

# The Finish Line



Spring/Summer 2014



**1995 V8**  
Looking back at a great race. 1995 San Diego Crew Classic.  
Page 5

## The conquest of Mission Bay

The Finish Line rewinds the clock back to 1995 to tell the story of eight who pulled off a strategic victory.

### Continuing the legacy of rowing at UC Irvine

Welcome to the Spring/Summer 2014 edition of the Finish Line. We hope you enjoy reading it as much as we like creating it. There has been a lot happening at the boathouse and around the crew since our last publishing in the fall. We had a big reunion down in San Diego Crew Classic. The oarsmen placed well at the two-day event with a fifth place finish (out of 21 boats). The reunion celebration is described on page 4. Our boats had a solid performance this year at WIRA with the Varsity eight finishing on the podium with a bronze medal. The second Varsity eight also finished with a bronze medal. Not a bad performance from our small but mighty program! Our two new coaches now have almost a complete season under their belts. You can read their interview on page 3.

Our foundation is also transitioning in big ways. Duvall Hecht has been the face of our program for many years since our inception in

1965. We all owe so much to Duvall for his commitment to the success of our program. As much as we would love for him to continue to with all of his contributions to the program, he recently announced to our board, coaches, and oarsmen that he is planning on retiring as Chief of Stewards for our foundation, the Friends of UC Irvine Rowing. In Duvall's own words, "Nothing is more certain than change, and it is a healthy organization that not only takes change in stride, but plans for and implements it. That earns a proactive label, one that accords with our temperament. Little was ever won by hanging back."

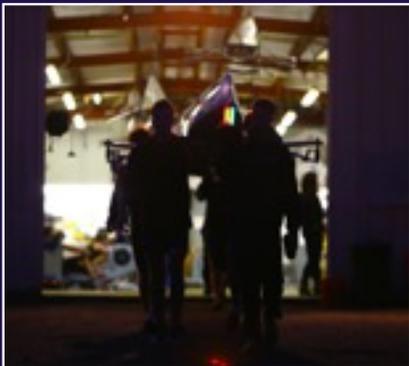
This transition is a healthy one. The foundation's board members share a common vision of the success of rowing at UC Irvine.

When the UC Irvine Athletic Department announced that Crew was no longer part of its program years ago, Duvall dropped everything to help ensure that the program would continue.

[Continued, page 2]



# *poetry in motion*



## **Moonlit Row**

Margaret Gregory

Through soft and dew-kissed, misty veil,  
With silent strokes, I swiftly sail.  
A glassy pool reflects my flight,  
The shining stars, and moon, so bright.  
The world is sleeping, but not I;  
One with water, I start to fly.  
None to stop me, I race with time;  
Internal bliss, a state sublime.

Each moment sacred in my shell.  
The moon shares secrets I'll never tell.  
But Dawn will rise, and I must go.  
She broke the spell, my moonlit row.

**...with almost 50 years of graduates from the program, the possibilities are endless! Rowing will continue to thrive at UCI!**

He helped to lay the foundation for the new model of success of the program as part of the UC Irvine Recreation Department.

Today there are many who are contributing in various ways behind the scenes to make that vision a reality. We have Duvall to thank for bringing us together to continue this legacy. None of this work would have happened without him.

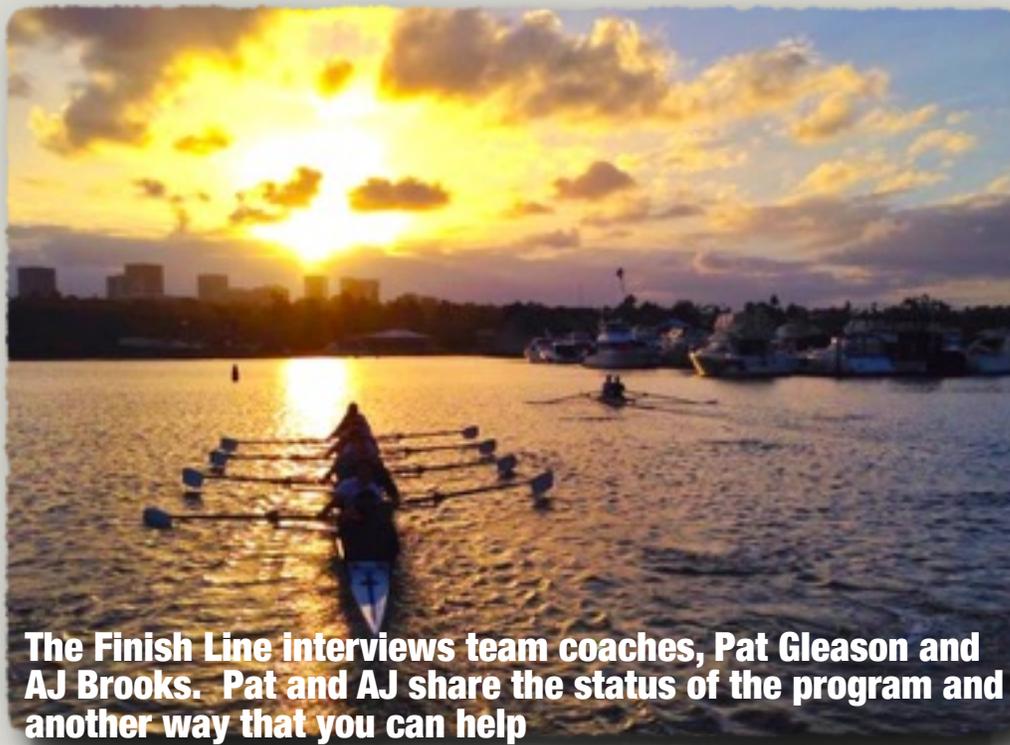
It's now our turn to carry that torch into the future. This work of funding the program is never easy. But when you have previous oarsmen, who all feel very passionate about rowing at UCI, and you put them together with almost 50 years of graduates from the program,

