



Princeton National Rowing Association Newsletter

January/February 2012

Greetings!

PNRA is dedicated to providing a world class rowing facility and venue where people of all ages and skills levels, novice to elite, can grow and excel in the sport of rowing. We are sending this newsletter to you in an effort to keep you updated on the happenings at the Caspersen Rowing Center. Thank you for being a part of the PNRA family.

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Need Motivation to Dust off the Erg. The Peddie Erg Challenge is coming almost here!

2012 Spring Season Preview



As Juniors of the Caspersen Rowing Center are gearing up for the spring campaign, the coaches provided the following preview of the upcoming season. Thank you Coaches and good luck this spring!

Hun School (Coach Geoff Evans)

The Hun boys and girls teams are chomping at the bit to get back on the water for 2012. The boys team saw some success last year (gold at Philadelphia Cities) and graduated some talent (to Princeton, GWU, St. Andrews, Illinois, Miami). The four returning seniors join over a dozen juniors and second-year rowers to make this one of the youngest and most excited teams to race yet. The girls team graduated also graduated some core seniors last year (Princeton, Duke, PSU, Wisconsin, Bucknell). They left the leadership in the hands of four returning seniors, many of whom have committed to row in college (OSU, Indiana, Holy Cross), who are joined with a group of equally excited underclassmen. After a week of training at Mercer in early March, Hun's boats will be excited to start racing with other MAPL and Mercer programs in April and May!

Lawrenceville School (Coach Ben Wright)

Lawrenceville Boys

Three seniors return from the 2011 Lawrenceville Boys First Eight. They are joined by five oarsmen and the coxswain returning from the 2011 Second Eight, as well as last year's Freshman Crew and Third Eight. After a successful fall season, which included winning the Youth Four+ at the Head of the Schuylkill, Crew Captain Josh Fram L '12



Peddie will be holding the 2nd Annual Peddie Erg Challenge on Sunday, February 12, 2012 from 12:00 noon-4:00 p.m. in the Erik B. Hanson Field House on Peddie's campus.

Schedule:

- 1:00 Masters Men
- 1:15 Masters Women
- 1:30 Novice Men
- 1:45 Novice Women
- 2:00 Open 3V Men
- 2:15 Open 2V Men
- 2:30 Open 1V Men
- 2:45 Open 3V Women
- 3:00 Open 2V Women
- 3:15 Open 1V Women
- 3:45 Mixed Double
- 4:00 Mixed Double

4:15 Mixed Double

How to Enter:

Entry fee:

A \$10 entry fee will be charged to help defray the cost of the event. This can be paid at the door by cash or check (Payable to "Peddie School").

Registration:

Day of the event registration is possible as the space allows.

Peddie plans to have a concession stand this year, so participants might want to bring some spare change for that.

MJRC Celebrates 10 Years of Rowing



Ten years ago this spring, approximately 55 budding athletes took up oars and took their first strokes as part of the newly organized Mercer Junior Rowing Club. In the past ten year, this initial group has been joined by almost 1,000 juniors who have learned to row and competed with the Mercer Junior Rowing Club. In the short ten year period, the Mercer Junior program has produced regional, national and world champion athletes. However, more important is the positive impact the program has had on the lives of the student athletes and their families.

Over the next 12 months we will be hosted several events to celebrate the decade of Mercer Junior Rowing. If you would like to get involved in the planning and organizing of these events, [please contact Sean McCourt](#).

