

WWU MEN'S CREW

ANNUAL  
ANNUAL

# RIGGER

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## SPRING 2014 SUMMARY

The spring racing season of 2014 proved to not only be long and demanding for the Vikings, but also highly eventful. The season included a number of local conference regattas as well as several national races. To Western's credit, the program was able to display an unprecedented depth of field with three 8's and one 4.

The team kicked off the season with our newly traditional Samish Sprints hosted on Lake Samish by Western Women's Rowing. The event consisted of a series of one kilometer sprints. Given how early they occur in the racing season, the Samish Sprints serve as a useful competitive experience for both returning and novice rowers alike.

The Samish Sprints were quickly followed by a duel race between the Vikings and the University of the Fraser Valley. WWU hosted the Canadian team on their home course at Lake Whatcom.

After the excitement of two early regattas was over, the team had to buckle down for an intense week of Spring Break training. The Viking rowers stay in Bellingham for the duration of Western's Spring Break in order to take advantage of the time away from school and attend the three+ hour practices that occur twice a day.

On March 29th, the Saturday following break, the team made the trek down to Tacoma to participate in the Cascade Sprints at American Lake. Despite the widespread excitement for another opportunity to race, the event was unfortunately cancelled after the

preliminary heat racing. Due to cold winds and intense rain, several other attending teams rowed through some of the cruelest conditions of their rowing careers. Thankful the Vikings have the cold Canadian breezes to prepare them for such events, and the team wasn't adversely affected from the unrelenting weather.

The weekend of April 5th, the Vikings competed in the Husky Open, a two kilometer sprint through the Montlake Cut, which offers spectators a commanding view of the entire race. The event offered the team a unique opportunity to compete against the University of Washington, as well as other nationally ranked crews. This afforded all the attending Western boats a chance to step up to challenging competition and get a taste of what it takes to race at a national level.

The following weekend the Western men drove south to race at the Covered Bridge Regatta in Eugene, Oregon. Covered Bridge is a regatta that attracts crews from around the West Coast, and is thus a tangible way for the Vikings to measure themselves against many of their major competitors later in the season. The entire team performed well, winning the overall team points award for the regatta as a result. The Varsity 8+ won a first place victory in their division, with a time of 6:28.2. The Varsity 4 followed with another first place victory with a time of 7:05.9. The Junior Varsity 4 also performed well with a fourth place finish and a time of 7:47.6. The novice team also stepped up to the plate with the Novice 8A and 4A sweeping first place in their races with times of 7:22 and 7:50, respectively. The Second Novice 8 came in second with a time of 7:36.9 and the

Second Novice 4 finished fourth with a time of 8:21.9. Overall, Covered Bridge was a success as it proves the first opportunity for the Vikings to display their impressive power and skill.

The team then subsequently raced at the Western Intercollegiate Rowing Association's championship regatta in Sacramento, California. WIRA's serves as a West coast championship event, and as such, only the very best have a chance to win. WWU Men' Crew sent their V8 and N4 to represent the entire program at this prestigious regatta. The Varsity boat took seventh overall, winning the Petite Final with a time of 6:16.4. The Novice crew won their preliminary heat and quickly took first place in the final heat as well to establish themselves as the 2014 Champions with a final time of 7:12.1.

On May 3rd was the Northwest Collegiate Rowing Conference regatta. NCRC's is Western Men's Crew's conference championship regatta and performing well here is one of the main focuses of the entire season. The V8 earned second overall with a time of 6:15.7. The V4 and the JV4 took first and second, with times of 7:15 and 7:38. The Third Varsity 4 also competed well with a time of 8:09 and a fourth place finish. The Novice team competed exclusively in the fours due to the lack of a Novice 8 event, but still performed well nevertheless. The N4 won their division with a time of 7:22, and the second N4 followed in sixth with a time of 8:28. The Lightweight 4 also competed and earned themselves a third place finish with a time of 8:43. With a standout performance from all Western boats, the team took second overall in the team points category, right behind the University of Puget Sound.

