

The Stroke Watch

Fall 2005

December 2005

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George Washington Rowing Celebrates Milestones

The 2005-2006 season contains a number of milestones for George Washington University Rowing. This year, the men celebrate their 50th anniversary while the women celebrate their 30th anniversary. Colonials Rowing, from its humble beginnings to its nationally recognized men's and women's programs of today, has borne witness to a rich and storied history. GW Rowing's rich tradition includes not only multiple U.S. National and Olympic Team members, but also a wealth of former athletes who have gone on to success in innumerable walks of life.

On the evening of April 8, 2006 in conjunction with the 19th Annual GW Invitational Regatta, we will be holding a Golden Anniversary Rowing Banquet. We invite all former team members, family, and friends to join us in a celebration honoring the first half-century of



George Washington Rowing, as well as the current team.

This will be an outstanding opportunity to reconnect with former teammates and to meet the new coaches and current teams. The event is planned for the Continental Ballroom on the third floor of the Marvin Center (800 21st Street, NW) on the GW campus. Please mark your calendars and save the date. We will send out further details as they are finalized. We look forward to seeing you there!

GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY ROWING

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The Women's Varsity squad competed in the Third Annual GW Head of the Halloween in full costume!

GW Varsity Women Fall 2005 Racing Recap

The George Washington Women's Rowing Program kicked off its 2005-2006 campaign with one of the largest squads in recent years. With a strong sophomore class, an extremely competitive group of juniors and an experienced senior presence, the Colonials are poised for a strong season.

The team's first race of the season took it to Boston, MA, for the Head of the Charles. The GW boat of **Lindsay Doyle, Diane Holcomb, Angie Costales, Hilary Goldberg, Kate Austin, Liz Gordon, Courtney Fawcett, Jean Williamson and Angela Wunderli** went into the race with the goal of finishing in the top 25. Starting from the 34th position, GW had a lot of work to do in order to reach its goal. The team rowed a strong competitive race, passing several crews and finishing 21st, ahead of rivals Radcliffe, Rutgers, Syracuse, Cornell, Penn, Navy and Georgetown.

The following weekend, the team headed to the Princeton Chase where it hoped for yet another strong performance. In the open eight event, the GW A entry, comprised of the same rowers who raced at the Head of the Charles, had another strong race, finishing in 17th place. The GW B entry, comprised of **Sara Neugroschel, Mary Kate Martelon, Ashley McCawley, Liz Cavanaugh, Jenna Feistritz, Christine Hamann, Julia King, Laura Crotty and Jessica Grivalsky**, finished 35th. The race served as a reminder of the critical role that depth plays in making fast boats. Of the 16 boats finishing ahead of GW A, four were from Princeton, three were from Virginia and three were from Brown. The team realized that the best way for GW to improve is for the program to have two or three boats that can compete head-to-head every day in practice.

The team finished its season with a short trip south to the Head of the Occoquan. In the open four event, the crew of **Mansi Shah, Goldberg, Austin, Gordon and Feistritz** finished 0.4 seconds ahead of a strong Penn State crew for the gold medal. In the open eight event, the GW A entry of **Neugroschel, Martelon, McCawley, Holcomb, Costales, Hamann, Fawcett, Williamson and**



At the Head of the Occoquan, the GW "A" eight of Sara Neugroschel, Mary Kate Martelon, Ashley McCawley, Diane Holcomb, Angie Costales, Christine Hamann, Courtney Fawcett and Angela Wunderli rowed their way to a 20-second victory.

Wunderli rowed to victory, finishing 20 seconds ahead of the competition. The GW B entry of **Gina Fernandes, Cavanaugh, Crotty, Ashley Larrimore, Anna Elazan, Emily Esman, Signe Hawley, Sarah Gall and Grivalsky** rowed to a seventh place finish.

With the end of the fall racing season, the team will continue to work towards its goal of placing several boats in the petite final at the Eastern Sprints Regatta in May. Over the next several months, the team will focus on increasing its strength and conditioning through running, lifting and erging.



