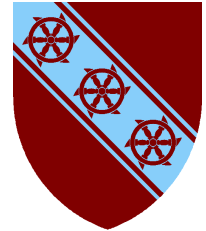




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College
Oxford OX1 3UJ



President: Bruce Mitchell
 Vice-Presidents: Don Barton, Richard Peters,
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8th February, 2015

In this issue . . .

With still over 3 weeks to go until Torpids, I know it's risking a lot to say it, but we've only lost a few days to the Red Flag, and those were at the start of term. The downside to a *dry* winter is, of course, a *cold* winter, and there have been some quite unnecessarily 'bracing' mornings out there on the water (or so I imagine).

Fifty years ago, as the new College buildings had been rising, so the 1st VIII had been sinking until St Catherine's had the indistinction of being the lowest 1st boat in both Torpids and Eights. But things were about to turn around. The Women's Boat Race had just been revived, but it would take rather longer for Oxford to achieve their first victory in that event.

Also in this newsletter there is an update on our (lightweight women) triallists, details for Torpids (5-7th March) and the AGM & Dinner (7th March), and a brief financial statement.

The women *will* be getting a new VIII, thanks to the generosity of a couple of alumni, but that won't appear until the start of next term so I'll save the details for the next newsletter.



et Nova: The Women's Torpid, approaching the Gut, in today's IWL.

Results

Isis Winter League C, 25th January

51 crews were timed

9th 5:37 **St Catz A (M1)** 7th/13 M8

Isis Winter League D, 8th February

84 crews were timed

71st	6:10	St Catz D (M2)	37th/38 M8
73rd	6:12	St Catz C (M2)	38th/38 M8
77th	6:18	St Catz A (W1)	29/32 W8



Vetera: The 1st Eight, approaching the Gut, in 1965.

University Crews

Catz' main involvement in this year's Boat Races is with the lightweight women.

On 14th December, in their Trial Eights race over the Henley course, Lucy Roberts was at bow in the *Roast* crew, which lost to *Scramble*. At the start of this term they had a training camp in Coimbra, Portugal, where cox Anna Corderoy was persuaded to join them rather than participate in our own 0th week training camp on the Isis (tough call).

Two former Catz oarswomen, actually stern pair of the 2010 1st Torpid, are also involved in lightweight trials: Danielle Bishop (M.09), now at Exeter College, is

trailing for OUWLRC while Emma Clifton (M.08), having helped Oxford to victory last year, will now be attempting to do the same for Cambridge.



Wish you were here? Lucy & Anna staggering home after a hard day on the water (they tell me) in Coimbra.

Tradition dictates that, at the end of Michaelmas Term, *all* the various University squads from both Oxford and Cambridge, hold their Trial Eights races over the same course that they will race in April and, more recently, also on the same day as their opposition (although obviously not at the same time).

The O.U.B.C Trial Eights race was established back in 1858 to serve as the final selection for the Oxford crew that could then train together from the start of Hilary Term. But nowadays with the squads all reconvening over the New Year for intensive training camps, ongoing and more sophisticated assessment procedures, and final selection often delayed until March, one has to wonder whether these races achieve anything other than providing a bit of end-of-term excitement for the participants and generating a bit of publicity, especially if something goes awry.

Despite the wind and waves, this year's Tideway trials proceeded without incident (unfortunately for the PR people) and, perhaps predictably, the official Boat Race web-page says only that exciting races can be expected.

Over the next couple of months the squads will be testing out their 'probable' line-ups against other top crews in private fixtures and, although careful not to race the same opposition, this usually provides enough guide to form to make 11th April a little less exciting.

50 Years Ago ...

In 1965 Catz students were occupying the newly-completed College buildings and the Boat Club had just moved its equipment out of Salter's boatyard (site of the present Head of the River pub) and into a bay of the old O.U.B.C boathouse (site of the present Univ Boathouse). The Boat Club still maintained a barge, one of several moored alongside Christ Church meadow, which served as a club room as well as occasional, if illicit, overnight accommodation.

