

Two Oakland Strokes Rowers Compete in Beijing, China

Submitted by Renne Cherry



Two local Oakland Strokes rowers, Alaizah Koorji and T.J. Laher, both Miramonte High School graduates, made the cut to represent the United

States at the 2007 FISA World Rowing Junior Championships Aug. 8-11 in Beijing, China. Koorji beat out six other coxswains to earn her place on

the women's eight boat, and Laher rowed in the fifth seat for the men's eight.

According to Laher, who also tried out for the team in 2006, "It was a long and grueling summer of double workouts and living away from home, for the honor to compete in three days of racing in China."

The selection process began on June 11 and ended June 23. For the men's team, 24 rowers and five coxswains from throughout the country competed for the 12 available spots.

The women's competition invited a total of 53 athletes, seven of which were coxswains. Rowers also had the opportunity to work out for three weeks at the Olympic Training Center in Lake Placid, NY.

The junior national men inaugurated Beijing's newly constructed Olympic course and Laher's entire family made the trek to see his races. The men

competed in all three races, while the women's team raced twice in Beijing. They got a first place in their opening heat on Thursday, which gave them a pass to the finals, with results as follows:

Women's 8

Gold/ Romania	6:27:47
Silver/ Germany	6:29:07
Bronze/ USA	6:30:17

Men's 8

Gold/Germany	5:41:86
Silver/Netherl	5:44:34
Bronze/ China	5:48:24
4th/Italy	5:50:20
5th/USA	5:51:56
6th/Romania	5:58:70

Laher was thrilled to be representing his country in an international event. With only eight days left of his summer vacation after Beijing, he returned to Orinda before beginning his freshman year at Cal and rowing for the Bears.

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