

The Pull Hard

A Cougar Crew Publication



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Sport Club of the Year

Every year, UREC takes nominations for sport club of the year, and the winner not only receives recognition, but a small monetary prize as well. Each nomination must explain why the sport club exhibits exemplary performance and behavior from its athletes. Ashley Vu, Commodore of the Lightweight Women, wrote a nomination for Cougar Crew and we were fortunate enough to win! In the following paragraphs, you will be able to read what she wrote about our teams.

“Cougar Crew has made amazing strides in this last calendar year. We earned 6 medals and 2nd All Team at the Western Intercollegiate Rowing Association Championship. At ACRA Nationals in Gainesville, GA, we earned 3 varsity silver medals and 6th All Team. This was the 1st ever varsity medal earned by the Lightweight Women, Lightweight Men, and a sculling boat at Nationals.

In this academic year, we have added on 5 new races from our schedule last academic year. This is a huge opportunity for our rowers and giving our program the positive visibility it needs to grow. In the fall, we attended the Head of the Charles Regatta in Boston, and the Charlie Brown Regatta in Portland. In the spring, we will attend Stanford Invite, Dad Vails in Philadelphia, and have made a return to the San Diego Crew Classic. This year, our novice 8 earned a spot in the grand final at the Crew Classic, earning the highest finish in the novice category for our team.

This spring, 14 seniors will graduate with 4 year oarsman awards. This is one of the highest, if not the highest, number of 4 year oarsman awards to be given in one year. This really speaks to where our program is today.

Every year in May, there is a PAC 12s only regatta. Within the PAC 12 are varsity programs and club programs. Club programs simply cannot compete with varsity funded programs and become

Sport Club continued

heavily discouraged to attend this regatta. Cougar Crew is proud to inaugurate the Paul Enquist trophy to the PAC 12 this May. Paul Enquist is an alumni and former Cougar Crew rower who went on to win a gold medal in the Summer Olympics of 1984. The Paul Enquist trophy will be awarded to the Men's Club Champion at the PAC 12s, motivating clubs to attend.

Palouse Rowing, a summer program where anyone in the community can learn to row or continue to row and race, is celebrating its 11 th year this summer. We have been blessed this last calendar year to christen 4 boats including the Elson S. Floyd. President Floyd was able to christen his shell about two months before his passing. This was a unanimous decision to dedicate our brand new shell to President Floyd as he has given so much to our program.

Lastly, Cougar Crew has been working with Joanne Greene and Matt Shaw to bring forth a Club Women's program. We are expanding our strictly Lightweight Women's program to include all women. This transitions us from being a team that has to turn away people because of their weight and can now accept all women of all shapes and sizes who want to row. This is huge for our program, the women at WSU who want a chance to row, and for our alumni who began the combination of men and women as club; open to anyone and everyone. We can now continue from where our roots began back in 1970."

Right: Rowers Ashley Vu and Michael Sheremet with Coach Alec Hurley accepting the award.



WIRA

Written by: Raquel Guerra-Lewis, Alyssa Kodama, and Katie Fowler

WIRA was such an amazing experience for me as a first year coxswain because it was the first time that I was able to get into the depth of collegiate racing strategy. After spending hours with my coach talking about everything we can accomplish as a team with the right execution on the course, it was finally time to try it out. Boats lined up at the start and we were off, neck and neck with the other teams from the start, but we somehow pulled ahead in the first thousand meters. Separating from the pack and holding a strong second felt amazing and only gave us more motivation to keep pushing our limits. Winning 1st in Heats to get into Grand Finals would have been amazing, but in the last 500 meters we began to conserve in order to set ourselves up for an even better race in the Grands. Crossing the finish line in a strong second place gave us amazing confidence as the First Novice 8 and helped us to be ready both mentally and physically to compete at our best the following day. In Grands we had the slowest time going in, but that was not on our minds. We had a hard start off the line becoming a little out of sync, but were able to pull it together by the first 500, holding even with lower rates to have a strong second 1000, then ending with an all-out sprint.



Above: First Novice 8

WIRA continued

Our efforts were sadly not enough to medal, but competing at a higher level with such great teams as well as beating our previous PR let us leave the regatta having an amazing learning experience to help us in the next race. The Second Novice 8 found success this weekend as well. They took second in their Heat, sending them to Grand Finals where they would earn a bronze medal. The Novice 4+ had a disappointing weekend, as they only had the opportunity to race once. They placed 5th in Heats, which would send them to the third finals had it not been canceled due to high winds.

