

The Pull Hard

*A Washington State Men's Crew
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A background image showing a rowing team on a lake. The rowers are wearing white tank tops and dark shorts, and are in a racing boat. The water is calm, and there are mountains in the distance. The image is slightly faded to allow the text to be read clearly.

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V8+ Wins WIRA Conference Championship

By Paul Ehlers



For the first time in Cougar History, the WSU V8+ won the WIRA Championships, taking first with a time of 6:13.0. The V8+ beat out the University of California – Davis’ 6:14.2, and University of California – Santa Clara’s 6:16.9, Orange Coast College, rival Gonzaga University, and the University of Cali-

The V8+ posing proudly with their first place trophy at the finish line.

ifornia – San Diego in the Grand Finals.

Battling through a tough, crossing wind, the Cougs were bowball to bowball with Davis coming through the 1000m mark, with several seats punched out the trailing crews of GU and UCSD. Coming in to the 500m mark, the Cougs were a few seats down on Davis, and used a strong sprint to pull out to a several seat lead and a 1.2 second victory. The Cougs also won their heat, again beating UC-Davis and turning in the second fastest time of the day, behind UC-San Diego. This victory was truly a historic moment of WSU Cougar Crew, which has never won an 8+ event at WIRAs. Coming from their 11th place finish last year, this turn-around bodes very well for the upcoming Pac-10 and ACRA Championships.

The Cougar JV8+ also collected a bronze medal, another record moment for the Cougs. The Cougars have never even made the grand final in the JV8+ event before at WIRAs, let alone sit upon the podium! The winning crew, UC-San Diego, turned in a time of 6:36.6, beating out GU by .2 seconds, and WSU’s 6:41.1 by

nearly 5 seconds. The strong winds definitely hurt the Cougar JV8+, as they are composed of 5 lightweights and are therefore much more susceptible to getting blown around.



The JV8+ walking through Orange Coast College in their final on Sunday.

The WSU JV8+

also turned in the second fastest time of the day in the heats, cruising to an easy 6:17.3.

In an interesting turn of events, the WSU Lightweight 8+ also collected gold medals and won their first ever WIRA trophy. Initially, the Cal Lightweights managed to beat out the Cougs by several seconds, but the Cal Lightweight team was disqualified for violating regatta rules.

The WSU 2- also made the grand finals, marking the third straight year the Cougs have gotten to the grand finals in that event. They finished 6th overall, behind eventual winner Loyola Marymount University.

The Novices also had a successful outing, with the 1N8+ qualifying for the grand finals with a furious sprint to beat out UC-Irvine. This also was the second straight year the 1N8+ has made it to the grand finals. They eventually finished 6th behind Orange Coast, the eventual winners.

The 2N8+ and 3N8+ also raced in the 2N8+ event, with the 2N8+ collecting silver medals and improving on the 3rd place finish that the Cougars achieved last year in that event. They finished with a 6:53.0 to Orange Coast's 6:45.0. The 3N8+ finished 4th.

And in a historic moment for WSU Cougar Crew, the inaugural Lightweight Women's team took home 3rd place medals in the Novice Lightweight 4+ event, the first ever medal for the Lightweight Women's team! They also finished 5th in the open weight novice 4+ heat, and the women's novice lightweight 8+, racing in the varsity lightweight 8+ event, finished 7th, with Stanford's women taking home the gold.

In a dramatic show of depth and force, the Cougars dominated the WIRA

championships, and this was truly reflected in their taking of the Overall Team Points trophy, another first for the WSU Crew team. Although WSU Men's Crew is a club program – and although they must fundraise more than 90% of their budget of \$200,000 – they beat out Varsity programs, with full support of their athletic departments, such as Gonzaga University, UC-San Diego, University of San Diego, and Orange Coast College.

The Cougs travel to the ACRA National Championships, where they are sending the V8+, JV8+, and 1N8+. The Cougs, who were ranked 7th in the V8+ prior to this week, look to move up in the polls after beating third ranked UC-Davis and 9th ranked Orange Coast College.



