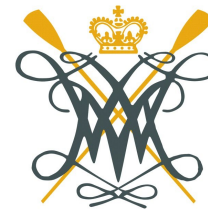




The Backsplash

William & Mary Rowing Club Newsletter
March 2012



Winter Training

By Charlotte Dobry, '14

As the fall head race season came to a close, the WMRC rowers bid a bittersweet farewell to the boathouse and moved their daily training back to campus for winter conditioning. The club has survived yet another season on the ergs, even managing to recruit a good number of novices to the team along the way. After months of grueling work on the ergs and wistful longing to be back on the water, both the men's and women's squads hit the docks again over spring break with a solid foundation of strength and endurance to jump-start the spring sprint season.

Thankfully, not all of winter conditioning was spent in the REC Center basement on the ergs, lovable as the machines are. Both the men's and

women's squads got chances to breathe some fresher air and enjoy (or just endure, depending on the activity) a variety of cross-training days to break up the monotony. The women's team even tried a Les Mills Body Combat class. Though the initially bleary-eyed

...months of grueling work
on the ergs and wistful
longing to be back on the
water

instructor ("You guys get up this early every day?") "Actually, we slept in today...") was enthusiastic, it was quickly revealed as to why many rowers only participate in crew as far as on-campus sports are concerned.

Head Coach Travis Hall was convinced to also participate in the class. His skeptical faces were almost as entertaining to watch as many rowers' attempts at modified martial arts moves.

The winter season wasn't all about preparing for spring, however, as the team had some indoor success stories as well. The team sponsored its largest Colonial Erg Sprints event to date and had good showings from all the participating WMRC rowers. Three attempts to break a world record for a 24-hours on the erg resulted in a WMRC alumni setting a new record. Hopefully the successes achieved during land training will carry over to solid finishes on the water in the upcoming races.

Colonial Erg Sprints

By Lynn MacPherson, '13

On a Saturday morning in late February, nearly 150 rowers gathered at William & Mary's Adair Hall for a taste of spring racing. Rowers, coxswains, coaches, and parents from Old Dominion University, Virginia Commonwealth University, James Madison University, the University of Richmond, and from the University of Mary Washington came to this home event to race on ergs and show their support.

Events ranged from 500 to 10,000 meters in length with up to 12 competitors in each heat. Heats were separated into Varsity and Novice categories and rowers of similar strength were grouped together to maximize competition. The gymnasium filled with the sound of ergs and cheers as the first event kicked off at 10:00 a.m. with eight Varsity and Masters men racing 2,000 meters.

Varsity men raced for the next three heats, followed by three rounds of Varsity women. Congratulations to WMRC sophomores Ryan Fliss and Charlotte Dobry, who finished first overall in the Lightweight Men's and Women's categories. William & Mary finished strong in the Open Varsity categories as well, with senior Jake

Buck placing third among Open Men and freshman Christine LaRoche and sophomore Emma Rudebusch coming in second and third overall among Open Women.

Always fun to watch, coxswains and coaches raced 500 meter pieces next. William and Mary's Varsity Men's coach Nathan Walker finished first among the coaches, and freshmen Olivia Walton and Sarah Vorona took second and third in the Women's Coxswain category. Novice men and women raced in the next nine events. For some, it was their first experience women raced in the next nine events. For some, it was their first experience

navigating a 2,000 meter piece at race pressure. Hopefully there were lessons learned about pacing and mental strength. Congratulations to freshman Ryan Basques, who finished just half a second behind first place, and to Stephanie Wacker who, new to the team this semester, finished third

overall among Novice Women.

The last race of the day was a 10,000 meter relay challenge, a brutal piece for the competitors who had finished their main events just hours earlier. William & Mary Coaches Walker and Hall took first place for the men and our two women's teams placed solidly in the middle among the four women's teams.

The winners of each event received gold-painted hammers for their efforts, with representatives of WMRC taking home 4 of the 12. With our rowers placing third or better in every event, the team is ready to take on spring racing.



