



HOCR 2009 First Hand Account

BOSTON, MA (October 17, 2008) – As we sit drinking coffee Sunday morning, and watch the wind blowing through the red, yellow, and orange fall leaves and the rain glistening on the pavement, we realize that the rowing gods blessed us yesterday with beautiful weather. The chop in the basin was formidable and we can not imagine what the singles are encountering this morning with stiff winds gusting up to 22 mph!

We met at the trailer at 8 am in 35 degree temps with a 12 mph wind and blue skies with occasional clouds blowing in front of the sun. In attendance...Louisa DiLeone(Lake Brantley and University of Michigan Cox), Lesley Welch, Vicky Hatter, Kim Watson, Lynn Shoemaker, Jamie Thomas, Adrienne Payor, Gwen Hamilton, Linda Rich...support group...Justin Ledner, Mike Welch, Mark Hatter, and Brian (Louisa's boyfriend).

Cold...must stay warm...stay warm...run around the parking lot...hand warmers...toe warmers...bathroom break....jumping jacks...strip layers...add layers....strip layers again...guess the weather...boats on trailers everywhere, rowers threading every size boat through trailers barely far enough apart to rig, canted, over the heads coxswains calling out from all directions...people...fans...police cars with lights flashing...park rangers...heads up...watch the bow...oars clanking...boats bumping boats...heads...bodies...Vertullo calls in...game plan...talking...excitement...

HAVOC...hands on...

...silence...only Louisa's voice...block the drone of sounds from our ears.. focus on hearing our coxswains commands....Mike and Brian with us to carry our slings...shoe bag...Mark with his camera...Justin by our side...get the boat to the water...onto floating plastic squares forming a makeshift dock...wet...too narrow...careful don't slip...slippery gap between shore and dock....bunch up at bow....bunch to stern to get on....be calm...listen to Louisa...don't talk...two minutes to load and tie in...hurry up....dockmaster calling....10...9...8...7....push off...nice dock work ladies...bow 21 take it out...bow 21 don't stop as you head down to the start...races are running...heading toward the finish...singles, doubles, fours...single file heading to the basin...hard not to look out and watch... Louisa speaking to us...ladies...let's try to do our warm up...stern four-arms only...bow 21 no drills, row all eight...ok 3 and 4 add in....remain calm...we will do what we can...head down to the start 45 minutes to the basin, heads in the boat.....stop for boat traffic...ready all row...pause at the finish....the palpable excitement filling the air....cacophony of fall colors, boats, uniforms, the din of sounds fill our ears...umpires on boats and on shore calling out directions, coxswains calling out commands, music playing in the distance, announcers calling out information about crews....bow 21 move ahead of the singles...bow pair drop out....shed a layer....bow pair add back in...we'll have to wait for drills and warm up...Louisa's calm confidence relaxes us...outlining what's going on....what we will do to be ready at the start...reminding us that without readings she will be using preset split goals and meter and mile marks to gauge our time...no time for a real warm up...maybe in the



basin...shed our layers....get our game faces on....ok we have a little space for 10 power strokes...starboards hold water....weigh enough...drop...strip clothes...bow four bring it up...stern four add in...all eight...take it up...weigh enough...chop it around...line up in the chute...bow 20 Etats Unis...bring it up....bow 21 move in behind Etats Unis....22 get in line...start rowing...bow 22 we need you behind bow 21...bow 21 bring it up...Orlando Rowing Club bow 21 easy pressure...full pressure...welcome to Boston...you are on the course...have a good race...this is it...this is what you have worked for...am I hearing Louisa or am thinking it...you're moving up on the boat in front of you....is it Etas Unis...no...then who...don't think...just row....focus...Magazine Beach....announcers...Riverside Boathouse...we're going to bring it up to pass our next boat...Louisa is saying, calm--- wait for my call...hit it... OK- you are moving on them...we've taken two seats...let's pass them in three strokes...River Street Bridge...brrr...cold wind whipping...this is about the mile mark...we are moving up on another boat...let's do it before the next bridge...we're passing under Western Ave Bridge...wow....listen to the sound of the finish under the bridge...the sound of the slides...unison...amazing...focus...schooooooowish...fwoooooosh...foruumph...the echo of the power of the finish off the walls...off the gently curved sides of the arch...is this real or is this a dream...my lungs burn...no, this is real...breathe...catch...release...catch timing...match up...catch...release...we are so set... this is great...focus ladies...lots of traffic ahead...we have three boats approaching this bridge together...are we at Weeks Bridge...give way...18-- I said yield...ladies power it up...18 yield-- we are moving through...cox in 15-- yield...we're moving...we have the boat deck...calm...calm...keep it moving....sounds...blades hitting...clash...relax...relax....it's just a couple of strokes...trust...keep it moving...don't you know what yield means...shhhhhh...let Louisa communicate...calm....focus....row through it...we're clear...it's beginning to blur...where are we...Weld Boathouse...Lars Anderson Bridge...blast of wind...chill...oars lifting with wind...control...cold air...brrr....20 seconds off our target...we need to pick it up...legs...legs...take it up with the legs...passing another boat...silent 10...the sounds of silence...breathing hard- in-out...the boat and rowers have a rhythm...a sync...schoooooowish....fwoooooosh...foruumph...and some our rowers letting out a primal sound...uuuuuuunh... long sweeping turn into our final bridge-Eliot Bridge...sit up straight...crisp catches...Linda and Gwen...looking strong...nice timing...Adrienne and Jamie show that power...let's see those puddles grow...Lynn and Kim great release...Vicky and Lesley nice rhythm...get ready for the announcer at Cambridge Boat House...bow 21 Orlando Rowing Club...they must be enjoying this cool weather...dressed for the occasion in bright fall colors...these ladies have nice form to match their style... rowing at a steady 30...now taking it up in to Eliot Bridge at a 31 ...schoooooowish....fwoooooosh...foruumph ...ladies we're passing Belmont Hill boathouse close to the dock...get ready to take it up for the last 800 meters...leaves brushing my head...announcers calling out again...someone screaming Havoc...ORC...cheers staying with us...maybe on a bike...now voice trails...colors on the periphery...voices....noise...noise...cheers...we're almost there...it can't be...on two take it up for a power 30 and we're done...yellow triangles floating past Louisa...is it over...still rowing all out...no call for finish...are we done...paddle down...that was the finish...I had you keep going since no finish line call...stay focused...lots of boats....bow 21 keep rowing...go around the yellow buoy and turn it around...boats everywhere....we are so happy....can't believe it is over....it's time to celebrate....



1 Bow 20 Etats Unis (1984 Olympic team) set a new course record at a blistering pace

2 Marin Rowing several time HOCR winners with past Olympic Team rowers breaks old course record

3 1980 Rowing (1980 Olympic Team) breaks old course record

6 Orlando Rowing Club...guaranteed 6 seed for next year...1 minute to shave off before we race again...we are ready for the challenge.

Thanks to all of you for your support and belief in us. This was one of the most awesome experiences...humbling and inspirational.

Written by Jamieson Thomas with the assistance of Vicky Hatter.