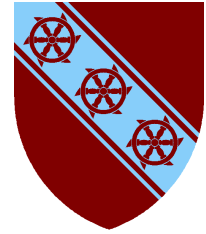




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College, Oxford OX1 3UJ



President: Colin Smith
 Vice-Presidents: Neil Chugani, Richard Peters,
 Sir Matthew Pinsent CBE, Ben Sylvester,
 Zoe de Toledo, Andrew Triggs Hodge OBE.

21st December, 2019

In this issue . . .

The term has been a complete wash-out for college rowing: Autumn Fours, 3 rounds of IWL, Nephthys and Christ Church Regattas — all cancelled. I'm not sure if a Catz novice rower ever made it onto the water, but if they did they'll certainly have forgotten everything by the time they next step into a boat (hopefully not too far into 2020). Presumably most, if not all, colleges are in the same, um, boat and with next Torpids a week earlier than usual (6th week rather than 7th) rowing in the lower divisions could be particularly cruel and unusual.

In the end Christ Church Regatta was rebranded Christ Church *Ergatta* and our novices had to make do with indoor racing. Not the same, though, is it?

However, an unusually large number of Catz students (5, plus one alumna) had the foresight to enrol themselves into the University trials system, with relatively unrestricted access to the water down at Wallingford. Four of these featured in the Fours Head — the first chance to compare squads against their Cambridge counterparts — with a couple of class wins. A slightly different four raced in the internal Trial VIIIs competitions, and all ended up in the winning crews. 2014 was the last time we had more than one Boat Race competitor, but if they manage to avoid injuries (and doughnuts), we could have several next year.

Finally we have the review of 2019, and a successful year it was across the whole Boat Club with wins for both men's and women's crews in regattas, in head races, and blades in bumping races.

Results

Fours Head, 23rd November

Oxford crews with Catz participants

Academic 4+ Band 1 (12 entries)

18:41.7 1st Isis A B: Augustin Wambersie

Academic 4+ Band 2 (13 entries)

20:41.7 10th OULRC C B: Niels Wicke

Women's Academic 4+ Band 2 (11 entries)

21:34.0 1st OUWLRC A S: Clare Leckie &
 3: Emily Hoogkamer (M.14)

Oxford Trial VIIIs, 11th/13th December

Races with Catz participants

OUBC Trial VIIIs

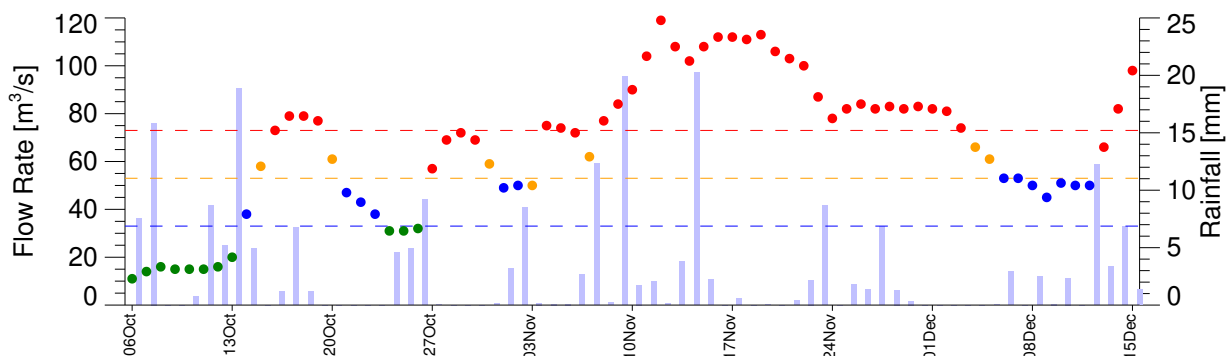
Hurley* bt Burley Easily *S: A Wambersie

OUBC Trial VIIIs

Morely* bt Brown 3 L *B: Hannah Morrissey

OUWLRC Trial VIIIs

Puppets* bt Parrots 2 1/2 L *S: Clare Leckie
 *7: Emily Hoogkamer



River flow (circles, left-axis) and rainfall (bars, right-axis) from 0th week through to the end of 9th week. Colours show Flags in force: Green — no restrictions, Blue — experienced coxes, Amber — senior crews and Red — no rowing.

