

Men's Crew wins four medals at conference championships

Last weekend (April 28th & 29th) the WSU Men's Crew traveled to Sacramento, California for the first of their two conference championships. This was the WIRA (Western Intercollegiate Rowing Association) championships in which WSU entered nine of the ten events and left Lake Natoma with one gold, one bronze and two silvers medals. The conference consists of 30 different universities from all over the western US for the men's events alone. "More than half of our roster is lightweights this year," noted Head Coach Arthur Ericsson "so we built our entries around them. This is the first time since 2004 that the lightweight 8 event has been held. Schools have been narrow-mindedly overlooking the smaller athletes in hopes that big, tall rowers could yield them more prestigious results. I'm hoping that this marks the beginning of the comeback of lightweight rowing." The event was the last event of the day on Saturday with five schools entered. Cal (UC Berkeley) Lightweights are a program composed entirely of lightweights, and would be considered the team to beat. But in the end, they beat the Cougars by just over a length, with UC Santa Barbara less than one second on the heels of WSU.

Cal	6:27.6
WSU	6:31.7
UCSB	6:32.6
Sonoma	6:43.4
UC Irvine	6:52.9

The Lightweight 4 raced on Sunday and took first place by open water over the field. Their lineup was (bow: Keith Sullivan, 2: Pat Pursley, 3: Sean Martin, stroke: Brandon Caesar, cox: Mary Andreotti). "This was such a rewarding experience for them all." remarked Commodore Karl Huhta (Jr. Sports Mngmt). "Especially Pat; he is a senior and fourth year rower and it's great to see him go out on top after all of the hard work he's put in."

WSU	7:12.2
Univ. San Diego	7:18.8
Cal	7:19.7
Pacific Lutheran	7:21.2
Sonoma	7:35.7
UC Santa Barbara	8:36.6 (breakage)

The Men's Varsity 4 placed second, just 1.3 seconds behind University of Puget Sound. "They have beaten our four on two previous occasions this year," noted Jason Lackie (Sr. Architecture) "but this time the gap wasn't 9.5 seconds as it was in March. We laid it all on the line and were even with just 250 meters to go, but UPS had a little more left in the tank."

UPS	6:52.4
WSU	6:53.7
Long Beach	7:01.9
Western WA	7:05.0
UC Santa Barbara	7:05.4
Seattle Pacific	7:10.4

The Cougars Novice squad took home a bronze in the Novice Lightweight 4 event and placed fourth in the grand finals of the Novice 8 event. "We tried to stay with Orange Coast from the

beginning of the race, and we did, but we never settled after the start and it ended up being the worst race of the year for us” commented WSU Novice Coach Dan Thayer. The Cougars entered the varsity 8 event, but since most of their top rowers are lightweights, the schedule did not allow them to do both, so they made a lineup composed of junior varsity oarsmen along with the lightweights not in the lightweight 4 event. This put them in a very difficult situation and they finished in last place in the field. Our pair rowed very well, but finished 10th out of 11 schools in the finals.

The Cougars will return to Sacramento in two weeks to complete their season in the Pac-10 Championships. At that race they will field their fastest varsity 8, but the lightweights are very much looking forward to a rematch with Cal.