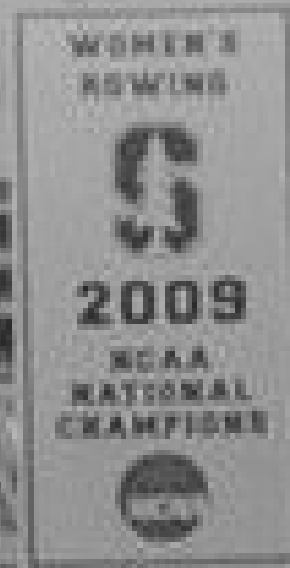




STANFORD
ROWING



BOATHOUSE OF CHAMPIONS

NEWSLETTER VOL. 7

SEMI-ANNUAL PUBLICATION
ON STANFORD ROWING

PRESENTED BY
THE ROWING ASSOCIATION



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THE ROWING ASSOCIATION

Our organization and purpose

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"BOATHOUSE OF CHAMPIONS"

A SEMI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

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MORE FROM THE ROWING ASSOCIATION

Connect with us and share your story to be featured in Boathouse of Champions

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Our team of incredible individuals who bring The Rowing Association to life

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THE ROWING ASSOCIATION

Welcome to Volume 7 of Boathouse of Champions!

The Rowing Association is a 2500+ Community of Alums, Parents, and Friends of Stanford Rowing. The 2023–24 season saw our Teams and Community come together and we are proud to see the incredibly positive energy on the water, in the boathouse, and on the shore. This is becoming a great chapter in the history of Stanford Rowing.

Our three teams all delivered seasons to be proud of, and to a team, entered summer eager to build on their momentum come Fall. In this issue, we get a chance to know Molly Hamrick a bit better, and we believe you'll find her approach to "Boathouse Culture" is central to delivering the Stanford Rowing Experience.

A rain-soaked Big Row brought a Stanford crowd to Redwood Shores that we haven't seen in some time. Parents and alums from six (maybe seven?) decades of Stanford Rowing crowded on and under the bridge to cheer on the Cardinal. The shore was all Cardinal – to the extent that the livestream announcer (Cal alum) commented on Cal being severely outmatched from a fan standpoint. Thank you Events Team and Parents for getting that to happen!

For Rowing, Parents Weekend on the Farm was highlighted by Family Day at the Boathouse. Our Community was treated with the opportunity to catch teams coming off the water after practice. Some even took the opportunity to jump in boats and see if they could still row? Thank you coaches for helping make this happen and we are happy to announce this is now Annual Family Day.

The Rowing Association would like to extend a special thank you to the Class of '24. Your Stanford careers started with a Covid lockdown followed by the Men's and Light's futures being put in doubt. The Boathouse as we know it was at risk. You dug in with commitment and brought Stanford Rowing together as One. Possibly one of the greatest wins in Stanford Rowing History.

Stay tuned as we prepare to launch the Stanford Rowing Networking Program this Fall. In a nutshell, we will provide a framework whereby current athletes, recent alums, and other members of the Stanford Rowing Community can find mentorship, be made aware of various internship opportunities, or simply reach out for career or industry insight.

Lastly, The Rowing Association is happy to announce we have kicked off a fundraising drive against two new funds. In the spirit of continuing to Strengthen, Secure and Deliver Something Bigger for Stanford Rowing, we will be building two new endowments, the first to support the equipment needs of all three teams, and the second to support Assistant Coaches. We look forward to your continued support!



TRIUMPHS AND TENACITY

A Stellar Year for Stanford Lights – By Associate Head Coach, Lizzy Houston

What a fantastic year we've had! I feel incredibly lucky to coach such an amazing group of young women who are committed to excellence both on and off the water. I couldn't be prouder, and I'm excited to keep building the program together.

I'd like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our seniors. Their leadership and determination over the years has created a strong foundation for the future of our program. Their impact will be felt for years to come, and they will be greatly missed!

We kicked off the season on a high note, securing a first-place victory in the 8+ at the San Diego Crew Classic and a commendable 4th place for the 4+, just behind Texas, Cal, and Washington. I'm always excited by our team's ability to compete with such formidable openweight programs. Next, we faced Princeton, a challenge we were both ready for and eager to tackle. The 4+ delivered an outstanding performance, clinching a sizable win. The 2x just missed the top spot by a slim margin of under two seconds. While the 8+ ultimately fell short that weekend, we were optimistic about their potential to close that gap by the time we met again in June.

In the weekends following SDCC and Princeton, we continued to have some fantastic racing with our 8+, 4+, and 2x sweeping the competition! First, we headed to chilly Madison, Wisconsin, for our dual meet with the University of Wisconsin. Despite temperatures dropping to the low 30s (definitely a change from our temperate Palo Alto) and strong winds forcing a change in our racing location, our crews showed resilience and adaptability, ultimately emerging victorious.

The following weekend, we journeyed north to Sacramento for the WIRA Championships. There, we secured the efficiency trophy, thanks to outstanding performances from all our crews. They demonstrated great composure and grit, resulting in some truly impressive racing. Before heading to NJ, we had our final race against Boston University. It was a wonderful experience hosting them for the first time at Redwood Shores. We secured a solid victory in the 8+, boosting our ranking from 4th to 3rd place. Unfortunately, our 4+ and 2x teams didn't clinch a win that weekend, but they put up a great fight and highlighted areas we needed to focus on in the weeks leading up to the IRAs. Their admirable performances set the stage for our push towards medal contention.

Our performance at the IRAs was the result of the team's relentless hard work and dedication throughout the season. With a track record of excellent racing, I had full confidence in each crew's ability to shine, and we set our sights on the podium. This year was particularly thrilling for our 4+ and 2x, as they competed for a spot in grand finals.

Despite a last-minute lineup change, our 2x secured a spot in the grand final after some very, very tight racing and produced an impressive finish in 4th place. Our 4+ dominated their heat with the fastest time and brought home the Championship Title for the first time since 2021. The 8+ had a close race with Radcliffe and Princeton throughout the weekend. They finished 3rd in their race for lanes but gave it their all in the grand final, overtaking Radcliffe, earning a silver medal and finishing just under 2 seconds behind Princeton for the Commissioners Cup. Overall, the team came in second by a single point, marking our best team finish in the last 5 years. We're incredibly proud of everyone's efforts and achievements and hungry for what's in store.

