Races on Friday so after the slow row, 4 eights took to the water for the race. The Sophomores, a boat of Sub-30 youngster alumni, and 2 boats of "Masters". 500 meters of pain lay ahead for the less conditioned. At the start, one of the Masters took an early and impressive lead. (There are those that would say it had to do with when we actually *started* rowing but without irrefutable evidence to the contrary I believe it was seasoned racing technique.) A reasonably close competition with the boats having some proximity.... At the end of the race(2 ½ hours or it just felt that way) the Sub-30's were able to hold off the Sophomores and cross first. The "Masters"? Happy to report all finished and made it out of the shell without medical help. A few coxswains were sacrificed to the River Gods. (One or two other alumni found themselves offered as sacrifice by way of taking long walks off short docks.)

With river festivities over, all made the trek back to Pullman to ready for the evening Banquet. This year it was held at the newly renovated CUB in the Senior Ballroom. The remodel of the CUB is spectacular. Greatly modernized and done quite well. Gatherings started on the lower level in the new restaurant & bar. As more and more showed up, the ballroom filled. By last counts, almost 200 people were in attendance. University President Elson Floyd (Pictured Right) was invited and attended a portion of the evening. He gave a very complimentary talk of the Men's Cougar Crew and pledged to work towards getting it the university support it needs to excel. He closed by making a personal \$2000 donation to our efforts.

As the years in the past, a silent auction and raffle was organized. Lisa (Coble) Curtis headed up the effort and doing things a little differently, she orchestrated a live auction as well. By the end of the night, over \$25,000 had been raised; nearly doubling last year's efforts. The evening wound down with groups once again going to local hangouts to spend a few more moments reliving shared experiences before having to go back home. Sunday morning brought many getting together for farewell breakfasts. A group of the 70's & 80's got together with Struckmeyer & Marge and had a few more laughs before starting to make their ways back to reality.

To those of you who made it; thanks for coming. Any way you look at it the weekend was a great success! To those who couldn't get there, I hope you can make it next year. We keep looking to reconnect with former members, men and women. Efforts were recently made and Kerin "Jane Jane" McKellar has been found! She promised to be there next year.

Remember, CCAA Fall Meeting in Seattle November 14th (Saturday, the day before Head of the Lake Regatta). Next year Cougar Crew Days will be during the weekend of March 20 & 21, 2010. See you there!!! ■



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