Cougar Crew 2010, WIRA Champions.



Head Coach Arthur Ericsson holds his team points trophy.

Coach Arthur Ericsson is extremely excited for his teams, saying, “We are so proud on two fronts. First, we won the premier Varsity 8+ event, and we are equally excited to have captured the Team Points trophy, showing the depth of our varsity, novice, and lightweight teams. The V8+ victory reflects the hard work over the past year, with 5 guys sticking it out from last year’s lineup [that took 11th], boosted by 3 second year rowers, to complete the formidable lineup.”

Lighthweight Women Bring Home WIRA Bronze

By Jen Weldy

Despite the gusty wind, it could not have been a better weekend in Sacramento, California for the WSU Lightweight Women to roll their boats down to the water, row toward the start line, and sit squared and bur-



The Lwt Women before races on Sunday.

ied, ready to row the last races of their 2010 Spring Season.

The WSU Lightweight women's inaugural season came to an exciting end on Lake Natoma at the WIRA Conference Championships. Lead by Coach Emily Kohl, the Novice Lightweight team raced in the Novice Women's 4+, the Lightweight Women's 8+, and the Novice Women's Lightweight 4+ events against California State University Sacramento, University of California Berkeley, California State University Humboldt, Stanford University, Willamette University, California State University Long Beach, University of California San Diego, Orange Coast College, Mills College and Portland State University.

Saturday morning the Novice 4+ took fifth, trailing only 0.3 seconds behind Mills College. The boat was coxed by Kelli Simpkins, with Holly Baker stroking, followed by Rachel Argo, Rebecca Gibson, and Sophia Foss in bow. Later that day, Jenn Weldy coxed the Lightweight 8+ with Becca Boen stroking, followed by Ellie Lokken, Nikki Rickard, Meesha Hedeem, Rebecca Gibson (hot-seating),



The Lwt Novice 4+ with their third place medals.

Sophia Peterson, Rachel King, and Melissa Galbraith in bow. They finished fifth overall to Stanford, Willamette, Long Beach, and San Diego, with a time of 8:36.0.

Sunday morning, they took bronze in the Novice Lightweight 4+ event with a time of 8:44.9 behind second place Berkeley and first place Sacramento. In their second

race of the weekend, the boat was coxed by Jenn Weldy, with Becca Boen in stroke seat, following Ellie Lokken, Rachel King, and Melissa Galbraith in bow.

The energy the girls rowed with spilled over in their enthusiasm to cheer each other on. Rachel Argo could be heard before every WSU race, "To the beach! To the beach!"

The weekend was a perfect finish to the women's first, and for some seniors the only, collegiate spring rowing season.

"This was such a gratifying experience," said next year's team Commodore Sophia Foss. "Our success at WIRA as not only a novice, but inaugural team definitely reflects well on this past year for us. We put in the hours and heart, which showed on the water. This race has given us a better understanding of competitive rowing as well as a rededication to come harder next year."

The team looks forward the upcoming fall season, varsity status, and a newly elected panel of officers. Among their list of responsibilities, the team plans on expanding their number with new recruits, and preparing for an even better season next spring—hopefully one that includes winning a few new shirts.

The Art of Seat Racing

By Paul Ehlers

As an involved parent, you may wonder what it means when your child calls you on the phone and despondently proclaims, “I lost my seat race today!” What exactly does that mean? Seat racing is one method that a coach uses to determine boat lineups. Rowing is not like swimming, cross country, or track: in boat classes other than the single, there is no way to directly measure an athlete’s boat moving ability. There are always other variables - in this case, other rowers – that disguise any particular rower’s prowess. Thus, selecting rowers for top boats is often a result of myriad factors: both raw and weight adjusted erg speed, form, seat racing, and coach’s tilt.

