

# ROW, ROW, ROW YOUR BOAT



photo contributed

Senior Eric Hildebrandt and the men's varsity team row at the midwest junior rowing championships in 2010 in Ohio, where the team placed sixth overall.

## Two Mason seniors take advantage of rowing's growing popularity

Joseph Spencer | Staff Writer

While sports such as track and football at Mason have more than one hundred participants per season, there are a few athletes in Mason who participate in a mostly unknown sport, rowing. Seniors Eric Hildebrandt and Mitch Evans row at Greater Miami Rowing in races that range from 2000 meters to 1200 meters with four to eight person boats. Hildebrandt began his rowing career when he first entered high school.

"I started rowing after I stopped playing lacrosse my freshmen year," Hildebrandt said. "Rowing quickly turned into my passion: the mental, as well as physical aspects of racing and finishing a race are what grows on a rower."

According to Hildebrandt, he said he believes that the mental aspect of rowing is what makes the sport so difficult.

"The mental aspect of being able to push yourself at the end of a mile-long race as well as being able to keep

your rows in pace with your fellow teammates makes the sport challenging," Hildebrandt said.

Hildebrandt said that being able to finish races is key as he rows in the back of the boat and is the power of the whole operation.

"I am the powerhouse of the boat," Hildebrandt said. "I work from the stern (back) of the boat and keep pace of the boat as a whole."

Hildebrandt rows with fellow senior Mitch Evans, who works from the opposite side of the boat as Hildebrandt.

"I sit in the bow (front) of the boat and set the pace for the race," Evans said.

Evans said he also started rowing as a freshman and is most attracted to the speed of the sport.

"The best thing about rowing is the [feeling] of having an eight person boat at top speed with every rower in unison," said Evans. "At top speed with the feel of

the wind at your back atop the water, you feel unstoppable."

Both Hildebrandt and Evans said they think that rowing will continue to grow in its popularity and gain college status.

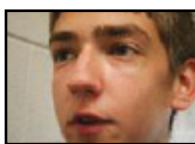
"Rowing is broadening immensely," said Evans. "Within the last 10 years we have seen three clubs rise in Cincinnati alone. While it will never be at a level of football rowing is on the way to becoming a major college sport."

As rowing continues to grow, both seniors' rowing careers are growing as well. Both are being recruited to row at the collegiate level at schools such as Georgia Tech, Ohio State, Cornell, The Naval Academy and Yale.

"I look forward to rowing in college," said Hildebrandt. "It is an opportunity to keep doing the sport I have grown to love."

### **C TRADING PUNCHES**

Is it such a big deal if Denver Bronco quarterback Tim Tebow is religious?



James Nosek

*There's no problem with Tim Tebow being religious, but I think the bigger issue is his football career. He is a proven winner; no doubt about it, but this rollercoaster ride of amazing emotions and the classic underdog story will eventually die off. I don't think Tebow can continue this magical run for the rest of the playoffs, one, but also for the next few years. I think Tebow will be a short term success, not a long term one and I hope he can prove me and all the haters wrong, but I don't see that happening.*



Katelyn Cain

*It is a big deal in a good way that Tim Tebow is religious because now there is someone that people can look up to in the NFL. Shouldn't the NFL be looking for players with attributes like Tebow? You can say all you want about is game, sure, but his religious side is the best part of his game; it makes him throwing 316 yards even that more magical. I don't understand why people would say that his being religious is bad. It's a good thing. Shouldn't parents everywhere be thanking the NFL that their children can finally admire someone with qualities like Tebow, instead of someone like Plaxico Burress?*