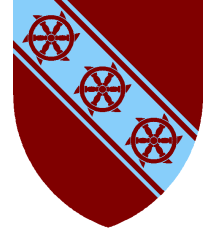




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College, Oxford OX1 3UJ



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

4th July, 2021

In this issue . . .

There's quite a lot to cover, so a bumper edition.

All the regular six University Boat Races did eventually take place, on the Great Ouse near Ely, spread over several weeks. Different location, but all went the same way as the last Tideway encounters. This was, at least, good news for one of our three participants, who provides an account of her experience.

With the changing Covid restrictions, many Colleges — Catz included — spotted the potential for a pre-term training camp, but once Trinity term proper got under way, for the first few weeks — in theory — it was only students on practical courses who were supposed to be in Oxford. Let's just say I never realised what a large proportion of rowers were scientists. There were a couple of re-branded 'Isis Spring League' time trials, both attracting over 100 entries, but also serving to teach marshals not to hit the klaxon for (a) white geese, or (b) crabs. When Torpids (yes Torpids) finally took place in 7th week, there were a few notable absentees but the Catz contingent was actually larger than usual. And those marshals were so well-taught that there was only one klaxon all week, and that only in the last race of the last day. We have the results and Captains' reports.

An unusually long term's rowing finished with a Boat Club Dinner, at which the winner of this year's Ben Sylvester Award was announced.



Move along now — nothing to see here. OURCs attempt to discourage spectators during 'Summer Torpids'.

Results

The Boat Races, 4th Apr – 23rd May

<i>Women's Blue Boats (4th Apr)</i>			
CUWBC	bt	OuwBC	³ / ₄ L 16:27
<i>Men's Blue Boats (4th Apr)</i>			
CUBC	bt	OUBC*	1 L 14:12
<i>Men's Reserves (25th Apr)</i>			
Goldie	bt	Isis	6 L 16:10
<i>Women's Reserves (25th Apr)</i>			
Blondie	bt	Osiris†	7 L 19:06
<i>Women's Lightweight (18th May)</i>			
CUWBC	bt	OuwLRC	2 ¹ / ₂ L 18:08
<i>Men's Lightweight (23rd May)</i>			
OULRC‡	bt	CULRC	1 ¹ / ₂ L 14:19

* Augustin Wambersie (str)

† Oriane Grant (6)

‡ Cici Hong (cox)

Isis Spring League A, 16th May

144 crews raced

1st	4:11	Wolfson B	1st/42 M8
=6th	4:29	St Catherine's A	5th/42 M8
9th	4:31	St Catherine's B	8th/42 M8
32nd	5:10	Wolfson A	1st/44 W8
=57th	5:37	St Catherine's A	13th/44 W8
=62nd	5:40	St Catherine's	10th/10 M4
93rd	6:09	St Catherine's B	35th/44 W8

Isis Spring League B, 30th May

107 crews raced

1st	4:05.0	Wolfson A	1st/46 M8
17th	4:44.5	St Catherine's A	17th/46 M8
20th	4:52.5	Wolfson A	1st/51 W8
43rd	5:20.5	St Catherine's A	9th/51 W8
70th	5:39.0	St Catherine's C	24th/51 W8

Rowing On, 5th June

Men's crews, 33 from 36 to qualify

1st	2:41.5	Christ Church II
14th	3:10.5	St Catherine's II
33rd	3:33.0	Hertford II

Women's crews, 31 from 36 to qualify

1st	3:16.0	Osler House
10th	3:31.0	St Catherine's II
22nd	3:46.0	St Catherine's III
31st	3:54.5	University III

My Year with OULRC

Zirong ('Cici') Hong, having previously coxed at Headington School, was selected to cox this year's Oxford men's lightweight crew.