High winds made for difficult racing on Saturday, and some events were pushed back to Sunday or even canceled altogether. Officials moved the V8's race to Sunday, but the JV8 still raced on Saturday. They needed to place third or better in their heat to advance to Grand Finals. They battled UC Santa Barbara's B boat the entire length of the course until they hit the last 500 meters. UCSB stepped it up for the sprint, but WSU was unable to match their speed. The JV placed 4th, just short of 3rd place, to send them to Petite Finals. Although disappointed they did not make it to Grands, the boat was determined to race better the next day. In Petites, San Diego State stayed right by their side until 700 meters to go when WSU was able to take a few seats and definitively take the lead. They finished in first with a time of 6:30, 6 seconds ahead of SDSU.

Right: JV8



WIRA continued

After not racing on Saturday, the V8 was anxious to begin racing on Sunday. They would need to place in the top two to advance to Grand Finals. However, a lackluster performance earned them 3rd place, sending them to Petite Finals. In Petites, they were able to sit fairly comfortably in 2nd place, until about 500 meters to go when UCLA began making moves to close in. With 300 meters left, both boats were sitting dead even fighting to get across the line first. UCLA was able to pull away and cross the line just barely ahead of WSU. The V8 finished in 3rd with a time of 6:19.

In a Final only event, our Varsity Men's Double raced. The two athletes had only been training together for a few weeks and did not have high expectations for how the race would go. They ended in 6th place behind Chico.

When the Lightweight Women headed down to WIRA this year, they were ready to race on Lake Natoma with high hopes of coming home with some hardware. A schedule adjustment due to windy conditions caused the Women's Lightweight 8+ event to be canceled and raced first thing on Sunday morning instead. The 8+ ended up making the third finals in the Women's 8+ D2, D3, Club event and were able to hold strong against UC Davis, with our boat being over 20 seconds faster than last year. The next race of the day was the Women's 2x, where the Lightweights had two entries. The double of Freshman Alyx Powell and Sophomore Tabitha



Above: from bow, Wheeler and Powell

WIRA continued

Wheeler were able to walk away with a silver medal in the event, only finishing 0.9 seconds behind Long Beach who won gold. The other double pairing of Freshman Hannah Wilson and Senior Sidney Cross placed fourth with a significant lead over the other 3 boats in the race. The final race of the day was the Women's Lightweight Varsity 4+. Due to an unexpected line-up change last minute, the 4 was still able to pull a time of 8:30 and have open water ahead of Chico State to receive a bronze medal. Due to several unforeseen changes, the team was able to persevere through the challenges presented to them and still walk away with 2 medals adding to the total 3 medals won by Cougar Crew that weekend.



Dad Vail

Written by: Sidney Cross

For the first time, the lightweight women traveled to Philadelphia to compete in the Dad Vail Regatta. They had a good experience rowing on new water, the Schuylkill River. Due to poor weather conditions, all race times were adjusted for this regatta. Their race was moved from 3:10pm to 12:08pm.

The race time was not the only change that occurred at Dad Vail. The sudden illness of one rower required a last minute substitution. This was very unfortunate, but the lightweights powered through with their new substitution of Alyx Powell for Katie Fowler. Despite the new lineup change, choppy conditions, and a couple crabs throughout the race the lightweights finished 5th, nearly a minute ahead of St. Thomas. Coxswain, Grace Montgomery said, “Given better conditions, I think we would have been more competitive with the other crews. We held even with Northwestern to the 1000 meter mark before a boat-stopping crab made us fall back. We are excited to have the chance to race against some of these same crews with our practiced lineup at ACRA.”

Right: Bronze medaling 4+ from WIRA



PAC12s

Written by: Griffin Berger

This year at Pac-12s the Paul Enquist Club Championship trophy was introduced to help facilitate the return of more club teams to the Pac-12s race. Over the last few years there has been dwindling attendance of club teams at Pac-12s. This year the only club teams that attended were Colorado, University of Oregon, and Washington State. At this regatta all club and varsity teams in the Pac-12 have a chance to race each other. From the standpoint of a club coach, it may seem pointless to race against teams that you will not face at nationals. The extra cost incurred by attending the event and time lost traveling that could be used for training instead can seem disadvantageous. However, by discounting the value of racing against fast varsity programs these teams lose the opportunity to gain valuable race experience. Most importantly, they miss the chance to race club teams that they will face at ACRA club nationals in the following few weeks.