St Catherine's had ended 1964 with the lowest 1st VIIIs on the river in both Torpids and Eights (out of the 23 participating, male-only Colleges). But 1965 got off to a promising start with Mansfield entering crews for the first time, thus elevating St Catherine's to the *second* lowest 1st VIIIs before a stroke was rowed.

The 1960s and 1970s were a period of experimentation with the Torpids rules, notionally with the dual aims of allowing fast crews to progress upwards more rapidly while also encouraging crews to train to row the full course rather than for a sprint, lack of stamina being perceived as a weakness of Oxford oarsmen compared to their Cambridge counterparts who had the advantage of a longer stretch of river on which to conduct their bumps.



The 1965 1st Torpid, approaching the recently completed Donnington Bridge, racing on the 'County' station.

Torpids in 1965 was raced in lanes: from the start the crews split alternately into two lanes and, beyond the Gut, into three. Places could be gained either by bumping the crew in your lane — difficult, since they would have started 2 or 3 bunglines ahead — or, more likely, by finishing ahead of crews in other lanes. Nor were there any Sandwich boats; instead, after each day, the division boundaries were moved down one place so the crew which finished top of one division would then row as the bottom crew in the next division on the following day. Thus Div I on Wednesday contained 6 boats, expanding to 9 by the Saturday, while Div V contracted from 7 to just 4. The intermediate divisions contained 9 boats each day.

The St Catherine's 1st Torpid started bottom of Div III, 24th on the river, were overtaken by Univ II on the Thursday but held their place on the other three days to finish 25th. Compared to the previous year — down 5 places — that was a success of sorts, but over the next 7 years they were to rise 19 places. The 2nd Torpid dropped 2 places to finish 39th, ahead of just one other crew: Mansfield.

With just 5 women's Colleges (L.M.H., Somerville, St Anne's, St Hilda's and St Hugh's) there was no organised women's rowing at College level. However, the Women's Boat Race had been revived the previous year and to O.U.W.B.C. fell the task of training up complete novices to participate in the event. There's video footage on the web of the 1965 Women's Boat Race, held on the Cam (e.g., Google 'Pathe 1965 CUWBC') but I should warn viewers of an Oxford disposition that it contains some scenes of a distressing nature. Suffice it to say, it wasn't until 1975 that Oxford finally won a race. I doubt the BBC will be able to resist the temptation to replay it as part of the build-up to live coverage of this year's Women's Boat Race.

Summer Eights paddled on serenely untroubled by 1960s revolutionary zeal, following rules laid down in the 19th century and, indeed, continued to this day. S.E.H. were the top rowing College and, with 5 Blues and 3 Isis oarsmen to choose from, had little difficulty retaining the Headship while their second boat rose 7 places to finish 11th in Div I.

None of which was of much concern to St Catherine's, starting 2nd in Div III. After rowing over on the first day they went on to register their first bump since 1962, on Keble II, and then onwards and upwards, bumping the 1st boats of St Peter's and Wadham. But any change in fortune had yet to filter down to the lower crews, the 2nd and 3rd Eights dropping 2 and 4 places respectively. Over the next 6 years the 1st Eight rose a further 11 places to race (briefly) in Div I.



The 1965 1st Eight, on the College Barge. Back row, left to right: A. Rumbold (4), Craig Shelton (bow), John Haden (Capt), Peter Chandler (6), James Holroyd (5), Will Pavry (7), Chris Talbot (3) Mike Day (2). Front row, left to right: Anthony Hull (str), P. A. Coleridge (S.E.H., coach) John Rousseau (cox).

Torpids

Torpids will be from 4–7th March (7th week), with Rowing On races scheduled for Friday, 27th February. In the absence of any racing last year, the start order will be the 2013 finishing order. Assuming no modifications are required due to fast stream conditions, there will be 7 men's divisions and 6 women's divisions, racing every half-hour each day from 12.00 noon (Men's Div VII) until 5 pm (Men's Div I).

