NAVY CREW NEWSLETTER

Winter Issue

www.navysports.com

January 2017

In this Issue...

- Spring <u>Alumni Banquet</u>
- CAPT Taeusch's Letter
- Locker Program Update
- Captains' Interviews
- Service Selection

Upcoming Events

Along with our fourth annual Alumni Reunion and Spring Kickoff Banquet (invitation on next page), the Navy Rowing program hopes to see you at its upcoming spring events.

There are two home racing weekends this spring on the Severn River: The Navy Lightweights will host Columbia on April 8th, followed by the christening of their new racing shell for former Lightweight Head Coach Bob Kasper. The Penn Lightweights will visit Annapolis for the Callow Cup on April 29th.

The Women's Team and Heavyweight Men will be in Washington DC on April 7-8 for the George Washington Invitational. There are not many venues better for spectators than the Georgetown Waterfront, so we hope to see you there.

CAPT Taeusch's Lost Letter

Recently, a lost letter was found from Navy oarsman CAPT Frederick L. Taeusch '39, who served as the plebe coach of "The Great Eight" rowers under Head Coach Rusty Callow. The letter was found in the Princeton Boathouse, of all places, and decribes his encounter with George Pocock, how he became Rusty's freshman coach, and the auspicious start of the Plebes who would become the legendary oarsmen from the 1952 Olympic Gold Medal Crew.

Born in Hollywood, CA, Taeusch completed secondary school at Derby Academy, CT and Phillips Academy Andover, MA, before entering Princeton University in the fall of 1934. Pursuing his passion for the sea, he received his appointment in 1935 to the Naval Academy and graduated with the Class of 1939.

Before coming back to Annapolis to serve as the Assistant to the Commandant and coach with Rusty Callow, Taeusch was a submariner during World War II. As the Diving Officer of one particular submarine, he was awarded the Silver Star "for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity" during War Patrols in enemy Japanesecontrolled Pacific waters. He was known to have contributed to the sinking or damag-



ing of seven enemy ships during that specific period of time.

As the freshman rowing coach, Taeusch led the plebes to consecutive Eastern Sprints' victories in 1951 and 1952. Five members of his 1951 plebe crew (Dunbar, Fields, Frye, Murphy and Stevens) became the "backbone" of the famous "Great Eight" who went undefeated for three years in collegiate rowing under Rusty Callow.

His lost letter takes us back to the 1951 IRA Regatta in Marietta and recounts the "worst Navy disaster since Pearl Harbor".

Lost Letter Cont'd on Page 4...

Navy Crew Triathlon and Team Updates

The Annual Navy Crew Triathlon once again provided a fitting culmination to a full fall season of hard work and conditioning. Now in its fourth year, the Triathlon has become a focal point for the final few weeks of training each fall, and gives all the Midshipmen in the Boathouse the chance to test themselves against their classmates and peers. Fittingly, it is the well-rounded athletes who can run fast and use their strength wisely who tend to prevail. At the same time, every competitor is challenged to muster the courage to pull a good erg after pushing themselves hard over the first two events, and that toughness is exactly what we want every Navy crew to be able to draw on come race day in the spring.

This unique "dry-land" triathlon starts with what some call the "feats of strength:" a 500 meter erg that is factored into the final time and a weighted sled-pull that emphasizes pulling power. Once the 60 yard sledpull is completed, the Midshipmen have to attack the run, a 2.7 mile effort from the Halsey turf around the Yard—including the 500 meters of the Navy Seawall—to the ergs that await them at Hubbard Hall. Once on the erg, a twenty minute-plus effort stands between the Mids and the finish line, as the men pull a 6k piece and the women go for 5k. Starting in waves of twelve—with 4 heavyweights, 4 lightweights, and 4 women on each flight—the competitors are racing both the overall clock and the Mids in their group.

When the dust settled this year, three new champions had emerged, including a Plebe on the women's side, with Ashlyn Dawson '20 taking top honors for NWC. Heavyweight Firstie Sawyer Rogers '17 moved up from being a class winner last year to posting the fastest time of the day and winning overall, while Ben Skinner '19 finished an impressive 3rd overall to win **Team Updates Cont'd on Page 6...** Fourth Annual Navy Crew Alumni Reunion &

Spring Kickoff Banquet

Join our Special Guest Speaker

<u>VADM Robert S. Harward '79, USN ret.</u> U.S. Navy SEAL Former Deputy Commander U.S. Central Command Former Commander of Combined Joint Interagency Task Force Former Deputy Commander of U.S. Joints Forces Command

in welcoming our First Class Heavyweight, Lightweight, and Women Rowers into the ranks of Alumni.



