

# They have a few surprises

## Oregon crew prepares for Pac-10 regatta

By Steve Friedman  
Of the Emerald

Rowing seven miles a day and running stairs all year long is a grueling task, but for the Oregon Crew team it's part of their everyday activities.

"We work hard — especially on technique, power, and endurance," says crew captain Tim Meier.

The team is compiled of 16 members, nine of whom are women. They have gone through numerous obstacles to get where they are now. The biggest, of course, is money.

"We're the only Pac-10 team not funded by its school," says Meier. "We get a little money for being in club sports, but in order to compete regularly, we rely on fundraisers to support us."

The crew team's money raising efforts were rewarded this year with the purchase of their first-ever boat. In the past, they had to rent their boats — making it hard to get the feel for a vessel, because they were always different ones.

In their second event the men placed third, but the big story was the women. They finished first in the light weight competition, thus, christening their new boat with a victory.

The team then hosted its own meet, sponsoring the Dexter Lake Regatta. Competing against seven other schools, they swept every event adding four more wins to their new boat.

"In our fourth regatta in Portland, we won six out of eight events and brought home our first-ever overall team trophy. I was really excited then," Meier says with a smile.

The biggest regatta was still to come, however.



Photo by Mark Woloshin

Hugh Watson of Oregon's heavy four is congratulated after winning the Pacific Northwest Championships. Teammate John Bigelow looks on.

The Pacific Northwest Regionals would have thirty teams including the powerful Washington Huskies and University of Victoria.

Oregon seemed to be out-classed by the money-rich Huskies.

"Their crew program is massive — the only sport that out-funds it is football," says co-captain Scott Chestnut.

Going in as a heavy underdog, the men beat all twelve of their competitors in the preliminary heats.

In the finals, the four-man light and heavy teams overtook the Huskies and Victoria to win the Championships in those events.

For the first time in the crew team's history, they beat the Huskies in a varsity rowing event.

This made them eligible to participate in the qualifying regatta for the National Sports

Festival, which all the teams in the country attend. But that does not start until June.

Next up for the team is the Pacific 10 Conference Championships. "The competition is going to be brutal, but we're going to pull a few surprises," says Meier.

One of the surprises is called "The Salazar" — named after star marathoner Alberto Salazar. "We use it for our sprint to the finish, says Meier. We get stroking about 40 times a minute and that's where we overtake a lot of our competition."

Whether they win or not, the crew team's tremendous ambition and character have brought this club sport some respect from other teams in the Northwest.

"This is the best season we have ever had," says Meier. "We have a great bunch of people and are going to be even stronger in the future."

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