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SARA
SYRACUSE ALUMNI
ROWING ASSOCIATION

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Dear SARA Friends ...



SARA will be a different and much stronger organization this time next year, one shaped by the rapidly-changing world of D1 Athletics, a stronger relationship with Syracuse University's Athletic Department, and the incredible drive and achievements of passionate and focused alums.

Before we dive into that, let's list what you accomplished over the last 15 months, during a pandemic without any SU racing season:

1. We did away with SARA dues, a step intended to make every alum, parent, family member and SU Rowing supporter part of SARA.
2. Men's and Women's Rowing dominated the Annual Boost the 'Cuse fund drive, blowing away expectations and results from other organizations.
3. Peter Henriques '80 led the Men's Championship Journey, an effort to ensure the Men's program will have the funds it needs for recruiting, equipment, coaching bonuses and travel. As of this writing commitments stand just over \$800,000 over the next four years, and there's no question we will hit our goal of \$1,000,000.
4. The Women's Championship Journey kicked off March 31 with Head Coach Luke McGee welcoming dozens of alumnae, parents and supporters; current athletes introducing themselves to alumnae; and Luke describing the goals for the Women's

Journey...funding a trip Henley (!), a new Empacher eight, and funds for recruiting and travel. Donations have started to flow, and thanks to Pam Carey Schrock '83 and her team for their great work to get the Journey underway.

Also, I met (virtually) with SU AD John Wildhack to get his take on the state of D1 athletics and sense for where SU Rowing will be in fifteen years. John echoed his past ardent support for both programs, voiced his delight at the success of the Men's Journey and excitement about the beginning of the Women's.

SU's strong commitment to the programs, coupled with what you have done over the last 15 months and what we need to going forward, SARA has to evolve to a more efficient, leaner, and more focused organization. We must expand our ties with you, improve our communications, and streamline our functions and operations.

But before we do that, we need to know what you think.

You will receive an electronic survey from SARA in the next few weeks; the Board is seeking your guidance, opinions, and perspectives on how SARA can renew itself and prepare for the decades to come.

We need to hear from you – because you are SARA.

For now, racing season is upon us. Check Cuse.com for racing schedules and broadcast news, know that things are subject to change, and cheer our athletes on. They will make you proud indeed.

Bleed Orange!

Joe Paduda, SU 1980

Pulling Together by Walter Kehm, 1960

Many years ago I walked under crossed oars at the Syracuse gym for a life changing experience. I became hooked on the sport after watching Movietone black and white film covering the Navy, Penn and Cornell eight-oared crews racing in Annapolis. All boats were neck and neck as they pulled together towards the finish line with Navy victorious. I decided then and there that I wanted to row. I applied to Penn, University of Michigan and Syracuse. Being a New York City kid, Syracuse won and on my first day of registration in 1955 the association with my crew buddies started and continues.

My last race at Syracuse was the 1960 IRA on Lake Onondaga. Crews from all over the country arrived to race and culminate the years of effort in one final season regatta. Coach Schoel arranged for our crew to stay in the Fairgrounds with controlled diets of Melba toast in the morning and lots of pasta for dinner. We had one puzzle though. Unlike other crews, we had no spare rowers and what would happen if anybody got sick? Race day, and unknown to the crew, two of our guys were not feeling great.

In the spirit of *'pulling together,'* if they did not row we would not have been able to compete.

Our racing shell the Saltine Warrior was launched and we quietly pushed off from the dock. Our cox, Larry Wiener, in fact was aware of our dilemma and said, *"Guys, we have had our ups and downs all season. This is our chance to pull together and show the country what we can do."*

The IRA was a three mile race and we had excellent conditions for once on this rowdy lake. The horn sounded and we had a great start. At the one mile mark we had a one length lead. We held the lead and had two lengths at the end of two miles.

During the third mile illness began to show and as the boat slowed Larry yelled, *"Cornell is closing on us!"* I was rowing two seat and remember the coaches yelling and offering inspiration. Pulling together through adversity we all rowed as hard as we could until the end and lost by one tenth of a second. At the dock, we huddled, gave ourselves hugs and knew that we had accomplished our goal. We overcame adversity and by pulling together we finished as a proud team.

This is a life lesson that lingers with me. If we only pull on starboard the boat goes in a circle. If we only pull on the port we also go in a circle. It is only when we pull together that we go straight and fast in harmony with the wind and water.

I continue to coach and tell my crews that rowing is about life and living. It is important for society, our families, and the country to pull together. Division and self-centered interests must be overcome if we are to move as a unified body. In our crew we had guys from different backgrounds and geographies. Nelson Miller from the Pacific northwest and architecture. Pete Gregory from upstate New York and studying forestry. Bruce Ackert from Rochester was studying pulp and paper technology. Ed Montesi was in Industrial Design. Bob Braue studied forest engineering. Larry Wiener studied business. Lance Osadchey was in pre-med. Bruce Baker was also in pre-med. Guys from New Jersey and Tennessee and New York City. We met, we bonded and we became a crew team. We were all for one and one for all.

Yes, I think these are life lessons for today.

As a nation we need to pull together and work together again. As we listen to each other and our coaches, we can learn and move forward with a stable boat.

I always think of rowing as the graceful application of power.

