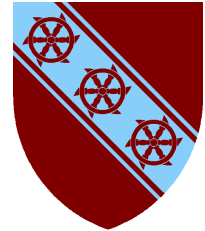




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College, Oxford OX1 3UJ



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

6th May, 2017

In this issue . . .

While OUBC managed to restore normal service, this year's women's Boat Races all took a turn for the light-blue. There were no current Catz students involved, unless you count getting blazered at the AK boathouse, but several of our alumni were kept busy on and off camera including, for the first (and hopefully last) time, a Catz-on-Catz disqualification.

In a recent newsletter I presented some information on one of our earliest distinguished oarsmen: W S Unwin. I now have his *Times* obituary and a photograph, which reveal him to be a Victorian gentleman of considerable rowing achievement, and a moustache to match.

The girls have been quiet since Torpids but the boys have been busy: a couple of VIIIs went to an Easter training camp at Keswick (there's some nice video on the 'catzboatclub' instagram account of two Catz VIIIs hammering it out side-by-side along Derwentwater). At the start of term a mostly-Catz crew raced in the BUCS (British Universities) regatta masquerading, not for the first time, as 'Oxford University' — apparently the entry system didn't recognise 'St Catherine's College'. We have the prospects for Eights.



... When all at once I saw a crowd, A host of . . . oh, just some Catz oarsmen on their Easter training camp in the Lake District.

Results

Henley Boat Races, 26th March

<i>Women's Alumnae VIIIs</i>			
Oxford*	bt	Cambridge	4 L
<i>Lwt Men's Reserves/Alumnae VIIIs</i>			
Cambridge	bt	Oxford	3½ L
<i>Women's Inter-collegiate VIIIs</i>			
Keble	bt	Jesus	1½ L
<i>Men's Inter-collegiate VIIIs</i>			
LMBC	bt	Oriel	3 L
<i>Women's Lwt Res 2-</i>			
CUWBCL	bt	OUBCL	Easily 8:05
<i>Women's Lightweight VIIIs</i>			
CUWBCL	bt	OUBCL	3 L 6:45
<i>Men's Lightweights</i>			
CULRC	bt	OULRC	1¾ L 6:07

*Cox: Anna Corderoy (M.13)

Tideway Boat Races, 2nd April

<i>Veterans' Boat Race (1st April)</i>			
Cambridge	bt	Oxford*	Dqd
<i>Women's Reserves</i>			
Blondie	bt	Osiris	13 L 19:06
<i>Men's Reserves</i>			
Isis	bt	Goldie	2½ L 17:17
<i>Women's Blues</i>			
CUWBC	bt	OUBWC	11 L 18:33
<i>Men's Blues</i>			
OUBC	bt	CUBC	1¼ L 16:59

*Cox: Zoe de Toledo (M.10)

BUCS Regatta, 29 Apr – 1 May

<i>Men's Intermediate VIIIs (42 entries)</i>			
Time Trial			
5:16.5	=14th	St Catherine's	
C Final (crews 13–18 in Time Trial)			
6:31.52	1st	St Catherine's	

Catz entered as 'University of Oxford'



The Cambridge women's lightweights leading Oxford at the Henley Boat Races

Henley Boat Races

The weather at Henley was pleasant enough for the spectators but the steady breeze blowing up the course meant the crews had to battle through large waves at the start.

This year's programme comprised 8 races, including a local match between Leander and Upper Thames although, strangely, not the men's lightweight reserves, who'd raced in coxed fours the previous weekend (Oxford won). However, first off today were the CUWBC v OUWBC alumnae, which the Oxford old girls won comfortably. They were coxed by Anna Corderoy (ex-Catz) who's now trialling for the cox's seat in the GB paralympic squad.

For a while it was level pegging with Cambridge taking the men's lightweight alumni race, Keble the women's intercollegiate VIII's and Lady Margaret BC, i.e. St John's, Cambridge, defeating Oriel in the men's event. But the two main races, between the Varsity lightweight crews, were both comfortable wins for Cambridge.



Old coxes' network in action: Zoe de Toledo (M.10) (left), who was presenting the prizes, and Anna Corderoy (M.13), coxing the OUWBC alumnae, taking their seats in the umpire's launch at the Henley Boat Races.

