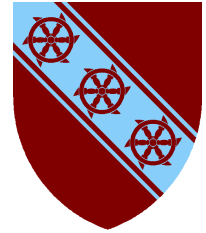




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College
Oxford OX1 3UJ



12th January, 2010

In this issue . . .

So here's the 2nd newsletter of Michaelmas Term (hopefully I'll be back on track by the next edition). This features results and reports on the term's rowing, which was curtailed during Christ Church Regatta (7th week) after a particularly wet November. There are a couple of news items from alumni, historical extracts from 20 years ago, an appeal for old photographs, a Facebook group, and forthcoming dates for London drinks and the RS AGM & Dinner.

As most of you will know, 2010 has got off to a cold start. Although the river has remained ice-free, more river closures are expected once the thaw sets in. Fortunately Torpids is in 7th week, a week later than in the past couple of years, and the extra week's practice will be welcome.

Results

Autumn Fours, 1st November

Men's Fours (15 entries)

- R1 beat Jesus A
- R2 lost to Trinity A

Women's Fours (12 entries)

- R1 beat Lincoln A
- R2 lost to Pembroke



A wintry welcome for those returning to Oxford in 2010. (Broad St, 6th January).

Isis Winter League A, 15th November

Total: 73 Entries

8th	4:49.0	Men's A	8th/41 M8
27th	5:34.5	Women's A	4th/26 W8
51st	6:13.0	Men's B	34th/41 M8
66th	6:56.0	Men's C	39th/41 M8
71st	8:17.5	Women's B	25th/26 W8

Nephtys Regatta, 22nd November

Men's Senior 8s (4 entries)

- SF beat Queen's
- Final lost to Exeter

Women's Senior 8s (3 entries)

- SF lost to Balliol

Men's Novice 8s (32 entries)

- R1 'Monsoon' lost to St Hugh's B

Christ Church Regatta, 25-28th November

Men's Novice 8s

- R1 MA 'Torpedo' beat St Benet's
- R1 MB 'Hurricane' lost to Corpus A

Women's Novice 8s

- R1 lost to Magdalen B (dqd)

Regatta abandoned due to high stream

Men's Boat Club Report

Phil McCullough, Men's Captain

As has been the case in recent years, the river was a cruel mistress. After six weeks of near-constant green flag, fortunes soon changed and we found ourselves under a red flag spell spanning three days of Christ Church, Isis Winter League B and the final week of term. Despite the frustrating lack of week 7 racing, I can safely say that this term has been full of promising rowing.

The seniors have enjoyed a base of 14 returning rowers, from which we have been able to field a boat for all the term's fixtures. Training religiously in the mornings with our new senior coach, Rachel Loveridge, we have made plentiful progress over the course of the term. After a solid performance in IWL A, the crew received a jolt to the system with a disappointing loss against Exeter in the final of Nephtys

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

Regatta. Motivated by this defeat, the crew returned the next morning with a new sense of determination that persisted throughout the remainder of term, and would undoubtedly have showed in IWL B had we not been thwarted by the weather. Armed with a fitness-oriented training plan for the vacation, the crew will hit the ground running in 0th week next term.

This sense of dedication has been mirrored by our promising novices. We fielded two boats, named ‘Hurricane’ and ‘Torpedo’, and pooled together with the novice



Phil McCullough, Men's Captain

women to field a third, mixed boat, to ensure that everyone has been able to race this term. I have been taken aback by the enthusiasm of this year's intake, with a desire to excel on the water rivalling that of some colleges' senior boats. We entered our mixed boat, ‘Monsoon’, into Nephthys Regatta, in which they were drawn against a strong, and I point out, all-male St Hugh's boat. Having not had much practice as a crew, they performed respectably, and were demonstrably more co-ordinated than some of the other mixed crews on the river that day.



Catz Men's Novice A (‘Torpedo’) win the exchange of crabs to draw clear of St Benet's (near side) in the first round of Christ Church Regatta.

In Christ Church, ‘Hurricane’ were defeated by a Corpus boat; however, ‘Torpedo’ managed to win in a dramatic race against an incredibly strong Benet's (technically Blackfriars) crew. This is a performance to be immensely proud of; this crew's prospects were looking very strong until amber flag swept the rest of the competition — in one college's case, literally — down a side-stream.

Faced with the prospect of propelling our first boat ever closer to elusive Headship, and with an army of eager novices snapping at the seniors' heels, Torpids 2010 will be an event to watch.

