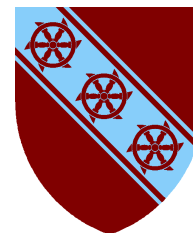




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College
Oxford OX1 3UJ



4th May, 2013

In this issue . . .

We now have two alumni in the GB squad, which merits a report on their first serious competition in the new Olympic cycle. That's two more than the number of Catz representatives in this year's Boat Race crews but Oxford seemed to manage quite well without our help (and we can even afford to be magnanimous in recording Cambridge's continued success in the various ancillary races which are now attaching themselves to the programme). From the archives we dust-off the minute book of 75 years ago — well, 76 to be pedantic, but the 1937 minutes are rather more entertaining than those of '38.

It's now 3rd week of Trinity Term and, although our crews have been back in training since — 1st week, it's taken until, of all things, this bank holiday weekend before it's started to feel that summer might finally have arrived, with a little over two weeks to Eights (22–25th May). On the Saturday of Eights there will also be a Special General Meeting of the RS to consider proposed changes to the financial management, as outlined by the Chairman, Kevin Skinner.



St Catz I racing at Abingdon Head in April

Results

Rowing World Cup I, 22–24th March
 Sydney, Australia

Men's VIII's

1st GBR str: Andy Triggs Hodge (M.04)

Women's VIII's

4th GBR cox: Zoe de Toledo (M.10)

Intercollegiate Races, 24th March
 (relocated to Dorney Lake)

Men's Race: Caius bt Balliol 7 L
 Women's Race: Downing bt St John's 1 L

Henley Boat Races, 24th March
 (relocated to Dorney Lake)

Women's Reserves Oxford 6 L 7:41
 Women's Lightweights Oxford 4³/₄ L 7:33
 Women's Blue Boat Oxford 1³/₄ L 7:21
 Men's Lightweights Oxford 1²/₃ L 6:49

Veterans' Boat Races, 30th March

Cambridge bt Oxford[†] 4 L 8:13

[†]Jan Herzog (5) and Zoe de Toledo (cox)

Tideway Boat Races, 31st March

Men's Reserves Oxford 1¹/₃ L 17:51
 Men's Blue Boat Oxford 1¹/₃ L 17:28

Abingdon Head, 14th April

320 boats, including 18 men's VIII's

07:00 1st Upper Thames Mas B/C/D 8
 07:30 2nd **St Catherine's I** IM2 8
 07:31 3rd **St Catherine's II** IM2 8
 07:37 4th Worcester Coll. IM3 8

Catz crews racing for 'time only'

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

International Rowing

The international regatta season started unusually early this year, with the first round of the World Cup being held in Sydney, Australia (only the second time that any of the World Cup races have been held outside Europe). Not surprisingly, given the early date and distance, entry numbers were well down, particularly from Europe. However, the GB rowing team was there in force, using the event to round off their Australian training camp.

One of many new faces in the squad in this post-Olympic year was our own Zoe de Toledo (M.10), coxing the women's VIII. Despite the strong field, they'd looked good prospects for a medal after their performance in the heats but, with all the crew doubling up in other events, the VIII's final was perhaps just one race too far and they finished 4th.

Among the not-so-new faces was Andy Triggs Hodge (M.04), along with two other continuing members of the Olympic four. The coaches obviously decided they needed a bit of variety and put them in the VIII. In the final race of the day they took an early lead and never looked seriously challenged. It'll be interesting to see if this particular experiment continues.

The next round of the World Cup is at Dorney Lake from 21–23 June 2013.

University Boat Races

I had to miss the Henley Boat Races this year due to other commitments but, given the harrowing tales from those who returned from the biting cold windswept shores of Dorney Lake, I can't say I regretted it.

The day began with the inter-collegiate races, for which Balliol had just pipped Catz by 1 second for the right to represent Oxford. If there is such a thing as a good race to lose, that might have been it: at Dorney Balliol were soundly, and publicly, thrashed by Caius. In the women's race, St John's (Oxford) finished a more respectable second to Downing.

If Cambridge supporters were warmed by those two early victories they should have left at that point. Oxford then took all four of the University races. The reports suggest that the Oxford crews generally opted for a long, low-rating style which was better suited to the difficult conditions. I thought this might have been because they'd done so much of their training at Dorney while the Thames was in flood but I'm told that this was not so (Wallingford, where all the Oxford crews train nowadays, has been considered 'rowable' most of the year).