As an incoming fresher, I joined pre-season training with OULRC before term started, getting to know the team and returning to coxing after half a year (since the first lockdown started!). As term began, we trained through Michaelmas and I took

some time to adjust to the early mornings and rainy weekends again as we rotated through small boats and 8s. We got the opportunity to do some racing at Wallingford before the 2nd lockdown put a halt in our training schedule. Little did we know at the time that the next time we went back into large crew training it would be at Easter!

Returning to training before Trinity term started, we tackled each session head on with the date of the race now set. The coxes were rotated through the boats and the rowers were also being trialled until a crew was finally set only a couple of weeks until the race. From then on, we focused on trying to make use of every session we had together to establish a good race rhythm as a crew before we headed out for Ely.



Dear OULRC, now please fish her out, dry her off and return her, in good working order, to Catz lodge. We still need her for Torpids.

We travelled up a few days before the race to have a row of the river that was previously unfamiliar to us, getting used to rowing with the tailwind conditions and trying to get a sense of landmarks (sparse as they were) up the course. On race day, after a thorough warm-up, weigh-ins and the official challenge, we lined up at the Queen Adelaide bridge ready for the Umpire to start the race.

Quick off the start, rating slightly higher, we had edged out to a $\frac{3}{4}$ length of a lead by 750 m in. However, entering the middle 2000 m of the race, Cambridge put in repeated efforts to get level. We pushed on from their bursts but failed to fully break into clear water. Maintaining contact until the inlet (3 k down, 2 k to go), we pushed off the marker and broke clear. Inching away, we were able to move over to the middle with the stream and create a bit of wash for our opponents. We maintained the gap through to the finish line, winning by 1.5 lengths. Celebratory traditions were in place, including the toss into the freezing water and we dried off for prize giving.

It's been a great 'season', if you could call it, with OULRC. Different as it was compared to previous years, the team has been extremely welcoming and nice to train with! I'm excited to take on our next season as Secretary for the club and hopefully be able to battle it out with Cambridge back on the Tideway!

Summer Torpids

The understandable concern for those organising bumps racing this term was that, with so little opportunity for training over the past couple of years, there was a risk of a large number of dangerously incompetent crews and coxes being entered. Hence the decision to run Torpids, with the hazard of dropping multiple places, rather than Eights; the requirement for all crews outside the top 3 divisions to qualify through Rowing On; and the reduction to divisions of 9 boats. Also the insistence that the results *will* count towards next year, not just running a 'fun' event. But, unlike regular Torpids, University representatives were allowed to participate.

The graduate colleges, in general, arrived in a strong position: having students in residence throughout the year meant they've been able to get crews out whenever Covid regulations and river levels allowed. But Christ Church, S.E.H. and Univ

also turned up in strength, showing other (probably expensive) ways could be found.

On the other hand, several colleges opted to take the six-bump penalty and not enter any crews at all. Most notable among these was Wadham, whose women had been Head in Torpids, and their men 3rd. Also, no entries from Jesus and Exeter men, nor from the hitherto all-conquering G.T.C. women.

The lack of a Wadham entry had two immediate impacts on St Catherine's. Firstly, it meant that our women's 1st Torpid is now the *only* crew to have contested every Torpids since women's divisions were introduced in 1978. Secondly, it meant our men were promoted from 4th to 3rd on the river, their highest position ever in Eights or Torpids. Of course, the women had only to turn up to defend their new-won status; the men would have to fight to keep theirs.



