

# BA-B crews shine at regional championship

BY JILL MAXWELL · THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2021

In a two-day regatta Oct. 9 and 10 on nearby Lake Quinsigamond, the Bromfield Acton-Boxborough rowing team earned multiple medals. First-place finishers included junior Eliza Straayer; the boys pair; and, in a large field of 22 boats, the boys first varsity 4.

The event, the New England Youth and High School Championship Regatta, highlighted a quirk in the rowing rules. Since BA-B is a team fielded from more than one school, the athletes are categorized as “juniors”—like a club. As a result they earned medals in that category. For example, the boys first varsity 8 finished third overall in its race, but it was the fastest in the junior category, so that crew left Worcester with gold medals on blue ribbons around their necks.

Both days featured gray skies and moderate temperatures in contrast to some very rainy regional regattas in years past. The course ran 2 miles for the double-oared sculling boats on Saturday and 2½ for the sweeping boats (one oar per rower) on Sunday.

The girls quad, which will enter the Head of the Charles Regatta for the first time as it is a new event, is gelling well, notes Holly Hatton, the team’s rowing program director and the head coach of the varsity girls. At Community Rowing Inc.’s Fall Classic in September, CRI beat them by more than three minutes. But on Saturday, the BA-B boat closed the gap to one minute in a headwind, finishing strong in third place.

Gary Piantedosi, the head coach of the varsity boys, noted that senior co-captains Clark Hanlon and Ryan Crowley displayed “experience, versatility,

and grit" in winning the pair. "That's the most enjoyable boat to row when it is going well and the absolute worst when it isn't," Piantedosi said. "These guys make it look easy."

Small hiccups bubbled up throughout the weekend in Worcester. In typical fall head racing style, the referees start each boat one by one with a few seconds in between. But on Saturday the referees' timing was off, resulting in a jumble of boats trying to squeak past each other in the narrow part of the lake marked as a no-passing zone. "This caught our double off guard," Hatton said. "I thought they did a good job keeping their cool and regrouping despite all the chaos." On Sunday Ben Bluth was "hot-seating," helping the novices by coxing their 8 and then dashing back for the varsity race. He didn't make it in time, so coaches swapped in Nathan Kushner, who rose to the occasion and coxed the second varsity 8 to a silver medal in the junior category.

On Sunday, Oct. 17, singles rowers are scheduled to compete in the Head of the Quinobequin; that's a native American name for the Charles River, meaning "meandering." Bigger boats will head north to the New Hampshire Championships George Dirth Memorial Regatta in Pembroke, New Hampshire.

### **Varsity Boys**

- Mens Junior 2-: Clark Hanlon and Ryan Crowley, 12:52.4, 1st place
- Mens Junior 2x: Asher Ryba and Thomas Keefe, 13:07.1, 6th place; William Pharo and Milo Whitbeck, 13:33.6, 10th place
- Mens Junior 1st Varsity 4+: Clark Hanlon, Ryan Crowley, Ewan Smith, Charles Maxwell, and coxswain Lucas Villaseñor, 15:36.3, 1st place
- Mens Junior 2nd Varsity 4+: Nikhil Suri, Abraham Rahman, William Thomas, Noah Stein, and coxswain Nathan Kushner, 17:39.1, 6th place

- Mens Junior 1st Varsity 8+: Ewan Smith, Ryan Crowley, Asher Ryba, Thomas Keefe, Clark Hanlon, Charles Maxwell, William Pharo, Aditya Balchandra, and coxswain Lucas Villaseñor, 13:59.6, 3rd
- Mens Junior 2nd Varsity 8+: Nikhil Suri, Derek Uhrich, Stanley Yuan, Milo Whitbeck, Adam Castriotta, Jorgen Johannesen, Leo Sullivan, Noah Stein, and coxswain Nathan Kushner, 15:18.2, 4th place
- Mens Junior 3rd Varsity 8+: Trevor Mangus, Aidan Lemke, Josh Whitney, Myles McCormick, Darren Quek, Jeffery Chang, Sam Goldgar, Kyle Sharma, and coxswain Ben Bluth, 17:53.4, 12th place

### **Varsity Girls**

- Womens Junior 1x: Eliza Straayer, 14:58.8, 1st place; Rachel Walker, 15:36.2, 5th place
- Womens Junior 2x: Mia Hartley and Jadyn Whitney, 15:28.0, 11th place
- Womens Junior 4x+: Sophia Atwell, Alissa Horton, Zoe Gendreau-Distler, Courtney Clark, and coxswain Amita Khurana, 13:47.5, 3rd place
- Womens Junior 1st Varsity 4+: Eliza Straayer, Sanjana Rao, Rachel Walker, Melanie Bodtman, and coxswain Sophie Thompson, 17:48.8, 5th place
- Womens Junior 1st Varsity 8+: Sanjana Rao, Eliza Straayer, Nosara Maxwell, Melanie Bodtman, Zoe Gendreau-
- Distler, Sophia Atwell, Alissa Horton, Rachel Walker, and coxswain Sophie Thompson, 15:43.6, 4th place
- Womens Junior 2nd Varsity 8: Courtney Clark, Mia Hartley, Norah Greene, Sydney Collet-Callahan, Nina Manglani, Yolander Yang, Evelyn Huang, Jadyn Whitney, 18:00.0, 8th place

*Jill Maxwell is a Bromfield Acton-Boxborough team parent.*