

Now! Now! Now!

By
**Alvin Ulbrickson with
Richard L. Neuberger**

At Poughkeepsie last year Al Ulbrickson's crews made a clean sweep—and the varsity went on to win the Olympics. Once more the cry "Watch Washington!" resounds along the Hudson River

IT WAS at Berlin that I bit my cigarette in two. The boys had just won the Olympic crew championship, and my jaws were working as furiously as locomotive pistons. My newspaper friends tell me I was so excited I jumped on my chair in the observation porch and kept shouting Coxswain Bob Moch's shrill "Now! Now! Now!"

I wouldn't know whether they're kidding me or not.

All I was conscious of in that wild last minute, when the boys came over the line ahead of Italy and Germany and Great Britain, was that we finally had achieved the objective we had pointed toward for three years. The gang was so jubilant that it showed mercy and didn't throw Moch overboard—the first time in Washington crew history that the coxswain hadn't been ducked after a victorious race.

Ever since 1933 the boys had talked about the Olympics all the time they were awake—and sometimes I think they did so in their sleep.

In that respect, rowing is like few other sports. You train more rigorously for it and the actual competition takes place in less time than in almost any other branch of athletics. A football team plays seven or eight games a season, a basketball team fifteen or twenty. Even a track squad enters four or five meets. But a college crew races only two or three times annually, and generally always has a weather eye on the Olympic Games, which are held four years apart.

In an average season the University of Washington boat participates in two events—the dual regatta with the University of California, and the national intercollegiate championship race at Poughkeepsie on the Hudson River. Probably the contests require an aggregate time of forty or forty-five minutes. Thus we spend nearly half a year preparing for less than an hour of actual competition.

There is a completely understandable reason why this is so. Intercollegiate

rowing demands the maximum in stamina and endurance. It would be more than flesh and blood could stand to hold crew races as frequently as other athletic events. Once an oarsman enters his shell for the four-mile pull down the river at Poughkeepsie, he is there to stay. For better or for worse, he must remain at his sweep until the end of the race. A football player can rest between scrimmage plays; he can be replaced with a substitute if an emergency arises. But there are no time-outs in rowing. Eight oarsmen and a coxswain start down the Hudson and the same eight oarsmen and coxswain must finish. If a rower cracks or collapses, and is merely a passenger when his boat reaches the final flag, he undoes the work and effort of his fellows. So every member of every varsity crew must be in as nearly perfect physical condition as possible.

The Modern Spartans

If a boy tells me he can't live up to training requirements, I tell him he had better abandon all hopes of being an oarsman. Sometimes I believe the self-denying gentlemen who used to live on pillars for twenty or thirty years were the progenitors of our modern collegiate rowers.

In bed at 10 and up by 7:30 are the hours for anyone who would swing a sweep in a varsity shell. He must confine his diet to lean meat and plenty of green vegetables, and he must stay away from pastries and other rich food. If you're unable to do without Hungarian goulash or pumpkin pie smothered in whipped cream, don't attempt to be a rower. Try something less strenuous.

During last year's tense pre-Olympic competition, I put the boys on a more rigid Spartan diet than ever. Finally we won the American championship and were on our way to Europe on the liner Manhattan. Six-foot-five-inch Jim McMillan, our captain for this season, could no longer stand the meals I had



Al Ulbrickson, Washington rowing coach, and, below, the Huskies crew that won the 1936 American Intercollegiate and the Olympic events

outlined. One morning he sneaked out of his stateroom early and got to the dining salon ahead of the rest of us. He ordered a double stack of hot cakes. They were brought. Jim looked at them and sighed. For a moment he hesitated. Then he generously coated each hot cake with butter. The spirit was willing but the flesh was weak; Jim was determined to have an honest-to-goodness meal at last. He drowned the glorious pile of buttered hot cakes in a golden flow of syrup, and poised his knife and fork for the first delicious bite.

Like the U. S. Cavalry in a Wild West movie, I arrived just in time.

