

The Finish Line

Fall/Winter 2012



1974 V8

The Finish Line takes a trip back in time to revisit one of UCI's historic crews that graced the waterways of Newport and joined the national spotlight
p. 5

A tradition of excellence

UC Irvine's rowing team celebrates a rich history of powerhouse crews. The legacy lives on today and is passed on to future generations of oarsmen and women.

Men's Varsity Coach's Message Duvall Hecht

The 2012 – 2013 varsity men's crew started fall workouts a week before school opened, and has been at it six days a week ever since. We began with 20 veteran varsity oarsmen and a strong mix of novices from Ben Hise's program last year.

Ben's enthusiasm, hard work and inspirational leadership are a major factor in turning our program around. He has the admiration and dedication of three novice boats, the same number as last year, and is forever upbeat and positive about our potential. When oarsmen row for Ben, he instills in them a vision of what their future can be. I regard it as a sacred trust to give Ben and the oarsmen he has sent to varsity everything I have to make them successful.

For the first few weeks, operations at the boathouse resembled Grand Central Station at peak commuting hour. We had a superabundance of novice men and women,

together with 20 returning varsity women, capably directed by their energetic young coach, Danny Harris. (Mike Long is on leave to spend time with Marissa, who is scheduled for an important surgery in the near future.) However, we have worked out very satisfactory crowd control arrangements, and most mornings launch and recover nine eights plus a small flotilla of fours and pairs.

Varsity men now arrive at 5 AM and leave the dock 10 minutes later. We try to be efficient in everything we do and maximize water time for mileage and technical improvement. It's a challenge when there is no light, but having white blades really helps! In this issue of our newsletter, you will see pictures of the crew at work, and more are available at our website.

We have participated in three fall regattas – Head of the American, NARF, and Head of the Harbor – with the Newport 3K scheduled for December 1. Results have been mixed, no one



Laboratory conditions

Being on the water at 5:15 AM provides a glass-like quality to the water, allowing the oarsmen to focus on mastering the stroke.

[Continued page 2]

We try to be efficient in everything we do and maximize water time for mileage and technical improvement.

is satisfied with them, and we will be focusing the remainder of this fall and over winter break on improving our speed.

The last two years we have embarked on a major upgrade in our shells, sparked initially by a gift from the estate of Fred Schenck – a new Filippi eight. In quick order we purchased two more new Filippis, one the gift of Budge Collins, the other the gift of four of the original founders of UCI crew. And two months ago we received another beautiful Filippi which is going to be christened by Henry Nicholas and will carry his name into battle!

Every morning I get up at 3:45 and open the boathouse an hour later. The men are all present by 5 o'clock, ready to row. Our first order of business is to get launched and out on the water, where we can log the mileage we need to be competitive. I have every confidence that the exceptional group of young men powering our two varsity boats will meet our mutual goals this year.

Thank you for your continued support.

Who are the Friends of UC Irvine Rowing?

As one of the vehicles for providing necessary financial assistance, the Friends of UC Irvine Rowing helps sustain the rowing program for future generations.

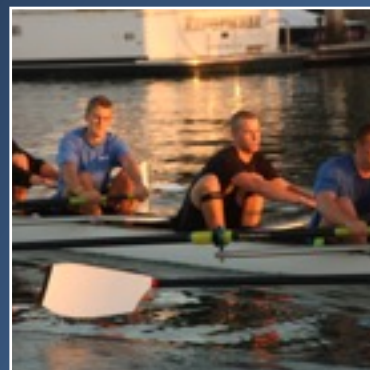
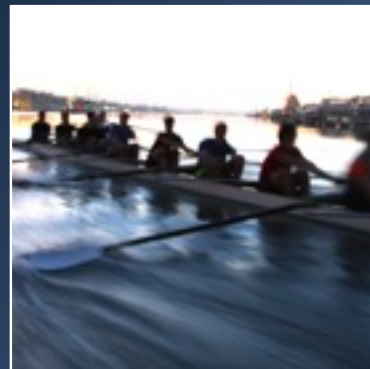
Under tighter fiscal circumstances, the past decade has seen a national trend of collegiate rowing programs moving from schools' athletic departments as an NCAA sanctioned sport to their club and recreation departments. With budget concerns at the University of California, UC Irvine's rowing program transitioned to this new model in 2009.

