



# PWRFC News

Spring 2011

## The PWRFC Family Remembers Jen Strong



*Jen Strong*

It is with great sadness that we report the unexpected death of a beloved member of the PWRFC family. Jen Strong died suddenly in Grand Junction, CO, on March 27, at the age of 37. Jen played with PWRFC from 1998 to 2002, primarily at fullback. She was one of the most naturally gifted athletes I've ever seen or had the honor of playing with, and when we took the pitch with her in the backfield I always felt a sense of quiet confidence. Her calm energy and easy smile -- and vicious, diving, try-saving tackles -- are what I recall with greatest fondness.

We asked several of her former PWRFC teammates to remember her here.

*~Beast*

I still remember Jen's first A-side game for Philly Women. She was slated to play in the B-side game and I was slated to start for the A-side at inside center. I was exceptionally nervous. As the game time approached our starting fullback (Tasha Manino) wasn't there. Jen was told that she was needed to start at fullback. What an amazing result. Every time someone got

through our back line, they didn't get far. Jen was all over the field. We were playing Maryland in the second game of the season. They were surprised by how little ground they were able to make with two rookies in the back line!

When Tasha arrived there was no doubt about what was going to happen. She replaced me at inside center and I got to watch Jen play. I was amazed at the obvious ability to play the game that she demonstrated. From that day forward Jen was our starting fullback until she finished her work at PCOM.

Jen was always attempting to help people improve themselves. She was always there lending a hand and expected more of herself, which often rubbed off on those of us around her. I am grateful for the many evenings I spent playing board games between her study sessions and the many times she was hanging out with her dogs. I also enjoyed watching her coach her PCOM rugby team, bringing her passion for sports to others.

I remember her as serious,

strong (not only in name), and steady. She took any game and placed it in her control and never got frazzled. I can still remember some of the plays we had in the back line that were designed to send Jen up the middle of the field. Of course it took us some time to catch up to her.

Jen represented Philly Women well. She was humble and an amazing athlete. She will be missed and always remembered.

*~Meg Thompson*

*Tribute to Jen Strong, an amazing rugby player and person, continued on Page 6*



### 2011 Executive Board

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**Captain:** Emily Record



Philly Pack vs. Drexel

## PWRFC Welcomes Spring and New Recruits

By Kate Hallinan

This March the members of PWRFC dug out their under armor, dusted off their bikes/tracked down their SEPTA tokens and unpacked their cleats for the first practice of the season. Despite Puxatawney Phil's optimistic prediction, layers of maroon sweat shirts and pants were necessary for braving the harsh weather. Even in these undesirable conditions, Philly Women somehow managed to have around thirty people attend their first practice, setting the tone for the season. In addition to PWRFC regulars, Philly Women welcomed 11 new players; some brand new to the game and some seasoned vets. While some players needed time to get back into the swing of things, players like Katie "I think *some* of us look awesome" Wojital jumped right in and upped the intensity at practice starting on day one. Somehow, Philly Women managed not to scare any of their rookies off (a first time accomplishment for PWRFC?) and had a record turnout for our first games this weekend. 38 players were on the roster for back to back games against Dartmouth and Princeton. After overcoming a rough morning of triangulating the field sans the expertise and military precision of Meredith Hegg as well as stomping out evidence of some sort of urban centaur dance party, PWRFC suited up ready to

take the pitch for the first time this season. An inspiring pep talk from their captain Emily Record was all they needed for a strong start against Dartmouth. Philly Women were able to take control of the game early on by controlling the rucks and implementing Bob Wier's game plan to move the ball up field using both forward and back line attacks. Standout performances include Karen "I'm not doing that" Minyety who shined at fullback and Woj who barreled her way through countless terrified college kids. Towards the end of the game, Dartmouth seemed to gain momentum and take control of the game for a bit, reminding PWRFC that fitness and mental toughness are still something we need to work on. Philly Women managed to pull themselves together, though, and pulled out a solid win in the end. Although the outcome of the game against Princeton was not quite as pretty, PWRFC's second game still had some highlights worth noting. Rachel Miller made her triumphant return to inside center, justifying her email alias and showing off her new muscle and speed. Harmony, one of Philly Women's newest players, put in a solid effort at wing, impressing just about everyone. Princeton reminded Philly Women their kick/ counter kick game still needs work and

that is something they continued to work on in the weeks to come. Overall, Philly Women did a great job of coming together as a team. All of the new players did an amazing job, 9 players played their first game of rugby, and vets stepped up to play positions they might not normally play. Philly Women also FINALLY began to make the offload in contact, a skill they have tried to master since the beginning of last season. All in all a great day of rugby!



