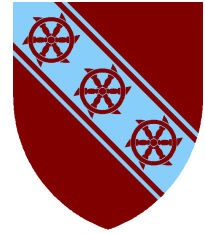




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College, Oxford OX1 3UJ



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

12th December, 2020

In this issue . . .

Inevitably, with the second lock-down, the term fizzled out with a whimper. Students were encouraged to take two Covid tests and, if clear, get themselves off home sharpish at the end of 8th week in order to be safely reunited with their families for Christmas. With the University's internal testing showing up just a handful of cases per day by the end of term, compared to 30 or so in the first few weeks of term, I assume the vast majority would have passed.

Although all rowing ceased half-way through term, the training didn't. Nor did the competing; Oxford college boat clubs found another direction in which to channel their energies, as you'll read in the captains' reports. I suppose one positive result — if I may use that phrase — is that Catz hold on to the title of reigning Men's Novice VIII Champions of Christ Church Regatta for yet another year.

Last summer I was contacted by a producer from a TV company based in Salt Lake City, Utah (there's a clue), undertaking some background research on a Catz oarsman from 90 years ago: P.C. Kimball. The Church of Latter Day Saints have used the story of his Oxford coaching experience as lesson for aspiring members of the priesthood. Well, I couldn't just leave it at that.

As you'll recall — particularly if you're wondering when your name will come up — I've put together a list of members who've made more than 30 starts in Torpids and Eights. The next group to feature are the five rowers occupying places 37–41.

Finally, some word has filtered through on the 2021 Boat Races. All I'll say for now is: strange times, strange places.

Results

Lockdown Regatta, November
21 teams entered

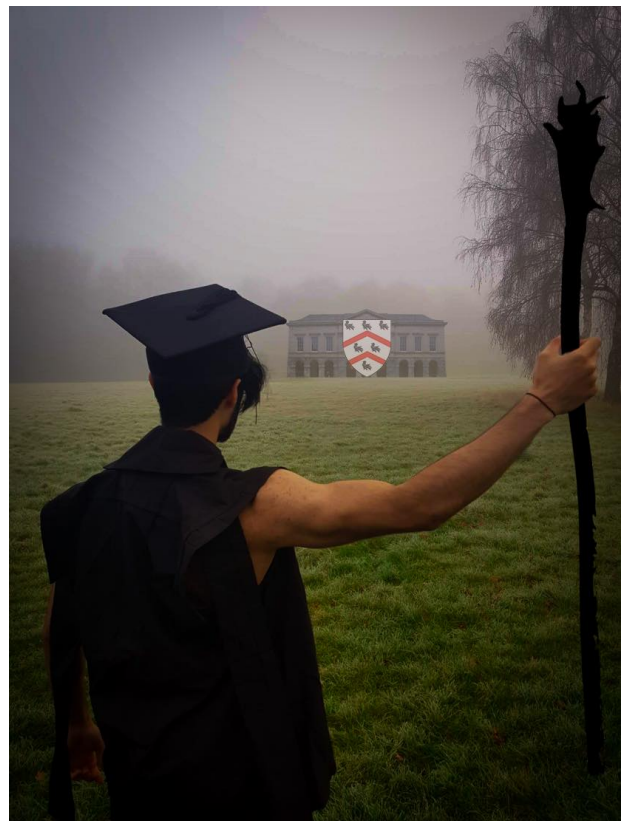
1st	1238 pts	Catz Us if you Can
2nd	1229 pts	Not the Worst team
3rd	846 pts	Purple Pain (New Coll)

Men's Report

Thomas Long, Men's Co-Captain

After a summer at home the squad returned to Oxford, optimistic for a full term of rowing. From the get-go, we were forced to weather a three week club ban imposed by College. This didn't hinder the squad, as our coach Niels Wicke (captain 18/19) got started right away, running virtual strength and conditioning sessions. During this time, we had a very good turn out and summer cobwebs were blown away by some challenging sessions.

