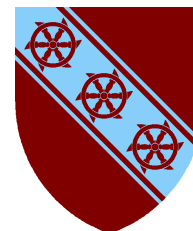




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College
Oxford OX1 3UJ



16th November, 2008

In this issue . . .

Apologies for a slightly belated newsletter. Since I signed off last June there have been one or two regattas to report and four of our old-boys ventured out to Beijing, two returning with medals. One of these crops up rather a lot in this newsletter, also making an appearance in the look back at the Boat Club of 5 years ago. The women's captain from that time has recently donated her scull to the Boat Club. More Recent alumni will already know of Emilie's Charities, which was set up following the tragic death of one of our undergraduates that summer.

Then there is news of how this year's Boat Race crews are shaping up (appearance no.3) and some early glimpses of College rowing. For those of you who complain about lack of notice of such things: we have a date for the RS AGM & Dinner: 28th February; Darren Chadwick has news of upcoming London events; and Grahame Kaye is planning a 60-year reunion of the '49ers. And finally (yes, I know this isn't a good time to ask . . .) a message for any potential sponsors.



The 2005 St Catherine's Men's 1st Eight Saturday line-up, featuring future Olympic medallists Andy Triggs Hodge (3rd from left) and Colin Smith (2nd from right). Also Chris Liwski, US spare in Beijing, 5th from right. Oh, and that's Darren, without the shirt. Yes, they did get a bump.

Results

National Vet Champs, Nottingham, 15th June

Tony Mitchell (M.78)	VetC 1x	1st
" & Sarah Payne	VetC Mxd 2x	1st

Rowing World Cup III, Poznan, 20-22nd June

Ante Kusurin (M.06)	CRO 2x	7th
Colin Smith (M.03)	GBR 8+	1st
Andy Triggs Hodge (M.04)	GBR 4-	2nd

2008 Olympic Regatta, Beijing, 9-18th August

Ante Kusurin (M.06)	CRO 2x	12th
Colin Smith (M.03)	GBR 8+	2nd
Andy Triggs Hodge (M.04)	GBR 4-	1st

2008 Olympic Games

Five of our alumni were aiming for Beijing.

Bastien Ripoll (M.05) was stroke of the French VIII. Having failed to pre-qualify on the basis of their previous year's results, their last chance was to win the Qualification Regatta in Poznan in June, but the Dutch took that spot.

Chris Liwski (M.04) accompanied the US team as an 'alternate' (= 'spare'). As far as I could tell, his services were not called upon although he presumably competed in the traditional 'spares' race prior to the regatta proper. He also contributed to various 'blogs'.

Ante Kusurin (M.06) was in the bow seat of the Croatian double scull. Despite being involved in a serious bus accident earlier in the day, they finished 4th in the semi-finals, just missing out on a place in the A-final place by 1 second. They didn't boat for their B-final, due to injury (possibly accident-related).

Colin Smith (M.03) was stroke of the GB VIII. Having been improving all season, they won their heat in impressive style and the final looked to be a race for gold between them and the equally impressive reigning World Champions from Canada. The Canadians shot off the start and established clear water over the rest of the pack, led by the British. The GB VIII gradually pegged them back but also had to watch a

President: Bruce Mitchell
 Vice Presidents: Don Barton,
 Richard Peters,
 Sir Matthew Pinsent CBE,
 Ben Sylvester.

late push from the US crew. But the Canadians had done enough and GB had to settle for Silver, with the US a close 3rd.

Andy Triggs Hodge (M.04), stroke of the GB coxless four, had had a very shaky couple of seasons. However, in this event, previous form was clearly out the window as all three medallists from last year's World Championships failed to reach the final, while the British crew won their heat and semi to line up alongside the Australians as winners of the other semi. The Australians had the faster start and led most of the way, with the British, Slovenians and French in close contact. However, in the last 500m, the GB four produced a sprint and the Australians had no answer, the French taking the bronze.

So the title of Olympic Champion in coxless fours passes from one Catz alumnus (Matt Pinsent, 2000,2004) to another. And we should also recall Rupert Obholzer (M.88) who kicked the whole thing off with a bronze in this event in 1996.

5 Years Ago

The year 2003/04 was the 21st Anniversary of the founding of the Rowing Society but, with few experienced oarsmen and women choosing to continue, it was always going to be a difficult one for the Captains, Evan Burfield and Katharine Curtis Pierce. Nevertheless, spurred on by John Hill (starting a two-year stint as head coach¹), they set about recruiting and developing novices. Four men's and 1 women's VIII were entered for Christ Church Regatta, although the men's D crew was actually a mixed crew. That was also the year a fresher arrived at Catz and went straight off to OUBC Trials: Colin Smith.

