



SQUARING THE BLADE

A Newsletter for MIT Crew Alumni

Director's Message *by Tony Kilbridge*

Dear friends of MIT crew,

We are deep in winter training here in Resch Boathouse. The Charles has been frozen solid for four weeks, with no thaw in sight. Our Florida training trip in January was smooth and productive but seems like a long time ago. Our routine now is ergs, ergs, ergs, with some weightlifting in the evenings. All four rosters are robust, to the point where each squad spends one morning each week cross-training outside of the boathouse, to make room for the others. On the one morning when everyone is in Resch, each of our 85 ergs and 24 bikes is in use. The space is crowded and loud, but full of positive energy.

The purpose of all this training will be upon us very soon. Our teams start racing in March and continue until July.

This issue of Squaring the Blade contains the spring racing schedules for each squad, along with recaps of our fall racing. As spring races approach, race times and details can be found on the DAPER website.

We have had one important staffing change. Hank Zimmerman, our beloved openweight assistant coach, left after ten years with Tech crew to become associate head coach with the Brown women's team, where he will assist Brown's new head coach, who also happens to be his wife. To replace Hank we were fortunate to find Matt Hanig, who brings a tremendous amount of college coaching experience to the role. Holly Metcalf provides details of this transition in this issue.

I'm also excited to announce that for the first time since 2015 MIT crew will be returning to the Henley Royal Re-



Winter 2025



Director's Message *Continued from page 1*

gatta. Our heavyweight men will send an 8 and a 4, and our openweight women will send an 8. I hope you will consider joining us to cheer on the crews at this unique and historic event. We are currently finalizing our schedule of events for alumni, including:

- Saturday, June 28th: Evening boat ride on the Thames in London
- Wednesday, July 2nd: Pub Lunch during Henley

You can learn more about the Henley Royal Regatta on their [website](#).

This trip will be expensive. The cost of feeding, housing, transporting and equipping the teams will be more than \$200,000. This will be paid out of our "expendable funds,"

and replenishing those funds is a principal focus of our fundraising this year. Our overall goal is to fully fund this year's trip while strengthening resources to send our lightweight crews to Henley in the future. To sustain MIT crew's travel and racing opportunities, we need to raise \$400,000.

If you can donate any amount toward our Henley trip we would really appreciate it. Gifts to our Friends of Crew and Friends of Women's Crew funds are available to the crew now, while gifts to our Travel and Training Endowment Fund build our long-term capacity to travel and race. You can give to either fund or split your gift. Thank you for helping us compete at Henley and we hope to see you there! Go Tech!

Open Women Staffing Update *by Holly Metcalf*

Hank Zimmerman, our assistant coach, has, as of Monday, January 13, begun a new position at Brown University, where he will coach the women's openweight team under the direction of his wife, Tessa Gobbo! This is a dream job for them both and an exceptional hire for Brown. What is amazing about Hank's and Tessa's job together is that they are replacing another married couple who led the program for more than 30 years. May Hank and Tessa lead the Brown women's team for another 30 years!

Hank has been at MIT for 10 years. Coming from the Princeton women's lightweight team, he brought new ideas for training and helped establish a new level of competitiveness. His understanding of and love for MIT made him extremely effective in his recruiting and is the reason we had such an amazing performance at the Patriot League Championship last year and why we have such strong freshman and sophomore classes. We are

grateful to Hank for his dedication and commitment to the crew program and to DAPER over the last decade and wish him luck in his new endeavor.

I am pleased to announce that Matt Hanig has been named the Interim Women's Openweight Rowing Assistant Coach, effective January 21, 2025. Matt will be working with the team through the spring semester.

Matt has an extensive coaching background, spanning across nearly two decades. He was promoted to Women's Rowing Associate Head Coach at Boston University in 2023, after serving as the Women's Rowing Assistant Coach for a decade.

While with the Terriers, Matt served in additional capacities as the Women's Rowing Recruiting Coordinator and Recreational Rowing Coordinator. Matt managed and coordinated all aspects of the Division I rowing program, including having responsibilities in recruiting, budget management, revenue generation, scholarship allocation and in building relationships with a wide range of constituency groups. Matt saw competitive success with the Terriers, including three league championships and staff of the year accolades, three NCAA Championship bids, and eight league championship crews.

