Director’s Message
by Tony Kilbridge

As many of you may know, each department at MIT is evaluated every two years by an outside body known as a “visiting committee.” This May I was asked to speak to DAPER’s visiting committee about the state of the crew, and in particular to describe meaningful developments of the past two years. I would like to share the same information with you. What follows is the executive summary I submitted to the visiting committee.

**Review and Update**

Since 2014, the crew program has seen the following developments, most of which are positive:

### Completion of Comprehensive Review by Jeffrey Orleans

As mandated in MIT’s 2001 decision to designate crew as a Division I sport, a comprehensive review of the program was conducted by outside consultant Jeffrey Orleans (former commissioner of the Ivy League). Mr. Orleans submitted his report to DAPER in July 2015.

A principal part of Mr. Orleans’s assignment was to recommend whether MIT crew should remain as Division I, or move to Division III.

Mr. Orleans determined that continued DI participation would provide the best experience for MIT’s crew athletes. In reaching this decision, he noted the following:

- There is excellent cohesion and morale on the four crew squads, and among the squads.
- MIT’s crew athletes enjoy and value the challenge of competing in Division I, and are realistic about the extreme difficulty of competing against the best DI programs.
- By rowing a mixed schedule, the crew program can provide its athletes with some races against teams more akin to MIT’s, e.g., DIII schools and smaller DI schools.
- The program will always face what he called “continuing basic difficulties” arising from the Institute’s extremely high admissions standards, lack of admissions flexibility for recruits, and lack of the resources and expectations found in schools with DI athletic departments.
- Mr. Orleans recommended a thorough review of crew recruiting practices, aimed at increasing the
number of rowers who apply to MIT. This review was completed in fall, 2015.

Mr. Orleans also found that the Pierce Boathouse is “obsolete and inadequate in every major respect.”

Continued slow but steady improvement in competitive success and in other metrics of health and vitality

Competitive results:

• Our heavyweight men finished 4th in the Collegiate 8 race in the 2015 Head of the Charles.
• Our openweight women placed all three of their boats in the grand final of the 2015 Patriot League Championships, and won medals in three of the past four years.
• Our lightweight women won back-to-back-to-back Dad Vail Regatta championships in 2014-16.
• Our lightweight men won Dad Vail in 2014, and finished second in 2015. They qualified for the grand final of the Eastern Sprints in 2014 and 2015, and were ranked as high as third in national polls during 2015.

Other achievements:

• Our lightweight men raced in the Temple Cup at the Henley Royal Regatta in 2015.
• Class of 2013 alumna Lauren Ayers represented the U.S. at the 2015 World Rowing Championships in the women’s lightweight 4x. Lauren is the first woman from the lightweight women’s program to row on the U.S. National Team.
• MIT openweight rower Veronica Toro represented Puerto Rico as that country’s single sculler at the 2015 World Rowing Championships.
• Assistant lightweight men’s coach Jeff Forrester was a U.S. National Team coach at the 2015 World Rowing Championships.
• Ten members of the women’s lightweight team were recognized as CRCA National Scholar-Athletes and IRA All-Academic Athletes in 2014 and 2015.
• Twelve members of our openweight women’s team were recognized as CRCA National Scholar-Athletes in 2015.

Alumni Giving Remains Strong

Since the last Visiting Committee visit:

• A $2 million fund endowing the men’s lightweight head coaching position has been completed.
• Two new endowment funds ($250,000 for a shell, and $100,000 for women’s rowing) were begun and completed (including pledges).
• The crew has received 25 gifts of $25,000 or more.
• Endowment payout has increased from $444,000 in 2014 to $525,000 in 2016.
• The market value of all crew endowments has grown to $14.9 million.

The McMillin Fund for recruiting is our top priority for fundraising in FY 2016. This fund will enable the program to provide better campus visits for potential recruits.

Boathouse Renovation or Replacement Project

As recognized in the Jeff Orleans report, the Pierce Boathouse has become outdated and inadequate for the crew’s needs. Its prima-
ry shortcoming is lack of space. Since the building was completed in 1966, MIT added two women’s crew squads, but created no additional space.