When we are in sync dedicated to doing our best in every race we will be victorious. It is all about what's happening internally now and in my 83rd year of rowing I reminisce with confidence that we did the best we could and won the race.

Rowing is a beautiful state of mind to guide one's life through calm and rough waters.

— **Walter Kehm, SU Class of 1960**
Founder of the Guelph Rowing Club

Editor's Note: Walter H. Kehm studied landscape architecture at the SUNY Forestry College. He went on to Harvard for his M.S., and did a tour in the U.S. Army before settling into teaching and practicing landscape architecture in Ontario, as well as coaching and writing.

Walter is the co-author of *'Accidental Wilderness, The Origins and Ecology of Toronto's Thompson Park.'* I had the pleasure of accidentally discovering the book on Amazon, then purchasing it, then making the connection that Walter was one of SU's proud rowing alums.

One phone call later to discuss the book, rowing at SU and life lessons, led me to ask Walter to make a short contribution to the OO.

Thank you Walt for your reflections via *'Pulling Together.'*

Follow SARA and our Crew's Races on Social Media!

You can find us on
Facebook (Syracuse Row-O-Rama
Instagram (Syracuse Alumni/ae Rowing
Association)
and
Twitter @syracuserowing
YouTube (SU Alumni Rowing Archives)



SUWROW Championship Journey Kickoff

Gillian Carlucci hosted the SUWROW 2021 Virtual Championship Journey kickoff in March.

Here is a link to a recorded-video link:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1jn-XRNRF4z-8xrwzOcaD-E6G_KHKzxwm?usp=sharing

I believe at the peak of the call we had 85 participants in the Zoom. I don't have a breakdown of numbers per each segment, but there were the following groups on the call:

- > Coaches
- > Student Athletes
- > Parents of Student Athletes including from Australia and Germany
- > Many Alumni
- > SU Development

We do plan on holding more zooms to discuss the Women's Championship Journey, and I would anticipate doing a kickoff like this every year.

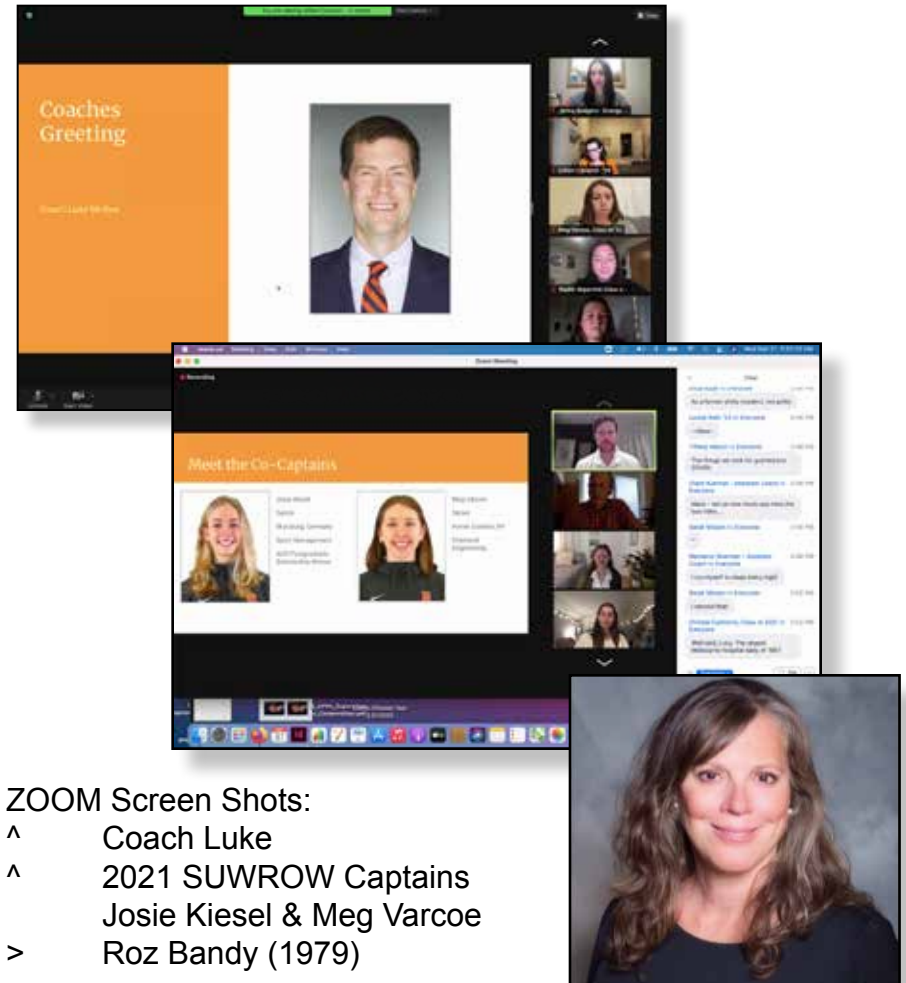
The goal is to start having smaller coordinated calls with Coach and alumni to discuss fund-raising and multi-year pledges (similar to what the men are doing now). And, we are hoping to coordinate this by class.