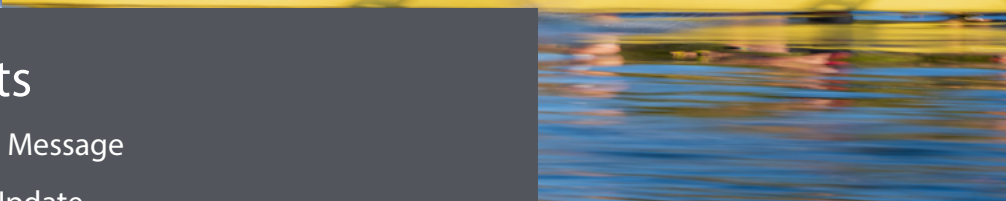
Matt earned his B.S. from the University of Massachusetts Amherst and M. Ed. from BU, and is currently working on a MBA through BU. Matt has additional experience with Education First, Wayland-Weston Rowing Association and Colgate University, and holds a USRowing Level II coaching certification.





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Lightweight Men Spring Preview *by Will Oliver-Milchman*

We didn't have a lot of races during the fall, and yet the year has felt very full of activity. Getting our new rowers up to speed has been a big project but they're fitting in nicely with the group and showing a lot of promise. Behind the scenes, we've been putting in a ton of work and seeing good results. With our final erg testing still to come, we've already seen all of our boathouse records broken this season, largely thanks to junior Lucas Young, who now holds our all-time 2K and 6K erg record, but we have other athletes right on his heels as well.

At our races, we've seen modest results, a 2nd place finish at the Quinsigamond Snake Regatta and an 8th place finish at the Head of the Charles. By the numbers, this year's boat should be a little faster than our crew from 2024, but with a large group of first-year students in the mix, we expect it to take some additional time to come together. Everyone is working hard to make that happen.

The team's trip to Florida was very productive in that regard. As always, our goal was to log as many miles as possible, and the rowers did their part by arriving in Florida still fit and ready for the work. A secondary goal was to bring our novice rowers up to speed. We currently have four novices working to catch up with the rest of the group. With the help of our volunteer coach Peter Herman, they are improving quickly, and, if all goes well, they'll help round out a 3V this spring.

Looking ahead to the spring season, we've got a challenging slate of races planned. The lightweight men will be returning to the EARC Sprints this season, a decision that reflects the shrinking lightweight field at the Dad Vail Regatta. Given our recent trajectory and the state of the current squad, this does seem like a good time to make the move, but it does come with some potential difficulties. The team's path the IRA National Championship will now be narrower. Per current IRA selection rules, only seven to eight EARC schools can be invited, meaning we will have to field a boat on par with our very best performances of the last two decades in order to be accepted.

We'll find out quickly how we stack up. Our season will begin on March 29 at the National Collegiate Lightweight Invitational, where we're scheduled to race Georgetown, Dartmouth, Yale, and Penn. On April 12 and 13, we'll face off against some strong

heavyweight competition at the Knecht Cup. On April 19 we will see Harvard and Navy at home, and then follow that up with a race against Bates and Trinity on April 20. Our last regular-season race will be the Geiger Cup versus Columbia and Cornell on May 3 in Ithaca, NY. That race will lead us into the Sprints on May 18 and then the IRA National Championship after that. Every weekend is going to be a challenge, and we'll need as much support as we can get. I hope to see you at the races cheering us on!

Go Tech!





Lightweight Women Spring Preview *by Amelia Patton*

This fall, the lightweight women welcomed several recruited lightweight women to the roster, and these freshman are already having a big impact. In our season opener at the Quinsigamond Snake Regatta, the lightweight varsity 8 earned second place in a 1-2-3 MIT finish with our open-weight counterparts. At the same regatta, the lightweight varsity 4 finished 3rd and 16th, and our single finished 1st!

