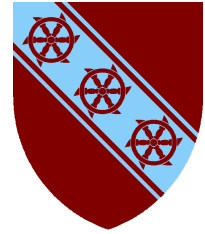




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College, Oxford OX1 3UJ



President: Prof. Ceri Peach
 Vice-Presidents: Don Barton, Neil Chugani, Richard Peters,
 Andrew Triggs Hodge OBE, Sir Matthew Pinsent CBE,
 Ben Sylvester

5th February, 2017

In this issue . . .

Congratulations to RS VP Andy Triggs Hodge who received an OBE in the New Year honours list. He and Zoe de Toledo will be guests of honour at a special 'Olympic' College dinner this coming Thursday.

The Boat Club's not had an easy time of it so far this term, but despite fog, ice and flood, they've managed to fit in a couple of IWL events, and still 3 full weeks of training until Torpids (1-4th March).

We have updates on the Boat Race crews: two Catz students are hoping for selection but Cambridge seem to be making most of the early running.

I have recently received a copy of a letter printed in a newspaper from our Captain of Boats in 1883, which makes it the earliest Boat Club document that we have. It's unfortunate that it's in the form of a complaint, but it's still a good excuse to introduce Catz first distinguished oarsman: W.S. Unwin

Finally, the Rowing Society AGM & dinner will be on the Saturday of Torpids, 4th March, and you will shortly receive an invitation and further details.

Results

Isis Winter League C, 22nd January

48 crews were timed

1st	4:19.5	Jesus	1st/22 M8
8th	4:39	St Catherine's M1	8th/22 M8
19th	5:11	Keble	1st/14 W8
48th	8:40.5	St Catherine's W1	14th/14 W8

Isis Winter League D, 5th February

46 crews were timed

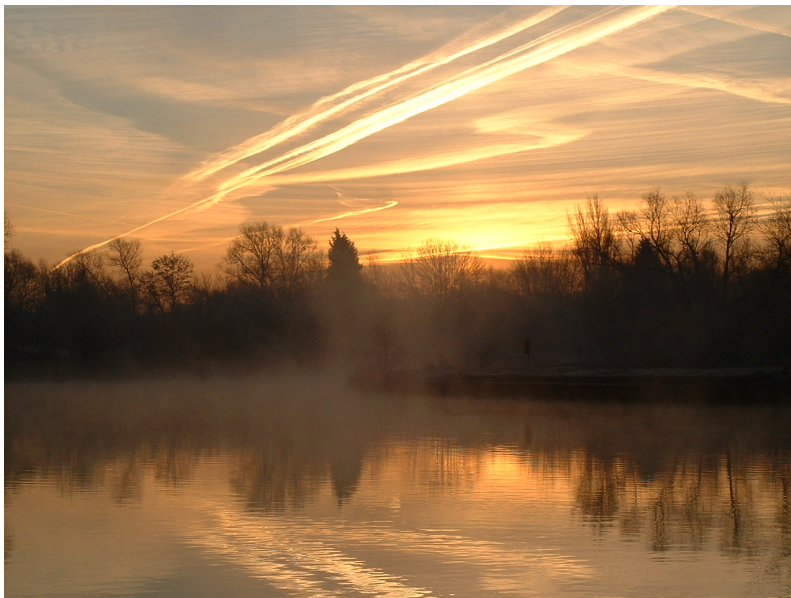
1st	3:37	Jesus	1st/27 M8
2nd	3:41	St Catherine's M1	2nd/27 M8
18th	4:27	St Catherine's M2	17th/27 M8

Boat Race Crews

We currently have 2 students, both freshers, trialling for University crews: graduate Matthias Mergenthaler with OUBC and undergraduate Oriane Grant has just joined the women's lightweight squad. However we are guaranteed some Catz representation in the Men's Boat Race: RS VP Matt Pinsent will be umpiring.

Crews have not yet been officially announced but the series of private fixtures has already begun with CUBC and Goldie taking on Oxford Brookes last weekend, and coming off slightly worst. We'll have to wait another 3 weeks to see what OUBC can do against the same opposition.

Last year OUWBC competed in, and won, Quintin Head fairly convincingly and this year it seems it was CUWBC's turn. Presumably there's some sort of backroom arrangement to make sure that both crews don't turn up to compete in the same event in the same year, since that would spoil all the fun for the bookies. Both crews have their first side-by-side fixtures scheduled for 19th Feb.



Dawn on the Isis, viewed from the Boathouse balcony.