Seat racing is the best way for a coach to directly compare the boat moving ability of two rowers. In its most basic form, two 8+s will perform a maximum pressure race piece for, e.g., 3 minutes, at rate 32. The margin of victory for one 8+ is recorded, and the boats are pulled together so that two rowers can switch from one boat to another. The piece is then rerun and the margin of victory is recorded again: if the originally winning boat extends its margin, the rower that switched in to it presumably is faster. If the boat that had won instead loses, or wins by a lesser margin, the rower that switched out of it is, again, faster. Valid seat racing all about minimizing variables, so that the only quantity measured is the comparison of boat moving ability between two rowers. Therefore, it is important that each boat travels the same course for every piece, that each rower pulls equally hard for every piece, and that the rate is consistent between both boats and pieces.

Obviously, seat racing is not perfect, and even on the best of days it is more of an art than a science. Just because an athlete wins all of his seat races does not mean necessarily that he will be part of the 8 guys that move a shell down the 2k course the quickest. However, winning one’s seat race ensures an athlete is well on their way to a position in the top boat.



JV8+ Wins Fawley Cup

By Paul Ehlers



JV8+ moving away from Gonzaga in the last 500 meters.

In an up-and-down day of racing for the Cougs, the highest note came from the WSU JV8+. Leading the race wire-to-wire, the retooled JV lineup beat the Gonzaga JV by 4 seconds and open water! The Gonzaga JV8+ was ranked No. 1 in the latest WIRA coaches poll, but the powerful Cougars punched out seats on the start and never trailed in their victory. Crossing the line with a time of 6:09.96, the Cougs beat the 6:13.81 posted by Gonzaga, and the 6:35.38 posted by the Cougar 3V8+. Kramer Wahlberg, stroke of the victorious 8+ and a 3rd year oarsman, was extremely pleased with his race. “We took seats off of the start and had nearly a length by the 500m mark. After that, we kept them off of our bow and maintained our lead through the end of the race.” Historically, the Cougs have not beaten Gonzaga in the JV event for at least 15 years, making this a particularly sweet victory.

The V8+ came in to the Fawley Cup premier race with very high hopes, and were looking to be only the second crew in 20 years to reclaim the vaunted trophy. Taking several seats off of their start, the V8+ led by half a length crossing the 1k mark, and were poised to take home the cup with a 2 seat lead entering the last 500m. Unfortunately, the Cougs ran out of gas and were passed with just 15 strokes to go, falling to Gonzaga and their 5:58.52. WSU crossed the line

just over a second later, with a time of 5:59.64.

The Novice 8+ were unable to take revenge for last year's



The 2nd Novice 8+

race, falling to Gonzaga. GU finished in 6:20.45, with WSU finishing in 6:34.70.

The 2N8+ was also an extremely close race, where WSU was leading with 300m to go before GU picked up their sprint and nosed out in front. Gonzaga's 2N8+ finished in 6:26.45, while the WSU 2N8+ finished just behind them in 6:27.52. WSU's 3N8+, also racing in that race, finished in 7:02.17.

While losing the V8+ was extremely tough on the WSU crew team, the victory of the JV8+ was a great boost to morale. Coach Arthur Ericsson says, "All of our crews got faster and left everything on the water."



Once the Fawley Cup races had concluded, a family row took place, fielding three eights of current rowers with parents and siblings.



Power 10 Campaign

Cougar Crew Alumni Association

Dear Alumni:

Set forth below is a letter from alum, Tom Caudill. The letter underscores the concerns and sentiments of the Cougar Crew Alumni Association (CCAA). On behalf of the CCAA, we would appreciate your taking a few moments to read the letter.

Power 10:

I was a Cougar oarsman from 1976 to 1980. I recently had the opportunity to attend Cougar Crew Days in Pullman during March 19 and 20, 2010. Over the weekend, I also attended the open Board Meeting on March 20, 2010. While I had a wonderful time reconnecting with former teammates, meeting the current rowers, rowing on the river, and meeting other alumni and family members, I left Pullman with a feeling of embarrassment and a personal (but silent) sense of outrage. Specifically, and strictly from the point of view as an alum, I became concerned about the financial condition of the men's crew, the time commitment of rowers to raise money, and the tremendous effort by the coaches for a nominal pay.