— Gillian Carlucci
carluccigillian@gmail.com

And to get involved in the Women's Championship Journey, or to inquire about lost contacts to reconnect with from SUWROW, please contact Jenna Rodgers, Syracuse Athletics Development @ jrrickan@syr.edu.

Virtual Kickoff Agenda:

- > Greeting and Coaches Corner
- > Meet the Class Representatives
- > Q&A with the Coaches & Captains
- > Alumnae Interview - Rosalyn "Roz" Bandy
- > Spring Racing Schedule
- > How to Get Involved



ZOOM Screen Shots:

- ^ Coach Luke
- ^ 2021 SUWROW Captains
Josie Kiesel & Meg Varcoe
- > Roz Bandy (1979)

Author tip: If you desire your reader to discontinue his or her journey through your article, use the word ‘database.’ There, I said it.

Database. Still with me? Thanks! With that ugliness behind us, let’s talk about connection.

‘*Connection*’ is a word often used on the water, relayed by Coaches and Coxswains to their rowers. And, as it turns out, it is used by lowly database grunts!

A handful of years ago, we came to realize that the contact information we had on Syracuse Rowing alumni had become disparate – splintered into many files in varying formats, and outdated.

We undertook the effort to change that. After several months of hard work followed by continuous upkeep and maintenance, we (coaches and alumni) now work from one efficient, central database.

And efficiency was really the primary goal. What actually happened was so much more fruitful and satisfying: connections were formed.

Alumni from as far back as Class of ’41 began reaching out, hoping to connect with an old friend – either by name, or by asking, “*Can you put me in touch with any fellas from my class?*”

Folks began asking if any other old Orange oars lived nearby. Groups organized reunions around dual meets and championship races. And the program itself started using the database to connect back with alumni, adding more old friends to the Coaches’ e-mail lists, or reminding us all what a storied team we belong to via the monthly tidbits.

Connection. You feel it when you properly engage your fingertips holding the oar, through your arms and core, hips and legs, and the pads of your feet upon the catch. And you feel it when a seemingly boring tool like a ... *Ahem...* ‘*database*’ can remind us all of what a special thing we are all a part of.

And, there are likely some outstanding connections to be made.

Drop me a line if you think I can help connect you with other alums. Thank you for sharing the **Orange** love.

— Jason Premo
jmpremo@hotmail.com

2021 Evening at Ten Eyck

The 2021 Evening at Ten Eyck is a great option to re-connect with alums, families and friends of the SU Rowing Community. Please follow SARA’s communication later in the summer for the in-person or virtual go / no go status of the E@T.
And get ready for some fun!

A Brief Note from the Coxswain's Seat

We arrived on campus the first week of February. It felt like a start — chaotic, like a high 40 and filled with uncertainty. There were countless Zoom meetings about COVID-19 protocol, mask-wearing, and testing. We were to get tested three times a week and function in four “pods.” Our pods consisted of people we lived with. We would row together, eat together and live together without much contact with people outside of our bubble. Practices spanned from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. with each of the four pods practicing whenever they were available. We saw other sports go on pause — men’s basketball had several COVID-19 cases and was shut down for two weeks — and wondered what the future held for our season.

We settled into March, finding rhythm in routine and camaraderie. Our COVID-19 tests consistently returned negative and we were soon able to practice in two large pods. We got on the water in early March. The coaches spent their days on launches breaking the ice so we could get as much water time as we could. Soon the two pods were practicing at the boathouse daily and lifting in the morning. We found out rhythm at base, soon it would be time to sprint.





In the final weeks of March we seat raced almost three times a week. We lined up five boats across on the lake and some days three fours across on the river, in search of the fastest lineup. As the weeks continued, the training load increased. We were weeks away from racing — a feeling we haven't felt in over a year.

Now, we're two days away from our first race — a 2k and a 1k scrimmage against Rutgers at Mercer. As we pack our bags we're sent COVID-19 travel protocol information and pack multiple masks. This season is destined to be different. Our parents are encouraged not to attend, we held a preseason Zoom kickoff rather than An Evening at Ten Eyck and we're racing without the Ivy League.

This season will be unlike any other for Syracuse women's rowing but after hours of training, testing and isolation it will be remembered as a season of grit and determination. We're in the final 250 meters of our race and we're itching to get across the finish line.

— Skyler Rivera, Orange Oar Correspondent
April 2, 2021

“Attention! Go!” (a.k.a. SUWROW is Ready to Race)

“Attention!”

We all know by now the starter’s commands for the athletes to rise to the challenge when lining up against rivals on the race course. After each crew’s name is called and asked for readiness, the starter then unleashes the competition with the emotionless “Go!”

For the SUWROW, per Coach Luke: *“It has been way too long for our women to test their training and skills against the likes of the ACC.”* How sweet it will be when coaches, parents and alums hear those starter’s commands for the first time in over 500 days!

SUWROW will travel in a bubble, and according to the testing protocols when they depart SU for the racing waters, first against Rutgers, on to Saratoga Springs, NY to meet Northeastern halfway for a ‘home’ race, then to the B1G Invite in Cincinnati, Ohio, before returning back to Rutgers in final preparations for the ACC Championships and the NCAAs.

Note that the athletes are prevented from mingling even with family while traveling. But rest assured that family members and alums that can attend from a distance will be pulling every stroke of the way down each race, hoping for success!