FINAL AND FOREVER

P A C - 1 2 C H A M P I O N S



FINAL AND FOREVER

Derek Byrnes, Stanford Women's Head Coach

Another spring season has come and gone, and what a ride it was! Each race presented a unique set of challenges, from weather to competitors in new locations. We saw the largest shipping port on the western seaboard, the historical suburbs of rural Virginia, the hat-slinging middle of Texas, and all the joy that Ohio has to offer. May have even been many people's first time racing at sunset. Our first two races of the spring were delayed due to weather conditions, so we found ourselves racing to cross the finish line before we ran out of light. As a coaching staff, it's something we personally really enjoyed, not sure about it athletically though. Regardless, the team threw down, in what can only be described as a resilient and flexible season of speed.

There were lots of wins and some educational losses that pushed this group to drum up their inner warriors, something they do well. One of the most exciting accomplishments this season was becoming the FINAL and FOREVER PAC-12 Champions, in every single race that went down at Lake Natoma this year. While the Pac-12 dissolves into the archives, Stanford women will hold all the trophies forever.

The battles the team faced throughout the season brought our team to an overall 2nd place team finish at the NCAA. While some might deem this achievement a success, for this team, it's a little bittersweet. Their expectations are high, driven by a culture of excellence and relentless pursuit of their ultimate goals. Yet, amidst the undertone of disappointment, there's a deep sense of gratitude and admiration for the hard-fought battles and inspiring performances. I mean, our Second 8 showed the rowing world how to be a force of undeniable prowess. The varsity had maybe their best race of the season on that Sunday, and the four pushed up one spot from last year. We had a heck of a lot of fun this year, and it can only be summed up by the words of Dolly via Belle Battistoni's theme/hype song; "working 9 to 5, what a way to make a living!"



SWC with Tara Vanderveer (center), who was the head women's basketball coach at Stanford University from 1985 until her retirement in 2024. Vanderveer joined in on a recent practice (and even hopped in the boat for a stretch!)

Continued . . .

Seeing so many parents and supporters come out this season was heartwarming, but also very telling that SWC goes well beyond the blades in the water. It's a testament to the passion and camaraderie that define this team – a group of incredible individuals united by their love for speed. There will always be a place for the cowbells (we now own a lot of cowbells) and fan-gear on the trailer for you (literally we had a large box of cowbells on the trailer people, so please when you arrive at the course ask for a cowbell)! To all our supporters, whether cheering from the sidelines or decking out in SWC gear, your unwavering dedication means the world to us. Thank you for standing by us, flying all across the county to watch us race (get ready to rack up frequent flyer mileage next year as we travel to Knoxville, Austin and Clemson), for showing up when it mattered most, and for entrusting us with your remarkable children. Together, we'll continue to push boundaries, chase dreams, and storm the castle.

Now, as we celebrate graduation here on The Farm, our attention shifts to Paris, the stage for the 2024 Olympics – a pinnacle of athletic achievement, where aspirations transform into reality, and a number of our rowing alums get to live out their dream.

Just a refresher...

Azja Czajkowski, USA, pair (2-)

Esther Briz Zamarano, SPAIN, pair (2-)

Emily Delleman, USA, quad (4x)

Cece Dupre, SWITZERLAND, quad (4x)



To Azja, Esther, Emily, and Cece: your contributions to SWC are immeasurable, and as you prepare to embark on this extraordinary adventure, know that we stand beside you with boundless enthusiasm. May your Olympic journey be filled with unforgettable moments and unparalleled success. Embrace every moment of this incredible journey. Your hard work, dedication, and passion have brought you to this extraordinary stage. Believe in yourself, trust your training, and compete with all your heart. Remember, you're not just representing yourself but also your country, your team, and all those who have supported you along the way. Make every stride, every stroke, every move count. Regardless of the outcome, know that you've already achieved something remarkable by simply being there. Cherish this experience, savor every second, and make memories that will last a lifetime. Go out there and shine! I'd like to say that we shift from coaches to the biggest fans, but really that's just what we are all the time. We are the biggest fans of Stanford Women's Rowing, so proud, so grateful, and so excited for the future. Thank you all for joining in this ride, enjoy your summer, make sure to watch the Olympics, congrats to all our graduating seniors and their epic jobs, see you in a few months, and... GO CARD!

– Coaches of SWC



	PTS	REB	AST	STL	TO	FG%	FT%	3PT%
27	12							
18	7							
3	3							
1	1							
4	2							
67	23							
100	0							
100	25							

CHOP WOOD, CARRY WATER

Ted Sobolewski, Farwell Family Director of Men's Rowing

As I reflect on our 2023–2024 season, I am reminded of a Zen saying that was brought to my attention through the writing of renowned Chicago Bulls and Los Angeles Lakers Coach, Phil Jackson, “Before enlightenment, chop wood, carry water. After enlightenment, chop wood, carry water.”



This year is the story of a team in transition. Since the spring of 2021 we've bounced between years that felt like a relative success (5th in 2021, 8th in 2023) and years that felt like we came up short of our expectations (13th in 2022, 12th in 2024). Whether we felt success or failure at the end of the year, there hasn't always been a clear path towards building off the results towards something better the following year.

Our outlook at the end of this year feels different. Even in the many moments we came up short of our goals, it felt like we were simultaneously building towards future success. While we faced our fair share of challenge and adversity, those moments were met with growth and maturation. This has set the foundation for a group of athletes who are ready to elevate the competitive speed of the program moving forward. There is a clear path towards this team being better in 2025, and then even better in 2026.

We didn't shy away from challenge in our racing schedule this year. We started the year off at the IRA Sarasota Invitational, racing two teams that eventually came in 1st and 2nd at the National Championship. All in all, we ended up going head-to-head with six of the eventual top seven teams in the country in our early season racing. Ultimately, this is the level that we aspire to compete at. It was no doubt a difficult introduction to collegiate racing for our ten frosh who raced in the 1v/2v mixture, however, we gained a lot of valuable experience that is already proving useful towards building into next year.