Photo by Connor Kee '14. Novice men ready at the catch.

Tampa Training Trip

By Lynn MacPherson, '13

During the last week of winter break, 30 rowers escaped the cold to train in sunny Tampa, Florida. The Tampa trip provides a special opportunity for the team to train on the water before spring season, and all four squads made progress in form and strength.

After a 14 hour van ride, the team got straight to work rigging boats and practiced that same evening. From then on, each morning and afternoon rowers made the mile long run between the hotel and the river for two-hour long practices. Especially during the beginning of the week, practices were geared towards improving form. With smaller squad sizes, coaches and coxswains were able to work in-depth with each rower, every correction taking time off races in the spring.

The historic site, just off the University of Tampa's campus, was an exciting change of pace from the erg room. We spotted dolphins playing in the harbor, and rowed between walls and under bridges with

decades of crew history in the form of "tags." Rowing past tags by crews we will see this spring was motivation enough for power 10s.

At the end of the week, the team got a taste of spring racing during scrimmages with [no idea who we raced...]. Both the men's and women's teams raced short pieces in 4s, working hard to apply what they had learned during the week. The men's team enjoyed a definitive victory, winning every piece. The women's team had mixed success but with close racing during every piece.

Beyond providing pre-season water practice, the Tampa trip was a great bonding experience for the team. From card games in the hotel to the traditional dinner trip to Rick's on the River, the squads got to know each other a little better each day. The team also shared walks to Starbucks for post-practice energy boosts and a trip to the beach for football and a quick, cold dip. Tampa was a great success, and left all who attended feeling excited about the spring season.



Photo by Emily Schultz, '12. The team enjoys a game of football in the sand.

Spring Regatta Schedule

March 31 – Ivy Hills Cup
(Duel Against Liberty)
Lynchburg, Virginia

April 1 – Waterfield Cup
(Virginia Tech)
Blacksburg, Virginia

April 7 – Rockett's Landing
Regatta
Richmond, Virginia

April 21-22 – SIRA
Championships
Oak Ridge, Tennessee

May 5 – End of the Year
Banquet
Williamsburg, Virginia

May 11-12 – Dad Vail
Regatta
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

May 26-27 – ACRA National
Championship
Gainesville, Georgia

*All results can be found on
our website:
www.wmrowing.org*

Coach's Hopes for the Upcoming Season

By Travis Hall, Varsity Women's Coach

4x10'. 3x4k. 40"on, 20"off. 10k. 6k. 2k. The women's team has seen me put a variety of things up on the whiteboard over the last few months. That being said, they've all come away from the dreaded indoor erg season quicker than ever and ready for the spring racing season.

The women are coming off a very successful fall season, culminating with a fourth-place finish in the Club 8+ event at the Head of the Hooch, the second largest head race in the country. In doing so, they were able to finish ahead of several teams that got the best of us during last spring and sent us into the winter training season with several fitness goals.

Following the erg season, the team is seeing a greatly improved average

2k score, and the top-8 average is as fast as in recent history. With these great results, we transitioned onto the water focusing on volume training an applying our increased power into each stroke. The spring season provides us many opportunities to compete against the best club women's teams in the country, something that we, as a team, are looking forward to.

Over the course of winter, the Novice women gained six new members, bringing their total up to a complete 8+ for the spring season. The Varsity women have two complete 8s, with a group of five seniors leading the way. Over the course of the spring, we hope to have our most successful season yet, with our end goal being to race a competitive 8+ at the American Collegiate Rowing Association Championships over Memorial Day

weekend. With the addition of the boathouse, equipment is in better shape, we're able to discuss more technique, and boats keep getting faster across the board. No reason to stop here. See you in Gainesville.

-Travis



Women's Varsity Eight hard at work.