Saturday, March 4, 2017 VADM William Lawrence Banquet Facility Navy Marine Corps Memorial Stadium 6:00 PM Cocktails, 7:00 PM Dinner

The Older we get, the Faster we were! Rejoin your teammates, other alumni and parents in celebrating our First Class Midshipmen as they start their final Championship Season on the Severn. All family and friends are welcome! Hear from our coaches, team captains and our special guest speaker, VADM Harward.

Click Here for Registration and Payment Link

Questions? Please contact Coach Rob Friedrich (friedric@usna.edu) or Kit Vallhonrat '93 (vallhonr@gmail.com)

2017 Navy Crew Captain's Outlook



HWT Captain: Scott Gibson Service Selection: Surface Warfare Officer Major: Quantitative Economics Hometown: Vienna, VA

Did you row in high school? Yes, at Thomas Jefferson High School

What are your team expectations for the Spring season? I think that the team has come back with a lot of great energy and momentum from winter break. Hopefully the warm weather persists and we can fitter on the erg while getting water time leading up to spring break to help us compete and win some early season races we have not been able to win for the past couple seasons. Hopefully, a strong performance over the whole season will give the team momentum for a strong finish at the Sprints and IRA.



Women's Captain: Madison Vachris Service Selection: SWO Nuclear Major: Operations Research with a Minor in Chinese Hometown: Southborough, MA

Did you row in high school? Yes, at St. Mark's School in Massachusetts

What are your team expectations for the Spring season? I expect the team to maintain the high standards we set for ourselves at practice, in the classroom, and in the Hall. In order to accomplish all of our goals, we need to work hard at practice every day by pushing ourselves as well as our teammates around us to become faster, better and stronger.



LWT Captain: Matthew Walsh Service Selection: Submarines Major: Mechanical Engineering Hometown: Southborough, MA

Did you row in high school? Yes, at St. John's HS in Shrewsbury, MA

What are your team expectations

for the spring season? As is the case every year, the 2017 N150 squad is looking to continue adding cups to the trophy case and defending the cups won last Spring. After placing all boats in their respective grand finals at the 2016 Eastern Sprints, the team is hungry to start placing boats on the medal stand in Worcester come May.

What piece of Navy Rowing History motivates you and the rest of the team? Personally, what motivates me is looking back at the results that some of the teams in the early 2010s had at the IRA and Eastern Sprints. I believe that 2012 was the last year that every Navy Boat made the Grand Finals at the Eastern Sprints. Additionally, the second boat won a Bronze medal at Sprints in 2014 and many members of the team knew guys who rowed in that boat and can relate to them.

What are the expectations for the plebe class and their role for the future of your team? This year's plebe class has a lot of depth as well as top end speed. I think the combination of winter training with the varsity squad as well as getting more comfortable with the routine of the academy in their second semester will see more plebes competing for seats in the top boats than any previous class.

What piece of Navy Rowing History motivates you and the rest of the team? Our recent success as a team in winning the Patriot League Championship the past two years in a row and placing 19th as a team at NCAAs in Sacramento, California last year are extremely motivating to us as team. However, remembering Navy rowers who have come before us and the legacy that they have left for us to try to build off of helps us get through tough practices.

What are the expectations for the plebe class and their role for the future of your team? Class of 2020 is expected to work hard in both Hubbard Hall and Bancroft Hall. We as upperclassmen on the team hope to teach the plebes to appreciate hard work, uphold the standard, and build upon the reputation that we have strived to maintain as a team.

What piece of Navy Rowing History motivates you and the rest of the team? The team is inspired by the successes of past Navy Lightweight teams throughout our history and the alumni that keep coming back to share their stories. In particular, the team draws inspiration from the 2004 IRA Champions, the back-to-back 2006 and 2007 Jope Cup Champions, and most recently, the success of LT Ed King '11 at the Rio Olympics in the light 4-.