the possibilities are endless! Rowing will continue to thrive at UCI!

## **Friends of UC Irvine Rowing Board of Directors**

Nick Berkuta, Todd Canfield, Mike Del Castillo, David Heimerl, Theo Khatchaturian, and Michael Maxwell





## The Finish Line interviews team coaches, Pat Gleason and AJ Brooks. Pat and AJ share the status of the program and another way that you can help

### Coach's Interview

**Pat Gleason** (Top right)

**AJ Brooks** (Bottom right)

**Finish Line:** Can you give us an overall status of the program?

**Gleason:** The program is striving to continue the tradition it has always had. It's goal is to remain competitive and finish well. The program could become a top notch program but it needs the backing of a strong alumni base, from fundraising efforts and through volunteer efforts. Duvall has helped create a lot of that. We recognize that Duvall is retiring from the board, however his vision will carry on through our foundation.

**Brooks:** We've seen Duvall as the face of the program. He's been a mentor to us as coaches and a mentor to the Board of Directors. Hopefully more people will be able to contribute and keep the organization moving in the right direction.

**Gleason:** We have no excuses. We're fine with the facilities we have. Yeah it would be nicer if we had locker rooms and other amenities, but the boathouse houses the boats and we have good boats, we have great water, a dock to launch from, and good coaches launches. We have all the things we need. There are other things out there we'd like (fours and indoor rowers), these would be nice to have for the program. Over time, hopefully these items can come. We are a strong program. We have the depth of field with a very competitive Varsity. The goal of the coaches is to increase the depth so that we have a stronger JV and a stronger Novice program and also field even more boats.

**Brooks:** To have a really fast Varsity eight, you need a really fast second Varsity eight, and you need a very fast Novice eight. Intersquad competition is great for the program.

**Finish Line:** How has co-coaching worked out for you?

**Gleason:** It's been good. I don't think in coaching you're ever like-minded. Everyone's got their own way of doing things. You've got to succeed and fail on your own so can make adjustments along the way. As a coach you will create your own style. Maybe my style's too easy going and AJ's style is too tough. But somewhere along the way we learn from one another and adopt elements of each other's styles.

**Brooks:** I come from a different program with a different style of coaching. At Washington, we had an amazing pool of athletes with heavy recruiting. The coaches would train the athletes really hard and put them in a boat and win. Here it's different. We don't really get any high school recruits. It's all walk-on the first year. Watching Pat and the way he coaches, I've been taking little pointers here and there and listening to his advice. It's nice to

have another way of saying things as well. I could tell the guys "Hey sit up at the catch more." They don't respond right away. And then ask Pat to say it "Hey guys, sit up at the catch more." And then they respond [laughs]. I feel that we work together really well. No complaints.

**Gleason:** I've coached with other people and it's always about integrating your own style and hopefully it resonates with the athletes and they catch on.

**Brooks:** It's nice because I feel that the athletes really value and respect what we're bringing to the program equally. They'll listen to any kind of advice or any judgment call coming from either of us.

**Finish Line:** What kind of involvement are you looking for from alumni?

**Brooks:** Aside from financial support, one of the goals we were looking to set up in the alumni base is career support for graduating seniors.

**Gleason:** One way we are looking at that alumni can get involved is by coming during the early part of the school year and sharing the message of the impact of rowing on their own life. Maybe they are thought out messages where it's something about "this is where rowing enhances your career and life in general." This provides our team with great support for our Novice program, so that they can see early that rowing brings them into a support network and also makes a great impact on their life. Perhaps we have alumni come to our involvement day. We can put in a career path element.