From there, we raced Head of the Charles in the Lightweight 8+, Lightweight 4+ and the Collegiate 2x, and we

were able to improve our margin to the winning crew in all boat classes: we were 40 seconds closer in the 8+, 46 seconds closer in the 2x, and 2:21 closer in the 4+ relative to 2023.

We also welcomed two new volunteer assistants for the year. Bailey Hughes comes to us from the University of Virginia men's program, and she currently serves as the club manager at Cambridge Boat Club. Lucy Climer-Kennedy is a senior at Northeastern who recently completed

her athletic eligibility as a four-year athlete for that program. Together, they have been working with our novice class and have been a huge help so far.

After the Charles, we raced two new in-house events: the Teeth and Tails Regatta, where each squad had to create lineups for a 4+, 2x, 2-, and 1x, and the tubby single costume relay row on Halloween.

In early January, we travelled to Cocoa Beach FL for 10 days of rowing. It was a highly productive trip with dolphin sightings, rocket launches, and friendly competition with the open-weight squad. We are now back in Cambridge for peak fitness season.

As we look ahead to the spring season, I am excited that we have a deeper squad than we've had in a few years, and optimistic that we can boat a competitive lightweight 8. We open our season at home against Dill openweight contenders Bates and Simmons April 5th. From there, we will head to the Knecht Cup, again in Cherry Hill where we plan to double (and maybe triple?) up events to get in as much racing as the schedule allows. Back at home the following weekend we'll make a run at the Muri Cup and Beanpot racing Radcliffe and BU. We'll host Gordon College April 26th hoping to repeat our sweep from last spring. In early May we have an action packed week, returning to Women's Sprints on Sunday May 4th before heading back to Cherry Hill for Dad Vail on beginning Friday May 9th. The season concludes as usual with the IRA National Championship, again in Cherry Hill. If you find yourself in Cambridge or Cherry Hill this spring, we'd love to see you at the races!





MIT Crew Spring Schedule

Lightweight Men's Crew

- 3/29 - National Collegiate Lightweight Invitational - Princeton, NJ
- 3/30 - National Collegiate Lightweight Invitational - Princeton, NJ
- 4/12 - Knecht Cup - Cherry Hill, NJ
- 4/13 - Knecht Cup - Cherry Hill, NJ
- 4/19 - vs Harvard & Navy, Boston, MA
- 4/20 - vs Bates & Trinity - Boston, MA
- 5/3 - Geiger Cup vs Cornell & Columbia, Ithaca, NY
- 5/18 - EARC Sprints, Worcester, MA
- 5/30 - IRA Championship - Cherry Hill, NJ
- 5/31 - IRA Championship - Cherry Hill, NJ
- 6/1 - IRA Championship - Cherry Hill, NJ

Lightweight Women's Crew

- 4/5 - vs Simmons & Bates - Boston, MA
- 4/12 - Knecht Cup - Cherry Hill, NJ
- 4/13 - Knecht Cup - Cherry Hill, NJ
- 4/19 - Muri Cup/Beanpot vs Radcliffe & BU - Boston, MA
- 4/26 - vs Gordon College - Boston, MA
- 5/4 - Women's Sprints - Worcester, MA
- 5/9 - Dad Vail Regatta - Cherry Hill NJ
- 5/10 - Dad Vail Regatta - Cherry Hill NJ
- 5/30 - IRA Championship - Cherry Hill, NJ
- 5/31 - IRA Championship - Cherry Hill, NJ
- 6/1 - IRA Championship - Cherry Hill, NJ



Openweight Women Spring Preview *by Holly Metcalf*

This past fall we welcomed the largest squad to date—almost five eights, including a very strong freshman 8. A week before the Head of the Charles the team took 1st and 3rd places in the collegiate women's 8 event at the Head of the Snake as well as 1st place in the collegiate women's 4 event. Our 3V8 finished in the middle of the pack in the collegiate 8 event—a strong finish, beating A and B boats.

What impressed me about the fall was not just the size, but the depth of the team. The difference in speed between the V8 and 2V8 was small. The intensity of our workouts were very high. The result: the V8 medaled at the Head of the Charles in the Club 8, taking 4th place, .5 seconds behind Princeton and 5 seconds behind Radcliffe.