### Novice 4 taking first at WIRA's

The spring racing season concluded with the varsity boats traveling to the larger and more competitive National Championship regattas around the country. The Varsity 4 travelled to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to compete at Dad Vail Regatta. The team took first place in their preliminary heat and actually put down the fastest time on the course that day. They promptly followed up with an easy first place victory in their Semi-Final heat, propelling them on to the championship heat. Due

to severe thunderstorms and wind, the championship heat was delayed, but luckily, the Vikings were still given an opportunity to race again several hours later. The men rowed hard and earned themselves a third place medal out of more than forty boats from all over the country. This is the greatest success the program has seen at Dad Vail's. Two weeks later, the Varsity 8 attended the American Collegiate Rowing Association's championship regatta in Gainesville, Georgia. This, in and of itself, was

unprecedented for the program, as this was the first time in Western's history that the men had sent an 8 to a national regatta. Moving up to the more competitive racing an 8 event provides is a huge step forward for the Vikings as they begin to make their presence known on a national scene. Racing in a total of three two-kilometer sprints in oppressive heat, the boat took sixth place in the C final with a time of 6:09 and provided the team with a respectable finish to a long season.

### Varsity 4 taking third at Dad Vail





## COMMENTS FROM THE CAPTAIN

The Viking Men's Crew is proud to count so many as supporters of the team. Striving to maintain the standard set by crews past, the team is looking ahead to a sprint season of increased competition, a reshaped conference, and the continued success of the largest team in recent years. Thank you to all that have worked to bolster the team and get us to where we are now!

The 2014 fall season was seen off to an unusually busy start for the novice squad at Western this year. With showings at Head of the Lake and against WSU and Gonzaga in Pullman, the squad has had a chance to square off against conference contenders and regional rivals alike. With over thirty novice rowers coming out of one of the more intense fall seasons, the Vikings are looking ahead to repeat victories in the novice class boats at Covered Bridge regatta, NCRC and WIRA, as well as expanded showings at all in-conference races and championships. Teams that move boats effectively have a foundation built on trust in their teammates. At every event this fall the novice squad has shown each other, the coaches, and the returning rowers that they are going to be putting in the work to earn that trust, with impressive efforts being presented on the ergs, on the weights, and on the water.

Western Men's Crew is constantly looking to improve and take on new challenges. Competing in larger regional and national levels, the team has been sending increasing numbers of boats to regattas such as Head of

the Charles, the Western Intercollegiate Rowing Association championship regatta, Dad Vail, and the American Collegiate Rowing Association national championship. In the process of assuming the responsibility to meet this higher level of competition, the team has also had to assume a much larger financial burden.

Creating a national name and a Wnational presence requires tremendous work from the athletes. Already Viking Crew has put up results that show that the team is firmly committed to this goal, with a 3rd place finish at Dad Vail in the 4+, a 15th place finish at Head of the Charles, a 1st place win for the Novice 4+ at Western Intercollegiate Championship and an 8+ sent to Lake Lanier to compete at the American Collegiate Rowing Association. With these successes in the last year alone, the Vikings look ahead to another productive season. The financial support provided by alumni, family and friends of the Viking Crew are crucially essential for the teams continued success.

There are many tax deductible ways to assist the team, including general donations, race specific donations, sponsor-a-rower donations, and equipment donations. If you would be interested in providing financial support for the team or would like to look into these options more, please feel free to visit our webpage in order to go through the foundation donation page or to get in contact with team leadership at [wwurowing@gmail.com](mailto:wwurowing@gmail.com).

Inside the atmosphere of competitive athletics, when one encounters the world of the collegiate rower, insight into the most inspiring, passionate, and overlooked potential shines through the darkness of night that they row in to and out of. In the humble habitat of Bellingham, Washington, a small club sport persists through never-ending pain in order to fight year after year for a place on a national podium alongside other unprecedented competitors.

While the rest of Whatcom County rests in their beds, Western Washington University Men's Crew fights for improvement this fall to maintain the reputation of success that has gained momentum over the past several years. As the roster stands larger than it has in Western history, all eyes seem locked on spring season and everything that must be achieved this winter in order to make this a more outstanding year than ever.

Much publicity has drawn attention to WWU Men's Crew as Western conveniently chose Daniel James Brown's *The Boys in the Boat* as the Western Reads 2014 book of the year for incoming freshman. With an ever-growing audience lining up at the 1,500 meter-bleachers, something seems to be amidst more than mere coincidence. Taking into consideration the club's accomplishments these past few years (having won the Team Title at the Northwest Collegiate Rowing Conference twice – an accomplishment that hadn't been won in the previous six years, as well as placing third at Dad Vail), it isn't an outlandish assumption that Western is on it's way to having the fastest season ever before.