**Brooks:** Let's say you were a freshman and you didn't want to join a fraternity (because a lot of guys join fraternities for career purposes). Then you show up at our meeting and you see all these alumni and you think to yourself "All these alumni can potentially give me a job. If I join crew and I am successful, here are these guys who have done a bunch of amazing things, and they're willing to help out."

**Gleason:** That's a great element to our program. We've got so many guys who have graduated, and I'm sure so many who are willing to help out.

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# Wish you were here!

San Diego Crew Classic and Reunion, April 2014

We had a wonderful time in San Diego celebrating another year as we celebrated the accomplishments and gave our support to the vision of rowing at UC Irvine. Friends and family of all ages, alumni oarsman dating back to the original founding crew (who only get better with age, like a fine wine), current oarsmen and their families, and all the generations in between joined together. That presence was felt at the race course where the San Diego sun and mild breezes ushered in the festivities and thrilling races that the Crew Classic is known for. Our men gave a solid performance landing themselves a 5<sup>th</sup> place finish out of 21 crews. We joined together at the Faculty Club on the campus of

Duval where he shared the story of the establishment of rowing at UC Irvine and what that legacy has meant to him. You'll want to read his speech from that dinner on page 6 of this publication. It's not to be missed.

In closing, if you weren't able to be there, you were missed. The conversations around the tables highlighted many of those missing from tables who had blistered their hands as they pulled their weight in a boat. There were smiles all around.

2015 is a special year for our university and crew. The year will mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of our program. We are sure to celebrate. We will be communicating the plans for that celebration soon. We hope that you will join us in commemorating our accomplishments and continue the crew's journey for the next 50 years and beyond.

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UC San Diego after Saturday's races for a reunion dinner. There, the likes of Bill Grant, Boris Buzan, and even Ali Bolorian, were seen reveling in the celebration of friendships, victories, losses, funny stories, and life lessons that four years of rowing offers to all. A little celebratory champagne never hurts in lubricating the conversations, especially coupled with a photo slideshow that shared the rich history of men who set foot every morning on Shellmaker Island since 1965. We got to hear the stories of current oarsmen who are the beneficiaries of the work that we do as a foundation. We heard from our two coaches Pat Gleason and AJ Brooks who lead these men and teach them the intrinsic values of hard work, teamwork, and belief in a common purpose. Our directors had a chance to share the work that the foundation has been working on including our financial support of the program and outreach efforts through our newly redesigned website [ucirowing.org](http://ucirowing.org) and newsletter, *The Finish Line*. Tying everything together was a closing message from

## We thank you!

*The Finish Line* would like to thank alum Gary Testa for his efforts in duplicating a similar event for the oarsmen at WIRA races in Sacramento. Thanks Gary for your contributions!

*The Finish Line* would like to thank alum Powell Thurston for his leadership efforts for our Regional Alumni Coordinators. Thanks Powell for your time and energy.

*The Finish Line* would like to thank Mary Ann Mahoney, for all her efforts in coordinating the events surrounding the Crew Classic. Mary Ann, we don't know how we would do anything without you!

And a big thank you to all who contribute financially or with their time. Thank you for supporting the vision of rowing at UC!

# The most memorable race of my career

The Finish Line interviews Nick Berkuta ('92-'96) as he retells the story of a race that landed Irvine a big win

**Finish Line:** Tell us about the race you remember the most in your career.

**Berkuta:** The most memorable race of my career was winning the California Cup at Crew Classic in 1995. But before I go into that I have to give some of the history of racing against UCSD. Our first race of the year was always against UCSD. It always was a back and forth location with us swapping race courses every other year. For some reason, that year we should have been going down to San Diego, but instead they came up to Newport. In the first race of the 1995 season, we got to about the last 250 meters and our oars collided with San Diego's. Their coxswain had steered their boat into our boat and our oars locked together. It caused them to stall. We won the race. Duvall, being the good sport that he is, said that it wasn't fair that a race was decided at home with two boats colliding. He said, "We are going to re-race this race." We re-raced the race and lost. [laughing] We ended up giving them our shirts after the second race.

We obviously weren't too thrilled about that. But in both those races we had seen a pattern develop in which prior to the 1000m mark they would take a power

10 and they would get a couple of seats ahead. They seemed to be able to keep that distance the whole rest of the way. So, flash forward to Crew Classic on that Saturday, we were in their heat and somewhere between 900 and 1000 meters they take a power 10 and they take a couple of seats on us and they were able to hold it. But when we finished that race (we came in second) the one thing we all knew before we hit the shoreline was "We can beat them. We know what they do in these races. They take this power 10 before the 1000 meter mark and it gives them an advantage, both psychologically and physically. If we counter that, then we can beat them!" I remember going back and we told Duvall that. He was surprised to see us so upbeat after placing second once again to San Diego in the heat. And then we went back to the hotel room and all of us collectively felt the same way. There wasn't even a hesitation. That's the only time I can honestly say that I can remember from all four years that I knew we were going to win the next day. And everyone felt the same way. We just said, "we're going to take a power 20 instead of a power 10 at about mid-race."