Women's Boat Club Report

Ilsa Haeusler, Women's Captain

0th week of Michaelmas 2009 proved to be very successful after a busy ‘Introduction to Rowing’ talk and an even busier taster tank water sessions on the weekend. A very keen group of novices piled into the boathouse on Sunday, ready to have a go on the water, in the very capable hands of Tim Rooney, who coxed every novice outing that day. The very helpful committee were on hand to help and coach the new novices, most of which got to row up to the Head and back again.

Twelve very committed novice women dived in to training for Christ Church Regatta, with the help of the Lower boats captain, Alice Pooley. She organised each outing and coached the



Ilsa Haeusler, Women's Captain

women with the help of several other senior members. The women were able to train on the water about two times a week and land training, organised by Sarah Hodgson, consisted of circuits, runs and ergs attended by both the Senior and Novice women.

By 7th week, the women were well prepared for the Christ Church Regatta, which, due to increasingly dangerous weather conditions, was only able to run for the first day of competition. Looking great in their new Catz kit, the women waited patiently on the water for an hour before they were able to race. When the time came, the women fought hard against Magdalen but were unfortunately defeated.

The senior women were very lucky to have a fabulous new coach, Rachel Loveridge, to get them back into things after a long vacation! Rachel was very keen to get stuck into training straightaway, so the women completed four water sessions each week, each coached by Rachel. On a few occasions, the four was taken out, which provided an exciting new experience for many members of the crew. The women trained hard throughout the term, entering Autumn fours (in which they reached Round 2 but were defeated by Pembroke), IWL A (in which they finished

4th of the Women's crews with an encouraging time of 5:34:5) and Nephthys Regatta. The women are currently training very hard over the Christmas Vacation ready to defend their Headship during next term's Torpids!

Thank you very much to the committee who were all on hand to help this term, particularly Alice Pooley for training the novices and Amy Carr and Lucy Tester, who did an excellent job at organising coxes for each session.



Catz Novice Women, attempting to 'strike a pose' (with, it has to be said, varying degrees of sincerity).

20 Years Ago ...

River closures were a bit of a novelty in those days — no one really knew what to do but everyone felt they ought to be rowing somewhere. Some colleges even commuted each morning down to the Tideway and back. Catz Men's Captain, Ollie Hassall, went for more creative local options.

The following extracts are from the Rowing Society newsletters and appeared in 'The History of St Catherine's Rowing'.

17th March, 1990

Rowing on the Isis ceased abruptly one morning in 3rd week when 3 crews (not ours) decided to play at being lemmings by the weir at Iffley and had to be rescued by the local fire-brigade. Then followed several weeks of trailing boats about the country in pursuit of rumours of rowable stretches of water. One of my enduring memories of this term will be standing on the shore of some tiny, miserable, windswept gravel-pit somewhere to the west of Oxford, with the Men's 1st Torpid, unable to believe that anyone would seriously considering going for a paddle on it. But prolonged deprivation does strange things to rowers, and this crew in particular, and paddle on it they did.

Torpids eventually went ahead, but just with the top two men's divisions, and just for the Friday and Saturday. Catz men dropped one place to 8th, bumped by one of the London commuters, Balliol.

28th April, 1990

Isis, coxed by Neil Chugani, starting as favourites, were 2 lengths down by Hammersmith, staged a great comeback to overhaul Goldie and were just about to go clear when there was a blade clash. The Goldie 2-man crabbed, broke his gate and Isis were disqualified. Neil, not a man to carry these misfortunes lightly, was more than a little upset, but at least he'll be a footnote in the history books.¹ This is a classic example of what we, in Catz, call the 'Choogs' factor.

This was the first year that Catz started regularly filling OUBC seats with Rupert Obholzer and a fresher by the name of Matthew Pinsent featuring in that year's Boat Race while Neil Chugani was to join them the following year. Oxford were having a good run, winning every Boat Race from 1972–1992 apart from 1986.

In summer term, Matt Pinsent tried his hand at coaching the women, while the men's 1st VIII trained down at Radley, an arrangement which had begun in 1992 under the new Master, Sir Patrick Nairne, who had links with the school.

14th July, 1990

Suzannah Rayner, Women's Captain, wrote Under the watchful, but somewhat silent, eye of chief coach Matt Pinsent, the Women's 1st VIII this term managed to reach a balance between 'work' and 'play' — although I think the perhaps the scales may have been slightly tipped ...

At Radley, Jean le Manac'h came up with one of his more impressive little miracles and after just a few days the 1st VIII turned up at Wallingford and won the Novice VIII's event, making up in winning margins what they lacked in style. That, I believe, was our Men's VIII's first win of an ARA event for over 10 years.