When the time came in third week to get on the water, we jumped at the opportunity. Many thanks to our president Ilayda who was always one step ahead of the game and had the (numerous) risk assessments polished off. This meant we had swift approval to resume in person training—the first of any Catz club!



Hamza of Catz, poised before the assault on Worcester and ultimate victory in the 'Lockdown Regatta'. (I can't vouch for the complete authenticity of this image)



Liz and Ilayda, 5 km run in sub-fusc. (I'm pretty sure this one's genuine)

We started immediately, fitting in sessions wherever possible. The squad came together in a short period of time, with three novices in the boat. Many thanks to Anu Dudhia for coxing us to a respectable finish at IWL A. This was the only race of the term but thoroughly enjoyed by all [*even me — AD*].

Just as we got underway, luck was not on our side and we were forced back into lockdown. The virtual strength and conditioning sessions resumed, focussing largely on improving strength. Thanks to Alex Bowmer who generously gave up his time to lead weekly sessions, despite continuing his work on the pandemic.

The lower boats captains have done a sterling job developing significant interest whilst grappling with the present restrictions. There were numerous sign-ups from virtual talks and in-person freshers' fairs, from JCR and MCR freshers alike. We are planning to build on the three novice taster sessions next term, with hopefully more water time. Also, we are lucky to have numerous experienced rowers and coxes joining us this term. Meanwhile Jamie Woodford, Shane McCarthy and Johnny Davidson took their next steps in trialling for the Blue Boat; by all accounts standing their ground and doing Catz proud.

Thank you to RS for the continued support, especially in these uncertain times. We are all looking forward to getting back out on the water next year, hopefully with more exciting news to report on!

Women's Report

Niamh Louwmann, Women's Co-Captain

The boat club has had a tough start to the term in dealing with College restrictions on club activities and a national lockdown. Despite this, we were excited to get back to training after a long summer. Virtual circuits were back in full force for the first three weeks of term, led by our coach Rowan Nicholls, before College allowed us to resume rowing in the third week of term. Thanks to our president, Ilayda Karadag, all of our risk assessments were completed well ahead of time meaning rowing was the first club in College allowed to run in-person activities. With a mixture of new and returning seniors, we made some great progress over 6 water sessions before the second lockdown. Unfortunately the second lockdown also resulted in the cancellation of racing such as the short lived Novice Regatta, which was set to replace Christ Church Regatta. A replacement event — Lockdown Regatta — consisted of 9 running challenges over the course of three weeks. The challenges included running in subfusc, a 'pub crawl' and spelling out a word/phrase using the initials of colleges after running past them. Our mixed crew, *Catz us if you can*, consisted of 6 women (Kaylin Chong, Ilayda Karadag, Elizabeth Rees, Lily Kershaw, Emma Bulte and myself) and 4 men (Hamza Ahmad, Thomas Lim, Vincent Allot and Tom Long). We started at the bottom but climbed through the ranks to finish first overall, thanks to the creativity and photoshop skills of some of the crew. Special mention to Ilayda and Elizabeth for running 16 km on their pub crawl challenge and hitting a grand total of 86 pubs!

Despite the challenges faced this term, our squad has remained determined and undeterred. We have continued with virtual circuits 3 times a week, with some additional sessions in the form of yoga provided by Elizabeth, and Strength and Conditioning with Alex Bowmer. We'd like to say a huge thank you to Ilayda for her tireless work, liaising with college to make rowing safe this term. We'd also like to say thanks to Elizabeth and Alex for volunteering their time to run training sessions, and finally to Rowan for his dedication to keep us training, no matter what.

While Michaelmas may have been lacking in rowing, we are looking forward to Hilary and are optimistic about getting back on the water in preparation for Torpids. In addition, we hope to be able to run more taster sessions and social events for new novices, with Lower Boats Captain Abby Hespe and Social Secretary Lily Kershaw. Training over the Christmas vacation will continue so we can hit the ground running next term.

