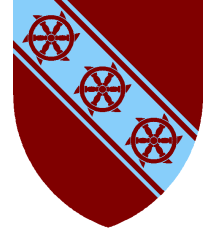




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College, Oxford OX1 3UJ



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

8th May, 2022

In this issue ...

The Boat Races made a welcome return to the Tideway this year, and the Tideway was indeed welcoming with near perfect conditions for all six races. OUBC finally rediscovered how to win, OUWBC are getting there but will have to keep searching for another year, but for the lightweights, alas, it's back to square one. Catz had representatives in both of the winning OUBC crews, and another four in the 'spares' races. Elizabeth Rees provides an account of the whirlwind that has taken her, in little more than a year, from crabbing with novices to competing with internationals as part of the OUWBC squad.

Another early lockdown casualty was the Boat Club's Easter training camp in Italy. That was also resumed this year and Eugenio Vecchi, men's 1st VIII cox and designated translator (the clue's in the name), has written a report.

The Boat Club started this term with with a burst of activity, entering City Bumps and the BUCS regatta. But now they're into more settled training for Eights, which will be from 25–28 May. And Summer Eights, last contested in 2019, is indeed the last piece of jigsaw before we complete a full year of 'back to normal' rowing.

Finally, on the all-time list of Catz competitors in bumping races, we now reach those on 40 starts or more: a venerable group of gentlemen occupying places 10–13.



The Catz women's IV racing in City Bumps

Results

Lightweight Boat Races, 20th March

<i>Women's Lightweights</i>				
Cambridge	bt	Oxford	15 L	19:59
<i>Men's Lightweights</i>				
Cambridge	bt	Oxford	5 L	18:01

The Boat Races, 3rd April

<i>Women's Reserves</i>				
Blondie	bt	Osiris	2 ³ / ₄ L	19:09
<i>Women's Blue Boats</i>				
Cambridge	bt	Oxford	2 ¹ / ₄ L	18:23
<i>Men's Reserves</i>				
Isis ¹	bt	Goldie	3 ¹ / ₂ L	17:04
<i>Men's Blue Boats</i>				
Oxford ²	bt	Cambridge	2 ¹ / ₄ L	16:42

¹ Augustin Wambersie at 6

² Angus Groom at 7

City Bumps, 24th April

19 Men's fours, 18 Women's fours competing

	Start		Races 1–4		Finish
Men's A	3rd	=	-1 -1 -1		6th
Men's B	15th	=	= = +2		13th
Women's A	11th	=	+1 = +1		9th

BUCS Regatta, Nottingham, 30 Apr – 2 May

Women's Intermediate VIIIs (38 entries)

Time Trial (fastest six crews to A Final, etc)

1st 5:14.6 Oxford Brookes A

32nd 6:26.3 St Catherine's*

F Final (for final placings 31–36)

1st (31st) 8:08.22 Portsmouth

3rd (33rd) 8:18.07 St Catherine's*

*Rowing as Oxford University D

University Boat Races

All six Boat Races returned to the Tideway this year. Since Cambridge's clean sweep in 2018, Oxford's only victories had come from the men's (3) and women's (1) lightweights. This year, however, the Cambridge lightweights were in a different class, their men winning by 5 lengths and their women by 15 (yes, fifteen). Catz ex-Captain Tom Wagstaff was in the lightweight spare pair, who also lost to their Cambridge counterparts. Kaylin Chong coxed the women's lightweights spare four which won by default in the absence of any Cambridge opposition.

A couple of weeks later the heavyweights made a bigger splash. Being a post-Olympic year all four Blue Boats were heavily stacked with international talent (the Oxford bow-man was the stroke of the US Men's Olympic VIII) and, for once, a convincing case could be made that both men's and women's Boat Races were contested by the two fastest club crews in the country.

In the end the results went according to expectation. The Cambridge women at least paid Oxford the compliment of deliberately (and borderline legally) washing them down rather than just racing the clock. They set a new record time, but the $2\frac{1}{4}$ length margin the narrowest since the Women's Boat Race moved to the Tideway in 2015, as was the $2\frac{3}{4}$ lengths by which Blondie defeated Osiris.

