



The Maroons row to victory

Men's crew victorious

By Daniel Laurence

The men's crew lightweight four returned from its 500-mile journey to Knoxville, Tennessee with a silver cup bearing testament to its achievements. The Head of the Tennessee regatta had brought together most of the top southern and midwestern crews. Among those in the men's lightweight-four event, Citadel, Central Florida, and Michigan State were seen as the most likely spoilers for UC. But of the eight boats entered, Citadel finished seventh, Central Florida third, and Michigan State second.

"We knew we were close to Michigan State because we could hear their coxswain," said Chicago bowman Bruce Lifka. "We beat them by about ten seconds." Chicago's official time of 21:36.47 may have been spurred by the fact that MSU was the only boat ahead of Chicago in the staggered start, providing a great deal of incentive for the UC oarsmen to pull into first position.

With a careful eye to the spring season, Lifka observed, "Those guys (MSU) are going to be really strong. They ran into a scull during the race, protested their time and rowed again. Then some of their guys got in an eight and raced the whole thing again after having only rested for one event in between."

This is exceptional, since the length of a "Head" course is three times that of a normal one. Even so, Lifka recalled, "It seemed so much longer than the Head of the Charles. It just went on and on and on. Carla (referring to Carla Pritchett, coxswain)

didn't know where the end was, she had no idea."

Though the race was her first taste of regulation competition, novice coxswain Pritchett was able to steer a good course. She guided the shell through turns with skill and managed to pick up a good deal of ground.

Led by stroke man Alan Hodges, the crew powered through the seemingly endless kilometers. "Everyone looked very strong," said Pritchett. "We felt pretty good, considering," added Lifka.

But the finish did finally come, and after the race, the crew went to find out the results. Due to the fact that the race had been staggered, they were unsure of the final standings and were expecting a second or third. Yet, despite a borrowed shell covered in duct tape and a bare two-and-a-half hours sleep on a church floor, the rowers had pulled out first.

The previous holders of the cup were members of the US Naval Academy team, this year's record-breaking stars of the Championship-eights at the Head of the Charles. Perhaps due to this victory Navy decided to take it easy and neglected to attend the Knoxville event this year.

The final races of the autumn season will be held in Lincoln Park on Saturday, November 7, when Chicago will send all of its rowers out to compete with the Lincoln Park Boat Club, the Milwaukee Rowing Association, and the newly formed Northwestern University club. The regatta begins at 10 a.m.