

The Pull Hard

A Cougar Crew Publication



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Coverphoto: Novice 8 rowing on the snake in preparation for ACRA National Championships

When a Rower Becomes a Coach

By: Danielle Mertens

Something different with Cougar Crew from most teams is having inexperienced men on their teams who have never rowed before. Our coaching staff has the pleasure of finding normal guys and turning them into rowers. Finding a coach that can pick guys up off the street that have never heard of crew, coxswains or even oars and turning them into rowers that can pull for a win is a serious accomplishment. Peter Brevick, an alumni rower from 2002-2006, has been the Men's Novice Crew coach for the 2011-2012 season and has made a lasting impact on a great group of guys (and gals). Being his coxswain has been an honor and he has taught me a lot of what I need to know and incorporated me into the lasting legacy known as Cougar Crew. I am so glad that I had him as my coach. His way of teaching is hands on and perfect for a new rower or coxswain and our knowledge from him will be the needed base for us in the coming 3 years to be a successful crew. Peter is now currently the Rowing Boatman for Riversport at the Chesapeake Boathouse in Oklahoma City.

Here are some valuable lessons, memorable quotes and crazy jokes that have come from the intelligent mind of Coach Peter Brevick:



“My favorite memory of Peter was when he yelled at David every time he didn't catch correctly. He just kept saying, ‘David! David!’”

~Favorite memory, Brandon Graham

Novice 8 posing for a picture after ACRA National Championships.

“The best coaching quote coach had was ‘Empty the tank.’ It always made me pull harder. His patience with us novice was really respectable as well.”

~Favorite quote, Steven Andrews

“What does the mommy bullet say to the daddy bullet?” “We're gonna have a BB!!”

~Favorite quote, Curtis Treiber

“You're not actually cold, you're just uncomfortable. You've probably never actually been cold.” Morning row quote 2: “No... he's probably cold...”

~Favorite quote, Max Vaughn

“I couldn't have asked for a better novice coach. Peter knows what he's doing in and out of the boat. He's a role model for everyone and never fails to make us think, laugh, and do everything else a novice needs to do. Peter is intelligent beyond his years and invests more of his wisdom into us novice than just teaching us how to row. He's a friend to all of us, not because he tries to be, but because that's just the way he is. Thanks for everything, Pete.”

~ Max Vaughn

Thank you Peter Brevick for an amazing year!



New British Novice Coach

By: Arthur Ericsson

Two years ago Cougar Crew was given approval to hire an assistant coach as a graduate assistant. This was a huge benefit to the team because this new position would allow Cougar Crew to attract a stronger pool of applicants, because it offers the prospective coaches the chance to pursue a graduate degree without the cost of tuition during their coaching term with the team.

During our interview process we identified one clear candidate that we wanted to hire, but our hopes were on a British coach and that proved to be too late in the year to execute within the graduate admissions timeline. Fortunately, that summer Coach Peter Brevick was hired to competently take the novice coach position for the 2011-12 season. But Cougar Crew did not give up on our candidate and before the fall semester was over began the hiring process of Giles Dakin-White, who was still very interested in the position. Once he discovered that Sports Management was a degree he could pursue all of the pieces fell into place and he was officially hired to be this year's novice coach. (Mike Dostal was another men's crew novice coach from England in 2005-06).

Giles arrived one month before the start of school and was eager to help get things ready in whatever ways he could. The timing of his new job forced him to give up tickets to several Olympic events that he had already bought. The cycling race went right through his hometown of Surrey, southwest of London. He got his feet wet recruiting alongside Head Coach Arthur Ericsson and Commodore Eric

DeMaris at the final Alive! sessions for incoming freshmen. And he made a few trips down to the boathouse to rig the boats that his novice would soon be using. He helped do a major revision on the team's handbook and went on some training sessions with Coach Arthur who was preparing for the upcoming triathlon. He admits to being unfit and accused Arthur of trying to kill him on more than one occasion, but one could see the talented athlete starting to come back to life. Already he has proven to be well organized and very knowledgeable in technique. We expect that he will be equally competent in executing a high level training plan and inspiring his oarsmen to push as hard as any Cougar crews that have come before.



Giles Dakin-White, the new novice coach.

Interview of Giles Dakin-White:

A.E. What was a highlight for you as a rower?

G.D.-W. The highlight of my rowing career has to be the day that we, the Cambridge Lightweight crew, defeated the Cambridge Boat Race JV crew. For my national titles, victories over Oxford, and other medals, it was on an ordinary overcast day on a deserted river in a closed scrimmage that we, a club lightweight program, knocked off one of the top varsity programs in the world.

