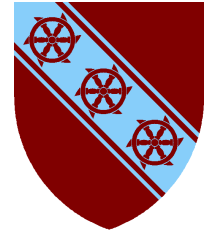




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College, Oxford OX1 3UJ



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

18th May, 2019

In this issue ...

After last year's clean sweep by Cambridge in the Boat Races, Oxford may have started to turn things around this year with victories for both lightweight crews, while the other four boats at least managed to reduce Cambridge's winning margins. The only Catz student taking part was Augustin Wambersie who, as stroke, led OUBC in a remarkable fight-back over the second half of their race but ultimately ran out of river.

Former Catz student Ante Kusunin (M.06) had better fortune in the Veterans' Boat Race. Having flown over from the US just for the event, he was parachuted (probably metaphorically) into the stroke seat of the winning Oxford crew. Three of our VPs (Pinsent, de Toledo, Triggs Hodge) also featured in the TV coverage in various capacities.

Just before Easter, a large Catz Boat Club contingent flew off to Milan for a training camp in the Italian lakes (supported by the Rowing Society). We have a report — although I suspect a carefully redacted version rather than the full *Così fan Tutti*.

And finally we have the prospects for Eights (29th May – 1st June).

Results

Men's Lightweight Race, 23rd March

Oxford bt Cambridge 2¹/₄ L 17:43

Henley Boat Races, 30th March

Women's Lightweights
 Oxford bt Cambridge 2¹/₂ L 6:28
Women's Lightweight Reserves (2-)
 Cambridge bt Oxford 1¹/₂ L 7:40
Women's Intercollegiate Race
 Newnham bt Wadham 5 L ntt
Men's Intercollegiate Race
 Caius bt Wadham 5 L 5:54
Women's Alumnae Race
 Cambridge bt Oxford Easily ntt

Veterans' Boat Race, 6th April

Oxford* bt Cambridge 7/8 L 7:27

*Ante Kusunin (M.06) at Stroke



As the Boat Club gradually descends into Lago di Monate ... Hmm, maybe one *can* have too much pasta?

Tideway Boat Races, 7th April

<i>Men's Blue Boats</i>		
CUBC bt OUBC*	1 L	16:57
<i>Women's Blue Boats</i>		
CUWBC bt OUWBC	5 L	18:47
<i>Men's Reserves</i>		
Goldie bt Isis	1 L	17:17
<i>Women's Reserves</i>		
Blondie bt Osiris	5 L	19:19

*Augustin Wambersie (M.18) at stroke

The Boat Races

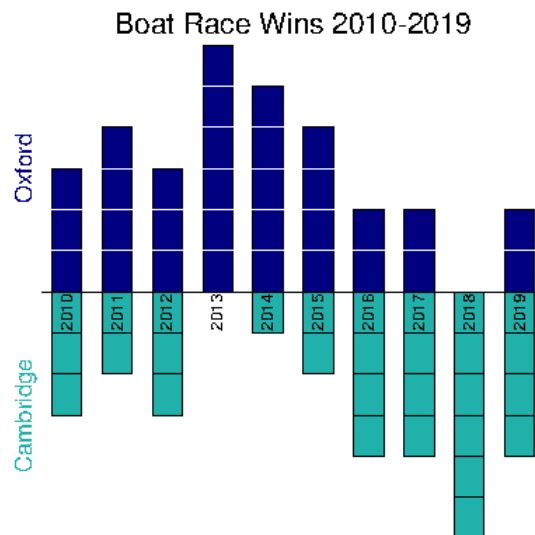
The first of three successive boat race weekends started with the men's lightweights racing, for the first time, over the Tideway course (sensibly combined with a number of other Oxford and Cambridge private fixtures on the same afternoon). Oxford were firm favourites, with 5 returning Blues to Cambridge's none, but nevertheless it was Cambridge, on the Middlesex station, who took the early lead and held it all the way to Hammersmith Bridge. But finally their bubble burst and Oxford's class took them through for what was, eventually, a comfortable victory. At which point all dark blue supporters heaved a sigh of relief knowing that this year was going to be better than last year.

Then, on to Henley; until recently venue for 4 of the 6 Boat Races but now just hosting the women's lightweights race (along with the intercollegiate and alumnae races). With little form to go on, and three of the previous four races having been decided by less than half a length, this really was anyone's guess. Watching the video, I'd have said that Cambridge looked the better crew, yet Oxford powered away to win by a surprisingly large margin of 2½ lengths. Cambridge won all the other races on the programme, but obviously we don't count those.

And finally, *the* Boat Race weekend. Since moving to the Tideway the Women's Boat Race has lacked a certain ... suspense? The favourite — and there has always been a clear favourite — just takes the lead off the start and continues to row away. Same again this year, although Cambridge's winning margin of *only* 5 lengths made it the closest race so far.

The men's race was more intriguing. Cambridge were firm favourites, and duly took the lead despite Oxford having the advantage of the Fulham bend. But then, inexplicably, the Cambridge cox decided to risk it all by venturing into Oxford's water and causing a blade clash — had Oxford suffered serious equipment damage it would have meant disqualification, and had Cambridge suffered damage it would

have been regarded as self-inflicted. But they got away with it and extended their lead around the Hammersmith bend to two lengths. Race over? Oxford thought differently and began to close the gap. A visibly tiring Cambridge were mightily relieved to cross the finish line, with Oxford snapping at their heels.