GW finished the season at the Head of the Occoquan taking gold in the both the Open Eight and Four events. The four was Kate Austin, Jenna Feistritz, Liz Gordon, Hilary Goldberg and coxswain Mansi Shah

GW Novice Women Fall Racing Recap

This year's novice squad is small in numbers, but it is composed of a good group of dedicated athletes. The team started methodically as usual, taking time to ensure good technique and build up their fitness as a team. Since the team did not race at the Head of the Schuykill, the novices had to wait until November 5 for its first race. The team took one boat to Charlottesville, VA for a three-way race with UVA and Georgetown. Racing aggressively, but with a low stroke rating, GW took fourth out of seven boats. Finishing about a minute behind the winning boat over the 4000-meter course.

The next weekend, the novice teams raced at Princeton in the Belly of the Carnegie. It was a beautiful day for a race and the team received a tremendous amount of support from its parents. The GW boat finished 20th out of 33,

meeting their goal of finishing in the top 20 and having a really strong race that felt good. At the same time, they knew they were racing against even boats and that all their competition is only going to get faster. The boat, comprised of five walk-on athletes, got its revenge against crews from rival Georgetown crews, passing them twice in the race.

Now off the water for the winter, the novices are erging 4-5 times a week and lifting. They are looking for big gains in speed they know they are capable of if they work up to their potential. They kicked off winter training by running the "Exorcist Stairs" the last practice before Thanksgiving break. It will be an intense winter, but worth it once they take it to the line against Rutgers in March.



The GW crew after passing five boats in the Head of the Occoquan en route to a first place finish.



Rob McCracken



Sarah Dondero

Meet the Women's Coaches

Head Coach Rob McCracken

Robert McCracken is in his first year as head coach of George Washington Women's Rowing. A graduate of Duke University, McCracken spent five years as a novice and assistant coach at Indiana University where he helped to guide the Hoosiers to grand final appearances at the Big Ten Championship and South-Central Region Regatta. While at Indiana, he earned a Master of Public Affairs in Land Use Policy. For the past two years, he served as a volunteer assistant coach with the novice team while working as a policy analyst for American Farmland Trust. McCracken and his wife, Jennifer Shea, live in Capitol Hill with their dog, Lucy.

Assistant Coach Sarah Dondero

Sarah Dondero is entering her third year as the novice coach for George Washington Women's Rowing. As an undergraduate of the University of Virginia, she helped the Cavaliers row to four top four finishes at the NCAA Championships. While at George Washington, she has directed the novice squad to four gold medals at the A-10 Women's Rowing Championship and a sixth place finish at the 2005 Eastern Sprints Regatta. Dondero holds a master's degree in Information System Technology from GW, is working toward an MBA and occasionally runs marathons just for fun.

GW Men Fall 2005 Racing Recap

Varsity Men

Every coach, first and foremost, desires to have athletes who are willing and eager to do what is asked of them. The GW Men's Varsity of 2005-06, on this account, has already far exceeded my expectations. While small in number, this squad is proving to be a very determined group of athletes. It is never an easy task to adjust to a new coach and a new training regimen, but these oarsmen and coxswains are rising admirably to the challenge.

We began the fall racing season with the local Occoquan Chase Regatta, where our varsity eight finished second to a powerful Virginia crew and our varsity four was the top collegiate entry. One week later, the varsity eight was in Boston for the Head of the Charles. Racing against much stiffer competition, we finished 27th – 80 seconds behind first place Princeton – confirming what we already knew: there is much work to be done before next spring.

The following weekend, we concluded the fall racing season with a pair of races. On Saturday, we shelved the eight for the Head of the Schuylkill, and rowed a pair and 2 fours instead. The GW entry of **Angeline Wood, Joe DeLeo, Henry Roosevelt, Jon D'Alba and Mike Mancusi** won the champ four, fully 11 seconds ahead of the next finisher. At Sunday's Princeton Chase, we revisited the eight with very modest results and also doubled up in pairs and singles, with **Jon D'Alba** winning the men's single.