## HEAD OF THE CHARLES

During the weekend of October 18th, WWU Men's Crew competed at the Head of the Charles for the first time in the entirety of the program's history. The Head of the Charles is a grueling 4800 meter race rowing upstream on the Charles River in the vicinity of the downtown Boston area. The racecourse itself consists of five sharp turns requiring both a confident and experienced crew and coxswain.

Due to the nature of head racing, teams are started every 10-15 seconds with the goal of catching the boat in front of you while simultaneously fending off the boat behind you, all while ultimately finishing with the fastest time possible. Despite the team's first appearance at the Charles, the Vikings finished 15th out of forty-four other shells in the race in an impressive time of 17:19.71. This competitive finish guarantees Western a returning spot for next year and a chance to make their attendance at the Head of the Charles an annual tradition for the program.

## PORTLAND WELCOMES WESTERN

For the fight to be the fastest school on the water, the doors to the Lakewood boathouse on Lake Whatcom opened earlier this year than in past seasons so that the commencement of crew's two most critical and complimentary characteristics – camaraderie and inter-squad competition – grow ever stronger with every extra stroke. Much of the motivation for this fall was a response to two additional races being added to the team's agenda that took place in Portland; the Portland loop and the Portland Fall Classic which were both 5K races on the Willamette River.

Through the choppiest terrain, the loop was called off halfway though the JV8 event because of extreme winds. Though the rows may not have been ideal, the experience of splashing around in industrial Oregon was one to remember, and the plus of Western placing the fastest time in the 3V8 event that morning was an impressive testament to Western Crew's strength across the board of all their boats.

As winds settled the following morning, the Fall Classic was underway as oars of orange and black, green and yellow fluttered to the 5K starting line. Crews rowed in the direction of downtown and under five bridges of echoing construction and excited spectators. After a powerful performance, Western exited the stage exhausted and able to return back to Bellingham confident in the extremely strong display of drive they had made. The V8 took second in their event and overall everyone seemed honored and enthralled for having competed in two regattas that Western has previously been absent from.

## JV8 at Portland Fall Classic



## VIKING'S PARTICIPATE IN HEAD OF THE LAKE

The following weekend attention turned to Seattle as over 2,200 participants competed in the 33rd annual Head of the Lake regatta at the University of Washington. With a trailer full of grey, black and blue boats, Western arrived excited to offer up incentive for support in the name of WWU Crew and the reputation of their rigor. Strength was undoubtedly tested as oarsmen from all over the country convoyed across Lake Union, through the infamous Montlake Cut, and out onto Lake Washington. Despite the upper-division competition of the home-field Huskies, Western's results were notably respectable; taking fifth in the men's collegiate open 8+, just nine seconds off of Gonzaga in third. As the Viking's vacated the crew-cluttered parking lot, their impression on one of the west coast's largest regattas can easily be claimed as more than substantial by any club-sport standards.

## WWU GOES TO WSU

In the final week of fall before a two-month break between the winter season, Western concluded their quarter on the water with a traditional trip to Pullman to race against WSU and Gonzaga (a first-time fall competitor) in the Head of the Snake Regatta, or what was formerly referred to as the WWU - WSU Dare Duel. Inside the eastern Washington river-rock canyons, the crews powered through a choppy tailwind in this cold and friendly 5K. Though keeping up with the Cougars is never an easy feat, our boys in blue stood their ground as the JV8 pulled out an impressive and persistently powerful piece, falling behind WSU by only three seconds, the closest margin of the day.

As the novice stow away the experiences of their first crew race inside the trophy-chambers of memory, more than just experience was acquired in our club's commute to our state's southeast edge. Speed and technique come from events like these wherein the talent of other teams inspires improvements between each other, but perhaps more importantly is the camaraderie across and inside these clubs that provides these new rowers with reasons to return for future expansion of our club and the evolution of spectator's expectations on club sports that we try tirelessly to exceed.

While temperatures begin to drop and a few weeks of rest are warranted, that doesn't imply that improvement is postponed during the off-season. With winter around the corner, the Vikings stay active on the ergs and in the weight room where victory is a communal mentality among the crew so that once spring approaches, the fullest potential will be at the tap. Hopes are high among all members of WWU men's crew, and the audience's anticipation for what's yet to come is minimal in comparison to the team's own eagerness and excitement for the intensity that they exhibited this fall to transfer over and be built off of over the next few months as we approach the sprints of spring.

