

The Crew That Grew

By Auntie Katy Bourne

Winning is always sweet and sometimes it's fantastic. The Girls 16 crew has been state championships for the past five years in a row, but this year was extra special because they won for all the right reasons.

Blame, criticism, and excuses were left behind. Respect, perseverance and teamwork earned the Gold this year. By the end of the season, these young women chose to challenge themselves, take personal responsibility for their actions, and earn this win the hard way.

The opportunity to grow was there, and eight young women rose to the challenge. This crew experienced the effects their behavior and absence has on the Club, their family and their crew. They realized how important communica-

tion is, how selflessness earns respect, and keeping yourself healthy and prepared is part of your responsibility to your team. They found out how important support is when team strength is as good as the weakest link.

They sat in new seats and new combinations because that's what the team needed. They showed up an hour before paddling practice to run sprints, lift weights, and sweat out the fine points in the trainer. They got beat by both younger and older crews while trying to blend a more sophisticated stroke. The girls swallowed their pride, depended on each others effort and continued to work on a more difficult but more proficient style.

Is there more to life than paddling? You bet! Paddling offered the opportunity for these girls to



Kai Bourne, Alicia Arnott, Ali Rigg, Whitney Dolman, Amy Lawson, Jenn Tokin, Avery Cavanah, Kaii DeMello and Sally Torkildson.

grow into mature young women through paddling. I'm proud of the example these gals have set for our youth to follow.

Alicia, Jenn, Avery, Whitney, Kaii, Kai, Amy and Sally have experienced the pride of a hard earned win. This crew is full of winners not just in paddling, but in life. You make a coach proud.