The Women's 1st Torpid

2021 St Catherine's Torpids

Men's 1st Torpid

B Hamza Ahmad
2 Christopher George
3 Thomas Long
4 Shane McCarthy
5 Jamie Woodford
6 Jonathan Davidson
7 Thomas Wagstaff
S Augustin Wambersie
C Eugenio Vecchi

Men's 2nd Torpid

B Alexander Scruton
2 James Wills
3 James Duckitt¹
4 Raghuvver Nath
5 Owen Lawton
6 Vincent Allott
7 Hugh Taylor
S Andre Hector
C David Berry

Substitutes

¹Tim Kilbey (Tue)
²Bethan Storey (Tue,Wed)
³Millie Brunton (Thu)
⁴Millie Cast (Fri)

Men's Coach

Niels Wicke

Women's Coach

Rowan Nicholls

Women's 1st Torpid

B Abby Hespe
2 Niamh Louwman
3 Emma Buelte
4 Sara Rotenberg
5 Valeriana Buslot
6 Elizabeth Rees
7 Ilayda Karadag
S Kan Li
C Zi Hong

Women's 2nd Torpid

B Shuting Li²
2 Anne van Ekert
3 Lily Kershaw
4 Tara Baurmann
5 Beth Proctor
6 Daisy Day
7 Nadine Staes-Polet
S Helen Nielsen-Scott
C Kaylin Chong

Women's 3rd Torpid

B Gaia Clark Nevola
2 Eleanor Ferris
3 Zhaoying Ma^{3,4}
4 Lili Herbert
5 Aitian Li
6 Ellie Hopkinson
7 Biba Jones
S Poppy Wood
C Niamh Louwman

Women's Boat Club Report

Kaylin Chong, Women's Co-Captain

Following a successful training camp, the squad was in the zone to start training for an exciting season ahead. With many new additions to the squad, we were able to make up for lost water time in preparation for the ISL head races As Torpids drew closer and crews were being set, training picked up in intensity both on water and ergs.

W1 was stuck as the sandwich boat for all 4 days of Torpids. Chased by Mansfield and chasing Brasenose, the crew put up a good fight but were unable to bump into division 2. Eight row overs later, it is safe to say that W1 became the most familiar with the course.

After a strong Rowing On performance, our W2 started third in division 6. A quick bump on Hertford before the Gut on the first day had them feeling quite comfortable. However, a showstopping crab, questionable steering from other coxes sent W2 for a turn. While W2 ended bottom of the division, they still finished in the same position (54th) they had in 2019.

For the first time since 2009 Catz entered a W3 for Torpids, made up of loads of talented novices that started rowing this Trinity. W3 were unfortunately bumped down to footship within 2 days. However following an unlucky crash by Trinity W2, W3 ended the week 9th in Division 7 — a new position coined as 'ankleship of the river'. They had a fantastic time nonetheless.

Following an eventful Summer Torpids, we collaborated with the men's squad to organise a mixed Catz lock trip to Abingdon and back. It was a great chance to explore parts of the river that most had not seen before, and enjoy a longer steady state session without having to spin. We threw in a few side by side race pieces for good measure, and the whole squad had a blast.



The Women's 2nd Torpid

We also wanted to thank Ilayda for all her work which made rowing safe and possible this year and our coach Rowan Nicholls, for his dedication to our squad which allowed us to be successful in Torpids. Finally, thank you to our squad for the enthusiasm and commitment, Niamh and I have really enjoyed captaining this year's squad.



The Women's 3rd Torpid (& Rowan)

Torpids, 8th–11th June

	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Finish
Men's I	=	=	=	=	3rd Div I
Women's I	=	=	=	=	1st Div III
Men's II	-2	+1	+1	+2	6th Div IV
Women's II	+1	=	-6	-1	9th Div VI
Women's III	-3	-1	=	+1	9th Div VII

