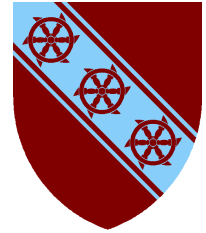




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College
Oxford OX1 3UJ



21st December, 2013

In this issue ...

The weather has been kind this term with no river closures or race cancellations (although it's just gone to Red Flag as I write this at the end of 9th week). This newsletter starts with a round up of results from our Senior and Novice squads and the Captains' reports. Last year I produced a table rating the 36 College Boat Clubs based on the positions of crews in Torpids and Eights, so now it's time for an update based on this year's finishing positions. Encouraged by the results from last issue's plunge into the events of a century ago, this time I've gone another 25 years deeper. Even though I could only managed to drag up the name of a single Catz oarsman from 1889, there was much else to discover in, literally, or at least littorally, a formative period for rowing on the Isis. Finally we have results from the Oxford and Cambridge squads from the Tideway Fours Head.

Results

Isis Winter League A, 3rd November
50 crews raced

1st	4:16.0	Trinity	M8
2nd	4:19.0	St Catz	M8
3rd	4:20.0	Hertford B	M8



Just the sort of people your tutor warned you about: Women's Lower Boats Captains Miriam and Katie.



Catz men's senior squad racing in IWL-A

Autumn Fours, 17th November

<i>Women's IVs (10 entries)</i>			
Rnd 1	Corpus bt	St Catz A	6"
	Wolfson bt	St Catz B	4 L
Rep	St Catz A	bt Somerville B	3 L
Rnd 2	Brasenose bt	St Catz B	1 1/2 L
Q/F	St Catz A	bt Trinity	Row Over
S/F	Somerville A bt	St Catz A	13/4 L

Nephthys Regatta, 22/23 November

<i>Men's Novice VIIIs (38 entries)</i>		
Rnd 1	Lincoln bt	St Catz Easily

Christ Church Regatta, 27-30 November

<i>Men's Novice VIIIs (69 entries)</i>			
Rnd 1	Hertford A bt	St Catz A	1 L
	St Catz B	bt New College B	2 1/2 L
Rep	St Catz A	bt Christ Church C	Easily
Rnd 2	St Peter's A bt	St Catz B	Easily
Rnd 3	St Hilda's A bt	St Catz A	Easily
<i>Women's Novice VIIIs (53 entries)</i>			
Rnd 1	Wadham A* bt	St Catz B	Easily
	Brasenose B bt	St Catz A	1 L
Rnd 2	St Catz A	bt Keble B	Easily
Rnd 3	Merton A bt	St Catz A	1 L
	St Hugh's A bt	St Catz B	Easily

*'Friendly Crew', illegal composition so allowed to race but not to progress

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



Catz Men's Novice B boating for Christ Church Regatta.

Men's Boat Club Report

Robin Muir, Men's Captain

The beginning of term saw the arrival of a group of aspiring novices with formidable ambition and drive. This, combined with the excellent organization and coaching work of the Lower Boats Captains Matthias Steiner and Ben Baron, resulted in a very productive Christ Church campaign. During their rowing apprenticeship, some of the Novices were occasionally mixed into the Senior Men's water sessions, forming good bonds within the squad. In the end, the Catz A crew were knocked out by a very strong St Hilda's crew in the third round, putting in an encouraging race. The B crew fought equally hard, and ended up losing in the second round to St Peter's A crew.



Robin Muir, Men's Captain

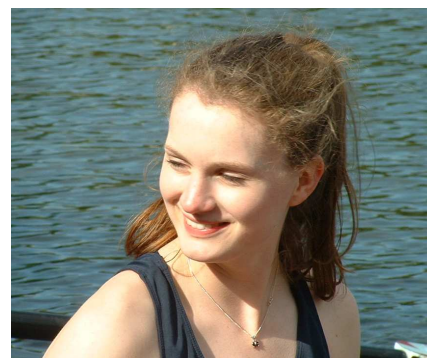
Always the quietest term on the competition front for the Senior Men, a draft Catz Senior A crew raced in the opening Isis Winter League race of the year. The standard was considerably higher than the previous year, but nonetheless, a conservatively rate-capped Catz crew came out second to a strong Trinity crew. The race gave us things to think about for the season ahead and how to improve; it was a definite indicator of speed still to come, and makes me as well as the rest of the squad very excited for the term to come.