What are the expectations for the plebe class and their role for the future of your team? With the full integration of the Plebes over the winter training period, the Class of 2020 is expected to make an impact top to bottom and push the entire squad a to a new level of competition. Although a large percentage of the 2016 team is returning, the Plebes will undoubtedly be key contributors to our 2017 campaign.

Navy History: CAPT Taeusch's Lost Letter

In November, 1949, I had command of the submarine BLENNY when we put into Seattle, Washington, during a West Coast fleet problem. For four years I had been on the Naval Academy crew squad in the late 1930's, when the University of Washington had dominated the crew scene, except for Navýs great victory at Poughkeepsie in 1938. I wanted to see the spawning ground for this rowing power.

On a bleak, gray, rainy Sunday afternoon I found myself at the apparently deserted Washington boathouse. Peering through a few windows, I saw a light and some movement in the interior of the building. Trying a few doors, I found one that was unlocked. Inside was a distinguished looking gentleman working on the framework of an eight-oar racing shell. I introduced myself and discovered that I was talking with the legendary George Pocock. British oarsman and builder of the vast majority of the shells and oars in use at that time by all of the U.S. rowing colleges. He was the ultimate authority on shells.

It was a most pleasant and informative afternoon, while Mr. Pocock worked on the construction of a shell that had been ordered by the immortal Buck Walsh, the Navy crew coach. Mr. Pocock was building the shell in accordance with instructions from Buck. "I think it is too big," said Mr. Pocock, "but that is the way he wants it, and that is the way I'm building it."

Then in the spring of 1950 I had my orders to the Naval Academy. I reported in during the summer, went to see Buck Walsh, and discovered that he was dying of osteomyelitis. He died that fall and was buried in the Naval Academy cemetery in a plot overlooking the route from College Creek that the Navy shells take from the boathouse to the Severn.

I went to the boat house and met Rusty Callow, the "Dean of American Rowing Coaches." who had inherited Buck's throne. Rusty was great, generous, open hearted personality, a real gentleman of the old school, and an inspiration to all who knew him. I offered my assistance, and Rusty asked me to be the Plebe crew coach. I gulped and accepted. This was in addition to my primary duty in the Executive Department.

I was blessed with more than fifty Plebe candidates, most of them big, powerful, and eager. Six crews! Interested in the shell I saw being constructed the previous winter, I asked Billy Wiedefeld, the rigger in the boathouse, about it. Billy pointed it out in the racks and said the Varsity had bad luck with it that spring and did not like it. It looked great to me, and I asked Rusty Callow if I could have it for the Plebes. He agreed.

Thanks to this wealth of material the Plebe crew had a semi successful season. We lost to Princeton by a nose in the first race, but won all the rest up to the Intercollegiate Rowing Association regatta. Midway through the season we could beat the Varsity at any distance from a racing start to a three mile time trial. The Varsity IRA distance had changed after WWII from four miles to three. The Plebes won the Eastern Sprints, the best of the Eastern crews, trouncing Princeton en noute. Then the IRA regatta, the climax of the rowing season. Traditionally they were held at Poughkeepsie, but due to complaints of currents, nough water, and unfair advantages in the different lanes the regatta was changed to the Ohio River at Marietta in 1950. The Army Corps of Engineers claimed they could control the Ohio River at that spot to "pool" conditions. The 1950 races at Marietta were held in an uncontrollable flood! It was a disaster.

We went to Marietta and the Plebes drew the outside lane next to the West Virginia shore. Heavy torrential downpours came, flooding the Ohio River at that point beyond the Army Engineers' control. The evening before the regatta I went out in a boat to look over the course. A tremendous, swirling current! I crossed the river dropping markers to see where the current was greatest – relatively quiet along the banks, but much stronger in the center. And the races were downstream. That night I asked Tip Goes, the referee, if it was legal to cross lanes to get in the middle of the river to utilize the current. He told me it was O.K. if we did not interfere with any other crew. Tip was a former Syracuse Cox under coach Jim Ten Eyck and donor of the Goes Trophy Cup for the winner of the Navy, Cornell, Syracuse regatta.

