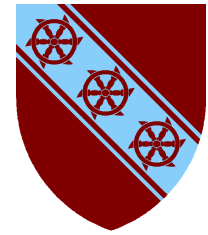




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College,
Oxford OX1 3UJ



25th March, 2007

In this issue ...

There are a couple of advantages to Torpids being washed out, as it was this year. Firstly, the Rowing Society Dinners tend to be a little more lively than usual — probably due to rowers and alumni not having expended all their energy at the river putting in a hard day's rowing and, er, alunning — and this year was no exception. Secondly, it allows the Captains to make extravagant claims as to the successes that surely awaited our crews, had it not for that wretched red flag. And once again, this year ...

Less affected by the local conditions, four of our students feature in the Oxford crews announced for this year's Boat Races, yet, for different reasons, even one of those looks like ending up in a 'virtual' race.

There was a brief window of opportunity in which College crews not only managed to get on the water but also to race, although having spent more of the term than usual *not* wearing rowing kit, there has been a revival of interest in gentlemen's tailoring.

There are recollections of events of 40 years ago (which the more delicate reader may wish to avoid) and news from alumni of that period, while a contemporary, Leslie Singleton, has been piecing together some old programmes.



The view across a flooded Christ Church meadow. A few more inches, maybe some buoys, and I think we'll have ourselves an alternative rowing venue.

Results

Isis Winter League E 19th Feb

Crew	Time	Position
Men's A	4:54	4th/19 Men's VIIIs
Women's A	5:39	2nd/20 Women's VIIIs
Women's B	6:14	10th/20 Women's VIIIs

Bedford Head 4th Feb

Crew	Time	Position
Nov 4+	5:15	4th/13 crews
S4 4+	5:17	2nd/5 crews
WS3 8	5:21	9th/13 crews
WS4 8	5:21	8th/12 crews

University Crews

Crews for the 2007 Boat Race were announced on 12th March. Croatian international Ante Kusurin continues our recent occupation of the OUBC stroke seat while Nick Brodie has once again been selected to cox (no doubt hoping that there won't be another late switch this year). Anthony Mullin, a Yorkshireman who only took up rowing while studying in the US, rows at no.3 in Isis.

A couple of our former Blues have also been involved in the Boat Race crews' practice fixtures. Last Friday, Andy Triggs Hodge (2005) stroked a Molesey crew which got the better of Cambridge, although if Oxford drew any satisfaction from that encounter it would only have lasted until the following day when they themselves came off second best against a Leander crew stroked by Colin Smith (2004,2006). Molesey, Leander and, for once, CUBC, should all be contesting next Saturday's Head of the River Race.

In the Henley Boat Races the following day, Catz will be represented by Alex Zdravkovic rowing bow in Nephthys, the lightweight second boat. As mentioned in the last newsletter, it seems unlikely that Cambridge will be fielding any opposition this year so they may end up just rowing over the course, which must be a tad irritating for them. However, I see that there is also a Nephthys entry for the Eights Head so, sensibly, they seem to found themselves an alternative challenge to justify 6 months of hard training.

President: Bruce Mitchell

Vice Presidents: Don Barton, Rev. Joseph Bell,
 Lord Garden KCB, Richard Peters,
 Sir Matthew Pinsent CBE, Ben Sylvester.

2007 St Catherine's Torpids

Men's 1st Torpid

B Simon Christian-Edwards
2 Tim Monger-Godfrey
3 Leo Masson
4 James Dunbar
5 Nicholas Powell
6 James Bolton
7 Nick Szmigin
S Malcolm Spencer
C Alastair Ross

Women's 1st Torpid

B Caitlin Fitzpatrick
2 Lucy Rowland
3 Nicola Squire
4 Linnea Ek
5 Katharine Pierce
6 Samantha Clarkson
7 Clare Shakespeare
S Bianca Rautenbach
C Timothy Rooney

Men's 2nd Torpid

B Chris Chan
2 George Farrell
3 Robert Gerlach
4 Knut Hustad
5 Mike Kuzmin
6 Jonathan Ragins
7 Marcus Wilson
S Christian Toennesen
C Kim Harley

Women's 2nd Torpid

B Claire Berthet
2 Tara Chang
3 Sophie Foxen
4 Teresa Kao
5 Shari Levi
6 Christine Schleppegrell
7 Caroline Woffindale
S Juliet Raine
C Peter Hedges

Women's Boat Club Report

Bianca Rautenbach, Women's Captain

This term has not been an easy one, but whenever the club was given the opportunity, it really shone. It all started with a week's training camp before term started, during which we were unable to get on the water at all, we worked hard on our fitness and the girls really started to bond as a team. The term was a matter as doing the most we could when the weather was on our side, and when the rain came we did many circuits and weights sessions.



