

MCGILL UNIVERSITY ROWING CLUB

THE WAVE

WINTER 2011

HEAD COACH'S REPORT

Dear McGill Crew Alumni –

Thank-you for enjoying this issue of the Wave! I hope you will take the time to read through this issue to hear what our athletes have to say, and that you will keep in touch with us.

I am pleased to report that 2010 was an extension of our landmark 2009 season. We had a strong tight crew this fall with our Lightweight Women capturing OUA Bronze in the 8+. In addition they went on to a best ever 6th place finish at the Head of the Charles. Our lightweight men's program was streamlined down to a 4+ and a double, and both captured Bronze at OUA's this fall. The Lightweight Men's 4+ captured 3rd place at the Charles, by a mere 3 seconds! Varsity MVP's were Jen Allan and Renaud Garon-Gendron. Renaud was selected for the RCA U23 national team last summer. Our Open men's and women's crews, JV men's double and JV women's 4+ were rebuilding this fall and turned in solid performances all season long.

On the Novice side, our men's crew (rowing the McConnell) was undefeated all season and captured silver at OUA's by less than 3 seconds. Our Novice Women (rowing the Paul Campbell), after finishing 3rd at Brock, advanced to the OUA final and placed in the top 6.

Off the water, we have been working hard in conjunction with the Athletics Department to finalize our lease agreement with Parc Jean Drapeau. This agreement cements our status as a "resident club" and will provide us with



much awaited stability at the basin. Despite a 50% budget cut this fall, we continue to be a strongly supported Level II Varsity Team and our official roster was expanded from "two varsity eights" to include all varsity and JV athletes.

Looking ahead, we face the challenge of more rebuilding as the majority of our OUA medalists from the past two years are graduating. With the Parc Jean-Drapeau contract negotiations near an end, I am eager to continue focusing on athletic excellence and expanding our fleet of equipment so that we no longer rely on renting equipment from other clubs. We are nearly there thanks to your support! Please read my article about the upcoming boat christening and naming ceremony – I hope you will be able to participate in large numbers!

If you would like to learn more about what is happening with McGill Crew, or you would like to get involved, please do not hesitate to contact me!

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**MARK YOUR
CALENDARS!**

BOAT CHRISTENING

**SEPTEMBER 17TH
2011**

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

“THESE PAST YEARS, THE EXEC HAS MADE A GREAT EFFORT IMPROVING THE STATUS QUO AT MCGILL CREW”

Here I am, sitting in an exec meeting for the third year in a row. These past years, the exec has made a great effort improving the status quo at McGill Crew. With a strong effort from Adam Hart, we were able to revamp our erg room into something to be proud of. Mirrors lining the wall, stoppers to prevent the ergs from sliding, new lights, and a surround sound speaker system, all paid for by fundraising efforts. In addition, we've added many new boats to our fleet, which will be christened on Saturday, September 17, 2011. New programs have been introduced these past years to improve our presence in the McGill community, namely Catch and Release (our post-pERGatory party) and Introduction to Rowing. In addition, our team party in Mont Tremblant has been something that people have been looking forward to during the winter season, and it has yet to disappoint expectations! These have all been great successes and we expect to be continuing the annual events for years to come.

This year, we're keeping the momentum going with more ideas and improvements. Our website, although it contains a lot of useful information, is overdue for a facelift. We want it to be something that catches the eye of potential recruits, and a place for the alumni

to know what's going on with McGill Crew whenever they like. It will also be a central repository of information for all McGill athletes with all information pertaining to training, schedule, fees, and any upcoming events that they need to be aware of. This will be a major facelift operation, but we want to make it something that people will want to visit on a regular basis!

Another, albeit smaller task, is to get a tent for the regattas. Remember when (as I'm sure you've all experienced) racing at Brock Invitational Regatta, with no shelter, and it's really cold, wet, and windy. And, since it's Henley Island, there's no real shelter for us to stay warm and keep our stuff dry. We're in the process of purchasing a tent so that we can stay warm, and have a place to congregate. It's a small addition, but it will make regattas that much more enjoyable.

The third item to concentrate on is the second erg room, right next to the main one. We want to make it into something, seeing as now it's mainly used as a storage space. If any alumni have ideas, please email me at michael.ross2@mail.mcgill.ca.