2004 Bumps Results & Finish Positions

(2008 finish positions in brackets)

<i>Torpid</i>	M1	down 4	13th	(5th)
	M2	down 4	56th	(61st)
	W1	down 8	10th	(1st)
	W2	down 6	40th	(48th)
<i>Eights</i>	M1	up 1	10th	(8th)
	M2	up 1	40th	(40th)
	W1	down 4	11th	(15th)
	W2	up 2	40th	(46th)

The 2004 Torpids was the first time that the 'full' event had been run since 1997. But for Catz crews, perhaps not unexpectedly, it was a largely a downhill affair with a net loss of 22 places. One bright spot was the Men's 1st Torpid successfully fending off Pembroke on the Thursday, only to succumb the

¹Nowadays coaching St Hugh's

next day and drop a further 3 places on the Saturday. The women's 1st Torpid had the toughest time, starting 2nd but dropping 2 places each day.



The 2004 Women's 1st Torpid. Carolyn Shuckerow (B), Jennifer Lee, Kassy Long, Lena Matthai, Emma Willis, Lydia Hutchinson, Carolyn Aler, Katharine Curtis Pierce (S), Ben Gander (C).

The misfortune extended to our University oarsmen. Colin Smith was stroke of the Blue Boat but that was the one boat race that Oxford were to lose that year. Paul Holland was selected for Isis but went down with flu a few days before the race.

For Eights, a computerised entry system was tried out for the first time. One thing computers don't understand is the notion of being sensibly flexible with deadlines, especially those regarding students; several clubs, including Catz men, found themselves 'locked-out' having failed to submit their entries in time. At the subsequent Captains' meeting, good sense prevailed and late entries were finally deemed acceptable, although not before various notions, such as requiring the delinquent captains row in pink bikinis, had been gleefully discussed.



The 2004 Men's 1st Eight. James McInerney (B), Will Mulholland, Dan Blakey, Evan Burfield, Justin Puleo, James Woodrow, Paul Holland, Colin Smith (S), Alastair Ross (C). (The boat is unusually rigged).

With Colin Smith and Paul Holland stepping forwards, other oarsmen were also tempted back. A largely new-look Men's 1st Eight took to the water but spent 3 frustrating days chasing Hertford before

finally recording a bump on Lincoln. The Men's 2nd Eight, containing many of the 1st Torpid, also gained a bump, while the women's 2nd Eight (coached by Dominique Bouchard of Lincoln) proved our most successful crew with 2 bumps. Only the women's 1st Eight failed to turn around their Torpids fortunes and were bumped every day.

Later that summer, Colin Smith, now in a single scull, reached the final of the Diamond Sculls at Henley and won a silver medal at the World U23 Championships. In the Athens Olympics, Matt Pinsent won his fourth Olympic gold and subsequently announced his retirement.

On the first day of Eights had come the news that a Catz oarswoman, Emilie Harris, had been killed in a road accident. The following day, a minute's silence was observed along the length of the Isis in the interval after Women's Div I.

Emilie's Charities

Our Mission: to give children and young adults in poorer areas of the world a better start in life and hope for the future.

Emilie's Charities was set up in memory of Emilie Harris who was tragically killed in a cycling accident in Oxford in 2004. Emilie had recently been elected as Charities Representative for her college, St Catherine's, and had previously worked in an orphanage in South America and visited Africa. She was very moved by her experiences where she saw first hand the issues of poor and orphaned children. Since its inception, therefore, Emilie's Charities has sought to support projects involving underprivileged children and young adults in developing countries. All money received goes to the projects with administration costs being met by the trustees.

So far projects have been supported in Bolivia, South Africa, Peru, Ecuador, Nepal, Rwanda and Uganda.

www.emiliescharities.org.uk

New Women's Sculling Boat

Following last term's donation of a new heavyweight single, Katharine Curtis Pierce (M.02) has also donated her own only-slightly-used lightweight single which had been left in our boathouse when she returned to the US. Which means that we now have rather nice boats for both men and women. Hopefully they'll both get a bit more use once the weather warms up.

News from Alumni

Paul Wimott (M.78) *I recently overheard Paul on BBC Radio 4 giving his views on the current financial turmoil. A search of the web reveals that he's big in the mathematical aspects of 'quant' analysis, runs www.wilmott.com and even merits a Wikipedia entry which describes him as 'researcher, consultant and lecturer in quantitative finance.' However, I couldn't work out if he was one of the people that predicted the turmoil, or caused it.*

Bob Coe (M.82) *Also someone recently cited in the press. He is a director of the Durham University CEM Centre, which carries out research into education. They produced a report which concluded that the better 'non-selective' schools are actually quite selective, following on from last year's headline-grabbing news that 'some GCSE's are easier than others' and 'A-levels used to be harder in the old days'. None of this surprises anyone, of course, but someone has to do the research that actually proves it, and that's Bob's job.²*

Matt Denmark (M.99) I married Sarah Gummerston on 9th August at New College. Sarah is a New College alumnus and rowed in their women's 1st VIII. We now live in Barnes, Sarah working as a teacher and I'm currently having an interesting time in corporate finance. I have also been rowing with Cygnet Rowing Club, including racing in the Thames Cup at Henley.

