

LOCAL NEWS

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SATURDAY, MAY 5, 2007

L.B. team rows to the top

Sports: Local squad takes first in German tourney.

By **Samantha Gonzaga**
Staff writer

LONG BEACH — A victory at a San Francisco qualifier earned a Long Beach indoor rowing team a free trip to Germany. They made good use of the opportunity.

The local team took first place at the inaugural international competition that gathers the world's best indoor rowers in Essen, Germany.

Belmont Heights-based Rowbics Indoor Racing on April 21 bested 100 others in the Concept2 Rowing Challenge during FIBO2007, Europe's largest fitness trade show.

"It was very exhilarating, very intense, very exciting," said team captain Victoria Draper, 30. "People were cheering and taking pictures. It was a new spectacle."

The international competition was hosted by Concept2, an East Coast manufacturer of indoor rowing machines. The team is comprised of Draper and Rowbics trainers Jack Nunn, 27, Logan Hood,



Jeff Gritchen / Press-Telegram

Indoor rowers Ron Sarchian, left, Victoria Draper, Jack Nunn and Logan Hood gather at the Pete Archer Rowing Center in Long Beach with a rowing machine similar to the one they used to win a competition in Germany.

34, and Ron Sarchian, 42. The team earned their FIBO2007 entry after beating national teams in March in the 2,000-meter relay challenge at the International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association trade show in San Francisco. They out-spiced competition with a 5:49.0 finish.

Teams of four at the Essen Rowing Challenge were required to change rowers every 500 meters. Each rowing machine registered the distance each team member logged on the Concept2

indoor rower. The data was fed onto large flatscreen monitors that could be viewed by judges and spectators.

Though the Rowbics team is a hybrid of rowers and non-rowers, Draper said, the team had no problem reconciling differences in athletic skills. The team worked on quick transitions, and by allowing team members with the fast rowing times to take the machine first.

"If you can figure how to transition from general fitness to rowing, it works well," Nunn said.

Rowbics is planning to promote indoor rowing in the coming months, in addition to holding their ongoing fitness program at Marine Stadium. In June, the group is planning a fundraiser benefiting the girls' Junior Nationals Olympic development team by holding a sports exhibition.

For information about Rowbics Indoor Racing, log onto www.rowbics.com.

Samantha Gonzaga can be reached at samantha.gonzaga@presstelegram.com or (562) 499-1284.