Above: V8



Above: JV8

PAC12s continued

The Enquist Trophy can only be won by the club team that earns the most points from all of the events they entered. This year WSU had the honor of winning the Enquist trophy for the first time. WSU collected 21 points, Colorado 17 points, and the University of Oregon 9 points. The V8 beat Colorado by three seconds finishing with a 6:27, 2V8 lost to Colorado by ten seconds finishing with at 6:47, N8 beat Colorado by three seconds and the University of Oregon by five seconds finishing with a 6:31, and the N4 lost to Colorado finishing with a 7:31. Overall, the team achieved the main goal for Pac-12s this year, which was winning the Enquist trophy. With only a 4 point lead to take the win, it shows how important each race truly is. Just introducing the Enquist trophy was not enough incentive to get full participation from the other club programs, so August Boyle, the upcoming Commodore for the 2016-2017 school year, is currently collaborating with the Commodore of the Colorado Crew team to reach out to the other club teams in the Pac-12s to encourage them to attend Pac-12s for the following year.



Right:
N4



Left:
N8

ACRA

Written by: Raquel Guerra-Lewis

This year I had the amazing opportunity of being the Novice 8 coxswain at ACRA. Traveling with the team itself was so much fun and it was even better to see all of the alumni and family that traveled to watch us race. There was a lot of thought and planning that went into the race plan for the qualifying races, but what our coach told us right before we went out on the water was that the qualification race should be raced with everything we had because we had hard competition and only one chance to make it straight to Grand Finals. After doing just that we ended day one with a race so good it was too close to call. After praying for good results and waiting for them to be posted my team was able to celebrate a well fought second place and along with that a spot in the Grands. The day of our final race was extremely challenging both mentally and physically. It was challenging to not get in our own heads after seeing the other times posted. We went in with our times ranking us 6th and after an incredibly close and hard fought race we ended in the middle of the pack placing 6th with a time of 6:13.9. A bittersweet end to my novice season although knowing how far we have come since we first joined Cougar Crew I could not be more proud of my team.

Written by: Alyssa Kodama

Our Novice Lightweight 4 (pictured right) also had a great weekend. They raced solidly in their Heats race to send them



ACRA continued

directly to Grand Finals. Being able to skip the Repechages gave them a huge advantage with the much needed extra time to rest and recharge. In Grands, they raced hard and were in contention for medals the entire time. Going down the course, many of the boats continually traded places hoping to beat out their competition. In the last 500 meters of the race, our lightweights were battling for third place. UC Santa Barbara was able to cross the line before them, placing WSU in 4th with a time of 7:13.1.

After mainly coxing lightweights for the past two years, including at Head of the Charles this year, it was definitely a huge change in dynamic coxing the Varsity 8 (pictured below) throughout the Spring season. As a crew, we had a lot of ups and downs while racing, which was very different from the seemingly smooth sailing I had with the lightweights. ACRA proved to be no different. Our Heats race was really rough and the boat just seemed off. It was upsetting to have to go to Repechages later that afternoon because we knew how grueling it would be to have to race four times that weekend. However, based off times we were confident that we would easily make it through Reps to advance to the Semi Finals on Sunday. We were correct – and it turned out to be our best race of



ACRA continued

the weekend. Smooth, connected, and powerful we walked through DePaul, Kansas and Georgia, to hang with University of Massachusetts. We finished with a time of 6:08.1 without doing a full sprint sequence. We faced a challenging field of opponents in the Semi Finals and were unable to make Grands. We raced well in the B-Final, but it was clear the three other races had taken its toll. Coming into the last 500 meters of the race, we were a few seats down on Texas and Minnesota. Not willing to lose to either of them, we made a huge push to sit even with Texas. They saw us move, and moved with us. In a very close battle, we finished with a 6:18.4, 1 second behind Texas and Minnesota, and 2 seconds ahead of New Hampshire. Though we may not have finished where we wanted to, I knew that every person in my boat left it all out on the course and gave it everything they had.