My rowing experience at WSU was a character builder and a foundation for discipline and responsibility, all of which have guided me throughout my career and life. For this reason, and for the life long friendships made from rowing, I owe the Cougar Crew a great deal of gratitude. Moreover, I feel a deep-seeded responsibility to the current rowers and, in particular, the coaches, each of whom seek to maintain our Cougar Crew tradition. This tradition can neither be maintained nor grow without help from the alumni. With this in mind, kindly note the following:

1. The Coaches: The men's head coach is Arthur Ericsson. Arthur is dedicated to the crew on a full time basis. During the rowing season, he expends a significant amount of time (well beyond 60 hours per week). He is married and has two young children. He sacrificed a career, and a better paying job, for the opportunity to coach the WSU Men's Crew. He has been our coach for approximately six years. During this time, he has made significant strides to improve the quality of the crews placed on the water and at the race starting line. The WSU men's crew is becoming increasingly competitive (like the old days). Coach Ericsson and his family have sacrificed much to maintain our tradition. In exchange, we pay Coach Ericsson a mere \$20,000 a year. This compensation, to say the least, is an embarrassment. He makes less than the poverty level for a sometimes thankless job. Yet, Coach Ericsson does an outstanding job for and with the rowers, for the crew in general, and for the alumni.

The men's novice coach is Julia Gamache. The amount we pay Julia for her effort on behalf of the crew is equally if not more of an embarrassment. We pay her \$10,000 per year. I was previ-

ously unaware of the pitiful compensation paid to our coaches. Yet, we expect each of them to commit one hundred percent of their time to the crew.

2. The Rowers: The time commitment by the current rowers to garner enough money to attend races is equally embarrassing. Moreover, the rowers' attention to fund-raising efforts has increased greatly as the team has taken on the responsibility of hiring coaches. The rowers' off season conditioning is intense. Their preseason practices are time consuming. Their dedication equals (if not exceeds) that of former rowers. Yet, our rowers cannot practice the same number of days a week as do rowers from other schools. This is because of necessary fund-raising programs such as "rent-a-rower", "tables and chairs", in which they set up tents, chairs and tables for various WSU events. The fund-raising work by the rowers results in a loss of practices on Fridays and during select weekends. And yes, practices are canceled during racing season due to necessary fund-raising efforts. Further, the various rent-a-rower programs and other fund-raising events do not raise sufficient capital for all to participate in regattas. Only some WSU shells may compete at regattas, and for some regattas, some may not compete at all. As an example, the Cougar Crew had to "scratch" both novice 8's at the recent San Diego Crew Classic because of novice team financial constraints. Yet, each rower practices as hard as the next for the opportunity to race.

It is also noteworthy that annual dues paid by the rowers will increase from \$275 to \$325. In addition, out of pocket expenses for travel, for those rowers who can afford such expenses, are approximately \$2,000 per year.

3. The Equipment: There is an ongoing need for better and newer equipment. The competing schools, by and large, have better and newer equipment on a consistent basis. In fact, other schools sell their "second-hands" to WSU, as our club can only afford to buy hand-me-downs from its competition. Our rowers, therefore, are reduced to competing with inferior equipment. As an example, last year several used shells were purchased from Western. Western no longer needed the used shells because it purchased new state-of-the-art shells. Yet, the "elder" WSU men's rowing club can rarely purchase a new shell for its team. Embarrassing.

Given the meager compensation to our coaches, the tireless effort of the rowers in the face of an inability to attend all races, and given the hand-me-down shells in which they race, I had a difficult time looking eye to eye with persons such as Coach Arthur Ericsson. As an alum, and speaking strictly for myself, I was both embarrassed and ashamed that we, as an alumni group, cannot do more for those who strive to maintain a tradition of which we were and are a part.