On race day the conditions were worse, if that was possible. I told the Plebes to concentrate on the start and get out in the middle of the river. Coming to the starting line, the Plebes collided with our starting stake boat, their shell filled with water and sank. There were other collisions with river debris, and Tip postponed the freshmen race to after the Junior Varsity race so the damaged freshmen could use N shells. The N race started, and the Navy boat came in second best with a log and sank. The freshmen race was then postponed to after the Varsity race so the Plebes could use the Varsity shell. During that race the

Varsity lost an argument with a log and sank, and there was no shell for the Plebes! A newspaper the next day said it was the "worst Navy disaster since Pearl Harbor."

We commandeered an old shell in the Marietta boathouse, completely unadjusted and rowed out to the starting line. En route, a power boat with a huge wash swamped us! The Plebes bailed with their hands and jerseys, made the starting line at dusk, and Tip said we could not delay any longer. It was a heartbreaking, uphill struggle, like running Secretariat in the Kentucky Derby with a broken leg. We could not get into the good current with a strange boat half full of water. In spite of all these handicaps we finished third. The MIT freshmen, whom we had beaten handily earlier in the season, won. My heart bled for the Plebes who had rowed their hearts out

But later they went on to much greater glory. They formed the backbone of the Navy crew that won the Olympic world championship in [Helsinki] Finland the next year and were undefeated for three glorious years under the great Rusty Callow.

This was the end of the IRA regatta at Marietta. The next year the races were held on Lake Onondaga at Syracuse, New York, where the waters were more manageable. The regatta is still held there with the distances all lowered to two thousand meters, the Olympic distance, instead of three miles for the Varsity and two miles for the JV and freshmen. The poor old shattered Plebe shell was sold or given to Dartmouth, then just starting its rowing program. I heard later that in the winter of 1952, it was stored in a shed which collapsed in a heavy, wet snowstorm, wrecking it beyond repair. May its star crossed remains rest in peace.



Commemorative Locker Program Update

The Hubbard Hall commemorative locker program is off to a great start, with 14 lockers already purchased (\$35,000) and several more pending, according to Rusty Yeiser '74 from the USNA Foundation.

Dirk Mosis '73, had the honor of purchasing the first locker (pictured on the right) and his locker plate is now installed in the men's locker room on locker #73 for his class year. Plebe Rower Andrew Knoll '20 is the proud athlete housed in the Dirk Mosis Locker for the 2016-17 season.

For those just learning about the program, here is the information provided in the last newsletter:

Given the rich history of Navy Crew that

ers and other alumni, family, and friends of Navy Crew to both honor past glory and provide for the success of future midshipman crews. The Navy Crew Excellence Fund provides critical private support for capital and supplemental program support for all three Navy crew programs: heavyweights, lightweights, and women. With a \$2,500 charitable contribution, you may customize a tribute to the people, history, and traditions that will continue to inspire midshipmen who pull an oar for

Navy.

Your personalized plate will be affixed to the front of a locker in the men's or women's locker room on the second deck of the

of excellence they have inherited. Your gift will also afford you recognition in the Naval Academy Foundation's donor recognition society, the President's Circle.

For additional information on the Navy Crew Commemorative Locker program, see the on-line Locker Program Brochure, or contact:

Rusty Yeiser '74 U.S. Naval Academy Foundation 410.295.4174 / rusty.yeiser@usna.com

73

Dirk P. D. Mosis III



Team Updates Cont'd...

the Lightweight Men's title. Of the top 10 times, five came from the LWT side of the boathouse and the fastest times continued to drop, with 25 athletes breaking the 52 minute mark this year, twelve more than in the 2015 edition.

The individual class winners this year for the Women were Heidi Zisselman '17, Emily Cecchini '18, Mady Malczynski '19, and Ashlyn Dawson '20. On the Lightweight team, Ian Best '17 won the Firstie mug, with Hank Forsythe '18, Ben Skinner '19, and Tyler Schatz '20 winning each class. For the Heavies, Sawyer Rogers '17, Charlie Linder '18, Aaron Hanko '19, and Andrew Knoll '20 were the class winners. New this year was the coxswains' event, where Nick Street '18 and Lauren Schrock '18 led the way to win the male and female coxswain races, respectively.

Finally, the fastest class—as determined by the average of the top five times from each team in each class—was the Second Class (the 2018s), but the current Youngster class put just as many folks in the top 20 as the 2/C did. Youngsters also claimed 2nd and 3rd overall, promising some more great competition next year when Triathlon time rolls around again for the men and women of Hubbard Hall.