Our performance at the IRA unsurprisingly mirrored our year-long preparation. Roughly two weeks before the championship, we settled on what I believe was the best lineup we had all year in the varsity. That crew had a great final 10 days of training. They rowed fast training pieces in practice, and ultimately had a solid row in the heat to advance into the A/B semi. The vibe in the crew after the heat was awesome, and we still felt like we had more speed than what we showed in the heat. While we were ready to be opportunists in the semi, the inconsistency of the year caught up with us, and we were unable to bring our best to the water in the final two races. The speed we found at the very end of the year was fragile, especially under the highest-pressure racing of the year. We will have 8 of 9 from this crew return next year.

Continued . . .

The 2nd Varsity Eight wound up with a very difficult draw in the IRA heat, which landed them in the C/D semi. They did an excellent job of regrouping and winning the C-final in a convincing fashion. When I talk about this year feeling different, I think this crew is a perfect example. While the result we got is ultimately the same as our 2023 result, the crew was a huge step forward in all ways. We had four frosh and a sophomore in the stern five, providing an excellent rhythm. These five athletes have the right attitude and mindset, along with massive physical upside heading into next year. I expect them all to compete for seats in our varsity boat, but with their continued development, we expect to have a significantly faster 2nd varsity next year, which will bode well for the upward pressure on our varsity crew.



While we have a great group returning next year, with 10 incoming frosh and two graduate transfers joining the mix, we also lose a great group of seniors. These athletes were supposed to begin rowing at Stanford in the fall of 2020. As you remember, life got a little crazy before they arrived here – their high school senior years were cut short due to COVID-19, our program was cut in July 2020, their frosh year was moved entirely online, and we didn't begin training in person as a team until March 2021. It was a lot to go through, and it would have been easy for them to walk away. To a man, they all stuck with it, and to a man, they all had their best years rowing as college seniors. I want to thank them for their commitment to Stanford Rowing and will always remember the role they played in navigating the program through some difficult years.

Finally, I want to thank our alumni, families, and friends of the program for all their support. This is the end of my fourth year at Stanford, and I continue to be blown away by the people we have behind us. You are the biggest asset we have as a program. Who you are and the values you hold is why it's so important we continue to support the sport of rowing at Stanford. I can also say that through your support, our community is stronger than ever. We're looking forward to the 2024-2025 season, and we'll continue to "chop wood, carry water." **Go Card!**



2024 SPRING RACING HIGHLIGHTS

San Diego Crew Classic

- Lights take first in the Cal Cup.

PAC-12 Invitational

- Men close out the Pac-12 Invite with a 4-2 record, sweeping Wisconsin and La Salle after losing to Syracuse.

Princeton Class of '15 Cup

- Lights host No. 1 Princeton, with the V4 winning by 9 seconds, while the V8 and 2x trailed the Tigers.

Wisconsin

- Lights sweep Wisconsin with 6+ second leads in every race.

WIRA Championship

- Lights sweep the V8, V4, and 2x at the WIRA Championships.

Longhorn Invitational

- Women win two of five races against Texas at the Longhorn Invite, with victories in the V4 and 4V8.

Oregon State

- Men's 1V8 and 2V8 secure 10-second victories over Oregon State at Dexter Lake, while the V4+ finish fourth.

Big Row

- Cal Men take Big Row.
- Women dominate Cal, winning all five races by open water.

Boston Dual

- Lights V8+ top the Terriers at Redwood Shores, while V4+ and 2x get nipped.

Pac-12 Championships

- Men place 3rd in the 1V8+ and 2V8.
- Women sweep the 2024 Pac-12 Women's Rowing Championships, and secure their third consecutive conference title by winning all scoring races and finishing with 45.5 points.
- Senior Belle Battistoni named Pac-12 Women's Rowing Scholar-Athlete of the Year.

IRA Championships

- Men finish 12th.
- Lights secure second place in the Commissioner's Cup, highlighted by a dominant win in the 4+ grand final and strong finishes in the V8+ and 2x.

NCAA Championships

- Women conclude the season with a runner-up finish at the NCAA Championships, highlighted by a national championship title by the 2V8+.

Visit our website www.therowingassociation.com for continued coverage and in-depth recaps of Stanford Rowing and Alumni racing!

MEET THE COACHES: MOLLY HAMRICK

Alben Family Associate Head Women's Rowing Coach

The Rowing Association would like to give our Community the opportunity to get to know our coaches a bit better. Coaches play a central role in defining the essence of Stanford Rowing and leaving their signature on different eras as much, if not more, than the athletes. We are watching an exciting era of WROW emerge, and the Associate Coaches play a large role in that. For this edition of Boathouse of Champions, we got the chance to connect with Molly Hamrick, The Alben Family Associate Head Women's Rowing Coach.



TRA: *Molly- Thanks for connecting with us on this. Can you start by telling us how you ended up coaching at Stanford?*

MH: I began coaching part-time in 2015 with the Brookline High School Varsity Girls while living and training as an Olympic hopeful in Cambridge, MA (fun fact – lightweight assistant Antonella Kugler is one of my first athletes!). In 2017, I stepped away from full-time training to work with the Under-19 scullers at Community Rowing in Boston, and decided that I wanted to try my hand at collegiate coaching. I started as the volunteer assistant for the women at my alma mater, Princeton, working under Lori Dauphiny. I held that role for two years, but was ready for a change (and a paycheck) by summer 2019. In coaching, you're at the mercy of the job market, so I never allowed myself to have a "dream job" because there are a finite number of assistant positions at each institution and roles only open every few years, but if I had to have one, it was Stanford. They were the only school who I felt was "beating us" at recruiting – if we lost an athlete with Princeton, it was to Stanford. I had learned a ton in my first two years and was aware that I had so much more to learn and was hungry to do so. I had a feeling that I'd be able to learn a lot from Kelsie and Derek at Stanford, and the values aligned with mine – I loved working with academically-driven individuals who wanted to go fast. Stanford seemed to check those boxes.

That June, the lightweight assistant coach job opened up. I contacted Kate Bertko (who also happens to be a huge role model of mine) about the position, who told me to "just wait a few more hours." Not long after, the openweights posted a position, and I reached out to Kelsie Chaudoin, applied, got on the phone with Derek, and had an offer from him a day or two later. I had never been to Stanford or Palo Alto, but accepted the job site-unseen. I knew it was the right fit for me and couldn't wait to get started.

TRA: What's the best part of being a Rowing Coach?