The Women's 1st Torpid racing in the Isis Winter League at the start of 6th Week.

We got the opportunity to put our hard work into action with Bedford Head, where the girls did extremely well. We entered one eight and raced it twice, I think our performance put the fear in the other colleges that competed, our times equalling that of Queen's College, placed 2nd on the river for Torpids. Our success was repeated when we took part in the

Isis Winter league, and came 2nd, beating Oriel who are currently head of the river in Torpids. Our hopes were high in the weeks heading up to Torpids as we knew there was a good chance we were going to move up from 3rd on the river, and might be taking home the headship blades.

Sadly we were unable to follow through as the red flag was raised, and Torpids was cancelled. So although disappointed, I am very proud of our success this term, and I think we have a firm grounding for a legendary Summer Eights.

Men's Boat Club Report

Malcolm Spencer, Men's Captain

Another term, another frustrating state of affairs with the state of the river in Oxford. It was with great disappointment we bore witness to the cancellation of each successive day of Torpids before our boats could reach the bung lines. Thus the headship for the girls will have to wait for one more year, while the men's rapid rise through Division I also took a temporary reprieve.



The Men's 1st Torpid racing in the Isis Winter League.

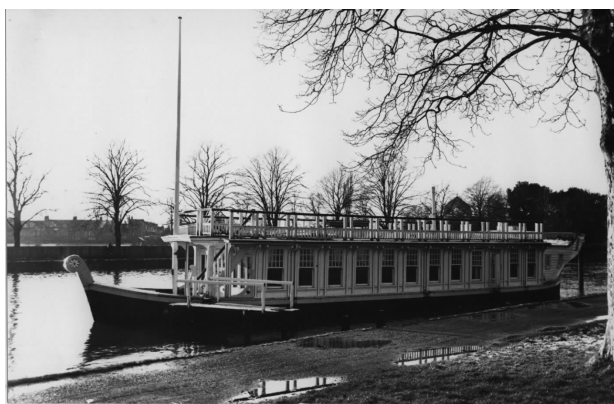
Still, the term was not completely without its racing with both the men's and women's crews entering Bedford Head for what was thought to be a build up to the term's bumps racing. The men entered two coxed fours in the novice and senior four divisions, posting some strong times. In the senior division they were just one second from the fastest time, with the novice boat then posting a time two seconds quicker, which would have put them at the head of senior four. However both boats noted with satisfaction that with their times they had managed to outpace our namesakes in Cambridge University.

Eyes are now focused on the coming term and what is hoped will be a thrilling (and complete) Summer Eights programme. Trinity term will also see the return of those members of St Catherine's who have spent the past two terms with the University Squads. At this stage, then, a sense of optimism is once more possible; all eager to get back on the water after so many false starts, the coming months will hopefully provide a more positive report of proceedings.

40 Years Ago ...

We have no contemporary Boat Club records from the 1960's so for the History we relied on memories of those who were there (and, of course, being the 1960's, 'if you can remember being there ...'). However, for this newsletter, the 1967 Captain, Andrew Geddes, adds the following.

We had an Australian graduate (John Corbett) who was an excellent oarsman (think we put him at 5 or 6) but he was a medical graduate and always said he could not afford the time on the river. However, we managed to persuade him to become part of the regular crew (1st VIII '65-'66) on a rather strange condition. Ian Lewis who was Vice Capt of Boats at the time also had something to do with this negotiation. John wanted to try and test his theories about body temperature during high pressure sport reaching surprisingly high levels which might normally be considered dangerous. He really wanted us to row with a monitoring system in the boat and thermometer up our backsides but this proved rather complicated to arrange. He settled for us having to come alongside the Catz barge pontoon (which gave a little more privacy than the OUBC pontoon) and each of us had to leap out of the boat and drop our pants to be measured with the aid of his pretty assistant armed with 8 thermometers and some vaseline!