Heavyweight Team Update

After a solid fall season, the Navy Heavyweights have been hard at work building their fitness and strength. Along with the strong leadership from the 1/C midshipmen on the team, there is recognizable "youth movement" on the squad, as described by Colonel Steve Liszewski '90 at one of the team's recent erg practices. The Commandant stopped by after the first 2k Erg Test of the season to find out the results and help pump up the team. The erg test results showed the strongest start of any plebe class during the 2k era.

"We are very excited about our strong plebe class," explained Coach Rob Friedrich. "Add a youngster class, who were IRA bronze medalists in the Freshmen event, and the great work ethic and leadership from the 1/C and 2C, and you have a very promising future for our program."

A few notable alumni are still well connected to the team and their visits have helped inspire the athletes to new heights. Gordon Schmidt '03 (SEAL) is a regular at the boathouse and continues to motivate the team on a regular basis. RADM Pat Piercey '85 stopped by to speak to the team while he was on campus for Ship Selection night. As a three-time IRA winner, Piercey spoke about how rowing helped mold him into the officer he is today, describing how he went from a plebe walk-on in the Freshmen 4+ to the Varsity boat that won the gold medal in 1984.

Recent graduate, Tim Tracey '16, inspires the team from overseas at Cambridge University, where he is earning a masters degree in Engineering and training for the Oxford/Cambridge Boat Race. As of January,

Tracey is rowing in Cambridge's top boat and is one of the better ergs on their team. Navy will be eagerly anticipating the naming date of the 2017 Boat Race.

The Navy Heavyweights will be on the road all spring, without any home races. However, they are excited to take on the league and improve on their speed every week leading up to the Eastern Sprints and IRA Championship.

Lightweight Team Update

Within the Lightweight boat bay at Hubbard Hall, there is a discernable "buzz" about the opportunities that the upcoming 2017 spring season holds. Despite solid results in the fall of 2016, the coaches and Lightweight midshipmen alike recognized that this winter season would be supremely important for addressing fitness/technical issues from the fall that will be key to a successful spring racing season. It continues to be the goal of the entire N150 Program to have a strong cup racing season that leads to a powerful finish at the EARC Sprints, and ultimately a return trip to the IRA National Championship, which will be in Sacramento, California this year. Winter is when those spring victories are won, and there is no doubt the Navy Lights understand that investment.

The Lightweight oarsmen came back to Hubbard in January 2017 ready to train to win, and have begun to set new PR's and high standards for their racing. Led by 1/C Captain Matt Walsh, the team also has the added benefit of strong 1/C leadership, to include 1/C William Herbert, who is currently serving as 2nd Battalion Command-



er for the spring 2017 semester. The Plebes also returned to campus after their first extended break since I-Day primed to make an impact on the top boats in the program.

Following tradition, the Navy Lightweights will officially kick-off their season with Spring Break training in Oak Ridge, TN. Hosted by our outstanding sponsors in Oak Ridge, the team will look to solidify line-ups and refine their race-readiness. Added to the Spring Break schedule this year will be a scrimmage against UVA to shake off any lingering rust before the Murtaugh Cup against Princeton on Carnegie Lake, Saturday, March 26th.

The Lights are excited about both the home and away racing schedule this year. That schedule is included in this edition of the Navy Crew Newsletter. The home highlight looks to be our racing against current national champions Columbia on Saturday, April 8th, where the newest Navy Lightweight 8+ will be christened following the racing. This 8+ will be named in honor of an outstanding former Plebe and Varsity Lightweight Coach, Robert "Bob" Kasper (1977 through 1980). The N150's also host Penn at home at the end of April. The road highlights look to be the annual Haines Trophy versus Harvard on Saturday, April 22nd in Boston, as well as the Johnson Cup versus Yale on April 1st at Carnegie Lake in Princeton.

As is always the case, the coaching staff and athletes welcome as many former Navy Lights and supporters to turn-out for our races as possible. Your passion and ongoing enthusiasm for your former program is appreciated and the current team

Team Updates Cont'd on next page...

Team Updates Cont'd...

looks forward to seeing you this spring. Go Navy!

Women's Team Update

The Navy Women headed across the world after fall finals. Armed with the desire to improve as individuals and as a team, they knew that they needed to put in the time and effort now, especially given the racing slate looming in the spring. After continuing to hone their rowing style in the fall, the Mids were able to shift the majority of their focus on simply getting fitter and stronger.