In 2014 DAPER commissioned a feasibility study of possible schemes for renovating or replacing Pierce Boathouse. This study, by Architectural Resources Cambridge, was completed in April 2015.

An MIT committee, including representatives from DAPER and crew, is meeting currently with the architects to bring the proposed schemes in line with cost guidelines provided by the MIT administration.

Challenges

The challenges faced by MIT crew were accurately identified in Jeff Orleans’s review of the program:

- Our biggest challenge is what Jeff Orleans described as the “continuing basic difficulty” of competing against Division I schools without the admissions assistance that all DI crews, and many DIII crews, enjoy. Specifically, almost all our competitors employ admissions slots, likely letters, early reads, and/or scholarships to secure recruits, while MIT allows none of these. Consequently, we struggle to obtain enough talented freshmen each year to provide the depth that a high-numbers sport like crew requires. Barring a change in MIT’s philosophy about athletic recruiting, this challenge will always be with us.

- The Pierce Boathouse has ceased to be a source of pride to the program and to DAPER, and has become a problem. It’s size and condition limit the team’s ability to train and discourage potential recruits.

MIT crew should honor the desire of its athletes to compete successfully at the Division I level. We should understand that this will never be easy and that racing successfully in the middle third of the division is both an ambitious goal and probably the best that can be achieved on a regular basis. A program that achieved this goal would be a source of tremendous pride for its athletes and for MIT. To get there, we need:

- The crew staff to continue to work diligently, with the support of DAPER, to provide the student-athletes with a demanding, rewarding, high-quality experience.

- Our alumni to continue to support the crew with their donations. In particular, we need to fully fund the McMillin recruiting endowment, and to successfully fundraise for a renovated boathouse.

- MIT and its admissions office to help us obtain a sufficient number of athletically talented and academically qualified freshmen each year.

#### Fall Race Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Head of the Charles (All Squads)</td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td>October 22-23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Princeton Chase (Heavy Men, Open Women)</td>
<td>Princeton, NJ</td>
<td>October 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dartmouth Green Monster (All Squads - Novice Only)</td>
<td>Hanover, NH</td>
<td>November 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foot of the Charles (Heavy Men, Open Women, Light Women)</td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td>November 12</td>
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Open Women

by Holly Metcalf

The openweight women finished off their season with an excellent showing at the Patriot League Championship—all boats in the grand finals and a bronze medal in the Varsity 8. For the second race in a row the Engineers sprinted through a strong Bucknell varsity 8, beating the multiple Patriot League champions for a first time ever. The entire race down the course had the Bisons and Engineers dead even. The high intensity and volume work through the winter months paid off, leaving our women with one more gear to fire off mentally and physically, putting them ahead of Bucknell and 3 seconds off Navy in 2nd and, for a first time, regionally ranked at number 5.

This past spring proved to be one of patience and humility, learning from early losses that changes can be made given humility and the willingness to face mistakes. Over half our squad was comprised of freshmen recruits and walk-ons—an extremely young team. Our first couple of races brought us up against the fastest programs in our area: Harvard, Northeastern, Boston College and Boston University. The team struggled with nerves and had tough races starting with the Bean Pot, followed by Boston College. The jitters during the first two races were addressed by the team and some extra preparation laid out to tap into confidence, to trust their incredible fitness and readiness for racing season.

The steady increase in speed came as a result of the team’s ability to learn from every race and workout. There was an intense focus on this team, and a willingness to push themselves like no other team I’ve seen in nine years. The freshmen on this squad brought a feeling of family, levity when needed, and a willingness to push themselves mentally and physically.

Our third weekend of racing brought us to Washington, DC where we competed in the George...
Open Women

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Washington Invite, facing the eventual overall Patriot League champions, Navy. We lost to the midshipmen by 7 seconds, one of the closer margins from the regatta. By the time we raced them again at the Patriot League Championship, we were within 3 seconds. This was just one example of this year’s team’s persistence and faith in themselves.