MH: I have the best job in the world and there is nobody who can convince me otherwise. I have nothing but gratitude for the opportunity to do what I do; it's incredibly fulfilling to have a life where my career and passion are interwoven (and I feel especially lucky that I have a partner who is also a rowing nerd and understands what I do). Primarily, I find it incredibly inspiring to get to work alongside people – referring to both my colleagues and my athletes – who care deeply about the people around them and this common mission we're all working towards, and are willing to work hard for one another. They are some of the most caring, hardworking, clever, humble, and hilarious people I've ever met, and I've become a better person by working alongside them. They find the joy in the difficult and the mundane and create such a positive atmosphere. It's both contagious and inspiring!

I also get to witness the personal growth of these athletes in ways that will positively affect them through the rest of their lives, which is exceptionally rewarding. Female empowerment is a huge priority of mine, and helping these women find their voices, feel celebrated for who they are exactly as they show up, and develop skills that will prepare them for whatever they want to do after Stanford (rowing or otherwise), are my top priorities. Our staff talks all the time about the growth of the athletes – and rarely we're referring to erg scores, here. It's usually in reference to confidence, ability to be a team player, a leader, their time management, etc. And with that growth comes the results that the athletes care about (the erg scores, the boat placements, and the wins), and having the front row seat of their success and the joy that brings them is just the most special.

It's not too bad that I get to bring my dogs to work, either.



TRA: Many attribute the recent success of the women's program to boathouse culture as much as a solid training program. How would you describe the current positive boathouse culture? How does the team of coaches build that? How can you tell when you have it?

MH: Culture is paramount. We (coaches) try to be thoughtful about everything we do, and we put as much effort – if not more, sometimes – into developing a positive and effective team culture as we do training plan. For the women's rowing team, our culture can be boiled down to embracing hard work (and finding athletes who consider "hard" and "fun" synonymous), finding joy in the process, being a great teammate, and not taking ourselves too seriously. Don't get me wrong, we take the work seriously. We hold ourselves and one another to a high standard, but we also don't let the highs get too high or the lows get too low. They understand when to be serious and when to be silly. We try to cultivate an environment where the athletes look forward to coming to the boathouse every day, and that they're leaving practice feeling good about themselves. That doesn't mean every day is the best day ever – there will certainly be great days and frustrating days – but we try to help the athletes develop a skillset where they can move through each day effectively and have teammates who will help lift them up and shake off the bad days (and maybe make a meme or two at the coaches' expense to keep things light).

Primarily, we influence culture by acting in a way that we hope sets good example. For me, that means expressing gratitude, leading with love and kindness, and holding myself to a high standard, among other behaviors. Derek goes above and beyond to make sure that each and every person understands their value on the team – largely by making sure everyone has racing opportunities throughout the season. We preach a "we before me" mentality, meaning that it's about the strength of the entire program before it's about any one person. We also make sure to demonstrate this through our behavior, not just talking the talk. Most other programs only travel to races with their NCAA squad, but we take everyone to every spring race. That includes NCAAs – win or lose, the entire roster gets to be there and experience the racing and results, because everyone is responsible for how those boats finish, not just the 23 women who get to go down the course.

Honestly, though, the athletes drive the culture. This is their thing, and I think that's important. We are here to help them achieve their goals, not the other way around. They have ownership over how they want this team to look and feel, and they take pride in who we are as a team. They play an active role in teaching the first years what it means to be on SWC. Coaches meet with our "team leaders" (one representative from each class) every other week, where we have an honest and open dialogue about recent and upcoming events, which allows us to always have our fingers on the pulse and provide guidance when needed. Of course, we're here for the athletes. We try to create a coach-athlete culture where they feel genuinely cared about and respected and are comfortable coming to us about whatever – whether that's video review or personal issues or wanting to share a class project they've just finished. When it comes to problem-solving, we try to lean into having the older athletes step up as leaders and help their younger teammates navigate their Stanford experience. If we see somebody struggling with time management, for example, we'll pull aside a junior or senior who faced similar obstacles in their first year or two but is now crushing it and ask that person to check in on that teammate.

I've heard someone describe managing team culture as trying to maintain your point during a race. It's normal to drift one way or the other with wake or wind or if one side is catching before the other, but if we keep our heads up, we can make small, methodical corrections with the rudder or pressure to keep ourselves straight without disrupting our course. A team with a positive culture does not have an absence of challenges, it's one where the athletes care enough to want to upkeep the culture, feel comfortable seeking coaches for guidance, and feel empowered and equipped with the skillset to problem-solve when something arises. When the athletes care about the quality of our culture just like they care about one another as individuals, then I know we've got a good thing going.

TRA: Former rowers know the feeling of backing into the start line before a big race. The dead time before crews are polled . . . The combination of adrenaline and butterflies. What does it feel like watching a boat you've coached back into the start?

MH: Oh gosh, the rowers and parents all know how nervous I get before racing. I want to be clear, it has nothing to do with a lack of confidence in them – I have so much confidence in their abilities as racers and competitors – but I hate waiting and not having anything productive I can do in that moment. The girls and their parents joke around with me because they know my heart rate leading up to races will consistently sit around 115–130 (not an exaggeration) while I'm just standing there. They've sniped photos and videos of me pacing nervously before and during racing. It's something I'm working on, but I genuinely do appreciate that they make light of it! The nerves are part of the fun of it all, and I consider it a privilege to do something that I care so much about.

TRA: Similarly, regatta atmosphere often has an overly serious tone around pre-race and boat launch. WROW appears to be loose, enjoying themselves, genuinely happy to be there around pre-race. How does that happen?

MH: These girls are all about hype. They are loud on the water, they are loud in the erg room, and they celebrate any opportunity they have to get out there and throw down. They love to compete, they love to race, and we love that they have so much energy around it. It's hard to beat a team that's having fun.

TRA: We come to WROW races and see a crowd of parents, friends, and athletes from other sports lining the shore. They're all armed with cowbells and decked out in Stanford gear. What does that mean to the athletes and coaching staff?

MH: Our parents are the best. We wouldn't be where we are without their support – they are willing to do anything and everything to help us out and also help these girls feel celebrated and supported. I love the hype – this year it's the cowbells, last year it was Katelin Gildersleeve's dad on his bike at the starting line of every single Stanford race (breaking the tense, starting line silence with a "GO STANFORD!").