A.E. What is a highlight for you as a coach?

G.D.-W. Although the first win as a coach is a feeling that can never be repeated, last year's Henley winning women's double was my proudest moment so far. One of the girls I had taught to scull just six months earlier, and we put the boat together just three weeks before the regatta. Winning the regatta (and a berth at the GB Championships for England) has led this particular athlete to pursue her international aspirations and she has joined the Irish National development program.

A.E. How is it going so far after just nine days?

G.D.-W. Nine days into the season, and I am pleased to see a high level of commitment already. Having athletes who are excited to learn is the most you can ever ask for as a coach; and everyone seems eager to get to a level where they can really work hard in a boat.

A.E. What has impressed you the most so far about Cougar Crew?

G.D.-W. Cougar Crew doesn't just call itself a family; it demonstrates it. The enthusiasm to bring new members into the fold, and the welcome that the coaches and varsity have given to the novice rowers and myself has been truly appreciated. We are looking forward to building on this atmosphere with a 'buddy' system this year between the varsity and novice.

A.E. What do you see as your biggest challenge now?

G.D.-W. The biggest challenge right now is maintaining the momentum. We have good energy right now, and guys who are eager to lay down some power. Giving this opportunity whilst guiding their development as rowers is an exciting challenge that I look forward to.

A.E. What are your goals while at WSU?

G.D.-W. My goal at WSU is simple: to give as many people the same experience that I had. That winning feels awesome, that winning is worth it, and that winning proves you are a stronger person than you thought you were. REACH FOR THE TOP. DON'T STOP.



Varsity Spotlight: Eric DeMaris

By: Caitlin Aldrich

Eric DeMaris is notching the seventh year of rowing under his belt as he goes into his fourth year rowing for Cougar Crew. During the 2011-2012 season he served as the team's publisher and for the past two years he has served as the stroke seat for the Varsity 8. In terms of experience alone, there is no one more qualified to be this year's Cougar Crew Commodore. Eric is a Neuroscience major looking to become a family physician; taking academic demands one step farther, he also is in the Honors College.

When Eric first arrived in Pullman, he was a technically sound freshman with a ton of promise and a very quiet demeanor. That quiet, promising sopho-



Eric stroking the varsity 8 during 2012 postseason.

more quickly became one of the fastest rowers and most enjoyably animated team members. During his freshman year he raced in the JV8 and Lightweight 8. Sophomore year he became the stroke of the Varsity 8 and still pulled double duty by making an appearance in the Lightweight 8. At a lean 6'2", he sits just on the line between lightweight and heavyweight and makes any lineup faster. During his junior year, the 2011-2012 season, he exclusively raced as the unmovable stroke seat of the Var-

sity 8 (much to his delight, he did not have to make lightweight during that season). Among his numerous achievements are a gold medal in the LWT8 at WIRA 2010, the 2011 Fawley Cup victory over Gonzaga, a Varsity 8 6th place finish in Grand Finals at ACRA's in 2011, and stroking the crew that set the WSU 2k time record this past season at ACRA's (5:53.4) and beat season rival UCLA.

His years of experience are clearly seen at work on the water, in the erg room, and in the structure of the team. Just when you are looking at this very seasoned athlete who has the focus of steel and expecting only serious focus, Eric will break out an incredibly goofy expression as a reaction to something and the mood is instantly lightened. Coxswains appreciate these breaks from intense focus and serious endeavors, often being unable to keep from laughing. The whole team got to enjoy a glimpse of Eric's entertaining antics and expressions at the 2012 talent show when he covered "Living on a Prayer" with a lyrical twist, the performance being "Rowing in a Pair".



Concept II Tour

By: David Herrick

The last two weeks of my summer were spent in Vermont leading up to a family reunion, which presented me with a rare opportunity. In the town of Morrisville my father, sister and I had a chance to visit the Concept2 factory. Usually tours are reserved for scheduled groups, most often from Craftsbury sculling camp, but my father mentioned he was rowing for the University of Pennsylvania at the same time as the Dreissigacker brothers when they were rowing for the Vespoli Rowing Club, both of which are located on the renowned Boathouse Row on the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia. This is significant because Dreissigacker brothers are the creators of Concept2. This apparently was enough to peak the interest of the man on the other end of the line and he invited us over.