The men's Boat Race was more straightforward, figuratively and literally, with both crews maintaining a respectful distance until Oxford gained enough clear water to take their own line. Angus Groom, silver medallist from the GB quad scull at Tokyo and now starting a DPhil at Catz, rowed at 7 in the Oxford boat, while our triple-Blue, Augustin Wamberis, found himself in the 6 seat of Isis. With three other former Blues for company, any disgruntlement was unleashed on Goldie so that, at his fourth attempt, he finally got across the finish line first.

The only Oxford victories this year came from the the two boats which included Catz students, and also from the two races umpired by *former* Catz students: Matt Pinsent (M.89) for Blue Boats and Matt Smith (M.99) for Isis-Goldie. This latter fact is presented merely as an interesting coincidence, nothing more.

The previous day, another Catz alumnus, Ante Kusurin (M.06) had stroked Oxford crew to victory in the Veterans' Boat Race (minimum age 35, average age 42+), Cambridge being disqualified when the boats locked together. The umpire? Matt Pinsent again. Still just a coincidence, though.



The OUWBC Spare Four, Oriane Grant second from left and Elizabeth Rees on the right.

There was also an inaugural (Tideway) women's vets event. Cambridge couldn't put together a crew within the required specs but Oxford, conceding an average of 5 years a woman, raced them anyway. And won. Does anyone out there want to be Catz' first representative in the Women's Vets' Race?

Before we leave London, British Rowing draws my attention to Fulham FC's plan to build a pier extending well onto the Tideway course. They also mention a petition (Google 'Stop the Pier') to oppose this and so I pass this information on.

Trialling with OUWBC

Elizabeth Rees

This was my first year trialling with OUW. Having just started rowing with Catz in the Hilary term prior, it has been something of a whirlwind to say the least. This year was particularly competitive, with a large intake of impressive athletes — some fresh off the plane from Tokyo. Fighting for a seat was tough, but at the same time I learnt an enormous amount about rowing, myself, and the depths of resilience I never knew I had. Highlights of the season included Fours Head of the River where we race the Boat Race course in the opposite direction, and I really enjoyed improving my small boat skills, racing a pair at BUCS in May. Adjusting to a new training regime and balancing this with my DPhil work presented new challenges, and ultimately, this year was a great learning experience for me. I raced Cambridge in the spare four this year with fellow Catz rower, Oriane Grant, where we unfortunately came up short against the Tabs on the Tideway. I'm looking forward to building on this year as I go into the next season, hopefully after a victorious Catz Summer Eights campaign!



The Easter Training Camp at Lago di Monate in northern Italy

Easter Training Camp

Eugenio Vecchi

St Catherine's College Boat Club held a training camp in Monate, in the Lombardy region of Italy, from the 12th–18th March 2022. 24 athletes and two coaches boarded a plane from Gatwick in the early hours of the morning, and just a few hours later we were already out on the water.

We spent five full days training on the beautiful Lago di Monate, home of the Associazione Canottieri Monate which included two sessions a day per squad. We had the opportunity for many members of our squad to try their hand at small boats for the first time, which whilst resulting in a few soaked rowers was also very enjoyable. The cultural side of our trip was also much appreciated, with the gelato stand outside the boat club likely making a year's worth of revenue in just a week, and the food provided by the accommodation (Casa Don Guanella Barza) was exceptional to say the least.

Overall the training camp was a great success, with many of the less experienced members of our squad making huge leaps forward in terms of both fitness and technique, and the more experienced members getting a good amount of mileage in, far more than is usually possible on the Isis. A huge thanks must of course go to the coaches Rowan and Niels, the club committee who made the trip possible, and to Rowing Society for their continued support.

Summer Eights

Eights was last run in 2019 so, even in the upper divisions, most participants will be having their first 'Eights experience.' For our men's 1st Eight there's the added novelty of bouncing along in the choppy water near the bottom of Div I.