In the short time back after their break, the team has already shown a drive and toughness in their training. The coaches have hit them with some workouts that have not only challenged them physically but mentally and emotionally as well. Their goals are lofty, but once again the women are going after another Patriot League Championship and qualification to the NCAA Championship. If the team can secure another Patriot League Championship, it will be their third in a row and will provide them an automatic qualifier to the NCAA Championship. If the Mids are back at the NCAAs, they will look to improve on their 19th place team finish from last year.

The women will return this year to the same spring training site they went to last year in High Point, North Carolina from 11-18 of March. As they hoped, the coaches found a diamond in the rough and enjoyed great weather, great water and amazing hospitality from the High Point Rowing Club. Racing once again will start up as the Mids travel up to Cherry Hill, New Jersey on back-to-back weekends 25 March and 1 April. The first weekend will feature local schools St. Joes, Temple, Drexel, George Washington and others while the second weekend will pit the Mids against Ivy League schools Penn, Dartmouth and Cornell as well as Syracuse, Northeastern, BU and Minnesota. It will be a challenging spring that will continue to ramp up with each race, especially as the team looks ahead to the Clemson Invite in late April.

2017 Navy Crew Service Selection

Heavyweight Crew

Ryan Adair Julia Foust Scott Gibson Kevin Leyland Michael Pentaleri Terry Renfro-Pihut Sawyer Rogers Harrison Samario Jonathan Wabeke Dan Weathers Navy Pilot Restricted Line Surface Warfare SEALs Navy Pilot Navy Pilot SEALs Surface Warfare Submarines SWO - Nuclear

Women's Crew

Julia ArthurMOlivia CzerewkoNAria DangMAlyssa DilldineSuKelsey HastingsMMadison VachrisSuHeidi ZisselmanSu

Marine Aviation Naval Aviation Marine Ground Surface Warfare Marine Ground SWO - Nuclear Surface Warface

Lightweight Crew

Grace Albertson Ian Best Mitchell Bond Bryan Colasacco Joseph Ellis William Herbert Colby Ko Patrick Leech Anlon McGuigan Brant McGuigan Brent Niewoehner Matthew Walsh Sean Williamson Robert Woods Joseph Yates Surface Warfare Submarines Marine Ground Marine Ground Surface Warfare Submarines Submarines SEALs Marine Ground Marine Ground Submarines Navy Pilot Navy Pilot Marine Ground

Navy Crew Spring Racing Schedules

April 1 April 7-8 April 15 April 22 April 30 May 14 June 2-4

March 25 April 1-2 April 7-8 April 22-23 April 29 May 12 May 26-28

March 25 April 1 April 8 April 15 April 22 April 29 May 14 June 2-4

Heavyweight Schedule

Princeton (Navy/Princeton and Smith Trophies) George Washington Invitational Syracuse/Cornell (Goes and Stagg Trophies) Harvard/Penn (Adams and Clothier Trophies) Columbia/George Washington/Hobart EARC Sprints IRA National Championships

Women's Schedule

Murphy Cup Regatta Doc Hosea Invitational George Washington Invitational Clemson Invitational Temple Patriot League Championships NCAA Championship

Lightweight Schedule

Princeton (Murtaugh Cup) Yale (Johnson Cup) Columbia (WIT Cup) Georgetown (Forster Cup) Harvard (Haines Trophy) Penn (Callow Cup) EARC Sprints IRA National Championships Princeton, NJ Washington DC Ithaca, NY Philadelphia, PA Mercer County, NJ Worcester, MA Sacramento, CA

Camden, NJ Camden, NJ Washington DC Clemson, SC Philadelphia, PA Camden, NJ West Windsor, NJ

Princeton, NJ Princeton, NJ Annapolis, MD Washington DC Cambridge, MA Annapolis, MD Worcester, MA Sacramento, CA

Navy Rowing Camps

Offering residential camps in June at the historic United States Naval Academy. Campers will be thoroughly schooled in all aspects of rowing and coxing by experienced and talented coaches from across the country.

Please visit our websites for detailed information

Girls Crew Camp www.navycamps.co navycamps@gmail.com Boys Crew Camp www.navycrewcamp.org friedric@usna.edu