On Wednesday evening, March 31, 2021, SUWROW hosted the first of its kind ‘2021 Virtual Spring Kickoff,’ introducing the Women’s Rowing team to the larger SARA Rowing Community. In addition to countless Zoom calls in the last year with the athletes, to the many Zooms with parents and alums, to this first signature kickoff event, Coach Luke is excited to return to the racing waters. Per Luke, Zoom is becoming a little more than a well-worn buzzword, *“Zoom has become a great way to interact with parents and alums, and it is a required tool when communicating with athletes.”*

On the Zoom, Maddie S, Maddie D, Emma, Christine, Josie and Lucy (5th year returnee) all offered perspectives on the last year. Half of SU’s women have not raced intercollegiately yet, so many have new experiences waiting for them on the race courses. Lucy compared the agony of last March’s first Zoom - announcing cancellation of the 2020 season with its deep sense of loss - to last night’s Zoom, which is focusing on finishing last year’s unfinished business. Per Lucy: *“It will be very special racing with this year’s seniors.”*

Coach Luke: *“SU’s Women are phenomenal, great athletes, who love to row for SU and work incredibly hard...”* Luke adds: *“The excitement is building for the racing season. A lot of hard work and commitment has been required to get the crews where they are: Ready to put on the Block S and compete for Syracuse.”*

The Syracuse Women have not had to wait for a starter’s command to create initiatives which create understanding and empathy on dry land. Sparked by a few thoughts from ACC coaches, ACC Unity was created to build communication and relationships across athletes who normally compete tooth and nail.

This spring, SU Junior Grace Asch inspired the team and the teams in the ACC to ‘Pack the Pickup’ with donate-able goods for non-profits in their home communities. The SU Women’s pickup truck, and Coach Luke’s pickup truck were both loaded recently with donations to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Syracuse.

ACC Unity is athlete driven with two members from each ACC team have regular calls where coaches typically express umbrella thoughts at the beginning of the calls, then let the Women create initiatives which will improve their communities through actionable items.

Coach Luke: *“I see relationships growing, more communication, expansion of the Unity initiatives to involve FR and SO athletes, and a bigger conversation growing.”*

Luke notes: *“Congeniality with competitors aside, on the water, the SUW will fight tooth and nail down the race courses this spring.”*

Luke *“... didn’t have a playbook,”* on how to coach during the pandemic, and expressed a challenge for coaches coaching in the pandemic era to make sure each athlete was getting the right amount training and attention, even when considering 4 unique pods. Per Luke: *“Pod training had the benefit of strengthening relationships that otherwise would not have happened, caring for one another more.”* Time management skills were important to Luke, but coaching skills remained just as critical to his staff. *“The women displayed an amazing amount of flexibility”* accomplishing the winter and spring training programs.

Coach Luke’s stated goals for the SUW is to win ACC’s each year and to get an NCAA bid. The women’s early season tests will give an indication of how well the team weathered the pandemic, but also who the competition is.

See related piece, on the Women’s Championship Journey by Jay Greytok, which dovetailed so nicely with the kickoff. Per Coach Luke: *“The Women’s Championship Journey has ambitious goals. The SUAD and the Coaches are working hard to give the athletes the best experience possible.”* And, Henley is on Luke’s radar, to strengthen SU’s commitment to the women, as well as to build the Syracuse Women’s brand nationally and internationally.

“Go!”

Editor’s Notes: Coach Luke’s report was gleaned from the ‘2021 Virtual Spring Kickoff,’ and a short coffee / early morning chat follow up. And please follow the ACC Unity Group on Instagram @ACC.Unity.



SUWROW 2021 Race Schedule (also live on Cuse.com)

| | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| April 4, 2021 | Saratoga Springs, NY | Rutgers University |
| April 10, 2021 | Home | Northeastern University |
| April 17, 2021 | B1G Invite | |
| May 1, 2021 | Home | Rutgers University |
| May 14, 2021 | ACC Championships | |
| May 28, 2021 | NCAA Championships by Qualification | |

“Are You Kidding?”

When asked if he was excited to get going with the racing season, Ben’s reply was “Are you kidding?” It has been well over a year since Ben and his teammates have raced a 2K race. And Ben, like all of his teammates “... are itching for a race, to butt heads with the crew we line up against, and to see who’s tougher through the last 300-400 meters.”

Benjamin Michael Dukes, SU 2023, was a successful (2-time All State) swimmer at Loyola Academy (Wilmette, Illinois) near Chicago. Ben was a distance freestyler, finishing 13th his senior year in the 500Y FR, a significant achievement in a state known for producing top swimmers. Skills gleaned from Ben’s earlier swimming years have proven to be a great foundation for Ben’s rowing career.



He initially tried rowing having recently read ‘*The Boys in the Boat*,’ about the University of Washington’s 1936 Olympic Crew. He thought: “Why not give rowing a try?” He started rowing as a freshman and added more time between the gunwales each year through high school, finding time for swimming and rowing both.

After some thoughtful contemplation, his family got onboard with his desire to be an athlete and attend Syracuse, some 700 miles from home. So Ben traded the maroon and gold of Loyola for the orange of Syracuse.



