

IT'S TIME TO RUMBLE...



For the fifth time in as many years, the invitation you've all been waiting for has arrived! Time for all you friends of WPI crew; old, young, fat, skinny, pokey, slow, and, dare I say it, fast and fit, to write on your calendars and buy your bus tickets to Worcester -- the OFFICIAL 6th annual 10k Old Man erg challenge is scheduled for **Friday February 27, 2009.**

Can it really be true!!!? This is year number SIX for the now legendary Old Man Challenge? Man, am I getting old.....fat and pokey too, like some of the more recent graduates. It's been an interesting year. For those of you whom I correspond with once a year via this invitation, about a year ago I joined the ranks of rowers with significant spinal disc issues. 2008 has been a difficult year to maintain a training program, but I am back in the saddle-of-pain (commonly called a C2 erg) once more, and ready to face all challengers in the perennial 10K race from hell.

We have firmly established by past performances that Fat Rules, and Old Fat has even more mystical powers, right Bake? But I digress. This year's Challenge highlights and unanswered questions await:

- For his final OMC outing before joining the Old Man team, will Tex Gary break even deeper into the 34's? Will he garner an unprecedented fourth nameplate on the coveted OMC trophy? And yet another shirt? More on that shirt thing later...

- Speaking of Texas, rumor has it that everything there is BIGGER, and in Formerly-Mighty Dan Reed's case, his erg score is reportedly bigger/longer too. Hopefully he submits a score – peer pressure might help here folks.
- Naked rowing is once again frowned upon this year in our new coed format.
- Another rumor has it that Larry's lungs are back to their former full capacity and that he is gunning for the Old Man nameplate on the trophy. Could Noble actually go sub 37?! Come and find out! Sipe, are YOU ready to lose to a really old person?
- If Sipe could only win the Rock-Paper-Scissors tournament, he could buy the team a boat and be immortalized even further than his famous ego-crushing erg performances have.
- Rumor has it that Jason "Man O" Steele is rowing wicked fast this year – like dolphins were chasing his erg – totally true? -- watch this dark horse folks...
- Vitale, are you in shape or what? I can lie and tell you I will have mercy on your sorry slug butt if you row next to me...but I *will* promise to buy the first round.
- Calling Scott Leslie – 10k is a drop in the ole' training bucket for a long distance ringer like you. Get to Alumni on the 27th and race with us. You can swap notes with Sebastian on erging 100,000k in one sitting. You animal!
- Tony D! Come rock and roll big guy! We all so enjoyed your gut spilling performance last year...
- More rumors – a rather hairy Irish guy who coaches a local high school *could* potentially grace us with his participation and demonstrate his perfect erging form.
- Another Women's handicap is in the works. I was generous last year. Maybe not so generous this year – we'll see. Ladies, PLEASE join us and kick some butt. Handicap info to follow.
- I promised a coxswain's event for this year. I'm working on that. Maybe an exhibition only sprint race? Each participant must pick four extra large "coxswains" to cheer them on and otherwise relentlessly push them through the piece while we all watch. I'm liking that. Details to follow. Better start the speed work now coxswains!
- Welcome Class of 2008 graduates – you're on the REAL team now. Come and row. And, as is customary, you bring the Advil. That's you Lettenberger. Damon got faster as an Old Guy. How about you?
- About the shirts for the winners (men and women and Old Guy). This is a special year and a very old and special 20th century artifact has been put on the block for the men's team. This one is actually a shirt printed for the WPI Henley trip in 1981. It *reeks* of WPI Crew lore and history. I hate to lose it. I have other goodies – ladies, a shirt of unknown significance but from a European country, possibly Germany. Wonder where that came from?....I may even have a prize shirt for the Old Guy winner.

And no matter what the results, I can promise all of you alumni who show up, you WILL have a great time. You will smile 'till your jaw aches. You WILL part with some of your hard earned cash and much sweat. And just a reminder for the undergrads, row really, really hard or you *will* lose. Ha!

For those of you unfamiliar with (or wanting to forget) this annual landmark event, we collectively challenge the WPI Varsity men and women's crew to compete against us in a grueling 10k erg piece. I will donate to the team a yet to be determined dollar figure for each person beating my score (I did \$20 per guy last year and am inclined to do the same this year), to be used towards the Crew's spring training trip to Florida. Each year our participation is outstanding. Last year we had three sessions of competitors with many alumni in attendance and several mail-in alumni entries as well. The continued generosity of our alums is something I am very proud of.