So the next day we did it. UCSD did theirs. We ended up erasing any of their gains they had and actually began taking seats. Psychologically it must have rattled them because then something happened to their boat to where one of their oars hit a lane line buoy. We were ahead and they got frazzled. We had about four seats on them to about the 500m mark. The last 500 meters we kept that distance and we won.

I remember it was just the most fluid feeling row that we have ever had. You're watching your competitor and they're not able to pull any seats on you. You've erased any gains that they had hoped to gain. Our coxswain

Jen was counting down the final 250. In your mind you're thinking, "Okay, I just have 25 more strokes." Everybody was perfect. We passed that finish line and we won the California Cup. It was quite a great feeling for all of us knowing that we had lost to UCSD not only in the first race of the year, but also in the heat on Saturday. But we learned their method to gain an advantage and we had used it against them and beat them in that race.

**Finish Line:** What did it feel like at the finish line knowing what you had just accomplished?

**Berkuta:** It was an outstanding feeling to know that not only did we work hard but we strategically had triumphed. We had come up with a plan, followed through with the plan, and by sticking to it we persevered and were able to win that race.

That was the most memorable of my races in my four years. And when I meet with the guys who were in that boat (now 19 years later) that is by far the one race that we most talk about because of the fact that we had taken a losing race and come off the water and were absolutely, positively sure, without a shadow of a doubt that we were going to be able to win the next day based on the plan we had developed. That's a rare occurrence, in any athletic career.

**Finish Line:** You got a lot of shirts?

**Berkuta:** We did. We got a lot of shirts. I can't remember how many shirts [laughs]. It was quite a lot. I have worn all those shirts thin. They

don't exist anymore. Nineteen years of post-rowing workouts have basically given them their demise. But let me just tell you, they were well lived. They didn't sit in a bin or a locker. They were well used. [laughs]

**Finish Line:** So what have you done in your career, Nick?

**Berkuta:** Since I left college I joined the L.A. County Fire

Department in 1998. I graduated UCI in 1997. In my almost 16 year career, I have been a Fire Fighter, a Paramedic, an

Engineer (driver of fire engines/trucks), Fire Captain, and I'm currently a Battalion Chief.

**Finish Line:** That's quite a path.

**Berkuta:** Yes, it's quite a path. And it wouldn't have been possible without the four years that I spent rowing, developing, and growing. It wouldn't have been possible without learning what teamwork was all about in my rowing years. Or the hard work ethic that rowing entails, I wouldn't have the success that I have now.

**Finish Line:** You currently sit on the board of directors for the Friends of UCI Rowing Foundation, what do you see for the vision for the future of the program?

**Berkuta:** Our vision is really simple. One: Get our alumni back involved with the program so that they feel a sense of community. This would give the current rowers an active support base. Two: Bring the club sport to a financial stable position. And three: Bring the sport back to a varsity status at the University.

**Finish Line:** What are ways that you see that Alumni can get involved?

**Berkuta:** Alumni can get involved by supporting the rowers both by physically being present at races, by financially supporting the rowing program through the Friends of UCI Rowing Foundation, through financial donations. They can also work with us on outreach (through our Regional Alumni Coordinators), reaching out to alumni that we no longer have contact with that they might have, and to bring them back into the fold of our UCI rowing community.

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1995 San Diego Crew Classic California Cup Varsity 8 Winners

Bow to Stern: Brian Moore, Jim Kreuziger, Nick Berkuta, Aaron Frank, Kieran Coghlan, Forbes Morse, Rob Walker, Jed Rogge, and Coxswain Jennifer Miyashiro Detterich

# Chicken Feed and Fast Boats

## How chance opportunities and the stars aligned to create our rowing program at UCI

*Transcript of Duvall's speech at our San Diego reunion event*

### Act I: Dan Aldrich

In 1952, when I was a senior at Stanford, the Western Sprints were held on the north Lido Channel. We didn't win the race, but it was the nicest of water I had ever rowed on. "Someday," I thought, "there will be a collegiate crew here and it will be great!"

Fast forward 12 years to 1964. UCI was a still a bean field, though the first bulldozers were beginning their work, and the new chancellor, Dan Aldrich, had set up his office in a temporary building on what would soon be the campus.