Looking For Something to Do This Summer - Add Rowing To Your List

proceeded to lead the team through effective winter training. Twenty-six oarsmen and four coxswains will train for a week in Augusta, Georgia for Spring Training on the Savannah River, seeking to win the MAPL Championship, the Mercer Sprints, and the Mid Atlantic Championships again, while keeping the elusive Stotesbury Cup and the USRowing Youth National Championship in sharp focus. Our success will depend on the final weeks of winter training, generating serious competition for each seat in the First, Second and Third Eights, and staying healthy throughout the season

Lawrenceville Girls

The Lawrenceville Girls crew is looking forward to the 2012 season. Led by senior captains, Annelies Paine '12 and Julia Peters '12, the girls have much talent returning. The team sent three boats to the Youth National Championships in Oakridge, TN last spring, a varsity 4+, a lightweight 4+ and a 2x. Annelies Paine '12, Savannah Koochinke '12 and Laura Poss '12 return from the 2011 varsity 4+, Kit Gardner '13, Emma Waugh '12, Charlotte Brace '12, Geena Fram '14 and Ji Won Kim '14 return from the 2011 lightweight 4+. Julia Bretz '13 and Amanda Miller '14 spent time in the 2011 summer at the USRowing Development camp. Many rowers return from a successful 2011 season in either the Junior 4+ or Novice 8+ and will look to make an impact on the varsity level in 2012. As a whole, positive energy, strong work ethic and dedicated team spirit will be the most important factors to the success of the crew.

The crew will start the season with a return to Augusta, Ga for a week long training camp. The top two 8+s will head to St. Andrew's for the opening race, March 31. The team will return and break into 4+s for the MAPL races. A rematch against the Kent 8+ on our home course promises to be exciting. A hopeful return to the Youth National Championships will hinge on success at the Mid-Atlantic Championships on May 12. The regular season will conclude with an exciting trip to the Stotesbury Cup Regatta, May 18-19.

Mercer Rowing Program

MJRC Boys (Coach Justin Mills)

This fall the Mercer Varsity men's team went through a few changes that the athletes had to adjust to. The first change was that the head coach changed at the beginning of the season so the guys had to yet again change their adaptation to a new coaching technique. The guys however stuck with the change and took everything that



Summer is a great time to row and PNRA has opportunities for kids of all ages to take advantage of rowing.

Juniors

PNRA will again this summer be running two Resolute Racing Camps and three Learn To Row/Novice Camps. The

Resolute Racing Camps offer an opportunity for experienced junior rowers to perfect their rowing strokes while the Learn To Row Novice Camps introduce the sport to 7-12 grade juniors. ([For more information](#))

Resolute Racing Camp I	July 8 - 13
Resolute Racing Camp II	July 29 - August 3
Novice I	June 18 - 22
Novice II	July 16 - 20
Novice III	August 6-10

Mercer Junior Fitness and Rowing Program

This program is designed to promote fitness through a variety of activities including weights, cross training and yes, rowing too! The rowing includes both sweep and sculling. The program begins June 18 and continues through August 10 meeting weeknights 6-8pm. ([For more information](#))

Mercer Masters

Imagine heading off to work knowing that you have gotten a good workout in while watching the sun rise over the beautiful waters of Mercer Lake as a bald eagle soars overhead. The Mercer Masters provide the opportunity to do just that. The Mercer Masters cater to rowers from 21 years old through 101 years old (OK we have not found the 101 year old yet but we are looking). There are three programs Learn to Row, Fitness and Recreation and Competitive Rowers. All programs meet 5:30-7:00am, six day a week. The Summer Program runs June 18 - August 10. ([For more information](#))

Can't wait until June to learn to row - the Mercer Masters have a learn to row program beginning on April 16.

Athlete Highlight: MJRC's Charlie Anderson

Last year as most of our athletes saw the Mercer Lake Sprints and Mid-Atlantic Junior Regional Championships as a chance to test their skills on the race course, MJRC's Charlie Anderson envisioned the events as prime opportunities to impact our community through food drives. Charlie organized a drop box at the Mercer Team tents for athletes and families to drop packaged and canned goods. Through Charlie's efforts 183 pounds of food was collected and donated to the Trenton's Mercer Street Friends Food Bank.

The Mercer Street Friends Food Bank reaches approximately 25,000 children and adults who face hunger on a daily basis.

Thank you Charlie!

