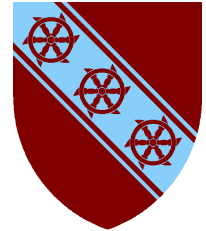




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College, Oxford OX1 3UJ



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

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In this issue . . .

Honours were shared in this year's Boat Races. I had to miss the Henley races, opting to follow Catz down to London for the Head of the River Race instead, but fortunately Anna Corderoy was well-placed to provide a report. Tideway conditions for the HoRR were quite benign but, as you probably noticed, things got rather more lively for the following weekend's Boat Races.

The GB racing season has just begun, at the European Championships in Brandenburg. A couple of our alumni are in action and they'll be hoping for seats, and medals, in Rio in August.

The Boat Club have also been busy over the Easter vacation. Apart from racing in the HoRR, they've been to a training camp in the Netherlands and competing in City Bumps. After Bedford Regatta this weekend they'll be settling down to a couple of weeks training for Eights (25–28th May).

Results

Head of the River Race, 19th March

334 crews were timed

| | | |
|-------|-------|-----------------------|
| 1st | 17:34 | Oxford Brookes I |
| 95th | 19:30 | Oriel |
| 222nd | 20:29 | St Catherine's |

Henley Boat Races, 19th March

| | | | |
|--|--------|------|---|
| <i>Women's Inter-collegiate VIII's</i> | | | |
| Christ Church bt Jesus | | 4 | L |
| <i>Men's Inter-collegiate VIII's</i> | | | |
| Pembroke bt Caius | | 1 | L |
| <i>Women's Lightweight's</i> | | | |
| OUWLRC † bt CUWBCL | Canvas | 6:54 | |
| <i>Men's Lightweight's</i> | | | |
| CULRC bt OULRC | Easily | 6:19 | |

† Anna Corderoy (cox)



The Boat Club Easter training camp in Tilburg, Netherlands. Apparently some rowing also took place.



Catz Men's IV racing in City Bumps

Veterans' Boat Race, 26th March

Cambridge bt Oxford[†] Canvas 7:19

[†] Zoe de Toledo (M.10) (cox)

Tideway Boat Races, 27th March

| | | | |
|---------------------------|----|--------|---------------|
| <i>Women's Blue Boats</i> | | | |
| Ouwbc | bt | Cuwbc | 24 L 21:49 |
| <i>Women's Reserves</i> | | | |
| Blondie | bt | Osiris | 3 L ? |
| <i>Men's Reserves</i> | | | |
| Isis | bt | Goldie | 2 L 18:55 |
| <i>Men's Blue Boats</i> | | | |
| CUBC | bt | OUBC | 2 1/2 L 18:38 |

City Bumps, 16th April

Race: 1 2 3 4 Finish

Men's IVs (32 crews)

St Catz = +1 +1 +1 11th Div II

Women's IVs (28 crews)

St Catz -5 -1 = -1 11th Div II

Head of the River Race

The Head of the River Race is the biggest annual rowing event in the country, where up to 400 men's VIII's compete in a time trial over the Boat Race course but rowed downstream. St Catherine's last took part in 2001 but, with this year's race earlier than usual (end of 9th week) and a previous Tideway taster boating from Auriol Kensington, it was clearly time to revisit the competition.

The Catz crew comprised most of the 1st Torpid, plus alumnus Ben Baron (who may have just been in the wrong place at the wrong time). They had an uneventful race (uneventful is good when it's your first time) and finished 222nd out of 334 timed crews. While that doesn't sound too impressive, they were 5th of the 13 Oxford College crews, and only 1 second behind L.M.H. Oriel were, by some way, the fastest Oxbridge College (and the only one to make the top 100).

In recent years Leander and Molesey have established something of a monopoly over this event. But Oxford Brookes have

been raising eyebrows this season, defeating Oxford and causing Cambridge serious problems in their Boat Race warm-up fixtures. Starting 3rd, Brookes passed Molesey and closed 9 s on Leander to register their first HoRR win (and their 2nd boat finished 4th). The Oxford Blue Boat are going to have their work cut to reclaim the title of fastest club crew in Oxford, but from there it seems but a small step to being the fastest in the country.



Catz men boating for the HoRR at Hammersmith



Lucy Roberts (stroke) in the lightweight spares race

Women's Lightweights

Anna Corderoy, OUWLRC Cox

The Henley Boat Races took place on March 19th this year, and with a fast stream and strong headwind we really had our work cut out for us. It was a historic day for both Oxford and Cambridge, with the inclusion of the first ever spare pair race. Our reserve pair (with president Lucy Roberts in the stroke seat) overcame the incredibly tough conditions to deliver an incredibly gutsy race. Despite a strong start from the Oxford crew, Cambridge won by 3/4 of a length.

This race was followed by the Lightweight Women's Boat race. We were 3/4 of a length down as we passed Upper Thames, 800 m into the race; however, we managed to keep contact and eventually break the Cambridge crew at Fawley Court with 750 m to go. Following this, both boats battled it out neck and neck before Oxford crossed the line a canvas ahead to avenge the 2015 result and take the trophy home. A Blue Boat/Tethys composite subsequently went to the British University Championships last weekend and we took home a silver medal in the Championship Lightweight VIII category.



The Oxford Women's Lightweight crew

The 2016 Boat Races

The Henley Boat Races continue to make creative use of the extra slots opened up since the departure of the big girls to the Tideway. This year, as well as the women's lightweight spare pairs, they had a fours race between Oxford and Cambridge alumnae (have we seen the beginning of a future Women's Vets Boat Race?) and a row-past of the 1986 women's lightweight crews. Strange, then, that the men's lightweight reserves duelled it out a week earlier (and even more strangely, with quad sculls as the weapon of choice).