As we head into winter training, we are already seeing some improvements, which is promising. We have a long way to go, but great rewards come from tremendous



The Men's Varsity 8 (near) races Yale, Spring 2005

individual challenges and I am truly excited to see what this squad can do in the spring racing season.

Novice Men

For the majority of the men's novice team, the recent relinquishment of an oar handle for that of an erg signified the end of the prelude to what will undoubtedly evolve into a number of successful collegiate rowing careers. While the novice men have benefited from the abilities of a handful of experienced oarsmen and coxswains, the majority of this year's novice men's squad first picked up an oar – and promptly caught their first crabs – only a few months ago.

Both a blessing and a burden, the inexperience of the novice men translated to mixed results in their three fall races. In two races against Georgetown and the University of Virginia, GW performed well, defeating UVA and the Georgetown

lightweights, while finishing a close second to the Georgetown heavies at a 4,000-meter race held in Charlottesville, VA, on November 5.

At the Belly of the Carnegie, held on Carnegie Lake in Princeton, NJ, on November 13, the Colonials finished adrift of much of the top regional and national competition in attendance, but gained invaluable experience racing against many of the top novice crews in the country.

With such an inexperienced squad, the enormity of the challenge before this year's novice men is eclipsed only by the magnitude of the correlative opportunity. The extent to which GW's newest oarsmen seize the opportunity before them will be addressed over the coming months one workout, one piece, one stroke, and one man at a time. A winter of individual challenges embraced will beget a spring of collective triumphs.

Meet the Men's Coaches

Head Coach Greg Myhr

Gregory E. Myhr comes to GW from Georgetown University, where he served as coach for the freshman heavyweight men for the past two seasons. A 1992 graduate of the University of Wisconsin, Myhr was team captain and MVP of the Badgers in 1992. He was the assistant men's varsity coach at Wisconsin from 1995-97 and served as freshman men's coach from 1997-2003. While at Madison, Myhr's freshmen fours won the IRA National Championship in '98, '99 and 2000. Wisconsin also was the Ten Eyck champion (overall team points trophy) in '97 and from '99-'02. In 2000, Myhr's freshmen eight won the EARC trophy, the first EARC freshman title in the program's history. Prior to his days as a collegiate rower, Myhr founded and rowed locally for the Walt Whitman High School Rowing team in Bethesda, MD, where he was the team captain in 1988.

Freshman Coach Dave Weiss

Dave Weiss comes to GW from Sidwell Friends School, where he was the coach of the all-girls team and was named *All-Met* Girls Coach of the Year in 2004 by the *Washington Post*. A 2001 graduate of Georgetown University, Weiss was team captain and MVP of the Hoyas in 2001. As a member of the Hoyas' varsity eight, Weiss won gold medals at the 2001 ECAC championships and at the 1998 Champion International Regatta. At the 2000 IRA Championships, Weiss' Varsity 4+ won the silver medal, finishing behind Wisconsin coached by...Greg Myhr.



Greg Myhr



Dave Weiss

Attention Rowing Alumnae!

GW Athletics has initiated an easy and convenient method by which Colonials Athletic Alumni can provide the department with updated contact information (addresses, phones, e-mails) as well as notes about themselves (promotions or new jobs, graduate school degrees, engagements & weddings, children). This will help your alma mater keep in better touch with its thousands of former athletes and coaches. Thus far, we have had responses from more than 100 rowing alums!

Simply click on the 'Athletic Alumni Updates' link located in the navigation bar on the left side of www.GWsports.com homepage, fill in the blank fields and submit. It's that easy! You can also email crewalum@gwu.edu with your personal updates for the *Making Waves* section.

Still Training on the Erg?

Sign up on the Concept 2 Web site (www.concept2.com) and log your meters in the personal log book. If you affiliate yourself with George Washington University, your meters will be added to GW's total and ranked against other university groups. At time of press, GW was ranked 44th among collegiate groups worldwide.