A friend invited me to a Cal Alumni event, where Dan spoke, and where I met him. He knew the value of athletics and spoke about their importance at this new branch of the UC. A few days later I called to ask for an appointment to talk about crew

Dan was a very impressive man - big, ruggedly handsome, outgoing, perhaps in his mid-40s. At Brown University he had been a track and field athlete - discus, shot put and javelin - and then served in the Navy during WWII. He was Chancellor at UC Riverside before coming to UCI.

At our meeting, Dan patiently heard me out. He told me a number of others had suggested crew at UCI, thanked me for my interest, and sent me on my way. I thought, "Well, that's it. I've had my 30 minutes."

A couple of weeks later, after a Friday business trip to San Francisco, I was at SFO waiting for my flight home. Those were the days when you walked across the tarmac out to the plane. Dan Aldrich was the furthest thing from my mind when I looked up and saw him a little way ahead of me, headed for the same airplane. I put on some speed, caught up, reintroduced myself - and sat down next to him for an uninterrupted hour and a half.

He was returning from a meeting at Cal, where he had given a presentation to the Trustees. He had a beautiful oversize portfolio, full color renderings, bound in Morocco leather, one for each trustee. Dan let me examine his copy. I thought, "Wow! So that's how the big boys do it!"

To be polite, Dan asked if I had any further thoughts on the rowing program at UCI. He probably regretted it, because it opened the floodgates. An hour later, as we stepped off the airplane, Dan, probably thinking he was at last getting rid of me, said, "Well, if you're so sure that's what should be done, why don't you give me a written plan?" In other words, "Get out of my ear!"

But he had just handed me the keys to the kingdom, because I saw what a big boy presentation looked like, right? I spent the weekend on my faithful Remington typewriter and created a 25 page proposal, complete with drawings, lay out, boathouse dimensions, cost estimates, recruiting ideas, salaries for coaches and riggers, racing schedules and equipment needs, and put it in the nicest folder I could find - not quite Morocco, but close - and took it to him on Monday.

A few days later I met with him again. "That's all you need?" he asked. "That and water and the young men, which won't cost you anything," I told him. "Okay," he said, "you're my guy." I said, "What does that mean?" He said, "You go out and raise the money!" I staggered, so he smiled and added "Whatever you raise, I'll match it."

Now that's a sporting proposition! So I called all my friends for help. I was asking for \$1000 and needed 25 takers. The \$1000 could be spread over three years. That sort of money meant something in 1964. In the event, when it was doubled by Dan's contribution, it paid for the boathouse, three eights, a coaching launch and a training barge, plus 36 oars.

### Act II: Bill Boland

The next problem was where to build the boathouse? Even in those days it was hard to find property on the water in Newport Beach. I tried half a dozen leads with no results. Then a friend who lived down here suggested I check out Shellmaker Island. He said the man who ran the dredging operation there was named Bill Boland.

Shellmaker Island got its start in the early 1900s when Redlands, Riverside and San Bernardino were the chicken and egg capitol of California - no thought then of "Inland Empire!" It was home to a modest dredging operation which scoured the bay for clamshells. The clamshells arrived at the island destined for the mill, still in operation in 1964. The mill reduced the clamshells to grit. Why?

Chickens require grit for their gizzards to grind up their feed. At the same time, if the grit provides calcium for the egg shell, you get a twofer. There is no better source for grit and calcium than ground-up clamshells. From there

it is just a step to see what's coming - the mill bagged the grit and labeled the bags "Shellmaker," as in egg shells - thus, Shellmaker Island.

When Bill Boland bought Shellmaker, Inc. after World War II, the migration from Los Angeles was just beginning. Every waterfront home wanted a dock, which of course required dredging. Bill's was the only dredging operation on Newport harbor, and his work shifted from grit for chickens to docks for millionaires.

When I first met him, 1964, the island was completely wild. The mill, hardly ever used by this time, stood across a large open space from the four sheds that served as office, tool room, shop and storage room. The sheds were typical California construction - uninsulated bat and board - the roofs similarly constructed and covered with tar paper. For air-conditioning, you opened the windows, and for toilets, you used the outhouse. It was cold in the winter and hot in the summer. You could hear the rain pound on the roof. It was heaven!

It was also an ecological paradise before ecological became an excuse to beat up on people. Old pumps, cables, pontoons, rusty pipes, crane extensions, decomposing rowboats that had served their time, lay off in the weeds and provided shelter for the bunnies. The irony is that with the transfer to Fish and Game and their Taj Mahal airplane hangar to house half a dozen cops and bureaucrats, the island became less hospitable to its critter population but better suited to the image DFG people have of themselves. However, that dismal event lay far in the future.