The rowing program has navigated the sea change with remarkable results. A strong performance in last year's season landed the men's varsity eight in the grand final at the American Collegiate Rowing Association National Championship. Less than two seconds separated the Irvine's eight from the medal podium. It's a noteworthy achievement when taken in light of the recent changes on Shellmaker Island. The accomplishment is a testament to the perseverance and class of the oarsmen, coaches, and staff. And it gives promise to the future performance of the program.

[See **Friends**, page 7]



poetry in motion



Legends of the Fall

The crisp November morning ushers in a patchwork of memories of being one with the water - condensation from my breath, lullabies of swirling waters, and a liquid golden sun glistening on the surface of the harbor.

*Every stroke becomes
one flawless unit*



Triumphing over adversity

At 18, Danny Harris blew out his knee from a soccer related injury and was told that his athletic career was over. Several years later, after intense rehab and physical training, Danny found himself stroking the Varsity "A" boats at OCC and LB State. As new head coach for the varsity women, that same perseverance and vision will serve Irvine's women well for many years to come.



A new head coach brings a fresh vision to women's rowing, building on the solid foundation diligently laid by former coach Mike Long.

Women's Varsity Coach's Message Danny Harris

As the new varsity head coach for the women's elite rowing program at UCI, I am proud to say that we have 20 Varsity members on our squad and have recruited over 50 novice athletes this fall. Mike Long has been an influential part of UCI's elite women's rowing program for the past 20 years. His devotion to beginning and fostering the program, to keeping it alive for the past three years shows his passion not only to the sport of rowing, but to that of UCI. He has stepped down to focus on his daughter and her health, but continues to mentor myself and the other coaches. He is also heading up a redshirt program for the women whose schedules don't workout this semester but continue to practice during offset hours from the rest of the team. If he feels they are up to speed and can meet the challenges of the next semester they will reenter the squad or be held for the next season. There is a strong focus between the staff and athletes to make UCI a woman's rowing thrive for future generations.

The varsity started out with five athletes over the summer programs and increased to 12 by the time school started. As word spread about the impact the varsity women were having within the program others rejoined. Success is contagious.

UCI women's
rowing will thrive
for future
generations

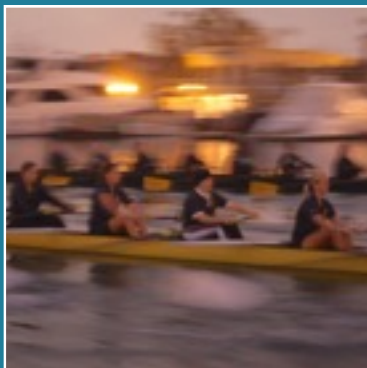
Leading our novice squad is Laurel Dinwiddie. She is a graduate student who has been mentored under Mike Long, last year's Head coach. Joining her is our new assistant novice coach Jen Lombardo. With their strong leadership and academic-athletic drive our novice team is coming into their own. They filled a void in the novice program; motivated and enthusiastic leaders with strong character. Even with two eights and two fours out on the water, the novice team is still short equipment as the remaining athletes are left on land. We hope to remedy this situation in the near future as our women's program continues to grow and strengthen.

This summer the team was given the green light to purchase a new women's varsity eight. With 90% of the proceeds banked, and expectation of fundraising goals, we purchased a new Hammerhead Hudson eight. The shell stands out amongst all our boats at the boathouse. It is the UCI colors of a yellow shell, and navy bow and stern. The deck is black and the shoes are fire red. We haven't a set name for the boat yet, but it has been nicknamed Spartacus instead of the yellow boat.

Our team goal is to have the boat slice through the water with every stroke with rowers transferring their muscle into motion. Every stroke becomes one flawless unit, achieving a power that transcends individual efforts and lifts the boat across the water to victory (Ernestine Bayer).

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Mornings on the water



A small flotilla

The women's varsity program shows a renewed strength by fielding twenty varsity members this year. Alumni rowers know the impact that a second eight has on the overall strength of a competitive program. Add to this the acquisition of a new Hudson racing shell and the vision of an experienced coach - Irvine's women have a bright outlook.

Nobody tries harder than you! We will push further down the line than anyone! No one can stop us!

We have made great strides from our first race of mixed eights down at the San Diego Row for the Cure. We were in the middle of the pack in the eights and took second in the four 3 seconds behind USD, a D1 school that is ranked 17th in the nation. We then loaded our eights for NARF and not only made up the 12 seconds that OCC had previously put on us, but added another 24 finishing just behind UCSB, our only division competition ahead of us.