So, on to the Tideway. The Veterans' Boat Race, held over just the first half of the course, is now regularly held the day before the Boat Race proper, and used by the organisers as a dress-rehearsal. Here there were a couple of Catz representatives: Jan Herzog (2005 OUBC) and Zoe de Toledo (2011 Isis, 2012 OUBC — coxes are excused the 'Veteran' requirement). Cambridge seem to take this race more seriously than Oxford and their crew (average age 45) beat the younger (43) but heavier (not necessarily and advantage when discussing veterans) Oxford men by 4 lengths.

The next day's Isis-Goldie race was remarkable even before the start: Goldie averaging 13.5 kg a man more than Isis. But the race that unfolded, sadly out of sight of the TV cameras, was a much closer contest with the lead having already changed several times before Isis finally sprinted past Goldie in the last 20 strokes.

Half an hour later the Blue boats set off. Oxford, on the Surrey station, got the better start and quickly established a lead of about $\frac{3}{4}$ which they held all the way round the big Surrey bend, with Cambridge on the outside effectively having to row faster than Oxford just to stay in touch. The question was: were Oxford rowing within themselves and biding their time, or were Cambridge really faster? The answer came as the river straightened out: Oxford put in a big push for clear water and Cambridge had nothing left to give, allowing Oxford to choose their own line to the finish.

Boat Race Statistics

Oxford made a clean sweep of this year's University Boat Races, a feat they previously achieved in 2002, while Cambridge have only managed this once, and that was 20 years ago. And while there were 5 Catz members in the 2002 Oxford boats, this year there were none. Actually, there was one Catz alumnus closely involved in the action: Matthew Pinsent umpired every one of this year's races apart from Isis-Goldie. But one assumes that played no part in the outcome.

Boat Race Wins	Overall		Since 2000	
	Oxf	Cam	Oxf	Cam
Men's Blue Boat	77	81	9	5
Men's Reserves	20	29	8	6
Men's Lightweights	15	22	9	5
Women's Blue Boat	26	40	10	4
Women's Reserves	16	23	11	3
Women's Lightweights	11	16	10	4

The preceding table summarises the number of wins in each of the six events. Two notable features emerge: firstly, that Cambridge continue to hold an overall lead in every one of these categories; and secondly, since 2000, Oxford has won more races in every category than Cambridge. Not included in the table are the Men's Lightweight Reserves races, held from 2000–2009, where Oxford did have the advantage in total wins until Cambridge decided that they didn't want to play any more. Perhaps an ominous portent of what might happen if Oxford do finally overhaul the Cambridge total in any of the current competitions. But, for now, the future seems Dark Blue.

75 Years Ago

1937 was a difficult year for the Boat Club: the 1st Torpid dropping 3 places while both the 1st and 2nd Eights were bumped on each of the 6 days of racing. The 1st VIII finished 27th on the river in both Torpids and Eights. However, the following extracts from the Boat Club minute book suggest that the atmosphere was not entirely gloomy.

Thursday, 15th October, 1936

The Captain appealed to all men to jump upon their friends' backs and bite 'em like a bug of rowing, so to speak, and to urge those so bitten to jump on others' backs, and so *ad infinitum* — as it were. This was not being successfully done but would be a good thing if it were.

Thursday, 3rd December, 1936

The second ordinary general meeting was not held on Thursday, Dec. 3rd at 2pm on the barge. There was consequently no mention of anything, and the meeting did not stand adjourned at 2.30pm. It is therefore still in a state of nebulous existence *sine die*, and will need measures extraordinary to cope with it.

Signed, in some doubt,
Captain, 19/1/37

Tuesday, 19th January, 1937

The minutes of the previous meeting were requested, read, and being misunderstood, shelved, so that the meeting of Dec. 3rd is still unconcluded. Searching blindly for something concrete, the Captain and meeting requested the minutes of the meeting before the previous nebulous one, which, being read, discovered and confessed a lamentable lack of knowledge of

eighteenth century satire¹ on the part of all save the Secretary.

The Captain passed on to exhortations. Oarsmen were not to be egotistic, nor hasty-tempered, nor make nasty remarks, e.g., 'Bother this contaminated bow-side', nor cast aspersions on the ancestry and probable descendants of other Hon. Members upon no more proof of provocation than personal discomfort.

Thursday, 25th May, 1937

There was general sympathy for the 1st VIII cox who amid a blaze of publicity sustained 12 bumps against him (a record) [presumably also rowing in the 2nd VIII].

The following year's minute book contains just the single terse comment: '[The Captain] did not believe in holding meetings.' but, nevertheless, the Boat Club seems to have been put back on track. You can draw your own analogies with contemporary events in Europe.