Men's Boat Club Report

Joe Grey, Men's Co-Captain

The senior squad came back this year much reduced, with a significant number having graduated this summer. A number of SCCBC members entered the trials system for OUBC and OULRC this year. Niels Wicke, last year's co-captain, continues the process with OULRC, while Augustin Wambersie remains with OUBC as President for this year — we wish them both the best of luck over the coming months. As always, the beginning of term was marked with a healthy intake of enthusiastic novice rowers, along with several experienced rowers to bolster the senior squad. We've also been lucky to recruit a couple of much-needed experienced coxes, although they haven't seen much of the river this term!

Rowing this Michaelmas has been largely overshadowed by unfavourable river conditions — unusually high flow kept the river closed for the vast majority of term. As a consequence,

training has been almost entirely land-based — on the ergs, in the tank and in the form of strength and conditioning sessions, run by Alex Bowmer. While it has been frustrating to have only a handful of water sessions over the past 8 weeks, the squad has committed to the training regime, and have made significant progress in terms of fitness as a result. River conditions have unfortunately also resulted in the cancellation of all racing, including the Isis Winter League, and Christ Church Regatta. The novice squad put in a solid performance at the Regatta's replacement event — the inaugural 'Christ Church Ergatta' — a 2 km relay on dynamic ergometers. Hopefully they'll get a taste of actual rowing next term — but the Men's Novice VIII title remains in our hands for another year!

While term has ended, training will continue over the Christmas vacation to build on the work we've done this term. With Torpids being held a week earlier than normal this Hilary, it is important the squad comes back fit and ready to go at the start of term.



Joe Grey, Men's Co-Captain

We'd like to take this opportunity say a quick thank you to James Wills, for his rigorous and effective coaching this term; Alex Bowmer, for his strength and conditioning coaching and injury treatment; and finally RS for their continued support.

Women's Boat Club Report

Abby Hespe, Women's Co-Captain

This term has been unfortunately deluged with rain and outings on the river have been few and far between. That said, the senior women did manage to have a few outings in the new four and we are looking forward to doing some races in it next term.

Despite the lack of water time we are pleased to have retained a good number of novice women who are enthusiastic to (hopefully) get on the water next term. Their water training may be lacking but they have been dedicated to all the land training that we have offered this term and it has been nice to integrate the novice and senior teams earlier on by training together. Each week we have had strength and conditioning sessions and circuit training sessions for the whole squad and our lower boats captains Chloe and Hannah have been working hard to improve the novices split times on the ergs in preparation for the Christ Church Ergatta. This was a great way to ensure that the novices could start to feel more like a team and get everyone into the competitive spirit of rowing at the end of term. Although the women did not win their race it was still a lot of fun and a good end to a term of hard work.

To keep the team spirit up and integrate not only the novices and seniors but also the men's and women's teams, our social secretaries Meirian and Jamie have been very active in

organising dinners and crew dates throughout the term which have been enjoyed by all.

We are all looking forward to getting on the water next term and getting everyone up to scratch in order to launch a successful Torpids campaign.