MJRC Alumnus Chris Benchly Passes Away

Coach Mills threw at them. In the Fall the guys ended with only 1 loss on the season. The Men's 1st varsity boat took first at the Navy Day Regatta and were very excited to receive their mugs. We were also fortunate enough to be selected to go to The Head of the Charles Regatta, and even though the guys didn't do as well as we had hoped they showed that they still wanted to push to get better. In the Mercer challenge the Men's boats did extremely well demonstrating to everyone that they had adapted to the new way of coaching and were only continuing to improve on their technique and ability and varsity athletes. The Men finished their season strong with our 1st Varsity Men's boat sweeping the competition at the Bill Braxton regatta and taking first place. Though some of our other boats had logistical problems with event staff and delays it was overall a great success for the team.

This winter the guys have training harder then ever with a very rigorous routine that has comprised of erging, weight training, plyometrics, and a great new core work out. We have seen vast improvements in 2k times most of the guys dropping 10sec or more off their 2k Personal Records and we look forward to seeing even more improvement at the Peddie Erg Challenge. This spring we are hoping to send more boats to the National Youth Championship Regatta then we did last year.

Things that are worth keeping an eye on would be our Men's heavy Varsity 8+. Even though the guys aren't as big as some of the guys out there they more than make up for it in their ability and drive. Another boat that has a potential to do extremely well is the light weight men's 8+ that we are going to try to put together this year. We do have a lot of guys on the lighter side of things so putting this boat together will provide a lot of opportunities for our guys to succeed. We plan on being tough and we plan on succeeding this year and are moving in the direction that can do both!

MJRC Girls (Coach Sean McCourt)

The Mercer women will try to improve on last year's silver medal performance at the US Rowing Mid-Atlantic Regional, and will go for its first medal at the Youth Nationals since reaching the medals stand in 2009, as they look to continue their tradition of success with another difficult schedule on tap for the 2012 season.

" I am excited about this spring's schedule as it will provide some great competition including matching up with four of the top ten teams at last year's



The Princeton National Rowing Association and the Mercer Rowing Program are sad to note the passing of Mercer Junior alumnus Christopher Wesson Benchley ('05) as the result of a motor vehicle accident in Jamaica in late December. Christopher was a member of MJRC's 2005 varsity boys crew, competing for Mercer in both the Head of the Charles and USRowing's Youth National Championships.

A 2005 graduate of Princeton Day School, Chris graduated in 2011 with a bachelor's degree in marine affairs from the Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science at the University of Miami. He had spent his freshman year at the University of Pennsylvania.

He is survived by his mother Winifred (Wendy) Benchley, sister Tracy and brother Clayton. Christopher's father, Peter, passed away in 2006.

Fine Art and Foul Play

Fine Art and Foul Play



© "The Biglin Brothers: Racing" by Thomas Eakins. National Gallery of Art

Thomas Eakins, the Biglin Brothers, and the Banning of Professional Rowing in America

An Illustrated Talk

By

William Lanouette

Writer and Rowing Historian

*A Social Evening for Rowers and Art Lovers
Refreshments will be served.*

**7 P.M., March 8, 2012
PRINCETON PUBLIC LIBRARY**

US Rowing Youth National Championship" said head coach Sean McCourt. Mercer will be entering its' tenth racing season with a jammed schedule of cup races, dual regattas and large events. "Each time we line up it will be against a quality competitor and will give us a great deal of experience that should prove invaluable come the Nationals in Oak Ridge. It should be an awesome spring!"

The Mercer women open the 2012 campaign in similar fashion to last year with a trip to St. Andrew's School in Middletown, DE. We will also be competing against Yorktown and Wilson High Schools, both from Virginia. "It is a great way to kick start the season as we usually do several pieces against these teams and we can get an early gauge on our speed," McCourt said. "This race always gives us an idea of where we stand and lets us make adjustments and improvements before we approach the bulk of the racing schedule."

