

## Regattas end up in a twist and tangle

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The morning of the second regatta dawned sunny, and the water in Utah Lake lay calm. Conditions remained the same all day. The Tribune raved about the circumstances: "The lake was as placid as a sleeping infant; not a ripple disturbed its surface, and finer rowing water could not have been wished for.

' " The Garfield club arrived at the big pond at 9 a.m. and practiced on the freshwater lake.

Spectators began arriving at the shore soon after noon. Many of them came from communities on the east side of the lake. When it was time for the races to begin, hundreds of onlookers lined the shore.

As was the case with the races on the Great Salt Lake, there was a delay before the first contest, scheduled for 2 p.m., could begin. A member of the Garfield team had gone uptown and was slow in returning. At 2:30, the Provo heavyweight team of Smith, Towle, Daniels and Wilson maneuvered their boat to the starting line where they lined up side by side with the Garfield scull manned by Bailey, McEnany and two Dinwoodeys.

At the beginning of the race, the Garfield team jumped the gun, but the Provo crew passed them after 100 yards. Both teams turned the flag successfully, but on the return course, Garfield's erratic steering helped Provo increase its lead. The local boys won by 10 lengths with a time of 10:18. This second win gave the state heavyweight championship to Provo.

The steamship "Helen" with the judges and several prominent citizens aboard, steamed two-thirds of the way down the course behind the sculls. At that point, the steamer turned back to the finish line to welcome the racers when they returned.

The single scull race followed the heavyweight contest. Provo's Wood rowed against Garfield's Webber. The Salt Lake man won with a time of 11:35. He claimed the state singles championship, since this was his second win.

The third contest pitted the two lightweight crews. Because of injuries that occurred in the Garfield regatta, both teams made changes in their personnel for this race. Provo's Wilson and Smith, who rowed with the heavyweight crew earlier in the day, joined Buckler and Dusenberry. Garfield's heavyweights, Bailey and Dinwoodey, joined McGurrin and Orr.

Again, Garfield started first. At the beginning of the race, the Provo team seemed confused, since they had seldom rowed together. After they worked into a synchronized rhythm, they took the lead, but almost missed the turn flag. The two teams were neck and neck on the home stretch, when Provo's Wilson yelled encouragement to his men. From that moment on, "They got a kink in their backs," the Tribune asserted, "that fairly lifted the boat out of the water."

The hometown boys won by a length and a half "amidst deafening applause." Their respectable time was 10:19. Provo's victory tied the lightweight series. The newspaper proclaimed, "Many people declared this to be the prettiest race ever witnessed in Utah." The double scull race finished the official segment of the Utah Lake Regatta. Garfield's Will Dinwoodey and Webber defeated Bailey and Orr, tying this series.

An unofficial race also roiled the waters of Utah Lake during the afternoon of the regatta. Provo's "Dandy" Joe Thompson challenged a Mr. Logan, recently of Pennsylvania, to a mile-and-a-half race. Betting stood two to one for Thompson.

"Dandy" took it easy, keeping even with his opponent for most of the race. On the home stretch, he showed a dandy burst of power and won the race by a length, making two out of every three gambling men at Utah Lake that day happy.

A convivial spirit reigned on both sides during the banquet that night in the Hotel Roberts where there were speeches, songs and recitations. The Tribune reported, "The corks popped freely and a fine social time they had." The Provo crews toasted their competitors: "The Garfield boys are pleasant and gentlemanly, and we shall always be pleased to see them [especially through bleary eyes] in our midst."

Official Starter Le Sieur, who seems to have caught some of the spirit of the evening, informed the assembled crews of his starting strategy: "I had a double barreled shot gun. One barrel was to start the race, and the other was to kill [George] Dusenberry if he lost it." Dusenberry only managed to respond with a groan, "I guess my head will be all right by the next regatta."

The congenial atmosphere prompted Provonian George Sutherland, a staunch Republican, to exclaim, "This victory looks like a solid South against a solid North. In water politics I am a Democrat."

Hopefully, the two clubs harbored happy memories of the Provo regatta in their minds all winter, because recollections of the final series of races held at Garfield would not have been so blissful.

Again, the Provo club and their boats traveled to Salt Lake City on a special train a day before the races in order to practice on the salty waters. Towle missed the special, but the belated boatman later rode to the capital city with a deputy marshal and arrived at Garfield in time for the regatta.

The Salt Lake Rowing Club donned their blue and orange rowing uniforms and joined its fellow boatmen for this final race of the season.

Organizers of the event hoped a three-cornered race among the three clubs would be the most exciting contest of the afternoon, and it was -- but not as they expected.

The three sculls gathered at the starting line and got off to an uneven start, Garfield suffering the most.

After the rowers settled down and pulled even strokes, the race looked like it would be a good one. Salt Lake took an early lead, but Provo rapidly closed the gap. Garfield tagged close behind.

As the crews neared the turn flag, Provo and Garfield passed Salt Lake, but the race remained close as the boats rounded the marker for the return trip.

Salt Lake briefly took the lead once more as Provo went a little wild and got too close to Garfield. Both boats sheered off, but they recovered and the two passed the Salt Lake rowers once more.

Within 100 yards of the finish line, Salt Lake lagged at least 10 lengths in the rear, Garfield maintained a slight lead and Provo rowed very close behind. At this juncture, two racing lanes whirled into a veritable maelstrom, and a surprise winner emerged.