Tideway Boat Races

So, a week later, and down to the Tideway. The media got a bit over-excited about threats to the race by the discovery of an unexploded wartime bomb, but it turned out to be something the size of a tin can, and somewhat downstream of the start.

The Veterans' Boat Race, which takes place the day before the main races, is used as a dress-rehearsal (albeit over a shorter course, finishing just past Hammersmith Bridge) and so was also umpired by the men's Boat Race umpire, Matt Pinsent. The Oxford alumni, coxed by Zoe de Toledo, got the better start and soon had clear water. But when Cambridge started pulling back they had no answer and, despite repeated warnings from the umpire, Zoe resorted to the coxing equivalent of a professional foul (which she cheerfully admitted to) by blocking Cambridge's line under Hammersmith bridge, which left the umpire with no option other than to disqualify Oxford.

As for the TV coverage of the main event, the BBC decided — with a wearisome inevitability — that what was needed to make the event more inclusive was a pre-recorded 'Celebrity Boat Race', although even they (perhaps after some trial and error) acknowledged that 9 novice celebs would not be able to raise enough speed or direction to make much of a spectacle. So they imported some proper rowing talent: step forward ZdT and Andy Triggs Hodge (also later called upon for the prize-giving for the Women's Boat Race). Anyway, I fear the only message that was conveyed to the general viewer was that rowing is (a) difficult and (b) painful. Well, perhaps that's about right.

Tideway starts involve stakeboats and a fast flowing stream, which necessitates the oars being kept over-feathered until the 'go', at which point the rowers rotate them through something more than 90°

before applying any pressure. A tricky manoeuvre at the best of times. At the worst of times, it can lead to a boat-stopping overhead crab, as one of the Oxford women's crew discovered, while Cambridge, already strong favourites, grabbed an easy couple of lengths and that was pretty much race over. According to the reports, the Oxford women's reserves also had a poor start and went down to Blondie by an even greater margin.

The Oxford men's boat, in contrast, got away much quicker than Cambridge and, although it was never comfortable, they were always in control. It was a similar story for Isis, who extend their sequence to 7 wins.

I fear for Oxford women's rowing. While Cambridge men continue to win about 1 year in every 3, it's rarely by a huge margin and even then Oxford usually manage to win the reserves race. However, such a comprehensive thrashing of both the Oxford women's Blues and reserves, not to mention the women's lightweights, does look like it might be the beginning of an era.

The Rev W.S. Unwin (1862–1943) (ctd)

A couple of editions ago I included various bits and pieces I had managed to gather about W S Unwin, who rowed for St Catherine's in 1883. Thanks to Tim Koch, who's a regular contributor to 'Hear the Boat Sing', a rowing history web-site (and who, coincidentally, was a guest at the RS Dinner), I now have some more information.

Obituary in The Times, Friday, 13 Aug, 1943

The Rev. William Sully Unwin, who died at Overy Staithe, Norfolk, on August 1, at the age of 81, rowed in the Oxford Eights of 1881–82, when the then unregarded boat of St. Catherine's rose 12 places. That feat was ascribed to him. He was thus a member of the Non-Collegiate body, but, as he had been educated at Magdalen College School (where he won the school mile and quarter mile and stroked the School Four at Henley in 1880), his ultimate transference to the College of Magdalen was natural. Accordingly he rowed for Magdalen in the University Fours of 1883,



W S Unwin, from a photograph of the 1886 O.U.B.C. crew (courtesy of Tim Koch).

and helped it to win the race in 1884 and 1885. He won the University Sculls in 1884 and 1885, and in 1884 also won the Pairs. In those two years he also won the Diamond Sculls at Henley and the Wingfields at Putney, thus becoming the Amateur Champion of the Thames. He rowed bow for Oxford against Cambridge in 1885 and 1886, being a member of the winning crew in the former year, and, of the losing crew in the latter year. In 1886 he rowed seven in the Magdalen VIII, which was head of the river that year. Few men resisted the temptation to use distinction as a rung in fame's ladder, but with his instinct for true values Unwin deliberately chose obscurity as a country parson, his active life being spent in the Lake District and Norfolk. Under such conditions it is character which counts, and Unwin carried with him to his new work the courage and resource developed on the river. His sound common sense, his energy and enthusiasm were an inspiration to all who met him his influence for good was

boundless, enduring, and far more widespread than might appear probable from the humility of his life.