About the winter break, Ben says the athletes were never out of touch with the Coaches over the winter break, always hearing from them once or twice a week over the phone.

And upon return to campus, Ben relates that “... *it took a few days to figure out again what it was like to row again in a boat.*” Eventually returning to the water in February was “*More fun than erging [through the winter],*” per Ben. And he adds that most guys were back in the swing of things after returning to campus in just one week. Good thing. Apparently the coaches didn’t give the guys too much slack before seat racing and lineup selections were underway.

The last few weeks of training have seen a lot of steady-state work, and it has been fun for Ben to be back training with his friends, even the 80 minutes of steady state, broken out 20/20/20/20 in the tanks / on the Concept 2s / on the RP3s / on the bikes. And then there are the 4X8:00 training sets. Per Ben: “*Individual training at home was draining.*” When they crews returned to campus, “... *We were just 10-feet apart, not 700 miles apart,*” adding to the shared purpose of training for the racing season.

Training this spring so far has mostly been on the River, per Ben, “*The River always has the same effect. Lake days are more exciting. It is much more enjoyable for the crews to head out onto Onondaga when the weather cooperates.*”

Seat racing for the Men’s Crew this spring will not be Coach Dave’s traditional ‘Matrix Seat Racing.’ Apparently there isn’t enough time, so coaches are simplifying the seat selections.

Ben is fighting for a stern port seat in the engine room, while the coaches sort out lineups, stroke seats and boat configurations. Ben relishes training with his friends, much more than individual training required over the winter; “*It is so much more fun, training is the best part of rowing ...*” comparing the seemingly

infinite training component versus the infinitesimal part of racing in a rower’s regimen. During COVID, “*All we have is each other. We are family.*”

Ben has three boats of friends on the team, but he singles out Bricen, Arnaud, Connor and Emory as his primary peeps and neighbors.

About his demeanor when racing, Ben refers to his personal ‘*quiet style,*’ which is to zone out all distractions and just focus on pulling hard. “*I am always looking for a good race. Who is tougher? Who can push themselves more?*”

Nerves and emotions don’t affect him. He just rows hard. “*If I focus on just rowing, it takes the pressure off, and I can enjoy the race.*”

Ben is studying Mechanical Engineering in the College of Engineering and Computer Science. Ben has always tinkered in motors, i.e.: with common youthful pursuits such as go-carts and motor bikes. Maybe this is why Ben likes rowing in the engine room. Ben envisions working for one of the Big Three U.S. automakers after graduation, citing the need to think outside the box and innovate new ways to make motors more efficient. A dream job might even include working in Formula One preparing cars for the Grand Prix circuit.

But Ben has lots more rowing racing in store before testing those employment waters, including this year’s return to racing as the world continues on the path towards some type of normalcy amidst the continuing pandemic. Ben is hopeful his parents can attend the opening dual meet races on the Occoquan Reservoir later in April.

Open Mic: “*I am very excited to race. Life is looking like it is returning to normal. I will enjoy everything that comes along.*”

Coach Jason Q&A

OO How did the athletes return to campus?

The team was excited to get back to campus and back into a routine after the extended winter break this year. Normally we would only have a 3-week break over the holidays before convening in Florida for a warm-weather training camp. This year, with no camp on the schedule and a lengthier break period, I think everyone was clamoring to return to Syracuse and get back into the swing of things.

OO How have the athletes responded to being back training together?

Training solo at home versus training together as a team is a significant difference. Yes, in theory, you can do all the same land workouts at home over the break period, but as we all know, there is just something special about training with your teammates that makes the whole experience richer. There is a level of intensity that gets brought forward when guys are pushing one another every stroke on the ergs.

We split time between the Sanford Rowing Performance Center and Flanagan Gym with pods of 8-10 athletes at a time, to minimize density in our indoor environments. Despite the smaller practice groups, there was a palpable enthusiasm among the team and the guys attacked the training with a great attitude.

OO What was it like to be back on the water?

As much fun as indoor training can be, the real reason we do what we do indoors is to set ourselves up for successful on-water practice and racing. One of the great ironies is that in 2020, we had no ice whatsoever on the water and had an abundance of water rows by the time March rolled around.

In 2021, a year already marked by uneven training opportunities, the weather gods conspired to send us a very cold February, meaning we didn't row outdoors until the second

week of March. Ultimately, the difference of a few weeks of water time won't make a difference in our end-of-season speed. But it's funny the way the universe works.

OO Talk about current plans for the Men's Spring 2021 racing season.

Racing was always going to be a bit of a roll of the dice this spring. The Ivies' cancellation of spring seasons was not a total surprise, given their decisions on fall and spring sports, but it definitely made things a little trickier with scheduling. On the men's side at least, the Ivy League fields a significant percentage of the fast crews in our sport, so the lack of an opportunity to race them is a loss for all rowing programs. That said, there are still many formidable opponents outside the Ivy League that we are eagerly looking forward to lining up against. Our current schedule essentially condenses a dual racing schedule to two race-packed weekends. On April 18th we plan to race Navy and George Washington University in two separate dual races down on the Occoquan Reservoir in Virginia. Two weeks later, we will head to the Charles River in Boston to take part in a round-robin race series with Northeastern, BU, and WISCO – three separate dual races over two days.

