

GDRJ Juniors
Midwest Junior Rowing Championships
May 19th and 20th, 2007
By Denise Hauser

Yet another outstanding weekend of racing for the GDRA Rowers!

A perfect weekend, warm, sunny and a good tailwind, brought the season to its highpoint.

GDRA COMPETED IN the **Midwest Junior Rowing Championships** May 19th and 20th, at Harsha Lake in East Fork State Park, Bethel, Ohio. THE RACE FEATURED OVER 370 BOATS FROM 35 CLUBS. THE FIELD INCLUDED TEAMS FROM CHICAGO, PITTSBURGH, ST LOUIS, WISCONSIN, CINCINNATI. THERE WAS INTENSE COMPETITION AS WINNERS QUALIFY FOR **USRowing Youth National Championships**.

GDRA had five boats qualify for the Championship Finals at the Midwest Junior Rowing Championships and all five medaled!

The Woman's Quad started the day off with a great sprint to the finish to capture the Bronze Medal and once again qualify for the Junior Nationals. This year's line-up includes Becky Wenske, Lindsey Titus, Jen Hartel, and Lauren Sobol. The quad is a contingent from Oakwood HS with Lindsey, a valedictorian from Northmont HS, filling out the four.

Congratulations to Brandon Walz (Oakwood HS) and David Crooke (Miami Valley HS) for qualifying for the Junior Nationals for the second year in a row in the Men's Varsity Double. David and Brandon took the silver medal in a field of tough competition. The "true grit" award goes to David who rowed the race with an apparent fracture of the rib. That's one tough rower! David, who missed his prom due to the race format, was thrown an impromptu prom by his teammates. The girls looked beautiful in their dresses and "unis" and the boys so handsome in their ties. There was even dancing under the tent!

Later in the day, Becky and Lindsey decided that if they were going to the Nationals, they wanted to row more than one race and so they also qualified in the Woman's Double by earning the Bronze Medal. This is also a repeat trip to the Nationals for them in this event.

In an exciting 2nd Varsity Doubles Race, Jon Wittoesch (Oakwood HS) and Dan Craft (Kettering HS) won the Gold Medal! Congratulations to both rowers. Jon and Dan have rowed together only a few times, and Dan - what an outstanding job as a Novice in a Varsity Race! All of our hearts leapt when Dan dropped his oar at about 60 Meters from the finish line. He never panicked (at least that we saw) and he and Jon got right back into the race and held off the approaching competition. Back on land, Dan was overheard talking about something "like being in a bad dream." Oh, those Novice memories!

Just as exciting was the Woman's 2nd Varsity DOUBLES Race which saw two GDRA boats medal. Congratulations to Lauren Sobol (Oakwood) and Meredith Snead (Oakwood) for winning the Bronze medal. They were not far behind Silver Medalists Jen Hartel and Haley Bohachek (Oakwood). Hats off to Jen, who never flinched when her double partner had to cancel on a last minute conflict. Haley stepped up to fill the position. Without ever having rowed together before this weekend, the girls took second place, only because they ran out of race course while chasing down the lead boat. Congratulations to two very determined young women.

We also saw some good races leading up to the Finals. The Girl's Varsity 4 of Haley, Meredith, Meredith Hollingsworth (Oakwood), and Hannah Enloe (Oakwood) qualified for the C Final. Our Novice 4 composed of Rachel Phillips (Beavercreek HS), Beth Castilano (Centerville HS), Kelly Rice (Beavercreek HS), and Christine , (Beavercreek HS) got off to a great start, but just missed qualifying for the finals by one place. A great finish for their first season. Watch for them in the Fall for some powerful rowing! The heartbreak of the season: the Boy's Novice 4. While vying for second place early in the race, an equipment mishap had them somewhat limited in their ability to

row full power down the course. The great thing is that they didn't stop and never gave up. I think a lot of Varsity boats could learn some lessons from Joe Noonan (Oakwood), Alec Livada (Oakwood), Alex Chuna, (Kettering HS) and Alex Casswell (Centerville HS). Did I say something about "oh, those novice memories?"

Special thanks once again to Frankie Gomez (CJ HS) our coxswain, who has been a staple in our program and our "coach in the boat." We'll Miss you, "Miss Gomez!"

Our season was a success in large part due to the support of the parents as well as Charlie Doyle, who always gets our equipment to us, and Chris Luhn, who always makes sure it's in working order! Thank-you, all!

Happy Rowing!
See you at the Nationals!
ROW THIS SUMMER!