Winter Training Moves

In our quest for the perfect get away spot, we are moving winter training once more. Abandoning the warm weather and salt water of Melbourne, FL, the team is migrating to Augusta, GA for nine days in January. The team will have 15 miles of flat water on the Savannah River in downtown Augusta. The new location will allow us to provide transportation to Georgia for the student-athletes, as well as good hotel and food options. The trip gives the team time to grow into a cohesive unit and start to focus on the spring season.



Winter training 2006 will be held from January 5-14 on the Savannah River in Augusta, GA.

Mark Your Calendars!

The Third Annual Row for Humanity is set for January 25, 2006. This fundraiser is critical to supplementing the operating budgets of both teams and is also a great way to get some additional attention for the DC and GW Habitat for Humanity Chapters. We give Habitat for Humanity 10 percent of the funds that we raise and plan to volunteer at one of their worksites during the spring.

The team has set high goals, both for funds raised and meters rowed. In 2005, both teams combined to raise over \$25,000, much of which was put towards purchasing new boats. This year our goal is \$30,000. If you are in Washington area, please consider coming by to watch, reminisce or row a little yourself that day. Row for Humanity 2006 will occur from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm in the J Street Food Court at Marvin Center.

Attention, Parents

Both the men's and women's have an active group of parents who get together to support the team. For more information, please contact the individuals listed below.

Women's Team: The parents of senior captain Mary Kate Martelon have graciously volunteered to coordinate the parents group for this spring. We have had some amazing parent support in the past and the Martelons are going to keep this going strong. Please contact Mr. Martelon at gmartelon@aol.com to see how you can help.

Men's Team: The parents of junior oarsman Mike Mancusi-Ungaro's have organized a parents' group. A number of parents have already been in contact and have helped tremendously with the fall regattas. If you are not on the contact list and would like to be added, please email Maureen McCausland (Mike's mother) at mpm6@earthlink.net.

George Washington University Rowing 2006 Fundraising Campaign

The men's and women's teams are preparing to launch an ambitious fundraising campaign in 2006. The goals of the campaign are two-fold. First, as the costs of equipment and travel continue to rise, we are in need of additional sources of funding to help cover costs. Second, we are looking for new ways to reconnect with our large alumni base.

In all likelihood, rowing was a central part of your GW experience. This campaign will not only serve as a way to reconnect the current team with its alums, but also as a way to reconnect alums with the current team. In the coming months, you will receive more information about the 2006 Fundraising Campaign. Together, we can ensure that the future of George Washington University Rowing is as bright as its past.

Men's Shell Naming Opportunities

The men's team is currently looking for individuals interested in naming two of the team's racing shells. The shells will be used by the varsity and novice eights during the coming season and the team does not want to tempt fate by racing in unnamed shells. If you are interested in naming a shell, please contact Coach Myhr at gmyhr@gwu.edu or (202) 994-0777.

George Washington University Rowing 2006 Fundraising Campaign

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Enclosed is my gift of: _____

All donations are tax deductible.

Please designate my gift to the following: Men's Program Women's Program Split

Please make checks payable to George Washington University Rowing and send your completed form to:

George Washington University Rowing • 600 22nd Street, NW • Washington, DC 20052

Making Waves—Rowing Alumni Check In

Melissa (Spead) Desroches, '97. M. Ed '98 is currently teaching writing at New England College in Henniker, NH and English Composition at Middlesex Community College in Lowell, MA. She just published a short story in *Entelechy International* (a journal). She is also taking classes on writing children's literature. She is married to Mike Desroches and has two children, Morgan, 3, and Matthew, 15 months.

Sandy Morrison '60 reports 2006 will be the 50th anniversary of the current GW Crew program as recognized by the shell "Men's Crew of 1956". It was a slow start, particularly the boat speed in 1956. However, the growth has been constant with the addition of the women's program, more University support, more rowers, and more student support. A lot has been accomplished and the future will bring more success. He reminds us that even Georgetown has a stake in GW's 50th as its program was started at the suggestion of and support from the GW crew.