P C Kimball (1903–1994)

Paul Clark Kimball came to Oxford in 1927 to read Economics having previously attended the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. He was a member of the Church of Latter Day Saints and a direct descendant of the Mormon Prophet Heber C. Kimball.

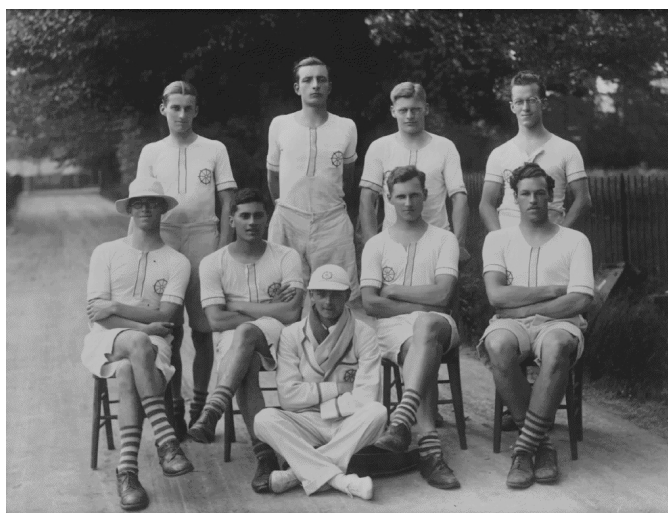
He was the first Rhodes Scholar to join the the St Catherine's Society, as it was then. From our own records we know he rowed from 1928–1930, becoming Captain in his last year (and so also our first American Captain), but very little else.

My attention was drawn to an address *The Word of Wisdom in Practical Terms* delivered in the Salt Lake City Tabernacle in 1931, which included Kimball recounting some of his Oxford experiences (the full text can be found via Google). From that we know he first tried his hand at rugby, but an unfortunate incident — arising from his American Football instincts to hang on to the ball in a tackle — led him to consider rowing instead.

Bumps events were held over 6 days: starting on a Thursday and finishing the following Wednesday with Sunday off. Rowing in the 1st Eight disqualified an oarsman from competing in Torpids the following year, so Torpids was considered an event largely for freshers, although not necessarily novices. Success came quickly for Kimball; the 1928 Torpid gained 4 places and the Eight won blades, finishing 20th on the river (their last bump being on Oriel). His size was no doubt a contributing factor, at 13st 7lb (86 kg) he was more than a stone heavier than the next man in the boat (also an American) and, indeed, heavier than anyone in the Brasenose Head crew.

In the address, however, Kimball mostly deals with what happened the following year when, clearly a man of some stature, he was approached to coach the Torpid. Given his one-year's experience of rowing, and none at all of coaching, he was reluctant but eventually agreed, subject to certain conditions:

This group of young men said: 'Well, that is all right with us. What are your rules?'. I said 'First of all, you must stop smoking.' They murmured at that. They did not think that was at all right. They were just out of school, and now had their first opportunity to smoke. They were free, and thought it would be 'big,' that they could be men if they could smoke. I said, 'Secondarily, you must refrain from the use of alcoholics of all kinds.' Having come right from from school, thinking that they were men, they thought it was their right to have at least their pint of beer for lunch. I said: 'You must cut it out. You must also



The 1930 1st Eight. Paul Kimball is seated on the right.

stop using tea;' and to ask an Englishman to stop using tea is, of course, like asking an American to stop using candy and ice cream and everything else that we think is nice. I said 'You must also stop using coffee;' but that did not hurt them so much, because they say the English coffee is more like mud than anything else. . .

Somewhat reluctantly, they nevertheless agreed to abide by his rules. The 1929 Torpids had to be postponed a week due to ice, and was reduced to four days, but the St Catherine's crew gained two bumps. Kimball spares his audience a detailed account of bumps racing, and there's a bit of licence, but he continues:

... These boys won their race hands down. People came up to me and said: 'Mr Kimball, how did you manage to get such success with that crew? They were just novices, and yet they made better crews look weak.' I said: 'I will tell you what. I made these boys train. I made them cut out tobacco. When the sprint came their lungs were clean; their systems were clean; their blood was clean, and their nerves were strong.'