However, the Intercollegiate Boat Races are now well-established as openers to the Henley programme. In the early years (we're talking 2010 onwards) these races were dominated by Cambridge, but Oxford have been taking them more seriously of late, and this year achieved their first double with Christ Church women and Pembroke men defeating their Cambridge counterparts.

Anna's covered the women's lightweight race but, sadly the rest of the day was very much Cambridge's.

The rivalry relocated to the Tideway the following weekend. This year they managed to fit all 4 races into the same afternoon (last year's Osiris-Blondie race was held the day before, to the accompaniment of pins dropping rather than helicopters whirring, which seemed harsh). And if four races setting off at 20 minute intervals wasn't exciting enough for the spectators, a fresh southwesterly was churning up the waves along the middle stretch, which meant that everyone who won the toss chose the Surrey station and the prospect of more sheltered water.

The Women's Blue Boats went off first.

It started predictably enough with Oxford, on Surrey, pulling clear as the crews passed under Hammersmith Bridge. But at that point it ceased to be a race between two crews and more of a competition of each crew against the elements. The Oxford cox was the first to succeed in breaking free of her programming, wandering off the notional 'racing line' in search of calmer conditions, but it seemed to require the shock of finding herself suddenly sitting in cold water before the Cambridge cox could be persuaded to head for shelter. With their boat swamped and Oxford well over the horizon the umpire took pity on Cambridge and

asked them if they really wanted to continue. They did, and their reward was to have an official verdict of 24 lengths recorded against them. On the other hand, that decision is likely to be regarded as the pivotal moment at which the Women's Boat Race became well and truly established on the Tideway. And the sponsors won't have been too disappointed by all the photos of the beleaguered Cambridge boat promoted from the sports sections to the front pages.

Next off was the Osiris-Blondie race. Osiris, on Middlesex, looked to be making a determined attempt to get clear water so they could take the Surrey side before they hit the waves, but Blondie pulled them back and after Hammersmith they took full advantage of the Surrey bend, finishing 3 lengths up.

Also having lost the toss, Isis on the Middlesex tried the same plan and had a little more success. They were a length up at Hammersmith, but not enough to take Goldie's water and so then had to endure an uncomfortable couple of minutes battling through the waves while watching Goldie draw level. But the Surrey bend ran out and, with the Middlesex bank now providing the shelter, Isis regained the lead and romped home for their 6th consecutive victory.

Cambridge were already favourites for the Men's Boat Race and that was before they won the toss. The soon established a strong rhythm and had almost a length lead by Hammersmith, although both crews looked relaxed, as if they knew that the real challenge was yet to come. So, into the rough stuff, Cambridge continued to build on their lead, although never managing to break Oxford, and finished some three lengths clear. I note that the Oxford Blue Boat's time was probably less than 10 s quicker than Isis. Just saying ...

The weather was certainly a factor in this year's races, although I don't think it changed the outcomes, given that first part of the race was sheltered and in each case the crew that led at Hammersmith Bridge went on to win. In case you were wondering why no one sank, boats these days have built-in buoyancy, and are designed to be rowable even when swamped, plus the Boat Race crews all had battery-operated pumps (admittedly of limited effectiveness when water's coming in over the sides).

| Boat Race Wins: Oxf-Cam | 2007-16 | Overall |
|--------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Men's Blue Boat | 6-4 | 79-82 |
| Men's Reserves | 8-2 | 23-29 |
| Men's Lightweight | 4-6 | 16-26 |
| Women's Blue Boat | 8-2 | 30-41 |
| Women's Reserves | 7-3 | 17-23 |
| Women's Lightweight | 7-3 | 16-17 |

International Rowing

With fewer than 100 days until the start of the Olympics, Catz alumni Zoe de Toledo and Andrew Triggs Hodge are competing for seats in GB crews. Zoe looks almost certain to be selected to cox the women's VIII (the VIIIs being the only Olympic events with coxes these days). After a year off with illness, Andy has successfully fought his way back into the fiercely competitive men's sweep squad and is currently ensconced in the VIII, the no.2 boat after the coxless IV. Both are in action this weekend at the European Championships in Brandenburg.

Eights 2016

Eights will be from 25-28 May. St Catherine's plan on entering 5 crews, with the women's 2nd and men's 3rd Eights having to qualify. Following last year's — ahem — misdemeanours, the men's crews were demoted 2 places and so the 1st Eight find themselves racing in Div II, and clearly they'll be aiming to bump their way back up into Div I. The women's 1st Eight last gained a bump in 2012. It would be nice to get at least one in the current Olympic cycle.

Eights 2016: Wednesday Start Times

| Crew | Div | Bun | Time |
|--------------------|-----|-----|--------|
| Men's 1st Eight | II | 2 | 5.45pm |
| Women's 1st Eight | II | 11 | 5.15pm |
| Men's 2nd Eight | IV | 10 | 3.40pm |
| *Women's 2nd Eight | V | 3 | 1.45pm |

*subject to Rowing On

NB: on Sat. all divisions race 1 hour earlier

Coming Up ...

In the next newsletter there will be results, reports and photos on the term's racing, the announcement of the winner of this year's Ben Sylvester Award, and updates on our Internationals. For those of you attending this year's Gaudy (25th June) we're also planning on offering a chance to get back into a boat.

Anu Dudhia

email: anu.dudhia@physics.ox.ac.uk

Row.Soc: <http://www.atm.ox.ac.uk/rowing/rs.html>
www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=93221115264

Diary

| | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 20 May 2016 | Rowing On |
| 25-28 May 2016 | Eights |
| 25 June 2016 | Gaudy Paddle |
| 6-13 Aug 2016 | Olympic Regatta |