Our novice women competed for the first time at NARF and met the challenges set forth by their coaches. For only rowing for an equivalent of two weeks, they performed with class and character. Most came off the water with positive attitudes and outlooks showing their parents and supporters the team and boathouse. We are developing a healthy camaraderie between programs and groups within to build a stronger, more viable UCI Rowing program.

The women's team had great success at the annual "Pancake Regatta" otherwise known as the Long Beach Fall Invitational Regatta. The team made great strides against CSULB, OCC, Chapman, and UCSB. Afterwards everyone was fed pancakes, eggs, sausages, and orange juice at the John Dunster/Pete Archer Rowing Center, home of CSULB.

We will be competing this weekend at the Coast Sprints in Newport Beach to finish out our fall season. We then prepare for finals, and then it's off to winter double day sessions. The team has high standards this season for the WV8, WV4, WVLt4, and novice racing shells. At UCI, our women's rowing program is reminded daily that: "Nobody tries harder than you! We will push further down the line than anyone! No one can stop us!" Go Eaters!



2013 Spring Race Schedule

We hope to see you at one of our races in the spring. The details are still being finalized on opening day. Below is the preliminary schedule. For updates visit our website at ucirowing.org.

-  **Saturday, March 2** - Opening Day
Location To Be Announced
-  **Saturday, March 23** - Berg Cup - Women
Newport Harbor
-  **Saturday March 16** - Parker Cup - Men
Mission Bay, San Diego
-  **Sunday, March 24** - Newport Regatta
Newport Harbor
-  **Sat & Sun, April 6-7** - SD Crew Classic
Mission Bay, San Diego
-  **Saturday, April 13** - Collins Cup - Women
Newport Harbor
-  **Sat & Sun, April 27-28** - Western Inter-Collegiate Rowing Association
Championship Regatta (WIRA)
Lake Natoma, Sacramento
-  **Sat & Sun, May 25-26** - American Collegiate
Rowing Association National Championship
Lake Lanier, Gainesville, Georgia

2013 Homecoming Event - April 20th

This upcoming year we will host a homecoming event to coincide with a bye week on our races. Details are being finalized. We want to plant the seed and hope that you will join us. Please mark your calendar for **Saturday, April 20th**.

Homecoming events are a great way to reconnect with friends and the rowing community at UCI. More details to follow at ucirowing.org. We look forward to seeing you there!

Band of Brothers

In 1974, Irvine's eight was recognized as one of the fastest boats in the nation and was awarded the Rusty Callow award. Bruce Ibbetson shares highlights from the storied crew.

Finish Line: Tell us about the Rusty Callow award.

Ibbetson: They don't give it every year. Rusty Callow was the famous coach from Washington, many years ago. US Rowing gives the award whenever they decide there is a worthy boat. It's not necessarily the fastest boat in the country. It's the one boat in the United States that made the most improvement and showed the most character to race. And we won the award in 1974 because we came from nowhere. We had been rowing as freshmen and

behind in fourth. Yes, we had a little drop off my senior year, but still we had good races.

Finish Line: Can you tell us about that junior year race when you beat Cal and narrowly lost to Washington?

Ibbetson: It's maybe even more important to know what happened in the prelude coming up to that race, in the heat. We raced in the same heat that Cal was in, and there was a slight head wind. Our normal race beat was a 36. That was our target rate. We blew off a 37-38 and by the 500 meter mark we had open water on Cal. By 1000 meters we had about half a length of open water on them. We were cruising at a 37 into a light head wind. My mistake. I was stroking. We were going too hard too early. Cal started chopping back at us in the third 500 and were about a half length down at the start of the last 500. They nipped us. We were trying to hang on and we lost to them in the heat by, I don't remember by how much, but it was painful because they were moving through us. And we couldn't stop it. And we finished second in the heats so we had to race in the reps that night where we cruised. We easily qualified for the finals.



sophomores and went to the Canadian Henley and did well and came back and kept training all that year and raced. We were probably in the top 3 in 1974. Washington had beat us, Harvard was fast that year. But we were probably in the top 3 fastest boats in the country. All out of nowhere. So they awarded us the trophy. It was sort of overcoming adversity and really rowing well on the national scene.

Finish Line: Would you consider that your top year?

