

# ROWED SCHOLARS



Athletes from the Princeton rowing team members spent part of their winter break in Austin, where they trained on Lady Bird Lake. 'Talking to friends

at Princeton, it's like 5 degrees there,' says Michaela Strand, a senior from Seattle. 'This is awesome. Any ray of sunshine is awesome.'

Deborah Cannon photos AMERICAN-STATESMAN

By Patrick Beach

AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

Lake Carnegie in Princeton, N.J., might have felt a little lonely last week when Princeton's rowing team, some 150 of them plus about 16 coaches and staff, made its annual winter sojourn to train on Lady Bird Lake for a week.

## Princeton and other schools migrate to Austin for winter training

Just in time for another round of winter storms hitting the Northeast.

"We basically own the lake" in New Jersey, said Tom Heebink, Princeton's boathouse administrator. "The only problem is it's capped off with several inches of ice."

It will come as news to approximately no one that Princeton is not alone. Teams start

showing up in Austin in late December into March. Dartmouth was just here, the University of Wisconsin after that. And a lot of them stay at the Holiday Inn on the lake.

"They're fun, easy-going," said Paul Boudreaux, the hotel's general manager. "And we have a shuttle that takes them to the Capitol and the LBJ Library. We have a 12-seat movie theater to keep them occupied."

Say you're a student-athlete. Wouldn't you rather be someplace warm that had breakfast tacos? Do they even have breakfast tacos in Princeton?

"Uh, if we do, they're not like this," said Michaela Strand, a senior from Seattle on the

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Above, Princeton rower Annie Prasad, left, prepares to hit Lady Bird Lake from a deck behind the Holiday Inn. At left, Katherine Parkhurst helps put her team's boat into the water. In Princeton, N.J., Carnegie Lake, where the team usually trains, is covered with ice.

## ROWING: Weather allures (as do breakfast tacos)

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women's open weight team. "There's so many amazing taco places. People love the restaurants. Just going somewhere that can feed all of us can be a challenge."

The students recently finished finals and, after taking a couple of days off to nap and watch trashy TV,

'They love the lake because there's no motorboat traffic aside from the rowing coaches.'

**SARA-MAI CONWAY**

Austin Rowing Club director

Strand said, they're getting a jump on school work. And even though we're in the grip of something that passes for winter in Central Texas, it's nothing like the weather

these people left.

"This is a huge relief," Strand said. "Talking to friends at Princeton, it's like 5 degrees there. This is awesome. Any ray of sunshine is awesome."

Another hot destination off the lake: the Whole Foods Market flagship store downtown.

"Everybody's familiar with Whole Foods back home, but



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From right, Paul Popescu, Will Gillis, Dave Mackasey, Tommy Lindemen, Jason Kopelman, Kristian Parapanov, JaMarcus Dillon and Charlie Kelly train on Lady Bird Lake.

it's nothing like this," said Heebink.

"Many of these teams have been coming for more than 10 years. They love Austin," said Sara-Mai Conway, director of the Austin Rowing Club. "They like coming here. The kids can safely do stuff in between practices. They love the lake because there's no motorboat traffic aside from the rowing coaches. During the day, they have the place to themselves,

practically. There's miles of protected water. And at the rowing club, we provide them with equipment rentals, our locker rooms, our showers, our indoor rowing machines."

The Princeton team rows on the lake twice a day, Heebink said. During down-time, many students boot laptops to work on their theses. Sixth Street is popular, and Smitty's barbecue in Lockhart has become an annual tradition — although Hee-

bink confessed the particulars of the family spat between the owners of Smitty's and Kreuz Market were lost on him.

Four teams from Princeton were here last week — the heavyweight and lightweight men, the open women and the lightweight women. Staff hauled about two dozen boats in two trailers from Princeton to Austin.

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