Below is the expected Wednesday start order for the Men's and Women's 1st Divisions, together with the movement of each crew in 2013. However, two years is an entire generation in student rowing, and that is likely to bear little correlation with what happens this year.

Torpids 2015

Positions of Catz 1st Torpids and 2013 change

Men's Div I		Women's Div I	
1 Pembroke	=	1 Magdalen	=
2 Magdalen	+1	2 Wadham	=
3 Christ Church	-1	3 S.E.H.	+1
4 Balliol	=	4 Oriel	+4
5 St Catherine's	+2	5 New College	-2
6 Oriel	+3	6 St John's	+4
7 Wolfson	-3	6 Pembroke	-1
8 Trinity	+5	8 St Catherine's	+5
9 St John's	-3	9 Christ Church	-4
10 Worcester	+4	10 Balliol	+8
11 Wadham	=	11 University	=
12 Lincoln	+5	12 Worcester	-3



The Men's 2nd Torpid racing in today's IWL-D time trial.

The women have been struggling for numbers and can only muster a single crew this term. There *may* be a men's 3rd Torpid but I believe it has yet to take to the water and, if it does, will still have to qualify in Rowing On. Wednesday start times and positions for the fixed division St Catherine's boats are listed below.

Torpids 2015: Wednesday Start times

Crew	Div	Bungline	Time
Men's 1st Torpid	I	5	5.00pm
Women's 1st Torpid	I	8	4.30pm
Men's 2nd Torpid	IV	5	2.00pm

I'll be in or around the boathouse most afternoons and sending out the usual evening race reports to everyone on the RS email list. Someone may even be 'tweeting' during the day (@StCatzBC, for those who follow such things), but otherwise the OURCs web-pages should contain live-updates.

Finances

The sharp-eyed may have noticed that we are no longer sponsored by PwC, who had been contributing about half of the Society's £6500 annual income.

Obviously we're now seeking out a new sponsor but, while we don't face an immediate financial crisis, you will appreciate our desire to maximise the return on our members' contributions.

Until now subscriptions have all been paid by standing order into a bank account earning little or no interest. What we've done is arrange with the College to piggy-back on their own fundraising (to which many of you already contribute separately) and so now we'd like you to redirect your RS contributions to part of the College endowment earmarked for

the support of rowing. Not only does this give us the immediate benefit, under Gift Aid, of reclaiming basic rate tax from contributions from UK tax-payers, but will also, we would hope, provide a better return on the invested funds.

For 'tax reasons' it means we now have to relabel your contributions as donations rather than subscriptions, and collect these via direct debit rather than by standing order. But to answer one obvious concern about the direct debit: we won't be changing the amount without first getting your permission, i.e., it works exactly the same way as other direct debit donations to the College. I hope that's all clear.

Dinner & AGM

As usual, the Rowing Society Annual General Meeting and Dinner will take place in College on the Saturday of Torpids (7th March). You should find a booking form and details attached to this newsletter.

The AGM will start at 6.30pm in the Bernard Sunley building. We are always on the look-out for new blood for the RS Committee (apart from the AGM, we meet in Oxford once a term), and we also propose to top-up our currently-depleted stock of Vice-Presidents. The AGM will be followed by a sherry reception. The dinner will be in Hall at 7.30pm.

Coming Up ...

In the next issue there will be the results, reports and photos from Torpids, any matters arising from the AGM, further news of University crews and triallists, and the new women's boat. Space permitting, I'll also look back to 75 years ago — 1940 — when rowing in Oxford continued in, understandably, a somewhat distracted fashion. 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

5–7 Mar 2015	Torpids
7 Mar 2015	RS AGM & Dinner
5 Apr 2015	Henley Boat Races
10 Apr 2015	Osiris-Blondie Race
11 Apr 2015	Tideway Boat Races
27–30 May 2015	Summer Eights