I know our athletes love to feel seen and supported, so any and all supporters – parents, siblings, friends, professors – who show up for them mean the world. I'm hopeful that we can continue to build this culture, especially surrounding our annual events like Big Row! Redwood Shores has to be one of the best spectator venues in the US, and having Stanford fans line the bridge and the shore is just the best display of community (and the energy you need going through the 1k). It'd be great to turn that into a weekend event, one that alumni have on their calendar annually and that parents and families make sure to be around for each year. I think we're on the right track!

TRA: As an Associate Head Coach, you do a lot of recruiting. Tell us about that?

MH: Recruiting is probably about 80% of my job. Overall, I really enjoy it, and my experiences with athletes and parents has been overwhelmingly positive. I'd estimate that we talk to about 300 athletes per year, some as just one-off correspondences and others several conversations, visits, Zooms, all culminating with a commitment to Stanford (hopefully!). The entire process for an athlete, start to finish, takes an average of 4–5 months, from first contact to commitment. Everyone is different, but what's really rewarding is when we talk to an athlete who just "has it." Everyone I talk to is special and has something to offer, of course, but sometimes I'll meet a kid who I can just so clearly envision here at Stanford and who I'm confident will get along well with our team. I tell the team that it's like we get to hand-pick their future best friends. It's really rewarding to meet these athletes and then, once they're here, see them get along with one another so well! I know how important these relationships will be for the rest of their lives, and we don't take this responsibility lightly. We work hard to bring people who will be the right athletic, academic, cultural, and social fits, who will be great teammates, and who will row and be contributors to our team for all four years.

TRA: If you're recruiting a top rower who is also being recruited by other top schools, what's your "Come to Stanford Pitch?"

MH: Of course, I talk about how the student-athlete experience is unparalleled. We're consistently one of the top academic institutions in the world AND one of the top athletic departments in the country, and we have a robust network of resources and support systems to back that up. Really, though, I just try to get top-tier recruits to meet our team and experience our team culture as quickly as I can. I think what we have is very special and unique, especially for a high-performing team, and that is often what seals the deal. Our team is so warm and welcoming, and they do a great job of making their potential future teammates feel like they belong. On a daily basis, they also demonstrate that it's possible to work hard, care deeply about a goal, and still find the fun and lightness in the process. They are each other's biggest cheerleaders and support system. I talk to the recruits about how "the people make the place," and we have the best people.

TRA: Coaching rowing is very personal. Your personal life has had rowing in it for some time now, and the trajectory looks like that's going to continue. Are you able to leave it on the water? Or leave it at the boathouse?

MH: Haha – not really, no. I mean, I am engaged to one of the coaches on the men's staff. But our relationship with the sport is not unhealthy, either. Niles and I don't obsess over work at home, we leave the stressful parts of work at work, and we do make sure to take time away from rowing/stay involved in other activities and be respectful when the other person doesn't want to talk shop at any given moment. We really enjoy camping and backpacking, and we get outside with the dogs on a regular basis.



But we also love rowing, and we love learning. Niles loves exercise science and physiology; I love culture-building and recruiting. If my athletes read this, they're going to make fun of me, but he and I will sit on the couch together with our telemetry computers and compare our teams' data sets, learning from one another. We'll listen to podcasts about coaching philosophy. We're getting married in August and probably 75% of our guestlist (if not more) have some connection to rowing. So, a big part of our lives outside of work is rowing, but we are alright with that.

TRA: A couple of years into Stanford coaching, the Alben Family made a donation to endow your position. Tell us what that was like?

MH: It's impossible to properly express my gratitude for the support and generosity of the Alben family. I feel unbelievably lucky that I get to do what I do every day, and to have the support and belief of alumni leaves me without words. I love what I do and care deeply about the women that come through this program, and it's so inspiring to know that they're going to continue to be a part of such a strong and supportive community – in that of The Rowing Association – once they graduate. It's the support (not just fiscal, but also in time, energy, and beyond) of our strong and ever-strengthening community that make it possible for us to do what we do and continue to raise the bar. It's unbelievably inspiring to remember that we have an entire village behind us.

TRA: Molly– Thank you for spending this time with us and thank you do for everything you do for Stanford Rowing!



2023–24 STANFORD ROWERS ENGAGE IN COMMUNITY

Initialize Stanford Participation in the Growing STEM to Stern Program

During the spring of '23, Rising Senior **Fiona Mooney '25** and her teammates were in the middle of their quest to a National Championship. She felt the intensity of training and racing while balancing the demands of being a full-time student. The camaraderie and teamwork that defines Stanford Women's Rowing kept Fiona and her team focused. While they had all earned their spots, Fiona realized how fortunate she and her teammates were to have the opportunity to row for Stanford. Fiona was aware of the STEM to Stern Program, a community-based program focused on expanding accessibility and inclusion in rowing, and asked Coach Biging Harmon how Stanford might become part of it. Her coach connected her with nearby NorCal Crew and Fiona began coordinating Stanford's participation in their STEM to Stern program.

STEM to Stern originated in Wisconsin and now boasts 25 programs nationally. Their approach is unique, focusing on middle school-age kids and building accessibility on both the athletic (Stern) and academic (STEM) aspect of the sport. STEM to Stern draws on collaborative partnership within each community, so as to build programs with resources and continuity.

David Banks '07, who is on the STEM to Stern Board, as well as the Oakland Strokes Board, describes what makes it work:

"In short, it's a program that helps introduce kids to rowing in communities where there typically has been a lack of access and opportunity. The local program is built and supported by partners in the community, a college or university, and volunteers. The program helps manage food, transportation, and other services so that participants show up to rowing practice as just regular middle schoolers, not part of a special program."

Banks also describes what makes it more dynamic than many learn-to-row or school-visit type activities:

"We have a solid (and free) middle school pathway, ready to offer the next day after a learn-to-row event or school visit. We time those events to coordinate with the start of a STEM to Stern session, so we don't have to wait months after the excitement of an event until we can get kids in a summer camp or similar."



Fiona Mooney '25

Stanford's participation has been entirely on an opt-in basis with a handful of rowers at a time going to STEM to Stern practices. They help lead part of practice and tailor it to the middle school athletes. That often looks like showing them the sequence of a rowing stroke, building familiarity on the ergs, or spicing it up a bit with erg relays!