The Eights finish order may have been frozen in time, but society has moved on and in the spirit of gender equality there will now be as many women's divisions as men's and, this year, as in Torpids, the last race each day will be Women's Div I.

Eights 2022

Starting positions of our 1st Eights and Torpids 2022 change

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

To make space for the extra women's division, the time between divisions in the early part of the day will be reduced from 35 to 30 minutes. The reason it used to be longer was to allow for the extra river traffic in summer, extra swans (drawn by the tow-path crowds) which have to be 'persuaded' off the racing-line, and the generally reduced competence of the crews. None of those factors is likely to be any different this year, so ...good luck with that! At least divisions are reverting to 12 boats (plus Sandwich Boat) rather than the 13 used since 2012, and the Rowing On divisions may have even fewer crews, which all helps.

But we now have a simplified nominal schedule: men's divisions every hour from 12:15 until 6:15, corresponding women's divisions half an hour later, and, as usual, all racing moved forward an hour on the Saturday.

For the Catz crews this means that, from Wed–Fri, the Women's 1st Eight are likely to be racing at 5:45 and the Men's 1st Eight at 6:15, so if you want to dip briefly into the various live coverage options, that might be a good time to do so. The men's 2nd Eight start 8th in Div IV at 3:15 while any other crews that succeed in Rowing On will be racing some time between 12:15 and 1:45.

I plan to send out evening reports to those on the RS email list.

Bumps Starts

We now reach those occupying places 10–13 in the list of those who have had the most bumps starts in Catz crews in Torpids and Eights. With the youngest of these hanging up his oar in 1968 I think we can safely say they won't be adding to their total.

Pos	Starts	Name	Active
=10th	42	Graham Kaye	1949–52
=10th	42	John Rousseau	1961–67
=10th	42	P B Smith	1931–36
13th	40	Mike Day	1964–68

Graham Kaye's obituary appeared in the St Catherine's Year 2019. During his time at St Catherine's he was a regular cox of the 1st and 2nd VIIIs, and subsequently went into teaching (history), eventually becoming headmaster of Rodway School in Bristol. Prior to the '49ers reunion in 1999 he bought himself a blazer which, via a convoluted route, is now back in circulation within the Boat Club.

All I know of P.B. Smith is that he rowed in the 1st and 2nd VIIIs from 1931–1936, and was the Boat Club Treasurer from 1933–34. He presumably features in a formal photograph of the 1933 1st Eight, but the individuals in that photo are not identified.

John Rousseau mostly coxed, although occasionally put his hand to an oar in the lower boats. His Catz career is long enough to suggest a DPhil but I know nothing of his subsequent life except that Google reveals a 2021 obituary notice of a Lakeland photographer of the same name and similar age.



The 1965 Catz 1st Eight, with John Rousseau in the cap and Mike Day standing on the Right. The photo was taken on the top deck of the old St Catherine's Barge.

Mike Day rowed in the 1964 1st Torpid, thereafter moving between the 1st and 2nd boats, finally winning blades in the '68 2nd Eight. He has been a member of the Rowing Society, although he seems to have dropped off our email list. He was most recently sighted at the 2014 Gaudy paddle and, from his last email (2018), still living in London. I believe after Oxford he went into the Civil Service.

Coming up ...

In the next issue there will be photos and results on Summer Eights, and the Captains' reports on the term as a whole. I shall reveal those in positions 5–9 in the Bumps Starts, four of whom are considerably younger and, in one case, more female, than those in places 10–13.

Meanwhile, David Reid (M.80) reminds me that it's 40 years since three Catz boats won blades in Eights'82 (M1, M2, W1) and most of those people will also have received invitations to this year's Gaudy. Anyone up for a paddle before the evening gets really messy?

Diary

- 21 May 2022 Rowing On
- 25–28 May 2022 Summer Eights
- 25 June 2022 Gaudy Paddle

Anu Dudhia