Catz women racing in IWL-C

Hilary Term 2017

Just before Christmas our coach for the past year, Christy Job, handed in her notice in order to spend more time on her *other* job, which is introducing rowing at a local state school (no one can really argue with that). The men have, almost seamlessly, re-engaged a former coach Rory Copus (who's *other* job is assistant coach for Oxford Brookes), but it's left the women's Boat Club in a bit of a predicament, especially when they're still struggling to fill an VIII. At the moment a Brookes colleague of Rory is helping out during the week and Mal Spencer, who clearly didn't escape far enough, covering the weekends.

Catz' first action this term was in Isis Winter League C, and ... it didn't go well. Leading off the division, the Men's 1st Torpid collided with a barge which had decided to ignore the marshals' instructions, causing severe damage to Catz' boat and breaking several blades, and a subsequent row in the 2nd VIII shell was, understandably, a bit below par. The women *did* manage to get an VIII together, with the inclusion of some very raw novices, but also had their fair share of self-inflicted incident as they proceeded up the course.

IWL-D was run today over a shortened course due to fast stream conditions (at Amber flag). There was no Catz women's entry but the men, complete with a new set of blades and rented boat (while theirs is being repaired), are getting back on track with the not-quite-final line-ups for the 1st and 2nd Torpids finishing 2nd and 18th respectively out of 27 men's VIIIs.



Catz Men's 2nd Torpid racing earlier in today's IWL-D

Torpids 2017

Torpids will be from Wed 1st – Sat 4th March, with racing from noon until 5 pm each day.

We're likely to have 3 crews racing at 90 min intervals, at least on the first day, with M2 at 2 pm (starting 10th in Div IV), W1 at 3:30 pm (5th Div II) and M1 at 5 pm (8th Div I).

I'll be sending out my usual daily reports to everyone on the RS email list, but

if you should venture on to the towpath you'll probably find me lurking behind Race Desk at Long Bridges boathouse, and someone (else) may even be updating the SCCBC twitter account (@StCatzBC). Otherwise, I hope to see some of you at the RS dinner after the end of racing.

Torpids 2017

Starting positions of our 1st Torpids and last year's change

Men's Div I		Women's Div II	
1 Pembroke	=	1 S.E.H.	-7
2 Oriel	=	2 Lincoln	=
3 Magdalen	=	3 Trinity	+2
4 Wolfson	+1	4 Jesus	+4
5 Wadham	+1	5 St Catherine's	+1
6 Christ Church	-2	6 Somerville	+3
7 Hertford	=	7 Linacre	+5
8 St Catherine's	+1	8 Green Templeton	+7
9 Balliol	+2	9 Worcester	-9
10 New College	+2	10 St Anne's	+3
11 Pembroke II	+5	11 St Hugh's	+6
12 Trinity	-4	12 Brasenose	-1

Henley 1883

St Catherine's first competed in Eights in 1876. At that time the event was held over 6 days and limited to just one crew from each College, so only 22 crews participated. For the next few years Catz bounced along near the foot of the table until 1882 when they rose 5 places, and 1883 when they rose a further 7 places, finishing 9th in Div I (a position on the river not reached again until 2006). Now they planned to extend their racing season into the summer . . .

We have no written records of our own prior to 1900, but William O'Chee, who is currently writing a history of Brasenose BC, sent me a copy of a newspaper clipping (from The Field, he believes) containing a letter written in 1883 by our Captain of Boats.

Sir, would you be good enough to insert this in order to draw forth the opinions of some of your numerous boating readers upon the following question, viz., whether the unattached of Oxford or Cambridge Universities should be considered eligible for the Ladies' Plate and the Visitor's Cup in the Henley Regatta?

For the benefit of those who do not understand their position in the Universities, I may be allowed to explain, that though not legally chartered as colleges, they are subject to all the University regulations, and are practically on exactly the same footing as members of colleges. The O.U.B.C. fully recognising this, passed a special provision in their rules enabling unattached men at Oxford to row in the college races, from which, of course, owing to their comparatively modern existence as a separate body, they were technically excluded. This year we wished to enter an eight for the Ladies' Plate, and applied definitely to the Regatta Committee to know if we might enter for that event. The committee decided that we might, but said that in the event of an objection, they would certainly disqualify us. As we knew of one quarter whence an objection would certainly come — of course, not from any college — we were obliged to give up that idea, and made another application, about entering for the Visitors. We were told by the secretary that we might enter on the same conditions: and that if we could make certain that none of the other competitors for that event would object to our entry, we should probably be quite safe, as the committee of management (consisting of one-third of the body of stewards) had agreed not to object themselves, but would await an objection to be made by a competing crew.

