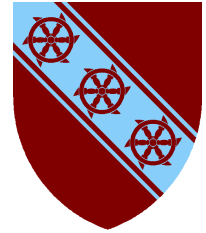




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College
Oxford OX1 3UJ



17th December, 2011

In this issue ...

The postal version of this newsletter may reach some of you rather late since, when I last saw Mike Bull, our membership secretary, a few weeks ago he was about to depart on his honeymoon (see News from Alumni).

The weather has been kind this term and the extensive results section shows that the Boat Club has made full use of opportunities to compete, and with both the men and women actually winning things. More details are in the Captains' reports.

The historical cycle begins again with the events of 10 years ago, when the weather wasn't so kind, but Catz contributed more than most to the surge of Dark Blue victories.

Results

Isis Winter League A, 13th November
78 crews raced

1st	4:17	Men's A
20th	4:58	Men's B
36th	5:17	Women's A (6th/22 W8)
57th	6:05	Men's C



'Right: here's the plan'. The men's 1st VIII look on, unconvinced, as stroke explains how he proposes to win the first IWL time-trial of the term.

Autumn Fours, 23rd October

Men's Fours (20 entries)

R1	Catz B	bt	Osler House	4 L
R2	Catz A	bt	Oriel C	r.o.
	Catz B	bt	Corpus	dqd
Q/F	Catz A	bt	Queen's C	4 L
	Pembroke	bt	Catz B	2 1/2 L
S/F	BNC A	bt	Catz A	Easily

Women's Fours (12 entries)

R1	GTC	bt	Catz	5 L
<i>Women's Fours - Plate</i>				
S/F	Catz	bt	Exeter	Easily
Final	Catz	bt	Wolfson	1/2 L

Nephthys Regatta, 18-19 Nov

Men's Novice Eights (27 entries)

R1	Univ C	bt	Catz
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Men's Fours (5 entries)

S/F	Lincoln A	bt	Catz
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Women's Fours (5 entries)

Q/F	Catz	bt	Jesus
S/F	Catz	bt	Lincoln
Final	Catz	bt	Christ Church

Christ Church Regatta, 23-26 Nov

R1	Men's A	bt	S.E.H. B	Easily
	St John's A	bt	Men's B	Easily
	St John's B	bt	Women's B	3 L
	Women's C	bt	L.M.H. A	Easily
	St Anne's B	bt	Women's A	dqd
Rep	Worcester C	bt	Men's B	1 1/2 L
	Wadham B	bt	Women's A	1 ft
	St Hilda's A	bt	Women's B	Easily
R2	Men's A	bt	L.M.H. B	Easily
	Women's C	bt	Univ C	1/2 L
R3	Men's A	bt	Linacre A	2 L
	Univ A	bt	Women's A	1 L
R4	Men's A	bt	Trinity A	Easily
Q/F	Men's A	bt	Hertford A	Easily
S/F	New A	bt	Men's A	1/3 L

Isis Winter League B, 27th November
37 crews raced

31st	6:09	Women's A (13th/15 W8)
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President: Bruce Mitchell
 Vice Presidents: Don Barton,
 Richard Peters,
 Sir Matthew Pinsent CBE,
 Ben Sylvester.



The Catz Men's Novice A crew (far side) racing Linacre A in Christ Church Regatta.

Wallingford Head, 27th November

249 crews raced

52nd 15:32 Catz 6th/30 IM3 8

Men's Boat Club Report

Ben Trigg, Men's Captain

The men have had a very successful start to the season this year, both with the novices and the seniors. The most notable success was achieved in Christ Church Regatta, where the novice men's A made it to the semifinals despite having to row 6 times in one day due to re-rows. The other men's crew also rowed well and both crews have a great deal of potential, to the extent that I expect a large number of them to be fighting for seats in the top two boats come Torpids. This success was largely, if not almost entirely, due to the hard work and dedication of our lower boats captain, Josh Morgan. Our success in Christ Church and the astonishing improvement of the novice rowers are a testament to the time and effort that he has put in over the last term. I know that this has not been easy, and I would like to take the opportunity both to congratulate and thank him for his work this term.

