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Bear Creek graduate clinches crew wins, heads to Junior World Championships

Cara Linnenkohl, recent graduate of The Bear Creek School, likes to rock the boat. She rocks it so much she's headed to Austria for the 2008 World Rowing Senior and Junior Championships.

Linnenkohl has only been rowing for five years but she sinks wins like a lifelong pro. June 15 she won first place in the Varsity Women's Singles race at the Youth National Championships in Cincinnati, Ohio. This win qualified her for the World Trials to vie for a chance at representing the United States in World competitions.

It was no surprise when on June 25 Linnenkohl won the first and second finals of the junior women's single sculls to qualify for the Junior World team. She finished more than 20 seconds ahead of her competition, with a time of 7:47.72 in the second final. She will now head to Linz/Ottensheim, Austria, July 22-27 to compete in the 2008 FISA World Rowing Senior and Junior Championships.

This success didn't come without dedication, this past school year Linnenkohl left her house at 4:30 a.m. daily to row on Lake Union for 1.5 hours before getting back home to take her sisters and brothers (she's one of seven children) to school. After wrapping up her basketball season at Bear Creek she added an additional rowing practice in the evening.

Linnenkohl's favorite thing about rowing is that "every day is a new learning experience. Even the world's best rowers learn new techniques, or refine old techniques, to continually improve. I like the constant commitment and competition that surrounds you with every new challenge and level of competition."

She is strongly rooted in her faith, and ultimately wants to give "the glory to the Lord for the body and talents that He has given me." She also is grateful for her education at The Bear Creek School, "the teachers at Bear Creek really had an influence in my life and my extracurricular activities. They inspired and comforted me through the hard times and encouraged me to push through."

She's is not only at the apex of her rowing career, but she also summited both Mt. Rainer and Mt. Kilimanjaro. She climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro as part of her Bear Creek senior project to study its native people, the Chagga tribe.

Linnenkohl plans to attend University of Virginia this upcoming fall on a full rowing scholarship.

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