

TUF AS NAILS

PORT TOWNSEND, WASHINGTON

FAQ



The Tuf As Nails lightweight women's 8+, which we purchased in Oregon in 2004. It was badly damaged in a collision with a street sweeper while on a trailer waiting to be delivered to Port Townsend. The Nails had it repaired by a local boatbuilder, painted it bright orange with blue flames, and named it Orange Crush.



Tuf As Nails at the 2008 San Diego Crew Classic - the largest spring regatta on the west coast - with hundreds of crews from college-age to masters competing.



The Tuf As Nails masters women's rowing crew, January, 2011. L to R (front) Jennefer Wood, Ann Wiltshire, Barb Hager, Zoe Ann Dudley; (back) Mari Friend, Erica Springstead*, Dianne Roberts, Penny Jensen, Char Wedin.

*Erica Springstead died in June, 2011, from ovarian cancer. We loved her and we miss her. She is with us on every stroke.

What is Tuf As Nails? We are a group of Port Townsend women in our 50s and 60s who formed a masters women's rowing crew in 2003, for the purpose of learning to row, training, racing and having fun together.

How did you get started? Most of us were distance runners who had been meeting to run daily at 6:00 a.m. for more than 20 years. We had done numerous races together, including the local 12k Rhody Run, half and full marathons, and multi-day relay races up to 175 miles long. As we got older, running was becoming harder on our joints. During a summer morning run along the waterfront, we saw some local rowers in an old wooden shell and decided we wanted to try it. We took an introductory rowing class in the summer of 2003 and were immediately hooked. We began training together, working out on rowing machines in the winter and seeking coaching in both Port Townsend and Seattle. We entered the San Diego Crew Classic - something novice rowers rarely do - and raced there in 2004 in the Husky Challenger. We loved it so much we're still at it!

How did you get the name Tuf As Nails? There were a few other small crews rowing in Port Townsend at the time we started. One day, we asked a group of four women what they called their team and they said they didn't really have a name. Then one of them noticed the label on the rubber boots she was wearing and said "How about the "Xtra Tufs"? Another group promptly became the "Pretty Tufs" and another the "Sorta Tufs." We settled on "Tuf As Nails" - an apt description of our team members, as well as our manicures.

How often do you row? During the Port Townsend rowing season - typically from April through October or so - we row every weekday at 6:00 a.m. for about an hour and a half, plus occasionally weekends and evenings. We row on the open water of Port Townsend Bay, with the hazards of boat wakes, tidal currents, coastal fog and winds that are normally not an issue for crews who train on the protected waters of lakes and rivers, so we miss many a morning, especially early and late in the season. In the winter, we train on Concept 2 rowing machines known as ERGs, hit the local gym, and sometimes organize training/coaching weekends in Seattle.

What boats do you row? In addition to the Orange Crush (above) we own a bow-coxed quad (sculling boat), the Blue Streak. Some of our team own a pair/double (the Green Flash), singles, and a sliding-seat wherry. This gives us the flexibility to train regardless of how many rowers are available on any given morning. In classic boat regattas in Port Townsend and Victoria, Canada, we row the Husky Challenger, the Small Wonder (currently on display in the Public House restaurant) and other local wooden shells.

Where do you race? We row in local races such as the 7+ mile Rat Island Open Water Regatta and in the Wooden Boat Festival classic regatta. We also transport our boats to races in Seattle like Head of the Lake, Tail of the Lake, and Row for the Cure, and have raced at the San Diego Crew Classic three times. Our goal is to complete the restoration of the Husky Challenger and race it again in San Diego in the spring of 2012.

» HUSKY CHALLENGER
RESTORATION - 2011