

Don Hume, a member of the 1936 University of Washington crew team that won a gold medal at the Berlin Olympics, died yesterday from the results of a stroke. He was 86.

Hume who worked in coal and oil exploration, was born in Olympia on July 25, 1915, and attended Anacortes High School. At the Washington, he and his teammates were undefeated heading into the 1936 Olympics.

In Germany, the Huskies set world and Olympic records in their qualifying race, with a time of 6 minutes, 00.8 seconds over the 2,000-meter course. But before the final on Lake Grunau, 20 miles south of Berlin, Hume became bedridden with a cold and high fever. A replacement was considered, but Hume, 14 pounds below his normal rowing weight of 172, was determined to race.

The Huskies started last, and Hume appeared to have no concentration.

"I kept yelling at him to get the stroke up, and nothing happened," coxswain Bob Moch said. "When he came up from a stroke, he was one foot from my megaphone, but there was no response."

The Huskies were unable to make up ground until the 1,900-meter mark, when they shot into the lead. They won by eight feet over Italy. Hume collapsed from exhaustion, but later downplayed his difficulties.

"There was a piece of tape in the boat, and I always looked at it and concentrated on it," Hume said. "This story gets more and more exaggerated as the years go on."

The surviving members of the crew -- with the death of Hume, four are still living -- have continued to meet on a regular basis. The wild card was always Hume, who spent much of his time on the road, due to business.

"Ninety percent of the time you'd never know if Don would be there," Moch said. "But each time he'd show up, with a bottle of champagne in each hand."

Hume is survived by a brother, Dale, of Olympia.