The decision to condense racing into two main road trips is twofold. One, it reduces the time spent traveling outside of the Central New York area to minimize risk of Covid spread. And two, it provides good preparation for the IRA National Championship, which requires multiple successful 2K races over multiple days. All told, this change to our scheduling will actually provide us with more trips down the 2K course (5 dual races) than previous years (4 dual races). The Eastern Sprints have been cancelled but the IRA Championships are planning to go ahead. Without the Sprints, the IRA will be the first opportunity for six-lane racing that our squad will see this season.

OO Do you think that the athletes have had a paradigm shift regarding training vs. racing?

We stress to our athletes that they must value the process of training in and of itself. But, let's be honest: at some point the rubber must meet the road! I am proud of our guys for keeping their chins up and doing the work these past twelve months, but it's important that they get the chance to put their work into action through racing this season.

Undoubtedly, they will value these opportunities a great deal more than they would have before. What they have learned from this whole experience is that hard work is not a guarantee of success, but it is the ante to sit at the table. Overall, there really hasn't been much negativity or soured emotions from this group. They are just eagerly awaiting the chance to complete a process that they have been chipping away at over many months and years.

OO How do you see the boats shaping up?

We are operating with a smaller squad this spring, but it is a dedicated group. As with most years, there are a few athletes who have set themselves apart from the group as top performers, while there is a larger group of guys who are working hard and almost there.

OO Talk about what it will be like when you launch the first set of boats out to the race course.

There will be nerves. And that's normal. I have two thoughts I want to share about pre-race nerves that have stuck with me.

One, is that if you're nervous, that's good! It means you're doing something that's important to you. And two, that nerves are your mind's way of warming up, just as your body requires warming up. Aside from that, I'm sure there will be a sense of relief once we finally cross the finish line for the first time in a while.

OO Talk about recruiting.

There are certainly some elements of Covid-era recruiting that may stick around. Certainly, using Zooms has allowed us to follow up with more prospects and their families without having to travel this year. However, there are two areas of recruiting that I feel the in-person element is critical. One is the official visit. When a prospect closes in on their college decision, that last trip to campus to meet the team, shadow classes, and watch practice is a crucial piece of their decision.

Plus, it's important for us as coaches to evaluate the prospect's 'fit' as they spend time with the team. Secondly, sending coaches on the road in the off-season months to watch practices and scout prospects is a really big driver of our recruiting. Sometimes there are kids you don't know about until you watch them practice or talk to them in person. Sometimes a kid isn't really thinking about Syracuse until you show them the time of day by turning up to their boathouse to see them. That type of in-person interaction is still a key piece of generating trust and interest in the recruiting process, and I think that will stay, though we may be more selective about when and where we travel.

OO Talk about the Men's Championship Journey.

Championship-level funding means that we can provide an unparalleled student-athlete experience. This, in turn, attracts the best talent in the world to Syracuse. It is no secret that to compete with the top teams in the nation, we must be funded at the level of the top teams in the nation. The university does an outstanding job of supporting us within the Athletic Department.

However, for us to ascend the ranks of the IRA league, additional funding from our alumni is the key to breaking through the ranks and making Syracuse a uniquely attractive destination for the best rowers in the world.

Women's Championship Journey

On Wednesday, March 31, 2021 the campaign for the Women's Rowing Championship Journey officially began with nearly 100 folks participating in a virtual call to action.

Women's Head Coach Luke McGee spoke about the current state of the program and his excitement that after more than 500 days of training, racing will begin again on April 4.

Luke spoke very highly of his women rowers as he introduced team captains and athletes from each class to the audience. These phenomenal women spoke about their experiences training during COVID, their success in the sport and in school, and their extreme excitement to be racing again very soon.

They also spoke candidly about the pain of the 'lost season' with fifth-year rower Lucy Pearce in particular expressing gladness about being able to get the chance to compete this year.

Listening to them share their rowing experiences reminded all of us about the need for involvement in continuing the traditions of friendships, adventures and competition that are all a part of the Syracuse rowing experience.

The call reminded us about how important rowing at Syracuse is to our alumni network.

The women's rowing program has come a long way since the very modest days of wooden boats and oars stored in Quonset huts. Our fantastic alumni paved the way for these women and to hear how appreciative they were of our support and the opportunity to race wearing the big block **S** was inspirational.

When describing what it is like to be one of the first women to row for Syracuse, alumnus Rosalyn "Roz" Bandy '79 – the second women's rowing scholarship recipient – stated it best, *"What matters most is being together, bonding with each other,*

traveling with each other and building friendships through hardships."

The Women's Championship Journey is an ambitious plan for the program to meet the coach's financial goals over the next five years. These goals include much needed equipment, international travel and recruiting in order to compete at the championship level.

Working with the University and SARA, we have an opportunity to create a culture of giving that builds financial stability and ensures that women's rowing program has the resources necessary to pursue excellence and compete at a championship level. Financial support from the women's crew community will further serve the stated purpose of SARA, *"... to aid, encourage, foster, support and promote the sport of rowing at Syracuse University."*

Our team of alums who are committed to helping the women's program through this journey include Pam Carey Schrock '83, Gillian Carlucci '14, Lynne Pascale '81, Eleanor Allen '83 and Susan Andersson '84. We are also assisted by Jenna Rodgers '13, who works directly with the Orange Club at Syracuse.