Letters from Our Captains

Men's Team Captain- Bruce Pfirrmann



Bruce Pfirrmann, '13

As we prep for our first away regatta this upcoming weekend, the Men's team is both excited and eager to begin our spring season. Approximately three months of indoor training served both Novice and varsity squads well. Between the tedious long rows to movies, lengthy core sessions led by our Coxswains (Emily S., Olivia W. and Tyler W.), and the always exciting "shark-bait" sprint practices, the men managed to not only build up a quality cardio and sprint base, but also bond as a teammates. The training certainly paid off at our annual Colonial Erg Sprints, where the majority of the men set personal bests in their 2k sprint pieces.

A shout-out to Coach Walker, current rower Ryan Fliss and alumni T.J. Wallin is well in order. In a fitting send off to indoor training, the three attempted to break the their respective world records for most meters erged in 24 hours. The heroic attempts took place the Saturday-Sunday

before spring break, with all three rowing incredible distances and with T.J. powering through to break the 20 - 29 year-old world record. Congrats to T.J, Ryan and Coach! Throughout the row, several of the men's team showed up to erg, chat and provide moral support to the conquering heroes.

The return of warm weather to Williamsburg just about coincided with our week-long Spring break training, hosted here in Williamsburg. Rowers from both the men's and women's squads stayed in their dorms in order to head back to the new Tack Family boathouse for a week of two-a-day, on-the-water practices.

Though physically challenging, the week provided a great opportunity to spend time together as squad's as a team, with nightly movie watching sessions (including Jurassic Park, Drive and a classic rowing documentary on Cal Rowing, All for One), dinners and potlucks keeping us occupied while not on the water.

This sprint season holds a lot of

promise, with duel races against Liberty and Tech on the docket for this upcoming weekend, followed by trips to Richmond, Tennessee and Philadelphia. Throughout the season, we plan to field competitive lightweight 8s, heavyweight 4s, and novice 8s and/or 4s. I'm continually impressed by the dedication, commitment, drive and general good nature of every member on the men's squad, showing up to morning practices amidst busy academic and extracurricular schedules. It has certainly been a privilege to assist the squad as captain this past year. Finally, we're looking forward to recognizing the successes of both spring and fall season at our 2nd Annual End of Year Banquet, to be held in early May.

As always, we greatly appreciate your continued support and encouragement as we move through the season.

Go Tribe.

Women's Team Captain - Emily Schultz



Emily Schultz, '12

Sun's Out Guns Out - WMRC does Spring Break Hello from the WMRC Women! We are excited to be back on the water and starting off our spring season.

The team hit the water over spring break, stronger than ever after a successful and smooth season of winter training. Although our week of break started out a little chilly (it snowed the first weekend!) it shaped up quickly and we had a solid week of strong water practices. Besides rowing, we had a fun week of team bonding, complete with Half-Priced Burgers, Potlucks, and other (primarily food-related) events.

My favorite part of spring break training was our Sun's Out, Guns Out tank top challenge. We ordered awesome tank tops for spring training, and then challenged the girls to wear their tanks for as long

as possible, only taking them off for a maximum of 10 minutes a day - including shower and sleep time. Believe it or not, 10 women wore the tanks from the first practice Monday until the inter-squad race Saturday morning!

Overall, the women are poised for a great spring season. Our numbers and motivation are way up, and our 2k splits are way down. If we keep up this momentum through the race season, you should be checking the facebook page for pictures of the WMRC women with heavy medals and wide smiles soon enough!



Women's team bonding.

William & Mary Rowing Camp

Registration is now open for WMRC's annual summer camp program! Under the supervision of a student-athlete staff and head coaches Walker and Hall, high schoolers will learn to perfect their

...perfect their technique and increase their top end speed

technique and increase their top end speed. Rowers are invited to register at www.wmrowing.org/camp for one of three week-long sessions. Weeks 1 and 2 will be for intermediate rowers with at least one semester of sweep rowing, and Week 3 will be reserved for advanced rowers as denoted by coach sanction. Hurry...spots are filling quickly!

Camp Dates

Week 1: July 8 - July 13

Week 2: July 15 - July 20

Week 3: July 22 - July 27