I think for both the JV8 and the V8 not having the equipment we were used to got inside of our heads a little bit. Back in Seattle, our oars were not allowed on the plane, and in a last minute scramble, we had to reach out to other clubs to ask to borrow oars. Luckily, borrowing a boat for the V8 was no issue, as we had a Hudson shell similar to shells we practiced in, but for the JV8 (pictured below) they were stuck with an old Vespoli with rigging that could not be adjusted properly. Though



ACRA continued

the JV8 raced hard in their Heats race, their boat made for heavier rowers was large and cumbersome, and did not do them any favors. They would have to race later that day in the Repechages, but this time they were able to use the Hudson shell the Novice were using. The JV8 had a great Repechage race, as they were able to take five seats on DePaul in the last 400 meters to finish with a 6:31.6, just .4 seconds ahead of them. They raced in the B Finals the next day placing third with a time of 6:33.9.

While none of the Men were able to secure medals, the Lightweight Women had a very successful weekend. Both Doubles were able to go straight to Grand Finals by placing 1st and 3rd in their heat. Their 4+ only had to race for lanes, so they decided to take it easy to save energy for their Final on Sunday. The Doubles started off the racing for the Lightweights on Sunday, and both the A and B boat were able to stay with the pack until the 1000 meter mark when the stroke seat for the

B boat suffered from an asthma attack, causing them to drop back. The A boat powered on, doing everything they could to keep Purdue from walking through them and taking them out of contention for medals. The A boat made one last move to shut down Purdue, and they were able to cross the line in third earning a bronze medal. The B boat trailed behind crossing the line shortly after.



Left: Stroke seat Hannah Wilson and bow seat Sidney Cross with Coach Giles

ACRA continued

After lineup changes the past two races, the 4+ was finally able to row their official lineup. Long Beach took an early lead and it became a two boat race for second between WSU and Northwestern. These two boats were nearly dead even and continued to trade places as one bow ball would get slightly ahead of the other. Coming out of the 1000 meter mark, they made a move to break Northwestern. They took a few seats, and as they began their sprint at the 500 meter mark, they were able to create open water to take second place and defend their silver medal from last year.



Above left: LWT4 after receiving their medals; right: entire LWT squad

Change for the Lightweight Women

Written by: Sidney Cross



Above: New Women's Coach,
Dave Kempzell

This upcoming year is going to be full of changes for the Lightweight Women. This fall 2016, will mark the first year that the Lightweights will be accepting women without the weight limit of 130lbs stopping their recruitment possibilities. With the new change of the team from purely lightweights to now an open weight club team there will also be a name change to this program. Washington State University Lightweight Women will now be called Washington State University Club Women's Rowing. With the weight limit lifted from the program it will be great to see the number girls that will be recruited this summer to build a more competitive team. Even though this will become an open-weight club team for the women, there will still be a high focus on having competitive crews in the lightweight division as well with the new openweight races.

Change continued

Along with the new changes to the name and all around program itself, the Women's team will also be receiving a new coach. With Giles leaving the program after his four years at WSU the women are looking forward to a new coach. At this point we may have an exchange program set up with the coaches on the other side of the Atlantic, being that Dave Kempell is also from England. Dave comes to Washington State after his fourth year of coaching at Bedford Modern School in England, where he has coached multiple crews winning national titles and medals, including a number of junior GB internationals.

Dave began rowing at Brunel University before joining Star Club in Bedford where he rowed in the first ever Star crew to reach a final at Henley Royal Regatta in the 2011 Thames Cup, before winning the Britannia Challenge Cup in 2012, the club's first Henley trophy. Dave then moved to Leander Club in Henley, placing 5th in the first GB trial after the London Olympics, and picking up a bronze medal at the 2013 British Championships. Dave also represented England twice, at the 2010 and 2012 Home Countries Regatta, winning the coxed four event in 2012. Since ending his competitive rowing career, Dave has continued using the erg to keep fit, setting a new British record for the Marathon in the 19-29 age category in February 2016.

Dave has moved to Washington to study for a Masters in Sport Management and to experience the U.S. collegiate rowing scene first hand.

Donations

Thank you to all of our friends, family, and alumni for your generous donations! These much needed funds help keep our team up and running. We would like to acknowledge those of you who have donated during the Spring 2016 season:

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