We challenge everyone to get involved, by becoming a mentor, getting active with SARA, sharing contact information of your old teammates, and when safe, coming in person to cheer on the squad on race day.

By volunteering and supporting the efforts of the women's team, we will put the program in the best position to be successful both now and into the future. We will be in touch in asking for your support and hope you will give back to a program that has given so much to all of our women alumni.

— Eleanor Allen and Jay Greytok

Men's Championship Journey

The Men's Crew Championship Journey is in the last \$175k of its \$1 million goal. \$825,000 has been raised in only 20 weeks.

Huge appreciation and thanks to the over 90 alumni rowers who have generously donated.

Coaches' Reischman, Sanford and Harrison have joined class zooms with year groups spanning 1954-2019 in support of today's and future Orange oarsmen.

The common sentiment, regardless of class year, is the shared experience of being a member of SU Men's Crew. A fellow alum from the 70's best captured the value of our shared rowing SU experience with these words:

"My time on the crew provided great memories and friendships, but also provided the development of discipline, hard work ethic, perseverance, fitness, and many other life skills. I definitely feel that I owe debt of gratitude to the Coaches and the crew experience, and I'll be expressing this with a meaningful donation to the Championship Journey."

We all do share these feelings and share the hope that SU rowing continues to impact its athletes as well as place the bow ball ahead of the competition.

Please help us finish the last \$175k like the 'final 200 meters to go' with a Men's Crew Championship Journey.

As of March 31st, 2021:

- > The Men are at 82% of the goal!
- > 63 Classes have been contacted!
- > Pledges have ranged from \$100 to \$60,000!

A Challenge to all Orangemen Alumni Classes

Help us sprint to the finish line and give our Orangemen rowers the best tools to compete.

Class of 1980 please donate and be part of the opportunity so we can grow our class' donations. Any amount pledged is most welcome and gets us over the finish line

Use this link to support the SU Men's Crew Championship Journey:

<https://secure.syr.edu/s/1632/17/form/form.aspx?sid=1632&gid=2&pgid=2328&cid=4557&sort=1&bledit=1&dids=375&appealcode=02531&paymenttype=scheduledonly>

Thank you.

— Peter Henriques, 1980

Backsplash Items



< From Tracy Brown, 1990
< New York City, NY

"I have finally, after several years of contemplation, my dog and I made the big move into Manhattan. Life in the City is quite a change from suburban Rhode Island, but I am loving the energy and diversity that urban living brings. I also have a new job! As of March 1, I am the Chief Development Officer for US Rowing, and will also retain my role as the Executive Director for the National Rowing Foundation. In this role, I am continuing to work with my colleague Portia McGee (R. in image above), whose husband Luke McGee is Head Coach of the Syracuse Women's Team!"

"Life is busy (but wonderful)...and filled with rowing connections."

Jamie and Val Bettini, 1999
Boston, MA

"I wanted to submit this bit of news, which is of my wife, Val, being named Account Person of the Year by Campaign US. Val rowed for the women's team; we both graduated in 1999."

Follow this link to Val's story:

<https://www.campaignlive.com/article/account-person-year-2020-vallerie-bettini-chief-client-officer-arnold/1707728>

Phillip ("PJ") Kaputa, 1999
Princeton, NJ

"PJ Kaputa won the 2021 C.R.A.S.H.-B Sprints Lightweight Men's Indoor World Championships in the 43-49 men's category this year with a time of 6:44.1 for the 2k erg piece. He was cheered on by his full family, including wife Christine who is a former SU coxswain and their six children. PJ also qualified for 1 of the 2 North American spots and finished 9th at this year's World Indoor Rowing Championships."



^ Team Kaputa



< PJ and Chris / Cox and Coach

See related Q&A with Christine.

Editor's Note: Christine Camilleri Kaputa (1998, Newhouse, Men's Crew Coxswain) walked on to the Men's Crew upon arrival to SU as a Freshman. We connected when PJ responded to an OO Backsplash request.



< Christine coxes the Men's Frosh to her first victory over the University of Michigan.

OO Talk about walking onto the FR Men's Crew.

I was walking through campus after class one evening with a tall, male classmate. A rower stopped us and asked my friend if he had ever considered rowing. He had not and wasn't interested. The rower then turned to me and asked if I might also be interested in the rowing team, as a coxswain. I was and still am 5'0" tall and weigh 90 pounds. I had never heard of a sport actually wanting someone my size. I had no experience with crew and was unfamiliar with this role. He gave me a flyer for an informational meeting. I showed up and was intrigued. I loved it from the start! I grew up with two older brothers and had helped manage my high school boys swim team and didn't think anything of being on the Men's Crew Team. Less drama! Because of my size, I had to carry extra weight for races. Coach Sanford would hand me a hunk of metal wrapped in tape.

OO Talk about managing a boat of high-spirited rowers.

I was definitely a *'work in progress.'* I wasn't given formal training, so I learned as I went along. The rowers were my teachers in a lot of ways. They suggested books and advised

me on what to say, how to say it, and what they found motivating. I found that mastering my course was a big part of it. I wish that I had had real training, because there was so much that I didn't know and had never experienced as a rower.