VARSITY WOMEN'S SEASON

4am wake up. shower. eat. make a lunch. pack a bag.
grab my cox box.

5am get to bus stop. twenty minute bus ride. fifteen minute metro ride packed with **people who don't shower in the morning**. transfer. metro. run to the basin.

6am practice.

830am run to class. eat. fall asleep. next class. **schlep around a cox box.**

Every morning from September to November I followed this routine religiously.

Every morning my 4am alarm would ring and a new day would begin.

Admittedly, some mornings were harder than others, but coxing for McGill was worth it.

My girls in the Varsity Heavyweight 8+ were the most amazing people I've ever met. With the early mornings and the long bus rides, we developed a certain trust that is unique to rowing. It's a trust that each girl is willing to pull her hardest for the every other girl in the boat.

Our coaches would follow us every stroke and every kilometre, and were still willing to repeat every possible analogy to get us to understand what we were doing wrong. Brent and Christian were willing to put all their energy into us, and we were willing to pull the "Ten for Coaches".

This is why I row.

Rowing is a beautiful sport and the bond you share with your boat mates and coaches is the longest lasting bond that we'll carry with us beyond our rowing careers.

As winter drags on and ergs become the enemy, we still train hard for the season to come. We know next fall we're going to be stronger, faster and, as always, the best looking girls out there!

– Laura Marks



VARSITY MEN'S SEASON

Fall 2010 was my first season with the Varsity Men's Crew, having rowed in the Novice program the previous fall. The men's program had a bit of a contraction this year, as many athletes graduated or moved on – including the men's heavy four which took gold at the Head of the Charles, and half of the OUA-winning men's lightweight eight.

This season I rowed in a heavy four with three other newly initiated varsity men, and while we couldn't replicate the successes of last fall, it was a year marked by major improvements, both on a personal and team level. If we can keep building on these gains in the coming seasons, I believe it won't be long before the heavy men start seeing podium finishes once again.

Far and away my favourite thing about McGill crew is how, in a matter of a year or two, the program can take a previously semi-athletic student such as myself, and transform them

into an athlete capable of competing against rowers who've been in the sport for several years. And this transformation isn't just physical. I find rowing to be an intersection of brutal individuality (when you're in the middle of a 2k, trying to ignore every screaming muscle) and essential teamwork (your individual efforts will count for nothing if the whole crew's not in sync).

Rowing at McGill has affected every aspect of my life in a way that I never expected it to, and I'm looking forward to my future seasons – and more of those sweet moments where, neck-and-neck with the boat beside you, your coxie screams “Power ten!”, and you surge ahead.

-Liam Kirwin

“AN
INTERSECTION
OF BRUTAL
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NOVICE MEN'S SEASON



When I first decided to go try-out for the McGill Varsity Rowing Team in September, I literally had no idea what I was getting myself into. It took me a whole season to figure out that rowing is much more than simply a sport; it's a way of life. Never had I considered that I would dedicate so much time and energy to this sport; all while going to class, studying hard, and enjoying the university student life. All the morning practices on the water, afternoon "ergs" and week-end "erg" tests are nothing when compared to the satisfaction of giving all you have in a race against other students just like ourselves. The men's Novice Eight crew I was a part of did quite well this season; we brought home silver from OUA's, a mere 2 seconds from the gold. This

is quite an accomplishment, considering the fact that we started off the season with nine men who had never touched an oar in their lives. I am thrilled to be a member of our amazing crew. On the other hand, hard work does not always cut it. Without the instruction, advice, support and dedication of our coach Nicole Bewski, none of this would have been possible. She knows what she is doing when it comes to rowing, but she really knows how to make us work hard; whether it is on the water or in the "erg" room. In other words, joining the rowing team was a great decision, and I am absolutely thrilled with my first rowing season.

- Philippe Toren

NOVICE WOMEN'S SEASON

When I received a flyer for the 2010 MURC's try-outs during frosh, I didn't know how it was about to change my university life. One week later, I had no idea that the girls with whom I was running around the Olympic Basin would become such good friends.

I think that the novice season is special because novice rowers start from scratch. At first, simply waking up so early every morning represented a challenge for us, but we adapted. The truth is that I found it more difficult to adapt to the non-rowing life two months later. Rowing has truly changed my life.