Cheers from the pavilion encouraged Provo to a magnificent burst of speed.

Unfortunately, the Provo and Garfield boats touched, tangled and remained almost motionless in the water while the Salt Lake boys passed them both and finished first with a time of 8:28. Provo and Garfield unlocked horns and proceeded to the pavilion for a discussion without bothering to cross the finish line.

The judges, referee, rowing crews and other interested parties assembled in the Garfield club's steamboat/clubhouse and for what was likely the last time in its long, illustrious history, the "boiler room" in the old "General Garfield" produced a good head of steam.

For more than an hour, 50 different men expressed 50 different opinions in 50 different languages about what should be done. The dialogue included many strong assertions and not a few cuss words.

The referee ruled that Provo was leading when it strayed into Garfield's water and fouled the northern team. Consequently, Provo should be dropped out of the race, and Garfield and Salt Lake should row the course again.

A general howl among Provo's supporters followed this expression of opinion.

Judges Tousey and Pike agreed a foul had been committed, but they felt the race should be run over again. A scene followed, and Salt Lake refused to race again.

Several old boating men said a similar situation occurred in New York, and the team who finished first was declared the winner. On this precedent, the race should be given to Salt Lake.

The race was not run over again. Provo didn't like the decision. Garfield didn't like it very much, and the Salt Lakers said little. The Tribune referred to the boathouse meeting as an "exhibition of babyism on the part of both oarsmen and judges."

In a burst of braggadocio, Provo's heavyweight crew, whose male pride had been hurt, offered to race any four Salt Lake men for a purse of \$150. There was no response. The devotees of Utah Lake desperately upped the ante to \$250 --then \$500 on a race between either Salt Lake or Garfield. Still no takers.

(In a supreme show of over-confidence later in September, the Provo rowers again waded into the fray with an offer to race either of the Salt Lake City teams for a \$2,000 side bet. Still, no dice.)

Meanwhile, spectators baked and perspired in the sun until about 5:15 as they wondered what was transpiring in the floating boathouse. Most of the disgusted crowd purchased some popcorn, boarded the evening train and returned home.

As for the other races, Provo refused to compete in the lightweight race, on which the betting odds were even, because Salt Lake insisted on using some seniors on its crew.

The race was called off. The single scull race was not run because of the delay. In the only other race completed, Garfield's Webber and Dinwoodey defeated Provo's Osburn and Bailey by three lengths, thereby winning the state championship in the doubles category.

In an attempt at understatement, the Herald summed up this final regatta by saying, "The final wind up [was] not a brilliant one."

After swallowing a healthier dose of reality, the newspaper admitted the regatta was "looked upon as a complete fiasco, and it will do much to dampen any enthusiasm that had been aroused in boating circles."

As could be expected, people in Provo generally held the opinion that their boat club had received rather shabby treatment at the regatta.

Provo's Daily Enquirer asserted the claim that Provo strayed into Garfield water "without the shadow of foundation, no matter if the referee did so decide."

The Enquirer claimed everybody but the referee, whose eyes were painted on, and one or two other people thought the Garfield crew fouled the Provo team "by encroaching on their water."

Practically nobody disputed that Provo was ahead when Garfield ran into them.

The Provo boys were willing to run the race again, but were not given the chance. They came home knowing they did "the square thing ... and that they won the race."

The heavyweight crew, William M. "Billy" Wilson, Joseph E. Daniels, A.L. Towle and Louis M. Smith, may not have won this race, but they had been victorious in their previous two races.

This made them the heavyweight champions. Late in September, Captain Pike picked up four gold medals valued at \$125. They bore the inscription, "Heavyweight Champions of Utah." Before awarding the medals to crew members, Pike put them on display in the front window of the Pike & Maiben drugstore. They attracted general attention.

Springville photographer George Edward Anderson snapped a photograph of the heavyweight team and their gold medals in October 1890. The Tribune branded the crew a tough-looking bunch and suggested their likeness should be sent to the "Police Gazette."

The Provo Boat Club ended the year with another grand ball in the Provo Opera House on Dec. 20.

In an effort to mend cracked oars, or possibly to prevent them from being cracked over heads in the future, Captain Glassmann of the Garfield club and Captain Barratt of the Salt Lake club attended the dance, along with some of their sailors.

The Daily Enquirer mentioned the many elegant costumes worn to this event.

Even though the paper's advance claim that Superintendent Hathenbruck would wear a \$750 diamond in his sailor's knot the night of the dance proved to be a hoax, the story made "maidens swoop down on him like an avalanche."

The event and the year ended with the club "feeling quite elated over their success."

Two more years of racing followed on the Great Salt Lake and Utah Lake before Utah's boating fever quietly slumped into remission, partly due to the Depression of 1893. Billy Wilson still remembered the club's dances and races 58 years later when he talked to Ray Schwartz, the Daily Herald's sports editor.

Wilson told Schwartz, "The boat club balls were the social high spots of the year in Provo."

Concerning the reason for the demise of the regattas, Wilson told Schwartz with a dash of his old bravado: "We won the state championship race the two years it was held. In fact, we were so successful, we actually killed the event. The other clubs got tired of getting beat and quit competing against us."