**This year at Friends and Family Day PWRFC took the time to vote on team superlatives. Below are the results:**

Best Dancer:	<b>Tunney</b>
Best Smile:	<b>Woj</b>
Team Lush:	<b>Cougs</b>
Worst Dog:	<b>Berri</b>
Biggest Nerd:	<b>Dr. Toad</b>
Most Awkward:	<b>Emily Record</b>
Prom Queen:	<b>Minyety</b>
Most Spirited:	<b>Bob Weir</b>
Worst Injury:	<b>Joan Miller</b>
Biggest Flirt:	<b>Cougs</b>
Team Dirtball:	<b>Rachel Miller</b>
Class Clown:	<b>Whitney</b>
Team Troublemaker:	<b>Woj</b>
Best Dressed:	<b>TK</b>
Drama Queen:	<b>Suzanne</b>

# Socializing in Full Swing This Spring

By Joan Miller

While Mother Nature was slow to roll out the warm weather, PWRFC was quick to get the Spring season started on a fun note by having some sweet social events. Although it was technically a fundraiser, PWRFC was multi-tasking at the Helium Comedy Club at 20<sup>th</sup> and Sansom on February 3<sup>rd</sup> by raising funds and having a good time. "Laughing it Up in 2011" was an appropriate title for the event, as comedian Bob Marley and his two opening acts were hilarious. The laughs plus yummy food and drinks along with good company made the night an overall success.

In an effort to hang out with our buddies from the Schuylkill River Exiles outside of O'Neal's for a change of pace, Potatoes of SRERFC and I organized a pub crawl in the Northern Liberties neighborhood of Philly. On Saturday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, the group began the festivities at Johnny Brenda's at Front and Frankford, then headed to N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to Cantina Dos Segundos, the

700 Club, and Standard Tap, and the night ended in dance at Silk City at 5<sup>th</sup> and Spring Garden. As to be suspected, draft beers, margaritas, burritos and dancing were a recipe for good times with PWRFC and SRERFC.

Recruiting is a major priority for the club, and one of the new strategies for getting the word out about PWRFC was having a social at O'Neal's for potential rookies before practice started. This night allowed women interested in coming out to play rugby the opportunity to meet some of our players before getting tackled by them, and it worked out rather well. Of the 35 girls on the roster for our first game, 11 of them were rookies! Everyone is excited about the turn out of rookies for the spring season thus far, and we are thankful the pre-season social was a success.

PWRFC also put on an impressive showing at this year's Rites of Spring

tournament social. Since players were dismayed to find out there was no theme for this year's social, PWRFC took it upon themselves to create their OWN theme, regardless of whether not anyone else would join them. After much debate, the theme was decided: "Prom". Members of PWRFC dug through their closets and brought out an array of impressive ensembles ranging from the demure to the risqué. Chesapeake Women's rugby team graciously accepted our invitation to be our dates and joined in the fun.

Luckies in Baltimore was not quite sure what hit them when the rugby prom arrived but, after the initial shock and temporary blindness caused by a massive quantity of sequins, PWRFC was welcomed with open arms. In fact, our neighborhood men's rugby team (Schuylkill Exiles) made sure to tell us how well we all cleaned up. PWRFC went on to place second overall in the tournament...but I think we all know who won the social.



## PWRFC at Rites of Spring



Special Thanks to our Sponsors



## PWRFC Goes Green... Not Just in March

By Rebecca DeMoor



While the Philadelphia women might take great initiative on the field (as well as keep an active social life around the St. Patrick's Day season), the team also shows great initiative in helping to preserve the planet. Many people on the team engage in activities, such as biking or walking to work, that not only save money, but are also good for the environment.

The most popular thing people on the team like to do is recycle plastics, paper, and glassware. Marissa Martinez, for instance, will carry home consumed soda bottles from her lab at work (as long as they aren't too disgusting) and recycle them through the city of Philadelphia through her regular recycling bin. Marissa claims, "I know this all sounds crazy, but it makes me feel better about the world." Whitney Hileman teaches a special education class in North Philadelphia and encourages her students to keep the city clean by

helping them start up a community recycling program. Twice a week her students go around their school and pick up the recycling bins to sort out the recyclables. When the weather is nice they go pick up trash outside which, according to Whitney, there is "plenty of in North Philly."