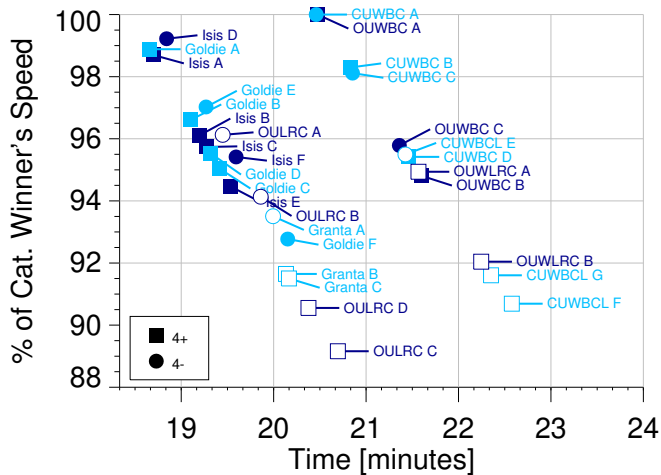
Abby Hespe, Women's Co-Captain



OUWLRC A in the Fours Head, featuring a pair of Catz ex-Captains as stern pair. Photo: JET Photographic

University Crews

Neither Oxford nor Cambridge seem to have an influx of international superstars this year (possibly due to 2020 being an Olympic Year), so there were no obvious favourites going into the Tideway Fours Head last month. Results are shown below, although I've excluded the 5 s time penalties incurred by several crews for arriving late at the start.



Oxford and Cambridge results from the Fours Head. The y -axis shows the crews' times as a percentage of the fastest boat in each category. Open symbols for lightweight crews

Normally plotting the crews' times as a percentage of the fastest boat in each category helps to compare performances between coxed and coxless boats but this year the fastest coxless boats underperformed, so all coxless results are probably 1–2% too high.

The top OUBC and CUBC coxed fours were closely matched. Goldie A were 2 seconds faster than Isis A, but incurred a 5 s time penalty so Isis were given the win. The Isis D coxless four may have been the next best performance but there was little to separate the remaining squad boats.

The top Oxford lightweight boat, a coxless four, was well up with the heavyweight crews and their second boat, also coxless, not too far behind, and well ahead of the Granta (Cambridge lightweight) boats.

The fastest Cambridge women's boat finished 1 second ahead of the fastest Oxford boat. However, Oxford were carrying a cox while Cambridge weren't. Behind them, though, were a couple more Cambridge boats with the second Oxford boat some way further back.

As for the women's lightweights, the fastest Cambridge crew was 9 seconds ahead of the fastest Oxford boat, but again Cambridge were coxless while Oxford were coxed (and also just ahead of the second OUWBC coxed four). The remaining lightweight crews were clustered almost a minute further back.

So based on that, I'd say: Oxford Lightweight men and, to a lesser extent, Cambridge Heavyweight women currently have the upper hand, with the other squads evenly matched.

We have an unusually large number of University triallists this year. Augustin Wambersie, OUBC President, was in the Isis A crew in the Fours Head and also stroked the winning *Hurley* crew in their Trials VIII's race.

Niels Wicke raced in the OULRC C crew in the Fours Head but didn't feature in the Lightweight Trial VIII's. I think he may be broken.

Hannah Morrissey is trialling for OUWBC. She didn't get a seat in the Fours Head but *was* in the bow-seat of *Morely* crew that won their Trials race, which suggests an Osiris place is within reach.

Clare Leckie, last year's women's co-captain, and Emily Hoogkamer, women's captain from 2015/16 (now at Linacre), were the stern pair unit that powered both the fastest OUWLRC crew in the Fours Head and the winning *Puppets* crew in their Trials race. They seem to be enjoying their new freedom to focus solely on the rowing while others deal with the admin. Kan Li is also trialling for the women's lightweights.

The women's lightweight race is now relocating to London, so all six 2020 Boat Races will be contested over the Tideway course.

2019 Review

It has been a successful year for the Boat Club with wins in the Men's Novice VIIIs in Christ Church Regatta, Women's Senior VIIIs in Nephthys Regatta and Women's Band 1 4+ in Oxford Sprint Regatta. There were wins in Men's Band 3 VIIIs and Women's Band 3 IVs at Henley Fours & Eights Head, and blades for the Women's 1st Torpid and Men's 3rd Eight. In particular the women's boat club has overcome its recent abysmal record in side-by-side racing, winning 6 out of 8 this year.

