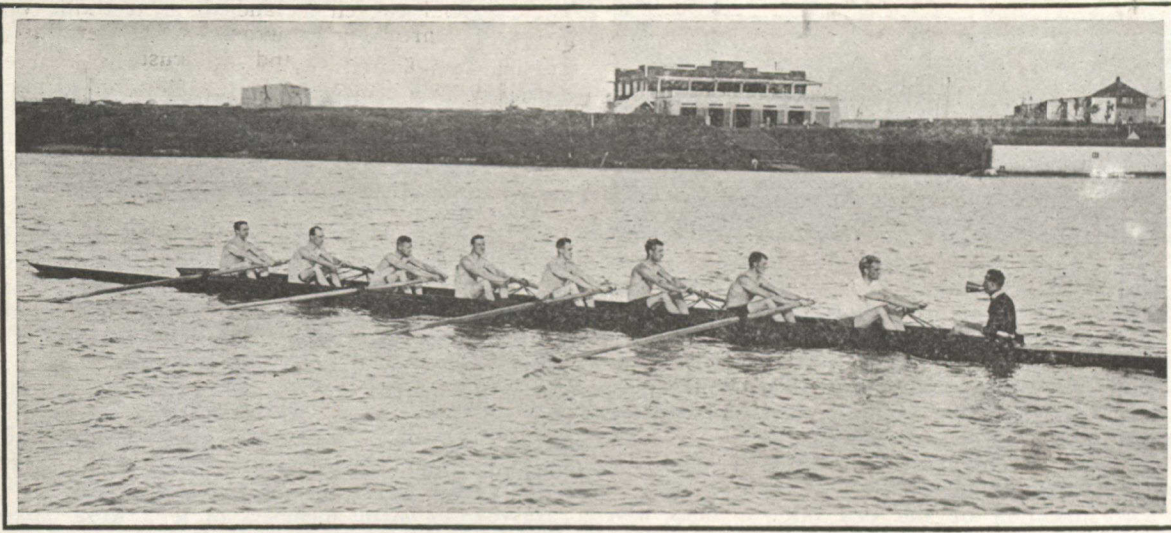




Winnipeg Rowing Club's Senior Eight: C. S. Riley, stroke; G. B. Aldous, 7; J. S. Henderson, 6; E. B. Eadie, 5; J. M. Baker, 4; K. L. Patton, 3; C. E. Allen, 2; J. D. C. MacLennan, bow; G. L. Leggo, cox. Club-house in the background.

## Our Oarsmen of 1912

By J. T. STIRRETT

CANADIAN oarsmen won nearly all the races at the three important regattas held in North America during the season of 1912. This is no vain boast, but a plain statement of fact. There are three series of contests annually to decide who are the best oarsmen on this continent: the National Association of Amateur Oarsmen's regatta, held this year at Peoria, Ill.; the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen's regatta, which has taken place annually for many years at St. Catharines, but which will probably be transferred permanently to Toronto next year; and the Northwestern International Association's regatta, which has lately come into prominence and which was held at Winnipeg this year.

How fared the Canadians against the brain and brawn of the crack clubs of the United States?

Out of thirty-six races rowed, the Canadians won twenty-nine, dividing their victories among the regattas as follows:

At the N. A. A. O. Regatta the Canadians won 8 races; at the C. A. A. O., 13; at the N. I. A., 8; total, 29. The Americans won at the N. A. A. O. Regatta, 4 races, at the C. A. A. O., 0; at the N. I. A., 3; total, 7.

These contests include "sweep" races, in which the men row in crews and with one long oar, and "sculling" races, where the men row alone or in pairs and use two short, light oars, or sculls. In England the former is "rowing," and the latter is "sculling," but the two are usually included under the one term, "rowing," on this continent. This is not only confusing, but also misleading. The two exercises call for entirely different athletic ability, and it is very rare that a man excels in both.

How did Canadians and Americans compare in sculling and rowing? A glance at the following table will give the answer:

| Regattas.   | Sculling (C.) | Sculling (A.) | Rowing (C.) | Rowing (A.) |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| N.A.A.O. .. | 6             | 1             | 2           | 3           |
| C.A.A.O. .. | 6             | 0             | 7           | 0           |
| N.I.A. .... | 3             | 0             | 5           | 3           |

That is, in sculling, the Canadians won fifteen out of sixteen events, and in rowing the Canadians won fourteen out of twenty.