Patriot League Championship
Team Standings:
1. Navy (49 points)
2. BU (48 points)
3. Bucknell (44 points)
4. MIT (35 points)
5. Georgetown (33 points)
6. Holy Cross (23 points)
7. Colgate (17 points)
8. Lehigh (13 points)
9. Loyola Maryland (5 points)

It is hardly the “wins” alone that make me proud to be a part of MIT crew--it is also the love of learning and the students’ passion for innovation that continue to inspire me. Thankfully the world of rowing values this in our student-athletes as well. This year the CRCA (Collegiate Rowing Coaches Association) recognized 12 openweight women as well as 12 lightweight women as CRCA National Scholar-Athletes. In addition to being one of the scholar-athletes, captain Larkin Sayre was named a 2016 Division I first team All-Region award-winner. These awards recognize the outstanding performances of rowers and coxswains from each of the five regions, organized into first and second-team selections. Congratulations to Larkin for her achievement of excellence in all aspects of her life at MIT and beyond.

The team looks forward to the fall, to picking up where we left off, to welcoming our new class of eleven recruited freshmen, and to our future walk-ons who continue to be crucial to the success of our program. I look forward to continuing to build leadership in our women and to becoming stronger student-athletes and people during the 2016-2017 academic year.
Spring Racing

Heavy Men
by Evan Thews-Wassell

The Tech heavyweight men had some good results over the course of the 2016 spring season, and showed considerable improvements along the way. The team boated two 8+’s, which were made up of returning varsity athletes, experienced freshmen recruits and walk-ons.

We opened the season with solid showings against the United States Coast Guard Academy. MIT’s 1V raced Coast Guards’s first heavyweight boat. Coast Guard did not have a second boat, so MIT’s JV rowed in the same race. MIT’s 1V controlled the race from the beginning, leading by open water at the 500 meter mark and finishing first with a time of 6:05. The closer race was between MIT’s 2V and Coast Guard’s 1V. MIT was able to hang on to a 1 length lead, finishing in 6:27 despite a determined push by Coast Guard, who finished in 6:29.

The following weekend Tech raced in the Alumni Cup against Dartmouth, Columbia, and Holy Cross. MIT’s 1V finished 3rd in a time of 6:23.29 behind both Dartmouth and Columbia. Dartmouth led the race from the beginning, with MIT in the back of the pack in the second 500. However, the Engineers showed great perseverance and were able to row through Holy Cross in the third 500 and finish ahead of them.

The Donahue Cup provided some of the most exciting racing of
the season. Competing on Lake Quinsigamond against Williams, WPI and the University of Rochester, the Tech 1V took to the lake in chilly conditions but perfect water. In what was an extremely tightly contested race throughout, the Engineers were able to move out to an early lead of almost a length. Williams pushed back in the third 500 to get even. Both teams sprinted well in the final 500 but MIT was able to cross the line four tenths of a second ahead of Williams, in a time of 5:54.9. WPI finished third in 6:03.8. For the second time in

two years and the third time since 2010, MIT brought the Donahue Cup back to the Pierce Boathouse.

The rest of the regular season had its ups and downs, with wins over Bates and the University of Rhode Island and losses to Harvard, Princeton, and Wisconsin.

The heavy men raced well at the Eastern Sprints, but ultimately could not crack their way into the petite finals, finishing 5th in the third level final. This result was not enough to qualify the team for the IRA National Championships, so Tech sent a V4+.

Making the program’s first Grand Final appearance in many years, the V4+ claimed sixth place at IRA’s. MIT’s opening heat on Friday featured perfect racing conditions with very little wind and an overcast sky. The Engineers trailed Holy Cross at the 500-meter mark but rowed well in the middle thousand, helping them pull even with 500 meters to go before eventually winning with open water in a time of 6:36.9. The almost four-second victory secured a spot in Saturday’s semifinal that featured Washington, Holy Cross, Boston University, Cornell, and Marietta. Competing in muggy conditions with a slight tailwind but flat water, Washington took an early lead and never looked back, crossing the line in 6:23.2.