In Torpids, apart from the women's blades, the men's 1st Torpid moved up to 4th on the river, equalling their highest ever position, and M2 are also at their highest since 1993.

Cambridge once again took all four heavyweight Boat Races while Oxford fought back with wins in the lightweight races. Our only representative, Augustin Wambersie, distinguished himself as stroke of an unfancied OUBC crew which pushed Cambridge to exhaustion. Meanwhile, Catz Boat Club took off to the Italian lakes for their Easter training camp.

In Eights the 'gentlemen's' 3rd boat once again won blades to consolidate their position in the fixed divisions while the women's 2nd Eight rose 5 places and were only denied blades on the last day by the crew two ahead hitting the bank off the start. All five Catz crews went up, resulting in a net gain of 13 places — our best result since 1998 — which put us second in terms of overall gain.

Catz Crews: Current Positions

(& highest–lowest positions, 2010–2019)

	Men		Women	
	2019	Range	2019	Range
1st Torpid	4th	(4–9)	21st	(1–27)
2nd Torpid	40th	(40–56)	54th	(47–61)
3rd Torpid	—	(62–68)		
1st Eight	10th	(6–15)	18th	(13–24)
2nd Eight	44th	(40–49)	55th	(44–74)
3rd Eight	60th	(60–89)	—	(75–79)
4th Eight	—	(88–91)		

The table on the right shows the standing of College Boat Clubs based on positions of all their crews in Torpids and Eights. Catz move up from 14th to 12th, overtaking Magdalen and Jesus, but still 2 pts short of the 11th place we held in 2014 (which equates approximately to a change of one place in Div 2). Pembroke retain the top spot, despite not holding any of the four headships, while Wolfson jump from 4th to 2nd. S.E.H. and G.T.C. also made big gains, while Magdalen and Worcester took the biggest losses.

College Boat Clubs: Total Points

		2018	2019	
1	Pembroke	375	Pembroke	348
2	Wadham	333	Wolfson	339
3	Oriel	325	Wadham	328
4	Wolfson	320	Oriel	324
5	Christ Church	314	Christ Church	297
6	Keble	271	Keble	278
7	University	233	S.E.H.	234
8	Balliol	214	University	231
9	New College	210	Balliol	223
10	Magdalen	209	Hertford	203
11	Jesus	208	New College	201
12	Hertford	205	St Catherine's	199
13	S.E.H.	203	Trinity	191
14	St Catherine's	180	Jesus	188
15	St John's	175	Magdalen	184
16	Trinity	170	St John's	146
17	Lincoln	144	Lincoln	137
18	L.M.H.	127	L.M.H.	135
19	Mansfield	113	Merton	116
20	Worcester	111	Mansfield	110
21	Somerville	107	G.T.C.	109
22	Exeter	102	Brasenose	107
23	Merton	101	St Anne's	104
24	St Anne's	99	Somerville	104
25	St Hugh's	94	Exeter	103
26	Brasenose	92	Queen's	100
27	Linacre	88	St Hugh's	98
28	Queen's	84	Corpus Christi	94
29	Corpus Christi	83	Linacre	92
30	G.T.C.	82	Worcester	89
31	St Antony's	64	St Peter's	62
32	St Peter's	55	St Antony's	52
33	St Hilda's	48	St Hilda's	47
34	Osler House	22	Regent's Park	26
35	Regent's Park	22	Osler House	16
36	St Benet's Hall	9	St Benet's Hall	14

Coming Up ...

The next newsletter will include the prospects for Torpids and updates on our triallists and the University crews.

Diary

26–29 Feb 2020	Torpids
29 Feb 2020	RS AGM & Dinner
15 Mar 2020	Lightweight Boat Races
29 Mar 2020	Heavyweight Boat Races

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