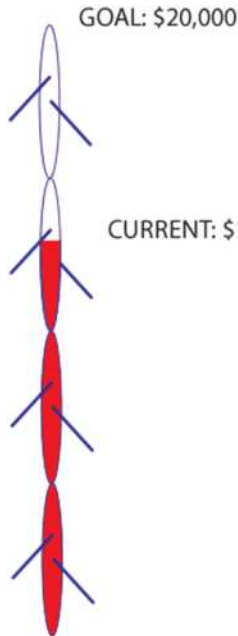
Following the trip to Delaware, the Mercer women will spend the next two weeks as road warriors. First they will head to Lake Lenape outside of Atlantic City in order to participate in the Shoebie Cup where they will face off against Mt. Saint Joseph's Academy, who finished 5th at last year's youth nationals. The following weekend they will venture to the historic Schuylkill River in Philadelphia to race Philadelphia City Rowing, a new club program composed of Philadelphia public school students.

Mercer will kick their racing schedule into high gear over the last two weeks of April. During a 14 day stretch Mercer will lineup against four of the top ten teams from last year's youth nationals. The Mercer women will look to defend their 2011 Mercer Lake Sprints championship against Connecticut Boat Club (3rd place at 2011 nationals) and Mount St. Joseph's (5th place at the 2011 nationals). Mercer will take on the Kent School (CT) and Lawrenceville the day after the Sprints. The following week Mercer will renew its rivalries with Community Rowing Inc. (6th place at the 2011 nationals) and Saratoga Rowing (10 at 2011 nationals) as well as several top Canadian teams at the Saratoga Invitational.

"We'll need to be at our best in order to have a successful month of April," McCourt said. "The quality of racing that we see during this stretch will set us up for a strong Regional and National performance."

Mercer will tune up for Nationals with a home race against Norwalk Rowing and

Help Us Make The New Boats A Reality



We are getting closer to being able to add for new 2x/2- boats to the Mercer Bay of the Caspersen Rowing Center.

Two boats have already been ordered! We need your help to be able to order two more.

Remember that this is a matching gift challenge opportunity and your dollars will be matched on a dollar for dollar basis.

As of the writing of this newsletter, we have received over \$12,776 from 57 individuals. When matched gift this becomes over \$25,500! Well over half way to reaching our goal.

If you have ever rowed in the MJRC program, this is an opportunity to show your support and give back to the program. Think about what the program meant for you. Think of the impact that you can have on the lives of

others who are following in your footsteps. With the matching gift, your gift can have a huge impact!

The race is not yet complete. I hope that you join me in not wanting to let any of our matching grant go unclaimed. I am counting on your support to make sure that we take full advantage of the opportunity. Please make a donation either on line at www.rowpnra.org/polDonate.cfm or send your donation to Mercer Boat Challenge, 1 S. Post Road, Princeton Junction, NJ 08550.

Sponsor the Mercer Rowing Programs and the Mercer Lake Sprints

PNRA is looking for Sponsors for both the 2012 Mercer Rowing Programs and the 2012 Mercer Lake Sprints.



Sponsoring the Mercer Rowing Programs allows a company or organization to associate their name with the USRowing Club of the Year, a winning program that is making a difference our our community. Reaching over 150 years

Lawrenceville during the first week of May. The Regional championships, held on Mercer Lake the following week, look to be very exciting as the Mercer women will look to qualify the varsity: eight, four, pair, and lwt four for the national championship.

"This race means a lot to our team for a couple of reasons," McCourt said. "We have a chance to represent the Mercer community by hosting this event. We will also have a chance to earn the right to compete on the national stage by winning on our home water. Any time that you can win a medal in front of your friends, supporters, and parents is really special."

Mercer will conclude their season by traveling to Oak Ridge, TN for the 2012 US Rowing Youth National Championship on June 8-10.

Peddie (Coach Barb Grudt)

With the graduation of 11 seniors from a 17 member squad, the Peddie Girl's Crew will be rebuilding this year. We are excited about the number of enthusiastic novices who returned to row varsity this year. It will be interesting to see how the combination of youthful enthusiasm and senior leadership develops throughout the season.

The Boy's squad had a successful fall season and seems on track to improve on last year's spring performances.