On my first visit, Bill Boland invited me into his office, which he shared with Johnny Jones, his bookkeeper. Johnny's father drove the toilet truck that serviced the outhouse. Nobody gave themselves any airs. Informality was Bill's style. He wore khakis, ankle boots, short sleeve shirt open at the neck, no jacket. He smiled, leaned back in his chair: "What can I do for you today?"

Before I answered, I noticed half a dozen pictures behind him, all of the F4U, the gullwing Corsair, symbol of Marine Corps aviation during World War II. And there was Bill standing in the pictures with his squadron mates around him. "My God," I thought, "I'm talking to a Marine pilot." In 1964 I was still a weekend warrior with the Marines, and what's more, I had flown the Corsair! This was made in heaven! (And it was about to get better!)

"Bill," I said, "you were a Marine pilot! I am too!" "OK," he said, "but you probably don't have any time in the Corsair." "Actually, I do - ten years ago, when I was at Cherry Point, Joe McPhail brought the Minneapolis reserve squadron there in Corsair's and let me check out in one." "Joe McPhail?" said Bill. "Joe was my wingman in the South Pacific!"

When we finally settled down to talk about what had brought me to Shellmaker Island, we were best friends. He showed me around the island and asked where I would like to put the boathouse. We walked the outlines of what would be our sublease.

As I got ready to leave, he said, "If I let you do this, can I get rid of you if I don't like having you around?" And I said, "Sure, but will give you no reason not to like us." And he said, "Okay. I'll call you and let you know."

The next day, Bill called to say that it was ours, but that he would need about a week for the lawyers to write up the agreement. Ten days later I picked it up for Dan Aldrich to sign, and took the autographed copy back to Bill. He took it to the Irvine Company, because they owned the island, which Bill leased from them.

The vice president to whom he handed the lease looked at it and said, "Bill! Don't you know you need our permission before you make a sublease?" Bill said, "Sure I do. I was just afraid somebody would say no." "I was just afraid somebody would say no," so Bill went ahead and did it anyway. Imagine trying that on a bureaucrat on the Coastal Commission or a timeserver at Fish and Game!

Bill helped us every step of the way. He built the boat racks in the boathouse. He put in water and electricity. He added the lighting. He brought the crane over to put up the flagpole. He dredged out our docking area. He bulldozed a level area for our parking. We had a 25 year honeymoon, then the Irvine Company gave the property to DFG, and the rest is history.

Bill and I remained friends till the day he died. To look at him you wouldn't think it, but he was a fine musician, a pianist. He had a Bosendorfer Grand which he gave a good workout every couple of weeks with a group of fellow musicians. He would fix dinner for everyone, the bourbon flowed freely, and they had music for dessert.

After the island was transferred to DFG, Bill moved to Petaluma and then to Inverness, where he retired. He built a house in the redwoods, halfway down a ravine where a creek flowed year-round. Steelhead came up it in the spring to spawn in the headwaters. As he grew older, he built a guesthouse to live

in and, as he had no children and his idiot wife had left him, he gave the main house to his nephew. He loved living there, in the shade, in the cool, with his Bosendorfer and books for company.

Bitterness had no part of Bill. He always remembered the good. "I've had plenty of sunshine in my life," he said, "and now I'm happy to be here where it's cool and shady." A year or two later his nephew's wife came down to his house to give him the newspaper. He always enjoyed reading it with his morning coffee. The coffee was there, steaming in a mug by the window, and Bill was there too, stretched out on the floor. His work was over, and the UCI crew lost one of the best friends it ever had.

### Act III: UCI Crew

When you strip it to its core, rowing is about the men, the water, the boats and the coaches. That's it. You can have great circumstances for the flourishing of a crew, and you can have terrible, but the circumstances don't make a great crew – you do. You can complain about anything and everything. It's profitless. It is what it is.

When you put the boats in the water, when you go out on the bay at 5:00 AM, you can't blame anybody or anything if you don't do the best job you can. You flush all the negatives out of your mind, and as a coach you demand the men do the same. They learn that rowing, like life, is a game that's won between the ears.

It can only be won by focusing, focusing totally, on the job at hand. That's what every coach at UCI, and really every rowing coach in the country, tries to do and tries to teach. The young men who get that message, who stick around long enough to find the sublime unity in a boat that moves well, and who after four years of rolling out of bed at 4:30 a.m. and showing up to row in the dark in any kind of weather, who remember the crunch of ice on the dock under their bare feet – they know something about themselves that they didn't know four years earlier.

What they know is that nobody will ever give them anything they can't do. And that is a terrific lesson to learn early in life, knowing with absolute certainty that whatever gets thrown at you, you can handle it.