Bumps Charts

MEN	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
I ORIEL				
PEMBROKE				
ST CATHERINE'S				
WOLFSON				
CHRIST CHURCH				
S.E.H.				
BALLIOL				
TRINITY				
HERTFORD				
II KEBLE				
ST JOHN'S				
MAGDALEN				
UNIVERSITY				
NEW COLLEGE				
MERTON				
L.M.H.				
CORPUS CHRISTI				
BRASENOSE				
III LINCOLN				
MANSFIELD				
QUEEN'S				
PEMBROKE II				
ST ANNE'S				
ST HUGH'S				
SOMERVILLE				
LINACRE				
WORCESTER				
IV GREEN TEMPLETON				
WOLFSON II				
ORIEL II				
ST PETER'S				
CHRIST CHURCH II				
ST ANTONY'S				
KEBLE II				
ST CATHERINE'S II				
S.E.H. II				
V ST HILDA'S				
LINCOLN II				
BALLIOL II				
TRINITY II				
BRASENOSE II				
REGENT'S PARK				
NEW COLLEGE II				
UNIVERSITY II				
MERTON II				
VI WOLFSON III				
MAGDALEN II				
ST BENET'S HALL				
ST HUGH'S II				
S.E.H. III				
HERTFORD II				
LINCOLN III				
PEMBROKE III				
CORPUS CHRISTI II				
VII ST ANTONY'S II				
QUEEN'S II				
LINACRE II				
ST PETER'S II				
UNIVERSITY III				
NEW COLLEGE III				
CHRIST CHURCH III				
MANSFIELD II				
CHRIST CHURCH IV				
LINACRE III				

WOMEN	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
I PEMBROKE				
HERTFORD				
KEBLE				
ORIEL				
WOLFSON				
CHRIST CHURCH				
BALLIOL				
NEW COLLEGE				
MAGDALEN				
II UNIVERSITY				
JESUS				
ST ANNE'S				
L.M.H.				
TRINITY				
ST JOHN'S				
SOMERVILLE				
LINCOLN				
BRASENOSE				
III ST CATHERINE'S				
MANSFIELD				
WOLFSON II				
ST HILDA'S				
LINACRE				
WORCESTER				
ST HUGH'S				
S.E.H.				
ST PETER'S				
IV EXETER				
QUEEN'S				
CORPUS CHRISTI				
ST ANTONY'S				
MERTON				
ORIEL II				
SOMERVILLE II				
REGENT'S PARK				
NEW COLLEGE II				
V PEMBROKE II				
WOLFSON III				
CHRIST CHURCH II				
MANSFIELD II				
ST HUGH'S II				
UNIVERSITY II				
LINACRE II				
BALLIOL II				
WORCESTER II				
VI CORPUS CHRISTI II				
HERTFORD II				
ST CATHERINE'S II				
UNIVERSITY III				
L.M.H. II				
ST PETER'S II				
ST BENET'S HALL				
MAGDALEN II				
BRASENOSE II				
VII CHRIST CHURCH III				
WOLFSON IV				
S.E.H. II				
TRINITY II				
WOLFSON V				
ST CATHERINE'S III				
OSLER HOUSE				
OSLER HOUSE II				
ST ANTONY'S II				
S.E.H. III				



The Men's 1st Torpid

Men's Boat Club Report

Thomas Wagstaff, Men's Co-Captain

Following a virtual Hilary term, many of the squad were grateful to be able to return to Oxford early for a training camp in -1st week. This camp was organised by our president, Ilayda, who arranged so that we could return to Oxford on the first day the government allowed us to. The camp was a huge success allowing significant development within the squad through the introduction of several novices who showed huge potential as well as the seniors embracing being back on the water.

This week culminated in a battle paddle between two fours during which all the athletes demonstrated huge determination and showed just how far they'd come on during the week!

After this we set our eyes on the Isis Spring League. After a committed block of training, and some particularly gruelling sessions set by our coach Niels Wicke, we arrived at the first race of the league.

Catz entered its M1 twice in 2 divisions and posted incredibly consistent times managing to attain 5th and 8th place within the college VIIIs. This set a really strong benchmark for the rest of the season and gave us the opportunity to push on with the support of our Blues athletes; Johnny Davidson, Shane McCarthy, Jamie Woodford and Augustin Wambersie.



The Men's 2nd Torpid

As always a huge deal of thanks is due to the RS who have worked hard to support us in all our endeavours and played a large role in the success of our men's squad this season! Catz has shown huge dedication through the pandemic and this really showed in the races of this term and I am excited to see the boat club continue to step on next season!