In the PNRA Store

Available in the PNRA Store and available for immediate delivery:

PNRA Tote Bag



Show your pride in USRowing's Club of the Year with this heavy weight canvas

athletes, their families and 30 masters rowers, sponsorship of the Mercer Rowing Programs provides a great opportunity to showcase your company. [Click here for more information about Mercer Program Sponsorship.](#)



By the numbers, The Mercer Lake Sprints draws over 2200 athletes, representing 58 different clubs from as far away as Virginia and Connecticut. The majority of the teams, 27 teams, came from New Jersey and Pennsylvania, with 11 teams from New York. An estimated 7,500-10,000 spectators view the regatta each year. [Click here for more information about Mercer Lake Sprints Sponsorship.](#)

If you are interested in sponsoring either the Mercer Rowing Programs or the Mercer Lake Sprints, or know someone who maybe interested, please contact Kris Grudt by [email](#) or at 609-799-7100 x 100

Calendar

- Feb 12 - Peddie/Falcon Erg Challenge
- Feb 13 - Mercer Spring Crew Begins (Caspersen)
- Feb 25-26 USRowing Level I and Level II Coaching Education (Peddie)
- Feb 29 - MJRC Parents Meeting (7:00p - Grover Middle School)
- March 8 - Fine Art and Foul Play (Princeton Library)
- March 30 - US Paralympic Team Trials for Rowing (Caspersen)
- March 31 - Mercer Ergathon (Quaker Bridge Mall)
- April 20-21 - Mercer Lake Sprints (Mercer County Park)
- April 28 - MAPL/Mercer Challenge (Caspersen)
- May 11-12 - Mid-Atlantic Jr Regional (Mercer County Park)
- May 13 - Big East Women's Rowing Championships
- May 24-27 - NCAA Women's Rowing Championship (Mercer County Park)
- June 11-14 - Olympic Team Trials for Rowing (Caspersen)
- June 24-27 - U-23/Jr National Team Trials (Caspersen)
- June 27-29 - USRowing Elite National Championship (Caspersen)

For a complete listing of events planned for the Casperen Rowing Center, please go to the [Calendar](#) at the PNRA website.

Want to Contribute to PNRA's Monthly e-newsletter?

Want to report on what your teammates are up to? Do you have a pent-up inner writer waiting to be set free, or do you just have ideas for articles that you would like to see either in this newsletter or posted on the PNRA website? If you are interested in contributing, please contact Kris Grudt at krisgrudt@rowpnra.org

tote bag. This bag is great for everything from carrying groceries home from the store to toting your

workout clothes to the boathouse or gym. - [PNRA Canvas tote bags](#) are available for just \$20.

Team USA - Olympic Games Fleece Jackets



Support TEAM USA in this stylish fleece jacket featuring a big "TEAM USA" on the back with the Olympic Rings and PNRA logo on the front - \$37.00 ([Click here to order on-line](#))

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The Princeton National Rowing Association, a 501c3 organization, operates the Finn M.W. Caspersen Rowing Center located on the shores of Mercer Lake, Mercer County Park in West Windsor, New Jersey. The Princeton National Rowing Association is dedicated operating a world-class training site for our nation's elite athletes, providing opportunities for area youth to excel in the sport of rowing and to expand rowing in the greater Mercer County area through community based programs. PNRA runs the Mercer Junior Rowing Program which provides rowing opportunities for the youth from over 30 Mercer County area high schools. PNRA also runs the Mercer Masters program, giving adults the opportunity to participate in rowing, from learn to row through a competitive team. The center is a home to the USRowing National and Olympic Teams, as well as The College of New Jersey, the Hun, Lawrenceville and Peddie School's rowing Teams.

Sincerely,

Kristopher Grudt
Princeton National Rowing Association

If you want to help in the creation of future editions of this newsletter, please contact krisgrudt@rowpnra.org



**U.S. OLYMPIC
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PRINCETON NATIONAL ROWING ASSOCIATION