These victories were divided among five Canadian rowing clubs as follows:

| Clubs.         | N.A.A.O. Regatta. | C.A.A.O. Regatta. | N.I.A. Regatta. | Total. |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------|
| Winnipeg R.C., |                   |                   |                 |        |
| Winnipeg ..... | 6                 | 0                 | 7               | 13     |
| Argonauts,     |                   |                   |                 |        |
| Toronto .....  | 2                 | 5                 | 0               | 7      |
| Dons,          |                   |                   |                 |        |
| Toronto .....  | 0                 | 7                 | 0               | 7      |



A. F. Culver, Winnipeg's Best Sculler.

|                |   |   |   |   |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|
| Ottawa R.C.,   |   |   |   |   |
| Ottawa .....   | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Selkirk R.C.,  |   |   |   |   |
| Manitoba ..... | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |

Fifteen of the races, consequently, were won by Eastern Canadians and fourteen by Western Canadians, a very equal division of honours.

THE Winnipeg Rowing Club deserve great credit for their record this season. They have stepped into the continental leadership which the Argonauts held last year, that is, so far as the number of victories is concerned. There is a close connection between the two clubs, owing to the fact that the Winnipeg Club was founded by graduates of the Argonaut Club who went west many years ago. They were good teachers and they had pupils whose energy and enthusiasm could not be excelled. And in some respects, the pupils have excelled their masters, for they have done what the Argonauts have so far failed to accomplish—they have won a sweep race in England.

In spite of the fact that they have won fewer victories than the Winnipeggers, the Argonauts played the most important part in Canadian rowing this year. They represented Canada at the British Henley and at the Swedish Olympiad, and, while they were defeated at both places, they demonstrated that they had one of the three best eight-oared crews in the world. Their sculler, E. B. Butler, retained two United States senior championships, and their

eights won the senior, light senior and junior championships of the Dominion. This seems a contradiction to the above tables of victories until one considers that seven of the races won by Winnipeg took place at the Northwestern International Association's regatta, which, although it provides splendid races, does not confer national championships. The Canadian championships are decided at the C.A.A.O. regatta, and those of the United States are decided at the N.A.A.O. regatta.

THE Dons, of Toronto, have easily distanced all competitors in sculling. They won every Canadian sculling championship, six in all, a record of which any club may be proud. The feat of Robert Dibble, who won the junior, intermediate and senior championships, at the one regatta, and who beat E. B. Butler, the Canadian Olympic contestant, in the last event, is a remarkable one in the history of sculling in this country. The Dons have mastered the difficult art of handling two oars at the same time, and, as they have taken up rowing in earnest, it will be interesting to watch whether they can train crews which will be formidable in the sweep events at the big regattas.

Ottawa did very little this season, winning only one international race, the senior four at the Canadian Henley. The men of the Maritime Provinces and the Pacific Coast have created little enthusiasm in rowing circles. Toronto and Winnipeg clubs have won twenty-seven out of the twenty-nine races, a fact which requires explanation. Rowing is an expensive game. Boats and other equipment cost a great deal. Many men must be tried before the proficient are selected. There are usually no gate receipts because regattas are held on wide stretches of water where the public has access without expense. Consequently, it is only in large cities, where there are plenty of young men available to swell membership lists and fill boats, that rowing clubs can flourish. Money and numbers are not the only essentials for success in this sport, however, a statement proved by the fact that although the American rowing clubs surpass greatly the Canadian rowing clubs, both in membership and wealth, the Canadians hold all the championships of their own country and two-thirds of those of the United States. Consequently, the small cities and towns of Canada need not feel that they are debarred from rowing. The small club may be hard to hold together, but it can develop oarsmen and scullers.

THE Canadian stroke, which is practically the Argonaut stroke, has received considerable criticism since the failure of the Canadians abroad this summer. The Englishmen tell us that we must change our stroke if we hope to beat them, and many Canadians agree with this view. Certainly, we have patiently trained and instructed many losing crews. While it is wise to admit a willingness to learn from the Englishmen, who have taught rowing to all the world, it is well to remind them of several things occasionally. They said that the Canadian scullers used slides which were too short and

were all wrong generally, till Ned Hanlan played with their best professionals. Then their scullers lengthened their slides. Lou Scholes showed them that Canadian amateurs can scull. Both these men learned their game on Toronto Bay under the instruction of the Toronto Rowing Club.

On the whole, this has been a good year for rowing. It is a great sport, the best loved sport of Old England. It requires of its votaries the courage of despair, the endurance of the camel, the cheer of Sunny Jim and the unwavering patience of an archangel. These are not foreign qualities to the inhabitants of our vigorous climate.



Grand Stand, Winnipeg Rowing Club.



Fair Winnipeggers Interested in Rowing.