UMass unfortunately would not give way early on, costing us 3rd place and likely 2nd place overall. No matter—an incredible performance by the V8! Our 2V8 finished 16th in the Club 8, giving us an automatic entry for next year. Congratulations to seniors Tamsin Nottage (co-team captain), Ella Gersack and Emily Warren (stroke)!

Following the Head of the Charles we headed to Saratoga Springs for the Head of the Fish—the 2V8 took home the Gold for a second year in a row and the V8 a bronze.

The 3V8 competed in the 2V8 event finishing 5th overall, beating Boston College's B boat. A strong fall showing set

the tone for our upcoming winter months of training.

For at least three years now the women's openweight team has committed to doing double sessions over IAP. To do this we have to be strategic when we submit our NCAA practice hours for the upcoming year. In this case we take

Wednesdays off in the fall and bank the hours for IAP. The Florida training trip kicked us into gear after the holidays with double sessions for 9 days and then into 3 weeks of IAP. Many of our competitors do not have a January term, so we take every advantage we can. The team's choice to be deliberate with their training time over IAP brings them closer together and is inspiring to be a part of.

Our team is made up of mostly freshmen and sophomores, and a mix of recruits and walk-on novices. We have two juniors and five seniors from last spring's medaling Patriot League Championship boats to deepen our overall experience level, along with the sophomores who medaled. The team is committed to being deliberate in their training—no complacency, allowing themselves to think that past successes somehow ensure future ones. There is a demand for more challenge, for more opportunities to find the team's mental and physical limits—to

engage in progress, not perfection. They are willing to fail in order to grow.





Heavyweight Men Spring Preview *by Evan Thews-Wassell*

The MIT heavyweight men entered the 2024 fall season with a group of athletes who were ready to build off a promising spring season. After graduating only one coxswain from the varsity 8+, and one rower from the JV 8+, the team had experience on its side as it started the fall 2024 season. Returning captains Cooper Price and Blake Hudspeth did a tremendous job of creating a summer training environment that kept everyone hungry and motivated to get faster.

After a disappointing Head of the Charles result in 2023,

and some of the underclassmen are showing real potential and pushing the upper classmen hard. We open our spring racing season on March 22nd at home against Coast Guard Academy. The following weekend we will travel to Worcester to race Holy Cross on Lake Quinsigamond. On April 5th we will host Marist College. The team will then travel again to Worcester to compete for the The Donahue Cup (Williams, WPI, Connecticut College). Finally, to conclude the dual racing season, we will host Bates on the Charles. On May 3rd, The New England Rowing Championships in Worcester will pit some of the top



the team was chomping at the bit to get another shot down the HOCR course. The athletes prepared well and ultimately had a great day at the 2024 Head of the Charles Regatta, finishing second out of 42 crews in the Collegiate 8s race. Lasalle College won by a lot, but the rest of the top teams fought for small margins all the way down the course. MIT was third behind Lasalle and Drexel at Riverside Boat Club, then overtook Drexel by Weld Boathouse and held their silver medal position to the finish. MIT's 2V 8 finished 29th in the same race. Tech's 3V finished 28th in the Club 8 event on Saturday.

As the team currently toils away on the ergs, there is a real sense of excitement going into the spring season. Team average erg scores are slightly faster than last year. There are new additions to the All-Time Top 2K and 6K boards,

teams in New England against each other. This will be a great race to prep the team for the NIRC Championships the following weekend. The season will then conclude at the IRA National Championships in Cherry Hill, NJ.

As an exciting addition to this year's racing docket, we will be bringing the crew to compete in the Henley Royal Regatta for the first time since 2009. (Our lightweight men went in 2015). We will bring our varsity 8+ to race in the Temple Challenge Cup, and a 2V4+ to race in the Prince Albert Challenge Cup. We are all very excited about the opportunity to compete internationally once again. Racing runs from July 1-6.

As always, we appreciate everyone's support, and we hope to see you at the races. Go Tech!