I feel that if each of us as a sustaining member contributes a nominal amount, and if we do so continuously, the concerns set forth above may be appropriately addressed and the Cougar Crew will significantly benefit.

Thank you for your consideration and contributions, past and future.

Tom Caudill

Lightweight Oarsman, 1976-1980

The CCAA Board shares the concerns raised by Tom Caudill. The long-term goal of the CCAA is to build its Endowment fund to a level sufficient to pay the coaching staff, to allow our rowers to practice rather than work at fund-raisers, to allow all rowers to attend regattas, and to purchase state-of-the-art shells.

Over the last four years, many of you have responded to team needs and contributions to the Endowment have totaled \$32,398. Unfortunately, the dividends from the Endowment fund, which may be used for the team, yield only approximately \$7,800 per year. This amount is insufficient to even maintain the status quo. As an extra effort to that drive, we propose to take a “Power 10” and urge all of our alums to participate in giving a small sum on a monthly basis to directly supplement items such as coaching salaries.

A contribution of \$10 per month (hence the “Power 10”) might hardly be felt in a monthly budget. But, combined with 100 or 200 (or more) of your fellow rowing alums, the total effect will be huge. Much like getting that ‘swing’ in the boat, big things suddenly become easier and obtainable.

Contribution Instructions: The CCAA would like to start contributions effective June 1, 2010. Contributions will be made directly to the WSU Foundation using the attached form. For convenience, please fill out the information and attach a voided check. This authorizes the Foundation to automatically take the specified amount out of your checking account on the 1st or 15th of each month. Specify “indefinitely” as the time period if you wish to continue for more than one year.

Thank you.

CCAA Board of Directors

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CCAA

GIFT ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER AUTHORIZATION

WSU FOUNDATION
TOWN CENTRE 201
PULLMAN, WA 99164-1927

CCAA Power 10 Campaign # 10362

By completing and returning this form to the WSU Foundation, you are establishing an easier and less costly method of making your gift to Washington State University. If you have any questions, contact the WSU Foundation; telephone 509-335-1686. **NOTE: If you do not specify an expiration date for this authorization or maximum total contribution, the WSU Foundation will continue to deduct the specified monthly amount from your bank account until you notify us in writing.**

GIFT(S) DESIGNATED TO			
Men's Crew Fund 17A 6800-9200			
AMOUNT PER MONTH	UNTIL THIS AMOUNT IS REACHED	OR	A ONE-TIME PAYMENT OF
\$	\$		\$
INDICATE ON WHICH DAY(S) OF MONTH GIFT IS TO BE DEDUCTED FROM YOUR ACCOUNT			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1ST <input type="checkbox"/> 15TH <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH (1ST AND 15TH)			
NAME (Print or type first and last name)			
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PREFERRED ADDRESS (If different than address on attached check)			
HOME TELEPHONE NO.		WORK TELEPHONE NO.	

- I hereby authorize:**
- Washington State University Foundation to initiate debit entries to my bank account at the financial institution named on the check attached below, and
 - My bank or credit union to make debit entries to my account as "WSUF Gift" and to submit a preauthorized bank account draft for the debit amount to the WSU Foundation.
- I understand that:**
- Unless I specify an expiration date or a maximum total gift amount, this authorization remains in effect and the WSU Foundation continues deducting the specified monthly amount until cancelled in writing.
 - I should anticipate the first debit entry approximately eight days after the WSU Foundation receives my authorization form.
 - Each subsequent transaction takes place on the date I specified above, i.e., 1st or 15th of the month.
 - I must complete a new authorization if I change banks or credit unions, or close my account.

SIGNATURE 1	SIGNATURE 2 (Spouse)	DATE

ATTACH A VOIDED PREPRINTED CHECK WHICH INCLUDES NAME AND ADDRESS.
Checks without preprinted name and address (e.g., counter checks) and deposit slips are NOT accepted.

IMPORTANT: Do not mark over the numbers on the bottom of the check.