Erika Collins '97 moved back to D.C. in August, started a new job at the InterAmerican Development Bank in September and then later in the month married Paul Fagan in a ceremony on the New Hampshire seacoast. It was a great time and was attended by a whole slew of G-Dub crew alums, including **Amanda McDougall '98, Al Goldberg '97, Jen & Tony Kuhel both '97, Marycate ('97) and Bill McDonough (coach '97), Miriam Alandydy '96, Kim Stewart '98, Christine Booth '97, Jen Edwards '97 and Kristin Gillig '97.**

Heather Staufenberg, '98 is currently living in Massachusetts. She moved there this fall to start a doctoral program at the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology. She is beginning a four-year PsyD. program.



Tara Jo Torres '98 is living in Woolwich Township, NJ, and has a new home as of October to raise her son, Michael, almost 3, and daughter Allison, 6 months.

Amanda McDougall '98 has recently moved into her newly purchased condo in DC.

Tina Brown '90 got engaged on November 5 to the conveniently-named Toby Brown. The proposal happened in the rain on the beach (a perfect setting for the Northwest!). She's still coaching at Orcas Island Rowing Association, a rag tag group that is slowly coming together. Their lake is only 1000 meters long, but is well protected & very beautiful.

Alia Marwah '01 graduated from the Georgetown University Law Center in May, passed the New York

Bar Exam and started work as an Associate in Mergers & Acquisitions at Skadden, Arps in New York City last month. She ran the NYC Marathon a couple of weeks ago with **Laurie Spinella '00.** Alia is looking to meet up for a run or have a drink with any of the alumnae in the City.

Christine Booth '97 finished her OB/GYN residency in June and is currently stationed at Fort Bragg, NC, and working at Womack Army Medical Center.

Anne Bannerman '94 recently became engaged to Tim Flanagan. She reports, "Tim proposed while we were on a trip to New York City and we are planning a fall wedding next year on the beach in the Florida panhandle. I am still with King & Spalding in Atlanta, although I switched positions within the firm and now work in the Business Development and marketing and no longer practicing law (no more billing requirements!). Tim works for the Federal Reserve and recently received his Captain's license. After the wedding, we are hoping to move to the coast and put that license to good work!"

Shawn Hoyer '99 (Men's Captain) is currently residing in Leesburg, VA, near Dulles Airport. He's a VP of Commercial Lending with Middleburg Financial Corporation and a board member on the GWR's Risk Management Association and the Young Financial Professionals.

Maggie Fann '04 is getting married in July 2006.

WOMEN'S SPRING RACING SCHEDULE

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
JANUARY		
Thur-Sat	5-14	Winter Training, Augusta, GA
MARCH		
Sat	18	Scrimmage at UVA or WVU
Sat	25	URI and Rutgers New Brunswick, NJ
APRIL		
Sat	1	Playfair Cup, Boston, MA
Sat	8	Lake Wheeler Invitational Raleigh, NC
Sat	15	Georgetown
Sat	22	Atlantic 10 Championships Camden, NJ
Sat	29	Princeton, Princeton, NJ
MAY		
Sun	14	Eastern Sprints, Camden, NJ
Fri-Sun	26-28	NCAA Championships Mercer, NJ

MEN'S SPRING RACING SCHEDULE

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
JANUARY		
Thur-Sat	5-14	Winter Training, Augusta, GA
MARCH		
Sat	25	Murphy Cup, Philadelphia, PA
APRIL		
Sat	1	Virginia, Charlottesville, VA
Sat	8	GW Invitational Crew Classic
Sat	15	Wisconsin, Minnesota Madison, WI
Sat	22	Bucknell, Washington, DC
Sun	23	UNC, Washington, DC
MAY		
Sat	6	Georgetown, Washington, DC
Sat-Sun	13-14	ECAC Championships Worcester, MA
Sat	27	Gonzaga, Washington, DC
JUNE		
Thur-Sat	1-3	IRA National Championships Cherry Hill, NJ

Come out this spring and support your GW Colonials



George Washington University Rowing
600 22nd Street, NW
Washington, DC 20052

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF ROWING AT GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY