

Virginia Rowing Association

FALL 2019

Dear VRA Family and Supporters,

We write at the end of another calendar year to provide an update on our fabulous rowing program.

THE 2019-2020 TEAM AND COACHES

This year we have a roster of 66 athletes, 26 of whom are rookies. During the fall, we've been rowing six 8s most days with the rookies mixed in with returning varsity rowers, which allows the new rowers to develop and become integrated more quickly into the program. With eight coxswains on the roster, we have the flexibility to send out 4 x 4+s and 4 x 8+s in a single day of practice. Our practices are intense, and the comradery has never been better at our boathouse.

We welcome Sam Greenblatt as an assistant coach this year and congratulate Nick D'Imperio, who left us for a fulltime position with Y-Quad Cities rowing program. Sam was a coxswain at the University of Washington and has 19 years of experience coaching in places as varied as Oregon State and the U.S. Junior National team. Sam's job at Oracle gives him the flexibility to coach for VRA and we are lucky to have him join our team. His coaching approach and philosophy fits very well with the culture we have worked hard to build at VRA.

Joining Frank, Alan, and Sam as coaches this year are five volunteer coaches: Frank Vasquez UVA '18 (works in data analysis), Garret Overholser UVA '18 (works in tech start-up), Connor Joslin '19 (UVA grad school), Ben Young, Ohio State '19 (UVA grad school), and Ryan McCarthy, Yale '10.

SAVE *the* DATE

Please join us on Saturday, February 8, 2020 at Potomac Boat Club for the 8th Annual State of the VRA. Details will follow closer to the date about the start time. This reunion event is a great time to connect with old friends and meet our coaches and team to hear about our program, progress, and plans.



FALL 2019

Racing Summary

We had the privilege of racing at three regattas including the Occoquan Challenge, Head of the Charles, and the Bald Eagle Invitational. Below and on page four are brief overviews of each race along with photos. Teammates, the spring 2019 schedule, and more news can be found on the VRA website.

OCOQUAN CHASE

10/13/2019



Our small fourth-year class successful at their last head race as varsity members

On October 13, we raced five 8+s and four 4+s. The results were strong. In the 8+ races, the Novice boats finished first and second, and the Varsity boats finished first, third, and fourth. In the 4+ races, the Novice boats finished first and second, and the Varsity boats finished first and third. Every Rookie in our program raced at least once.

HEAD OF THE CHARLES

10/20-10/21/2019

We raced one 8+ and two 4+s at The Head of the Charles. Knowing we still have a lot to do in terms of building speed, our main goal was to race well enough to qualify boats to race in the 2020 HOCR. Our Club 4 finished sixth, an excellent result against this field, our Collegiate 4 raced hard and finished tenth, and our Collegiate 8 finished 15th. All boats earned spots for next years' regatta. The Collegiate 8 result was disappointing and did not reflect the speed this boat had achieved in practice (as they showed in their next race). MIT won the event, but did not beat our course record set in 2017. We also had two alumni 8 entries, proving the lifelong commitment to rowing that our program creates. The Alumni A boat finishing 17th, guaranteeing an entry for 2020.



Ready for winter training

BALD EAGLE INVITATIONAL

11/2/2019

We traveled to Indianapolis on the first weekend of November for the Bald Eagle Invitational. We have grown to love this regatta – there is great field, including Michigan, Purdue, Wisconsin, and several ACRA crews, and the course is a straight 4,000m. We raced a first and second Novice 8, a first, second, third, and fourth Varsity 8 and two Novice 4s.

Our Rookies kicked off the racing, winning the 1N8 by beating Wisconsin by 9 seconds and Michigan by 41 seconds. The 2N8 fought hard and finished 4th in their event.