Ibbetson: Yes. In terms of competitively, that was the racing season, the spring of my junior year. We rowed through Cal in the Final and narrowly lost to Washington. We were in the process of winning when we ran out of space. Literally, we were moving through Washington. So competitively yes. The next year we fell off a little because we lost a bunch of guys out of the boat. Four in fact, left that boat. So we had four guys and we needed four more guys coming up from the program. We had Brad Lewis. We had several others, but it wasn't quite as fast. We finished fourth in the Western Sprints. Back then the Western Sprints included everybody. There wasn't a Pac 10 or Pac 12 championship. It included every team west of the Rockies that wanted to race. My senior year Washington won, Cal was second, Oregon State was third, and we were right

The Finish Line: So you actually had to race again the same day to qualify for the finals the next day?

Ibbetson: Yes. Back then it was the winner from each heat went to the finals and then the winner of the reps.

The Finish Line: So tell us about the actual final.

Ibbetson: In the final the next morning there were perfect conditions. No head wind and a flat course. The schools racing were Washington, Cal, us, Oregon State, UCLA, and a sixth boat I can't remember. Cal and Washington were in lanes one and two, paired up next to each other because they had won their heats. We had won a rep and we were on the other side of the course in lane 6. We blew off with everybody and Washington and Cal were duking it out early. We were right on our race beat. We didn't row too high, we hit right in on a 36 and raced. They were ahead of us by about a length, paired up racing side-by-side. This stayed like this all the way to the 1000m mark. They had a little bit of open water on us but we were racing within ourselves, doing our race. And then we started pushing in the last half of the race. In the third 500 we took a little move and gained back some ground. And we just kept moving. Cal started falling off.

[Continued page 6]

The endless Summer



Top: George Stone (Class of '73) coaching Bruce Ibbetson and Rick Petersen in 2+. Coxswain visible in bow.

Middle: The Canadian Henley, summer 1973. UCI fields 3 of the 6 boats in the pairs final.

Bottom: Bruce Ibbetson at the Henley

Left: Head of the Harbor, Fall 1973. Most of the eight from the summer returned in next year.

Unless you go out and test yourself and race, you won't really learn. Valuable lessons are right there.

Both boats, Cal and Washington started slowing down. And we were moving through them. We caught Cal and rowed right on through right about the beginning of the last 500. And then we were moving right through Washington. But we literally ran out of space. If the race was about another 50 meters we probably would have had them. They had only about a seat and a half on us and we ran out of space. We were moving through them. So that was a really good race in the final which made everybody happy because we had faltered in the heat. Considering how we felt after the heat, with everyone coughing, depressed, it was brutal. But you learn something. I learned something. I was a junior. I learned a lot. And that's how you learn is race. You can practice, practice, practice and learn a lot while you're practicing and get in good shape. But unless you go out and test yourself and race, you won't really learn. A lot of valuable lessons are right there in front of you when you go out and race, and you fail from time to time because you're done. You try things that didn't work and were painful. Other times things work out exactly as planned.

Finish Line: You mentioned racing at the Canadian Henley. Can you tell us more?

Ibbetson: That was the summer between my sophomore and junior year. We really came together as a boat that summer. We only took

eight guys, but we raced in everything. Our coach Bob Ernst had us entered in everything so we were racing two times or three times a day. We did great. We almost won the point trophy with eight guys. Three out of the six boats in the pairs final were from Irvine. We had done a lot of rowing that summer. All in small boats, learning to row. And then later that Fall we all got back together at school and with the exception of one rower, had the same eight from that summer. There was Michael Sullivan, John Davis, Rick Petersen, John Sutton, myself at Four, Bill Butler at Three, Phil Pearson at Two, and David Graham in the bow. So that was the Varsity eight guys through a lot of the year.

This was the boat that narrowly lost to Washington. These were good guys. There were a lot of good rowers coming through the program from about '73-'76. Out of that four year period we produced two Olympians, myself and Brad Lewis. *[Bruce Ibbetson later stroked the 1980 & 1984 U.S. Olympic eight, capturing a silver medal in 1984. Brad Lewis later won a gold medal in the 1984 Olympics in the double sculls event.]* A few years later came Greg Springer and Curt Fleming. They were a couple of years after us. Year after year there were some good rowers coming through the program.

Finish Line: Tell us about your coaches.

Ibbetson: Stu Gibson was my freshman coach. And Bob Ernst was the varsity coach. Ernst had been doing some assistant coaching under Duvall and took over the program and became



Top: Practice at the Henley, 1973

Middle: UCI Program on dock at Shellmaker Island.