Women's Boat Club Report

Poppy Lambert, Women's Captain

Never afraid of putting the work in, the senior women and Malcolm Spencer returned this Michaelmas with five weeks of training already under our belts. We were lucky enough to be joined by two new seniors from Durham and Massachusetts, and Dolf Diemont, an accomplished coxswain from the Netherlands. Our main focus on the water this term was Autumn IVs; our B crew reached the second round and our crew A progressed to the semi-finals, where they unfortunately lost out to Somerville, the subsequent winner of the event. We of course also raced in the University's Cross-Country Cuppers, once again contributing to a great victory by Catz women.

Within the novice programme, our Lower Boats Captains Katie Power and Miriam Mahmoud put in a heroic effort with the large novice cohort, producing two



Poppy Lambert, Women's Captain

crews for Christ Church with both of them reaching the third day of the regatta. The novices impressed us all with their commitment and enthusiasm at this early stage, and with all those who have decided to join the senior programme we now have a squad more than doubled in size. We're looking forward to the gains that our vacation training will bring, for old and new seniors alike, and excited to see the impact that the crews we form will make this coming term, both on and off the Isis!



Catz Women's Novice B boating for Christ Church.

Top Rowing Colleges

Last year I proposed a system for assigning points to each position in Torpids and Eights to create an overall score for each College Boat Club. Based on the 2012 finishing positions this placed St Catherine's 13th. I have now updated the calculations to use the 2013 results.

College Boat Clubs: Total Points				
		2012	2013	
1	Pembroke	359	Pembroke	354
2	Christ Church	332	Christ Church	309
3	Wadham	297	Magdalen	301
4	Magdalen	283	Wadham	296
5	Balliol	255	Oriel	278
6	Oriel	254	St John's	258
7	St John's	249	Balliol	250
8	Hertford	241	S.E.H.	239
9	Wolfson	235	Wolfson	237
10	S.E.H.	223	University	228
11	University	221	St Catherine's	224
12	New College	207	Worcester	203
13	St Catherine's	202	Hertford	192
14	Worcester	181	New College	188
15	Trinity	158	Trinity	186
16	Lincoln	149	Lincoln	157
17	Keble	146	Keble	139
18	L.M.H.	140	St Anne's	130
19	St Anne's	135	Jesus	129
20	Exeter	133	Merton	119
21	Merton	132	Somerville	118
22	Jesus	125	L.M.H.	116
23	Queen's	109	Exeter	111
24	Brasenose	94	Brasenose	109
25	Somerville	93	Queen's	93
26	Mansfield	80	Mansfield	76
27	St Peter's	80	St Hugh's	75
28	St Hugh's	79	Corpus Christi	73
29	Osler House	70	St Peter's	70
30	Linacre	65	Linacre	66
31	Corpus Christi	57	Osler House	56
32	St Hilda's	48	St Antony's	51
33	St Antony's	44	Green Templeton	38
34	Green Templeton	26	St Hilda's	38
35	Regent's Park	13	Regent's Park	15
36	St Benet's Hall	2	St Benet's Hall	5

We gained 22 points, mostly (13) coming from the Women's Torpids, moving us up to 11th at the expense of Hertford and New College. At the top, Pembroke increase their margin despite dropping a few points while Magdalen move up to 3rd, challenging Christ Church.

125 Years Ago

During the 1880s a significant remodelling of the Isis took place leaving it in much the state we find it today: the Gut slightly straightened out (really), the towpath raised, the New Cut (the branch of the Cherwell separating the boathouses from the Green Bank) opened (1884), the Long Bridges rebuilt (1885) and the lock at Folly Bridge removed (1886). But there were only two boathouses: Clasper's at Long Bridges and, since 1882, the OUBC boathouse (destroyed by fire in 1999 and rebuilt as the current Univ boathouse). The 'town' bank from the Head down to the current Boathouse Island was occupied by the moored College barges. Downstream there was no bridge across the river but those crews starting from the lower bunglines would have done so under the beery gaze of drinkers at the Isis Tavern. Sliding seats, with wheels rather than just greased runners, had been introduced in 1885 so, at a mechanical level, the boats had evolved into their current form. And in 1889 the final innovation: the first recorded appearance of a bicycle on the towpath, ridden by A. Inman of Magdalen.