Upon arriving we observed an unimpressive single story wooden building that covered maybe five acres. Perched over the entrance was a metal statue of a man erging. Walking through the front doors we met with Frank. Not a former oarsmen himself, he played football in college despite being roughly 5'7" and slightly built, but he had been with the company for over twenty years. The factory was, like many, one large room that has been sectioned off by partial walls and openings. He first showed us the beginnings of a blade and explained how it could be cut to different designs depending on the order, and how fiberglass could be smoothed or textured to suit the needs of the company. Next we moved to where oars that had been constructed were drying as the waterproof epoxy set. He pulled down an oar and showed us the edge of the blade and began to explain the physics of the blade in the water in such detail I had difficulty trying to keep it all in order.

Next to the rack was a machine that was crowned with a cardboard cutout of a T-Rex skull that had the spinal ridges created out of broken blades and "Monster" slung around the neck. The machine tested the durability and strength of the shaft far beyond the normal stresses put on it by an oarsmen. Frank chuckled and said "every once in awhile though one will break and it sounds like a gunshot." While imagining fiberglass shards flying through the air we moved to another station. Frank showed us a new device they were constructing to measure how flexible an oar was and when finished it would be able to measure to within a tenth of a centimeter. This would outdate the standard system of hanging a ten-pound weight off the edge of the blade and measuring its bend to the centimeter. The reason, Frank said, was that the U.S women's team had requested skinnier shafts on sweep oars, and this was their response to that.

We continued on and Frank described that from this point oars could be colored, originally they only did white but now could do seven base colors, and after painting could be shipped to Montreal, Canada since it was the nearest port and only a two hour drive away.

With the tour mostly concluded we walked over to an area of the factory with several ergs lined up with other machines that served as a gym for employees and as a showcase for buyers. Mounted on the wall we saw the Model A, B and C ergs and Frank talked about their production years. Inside the gym area itself were several ergs but also some adapted pieces of equipment that Concept2 had created in place of weights, the largest of which was appropriately called the rhino.

The tour was concluded with a few handshakes, free stickers and thanking Frank for his time, a roughly 45 minute tour which was far more than we expected, though we joked he was probably happy to get away from the phones.



Summer Rowing

By: David Herrick

This summer I spent six weeks living in Dallas, Texas with my father and stepmother to work and train. Originally I am from Colorado but there is little opportunity to row near where I live and I was determined to improve on my technique, making Dallas the logical choice. My father was a college oarsman at the University of Pennsylvania and my stepmother picked up rowing almost a decade ago and has spent several years as a coach. I had been told that working in a single scull would be a good way to fine tune my form, which in turn put me under the watchful eye of my stepmom Lisa. Standing at about 5'8" with brown curly hair with smile lines on her cheeks exhibit an easy smile, she agreed to coach me twice a week.

I was promptly attached to my family's membership at the Dallas Rowing Club, located on Bachman Lake in northern Dallas. The upshot was that the lake was only a five-minute drive from my house. The downside was that less than 50 feet from the waters edge was Dallas Love Field, the primary hub for Southwest Airlines which meant that I had everything from private propeller planes to 747's roaring in to land right above my head. I began in a training shell, specifically a Zephyr which was wide enough that it would have been a physical challenge to flip it. Quickly I proceeded to an Aero, still a training shell, but not something that could navigate open ocean. I spent a great deal of time in this boat, its wide hull allowed me to focus on improving my sculling abilities without fear of flipping. On the days that Lisa did coach me she would give me a drill or two to work on and then would follow me in her launch. After the drill she would question me about how I felt, what seemed to work, and told me what I needed to improve on. On the days she wasn't coaching me I would go out on the lake in the afternoon (usually the air temperature was hovering around 97 degrees) to practice on my own, or with my brother or

or another high school rower named Brooke who Lisa was coaching at the same time with me. The focus of my drills tended to focus on steering a straight course, popping the oars out of the water square before feathering and making sure my hands got away from my body smoothly and quickly. With time, these aspects of my technique improved.

Eventually I proceeded to racing shells. One difficulty I faced was that I had a relatively weak core, which made balancing in a boat more challenging. Up to this point I had been doing a rather brutal routine of exercises to strengthen my abs and I hoped it was enough. My first day out I could barely crack my legs to take a stroke, so I settled to arms and body rowing while skimming as a way to ensure I stayed in the boat.



David and Liam Herrick rowing a double on Bachman Lake.