Other people on the team have found different ways of going green that are perhaps unconventional but are good for the earth just the same. Tess Thorman has just recently started a project with her roommates using a bunch of worms to try and create home compost. Tess says that the worms are super cute and she and her roommates hope to be able to grow some plants in the mulch. Also, PWRFC alumae Meredith and Travis claim to have set up their new house with renewable energy. Details are sketchy but there has been a suggestion that their energy is delivered through a mechanical bicycle

that is ridden by Travis and operated by Meredith-a great way to get in exercise and save energy at the same time. Good going ladies!

If you would like to join in on all the recycling fun, check out the website below with information on recycling in Philadelphia. The city now takes all types of recyclables and does not require separation. In fact, the city now has a recycling rewards program - all you have to do is put a sticker on your recycling bin and when it is scanned, you earn points towards discounted services and shopping.

<http://www.phillyrecyclingpays.com/>

### 2011 PWRFC Summer 7s Schedule!

June 11<sup>th</sup>: Lehigh Valley 7s

June 18<sup>th</sup>: Wilmington 7s

June 25<sup>th</sup>: Harrisburg 7s

July 9<sup>th</sup>: Cheesesteaks 7s

July 23<sup>rd</sup>: MARFU Championships!



If you are interested in joining us for 7s this year please contact [kate.hallinan13@gmail.com](mailto:kate.hallinan13@gmail.com)!

## Local Food Review: The Saucy Suzanne

By Rebecca DeMoor

The Saucy Suzanne comes from PWRFC's most favorite brew joint, O'Neal's, and is named after Suzanne, the excellent bartender there who always provides friendly and efficient service. The burger is beloved by many people on the team and as Emily Tunney put it, "What could be better than putting bacon, cheese, onions, and BBQ sauce ALL on one burger?!" But what is it about the Saucy Suzanne that everyone loves? What makes it so special? Well I decided that two years of playing on the team is too long never to have tried it so this past Thursday night I took the plunge.

I ordered my burger medium-well with a side of fries. As described above, I was eventually presented with a home-style cheeseburger where the beef was cooked to my liking and topped off with cheese, bacon, BBQ sauce, cooked onions, lettuce, & tomato.

To give you an idea about the different qualities, I used a Burger Rating Scale found on [Burgerjunkies.com](http://Burgerjunkies.com). It consists of five categories: 'Burger Juiciness,' 'Bun Goodness,' 'Burger Flavor,' 'Burger Value,' & the 'B-factor (e.g. the atmosphere or special things about the burger)."

I have rated the Saucy Suzanne using these categories below on a scale of 1-10 where 1 = Taco Bell and 10 = finger licking good!!

- Burger Juiciness: 8*
- Bun Goodness: 8*
- Burger Flavor: 7*
- Burger Value: 7*
- B-factor: 9*

Overall the burger was excellent. The Saucy Suzanne gets my two sauce-covered thumbs up.

**Congratulations to PWRFC Coach Bob Weir on being selected to coach the 2011 MARFU All Star Team!**

**Congratulations to Katy Black, Emily Record, Kate Hallinan and Suzanne Igoe for making the MARFU All-Star team and representing PWRFC at the National All Star Championship in San Diego!**



## Spring Season Wrap Up

By Kate Hallinan

This season PWRFC was able to accomplish something we have not done in a while: we consistently travelled and played with two sides. Entering two teams in the Rites of Spring was a feat unmatched by any of our opposition, showing that PWRFC has plenty of depth heading into our Fall season!

Friends and Family Day this year was also a tremendous success thanks to the efforts of Angie Marfisi. PWRFC had its first ever alumni brunch and while friends and family didn't get to enjoy nice weather they did get to enjoy a rather elaborate air castle compete with slide.

Marfisi says: "Thank you to everyone who supported the day! Shout outs to the committee: Flyod, Chey, Tasha, Karen, April, Anna and Eileen. Looking forward to next year's event!"

In addition to thanks our coach Bob Weir, friends and family who support our rugby habit, O'Neals, and, of course, our loyal fans, PWRFC would also like to thank all our rookies this season for coming out and giving it their all.



## From Our Captain

This spring season was a great success. With almost 30 players at every practice, we were able to get more scrimmage time in, which helped us learn to work with each other and work on our open field game. We saw a lot of vets really step up this season, and we have a very impressive rookie class! So I'm very excited to see what we can do for in the fall!