University Crews

Colin Smith returns to Oxford (and St Catherine's) as the new OUBC President and brings with him a number of friends from Beijing: Ante Kusurin (but now at Kellogg College), Tom Solesbury from the GB pair, Jake Wetzel from the Canadian VIII (I'm sure he and Colin will get along just fine), the Dutch single sculler Sjoerd Hamburger and George Bridgwater from the NZ pair. Only one of last year's Blue Boat is continuing (Marcovy) but Smith (2004, '06), Wetzel ('06) and Kusurin ('07) are all former Blues. At Catz, apart from Colin, we also have last year's Isis oarsman Martin Walsh and men's lightweight cox, Colin Groshong.

While Oxford seem to have outdone Cambridge on the recruiting front, I wouldn't dash off to the bookies just yet: at the Fours Head a couple of weeks ago the Oxford boats were fairly comprehensively spanked by their Cambridge counterparts. And those with long

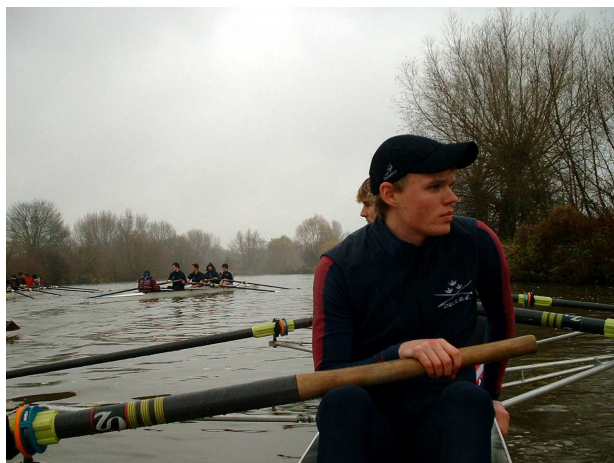
²Nevertheless I look forward to future reports on 'The role of hygiene in the lives of sylvan bears' and 'The Papacy: is freedom of religion an option?'

memories may remember the '93 Boat Race when the situation was all too similar.

Michaelmas Term

And so to this term. The men's Boat Club seems to have received fewer experienced freshers than usual, with just two confessing to previous form. Fortunately they have enough ex-1st and 2nd VIII oarsmen around to regularly boat an VIII or two IVs. For once the women get the larger share: no less than seven freshers arriving with some rowing background. They've been doing less racing, but more training, than the men. The RS website (www.atm.ox.ac.uk/rowing/news.html) contains some video footage of what happened when we took the boys and girls below Iffley Lock last weekend.

There are, in addition, 3 men's and 1 women's novice VIIIs training for Christ Church Regatta (26–29th November) (notable among these is the grandson of a former Captain of Boats, R.C. Easterbrook (1935/36), see newsletter of 24 June 2007). So, a busy time on the water.



Putting the 'Winter' back into the Isis Winter League. Mal Spencer, stroke of one of the Catz fours (the other is in the background) marshalling, in the rain, for this afternoon's IWL head race.

1949 Reunion

C. Graham Kaye writes of his plans to organise a dinner 60 years on for the surviving '49ers': those from the 1949 Boat Club when all three Eights made 6 bumps (Eights, in those days, being run over 6 days rather than 4). For their 50-year reunion they took an VIII out and Graham hopes they might manage the same again 10 years on. Although surely this is a less daunting prospect from his viewpoint — the cox's seat — than for some of the oarsmen.

London Events

Darren Chadwick writes:

Following the success of the London Party at Imperial College Boat House last year, a series of regular alumni drinks are being arranged. The first will be at the Hammersmith Ram on Friday 21st November at 7.30pm. The Ram is 3 minutes walk from the Hammersmith Tube Station on King Street. A facebook group has been set up for those youngsters who are into that kind of thing, but details of these events will be included in the newsletter and in emails to the Rowing Society email list.

The next event will be on Saturday 13th December at the Champion Pub, 12–13 Wells St, W1T 3PA. The nearest tube stop is Oxford Circus. For more information or to suggest a location, contact Darren Chadwick (darren.chadwick@brite-green.co.uk).

Sponsorship

We are currently looking for a new sponsor for the Boat Club. We don't expect it to be an easy task in the present economic climate, but if any of our alumni are in a position to help set something up, please contact me or see the Boat Club web-page sccbc.org.uk/web/sponsorship.html

Coming Up ...

In the next newsletter there will be the results and Captains' reports from this term's rowing (hopefully Christ Church Regatta will happen this year — last year it was cancelled and two years ago it was curtailed), and further news of our OUBC Triallists. There will also be a look at the Boat Club of 15 years ago, under the captaincy of Chris Mahne, Louise Glasgow & Bianca Superville (all these years on and I *still* say she sounds like the deadly yet glamorous villainess in a Bond film). Contributions to the News from Alumni section always welcome.

Anu Dudhia

email: dudhia@atm.ox.ac.uk

Row.Soc: <http://www.atm.ox.ac.uk/rowing/rs.html>

Diary

21 November 2008	London drinks: Hammersmith Ram
26–29 November 2008	Christ Church Regatta
13 December 2008	London drinks: Champion Pub
25–28 February 2009	Torpids
28 February 2009	RS AGM & Dinner
27–30 May 2009	Eights
30 May 2009	'49ers Reunion