JV4 at Head of the Lake

## MEET THE TEAM

Patrick Abercrombie  
Diego Acevedo  
Severn Anderson  
Alex Balansay  
Zackary Balonick  
Ian Boals  
Henry Brown  
Beau Byron  
Dario Castellon  
Robert Cohen  
Megan Deshaye  
Stuart Doty  
Carlos Enciso  
Marielle Face  
Drew Falabella  
Max Griffith  
Nathan Haase  
David Henry

Brayden Jacobson  
Mac Jaffe  
Nicholas Jensen  
Allison Joy  
Tohn Keagle  
Nicholas Kelly  
Brandon Khademi  
Nathan Lund  
Aaron Lutz  
Alex McCoy  
Corban McKay  
Cameron Moser  
Gabriel Moss  
Caleb Neufeld  
Charlotte Nieman  
Elliot O'Neill  
Michael Ottele  
Jeff Pratt  
Maclain Ramsey  
Olivia Robb-Linse  
Shane Sanders

Carl Smith  
Micah Spady  
Chris Swanson  
Mitchell Tokuoka  
Jackson Turvey  
Roderick van der Linden  
Nick Vitalis  
Ben Waples  
Paul Weidner  
Nick Whitcomb  
Grant Williams  
Jackson Wood  
Evan Zofkie

Jack Marolich - Head Coach  
Joe Gregersen, Zak Balonick,  
Matt Reider - Novice Coaches  
Sean O'Meara - Assistant Coach  
Strength Coach - Will Ruth

## CONTACT THE CREW

Viking Crew is committed to being an integral part of the Western Washington community. Last fall alone, the Western Men's Crew clocked over 350 volunteer hours. Giving back is a tradition that the team hopes to continue to an even greater extent this year. If you know of any opportunities for volunteering within the Western community, please get in touch with the team at [wwurowing@gmail.com](mailto:wwurowing@gmail.com).

To keep updated on events and other opportunities to stay involved, visit our webpage at [www.wwucrow.com](http://www.wwucrow.com).

You can also join our Booster Club. The Viking Booster's provide support for the team during the season for a variety of means. It also serves a connection for parents, family and friends of the Men's to get in touch and stay up to date on results and information during the season. To learn more, contact [VikingCrewBooster@gmail.com](mailto:VikingCrewBooster@gmail.com).

Keep up with our proud WWU Men's Crew Alumni on their Facebook page of the same name.

We're also on Twitter! [@wwumenscrew](https://twitter.com/wwumenscrew)

To donate to the club or an individual athlete, visit [wwu.edu/give](http://wwu.edu/give).

Wonder where your donations may go? Check out these exciting club updates! The team is looking to purchase a new 8 currently being used by the Canadian National Team in Sacramento, as well as other materials for the upcoming season. To check into the team's specific fundraising goals, check into our "Donate" tab on [wwucrow.com](http://wwucrow.com).

We look forward to hearing any and all comments, questions or concerns about how WWU men's crew can stay active in our supporter's lives. Thank you so much for following our progress and know that we are surely excited to exhibit all of our hard work after this cold winter to come.



## IN HONOR OF OUR ALUMNI!

Western Men's Crew is proud of the alumni that have made the team what it is today. The Viking's tradition of excellence is grounded in the work of crews that have launched from Western boathouses for more than four decades now. We would like to take a moment to pay tribute to some of the rowers and crews that have been a part of crews in the past and that remain active supporters of the current team.

Pictured are the members of the WWU 1971-1972 Varsity 8 at the Pacific Northwest Collegiate Championship in Seward Park, Seattle. They are being presented the LaFramboise Cup by Ms LaFramboise herself following their victory at what would be considered the Pacific Northwest small college championship. Pictured from left are Steve Hunt, Greg Munro, Rick Maynard, Steve Kirsop, Brandon Keyes, Don Buthorn, John Sting, and Darrell Vreugdenhill.



The team will be selling WWU crew merchandise for family, friends and alumni online! To access the order form, visit [wwucrew.com](http://wwucrew.com) and go to the "Support" tab and follow the "Clothing order" link.

This year we will be selling:

- Baseball T's
- Long sleeves
- Hoodies
- Jackets
- Fleece vests
- Fleece jackets
- Softshell jackets
- Tablet and laptop cases
- Stadium blankets