Torpids and Eights were raced over 6 days, from the Thursday through to the following Wednesday, with Sunday off (so Eights Week really was a week). Bumps rules were the same as for the current Eights, i.e. both crews dropping out when a bump occurred, but Eights was restricted to just the top boat from each of the 22 participating Boat Clubs so Torpids, with 27 crews including 2nd boats, was actually the larger event.



A contemporary postcard showing the Isis in 1889, looking downstream from the Head.

St Catharine's, whose students had just moved into their new premises on the High St adjacent to Examination Schools, had been competing in the bumps since 1876. The Boat Club had already distinguished itself by reaching 9th on the river in Eights in 1883 (a position not regained until 2005) but by 1889 they

had slipped back to 16th in Eights and 22nd in Torpids.

The previous year, during the Cambridge Lent races, there had been a fatal accident with a Clare oarsman being impaled by the bows of Trinity Hall III. As a consequence all boats were now required to have rubber bow-balls fitted.

The 1889 Torpids was run under flood conditions and Oxford suffered its own rowing tragedy on the Saturday when an overloaded punt overturned and a student of St John's College drowned. With a speed that seems remarkable by today's standards, the University Coroner completed his inquest on the Monday and racing resumed on the Tuesday. Following the Coroner's recommendations, O.U.B.C. subsequently passed rules requiring two lifebuoys to be kept at each barge, and for each club to have its own waterman and punt. A temporary bridge was also erected across Trill Mill Stream (at the back of the current Head of the River pub) to encourage more people to walk around rather than use punts.

In the racing itself, St Catharine's fell 3 places, bumped by the second boats of Brasenose, Balliol and Keble and finished 3rd from bottom (although still ahead of Worcester's 1st Torpid). In Eights, after initial success (bumping Worcester), they fell to Exeter, Oriel and Wadham to finish 18th (ahead of Worcester, S.E.H, Univ and Jesus).

In the absence of any Boat Club records, the only Cath's oarsman we can identify from that year is W. E. Robinson, who is listed in Sherwood's *Oxford Rowing* (published 1900) as rowing in both 1888 and 1889 OUBC Trial Eights races, although he failed to be selected for either Boat Race. He was also the losing finalist in the 1890 University Sculls (the event won by H. M. Kusik in 1913 — see last newsletter).

News from Alumni

Helen Barnes (M.96)

We're still living in Bangladesh for the next year or so. Baby no. 2 (boy named Vusi) was born in June and is keeping us entertained.

Ilsa Haeusler (M.08)

Despite still living in Oxford, and indeed, still being a student at Catz, I haven't been rowing for a couple of years. I am currently in my final year of my medical degree, and due to sit my finals in January. So more of the same over the next few months; lots of study!

University Crews

David Zimmer with the lightweights is our only trialist this year. However, neither they nor their Cam-

bridge counterparts participated in this year's Tideway Fours Head, traditionally the first opportunity to weigh up the relative strengths of the Boat Races squads. Based on these results, at least for the Blue Boats, one would say that Oxford currently have a slight advantage.

Tideway Fours Head, 30th Nov 2013

Results for Oxford and Cambridge crews

Men's Fours

Isis III	4+	19:14.4
CUBC II	4-	19:41.6
CUBC I	4+	19:44.9
CUBC III	4+	19:48.3
Isis I	4-	19:50.2
Isis II	4-	20:07.4
Isis IV	4+	20:00.3
Isis V	4+	20:18.0
CUBC IV	4+	20:26.0
CUBC V	4+	20:36.0

Women's Fours

OUWBC I	4+	21:52.2
CUWBC III	4+	22:00.5
OUWBC II	4+	22:01.8
OUWLRC II	4x	22:07.1
CUWBC II	4+	22:22.0
OUWLRC I	4x	22:32.8
CUWBC V	4+	22:40.0
CUWBC VI	4+	22:41.0
CUWBC I	4-	22:46.9
OUWBC III	4+	22:47.9
CUWBC VII	4+	23:02.6
CUWBC IV	4+	23:10.0

Coming Up ...

In the next issue we will have prospects for Torpids, updates on the University crews and — particularly for our younger readers — a recap of the events of 5 years ago. I have also found a little more on our lately rediscovered Olympian, Mart Kuusik, but I'm currently looking for someone who can do a better job of translating Estonian web-pages than Mr Google.

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

5-8 Mar 2014	Torpids
8 Mar 2014	RS AGM & Dinner
30 Mar 2014	Henley Boat Races
6 Apr 2014	Tideway Boat Races
28-31 May 2014	Eights