Trinity Term

Both men's and women's senior squads were back in –1st week for training camp, looking to make up for lost water time last term. While the women trained on the Isis, the men took a couple of VIIIs down to Abingdon. Apart from a change of scenery, this was also to test out the logistics of establishing a regular term-time training base there. They rounded off the week by entering two composite crews in in the Abingdon Head, finishing 2nd and 3rd overall in almost identical times, and both ahead of Worcester, the only other Oxford College racing.

This extra week meant that the 1st and 2nd boats have been selected and settled down to regular training earlier than we usually manage these things. On the other hand, many other boat clubs seem to have had the same idea.

At the end of last term we sent our battered and cannibalised eight-year old 3rd VIII shells (*Tony Hancox* and *Sir Glyn Jones*) back to Janousek for refurbishment. Upon their return they have, not unreasonably, been appropriated by the 2nd VIIIs with the former 2nd VIII shells (*Catz 22* and *Catz Me If You Can*) now passed down to the 3rd VIIIs and novices, at least until their turn for a refurb comes up.

¹'bite 'em ... ad infinitum' having being, of course, adapted from Swift

Eights 2013

Eights will be from 22–25th May. Last year’s experiment increasing the number of boats from 12 to 13 per division was considered a success and will be continued, which does at least give the women’s 1st Eight a bit of a run-up at getting back into Div I by having Wolfson to chase on the first day, with New College behind. The men’s 1st Eight will be hoping to catch Hertford while watching S.E.H. disappear into the distance.

The Catz women’s 2nd Eight have gone down for the past 3 years and now will have to qualify in Rowing On, but this year’s crew is a rather different beast and that shouldn’t be a problem. The men’s 2nd Eight fell three places last year, but will also be eyeing-up the four crews that lie between them and Div III rather than looking at the crews behind.

I assume an assortment of gentlemen will be found to fill the men’s 3rd Eight and other crews may yet materialise between now and Rowing On.

Eights 2013: Wednesday Start times

Crew	Div	Bungline	Time
Men’s 1st Eight	I	9	6.45pm
Women’s 1st Eight	II	2	5.15pm
Men’s 2nd Eight	IV	4	3.30pm
Women’s 2nd Eight*	V	5	1.50pm
Men’s 3rd Eight*	VI	13	1.15pm

*subject to Rowing On

NB: on Sat. all divisions race 1 hour earlier

Changes in RS Financial Management

Kevin Skinner, RS Chairman

The Rowing Society was founded in the early 1980’s and exists to support rowing within the College and to provide social contact amongst alumni with an interest in rowing. A significant element of the Society’s support is financial.

The Society has until now administered its own finances entirely independently of the College and maintains its own current and deposit accounts with banks in Oxford. The current arrangement is no longer attractive because subscriptions and donations to the Society do not attract the significant tax advantages available on direct donations to the College by virtue of the College’s charitable status. Additionally, the Society is unable in the current financial climate to make more than a miniscule return on reserve funds set aside for future capital expenditure.

Following a decision in principle some time ago, the Society has explored with the College a more beneficial financial arrangement to address these disadvan-

tages. It proposes the creation of a dedicated Rowing Fund within the College’s system of Expendable Endowment Funds. Expendable Endowment funds are distinct from Permanent Endowment funds in that there is no requirement to preserve the initial endowment capital. All Rowing Society subscriptions (re-designated as donations), external sponsorship and other rowing-specific income such as bequests and donations would be directed into the new fund. The Rowing Fund will be invested as part of the College’s consolidated endowment funds. As a directly invested fund, the return on the College’s overall endowment may be positive or negative in an individual year, but of course the overall objective is for beneficial returns.

All Endowment funds are separately identifiable within the College’s accounting systems and are created with a limiting statement of purpose provided by the benefactor, in this case the Rowing Society. The College routinely consults with benefactors, or their representatives, as to the state of the fund and how the available monies are to be applied. This means that the Rowing Society, through its Committee, will retain a significant influence in how the available funds are used. Although there will be a transfer of formal ownership and responsibility for the funds, the College authorities have indicated that they will be prepared to delegate day to day decisions to the Rowing Society and that decisions on major capital expenditure on new boats and other equipment would be taken in consultation.

A Special General Meeting of the Society will be held on Saturday 25th May 2013 at 11:00am in College to formally resolve for the creation of the St Catherine’s College Rowing Fund, to amend the Rowing Society Constitution accordingly and to approve the Statement of Purpose for the Fund. Society Members are encouraged to attend.

Coming Up . . .

In the next issue there will be the Captains’ reports and, space permitting, the Boat Club of 100 years ago. News items or other contributions from alumni always welcome.

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

- 17 May 2013 Rowing On
- 22–25 May 2013 Eights
- 21–23 Jun 2013 World Cup II (Dorney)