So, do I love rowing? Do I love coaching? Listen. I was nothing. When I entered Stanford as a sophomore transfer, I found that freshman and sophomores were required to take a PE class. Rather than play badminton, I tried crew. I was in the third boat all year, and if there had been a fourth, I would've been in it. No chance I'd row my junior year.

That fall, sucking down a Lucky Strike on the third floor of the Zete house, someone yelled "Hey Dewey, there's a guy down here to see you!" So I bounced downstairs, very cool with the Lucky in the side of my mouth, and there was my rowing coach, Jimmy Beggs. Even though I didn't plan to row anymore, I liked Jimmy and was sufficiently embarrassed that I tossed that cigarette in the fireplace. Of course Jimmy had seen it. He stood at the door for a long minute, looking at me. Then he said, "You know, I thought you might have some potential and that I'd ask you to come back out for crew. But now, I don't think so." He turned and walked away.

Well, it may have been child psychology, but nobody treats me that way! So I showed up and rowed as a junior. For the first time in my life I trained. I got the idea of what crew was about.

Beggsie had been a coxswain at Yale before he came to Stanford as a graduate student in 1949. He had taken a pair-with-cox to the 1948 Olympic trials. They came in second, and Jimmy promised himself he would find another couple of oarsmen in 1952 and make it to Helsinki. In the fall of my senior year, he asked me if I would like to try it with him. He said I could choose who I wanted to row with. There was no doubt in my mind that it should be Jimmy Fifer.

Jimmy Beggs brought a brand-new Pocock pair down from Seattle in January, 1952. Fifer built us a dock at Redwood City. We rowed every morning in eights out of the Stanford boathouse at Palo Alto yacht harbor, afternoons at Redwood City with Jimmy Beggs. We began to move the boat pretty well.

In July we went East to the Olympic trials at Lake Quinsigamond in Worcester, Massachusetts. We had never raced before. After going through elimination heats, we came up against the pair from the US Naval Academy. They had won the Eastern sprints championships and were undefeated through their competitive season. In the final race, we beat them by about a foot. It took 15 minutes for the judges to develop the film – the longest 15 minutes of my life.

So we won the American championship and made the Olympic team, thus realizing our goal. In Helsinki, we were eliminated in the semi finals. Did I learn something from that? You bet I did! We set our goal to win the American championship, which we did. Then we went to the Olympic Games, where we had no further goal, and where we failed.

But amazingly – no, miraculously – four years later Fifer and I got an opportunity to row again, this time in a straight pair. Jimmy Beggs, who was then at Penn coaching freshman, agreed to coach us. He did such a good job that we won a gold-medal in Australia.

How could that be? We were the same two people, same height and weight, as we were four years earlier. The difference was all mental. There was only one thing in our minds, and that was to overcome the shame of having lost. The shame! Failing is a wonderful motivation, because you cannot live there.

When I got the opportunity to coach at Menlo JC in 1958, I was on fire to pass my experiences on to a new generation of oarsmen. And tonight, as I look out at everyone in this room and see people from the founding crew at UCI to the most recent oarsmen, I feel blessed and grateful to God to have been connected in a vital, visceral way to young men who took to heart the lessons of rowing and made of themselves more than otherwise they would ever have made, had they not discovered as oarsmen what was possible for them to give, to take, to endure.

I am grateful for having been given the great opportunity and privilege of helping to create the UCI rowing program five decades ago. Even more, I cherish my time on the water as a coach, where I have tried to share the vision I inherited and the lessons I learned from the four great coaches who taught me how boats should move over water.

I thank you for your support, and now turn over to a new generation responsibility for the next 50 years of UCI crew, confident that its best years lie ahead.



## Back in Black

Tracy Smith Lovric ('86-'89, coxswain)

Black blades pulling together rising out of the gray water, disappearing into the fog on the recovery. Black shirts with deep gold crests sprinkled with salt water line up together as the crew swings the boat overhead and marches up the dock ramp after the race. "Why do we wear black?" I asked when I first received my rowing shirt on race day and tugged it on. "We are the crew. We wear black and gold. Those are our colors," said the captain as he walked away passing out shirts. Simple, but resonating.

Crew is a unique sport at UCI in that most of the athletes walk on with no prior rowing experience. We bond together learning a sport which requires us to work completely in sync. The rowers are a team off the water too. We had to handle our own matters from painting our black blades to going door to door to raise money.

Working side by side, we maintained the dock, the yard, the boathouse, the equipment. When they cut our rigger's salary, we paid it by working together to raise the funds. When we needed a boat or new oars, we worked together as a team (and alumni) to make it happen.

Why do we wear black and gold? We don't subscribe to splashy, bright, current collegiate catalogue trends. As a team we have had to forge our own way, make our own rules when handed hardship. We draw on our combined strength to defy the odds and endure anything from bad weather to equipment failure and budget cuts.