**The PWRFC Family Remembers Jen Strong...continued from Page 1**

I don't really know where to start...I am lucky to have so many happy/fun/funny memories of Jen that it's basically impossible to shrink them all down in to something that can be put into words on paper.

We became close during medical school and spent many long days, nights, and weekends hitting the books. Jen was a stellar student. She was dedicated to her education like she was dedicated to athletics. During medical school she would often get up at 4am to go running (so she'd "have time" to run despite a packed full academic schedule). I once said I could never do that, partly because I don't even like to run...she said "no one likes to run, you do it because you have to." That's the kind of person she was. She figured out what you had to do to get to where you wanted to be in life, and did it. (But I think she liked to run...at least sometimes.)

Even though we were busy with school, we found time to have many adventures. We played rugby together at PCOM and with PWRFC. I remember our coaches discussing our strategy for the very first rugby game at PCOM...it was simple..."get the ball to Jen." We did, but it was almost unfair to the other team to do so, as she managed to get into the try zone pretty much any time she had the ball. After a short time playing with PCOM, Jen learned about PWRFC, where she realized her full rugby potential and even ended up in the Eagle pool. She was tiny but powerful, quick and accurate, and could tackle the biggest of 'em without fear. As roommates for the last year of medical school we developed a great group of friends through Philly Women and attended organized and spontaneous social events, walks up and down South Street, weekends in Rehoboth Beach, trips to Vermont, and countless rugby games and tournaments.

Even our dogs were friends. It was fun to watch them wrestle each other. Jen was a very patient teacher (a trait that seems to have continued in her professional life). She basically gave me private snowboard lessons one season so she could have a snowboarding buddy the following year. We did our rural medicine rotation together, about six weeks during which we traveled all over the western third of Montana, exploring, stopping at all the "mom and pop" ski resorts to snowboard, hike, and snowshoe. We got pulled over for speeding in Montana and were happy about it, because we needed directions! The police officer let us sit in the front seat of the police car (next to one of his guns) while he ran our info and found a map for us. On one Montana adventure we (unintentionally) came as close to running out of gas in our rent-a-wreck as you can get ... we really thought we were going to be stuck in the middle of nowhere (cell phones didn't work there at the time). Our snowshoeing adventure in Yellowstone got cut short because Jen was convinced the Bison were moving closer to us. We hiked and SCUBA dived in Hawaii. We attempted a few mountain bike adventures (but they seemed to end quickly, each with its own set of silly circumstances). I am not a golfer, but used to have fun playing "pitch and putt" golf and going to the golf driving range with Jen because it was the only sport she didn't excel at. It was funny to watch her get all frustrated (in a fun/happy way). We would play and joke about it then go do something she excelled at ... which was everything else.

Our PCOM rugby team started school year 1997-98, she played scrum half at PCOM, then she joined up with PWRFC a year after that. She played summer 7s with Philly Women also... she had a wicked kick :)

~ JJ Roberts

In terms of her athleticism, what struck me was her sheer talent. After we had played together for a few months, I started realizing she could see things on the field in terms of play development and coverage that most of us had no idea of. And she obviously exploited that immensely. I believe the only thing that rivaled her talent was her modesty. She never once was known to brag, or toot her own horn. I recall that even when she was selected to go to ITTs one year, she just shrugged and said, "I've already been through a process like that with soccer, I'll just give some other girl a chance." I also remember that no matter what kind of tension or drama was going on with the team, either on or off the field, she never once complained, in the whole time I knew her, about anything.

I can see why her patients called her a good doctor, when I can transfer her ability to anticipate on the athletic field into her professional life. To win in medicine, it's critical to be a few steps ahead of your patient, or their pathophysiology at least, so you have some lead time on it. You've got to have the answer before the problem even presents itself fully sometimes. If she could read a patient like she could read a field, I'm sure she was awesome.

In terms of our friendship, we had a lot in common. We were both doctors, both rugby players, both in the military, both gay, and both signing up for kind of a hard road professionally and personally. Unfortunately, we were also both the kind of person who doesn't keep in good touch with old friends as we move into a new phase of our lives.

I will miss Jen in a way even I don't totally understand right now. It's like an empty place. Maybe it's the bond created by playing rugby with someone on the field. You sweat, bleed, push yourself, hurt, achieve, and celebrate with them in ways that can never be taken away. Not by time, not by space, and I guess not even by this.

I will always miss my friend.

~Lauren Daly