Head coach Philip Hedrei once told us that we would soon forget all the pain that we would put ourselves through during the season, but that we would remember a victory for the rest of our lives. Although we didn't win a race, I will always remember my novice year.

If our first event had been a stair climbing race or a jump squat competition, we probably would have won it, but it wasn't. In fact, we had been rowing together for no longer than two weeks when came our first regatta, the Head of the Rideau. I am not even sure that we had rowed the entire basin all eight together more than twice. Oh! And I forgot to mention that we rowed the Rideau on the square. Not only did we barely know how to row, we didn't know what to bring, what to wear or what or when to eat either. Let's face it; despite the fact that we were rowing, we weren't rowers yet.

The week after, our coach told us that we had earned the

right to feather, which boosted our confidence for our next regatta: the Head of the Trent. But we only finished 14th out of 17 boats. This disastrous result had nevertheless left us with nothing to lose and everything to gain for the next race.

Thus, in the following weeks, we practiced harder than ever. After more than 18 000 jump squats and a countless number of strokes, we were definitely ready for the Brock Invitational Regatta. We didn't win at Brock, but I will always remember how this race felt. It was as if our minds had been bound together by an invisible string. All eight of our bodies were doing the exact same movements at the exact same time; we were rowing like we never had before. Even though we came second at Brock, it was a victory for us.

We didn't win the OUA's either, but I know that every single one of us gave everything she had. We made it to the finals and came fifth. I was so proud of being in that crew. Coach Phil was right: we can't remember how we suffered through those races. However, we can remember that we felt that pain together and that it brought us closer and closer over the season.

Overall, rowing has been one of the most intense and most satisfying experiences of my life. I would like to thank the 2010 novice women's amazing coach, Kirk, the MURC's coaching staff and the alumni support to have made it possible for me and the ones yet to come.

-Luce Bourbeau

BOAT CHRISTENING CEREMONY SEPTEMBER 17th, 2011

Dear Alumni –

On September 17th 2011, McGill Crew will be christening the new equipment we have acquired in 2009-2010. I would like to extend a personal invitation to each and every one of you to attend!

We are planning to have a boat christening and naming ceremony on McGill campus followed by light refreshments. Immediately following our morning practice at the Basin, the boats will be loaded on the trailer and transported to McGill's downtown campus for the ceremony. The entire team will be in attendance, as well as members of McGill Athletics.

Myself, the entire coaching staff and above all the athletes are very grateful to you for this new equipment. These boats were acquired as a result of your generosity. McGill Athletics also made a financial contribution, and team fundraising efforts have gone towards offsetting costs as well. In fact, our need for these boats is so great McGill Athletics has loaned the McGill Rowing Team some \$30,000 to offset the cost of this equipment as we continue to fundraise into 2011 and 2012.

We still need your help! At this point, no names for these boats have been put forth. Because your generous donations have contributed to the renewal of our fleet, our goal is to have alumni name these boats, and to include your names beside the seats. We are eagerly anticipating your involvement in this process in time for the christening next fall, particularly if you have contributed to the acquisition of this equipment. Here is a list of the new equipment, along with:

Two boats purchased in part with funds raised by Alumni Varsity Women Eight for 08 drive:

-Vespoli Millennium 8+, acquired in 2009, rowed by Varsity Women and Lightweight Men, gold medal at Brock Invitational 2009

-Vespoli M2 8+, rowed by lightweight women, Brock and OUA bronze 2010

-Two brand new midweight V1 Vespoli 4+, rowed by all our top Varsity Women's and Men's crews. One acquired in 2009 (LW women Bronze at CURC 2009), and the other in 2010.



-A lightly used Fillippi 2x (McGill Crew's first sculling boat!), purchased from Rowing Canada, LW Men's OUA bronze 2010.

-A lightly used Hudson midweight 8+, purchased from Rowing Canada.

-2 sets of fat smoothie CII oars, used by Varsity Men and Women.

If you are interested in helping us name these boats, in organizing a naming drive with fellow alumni, or in helping fundraise I would love to hear from you. Also, if you are interested in helping the team plan the christening and naming ceremony please let us know.

A heartfelt Thank-You for your support of our team!

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