Eights didn't go so well, with the Men's 1st Eight dropping one place to 16th on the river and the Women dropping 2 places to 15th. I met Jean at Bedford Regatta last summer, still coaching Radley schoolboys.

¹This was the first and, to date, only time there has been a disqualification in either the Boat Race or the Isis-Goldie Race.

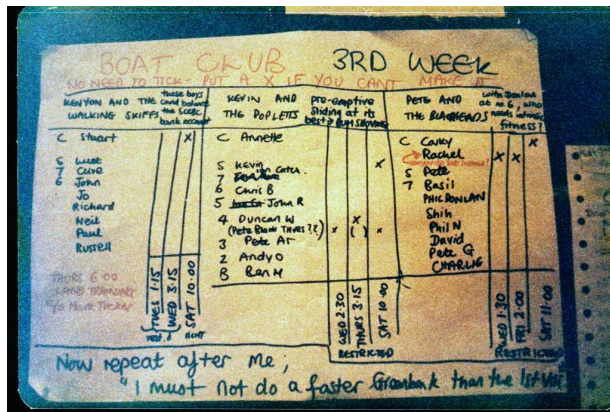
News from Alumni

Roger Noël Smith (M.71) (from Finland) A slightly belated announcement (19 March 09), that, in spite of being the ‘old man’ in the Gaudy paddle, Roger Noel Smith and his wife Aila have a daughter Lucinda, sister to Miranda, and that only thing preventing them from practising their rowing on the lake is that it is at the time of writing it is minus 30C.

Hanna Sykulska (M.00) Since leaving Oxford I did a PhD at Imperial College while working on the Phoenix mission which landed on the surface of Mars in May 2008. I designed and made hardware for the lander and went to the States to work, living on Mars-time, as an instrument downlink engineer during mission operations. I’m now back in Oxford — one floor away from Anu — working on more space instrumentation and looking forward to getting back into Oxford life.

Photo Archives

As some of you who have visited the Rowing Society web-pages will know, there is an archive of old photographs. These are mostly scanned copies of crew photos, but with the occasional (possibly more interesting) diversion. I’ve recently received a number of new photos from the early 1980’s from Olive Law (née Spurway) (M.79) and Stuart Warmink (M.80), and Ian Martin (M.68) has sent a picture of the College Barge from 1972.



How were things organised before email, the internet and mobile phones? The sign-up sheet for 3rd week outings for the men’s 3rd, 4th and 5th VIII’s on the Boat Club noticeboard from Hilary Term 1982. With only the 5th Torpid failing to Row On, it must have worked quite well. The bottom line reads: *Now repeat after me: ‘I must not do a faster Greenbank than the 1st VIII’.* Photo from Stuart Warmink (M.80).

University Triallists

As far as I know there are no St Catherine’s students trialling for University crews this year. Martin Walsh (M.07), having been selected for Isis in his Catz years, is back again but now as a member of Green Templeton College. He was stroke of one of the OUBC Trial VIII’s (‘Perky’) and, rowing in rough conditions, got them into a good lead until the race was called off after Hammersmith with their opponents, ‘Pinky’, having shipped too much water to be able to continue.

Facebook

Darren Chadwick has set up a Facebook group entitled ‘SCCBC — old boys and girls’, which currently has 110 members. The web-page www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=93221115264 provides the details, visible even to social-network refuseniks such as myself (there’s a link on the RS web-page to save you typing). This is the main forum for coordinating the monthly Thursday-evening pub meets (see under Diary for forthcoming events).

AGM & Dinner

The Rowing Society AGM & Dinner will be held in St Catherine’s College on Saturday, 6th March (the Saturday of Torpids). More details to follow in the next newsletter.

Coming Up ...

In the next newsletter there will be early news of training for Torpids, updates on the Boat Race crews, and a look at events of 30 years ago, under the Captaincy of Ed Parker-Jervis and Anne Hollifield. Also, any news items from alumni always welcome.

Anu Dudhia

email: dudhia@atm.ox.ac.uk

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

Diary

- 11 Feb 2010 Drinks at *The Cock Tavern*
7.30pm 27 Great Portland Street, London
Closest tube: Oxford Circus
- 3–6 Mar 2010 Torpids
- 6 Mar 2010 RS AGM & Dinner
- 11 Mar 2010 Drinks at *The Champion*
7.30pm 13 Wells Street, London
Closest tubes: Oxford Street, Tottenham Court Road
- 28 Mar 2010 Henley Boat Races
- 3 Apr 2010 The Boat Race
- 26–29 May 2010 Summer Eights