Rowing takes an unbelievable amount of mental strength. The varying tone of my voice, its volume, and my observations of the rowers and course were crucial. I was a conduit between the coaches / officials and the rowers. I took that seriously.

OO How did the men treat a novice female coxswain?

They were like brothers to me. As with brothers, there is some teasing but only out of affection ... they didn't treat me any different ;-). Sometimes, they would play jokes, like the time a few of the freshmen rowers prank called me from their dorm room. I was living in Sadler at the time, they were across the way in Lawrinson. My phone rang and I answered to, "*We are watching you. We are watching everything you do.*" Completely freaked out, I hung up and closed my curtains. A moment later, the phone rang again. "*Why did you close the curtains? We can't see you anymore.*" I hung up again, panicked, only to a third ring. This time, all I heard was laughing on the other end. They confessed it was them. Don't worry, I made sure they put in some extra work the next day!



^ Legacy image, returning home from a Florida trip.
Note Chris is carrying her own weight!

OO Talk about the training. What observations do you have now looking back over 20 years?

These men work so hard, all year. It amazed me how intensely they performed and how much they gave to the team and the sport. Looking back now, I wish I would have done some of the indoor winter training. Honestly though, I wouldn't have been able to keep up! There is a higher level of respect that you have as a coxswain when you see the ceaseless dedication of your rowers. They impressed me and taught me what it means to give so much of yourself. This example has driven me in my other endeavors. I wish that I had been a more experienced coxswain; that I could have offered them more.

OO What was it like to cox PJ?

PJ was very competitive, as he is now. He worked hard to be the best at everything he did. Seat racing may have been his favorite rowing activity. He saw me in the Boathouse one very cold morning, trying to warm up. After that, he was smitten. The rest is history. We tried to keep our relationship quiet, but that was impossible.

One rower said to me, *“But have you ever seen him eat in the dining hall?”* They all laughed. My answer was, *“Have any of you seen yourselves eat in the dining hall?”*



< PJ & 'CEO of the House' Chris.

OO Besides meeting PJ, what is your favorite memory of rowing at SU?

There is an element of rowing that is peaceful, serene. When you come out of the outlet onto Onondaga Lake on a brisk morning with a rising mist, it is so tranquil!



OO Do you keep in touch with some of your teammates?

We have returned to SU for the annual Evening at Ten Eyck (see image above). It is such a special time to reconnect with old friends, meet rowers from other classes, listen to beautiful addresses and watch fellow athletes being awarded. Facebook and more recently Zoom help us keep up. It is so nice to see old faces of those we have lost touch with.



OO Talk about 'Team Kaputa.' It seems like you have a straight eight under one roof.

We have been married almost 21 years and have six children. I feel a bit like a coxswain every day. There is a lot to manage, as in most households with children. Now we have three rowers, which is exciting.

PJ is going strong and recently won the C.R.A.S.H.-B Sprints Lightweight Men's Indoor World Championship. This was a lifelong dream for him and I couldn't be prouder of his many accomplishments.

Our son, Nolan, a high school junior and daughter, Sarah, a high school sophomore, both row for PNRA Mercer Rowing. I am encouraging my rising high schooler to cox, too. As with most families, it is a balancing act between having fun and getting everything done. We bleed **Orange** in our house and have our fingers crossed that we may have another **Orangeman** or **Orangewoman** in our future.



^ Team Kaputa L-R: John, PJ, Chris, Kate, Nolan, Gabby, Sarah, Hollis, and Tucker the dog.

OO Talk about coxing in alumni events.

It is a great experience to cox for alumni events. Witnessing men from different classes come together with little to no practice as a unit and work together as though no time has passed is truly uplifting. Alums join these races respecting where each of their teammates is coming from: different ages and stages of life.

As a coxswain, it can be intimidating, as the majority of us haven't been in a boat in many years. I raced in the Head of the Charles a few years ago. That is a tough course and I knew I needed to practice before the race. We got on the water the evening before. My goal was to cut those turns as tight as possible. We came through the Anderson Bridge too tight. The men reacted quickly and pulled their oars in. Luckily no one was injured and there was no damage. I almost bailed on the race the next day. I didn't want to have another encounter like that. But after a good night of sleep, I was ready. That may have been one of my best races ever, cutting a great course. I guess the second time's a charm!

I coxed an alumni race at the Head of the Schuykill a few years back. It was a great day and our boat was in the lead. As we exited the Gerard Avenue Bridge and entered the final stretch of the race along Boathouse Row, we rowed over something in the water. Because it was below the surface, I hadn't seen a line of strings. My stroke noticed that we were actually pulling something. It was balloons that had fallen in the river. I couldn't reach the rudder to pull it off. I was now lying on the deck of the stern trying to untie what was caught, but couldn't. I got back in my seat and called a ten and we pulled the extra weight. Having the men take pictures with the string of balloons was humiliating! I would like to believe we saved the lives of some fish that day!

< See lower photo, previous page.

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Spring 2021 edition of the Orange Oar

Let me know how you like the landscape format of the Orange Oar! I designed it more for easier reading on computer screens, to have the document take advantage of the landscape orientation of computer screens. I hope also, that the OO will read better on your phone.

– Orange Oar Editor.