Athletes also engage in the STEM portion of the program, getting the middle schoolers to on-campus programs that expose them to areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. Fiona and her teammates have helped coordinate programs bringing the middle schoolers to programs held at the Graduate School of Education and the Medical School.

Continued . . .

Mooney describes how she and her teammates manage to juggle a STEM to Stern commitment while rowing and being a full time student:

“STEM to Stern set up a structure that made our participation very easy. I coordinate blocking out times that work for both STEM to Stern’s schedule and ours, then get all of the athletes who want to participate signed up. Honestly, it’s really fun!!! So, it’s a welcome break from studying and practice.”

Mooney shares what participating in STEM to Stern has meant to her:

“Something we talk about amongst the team is the importance of having balance and things you care about outside of classes and practice. And while this definitely falls within the category of rowing, it matters in its own right, so it has been a great addition to our overall Stanford student-athlete experience.”

“Rowing has taught me so many invaluable lessons including introducing me to teammates who will be lifelong friends. And rowing is not a sport done halfway, one has to go all in, fully commit. So just as we look past personal erg scores and boat placements to consider the team as a whole, we have the opportunity to look beyond our team successes and consider our potential impact on the rowing community as a whole. Participating in STEM to Stern is an opportunity for us to share rowing with some incredible middle schoolers who might not get introduced to rowing if it weren't for the program. Some will go forward with rowing and have their own successes and invaluable lessons. That’s good for the rowing community.”



Editor’s Note: We are so proud of The Stanford Rowing Community. When US Rowing launched the 2023 fundraiser for STEM to Stern, new participant Stanford was pitted against Texas, Princeton, Wisconsin, and Brown in a challenge to outraise the others. Our community came through!

All three Stanford squads engaged in the Stanford fundraiser, yet at the 1500 mark, we were down a couple of lengths of open water to the field. That’s when Coxswain **René Spellman ’06 made the call for the ’00s alums to take the rate up . . . Nearing the line, Stanford was even, and with one last massive Power \$10K, Stanford pulled away from the field.**

SHAPING ROWING EXCELLENCE: THE COACHING JOURNEY OF WENDY DAVIS

The Rowing Association Catches up with Wendy Davis



"I knew I wanted to be a coach since I was in the third grade."

Wendy Davis' coaching life began in earnest coaching the Stanford novice women's crew in 1983. An accomplished sculler and recent UCLA graduate, Wendy was an integral part of establishing Stanford women's crew during the early Title IX days.

"The first two years at UCLA, when we would race Stanford, we would beat them and then my last two years when we would race Stanford, they would crush us. I wanted to find out what was going on up there."

I coached at UCLA in the year following graduation and got to know the Stanford coaches- Bob Whitford and John."

John is John Davis, who started coaching the Stanford Women in 1980. Wendy and John would marry in 1985.

"When Stanford had a position open up, I wanted the job. At the time, my parents were farmers who ran an ag aviation business near Coachella. We had a plane. My oldest sister was a pilot in the business. I asked her to fly me up there to meet with John. Once we got up to San Francisco, I called John and told we were in town for the day."

We went to lunch in Redwood City. John offered me the job which paid \$2,000 a year at the time. I do remember John was totally impressed with my sister."

Stanford was a step up from UCLA in those days- at least in how the men and the women trained together. Bob Whitford, the men's coach at the time, and J.D. got on pretty well. I was fortunate to land there."

No one really had more than anybody else in those days and we were all just doing what we could do. We had a few eights worth of folks, almost all of them learning to row from day one."

In my first year, we had a handful of recruits from Exeter and Andover. Fresh out of UCLA, I was scared to death. They went with it and let me coach. After all these years, I remember that about Stanford- people really knew how to focus."

Through the 1980s, the novice team excelled, placing in the top three at the Pac-10 Championship every year except for one season. Wendy took over as head coach in 1991. The Varsity Eight achieved a second-place finish at the Pacific Coast Rowing Championships in 1992.

Continued . . .

"I love the saying-- Some years you're fast and everyone else is faster and some years are slow and everybody else is slower. You just don't know at the start of the season-- even if you are moving along nicely.

It was pretty barebones. You loved it or you quit. My entire time there-- we were fundraising most of our operating budget each year-- We were lucky Stanford attracted people who knew how to get the job done.

Our first son was born in 1989. We were up at 5am every morning. One morning the babysitter just didn't answer the door. That was the first morning he joined me in the launch. I stuck a bottle in his mouth every time he cried. I think I coached most of the 1990 season with a baby on board.

It did get rough there in the late eighties, into the nineties, as more athletic departments started funding rowing. A core set of the men's crew alumni recognized the value of women's rowing and kept things moving. And, in a stroke of luck, by the time Amy Baker took over, the athletic director's daughter had started rowing at Kansas."

In 1993, Davis moved to the East Coast, becoming the head coach at Yale University, where she remained until 1997. In 1997, the Yale team placed fifth at the first NCAA Rowing Championships.

"When I interviewed at Yale, I asked Dave Vogel, the men's coach, how much does Yale spend on rowing? He ball-parked it at \$900,000 a year. A lot of money in those days. I thought-- if I don't get this Yale gig, I'm doomed.

By 1997, around the time of the first NAAs, I remembered recruiting against Michigan because they had scholarships and thinking--This is a football school. Why would you pick a football school? Things changed overnight. It was pretty remarkable. It was wonderful for the sport. "

In 2000, Davis began a long coaching stint at the University of Minnesota, where she served as head coach until 2019. During her 19-year tenure, she led the Gophers to a Big Ten Championship title in 2007, following a runner-up finish in 2006. The team also placed sixth in the 2007 NCAA Championship. After her time at Minnesota, Davis joined the University of Tennessee as an assistant coach in 2019.

"There are more rules since the early days-- practice times and days offs. You can only do up to this many hours a day and you have to have this many days off. Every rule seems odd at first but you get used to it. Everything is really centered on the athletes and preventing anyone from being taken advantage of-- which is great.

In the early days at Stanford, I thought, 'I wish they cared enough about rowing that I could get fired for my performance.' The sport's grown a lot since those days."

Wendy Davis' coaching life continues. Last spring, Davis was named an assistant coach at Duke University.

"What's timeless is the caliber of person that makes a good rower and the camaraderie. That is still just as strong as ever.

