

Results Recap

This year as team skills increased, the team size diminished. Deciding to focus on fours, the staff trained an awesome lineup of team members who proved to be strong competitors in virtually all categories.

Both the novice women's crews, light and open fours, remained undefeated at the season's end. The first Seattle Pacific team championship banner was won with six victories at the Northwest Collegiate Rowing Conference Championships, all in fours. No Falcon crew finished in less than third place at this championship. The WIRA Championships in Sacramento also affirmed the new direction. Fours categories yielded two gold medals, accompanied by a silver and bronze medal finish, as well as our first varsity WIRA banner. All affirmed this year's emphasis. The significant victories and results in the fours categories this past spring should prove to be the cornerstone for a winning tradition for Seattle Pacific

Women Repeat National Championship Win

As of May 13, the Falcon women's varsity four crew can claim back-to-back national championship titles.

Taking their first visit to the superb 1996 Olympic venue in Gainesville, Georgia, the Falcons competed in the Avaya Communications Collegiate Championships (ACCC), which featured non-scholarship collegiate rowers.

This year, the Falcon cause was helped by an organizational twist: an automatic qualifier for West Region crews through the Western Intercollegiate Rowing Association (WIRA) Championships. Although the Seattle Pacific varsity four had finished second at the WIRA Championships in Sacramento, they remained the region's top eligible *collegiate* crew and advanced to the finals.

On May 13, race conditions in Georgia were optimal with a slight crosswind at the start, on a not-too-humid, 80-degree day. Last-minute entry adjustments reduced the event to two heats of six each, with Seattle Pacific getting the number one seed. This placed the Falcons in the best lane of what appeared to be the lighter of the two heats. Completely unchallenged, they launched ahead in the opening segment and soon cruised across the finish line, almost off pressure. With the fastest time of the two heats, SPU was the only crew to finish under eight minutes.

The grand final proved more exciting, however. The Falcon four, rowing their race plan, found themselves down at the first 500-meter mark to the University of Pittsburgh team, which had obviously been playing it cool in the two crews' mutual heat. The SPU four stayed long, however, and steadily advanced to what appeared to be a comfortable two-seat, open-water lead for the next 1250 meters. Not to be denied the championship without a fight, Pittsburgh launched an enviable charge that would close all but a few inches, with 30 meters to go. As they crossed under the wire, the two crews seemed locked together, with neither bowball clearly ahead. What followed was the nerve-racking wait for a photo-finish determination.

The crews returned in stolid silence to the dock, anxious for results. It was only fitting that on Mother's Day, the athletes'



The women's varsity four champions, from left to right: Catherine Gibson (bow), Jessie Pennington (2-seat), Lindsay Wike (3-seat), Kimberly Tschetter (stroke), Lindsay Dilschneider (coxswain), Keith Jefferson (coach).

Crew. Look for all the latest program information and results on our website at www.spu.edu/depts/crew.

New Rowing Ergometers

Thanks to all who contributed to the crew this year. In addition to promoting excellence in racing, the program was able to replace all of its aging rowing machines with the newer Model C versions. This will definitely advance the training quality, as well as minimize maintenance issues. Please remember SPU Crew in your annual giving plans.



New Model C rowing ergometers replace aging machines, improving the quality of training for crew teams.

mothers would announce the good news: the Falcons won by a slim 4/10 of a second. Their winning time of 7:33.8 was a school record and improved nicely on their mark of last year—an amazing finish, considering only one of the SPU rowers from last year’s championship crew had returned this year.

Novice Men Finish Best Ever at Vails

Up the coast from the women’s finals at Gainesville, the openweight novice men were duking it out at the Dad Vail Championship regatta in Philadelphia that same weekend. Billed unofficially as the nation’s *small college* championships, “the Vails,” as they’re referred to, comprise a formidable gathering of crews from around the country. The SPU men competed against 53 teams. Experienced Vail medalist Josh Adam, now the Falcon novice coach, was at the helm of this donnybrook and invoked the novice men’s mettle early on. The freshmen got down to business and won their heat easily with substantial open water.

They drew a slightly tougher semifinal and finished behind University of Minnesota, but still advancing to the finals. The clear winner in the grand final was Minnesota, but a dogfight ensued for second and third. Ultimately, North Carolina State poured on a sprint for an extra couple of seats over the Falcons, who found themselves scrambling for a medal against Johns Hopkins in the final 50 meters. As at the women’s final, a breathtaking photo finish left everyone agonizing at the finish line, waiting to hear who would get to land at the awards dock. Earning the bronze the hard way over 51 other entries was a sweet ending, well worth the wait for the young Falcon rowers.

This was a tremendous effort, given their situation with three lightweight rowers in an open category, borrowed equipment, and no practice opportunity before racing. It was certainly a well-deserved bronze medal for the Falcon men.

The results of both men’s and women’s championship races this year continue to demonstrate the sustained level of excellence of Seattle Pacific Crew and will serve as hallmarks for years to come.



The Dad Vail bronze medal men’s novice four from left to right: Angie Stearns (coxswain), Tyler Van Stright (stroke), Joel Braman (3-seat), Kyle Glines (2-seat), Trevor Winters (bow).