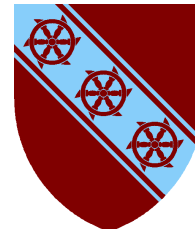




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College,
Oxford OX1 3UJ



5th February, 2001

Dear Alumnus,

The rowing's been a bit sporadic this term, the ground's so waterlogged that no one dare spit in case it triggers a red flag. Without much local action to report, in the last newsletter I speculated that the odd gentle threat to publish embarrassing photos might encourage one or two alumni to provide contributions instead. On that matter I'd first like to thank Keith Pritchard (M.82) for his generous and immediate offer of a photo from his own private 'Boat Club Dinner' collection, depicting a former crewmate with . . . well, a 'recreational aid' strapped to his forehead. Intriguing though that was, I decided to approach Sarah Askew (M.94), now at Imperial College, in order to get something I could actually print:

'Once I'd graduated from Oxford I really didn't expect to row again — surely four years of early mornings is enough for anyone! However, I made the mistake of wandering down to Putney to have a look at the brand new IC boathouse which had just been refurbished. I've been spending a large amount of my time in Putney ever since!

'Rowing at IC is quite different to rowing at Catz. Training is very intensive; I always thought the women's 1st VIII trained pretty hard, but I suspect if anyone suggested that they should do a 4 mile warm-up run before each heavy weights session there would be mutiny! Crews here are only selected a couple of weeks before major races, the rest of the time a squad system operates so that everyone gets to row with everyone else. We're expected to be flexible: I haven't really learned to scull yet but I can certainly row both sides nowadays (although I don't cox anymore). Perhaps the biggest difference is the Tideway with its large waves, bizarre circulation patterns and occasional floating tree (!), a very different stretch of water to the Isis. It also doesn't flood very often: I was out rowing last term while everyone in Oxford was land training (just thought I'd rub it in).

'So there you go. I'm still doing the early mornings (I got up at 4.40 am today) and the weights and the ergs and the circuits. Everyone in my lab thinks I'm mad, but what would they know?'

That scurrying noise you hear in the distance will be the sound of members of the 1st Torpids frantically rushing around trying to ensure that their coach, Bobby Gibson, doesn't get to read this newsletter. Crews are listed over the page (the web-version looks better). Torpids, we hope, will be from Wednesday, 28th Feb until Saturday, 3rd of March. The women's 1st Torpid start 3rd in Div. 1 (4.30pm), the men's 1st Torpid 10th in Div. 1 (5.00pm).

Matt Smith and Floss Williams continue with OUBC and OUWBC trials. Crews haven't been announced yet and Floss was still wearing her 'Madge' top in lectures today. However, Helen Barnes (M.96) *has* been selected for the Women's Lightweight's. The Tideway Boat Races are on March 24th, Henley Boat Races on April 1st.

I remind you of the College's 'Rowing Dinner' on the Saturday of Torpids (3rd March), for which you should have received an invitation. Replies are due in by February 23rd. It's open to all alumni, not just Society members, so if you're still on speaking terms with any of your Boat Club contemporaries I suggest contacting them and bringing them along. Failing that, just bring the photographs.

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Rowing Society: <http://www.atm.ox.ac.uk/rowing/rs.html>



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