I love our sport and I love that you still cannot be a prima donna. You can't. You still have to grind."



2024 BEACH SPRINTS TRIALS

The 2024 Beach Sprints Trials, held in Sarasota, Florida, were a thrilling display of coastal rowing's unique challenges and excitement. This knockout-style event saw rowers competing head-to-head, with the winners advancing to the World Rowing Beach Sprint Finals in Genoa, Italy. Among the competitors, Stanford alumna Christine Cavallo '17 stood out, clinching victories in both the Women's Single and Mixed Doubles events.

Beach Sprints are distinct from traditional flat-water rowing as competitors start and end the race with a sprint on foot. Athletes sprint and jump into their boats, then navigate through a slalom course marked by three buoys, and race back to shore, all while contending with waves and currents. Coaches, unable to provide in-boat guidance, shout instructions and make directional arm motions from the shoreline, a sight that often puzzles onlookers.



The three-day event was not without its obstacles (literally). Florida's brutal summer heat and thunderstorms disrupted practice rounds and time trials on Friday and Saturday. On Sunday, a manatee swam leisurely through the race course, causing a humorous delay and providing some light-hearted entertainment for the crowd.

Through it all, Christine Cavallo, a seasoned competitor in Beach Sprints since 2021, once again showcased her prowess with stellar performances in the time trials – which earned her byes straight to the semifinals in both events.

In the Women's Single event, Cavallo secured her spot in the final with a 20-second lead and a time of 2:46. She maintained her dominance in the final, finishing at 2:55. In the Mixed Doubles event, Cavallo and her partner, Kory Rogers, led the field with a 2:27 finish in the semifinals, a full 35 seconds ahead of the pack. They went on to clinch victory in the final with a 2:37 finish.

Christine Cavallo's victories secured her place at the Beach Sprint Finals in Genoa, Italy, this September. Her consistent success and dedication continue to elevate the profile of coastal rowing, which will officially be included in the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

EMILY DELLEMAN CÉLIA DUPRÉ ESTHER BRIZ ZAMORANO
AZJA CZAJKOWSKI PETER CHATAIN



PARIS 2024

PARIS 2024

THE ROW TO PARIS

Stanford Rowing Alumni Set to Compete in Paris 2024 Olympics

Five Stanford Rowing alumni have earned the opportunity to compete on the world's leading stage at the Paris 2024 Olympics. Azja Czajkowski '23, Emily Delleman '20, Esther Briz Zamorano '22, Célia Dupré, and Peter Chatain '22 represent the largest contingent of Stanford rowers in Olympic history, with records dating back to the 1976 games.

Azja Czajkowski '23 will compete for Team USA in the Women's Pair (2-). During her time at Stanford, she led the program to its first national championship since 2009 in the varsity eight boat and earned multiple accolades, including U.S. Rowing Co-Athlete of the Year and CRCA Athlete of the Year in 2023. Her Olympic journey began with a strong performance at the 2023 World Championships in Belgrade, Serbia, where she was named a spare for the US National Team. After rigorous training and impressive results at the Fall and Winter Speed Orders, Czajkowski secured her spot at the 2024 USA Olympic Trials, ultimately winning her race by seven seconds with partner Jessica Thoennes.

Emily Delleman '20 will race in the Women's Quadruple Sculls (4x) for Team USA. A two-time All-American at Stanford, Delleman made the U.S. senior national team in 2022 and competed in the Women's Quadruple Sculls at the 2022 World Championships. Despite not qualifying at the 2023 World Championships, Delleman's boat secured its spot for Paris by winning the Final Qualification Regatta in Lucerne, Switzerland, in May 2024. Her determination and perseverance paid off, earning her a place on the Olympic team.

Esther Briz Zamorano '22, has been a part of Team Spain since 2016 and will compete in the Women's Pair (2-) at the Paris Games. A two-time All-American, Zamorano has achieved significant success with her partner Aina Cid, including first-place finishes at the 2023 World Rowing Cup I and top finishes at various European competitions. The pair secured their ticket to Paris with an eighth-place finish at the 2023 World Rowing Championships.

Célia Dupré, will represent Switzerland in the Women's Quadruple Sculls (4x). Dupré, the 2023 Pac-12 Newcomer of the Year, took a break from Stanford to focus on her Olympic aspirations. She played a crucial role in Switzerland's fourth-place finish at the 2023 World Championships, which qualified the boat for the Paris Olympics. Dupré's outstanding performance throughout the 2024 season earned her a spot in the Swiss Olympic boat.

Peter Chatain '22, a Stanford graduate student and rowing alum, will compete in the Men's Eight (8+) for Team USA. Chatain and his team secured their Olympic berth by winning the World Rowing Final Olympic & Paralympic Qualification Regatta in Lucerne, Switzerland. Chatain, an IRCA first-team All-American and two-time All-Pac-12 first-team selection, is ready to make his mark on the Olympic stage.

The Rowing Association is incredibly proud of these athletes and their dedication to our sport. We look forward to following their progress at the Paris 2024 Olympics from July 27 through August 3. For racing schedules, results and more more information, [click here](#).

THE ROWING ASSOCIATION LAUNCHES TWO NEW FUNDS

Expands Development Team for Fall Fundraise

In the continued drive to Strengthen, Secure, and Deliver Something Bigger for Stanford Rowing, The Rowing Association is excited to announce the establishment of two new funds.

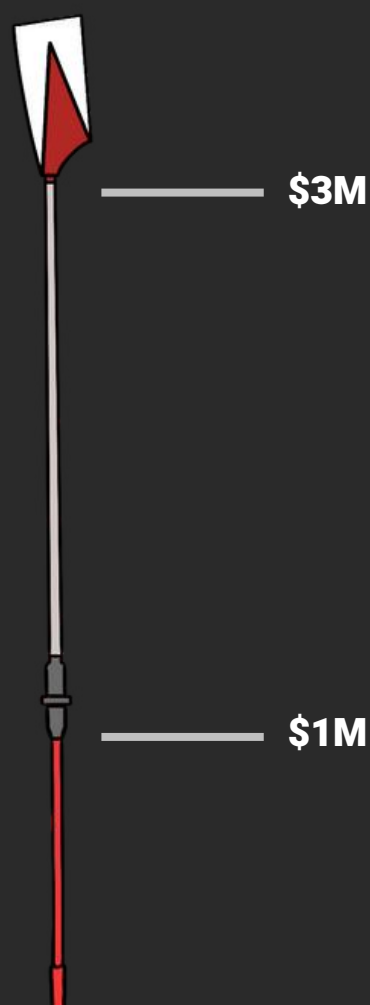
With the ongoing economic turmoil of college athletics, it remains in our best interest to take charge of strengthening and securing Stanford Rowing's financial future. Thanks to the support of our Community, the University has added \$14M+ in Rowing endowments in the last 3 years. We continue to work with the University to secure endowment against their priorities.