Easter Training Camp

Clare Leckie, Women's Co-Captain

Over the Easter break, 26 athletes (11 women and 15 men) and 3 coaches travelled to northern Italy for a week-long training camp on Lake Monate. Rowing with snow-capped peaks in the distance, this was an idyllic location to get a head start on our Summer VIIIs training. We were hosted by a local club ASD Canottieri Monate, and for most of our sessions we had the lake entirely to ourselves!

With access to two eights, a coxless four and a coxless quad, everyone was involved in two sessions on the water each day. Although most of these sessions were organised so that the men's and women's squads could train independently, we all came together at meal times and for muscle-activation, cool-downs, team bonding activities and workshops.

For a number of our athletes, this was their first time rowing off the Isis. Many also had the opportunity to row in coxless boats for the first time, and some got the chance to try coxing. All in all, it was a wonderful week full of training, learning and team-bonding for everyone involved.

Big thank-yous to Giovanna Granata for her incredible translation, Rowan Nicholls and David Zimmer for their excellent coaching, and Alex Bowmer for his indispensable physiotherapy and his amazing nutrition and injury prevention/treatment workshops.



Catz Boat Club training on Lago di Monate

Trinity Term

Returning from Italy there was barely time to unpack for an Easter weekend at home before coming up to Oxford for the start of term.

Our men's 1st VIII is largely unchanged from Torpids (unfortunately our Blue, Augustin Wambersie, is unavailable for Eights). They're currently experimenting with a tandem rig — these suddenly seem quite fashionable, possibly inspired by Cambridge's Boat Race success, but they make racking boats in the confined, interlocking spaces within a college boathouse a bit of a nightmare. They raced at Bedford Regatta last Saturday (albeit briefly).

The women, on the other hand, have had to accommodate their two returning squad triallists, which has had the knock-on effect that two members of the 1st Torpid are now in the 2nd Eight (as G.T.C. II will not have appreciated when they took on Catz II for some bumping practice this afternoon). The women are focussing solely on Eights this term, with no plans to race anywhere else.



The Men's 1st Eight, with 4 and 5 in a 'tandem' or 'bucket' rig.

Eights 2019: Wednesday Times

Crew	Div	Bung	Time
Men's 1st Eight	I	11	6.45pm
Women's 1st Eight	II	7	5.15pm
Men's 2nd Eight	IV	6	3.40pm
*Women's 2nd Eight	V	11	1.45pm
*Men's 3rd Eight	VI	3	1.10pm

*subject to qualification in Rowing On

Summer Eights

Eights start on Wednesday, 29th May and continue until Saturday, 1st June. We have three crews in the fixed divisions. The women's 2nd VIII and a yet-to-materialise men's 3rd VIII (I believe David Zimmer is working on it) will have to qualify in Rowing On next Saturday.

Eights 2019

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

Men's Div I		Women's Div II	
1 Keble	+6	1 Balliol	+6
2 Oriel	=	2 Jesus	=
3 Christ Church	-2	3 St Anne's	+2
4 Pembroke	=	4 Linacre	-3
5 Wadham	=	5 Lincoln	-5
6 Wolfson	+1	6 Mansfield	+2
7 Balliol	=	7 St Catherine's	+4
8 University	+1	8 Trinity	+3
9 S.E.H.	+4	9 L.M.H.	+3
10 Trinity	+3	10 Wolfson II	-2
11 St Catherine's	+1	11 Exeter	-3
12 Jesus	-3	12 G.T.C.	+5
13 Magdalen	-4	13 Worcester	=

Back in 2012 it was decided to expand Eights divisions from 12 to 13 boats, creating an extra 13 places. However, the number of entries received remained about the same, with the unintended consequence that Rowing On for Eights has generally been a bit of a formality for any crew capable of cohesive rowing.

Racing on Wed-Fri starts at noon and finishes at 6.45pm, while on Saturday everything is, as usual, one hour earlier (Eights dinners to get to!).



A rather scary-looking Catz W2 (foreground) getting in some bumps practice with G.T.C. II

The men's 1st Eight start behind Trinity, who had a good Torpids and, in theory, now have the services of a Blue, an Isis and a lightweight to call upon. Ahead of them are S.E.H., who are probably salivating over the prospect of Univ. for breakfast. Behind Catz are Jesus, whose steady rise since 2015 came to an abrupt end in Torpids, and there's no reason to suspect their Eight will be much faster. Magdalen are behind Jesus. Traditionally one of the major rowing colleges, they still haven't recovered from their implosion of 2017 and will probably fall to whoever emerges from the top of Div II. All of which should give Catz at least a couple of days to figure out who, if anyone, they're going to catch.

For the women it's a sense of *déjà vu* as, once again, they'll be chasing Mansfield and, as in Torpids, hoping they catch them before Mansfield catch the crew ahead — Lincoln in this case. Behind are Trinity, who spent Torpids forlornly chasing L.M.H. but picking up overbumps on the crews that L.M.H. had bumped. Now finding their positions reversed, hopefully Trinity will be more concerned with staying ahead of L.M.H. rather than aspiring to bump Catz. Either way, for Catz the first day's outcome looks like being the key that will unlock the rest of the week.

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.



The not-at-all scary (honest!) Women's 1st Eight

Coming Up ...

In the next issue we'll have results and photos from Eights, along with the Captains' reports on the term's rowing, and the announcement of this year's winner of the Ben Sylvester Award.

Diary

25 May	Rowing On
29 May – 1 June	Summer Eights
1 June	Boat Club Dinner
29 June	Gaudy Paddle

Anu Dudhia
 anu.dudhia@physics.ox.ac.uk