The seniors have also had a very good term. An injection of new faces, whether returning from years abroad or as freshers, has refreshed the crew and created a cohesive yet competitive group challenging for seats in the first two boats. Although the loss of our previous M1 cox, Theresa, was a blow, we have been lucky to have Dorothy Halberg, a visiting student

and experienced cox, join us and she has quickly become an influential and leading member of the crew. We have also got a new coach for the year, Rory Copus, and his enthusiasm and energy have helped make large changes to the mentality and training ethos of the squad. Although this term has arguably been primarily focused on the novices, he has ensured that the seniors have been kept focused with both training and racing, entering many regattas, both in Oxford and externally. Although we had limited success in both Autumn Fours and Nephthys Regatta (arguably due to having to use the heavy weight four with four lightweights), this was more than compensated by success in IWL and Wallingford Head. In the first IWL of

the year, we were the fastest boat on the river whilst in Wallingford Head we were third fastest Oxford crew, beating the likes of Oriel, one of the Nephthys lightweight boats and even Christ Church when they rowed under similar conditions.

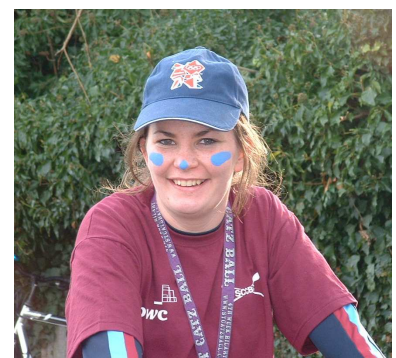
Our success this term means that I am very excited about the potential that the current squad holds and I hope that a solid effort over Christmas will bring everyone back fit and ready to hit Hilary running in time for Torpids.

Women's Boat Club Report

Emily Risness, Women's Captain

Michaelmas term started well with a good number of enthusiastic women signing up for rowing, after attending the two talks held in Fresher's week. Thanks to much help from current and former committee members, the session at the end of the week was also a great success, allowing our new rowers to get a taste of rowing in the tank and on the water.

Following this, rapid progress was made with 7 women's novice outings being held per week, all organised by Joanna Harrall. The novice rowers also benefited from coaching from our new coach,



Rory Copus, and extra help from Malcolm Spencer.



The Catz Women's Novice C crew (near side) racing Univ A

We were able to enter 3 boats into Christ Church Regatta, although regrettably due to drop outs our Boat A had to be made into a 'friendly crew', making them unable to reach the second round. The 6 novices from boat A, with a couple of helpers still managed to put in a great performance and win their first race. Boat B unfortunately lost both their races, performing well against tough opposition. Boat C beat LMH A by an impressive 5 lengths in the first round, and went on to beat Univ C. Sadly Univ managed to get their revenge as their A boat got us by a length in the 3rd round, but the girls managed to maintain great technical rowing throughout. We are proud of all three boats' performances and are very excited to see these rowers progress into the senior boats next term.

The seniors also had a great term. In Autumn Fours, after being unfortunately matched with the eventual winners Green Templeton A in the first round, the women went on to win the Plate in the repechage. The same four also won the fours category in Nephthys Regatta. There was also a senior VIII training a couple of times a week along with erg sessions and the boat club circuits, and entering IWL A and B.

Overall it has been a very successful term thanks to all of the committee, especially Jo, who put in an exceptional amount of time organising, coxing and training the novices, whilst still rowing with the seniors. Also a massive thank you to Theresa for helping cox and coach the seniors throughout the term, and to Rory for his coaching and advice. We are now excited to see the strong group of rowers from this term take advantage of our high position in Torpids next term!

10 Years Ago

The successes of the previous year (2000), when the men gained blades and the women the Torpids Headship, cast a long shadow. The women, in particular, struggling even to find a captain let alone put out a crew capable of defending the Headship. Hanna Sykulska was nominally in charge but I'm not sure she ever stepped in a boat, leaving their coach, former captain Emily Woodeson, effectively to run things.

But the following report from the Michaelmas Term newsletter has a certain timeless quality to it:

Will Mulholland, Captain of Lower Boats 2001/02

'It never really clicked to me on that night of Summer Eights last year, when I was approached by the captains Laura and Matt D (wearing hula dress/bikini top and toga respectively) that I had just agreed to do this job. Most likely this was because they had waited until the night's end before popping the question, by which time I was excessively inebriated and said yes to them. From that moment on, I was engulfed in the phenomenon of Novice Rowing. Considering Oxford is regarded by many as the seat of learning, thus far I've learned ...

- That it is possible for a novice cox with sufficient gusto, to steer a course from Catz Boathouse to the top and back which, when straightened, would extend down beyond the Isis Tavern.
- That a person *can* row with their seat backwards if they so desire.
- That Pay-As-You-Go mobile-phone plans are useless if your job title has the word 'Captain' in it.'

