

Henley racing returns to Harvard's Bare Hill Pond

BY JILL MAXWELL · FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 2022



Left: Program Director/Coach Holly Hatton poses with team mascot Babby. Right: The tournament trophy. (Photos by Jesse Boudreau)

Harvard's town beach was the perfect setting for the 2022 Harvard Henley Regatta, staged by the Bromfield Acton-Boxborough rowing team on Sunday, April 24. Colorful team food tents popped up on the sand, and grilling smells filled the air for the first time since 2019. Crews from rivals Boston Latin School, Brookline High School, Wayland-Weston, and Cambridge's Riverside Boat Club made the trip out to idyllic Bare Hill Pond. Wayland-Weston captured the trophy for girls first varsity eight, while Brookline took home the trophies for the boys first varsity eight and total team points. BA-B came in third overall on the day.

The contest featured round-robin racing in the style of England's Henley Royal Regatta, which dates back to 1839. Each event included two heats with two teams; the two fastest crews then raced each other again. The winners of the boys and girls first varsity eights earned trophies unique to Harvard's

hometown regatta: For the boys, it's the Pummy, named for Pumunangwet, whom you can find shooting for the stars over at Fruitlands Museum, and for the girls, it's the Arte, named for Artemis, the goddess of the hunt.



From left, Jady Whitney, Courtney Clark, and Amita Khurana of the girls 2V8+. Their boat finished in second place in the A final. (Courtesy photo)

An unprecedented outcome in the boys first varsity eight resulted in a best-two-out-of-three tug o' war on the sand. Brookline and BA-B crews passed the finish buoys at exactly the same time, and the race was declared a dead heat. According to Gary Piantedosi, the BA-B boys head varsity coach, this never happens. "There's a camera at the finish, and if it's a tie, the team that has its oars in the water gets the win," Piantedosi said. There was no camera on the raft that day, so Piantedosi improvised.

Hundreds of spectators cheered as the BA-B crew (rowers Derek Urich, Milo Whitbeck, Asher Ryba, William Pharo, Charles Maxwell, Ewan Smith, Ryan Crowley, Clark Hanlon, and coxswain Lucas Villaseñor) dug in and pulled Brookline figuratively if not literally to its knees. BA-B elected to keep the Pummy for the first six months and will surrender it to Brookline for the second half of the year until the next Harvard Henley. "I really enjoyed the competitive spirit and camaraderie with Brookline—the hockey handshake line at the end. Next time we will add another round, pitting the starboards from both teams against the ports from both. Next year!" Piantedosi added.



After a tie in the boys first varsity eight boats between Brookline and BA-B, the winner was determined by the best two out of three tugs-of-war on the beach. (Courtesy photo)

The girls first varsity eight missed making the final round by .5 second. That's only about five strokes at the end of a race, said their coach, Holly Hatton. They went on to win the B finals, while the girls second varsity eight finished second in their A final.

BA-B girls won the second varsity four (Alissa Horton, Sophia Atwell, Evelyn Huang, Mia Hartley, and coxswain Hannah Tandang). Courtney Clark won the third varsity single, and Eliza Straayer placed second in the first varsity single. After a rough start when a gust of wind snagged them up in the buoy line, the first varsity four recovered to place second. Brand new combos in the pair (Nosara Maxwell and Sanjana Rao) and double (Sydney Collet-Callahan and Zoe Gendreau-Distler), with only a few practices, finished the course respectably.



Boys 2V8+, from left, Noah Stein, William Thompson, Camden Moran, Adam Castriotta, Sam Goldgar, Aidan Nolde, Nikhil Suri, Abraham Rahman, and coxswain Benjamin Bluth.. (Courtesy photos)

"I thought all in all that the girls performed well," Hatton said. "Getting on the water later than most of our competitors this spring and losing valuable practice days to strong winds, they had a lot of catch-up to do, and the results on Sunday show that they are making good progress."

As if the team had put in a request, Bare Hill Pond's nesting bald eagle pair did a flyover for the very last race of the day.



Girls 1V4+ athletes from left, Eliza Straayer, Sydney Collet-Callahan, Zoe Gendreau-Distler, Sanjana Rao, and coxswain Sophie Thompson.

The boys and girls varsity squads will travel to New York for the Saratoga Springs Invitational this weekend, April 30 and May 1. That regatta will give BA-B a chance to test itself against teams from the broader New England region. "This is where the coaches start to decide which crews will prepare to compete at upcoming regional races in order to qualify for Youth Nationals this summer," Hatton said.

Jill Maxwell is a BA-B parent.

Varsity Boys Results

- 1V1x: Derek Uhrich, 4:10.7, 4th place
- 1V2x: Milo Whitbeck and William Pharo, 3:57.6, 2nd
- 1V2-: Clark Hanlon and Ryan Crowley, 4:10.7, 3rd
- 1V4: Clark Hanlon, Asher Ryba, Charles Maxwell, Ewan Smith, and coxswain Lucas Villaseñor, 3:32.9, 2nd
- 2V4: Sam Goldgar, Adam Castriotta, Matthew Chytil, Abraham Rahman, and coxswain Benjamin Bluth, 4:15.2, 3rd
- 1V8+: Derek Uhrich, Milo Whitbeck, Asher Ryba, William Pharo, Charles Maxwell, Ewan Smith, Ryan Crowley, Clark Hanlon, and coxswain Lucas Villaseñor, 3:22.3, dead heat
- 2V8+: Noah Stein, William Thompson, Camden Moran, Adam Castriotta, Sam Goldgar, Aidan Nolde, Nikhil Suri, Abraham Rahman, and coxswain Benjamin Bluth, 3:41.6, B final, 2nd
- 3V8+: Kyle Sharma, Darren Quek, Maxwell Hurlbut-Lesk, Aidan Lemke, Jeffery Chang, Trevor Mangus, Jorgen Johannesen, Josh Whitney, and coxswain Nathan Kushner, 3:37.1, B final, 2nd

Varsity Girls Results

- 1V1x: Eliza Straayer, 4:16.4, 2nd place
- 3V1x: Courtney Clark, 4:45.0, 1st
- 1V2x: Sydney Collet-Callahan and Zoe Gendreau-Distler, 4:29.5, 3rd
- 1V2-: Nosara Maxwell and Sanjana Rao, 4:41.8, 2nd
- 1V4+: Sanjana Rao, Zoe Gendreau-Distler, Sydney Collet-Callahan, Eliza Straayer, and coxswain Sophie Thompson, 3:53.1, 2nd
- 2V4+: Mia Hartley, Courtney Clark, Sophia Atwell, Alissa Horton, and coxswain Hannah Tandang, 4:06.7, 1st
- 1V8+: Mia Hartley, Alissa Horton, Sophia Atwell, Nosara Maxwell, Sanjana Rao, Zoe Gendreau-Distler, Eliza Straayer, Sydney Collet-Callahan, and coxswain Sophie Thompson, 3:55.5, B final, 1st
- 2V8+: Yolander Yang, Alexis Nichols, Nooriya Taherbhoy, Evelyn Huang, Sophia Philipp, Beatrice Maxwell, Jady Whitney, Courtney Clark, and coxswain Amita Khurana, 4:15.6, A final, 2nd

A plus sign (+) indicates a coxswain in the boat; a minus (-) indicates no coxswain; an x means two oars per rower (sculling) as opposed to one oar per rower (sweeping).