However, the rest of the field battled the entire length of the course for the last two Grand Final qualifying spots. As the crews entered the sprint, MIT held off a strong charge by BU to claim third place by four-tenths of a second while being edged out by Holy Cross for the runner-up spot. Sunday’s Grand Final included Washington, California, Princeton, Holy Cross, Wisconsin and MIT. The Engineers began the race well but struggled to hold on to the field through the middle part of course. During the last 500 meters, the Cardinal and Gray and Wisconsin fought to the finish line but the Badgers edged out MIT by 1.62 seconds.

Thank you to everyone who came out to the races to support the team and cheer on the athletes. The support from friends, family and alumni is truly appreciated.

See you in the fall!
**Spring Racing**

**Light Women**
by Claire Martin-Doyle

As I rode in the truck keeping John Pratt company on the ride home from IRA, I should have been thoroughly satisfied with the success of our spring season: 3rd consecutive Dad Vail Championship racing competitively in the grand final of IRA for the first time in program history, 5th overall team placement at IRA and the rumor is true – Amelia cried from happiness after IRA which may be the biggest deal of the past 10 years. Despite all the success of the season, the most prevalent thought in my mind was “How could we have gotten than 1.7 seconds needed to beat Wisconsin?” How are we going to move on to the podium in the future?” These are the musings of a coach and I’m sure all of you can relate to this feeling. For now, though, I am going to venture to keep the focus on the success of our spring season, so here’s the recap!

**Won Dad Vail Lightweight Eight Championship, 3rd consecutive year**
Dad Vail Champions 2014, 2015, 2016

**Varsity Lightweight Four took bronze at Dad Vail**
2nd year the Four took bronze at Dad Vail

**Team placed 5th overall at IRA**

**National Championship**
Combination of Varsity Eight and Varsity Four Points to Finish ahead of: Princeton University, University of Massachusetts, University of Tulsa, Villanova University, Fordham University and Georgetown University

**Varsity Eight placed 5th in Grand Final at IRA**
1st appearance in Grand Final in program history

**12 CRCA Scholar-Athletes**
Student-Athletes are eligible in their 2nd academic year, and if they have rowed in an IRA eligible boat 75% of the year. The majority of our IRA boat rowers are Scholar-Athletes. When recruits ask if...
it is possible to row and do well academically at MIT, this is our answer.

**Sharon Wu ’17 named 1st All-American in program history**

Our elected co-captain for 2016-2017 wins the 1st All-American Award in program history. Rowers are eligible (by nomination) when the Varsity Eight races in the Grand Final.

**Team GPA of 4.5/5.0**

Our rowers are performing exceptionally academically as well as athletically - showing that we are committed to maintaining high academic standards in combination with a competitive collegiate training program.

Every season has its share of ups and downs, drama, serious low points and we certainly had ours this spring. I have a post-it note on my computer that I jotted down on a tough coaching day, which says, “Confidence in your convictions. Faith. Integrity.” Amelia and I take this to heart every day and believe that MIT LW’s Rowing has been thriving and strong in many regards for a number of years and now is paying off in improved competitiveness. We strive to continue to build our team with a culture of support, positivity and integrity and keep the faith that speed follows suit.

Thank you to all of you who helped to build our program with your attributes of resilience, care and integrity in addition to competitiveness. Our success this spring is because of you – your dedication to MIT LW both as a rower and now, as an alumna. Thank you and we hope to see you back at the boat-house soon!

**Save the Date**

Please make your plans now to join us for MIT Crew Alumni Day 2016!

**October 21, 2016**

More information to follow!
We started the 2016 spring season knowing that we had some serious ground to make up. Having graduated so many rowers from last year’s boat, and having lost a several others due to injury, the team as a whole was very young. The 1V and 2V would each have only one rower returning from their previous year’s lineup. What we had going for us was that each oarsman really wanted to contribute and improve; the team’s dynamic and positive attitude throughout the season was definitely and bright spot and a major factor in the squad making as much progress as it did. We came into each week’s race planning to make small gains, never knowing if they would be enough, but hopeful that by the end of the season that the seconds would add up.