According to one obituary, at the completion of his Oxford doctorate, Kimball was examined by John Maynard Keynes no less (this was at the start of the Great Depression, which would elevate Keynes' name to an adjective). He then returned to a faculty position at the School of Business at the University of Utah and worked for the state tax commission. He married in 1933, moved to New York and eventually settled in Chicago where they raised three children. There he set up his own investment banking business, Paul C. Kimball & Co., and acted as a consultant to the U.S. State Department, all the while maintaining his involvement with the Church. He died at the King Home in Evanston, Illinois on 27 Oct 1994.

Bumps Starts

Posn	Starts	Name	Active
=37th	32	Martin Cusack	2014–19
=37th	32	Jane Golley	1995–2002
=37th	32	Alex Sanders	2010–13
=37th	32	James Sergeant	1985–88
=37th	32	Kent White	1924–28

Continuing the count-down from the last issue, we now present 5 rowers, each with 32 starts to their name, sharing 37th place on the all-time list.

Martin Cusack has been making regular appearances in the ‘gentlemen’s’ VIII in recent years and may yet return to add to his total.

Jane Golley, the 4th-placed woman, had a lengthy residency in the stroke seat of the women’s 1st VIII and is now a Professor of Economics and Director of the Australian Centre on China in the World at the Australian National University. Interesting times.

Alex Sanders, a schoolboy oarsman, rowed in the men’s 1st Torpid and 1st VIII in Div I all four years of his undergraduate degree, and was indeed fortunate in having a full Torpids run every year from 2010–13, hence notching up 32 starts.

James Sergeant arrived in 1984 having mostly coxed at Radley. But here he rowed for 4 years, mostly in the Catz 1st VIII, apart from a 3rd-year sojourn in the Schools VIII. He had an extra start rowing as sandwich boat when moving the 1st Torpid up into Div I in 1985, but lost a day due to ice in Torpids of the following year.

H. Kent White is someone of whom we know very little beyond his appearance in crew lists. He first rowed in in the 1924 Torpid, stroked both the Torpid and the Eight in 1925, and was again stroke of the Eight and Captain in 1926. He seems to have taken a year off in 1927, which allowed him to return, as an old hand, to the Torpid in 1928 where he would no doubt be setting an example to the novices in the crew, including P.C. Kimball. The 1926 Eights was reduced to 4 days as a result of the start of term being postponed due to the General Strike, but he also had 4 starts as sandwich boat.

University Crews

It’s recently been announced that the 2021 Boat Races will take place on 4th April, but will be held on the Great Ouse at Ely, which is basically Cambridge’s training stretch. This is partly because they don’t want crowds lining the banks (spectators are discouraged), but also because Hammersmith Bridge

is in such a state of disrepair that, since August, no traffic is even permitted under it, let alone across it.

What is less clear is whether the move to Ely applies to just the men’s and women’s blue boats, or to all 6 Boat Races. The Great Ouse, being non-tidal, creates no difficulties with scheduling 6 separate races at well-spaced intervals but they may decide the logistics of having 12 crews training intensively on the same stretch of water with limited boathouse facilities are just too daunting. So, back to Dorney Lake, or even Henley, anyone?

I believe Augustin Wambersie is back training for OUBC, and Kan Li for the women’s lightweights. James Woodford, Shane McCarthy and Johnny Davidson, as mentioned in the Men’s report, are probably aiming for the OUBC 3rd VIII which is being run again this year.

The Women’s Eights Head is currently scheduled for 6th March, Saturday of 7th week (not sure what they’re going to do about Hammersmith Bridge), which would normally mean moving Torpids forwards to 6th week. However, the college captains have realised that they’re going to need every week of training they can get so have decided to keep Torpids in 7th week (3rd–6th March).

More news, and I hope more clarity, next January.

Anu Dudhia



Merry Christmas to one and all