

The Formation of USRowing

A Brief History of Milestones

Milestone 1 - 1962

- National Women's Rowing Association founded.
- Co Founders were Joanne Wright Iverson (Philadelphia Girls Rowing Club), Ted Nash (Lake Washington Rowing Club) and Ed Lickiss (Lake Merritt Rowing Club)
- Note: A Regional System covering the whole U.S. was an NWRA Cornerstone

Milestone 2 - 1967

- Philadelphia Girls Rowing Club sent the first representative Women's Eight (as well as a Quad) to a FISA international championship.

Milestone 3 - 1972

- The passage by the U.S. Congress of Title IX of the Omnibus Education Act greatly influenced the stature and development of women's rowing in the United States.

Milestones 4 & 5 - 1976

- Montreal Olympics: First Olympic Rowing Championship for women (1,000 meters).
 - Joan Lind Van Blom wins silver in W1X; U.S. Women's Eight wins bronze.
 - Staines & Coffey M2- wins silver (only medal for the U.S. men's team).
- The Yale Women's 8+ makes national headlines with their Title IX protest strip.

Milestone 6 - 1978

- Passage of the original Ted Stevens Amateur Sports Act (revised and enhanced in 1998):
 - Re-chartered and granted monopoly status to the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) as the ultimate governing authority of U.S. amateur sports
 - Charged the USOC with chartering a single NGB for each Olympic (and eventually Paralympic) sport.

More Effects of the Act...

- Set up Athletes Advisory Council of the USOC.
- Charges each NGB with (1) selecting its best Olympic team and (2) promoting amateur competition in its sport.
- Grants substantial rights and protections to Athletes especially regarding:
 - Their right to compete
 - Their right to 20% representation on the board of their NGB.

Direct Effects on U.S. Rowing

- Forced the all-male NAAO to negotiate with the NWRA to form a unified NGB that would:
 - Include and empower women to serve on its board of directors on the same basis as men
 - Fulfill the USOC requirement of athlete representation on the NGB Board of Directors.
 - Truly represent rowing nationwide, not just on the Boston/New York/Philadelphia/Washington D.C. continuum.

Other Effects

- Change of leadership at NAAO
- Addition of paid staff (Exec. Dir. and Sec.)
- Emergence of key change agents:
 - Bill Hollenback - president
 - Boyce Budd – lead negotiator on behalf of NAAO
 - Susan Urbas – president of NWRRA and lead negotiator
- Identification of Regionalization as the key vehicle for NAAO institutional change.

Milestone 7 – 1979

- Development and refinement of the NAAO regionalization plan.
- Presentation of the plan by Boyce Budd at the December 1979 NAAO annual convention in Seattle, WA.
- Adoption of the plan by the NAAO House of Delegates.

Milestone 8 - 1981

- NAAO changes its name to United States Rowing Association.
- Other major constitutional changes are ratified (including an expanded, more inclusive Board of Directors).

Milestone 9 - 1983

- After two years of intensive negotiation, MERGER of NAAO and NWRA is finally agreed upon and put into implementation.
- A central feature – at the insistence of NWRA – is complete gender equality at all levels of governance (Board of Directors and Regions).

(Note: NWRA finally dissolved in 1986).