We have also worked with the University to expand coaching and support staff while gaining incremental budget support for the teams. By fundraising to fill the new funds, we will secure those budgets and support staff.

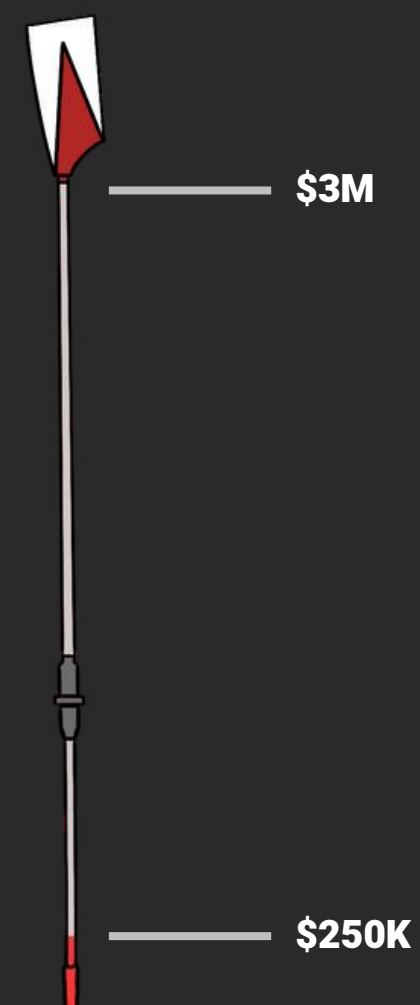
Assistant Coaches' Support Fund. This Fund will be an endowment that sits within The Rowing Association and provides incremental work opportunities that assistant coaches can apply for. **Assistant Coaches' Support Fund Goal \$3M.**

Stanford Rowing Equipment Fund. This fund will be an endowment that sits within The University and will support the annual equipment needs of all three teams. It will also designate a cadence of new racing shells so that coaches are able to enter a season knowing they have their equipment needs funded. **Equipment Fund Goal \$3M.**

**ASSISTANT COACHES' SUPPORT FUND
RAISED TO DATE: \$1M OF \$3M GOAL**



**STANFORD ROWING EQUIPMENT FUND
RAISED TO DATE: \$250K OF \$3M GOAL**



The Rowing Association has added to our Development Team, begun a Women's Rowing-Specific Development Team, and added a Parents' Development Team. You can expect an invitation to jump on an era, class, or Parent call this fall and we hope you are able to join!

If you have Questions about giving opportunities, please contact:

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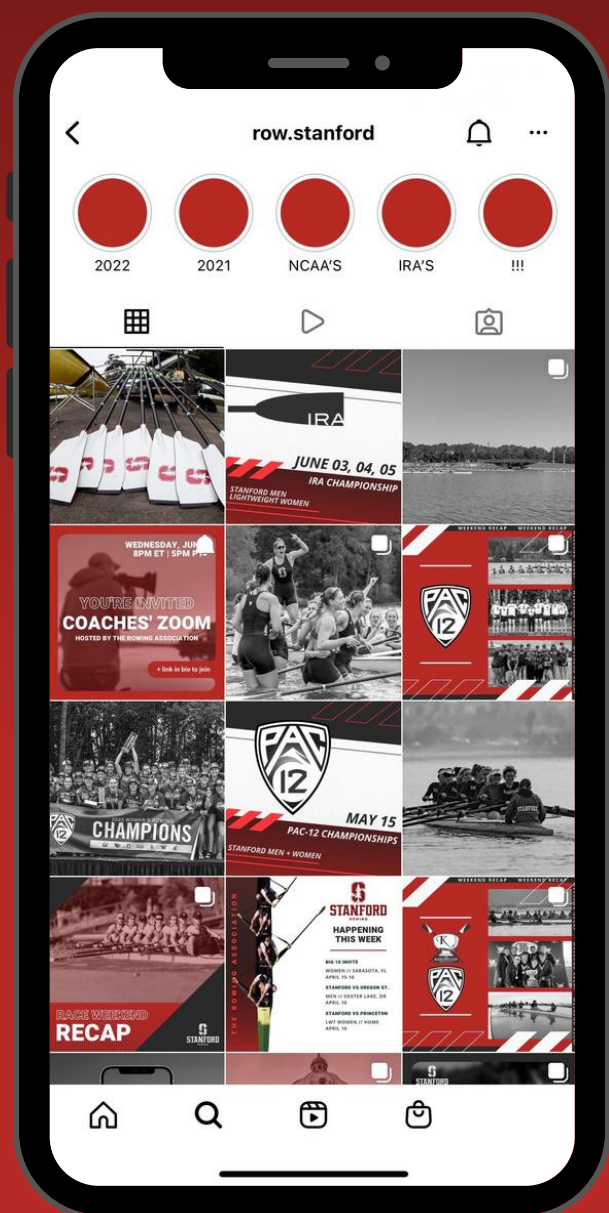
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SHARE YOUR STORY

As a member of The Rowing Association community, you have the opportunity to connect with other rowers who share a passion for the sport and a commitment to excellence. You also have access to a wealth of knowledge and experience, as well as opportunities to learn from and be inspired by some of the best rowers in the world.

Sharing your story with The Rowing Association community is a great way to inspire other rowers, and foster a sense of commonality within the rowing community. We want to hear from you! Reach out to us for the chance to be featured in future communications from The Rowing Association.

Email hello@stanfordrowing.org for more details.



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Sponsor Members of The Rowing Association help bring the Stanford Rowing Community Boathouse of Champions, a full calendar of events, and updates on Stanford Rowing. We continue to work closely with the University in support of Stanford Rowing. Thank you!

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