The season kicked off versus Penn and Delaware. In the past, we’d seen a lot of competitive races against these two opponents. This year they were definitely ready for us, however. Our boats got off to excellent starts, but could not keep up the pace. The margins were definitive but respectable, and we knew that we’d have to keep training hard through the spring season in order to close the gaps.

The next weekend found us in San Diego. The Crew Classic offers a variety of competition, and we got to race some schools that we rarely see from the West Coast. The main competition was University of Victoria, down from Canada, and they offered us quite a fight in both races of the lightweight event. In this race, it was our turn to show our speed through the middle of the race, and while Victoria got up on us in both meetings, we were able to hunt them down and win by decisive margins.

The next three weekends constituted our team’s cup season. In quick succession we raced the Joy Cup, the Biglin Bowl, and Geiger Cup, in Boston, Hanover, and Ithaca respectively. Each race found us trailing our league opponents, but we continued to make headway throughout. With a large portion of the team stricken by norovirus, the Joy Cup was quite a challenge, and both the 1 and 2V lost close races to Georgetown that we would have otherwise hoped to win. In much better health the following weekend, the Biglin Bowl was a decidedly closer race. Our margins to both Harvard and Dartmouth were within about 10 seconds,
Light Men
Continued from p. 10

and both boats rowed consistent races against good competition. Versus Columbia and Cornell at the Geiger Cup, those crews’ strength really showed. Our guys rowed what might have been their strongest race of the year, but still came up short of two very good squads. Nevertheless, having seen most of our competition for the season, we felt prepared for the push to Sprints. We knew we still had ground to make up, but we had an idea of how to improve our performance. Both crews worked hard for the three weeks before our league championship, working to generate more effective rating and to maintain consistency throughout their races.

At Sprints, we really felt the hard work paid off, even though the results were not what we would have hoped. The margins were considerably closer, and both the 1 and 2V were in tight races into the last 500m. In the end, we didn’t quite make it, but the guys remained positive throughout and laid the groundwork for a stronger future. We’ll say goodbye to 5 seniors this year, but we have a solid incoming class (9 recruited freshmen) to help fill the gap. We’re positive that the team can come into next season in a much better position, and though there’s always going to be more work to do, we feel great about where the program is headed. Thanks to everyone who came out and supported us throughout the season. Your cheers, snacks, and enthusiasm are endlessly helpful and appreciated. See you in the fall!
Incoming Class
by Jeff Forrester

All four squads had a banner year with recruiting and the athletes they have brought to MIT. All are excited for their incoming group of freshmen and look forward to the contributions they will make in the coming years.

Openweight Women
The openweight women’s team is very excited to welcome the incoming freshman class. There are 11 total recruited freshman coming in, making it one of the biggest classes ever for the program and the talent level and enthusiasm of the group will make a lasting impact on the team for years to come.

Lightweight Women
The lightweight women have 9 incoming recruits, from California to Boston, and are very excited about their talent, as several of them qualified and raced at Youth Nationals.

Heavyweight Men
At the end of this years’ recruiting cycle, the heavyweight men were able to bring in 10 of 13 accepted recruits. The group is a mix of club and scholastic rowers, with some of them getting medals at both USRowing Youth Nationals and Scholastic Nationals. As this is one of the bigger recruiting classes in recent years, the team is excited about the impact they are going to have come September.

Lightweight Men
The lightweight men had 11 student athletes admitted, with 9 of them committing to becoming Engineers. This is one of the most experienced group the team has ever had admitted, having numerous rowers compete at the national and international level as junior rowers. The potential for what this group of 9 can bring is extremely exciting and have the team optimistic for the future.

Photos by Igor Belakovskiy & MIT Coaching Staff
Edited by Will Oliver