I have no predictions this year concerning my own or anyone else's performance. We're all out for a Personal Best.

Who will be the 10k Champions? Come and find out! Embrace the pain! Smell the burning fat, testosterone, (and estrogen)! Hopefully we won't have to smell Tony's stomach contents again. Laugh at the young alumni sucking wind and gawk in amazed wonder that Old Guys can actually row that fast, it's FUN! Remember – Old Guys Rule!

WHEN – FEBRUARY 27 2009. FIRST GROUP GOES OFF AT 4:15 PM sharp. WARMUPS BEGIN WHENEVER YOU GET THERE. WE'LL LIKELY NEED A SECOND AND THIRD GROUP. THEY'LL START AROUND 5:10 PM and 6:15PM.

WHERE – WPI ALUMNI GYM 3RD FLOOR, INSTITUTE ROAD, NORTH SIDE OF THE QUAD, WORCESTER, MA, USA, PLANET EARTH, THAT'S THE THIRD ONE FROM THE SUN.

WHO – ANY ALUMNI AND FRIENDS WHO WANT TO PRETEND THEY'RE YOUNG AND IN-SHAPE AND HAVE SOME SERIOUS FUN. WE'LL MIX UP THE ALUMS AND THE VARSITY SQUAD. EMAIL ME IF YOU PLAN ON ROWING WITH US SO WE CAN PLAN THE GROUPS.

Of COURSE, we do have a plan again for an informal get together afterwards for food, drink and billiards for any alumni and undergrads that would like to join us at Jillians on Grove Street. I expect that will start up by 6PM or so.

HERE'S A RECAP OF THE OFFICIAL "RULES"

1. Compete with me by rowing a 10k erg piece, either on Feb 27 at WPI (about 4PM – see above) or elsewhere and send me (or phone in) your score no later than noon on Feb 27. Alumni need to row the piece between Feb 15 and Feb 27. Before you begin, you decide how much \$\$ you will donate per rower that beats your score and communicate that to me. The crew all rows on the 27th. I can tell you that last year the team rowed between 42 minutes and 35 minutes for their 10k's. I lost to 17 out of 49 last year, but I only pulled a 39:07. No predictions this year. There are approximately 30 undergrads competing this year. You do the math. Any donation is appreciated. Many Friends donate fixed amounts not tied to how fast anyone rows, and many figure \$xx per rower up to a dollar amount cap of their choice. The goal is to have fun and help out the crew at the same time (and to top last year's donations if we can). Don't sweat it. Donate if you can and if you feel like it. Just help me keep track by privately emailing me a pledge. I love it when I get checks at the challenge.
2. If you are out-of-shape, unable to erg, are a girly-man (did someone say Lettenberger?), are just plain lazy, or all of the above, but you still want to contribute, you can gamble on my performance instead. As always, one never knows until the fat lady (or fat old guy in this case) sings. And I guarantee I WILL be singing. My goal is to break into the thirty eights this year, which is actually pretty ambitious given how my 2008 training went. Anything is possible.

3. **I am the master of the Old Man 10k Challenge. All rules, decisions, arguments, protests, et al concerning fair (or unfair) play, scores, official times, etc. are mine and mine alone to rule on. In short, I am THE god of the OMC. Bribes of all types gladly accepted. Don't expect much.....unless it's a really spectacular bribe.....**
4. New rule number 4, which I was compelled to create after last year's faux pax by a freshman, I control which erg I get, who I row next to, and the musical selections. No exceptions. Remember, it's my day to play.

FYI, and I repeat this every year, although you don't hear much from them, ALL of the members of the Crew very much appreciate our generous and continued support. Contributions of any amount are welcome, particularly in the current economic climate. All contributions can be as confidential between you and me as you would like to make them. Mostly, people make checks out to WPI Crew, but if you desire confidentiality, you can make it out to me, or Paypal me, and I will write an anonymous check for you. As usual, I don't really have a specific goal in mind as I'm no professional fund raiser, nor do I want to sound like one. Last year's donations were extremely generous. They ranged from \$50 to \$450. Let's do it again. It's cool!

Please check the distribution on this email and if you are in regular contact with other crew alums (both men and women) not listed, please forward to them if you think they'd be interested. This is intentionally a relatively small-dollar and private fundraising event not associated with the WPI alumni office, so I haven't asked them for any assistance. All donations are tax deductible and I can provide a receipt on Friends of WPI Rowing letterhead if you need it for larger amounts.

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**Yours truly in old age,
Pat Guida '83
AMF!**