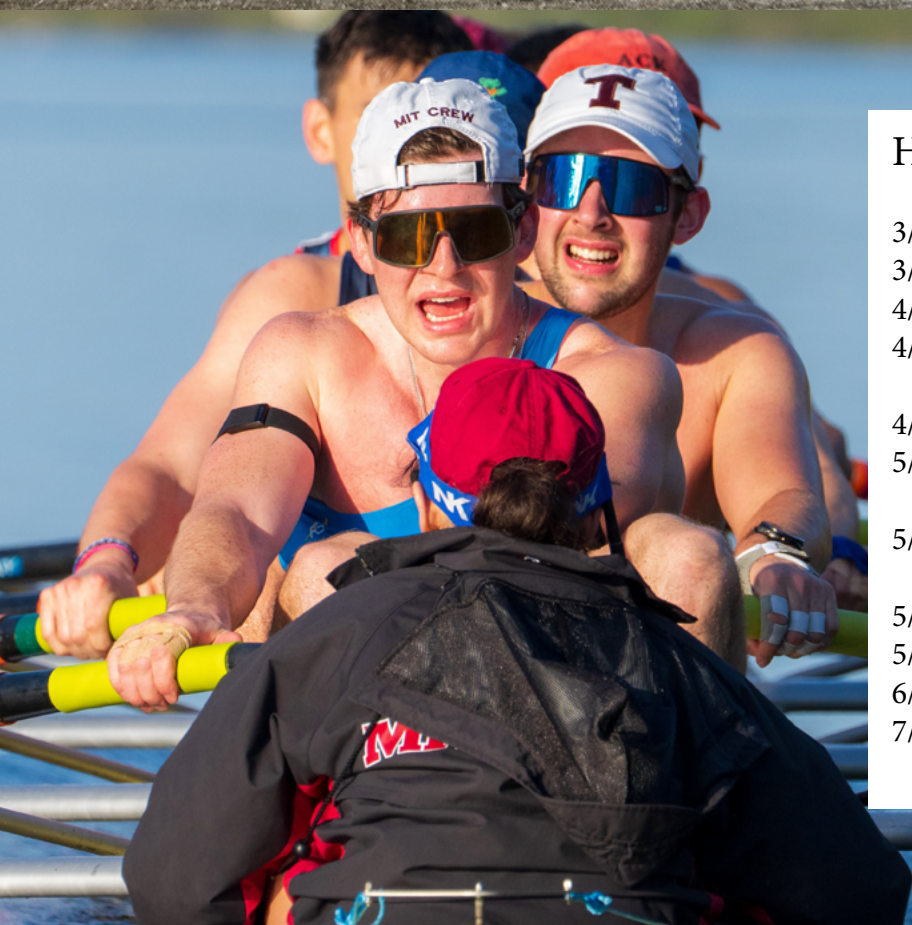


MIT Crew Spring Schedule



Openweight Women's Crew

- 3/22 - vs Coast Guard - Boston, MA
- 3/29 - vs BU Lightweights - Boston, MA
- 4/5 - vs Northeastern, Dartmouth & Radcliffe - Boston, MA
- 4/12 - Knecht Cup - Cherry Hill, NJ
- 4/13 - Knecht Cup - Cherry Hill, NJ
- 4/19 - vs Holy Cross - Worcester, MA
- 4/26 - vs Bates - Boston, MA
- 5/3 - New England Rowing Championship - Worcester, MA
- 5/16 - Patriot League Championship - Cherry Hill, NJ
- 7/1-6 - Henley Royal Regatta - Henley-on-Thames, England



Heavyweight Men's Crew

- 3/22 - vs Coast Guard - Boston, MA
- 3/29 - vs Holy Cross - Worcester, MA
- 4/5 - vs Marist - Boston, MA
- 4/12 - Donahue Cup vs Williams & WPI - Worcester, MA
- 4/26 - vs Bates - Boston, MA
- 5/3 - New England Rowing Championship - Worcester, MA
- 5/11 - National Invitational Rowing Championship - Worcester, MA
- 5/30 - IRA Championship - Cherry Hill, NJ
- 5/31 - IRA Championship - Cherry Hill, NJ
- 6/1 - IRA Championship - Cherry Hill, NJ
- 7/1-6 - Henley Royal Regatta - Henley-on-Thames, England