"Thanks a million, Jim, for fixing those for me," I said, as I reached over his shoulder for the plate. While Jim glared at me across his orange juice and dry toast, I calmly proceeded to eat the hot cakes he had so diligently prepared. But it was partially because Jim McMillan was in A-1 shape and pulled a powerful sweep in the center of our boat that we took the Olympic finals.

No crew race was ever won by a squad out of condition.

Athletics' Supreme Moment

This pointing toward one or two major boat races makes the Poughkeepsie regatta so thrilling each year. The tenseness before the football kickoff, the second when the two fighters meet for the first time in the middle of the ring—both are stirring and colorful, but for the supreme moment in athletics, I must decide in favor of the start of the annual Poughkeepsie race.

The pick of the country's crews wait breathlessly with poised oars. Rigid coxswains hold the tiller ropes motionless. Along the river banks thousands of persons lean expectantly from boat trains, those weird hybrids between freight cars and grandstands. The Hudson is dotted with launches, yachts, canoes, tugs and destroyers. From one of these vessels the President of the United States watches with his rowing-fan sons. It is almost sundown, and the western hills are aglow.

For half a year the assembled crews have prepared and planned for this moment. Future naval officers from Annapolis, miners' sons from Pennsylvania, embryo lawyers from Columbia, youthful lumberjacks from Washington—all have awaited the Poughkeepsie test.

For an instant there is the hushed silence of a cathedral. Then the gun barks and poised oars suddenly sweep into action. The shells spurt ahead like torpedoes. From the locomotives on the shore and from the yachts on the river come deep-throated whistles. Shrieking spectators wave pennants and flags. The boat trains start with sharp jerks. The oarsmen snap back and forth with jack-knife motions. Wiry little coxswains bend forward vibrantly, as if trying to transmit their own energy to their

(Continued on page 53)



Dangerous Young Man

By George F. Worts

The Story Thus Far:

A GANG, headed by Frankie Fife (alias Frank Merri-cka) and Steve Tetlow, a tavern owner, is plotting to blackmail Jane Griffin, New York debutante. A girl, one with an *entree* to society, is needed to inveigle Jane into leaving a party to be given at Lazarre's and going to the apartment of one Roderico Hova, a tango dancer. And the right girl is found: Franziska Rilling.

Franziska is in debt. And she has lost the man she loves, Roger Van Tyle, to Jane Griffin. She promises (so, at least, it appears) to co-operate with the kidnapers.

At about this time, young Peter Banyard of Nevada reaches New York and immediately consults his wealthy father's wise old ex-valet: Oliver Hooper. He insists that Oliver become his valet and assist him in working his way into Park Avenue society so that he can meet a certain girl who, flying east with him, has snubbed him. The girl, he says, is beautiful; her name is—*Franziska Rilling!*

Oliver is impressed by the young man's obvious strength and apparent courage. He says that he will do anything Mr. Banyard asks him to do, if Mr. Banyard will only accompany him to a certain tavern (Tetlow's) and there administer a drubbing to one of his old enemies: Albert Mowrey. . . . It so happens that Peter is anything but fearless: he is afraid of almost everything—including women! But, to overcome his fears, he deliberately goes out of his way to face danger. . . . At Tetlow's Tavern, he gives Mowrey a beautiful beating!

A few evenings later, he is prepared to face the greatest peril of his life: Franziska Rilling, who (he feels sure) had sensed his timidity on that airplane trip. Leaving his Park Avenue apartment (selected and managed by the omniscient Oliver), he goes to Lazarre's. There, so Oliver has informed him, Franziska Rilling will be a guest at a party being given for Jane Griffin. He has no invitation but, coached by his valet, he knows how to "crash" his way in.

As he drives up, he sees Franziska arrive. He sees a man—Steve Tetlow, whom he had seen at the tavern—slip up to her and hand her some small object. Then he sees the girl, accompanied by a tall, red-haired young man, step quickly into Lazarre's.