The Varsity boats showed in their race the speed they'd demonstrated in practice. The 1V8 finished third behind Wisconsin (first) and Michigan. We were less than five seconds behind Michigan, which was a 35 second improvement compared to the HOCR finish. Just as satisfying, we beat fourth place Purdue (the 2019 Dad Vail Champions) by 12 seconds. The 2V8 finished second, four seconds behind Michigan and 15 seconds faster than Purdue. We also raced a third and fourth V8, finishing third and fourth behind Michigan and Purdue. This racing will provide the guys an extra incentive to push each other and the rest of the team through the winter months. Our Novice 4s finished third and fourth behind two Wisconsin boats. All in all, it was a great regatta to end our fall.



Bald Eagle 2019: 2V8 powering away into last 1,200 meters

VIRGINIA ROWING SPRING 2020 SCHEDULE

JANUARY TRAINING CAMP

January 4-11, 2020 | Charlottesville, VA

STATE OF THE VRA

February 8, 2020 | Washington, D.C. (Potomac Boat Club)

SPRING TRAINING CAMP

March 9-14 2020 | Charlottesville, VA

SPRING SCRIMMAGE

March 14, 2020 | Charlottesville, VA

HOBART DUAL (VARSITY ONLY)

March 21, 2020 | Charlottesville, VA

OCOQUAN SPRINTS

March 29, 2020 | Fairfax, VA (Occoquan Reservoir, Sandy Run)

WILLIAMS SCRIMMAGE

April 4, 2020 | Charlottesville, VA

KNECHT CUP REGATTA

April 10-11, 2020 | Cherry Hill, NJ (Cooper River)

SIRA CHAMPIONSHIP

April 18-19, 2020 | Oak Ridge, TN

ACRA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

May 22-24, 2020 | Gainesville, GA

VISIT WWW.VIRGINIAROWING.ORG FOR FULL SCHEDULE



THE BONDS FOSTERED BY ROWING AT VIRGINIA

To the left is a photo from the October 2019 wedding of Sean Fagan '11. This photo beautifully illustrates how tight-knit our rowing community is. More than eight years after Sean graduated from UVA, 22 friends who either rowed for UVA or have connections to our program attended his wedding to celebrate with their friend and former teammate.

WINTER TRAINING OUTLOOK

The Indianapolis trip was good for the team spirit and morale – we can sense the energy and motivation for winter training. Everyone understands what's coming and is eager to get going. We have a squad that has fun together, enjoys the comradery but also works hard and pushes each other. Every athlete will have a detailed training program over the winter break. Showing their commitment to the team and to excellence, *the entire team is reporting back to the Boathouse on January 4 for eight days of indoor conditioning camp (erging and lifting)*. This is the second year the team has taken this approach and it pays huge dividends in terms of erg scores and development, especially for the younger guys. Knowing this training camp is coming also pushes guys to do the training over winter break and sets the standard for the rest of indoor training. In football, defense wins championships. In rowing, training from November through March wins medals in April through June.

WE NEED YOUR DONATIONS

As you can see, Virginia Rowing is thriving. The things that we all love about rowing in general, and Virginia Rowing in particular, are evident in the athletes' experiences and in the connections among our alumni that last a lifetime.

Every year, we depend on your donations as a critical component of our budget. Approximately one third of our annual budget is funded by your donations. The balance is funded by the athletes' own contributions, generous giving from the parents of current rowers, and a variety of entrepreneurial initiatives (such as the summer rowing camp) that are managed and driven by our coaching staff. Your support is fundamental to the program's ongoing success.

For the 2019/2020 season, we need to raise \$140,000 in donations from you – our friends and alumni – to meet our budget. As you consider your year-end giving plans, please include a gift to Virginia Rowing. 280 gifts of \$500 per donor would allow us to meet our budget goal. And the greater our number of donors, the more we can be confident in the ongoing financial viability of our great program.

You can donate by visiting www.virginia.rowing.org or by filling out the giving form that is attached. Thank you for your support.

We look forward to seeing everyone who can join us at the State of the VRA in February or at one of our races this spring.

Go Hoos!

Andy Fletcher (Law '92)
President
Virginia Rowing Association

Frank G. Biller
Director of Rowing
Head Coach