

# Regatta Rallick

Story by Justin Much  
Photos by Ross Martin



emu

What do the EMU Skylight Refectory and an Italian restaurant in Rome have in common?

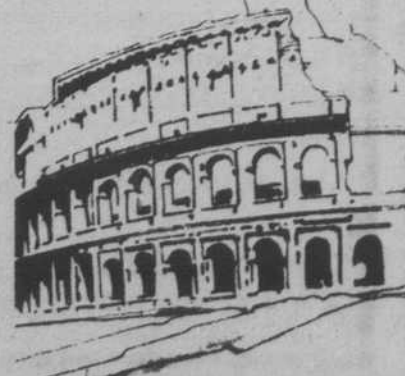
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Ignoring forecast warnings of cloudy skies and imminent rain, crew teams from around the Northwest gathered at Fern Ridge Reservoir last weekend for the first Oregon hosted Pacific Northwest Rowing Championships.

Saturday's spotted clouds yielded to clear skies on Sunday while more than 20 crew teams, stretching from British Columbia to Northern California, provided a bounty of depth to pave the way for a competitive and successful regatta.

Spectators ranging from ages 2 to "too old" took seats along the lakeside rocks to witness nearly 100

racers, which spanned from 8 a.m. Saturday through Sunday afternoon. With a race almost every 10 minutes, water-sport fans were treated with every combination of rowing contest they could desire in a weekend.

Men and Women's junior competitors rowed in the 1,500 meter races, while contestants in the college and open events strained for 2,000 meters before earning a breather. Exhausted crews saluted their triumphs over the course with unison chants after each race as sportsmanship abounded among all of the hard working boaters.

The boats, or shells, weighed anywhere from

210 to 310 pounds with lengths of 58 to 64 feet and a width of 24 inches. Rowers propelled them with a lot of muscle and skill behind 12 foot oars of either carbon fiber or wood.

The rowers are grouped into classifications according to age, experience, sex, weight and the number of rowers in a shell. The lightweight men are restricted to 160 pounds per person with an average of 155 pounds. Lightweight women have a 130 pound limit. New rowers compete in the novice/frosh class, while oarpersons older than 27 years take the title of master rowers. Each shell may have 1, 2, 4 or 8 scullers, depending on the race,

with the latter two adding a coxswain to bark out the rhythm. The races may vary from all men, all women or mixed crews.

For the University bunch this was the highlight of a year filled with long and enduring practices. Since last fall the crew would rise at 4:30 in the morning, five days a week, to make their way out to Dexter Reservoir for workouts on the water. These workouts, coupled with the fund-raising cleanups and row-a-thons, lend veritable proof to the dedication this club has for their sport.

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