Having ascertained from the other competing crews that they had no idea of objecting to us, we entered for that event. At the stewards' meeting, held immediately after the entries were received, an objection to

our entry was raised by one of the stewards, and we were forthwith disqualified. Our disqualification was most unexpected, at least in Oxford, and what still more surprised us was that at the stewards' meeting, at which our application was considered, they decided, with a show of being willing to allow us to enter under a generous interpretation of the qualification rule — if they could reconcile it to their consciences — that we were not even included in the spirit of the rule, and that the fact of our rowing in the College Races ought not to influence them in the least. This, Sir, to say the least, seemed strange, as I take it that the O.U.B.C. is quite as exclusive in its nature as the Henley Regatta Committee.

We have this been put to a great deal of inconvenience, most of which could, I think, have been avoided. May I ask these two questions? Ought not the committee to decide at once, on definite application, whether a crew may enter or not for any particular event? and do we not seem to be included in the spirit of the rule for the Ladies' Plate?

Surely, for the stewards to allow a crew to enter, and to decide not to object themselves but to await an objection from a competing crew, and then to disqualify them, is not only a confession of laxity — to use a mild term — on the part of the stewards themselves, but also places both the crew itself and the other competitors in a false position.

S. Weigall

(Captain of St. Catharine's B.C., the Unattached).

Having been prevented from entering the Ladies Plate, for College VIIIs, and the Visitors', for College IVs, they were at least allowed to enter for the Wyfold Cup for Club IVs. Henley was raced in three lanes in those days. In their opening heat Catz drew the Bucks (town) station, with London R.C. in the centre and Kingston R.C. on the Berks (towpath) station. Even for that time, the Catz crew was rather light, averaging 67 kg against 70 kg for Kingston and 72 kg for London. The following crew details and race report are from the same source.

1883 Wyfold Cup

St. Catharine's Crew	
	st. lb.
1. P.A. Underhill	11 0
2.*H.S. Salter	10 4
3. S. Weigall	11 1
S. W.S. Unwin	10 1

*Steersman

Kingston, rowing well together, soon went in front, while London fetched over towards St. Catharine's

and took their water under the Bucks bank off Remenham, being then just clear of them, while Kingston were fully a length and a half in front. Off the Fawley Court boathouse, St. Catharine's overtook and bumped London, who were unable to keep their lead, both stopping. Kingston then paddled ahead and won as they liked.

Kingston went on to win the event.

The Rev W S Unwin (1862–1943)

The stroke of the aforementioned St Catharine's Wyfold crew deserves more than a mere footnote. In fact, he even has his own Wikipedia entry — below. I can confirm the rowing achievements, but his affiliation for these is recorded as Magdalen, having transferred there in 1884. Incidentally, his Boat Race weight is listed as 10 st, 11 lb, so either the Henley weight was a misprint, or the food was a lot better at Magdalen.

William Sully Unwin (born 1862) was an English clergyman and amateur rower. He won the Diamond Challenge Sculls at Henley Royal Regatta and the Wingfield Sculls in 1884 and 1885, and rowed for Oxford in the Boat Race in the 1885 and 1886 races.

Unwin was born at Rotherham, Yorkshire, the son of William Unwin and his wife Elizabeth. His father was a tutor at Oxford living at Park Town in 1881. He was of the non-collegiate St Catherine's Society, Oxford and rowed for Magdalen College, Oxford.

In 1884 he won the OUBC Sculls, the Diamond Challenge Sculls at Henley and the Wingfield Sculls. He won the same three races in 1885, and was also bow in the winning Oxford boat in the Boat Race. In 1886 he was in the Boat Race again but lost the Wingfield Sculls to F I Pitman, whom he had beaten in the previous year.

Unwin became a clergyman and in 1895 was in Keswick where he attempted to establish a rowing club. Later he had a living in Norfolk. In 1933 he was active in establishing the Council for the Preservation of Rural England in Norfolk.

Unwin married Mary Frances Sully at Bridgewater in 1905.

Also, gleaned from the internet, I can add that from 1888–1893 he served as the curate of Caversham, that he attended the Wingfield Sculls Centenary Dinner in 1930, and that he is buried at St Margaret's, Burnham Norton, Norfolk.

Coincidentally, the Boat Club are talking of an Easter training camp in Keswick, where the locals are trying to re-establish a Boat Club.

Coming Up ...

In the next newsletter we'll have the results from Torpids, and updates on the Boat Race crews, and any matters arising from the AGM.

Anu Dudhia

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Catz Men's 1st Torpid racing earlier in today's IWL-D

Diary

1–4 Mar 2017	Torpids
4 Mar 2017	AGM & Dinner
25 Mar 2017	Tideway Eights Head
26 Mar 2017	Henley Boat Races
2 Apr 2017	Tideway Boat Races
24–27 May 2017	Summer Eights