Hilary Term was almost a complete washout but the cancellation of Torpids did at least mean that the women held the Headship for another year. So attention moved on to the Boat Races, with Catz representatives in four Oxford crews: OUBC (Matt Smith), Isis (Angus Warner), Men's Lightweights (Mike Bull and William Mulholland), and Osiris (Fiona Howarth). The following extract is from the first RS newsletter of Trinity Term:

Mike Bull, 2002 Men's Lightweight Race

'We'd done the training — 7 months of it — we'd changed our crew order more times than I'd ever thought possible, we'd weighed in, we'd watched our reserves, we'd shaved our heads, there was nothing

left to do before the race. And here we were, spinning onto the stakeboat, our race delayed by half an hour, with various ‘self-important officials’ yelling instructions to our cox. I’d been warned about this feeling, but never really understood it until I was there: ‘Someone just say GO!’. And then someone did.’

It was the year that Oxford swept all 6 boat races, and the wall of our boathouse contains a framed letter from Hertford BC congratulating us on our contribution. It was also the year that Cambridge decided to start counting the Veterans’ Boat Race as part of the set (obviously they’d won that one, despite the efforts of our own Tony Mitchell in the Oxford boat).

In summer term there was a change of both captains: Simon Risoe replacing Matt Hilton for the men and Fiona Howarth taking up the reins for the women. The term began brightly, with our men’s and women’s fours winning ‘blades’ in the recently revived City of Oxford bumping races. But in Eights, despite reinforcements from the University rowers, the men still dropped one place (to 11th) while the women dropped two (to 4th).

This was also the year of the first presentation of the Ben Sylvester Award, Ben himself being on hand to hang the medal around Emily Woodeson’s neck. The formal citation read:

‘She is an excellent oarswoman who has successfully represented the University against Cambridge and has proved to be an excellent coach in Michaelmas and Hilary Terms when she virtually took over as Captain again to keep the Women’s crews together. For this she claimed no more than a bicycle repair whereas the Rowing Society was paying a professional fee to a coach for the men.’

However, I prefer the (possibly apocryphal) tutor’s report: ‘Emily seems to regard Oxford as a diverse sporting arena in which contact with us forms a small, but unfortunate, sideline.’

News from Alumni

Chris Little (M.67) [the last newsletter] evoked a forgotten memory — I was on the receiving end of John Corbett’s experiments in 1967–1970, both in a boat, and while caving with OUCC in Yorkshire. Typically we would be wired with sensors measuring surface skin temperature and heat flow, and would swallow a radio pill that would transmit body core temperature. Blood samples were also taken before and after exercise.

As the radio pills were expensive, the less said about how they were returned the better.

The levels of ketone in the blood was among the things he was researching — this proved that you were knackered. I think he was surprised about just how exhausted we became, in physiological terms. It is now well known that in extremis ketone smells in your breath is a sign that the body is starting to self-digest proteins to survive, as no sugar or fat are left.

The only benefit of these experiments seemed to be being in close proximity to the stunning nurse he brought with him to take the blood and other readings.

Emily Woodeson (M.97) *According to the school’s web-site, in August 2011 Emily started as Head of Science at the Prince of Wales Island International School in Malaysia, having previously been teaching in an Oxford comprehensive.*

Mike Bull (M.99) *At Mike’s wedding last month I learned that, apart from being something to do nowadays with Air Traffic Control, he also has a talent for making cakes (yes, he made the wedding cake) and knitting.*

Hanna Sykulska (M.00) *Recently received a Dorothy Hodgkin Research Fellowship from the Royal Society, aimed at promising young scientists who may benefit from flexible working arrangements. I know this because she’s in my lab, although nowadays we’re more likely to discuss provision of child-care in Oxford rather than science or rowing.*

Coming Up ...

In the next issue there will be early reports on Hilary Term’s rowing, a new boat for the men, details of Torpids and the AGM & Dinner, the progress of our University triallists (Zoe de Toledo coxing for OUBC, David Zimmer rowing with the lightweights and Charlotte Marshall with OUWBC) and a look at the events of 20 years ago, under the captaincies of Matt Mowbray and Charlotte Elmitt.

Anu Dudhia

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

www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=93221115264

Diary

22–25 Feb 2012	Torpids
25 Feb 2012	RS AGM & Dinner
25 Mar 2012	Henley Boat Races
07 Apr 2012	The Boat Race
23–26 May 2012	Eights