Below: Stern to bow: Michael Sullivan, John Davis, Rick Petersen, John Sutton, Bruce Ibbetson, Bill Butler, Phil Pearson, and Doug Dovee. Dovee rowed for USC.



1973 Canadian Henley. Irvine's eight rowed in every event.

Friends

[From page 2]

Accomplishments aside, being removed from UC Irvine's athletic department created a whole new set of responsibilities for the team, primarily associated with financing of the activities of a rowing club. The added assignments dovetailed with the mission of the Friends of UC Irvine Rowing (FUCIR). Shifting this work over has helped the coaches focus on coaching and the athletes focus on rowing.

FUCIR is a charitable 501(c)(3) organization; a separate entity that partners with the rowing program. Its primary mission is to help sustain rowing at the university today and for future generations. The funds that the Friends donate serve as a supplement to the club team's budget. Oarsmen and women carry the lion's share of the finances; responsible for individual dues and fundraising goals. However, without FUCIR's assistance, rowing would probably not exist as it does today at the university.

The Friends of UCI Rowing receives donations from alumni and the community at large. The decisions on how to disperse these funds to the men's and women's teams are made by a board of directors. The members of the board consist of several of UCI's rowing alumni. To help preserve the legacy and vision of the rowing program, several generations of the team are represented on the board.

In the past two years the Friends of UCI Rowing secured funding for the purchase of four new eights for the men's and women's teams. These are significant acquisitions for the Friends and for the teams and will serve the young men and women well for many years to come. The early successes of FUCIR as a charitable organization give renewed hope to the rowing program's ongoing legacy. There is also a willingness in the growing alumni community to support the program that played a significant part in many young adult lives.

Like other collegiate teams, UCI's Rowing program may have hit some choppy waters when it was moved away from the school's athletic department. But as Irvine's past and present rowers have proven time and time again, greatness is accomplished when we work together under a common goal. The foundation

for the future success of the program has been laid. Friends of UC Irvine rowing is an ongoing partner with the crew and equally a part of its success.

Ibbetson

[From page 6]

head coach. Ernst coached until my junior year and left to go to Washington my senior year. We had been doing so well, better and better and narrowly lost to Washington with a program that was way smaller than Washington. We were doing good work. And they needed a Freshman coach, so Dick Erickson, the head Washington coach hired Ernie to be the Freshman coach. Under Ernst, the program was run in a very organized and professional way. Ernst was a stickler for being organized and working hard. You didn't waste time. He was an Air Force search and rescue team member. He had a military background and thought organized. He got good at coaching by doing it. He learned on the job. He was a student. He would go anywhere and read anything to learn about rowing. He was a good coach. It was wonderful to have the energy and have good people like that. That's why we got good athletes that saw the program and say "I want to be part of that." They want to be part of something that's organized and going somewhere, and has a chance to be successful. There's always levels of recreation, you can have clubs and recreation. But if you really want to get good, you have to put in the work and really cater to the head coach. Whatever that person wants to do, you have to buy into that and do it. It's not a democratic system to make fast boats. It's dictatorial. You have to listen to your dictator and go. But you have to have everyone buy into that program and do it. You don't get to vote. You just do the work. And if you don't like it then go find something else to do. Go join the chess club or go do something different. But don't be a rower if you don't want to work.

Finish Line: Who coached your senior year?

Ibbetson: John Davis had just graduated so he became our head coach. He was a guy that we had just rowed with, he rowed right behind me the year before and then the next year he's our coach. Be we already knew what to do. We knew how to train, what to do. He was organizing and running the program. And he liked coaching so it was good. That's how he

If you want to be a good program and race fast, there is only one way to do it. Put in the time and effort and learn. It does not happen overnight but you will get better and better and better.

got his start. He did coaching later at Stanford and Minnesota. He was a good guy to have available. Because back then they didn't pay and Bob Ernst made a small stipend. They didn't pay coaches. Coaches had to have jobs on the side. Bob Ernst was a lifeguard in the marine division for Newport Beach. He had been a lifeguard for several years. But he also did bartending. So he had three jobs. He did bartending at night on occasion. He worked for the marine safety as a lifeguard. And he coached UCI. You know you can't do that forever so that's why when Erickson called and said "we want you to be the Freshman coach," a full time coach with benefits and a salary, it was game over and he was gone.