With time I was able to row normally, though still with oars skimming, quite quickly though I found my starboard oar catching water and before I realized it I had been pitched from the boat into the lake. I surfaced to the sound of laughter as Lisa drove up and instructed me on how to get back into my overturned shell. This was not the last time I would find myself christened by Bachman, the third time I found myself in this baptismal act I had an entertaining thought. Like most people when I imagined someone in a single, I thought of the person and shell in harmony gliding effortlessly across a glassy lake, rowing nirvana. Yet here I was standing ankle deep in mud up to my shoulders in water (the lake was shallow enough for me to stand up) with 747's cruising less than 100 feet over my head undoubtedly sprinkling me with engine fuel. Not exactly picturesque, but still I was happy to be there.

After six weeks on my last day of training I was able to row with oars off the water with some semblance of grace and good technique. I had done a few starts and Lisa filmed me for a few minutes. After putting my boat away, another skill that takes more practice than I would have anticipated, we reviewed the video. I wasn't thrilled with my lack of keeping the boat set but Lisa quickly pointed out that there was virtually no check in the boat, which was something to be proud of. Overall I don't think I could have spent those six weeks any better.



Triathlon Success!

By: Paul Lund

The Men's Varsity team held its fourth annual triathlon on Saturday August 25th. The triathlon has established itself as a fitness assessment of the returning varsity oarsmen, while also marking the start of a new year for Cougar Crew.

Eighteen varsity rowers and four others successfully completed the 1,500 meter swim. The first swimmer to reach the dock was Greg Turner, a Navy ROTC colleague of 3rd year oarsmen Loren Bates, followed by sophomores and 2nd year oarsmen Tyler Larson and John Gehring. The top three are all former competitive swimmers and showed their strength on the first leg of the event. Four rowers either didn't pass the swim test earlier in the week, or chose to erg instead of doing the open water swim. Three returning rowers from the women's lightweight team did a four mile run instead of the swim, and then joined the rest of the field for the remainder of the event.

The bike leg once again brought significant changes to the field. The three top swimmers were caught by head coach Arthur Ericsson within the first eight miles of the bike portion. 3rd year oarsman David Herrick held on to the lead almost to the



Top: David Herrick finishing the swim in a good position.

Left: The bikes prepared for the 25 mile ride along the Snake River.

turnaround point, but couldn't follow Ericsson's fast pace on the bike. Advancing from behind was Paul Lund and Max Vaughn, who finished the bike leg about four minutes behind Arthur.

During the run there were few changes among the leading group. Arthur Ericsson added about one minute to his lead after the bike, and Paul Lund took advantage of the start to build a two minute lead over Max Vaughn. Ericsson crossed the line in 2 hours and 33 minutes, followed by Lund in 2:38. Vaughn wrapped up the podium with a time of 2:40.

The majority of the juniors and seniors improved their time from previous years, something that didn't go unnoticed with head coach Arthur Ericsson "We need to be training year round, bringing summer fitness onto the water, in order to maximize our season. If I asked everyone to slog away on an erg all summer it wouldn't happen and we'd start the season off with a guilty conscious. But the tri can inspire them to tackle fresh disciplines (swim, bike and run) which are fun and valuable cross training for everyone. It's a good feeling to know that we start our season off by doing an Olympic distance triathlon. Most teams now have to try to catch up with us. The guys did well. It was our best performance yet as a team."

Commodore Eric DeMaris has participated in every triathlon since the inaugural one in 2009. In addition to a solid amount of training over the summer, he recognizes the importance of experience "I beat my personal record by just under 10 minutes. Being my fourth tri with the team, I really valued the extra experience I had with the event. As fit as one can be, having experience with triathlons makes a difference. The tri is a great measure of how well we trained over the summer months, and it also gave us something to strive for in the off-season. I never thought I'd end up being a four-time triathlete by joining the team, but I sure am happy to have that under my belt."



Race Schedule 2012-2013

Fall Races

Head of the Spokane	October 20th	Spokane
Head of the Snake	October 27th	Snake River
Head of the Lake	November 4th	Seattle
Dare Duel vs. WWU	November 3rd/4th	Snake River
Dad's Row	November 3rd/4th	Snake River

Spring Races

Cougar Crew Days Banquet	March 16th	CUB Sr. Ballroom
Cascade Sprints	March 30th	Tacoma
San Diego Crew Classic	April 6-7th	Sand Diego, CA
Apple Cup vs. UW	April 13th	Snake River
Mom's Row	April 13th	Snake River
Fawley Cup vs. Gonzaga	April 17/18th	Spokane
WIRA Championships	April 27-28th	Rancho Cordova, CA
Opening Day Regatta	May 4th	Seattle
Pac-12 Championships	May 19th	Rancho Cordova, CA
ACRA National Championship	May 25th-26th	Gainseville, GA

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