Summer Eights

Summer Eights will be from Wed–Sat 24–27th May. We have two men's and a women's VIII in the fixed divisions, and any other crews which materialise will have to qualify in Rowing On on 19th May.

Eights 2017: Wednesday Start Times

Crew	Div	Bungline	Time
Men's 1st Eight	II	1	5.45pm
Women's 1st Eight	II	8	5.15pm
Men's 2nd Eight	IV	7	3.40pm

Racing on Wed–Fri starts at noon and finishes at 6.45pm, while on Saturday everything is one hour earlier. I'll be down at the boathouse maintaining the 'Racedesk Live' web-site, and sending out evening reports as usual to those on the RS mailing list.

Eights 2017

Starting positions of our 1st Eights
and last Torpids' change

Men's Div I		Women's Div II	
1 Oriel	=	1 Lincoln	+4
2 Christ Church	-1	2 Jesus	+5
3 Keble	+5	3 Somerville	+4
4 Pembroke	=	4 St Anne's	+3
5 Wolfson	-5	5 Worcester	-3
6 University	-1	6 Mansfield	+4
7 Magdalen	-	7 Trinity	-2
8 Wadham	+1	8 St Catherine's	-10
9 S.E.H.	=	9 Merton	+2
10 New College	-5	10 Linacre	-2
11 Trinity	-1	11 St Hugh's	-6
12 Balliol	+1	12 L.M.H.	+5
13 Hertford	+1	13 Osler House	-

Men's Div II	
1 St Catherine's	+3
2 L.M.H.	=
3 Mansfield	+4

Last year the Men's 1st Eight rowed the course 8 times as the Sandwich boat, very closely pursued on the last day by L.M.H. and then putting Hertford under pressure at the bottom of Div I. This year's crew is quicker — little changed from the crew which finished 4th on the river in Torpids — and they'll be very disappointed if they're not firmly re-established in Div I by the end of the week. However, unless Magdalen fail to enter again (as they did for Torpids) Catz will first have to defend their position at the top of Div II by keeping clear of L.M.H., which, barring



Easter training on Derwentwater (Photo: Martin Velichkov)

disasters, should not be a problem. Assuming they manage that, then they'll be chasing Hertford whom they've already bumped in Torpids.

The men's 2nd Eight also start their campaign chasing a Hertford crew, whom they've also already bumped in Torpids. They will, however, be pursued by Osler House — a very unpredictable outfit who, if they enter at all, tend to alternate between spoons and blades.

Catz women will start between Trinity with Merton. Trinity weren't great in Torpids — down 2 — while Merton rose 2 places, but that was down in Div III. Of course Catz didn't have a great Torpids themselves — down 10 places — but this term's crew looks to be a rather different beast. At the moment they seem to be on the 'up' escalator so I'd guess that whatever happens on the first day will set the pattern for the rest of the week.

The top of Men's Div I looks interesting. Oriel had a strong Torpid but just one member of the University crews, while Christ Church, who had an average Torpid, could now be adding 2 Blues and 4 Isis men, while Keble are in an even better position with potentially 4 Blues and a lightweight to add to an already strong Torpid.

The women's Blues are more evenly spread. Pembroke (2nd) might have enough reinforcements to challenge Wadham for the headship but by the end of the week I'd be expecting them both to be worrying about Christ Church (starting 5th) or Keble (6th).

Coming Up ...

In the next newsletter we'll have all the results, reports and photos from Summer Eights and other events of the term, the announcement of the winner of this year's Ben Sylvester Award, and a look forward to anything that might be happening over the summer (I draw your attention in particular to the Gaudy paddle, 24th June, which is open to all rowing alumni, not just those attending the Gaudy).

Anu Dudhia

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Row.Soc:

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Diary

24–27 May 2017 Summer Eights
24 June 2017 Gaudy Paddle