Finish Line: Do you think that much has changed in the culture of rowing over the years?

Ibbetson: Probably not. There still is a lot of good rowing around the country. Programs have changed, there are a lot of haves and have not programs. Some are well funded with lots of legacy, good history, good coaching, and ability to recruit. Other programs struggle to put all those pieces together. But I think the culture of rowing is still the same. It's fully amateur.

If you want to be a good program and race fast, there is only one way to do it. Put in the time and effort and learn. It does not happen overnight but you will get better and better and better. And if you don't then you're destined to always be a mediocre or a recreation kind of group, if you don't band together and make that commitment. That's what Irvine had and has again from time to time. Irvine shows those flashes of yes, we're going to get this done.

An appeal for your financial support

Mike Del Castillo, Oarsman 1994-1997

Rowing at UC Irvine is made possible with the help and financial support of oarsmen and oarswomen like you. Contribute today.

As I look back on my life and think of the many experiences that 37 years have brought me, I am forever grateful for the four years I rowed for UC Irvine. It was an adventure that only the fraternity of rowers can identify themselves with - it brought challenges, triumphs, defeats, important lessons, hard work, celebrations, and life-long friendships.

I recently rode on the coach's launch with Duvall to watch a morning workout. Getting up at 4 AM is a challenge unto itself that left me wondering how I managed to do it day in day out for four years. However, seeing the full rhythm of the boathouse at 5 AM, with oarsmen and coxswains handling their morning tasks with a common sense of purpose, like a well oiled machine, began to remind me of the reasons why I got out of bed so early every morning.

The more things change, the more they stay the same

A lot happens in fifteen years. In the last decade and a half I launched my career, met my beautiful bride, and witnessed two wonderful boys born into this world. On that Tuesday morning in Newport Harbor I saw much newer equipment and new faces, but so much had remained the same. The fundamentals of the stroke, the "flip-catch," the idea of making sure to drop the oar into the water just shy of top-dead-center and not missing any water because inches of missed water in the stroke translated into boat lengths over a 2000 meter race course. Some days were better than others. The days that the boat leaned to starboard were frustrating and could affect my mood all day


long, but left me yearning to come back the next day and try to make it better. When the boat was good, everyone knew it. No one said a word. No one wanted to jinx it. The boat glided effortlessly from stroke to stroke and made us all want to come back for more.

It was all coming back. It never left. It never changed. The stroke and the desire to master its intricacies had remained the same. And here was the next generation of oarsman onto whom this legacy had been bestowed. It was their turn to carry the torch which has burned continuously from one generation into the next.

My turn to give back

I consider myself fortunate. I've worked hard and I have many blessings to be grateful for. However, to be honest I do feel some regret that I have not contributed more to the rowing program. I did once write a \$250 check to the program about a year or two after graduating, and I patted myself on the back. But now, so much time has gone by and I've simply forgotten how much the program did for me and impacted my life. It's now my turn to give back.

I've decided to set up a sustaining membership so that each month a small amount is withdrawn from my bank account and transferred to the Friends of UCI Rowing. It's a modest amount but I believe that if every alumnus were to take a similar step, that would make a real difference to the program.



And here was the next generation of oarsman onto whom this legacy had been bestowed.

Sustained memberships provide a consistent flow of revenue into the budget for the crew. That helps a lot more than we can imagine, especially for a team that operates on such a tight budget.

Sustaining the future

I do sincerely wish that the university could return the crew to its former status. However with the current state of affairs with the budget in Sacramento, I can understand why this may be a pipe-dream. However, I will do what I can and do what is under my own control, and not wait for some one else to step in. I know that my dollars will go a long way in sustaining the crew for future generations if combined with the support of many others. My hope is that you will join me and show your support. Set up a sustaining membership or make a one-time gift. Give what you can. Your donation will help preserve the legacy of rowing at UC Irvine today and for future generations of oarsmen and women.

Donating to the Friends of UCI Rowing

Set up a sustaining membership

It's easy to set up a sustaining membership. Simply visit our website at ucirowing.org and click on the Donate button.

..or make a one-time donation

It's just as easy. Visit ucirowing.org and click on the Donate button.

Membership Levels

- Novice \$10 Monthly
- Varsity \$25 Monthly
- Masters \$50 Monthly
- Elite \$100 Monthly
- Or make a one-time donation in any amount

FRIENDS OF UCI ROWING

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