

For the first time ever, the entire women's team of rowers qualified for national level competition, leading to one of the best team finishes, as well. Two gold medals and a bronze for the women meant the entire team finished in the medals, a huge accomplishment for this young team. This year the national event was the Dad Vail Regatta in Philadelphia.

With some key injuries in the open women's section reducing the varsity four to a pair, a third attempt at winning at the Avaya Collegiate Championship had to be deferred for a year. Nevertheless, the three Western Intercollegiate Rowing Association champion crews were to represent Seattle Pacific University very well through the varsity pair, the varsity light four and the novice four. The Dad Vail Regatta in Philadelphia, the largest national event of its kind, enjoyed its largest turnout, with 113 colleges and universities from across the country in attendance.

The racing began with rough conditions, as the

Spring Recap

The women's team started strong, entering the championship season undefeated in all categories. Even with one photo-finish defeat at the Northwest Collegiate Rowing Conference Championships, the light varsity four was one of the first to show signs of real speed early in the season by racing and winning many times in both the light and openweight categories. A young crew with a strong returning group from last year's WIRA champion light novice four, these women corrected their narrow NCRC loss the following weekend at the WIRA Championships in Sacramento by defeating all their Western foes and solidifying a berth at nationals.

The women's novice four and varsity pair had little trouble all the way through the season. The pair, with perhaps the two best physical athletes SPU Crew has seen in years, was never really pushed throughout the season. Even with a persistent injury in the stroke seat, their ubiquitous power was to deny any challengers from the start.

The novice four enjoyed some depth with the addition of Sarah Zorn, who had rowed previously at the junior levels, and Andrea Martineau, who rowed for five weeks last year before undergoing back surgery and needing to stay out all season. The addition of true novices in the middle of the boat made for a potent and highly motivated combination that learned quickly and remained undaunted in the face of even varsity and junior varsity crews. These women never really had any serious challengers in their category all spring. With all five of these crewmembers returning for the next three years, SPU should keep the championship.

The men's squad had some injury difficulties this year as they attempted to capitalize on good retention. The men's pair was to start out with a win and a second place finish in season before tendonitis took out Tyler Van Stright for three critical weeks right in the middle of the season. Similarly, the men's light varsity four, all returning from a solid 2001 WIRA gold medal and Dad Vail bronze, got hit hard at about the same time with a debilitating rib injury from Kyle Glines in the two-seat; this was to affect their lineup for three regattas. Both managed to recover in time for the championship season but lost too much training time to muster a championship medal at WIRA to gain a national berth. The men's novice group hit similar problems, besides having a late start, with half their crew starting in Winter Quarter. The struggles reflected in their finishes: the varsity crews finished just out of the medals in fourth at the WIRA championships, and the novice men missed qualifying for the final.

wind seemed to blow from several different directions throughout the course. The Falcons battled stability issues throughout the entire course during their heats. Each of the three Falcon crews handled it with deft confidence, managing to win each of their heats, some coming from behind to do so.

The following morning, the women's novice four was the only crew that, with 36 opponents, was required to race a semi-final. In typical fashion, however, they made light work of their competition to clear their way to the afternoon final.

Fortunately, the conditions were significantly improved with a very light tail breeze which, in concert with the river current, made for some incredible race times on finals day. This proved particularly true for the SPU crews who had their first win of the day—and the first SPU win ever at this regatta—with the women's novice four. With a little oar trouble at the outset, the women came from some distance behind to complete their undefeated season an impressive five seconds ahead of second-place University of Massachusetts-Amherst. Assistant Coach Josh Adam was at the awards dock to hand out medals for the young crew members, who will do well transitioning up to the varsity category from here on out.

Next was the gold medal finish with the women's pair. With conditions much to their favor, this dominating pair established a lead early on and vanquished their nearest competition, Bucknell, by almost ten seconds, choosing to do so without a sprint. This was an amazing win for this undefeated crew and a tremendous

Trish

It's not very often in this sport we can profile an individual in such a demanding, team-oriented sport. But this is an occasion where one person has risen to the top so distinctly that she must be given appropriate recognition. In just two years of involvement with Seattle Pacific athletics, Trisha Sawatzky has distinguished herself so positively, she can hardly escape notice in her own right.

Trisha Sawatzky is a superb individual in all aspects. A physics major with a minor in English literature, Trish is an honors student with a 3.79 GPA. She conducted her honors project on the physics/biomechanics of rowing.

One of the most athletically inclined individuals in this program, Trish ranked near the top in all testing categories. As a novice last year, her crew was undefeated. This year, Trish repeated that accomplishment in the pair and nearly in the varsity four. The 2002 varsity four, an unpracticed mixed light and heavy arrangement, won all but two races.

Trish can claim this year's competitive accomplishments: winning the NCRC Conference championship in both the varsity pair and varsity four, winning the WIRA Championship varsity pair, grabbing silver in the varsity four, and of course winning the varsity pair at Dad Vail. Trish was honored all throughout the various affiliations this year, voted as NCRC All-Conference, All-WIRA Second Team, CoSIDA/Verizon Academic All-District, CRCA Scholar-Athlete, and CRCA All-American. A co-captain and stalwart leader within her squad, she was voted Oarswoman of the Year this year by her peers, earned the Athletics Department Award for Excellence and the Norm Edwards Scholarship Award two years in a row. Trish is a two-year SPU Scholar-Athlete and SPU Athlete of the Year. With this resume, Trish will be a tough act to follow for years to come.

Year-End Needs

As one might imagine, taking the entire women's team to the East Coast had a rather vast impact on our finances this year, and we are grateful to all of you who have already contributed to make that travel possible. We are upgrading our equipment consistently and continue to need your help as we approach the next season with a diminished account. We welcome any renewed pledges and donations to help offset these expenditures. As always, your support in all forms is invaluable, and we are very appreciative.

career culmination for the two seniors.

Finally, the women's varsity light four was to test their mettle against some very tough competition. The University of Georgia team, which had dominated the heats, managed to further stake its claim by establishing an early lead that was not to be challenged by any crew. But a close race for second ensued between the SPU and Carnegie-Mellon lightweights. An explosive sprint by the Carnegie crew in the last 100 meters managed to give them the edge for silver over the Falcons by a mere two-tenths of a second. Nonetheless, it was a terrific finish for this young crew, whose members will all return next year to pursue their gold medal.