During all this time our M2 squad was also working hard to integrate novices and push on with their own training and went on to be the only Catz men's boat competing in ISL B and came 15th which was extremely impressive given that most other crews were college first VIIIs. After this race there was a final block of intense training and then it was time to get on with the

main event of the term, Summer Torpids 2021.

Due to Wadham withdrawing Catz M1 was sat third on the river (the highest we have ever been). Catz rowed over on all four days which was particularly impressive as they were chased by Wolfson and Christ Church across the week, both of whom were favourites for headship, but found themselves unable to bump any higher than 4th. The M2 suffered a failure with the steering system on day 1 and suffered two bumps but managed to bump once on days 2 and 3 and managed to get a bump and a second technical bump on day 4 and so finished the week +2, an impressive showing given many of the crew only had a term's experience.

Bumps Starts

Before introducing the next set of alumni all of whom have 35 bumps starts to their name, we should acknowledge Hugh Taylor, whose 5 starts with the men's 2nd Torpid this term brings him up to 34, which would have put him among those listed in the last newsletter. Also, although she'll probably never make the minimum 30 starts required to get on the list, a special mention to women's co-captain Niamh Louwman who's just notched up 12 starts in her first bumps event, so at 3 starts/day she must at least have the highest *average*.

Pos	Starts	Name	Active
=26th	35	Don Barton	1949–52
=26th	35	Austin Downing	1949–52
=26th	35	Richard Law	1996–2002
=26th	35	Dom Layfield	1991–96
=26th	35	Phil McCullough	2009–18
=26th	35	F.E.G.M. Tate	1949–52

Don Barton, Austin ('Pat') Downing and F.E.G.M. Tate were, respectively, members of the 1949 1st, 3rd and 2nd Eights all of which won blades, which no doubt encouraged them to continue rowing for the next three years as well. Bumps then were over 6 days, which helps their scores. Don was active in the Rowing Society and became one of our Vice-Presidents, while Pat's energies went in the direction of Bedford RC. Dom Layfield and Richard Law were successive men's captains who rowed together in the 1996 2nd Eight, notable not only for achieving 6 bumps but also decorating Donnington Bridge with a declaration of, ahem, questionable theology. Richard rowed with the lightweights in 2000, but since Torpids that year was flooded off it didn't affect his total. Phil McCullough was also a men's captain, and lower boats stalwart, nowadays a familiar voice commenting on bumps over the PA (and stepping in for some emergency W2 coxing in 2018).

Ben Sylvester Award

The winner of the 2021 Ben Sylvester Award for 'enhancing the rowing life of St Catherine's College' is Boat Club President, Ilayda Karadag.

Those who nominated her said

... Ilayda has ensured that rowing at Catz could continue during the coronavirus pandemic. Back in Michaelmas we were the first Catz club to be approved to restart, after Ilayda had single-handedly written thorough risk assessments and COVID protocols

... Ilayda gives so much of her time behind the scenes to organising boat club events and always gives 100% in the boat at training. Her contribution has really made the difference in the club this year, particularly with organising training camp

Also nominated were Abby Hesse, Kan Li and Eugenio Vecchio.



Ilayda Karadag (centre), in the Women's 1st Torpid

Coming up ...

Well, that's a lot to cover in a single newsletter. I hope things will be back to normal next term, at least normal enough to provide enough material for the usual two newsletters. I'm trying hard to ignore the recent explosion in positive Covid test results among Oxford students — at least it was sufficiently delayed that I doubt anyone's blaming it on the rowing. But I can confidently state that I'll be listing the next batch of rowers as we continue the countdown of bumps starts.

The Olympic Games start in 3 weeks. I don't know of any Catz involvement but that's not to say some of those participating won't turn up at Catz lodge next term taking their first steps to post-Olympian life.

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