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For Immediate Release

**NEW TRIER BOYS VARSITY CREW TAKES 2ND, GIRLS FINISH 8TH AT
LEGENDARY HEAD OF THE CHARLES REGATTA**

Winnetka, Ill. – New Trier’s Boys Varsity Eight Crew finished 2nd among 79 boats, and the Girls Varsity Eight took 8th among 74 crews at the 45th Annual Head of the Charles Regatta, the largest two-day regatta in the world, held in Boston, October 18 and 19, 2009.

Fighting through the rain and wind of a developing nor’easter, the Varsity Boys Eight claimed a silver medal in the Youth Eights event, finishing behind 1st place Eton College of Great Britain, and ahead of 3rd place Everett Rowing Association, a top high school crew from Seattle. Starting as the fourth boat in this event, the Trevians passed long time rival Winter Park (Orlando, FL) early on in the 3-mile race.

“With seven seniors and one junior, all relatively light in weight, New Trier was able to row their race the best I have seen them this season,” said Nate Kelp-Lenane, Varsity Boys Head Coach. “Despite the cold, rainy conditions, they did an excellent job in applying the technique that we’ve been developing in practice. I am happy to see them complete their fall season on a great finish.”

“When our coxswain, (Patrick O’Hara) said we were starting to walk through Winter Park just after the Boston University bridge, we couldn’t believe it. We took up the power and pushed through to pass them. It was a great feeling,” said James Nelson, who rowed in 4-seat of the Varsity Boys Eight.

New Trier’s Girls Varsity Eight also left their mark at the Head of the Charles, finishing 8th among 74 crews in a time of 17:56, just 2.95% out of the 1st place time won by Maritime Rowing Club. Boston’s Community Rowing Club was 2nd, followed by 3rd place Saratoga Rowing.

“The level of competition was steep, and the girls rowed a solid race,” said Rose Marchuk, Varsity Girls Head Coach and Rowing Program Director. “Part of what makes head racing so much fun is the element of chance when it comes to weather conditions, and like a deck of cards, they did their absolute best with the conditions they were dealt.”

The Youth Eights event is open to all high school crews, but New Trier was one of the few public high schools to field boats in this event, filled predominantly by rowing clubs and prep school rowing programs.

The legendary Head of the Charles Regatta attracts more than 300,000 spectators to the banks of the Charles River to watch 8,500 rowers from 19 countries compete on the 3-mile course. Rowers ages 18-84 race in 57 events, representing clubs, schools, and national teams, all hoping to become “head” of the Charles River.

In head style races, boats race against the clock, staggered in 10-12 second intervals, and the crew with the fastest time wins. Time penalties are assessed throughout the course for a variety of errors such as missing buoys or colliding with another crew.

The winding Charles River course, with its sharp turns and seven bridges, is one

of the most challenging in the world. In fact, the regatta is often called “a coxswain’s race” because much of the time lost or gained is determined by the way a coxswain steers this tricky course. New Trier coxswains Patrick O’Hara and Sarah Specht, both seniors, had steered the course in 2008, and demonstrated their expertise in leading their crews to top finishes again this year.

Crews finishing in the top half (based on the number of entries) in their event are guaranteed a place in that event the following year. All other crews must rely on the luck of the draw, as non-guaranteed entries are selected via random lottery draws in early September. Both New Trier’s Varsity Boys and Girls crews secured an automatic entry in the Youth Eights event for 2010.

Representing New Trier High Rowing in the Men’s Youth Eights was coxswain **Patrick O’Hara**, stroke **Connor Smith**, 7-seat **Jason Kopelman**, 6-seat **Connor Jones**, 5-seat, **Taggart Denton**, 4-seat **James Nelson**, 3-seat **Tommy Morrison**, 2-seat **Alex Dern**, and bow **John Noyes**. The spares were **Will Rosenbloom** and **Will Roberts**.

Competing for New Trier in the Women’s Youth Eights was coxswain **Sarah Specht**, stroke **Melanie Eckert**, 7-seat **Hilary Going**, 6-seat **Katie Wilcox**, 5-seat **Lauren Lashmet**, 4-seat **Emmi Benton**, 3-seat **Maddie Hilbrant**, 2-seat **Alex Swift**, and bow **Hannah Wilson**. Spares were Kat Brewer and Joanie Weaver.

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Of Interest:

This year’s Head of the Charles featured one of the greatest fields of elite rowers that this legendary Regatta has ever assembled.

All six of the finalists from the 2008 Olympic Single Sculls event – Olaf Tufte (gold medal, NORWAY), Ondrej Synek (silver medal, CZECH REPUBLIC), Mahe Drysdale (bronze medal, NEW ZELAND), Tim Maeyens (fourth, BELGIUM), Alan Campbell (fifth, GREAT BRITAIN) and Lassi Karonen (sixth, SWEDEN) – were joined by 2008 Olympic Double Sculls finalist Iztok Cop (SLOVENIA) and Marcel Hacker (GERMANY), winner of the petite final at the 2008 Olympics – in an eight-man sweeps boat dubbed the “Great Eight.”

The Great Eight competed in the Championship Men’s Eights race at the Head Of The Charles against a field with national team boats representing the United States, Great Britain and France.

“To have such accomplished elite rowers coming to Boston for this year’s Head of the Charles certainly is a thrill,” said Fred Schoch, executive director for the Head of the Charles. “Short of a world championship or an Olympic regatta, it’s rare that you’ll see so much talent in one place. This is an historic occasion for the Head of the Charles.”

The Great Eight, which is the brainchild of British coach Bill Barry, competed together for the first time in March at the Head of the River Race on the Thames River in London. In that race, the Great Eight bettered Leander Club, comprised of five British National Team members from the Beijing Olympics, to win the title.