We will not only survive, but we will thrive.

# Financial Report

Theo Khachaturian - Treasurer  
Friends of UC Irvine Rowing

FUCIR has continued its fundraising efforts through its newsletters, social media, and other activities. Some alumni have preferred to donate through Paypal, by signing up for a monthly draw. Others prefer simply to write a yearly check. Since October 1, 2013 (the beginning of our fiscal year), FUCIR has raised \$56,500. We are about \$140,000 short of our fundraising goal of \$200,000 and we've got about five months left in the year.



FUCIR has committed to funding coaches through the end of the rowing season. The crew recently asked FUCIR to split the costs of its three biggest races - San Diego Crew Classic, WIRA, and the ACRA race in Georgia. The Board agreed to cover these costs, which amount to almost \$7,500.

The racing season is almost over, but we're eyeing other costs on the horizon. We're looking to update our aging racing shells and wondering which generation of oarsman is interested in putting their mark on a new shell, and ensuring that our team has world-class equipment.

Please visit our website at [ucirowing.org](http://ucirowing.org) and donate to FUCIR. We need your help to keep the crew afloat

## Call to action!

### 10 ways you can help

There are a number of different ways to contribute to our program. Here are several ways we can use your help.

**1. Visit our newly redesigned website - [ucirowing.org](http://ucirowing.org):** There's a lot to be seen. Check out our news and photos. Or make a donation.

**2. Update your contact info.** We are missing a lot of email addresses. Email is a quick and affordable way for us to stay in touch with you. Take the time to update your contact info by visiting our page at [ucirowing.org/contact](http://ucirowing.org/contact)

**3. Reach out.** We have close to 50 years of graduates from the program. We need your help in reconnecting with those who we have lost contact with. Simply asking friends from your boat if they receive our newsletter can get them back into our community. Have them visit our website or send an email to [info@ucirowing.org](mailto:info@ucirowing.org).

**4. Get Social.** Did you know we have a Facebook Group? We've gone digital in our outreach. We have 250 Facebook group members and there's room for more! It's becoming a great spot for friends to swap stories about rowing. We even have Twitter, LinkedIn, Google Plus, and Flickr Groups. To join in, visit our website at [ucirowing.org](http://ucirowing.org) and click the appropriate links on the top right hand side of our home page.



**5. Help launch a career.** Graduating in today's workforce is a lot different than even 10 years ago. Rowing at UCI is its own fraternity. If you can help connect future graduates & alums with career placement opportunities we'd love to hear from you. Send an email to [info@ucirowing.org](mailto:info@ucirowing.org).

**6. Partner with your company in giving.** A lot of corporations match employee contributions to non-profit organizations. They make it really easy by taking a small monthly amount out of each paycheck. When looking for a non-profit to donate to, search no further than Friends of UC Irvine Rowing.

**7. Join one of our regional dinners.** We've held events in Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego, and San Francisco. We have a large presence of alums in other cities as well. ***Join us at our next dinner event in Los Angeles on June 19.*** We are also planning an event in New York in the coming months. Contact [mamahoney@orton.us](mailto:mamahoney@orton.us) or [pcthurston@cox.net](mailto:pcthurston@cox.net) to join us!

**8. Shop with giving in mind.** Do you shop online? **Amazon.com** will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible Amazon purchases to Friends of UC Irvine Rowing whenever you shop on their site. To shop smarter, start your purchase at [ucirowing.org](http://ucirowing.org) and click on the logo to Shop at AmazonSmile.

**9. Donate.** If rowing has made a difference in your life, help make a difference in the lives of current and future oarsmen. Your life would not be the same without the lessons that rowing offered you. It's now **your turn** to give back. Visit [ucirowing.org/donate](http://ucirowing.org/donate) today.

**10. Get a shirt!** Sign up for a JV membership level or higher (\$25 Monthly) or make a one-time donation of \$250 or more and receive an Irvine Rowing Alumni Long Sleeve Shirt! Visit [ucirowing.org/donate](http://ucirowing.org/donate).



-FL

## Donating to the Friends of UCI Rowing

### Set up a sustaining membership

It's easy to set up a sustaining membership. Simply visit [ucirowing.org/donate](http://ucirowing.org/donate)

### ..or make a one-time donation

It's just as easy. Visit [ucirowing.org/donate](http://ucirowing.org/donate)

### Membership Levels

- Novice \$10 Monthly
- JV \$25 Monthly
- Varsity \$50 Monthly
- Masters \$75 Monthly
- Elite \$100 Monthly
- Olympic \$200 Monthly
- Or make a one-time donation in any amount

## FRIENDS OF UCI ROWING

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