



Story
and
photographs
by
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Six members of the crew strain to finish their endurance workout Monday under the "hustle orders" of Coach Ashton Richards, seated in the rear.

MEETING THE CHALLENGE

Crew makes the best of workouts

By the time they finish, their bodies are steaming. Five days a week, 40 minutes a day, it's catch, drive, finish, release, catch, drive, finish, release . . . a constant cycle. Then they're through. Six or eight people sit in a dimly lit room, steam trailing upward around them through the perspiration. In the cool air of the boathouse, the UNL Crew has just finished another endurance workout.

"They've accepted a challenge," crew coach Ashton Richards said. "They discover something new about themselves everyday through the rowing."

Richards knows from experience. A first-year coach and a world-class oarsman himself, Richards is a 1982 graduate of Syracuse University, where rowing has the largest athletic budget on campus next to football.

While some might not think of Nebraska as being a good place to work on their rowing skills, during the winter, the crew has found ways to beat the cold. With two huge tanks of water separated by a boat-like platform, endurance and rhythm techniques are worked on constantly. Also present is the "Erg", a rowing simulation machine called an ergometer.

The crew was recently the host of the Midwest Rowing

Clinic, a yearly event conducted last weekend in the Nebraska Engineering Center and in the boathouse. Rowers and coaches from as far away as Minnesota and New York attended the two-day seminar, which included everything from racing tactics to coaching techniques.

Now that the clinic is over, however, it's back to the daily practices. All crew members, from novice to varsity, male or female, must work out on the tanks at least three days a week for 25 minutes. Men's varsity goes the longest with its 40-minute five-day-a-week sessions.

"It's tough," said Jamie McClain, a novice oarsman from Des Moines, Iowa. "Sometimes you just kinda blank out," he said. Tammy Meyers, a junior from Daykin, said she loves the travel and the staying in shape that go along with being a crew member, but when rowing in the tanks, she said she thinks of "anything to keep your mind off what you're doing," she said.

But until spring break arrives, bringing with it the crew's first race in Austin, Texas, workouts in the boathouse will have to do. As Dan Foster, a sophomore crew member put it, "It's kind of fun . . . I guess . . . in a way," he said.