II

WHEN Peter entered Lazarre's lobby, Franziska and the redheaded young man were lost in the crowd. He checked his things and followed the crowd to a point where he could see a little of Lazarre's gilt-and-white ballroom.

He was thinking about Steve Tetlow's strange encounter with Franziska. He was so shocked by its implications that he forgot, for a little while, to be terrified. The rich, deep music of a slow dance gave him a feeling of recklessness and romance. He saw the watchdogs and now and then he heard the voice of a man who looked like Oliver calling the names to the receiving line.

It seemed to him, in that lucid interval, that many of the young men bore themselves with an air of preening, as if they were not any more accustomed to this sort of thing than he was. And he saw girls who, he was certain, did not feel nearly so gay as they acted. His collective impression, which surprised him, was one of stilted gaiety.

He lit a cigarette and smiled at a blue-eyed girl who glanced at him. He was surprised when she smiled mistily in return. He tried it on another girl, a breathless-looking brown-eyed girl in a pale pink lace gown, and was startled when she grinned at him and rolled her eyes a little. He was sure that this little coquetry was the most exciting thing that had ever happened to him. After that, he smiled at every girl whose eyes he encountered, and usually she smiled back at him.

As Oliver had predicted, he wasn't waiting alone. Other unattached young men drifted in and out, and girls, alone, or with other girls or men, came and went.

So far his program was successful. No one had stared at him as if he were a party crasher. And no one had asked him any ques-

tions. Oliver had said it would be easy, and so far it had been easy.

He listened to the smooth music and studied another young man who was waiting, wondering if he could be as bored, as worldly, as blasé as he looked. His eyes were long-lidded, half-mooned. His eyebrows were slightly pinched. His mouth was slightly pursed. He wore white kid gloves. Another worldly-looking young man came out. The two exchanged suave greetings and went in. Peter presently realized that the man who looked like Oliver was no longer calling off names. The receiving line had broken up. Fewer people were going in and the gaiety seemed to have reached a higher note.

IT WAS time to stop loitering. It was time to go in. It was time to pick up an unattached girl and go in and dance with Franziska.

An unattached girl was coming out. She was not looking at anyone. Her head was down a little, and her eyes were downcast. Her air was that of a girl who wished to avoid eyes, who wished to avoid being spoken to.

Peter realized that she was a super-smoothie. She must be a supersmoothie. She was one of the prettiest girls he had seen tonight, and there was something about her that was only to be described as something special.

She was a small, slim thing in a white gown with a large corsage of Talisman roses. Her hair was golden blond and her complexion was a beautiful blending of rose and white. It was a slim, modeled face, with the eyebrows tilting upward toward the temples. Her hair was cut very short, combed straight back, and from the back curls came forward, appearing on top of her head like small golden horns. There was something faunlike about this girl.

She did not raise her eyes when she passed Peter. She seemed in a hurry. She went to a door on which was painted the word "Telephones," opened it and went in.

Another unescorted girl came out of the ballroom. She was the brown-eyed breathless-looking one who had been among the first at whom Peter had smiled. After the blond girl, she looked drab. Even with her beautifully cut shell-pink gown and her artfully arranged black hair, she did not come off as the blond girl had come off. She was pretty. But she wasn't a supersmoothie. She wasn't even a smoothie.

The girl in shell-pink was smiling a little, as if she might talk to him if he encouraged her, but Peter looked at the door marked "Telephones." He had decided that the blond girl was the girl he would walk in with, not because it was sensible, but because it would be a harder test. It was the way he must do this sort of thing—a little perversely. His timidity demanded it.

HE WALKED slowly toward the door marked "Telephones." He was as tense as a fiddle string, and his tongue tasted very brackish. He waited, with his smile ready.

He was going to be returning when she came out. He was going to say, "Hello! Why, hui-lo, there!"

It sounded pretty silly. Why, hui-lo, there! The door opened and she came out in a hurry. She looked angry. She had large blue eyes which were startling and beautiful with their dark blue rims like gentian irises. She looked like an angry faun.

Peter was turning, toward the dance floor,

