



Feature on Page 8

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## 'Cinderella' crew strokes to the nationals

By Randy Malat  
Of the Emerald

The sun-glazed surface of Dexter Reservoir reflects the green mesh of pines on the surrounding hillsides. The prow of a rowing shell slides atop the water, and four oarsmen, their backs to the course, pull and push through the dense, indifferent weight of the lake.

The coxswain, a woman, steers the shell from the stern and urges on her teammates. The coach follows in an outboard, shouting instructions through a megaphone.

"Try to move from the waist at the catch."

"Push down and then feather."

"Reach and hook on the recovery."

The University's men's heavyweight four crew is training for a race nobody thought they'd be in. Bucking the odds all the way, this crew beat Cal-Berkeley by one foot to win the Pac-10 title, and defeated Washington to win the Northwest Regional. They then conquered a heavier UCLA team to win the Western Regional and an invitation to the upcoming National Sports Festival in Indianapolis, July 23-27.

Hugh Watson, a 32-year-old Australian, is the team's veteran. Watson started rowing the year before his 19-year-old teammate Sietske Fockens, of Reeuwijk, Holland, was born. Fockens is completing his first year of competitive rowing, as are teammates Bryan Andresen, of Junction City, and John Bigelow, from Beaverton. Coxswain Brenda Thornton is in her second year of compe-



Photo by Jay Jollon

*In the national competition the University team will be the underdogs. But they have the confidence that comes of winning the Pac-10 title and Northwest Regionals.*

tion.

The unpaid coaches are Jim Petrusich and Dick Hersh. Petrusich is a lightweight crew member and recent graduate of the University. Hersh, dean of the University graduate school, is a new member of the team with a long rowing history. Lori Huseh coached the University crew earlier in the year.

The oarsmen average 6 feet 2 inches and 175 pounds. UCLA oarsmen averaged 6 feet 3 inches and about 195 pounds. In a sport in which the larger team usually wins, the University heavyweight four is this year's "Cinderella."

Their training season began last September, with 5 a.m.

workouts five days a week. They ran five or six miles daily, worked on their rowing technique, ran stairs, lifted weights, rode bikes, swam.

Oregon State beat them by two lengths in one race. When the four-man shell is 42 feet long, a two-length margin represents a thrashing.

Then, Watson says, "we clicked in the last three weeks of the season."

The University team won a rematch with the Beavers by four lengths.

A few weeks before the showdown with UCLA, Watson got wind of a secret. Dick Hersh, disguised as graduate school dean and University vice-provost, was an oldtimer

in the world of competitive rowing. After four years on the Syracuse crew, Hersh had been coxswain on the U.S. team at the 1966 world championships in Yugoslavia. He then coached at Harvard and coached two of seven Olympic rowing teams at Mexico City in 1968. Watson contacted him.

"He was skeptical," Watson says. "I think he thought that nobody in Oregon could be competitive on a national level. He came out for one row and was surprised at our standard. He's been out for every row since."

"I told them that I felt I could make them six or seven seconds faster than they were," Hersh says, "and that

they needed to do 2,000 meters in six minutes, forty-five seconds to beat UCLA. Well, they did six forty-six and won."

Oarsmen Fockens says that about 80 percent of the physical strain is in the legs. Hersh, quoting a Sports Illustrated article, says rowing is the most demanding sport in terms of cardiovascular capacity and physical stress. He compares the exertion and endurance requirements to "each man lifting an 80-pound weight from the floor up over his head every two seconds for over six-and-a-half minutes."

And coxswain Brenda Thornton, who weighs 103 pounds, isn't exempt from the training. Besides steering, she must communicate with the oarsmen about their position and initiate "power-fives," "power-tens" and "power-twenties," which are like the kicks of a runner.

"If you're not part of the pain of working out, when you race the guys can't relate to you," she says.

In the nationals, the University four will remain the underdog. Their competitors will be five larger teams from schools that offer rowing scholarships, and four teams from the national Olympic camp. But for a team that gets no athletic department funding and rents all but one of the shells in its oarhouse, Hersh says "they're in pretty fast company."

Meanwhile, the workouts continue, five times each weekend, the daily running, and the pain of training. "We row as far, but about twice as hard since Hersh came out," Watson says.

## Chancellor creates new planning position

By Debbie Howlett  
Of the Emerald

Larry Pierce is a reluctant warrior. Appointed as the Chancellor's new special assistant for long range planning, he accepted the position despite having already planned a year-long sabbatical.

"When I was approached, I was disappointed to have to give up the sabbatical — but I felt I had an obligation to use some of the background I had to assist the Chancellor in improving higher education," Pierce says.

Pierce, previously the head of the University's political science department is an accomplished voice on financing elementary and secondary schools.

If he is reluctant, or just slightly hesitant, Pierce jumps headlong into his new assignment. "There are a lot of things we want to do with it," Pierce says. "We'll be moving very quickly."

Pierce has moved very quickly indeed. He hopped a plane to Seattle last week

and this week is headed on a tour of southern Oregon with other state system officials. Next week he will be at the State Board of Higher Education meeting in Ashland.

His travel itinerary seems to go forever, but Pierce also has plans other than travel for his office. Of the items on his work agenda, he speaks only of the ones the Chancellor has OK'd. That list is even longer than his travel plans.

"Generally, our goal is improve the quality of higher education in Oregon and improve its funding," Pierce says. His plans include:

- Taking a much better look at "who are the students in the state system."
- Carefully examining the way higher education is funded.
- Reviewing admission requirements. Pierce says requiring entering students to have certain amounts of course-work in specified areas may be more important than a grade point average.
- Ensuring students are prepared for college-level course work.
- Looking at the whole "program mix"

in higher education; certainly looking at duplication and looking at what is the "appropriate" mix for the 1980s.

Pierce will also work to inform the Oregon Legislature about the state's higher education system.

"Our goal is to present a very coherent statement as to the value of higher education," Pierce says. "We'll try to have an outline of a study by the beginning of the legislative session in January," he adds.

Pierce's goals are similar to the goals of the Chancellor's office. He explains that he wants to expand his function.

"I don't want to use any criticisms, but we haven't done as good a job as we should have in explaining the value of higher education."

But most of Pierce's job will involve long-range planning. In May, the board asked to be provided with alternative long range plans for higher education. Davis responded by appointing Pierce to the temporary post.

Pierce calls it "a chance of making a difference."



Photo by Peggy Meneice

Larry Pierce, the Chancellor's planner