The College Barge — scene of many a crime and unnatural act over the years.

In the summer of '66 the 1st VIII got into various cars and we drove over to Paris for a return race against HEC (Haute Etudes Commerciale) which was great fun but I really cannot remember who won since it was the event which was actually more important than the result [see p126 of the History for more].

We also had a lot of parties on the barge in the '65-'67 period but it smelt like a brewery the next day until we pumped out the bilges.

It might be a little outside the period but it must have been '68 when, after an unusually raucous BC

dinner, a good member of the Catz BC, Ron Collins, attempted to drive a steam engine into the quad but left a trail of broken flagstones behind him. Sadly Ron died recently but he was a very colourful character in Catz BC and a good friend of many of us.

For reasons of both space and taste, I've edited this down a bit. The unexpurgated version is on the 'Messages from Alumni' section of the RS web-pages.

News from Alumni

Andrew Geddes (M.65)

I rowed for many years at my school which culminated in the school's 1st VIII and we did all the usual regattas along the Thames. When I arrived at Catz I therefore found myself in the Catz 1st VIII and was elected Treasurer in my first year ('65). In the following year I was elected the Capt of Boats ('66) and we continued a steady upwards progress at that time to the top of the Second Division, and managed to row at the bottom of the 1st Division but unfortunately could not make the vital bump to secure a place in the 1st Division. Most of this time I was stroke. I rowed in the 'Cherwell' boat as stroke in the summer of '66 [called Isis III by Simon Clark]. I think it was during this time that we got a new boat for the first VIII and Simon Clark drove it into the bank in the gut saying the rudder was too small to control the boat. We changed the rudder for a larger one the next week and I think Simon still has the original one as a trophy. I did some rowing with Kingston RC after I left Catz but it was never the sort of perfection of technique that I had hoped so I dropped it.

Simon Clark (M.66)

My Dad coxed the Society First Eight in 1928 so I volunteered when I went up. In 1967 I coxed the Second Torpid and Second Eight. I coxed in my Dad's blazer and cap. The following year I went on to First Torpid and Eight and, with Mark Stevens and Andrew Forbes, was part of Isis III. I think I was Treasurer in 1968 with Andrew Forbes as Captain. Did a bit with Mark Stevens with London Rowing Club after Catz, Novice Eights as I recall. Then LRC Veterans for many a year. I remember being bumped quite a bit in 1967, and those long pencil shaped blades which look so antique today. I don't think we were very good as Second Eight but we tried so hard! And those funny antique T Shirts. Of course in those days we had a barge but we didn't know how special that was. My best stories relate to 1968 so maybe another time ... I worked in advertising and marketing, now am semi-retired, fiddling about in property and voluntary work.

Old Programmes

Leslie Singleton (M.65)

Programmes means Eights Week Programmes: I have bits, only, of those for 1935, 1936 and 1937. The consecutive dates are pure coincidence which I say because the programmes come from different sources over 40 years. I find what they contain fascinating.

1935 Head of the River?

I only have one page for 1935 but it is of some interest because, in a way, it shows us as Head of the River. How? Well, it is a map of the Barges in that year and our Barge is clearly shown as right at the top up near Salters. Beat that! We know from the beginning chart in the 1936 Programme that we finished 5th in the Second Division in 1935.

1936 Six Days' Racing

Everybody knows that Eights lasted a full six days then but what I for one did not learn till recently was that the racing then was a perhaps counterintuitive Thursday to Wednesday inclusive (rather than from Monday to Saturday as might have been expected, with the last day on a Saturday). At least that's what the 1936 (and 1937) Programme clearly shows.

What I have for 1936 shows on Front Cover: Summer "Eights" 1936 "Blue" Race Chart 18th Annual Issue Order of Starting Monday, May 25th. (the quotation marks are as is and the colour of the cover is indeed Blue — Light Blue in fact)

By that stage we had gone down two, once on the Friday and again on the Saturday meaning we were by then 20th on the River. We obviously went down one more place because we are shown as starting 21st on the River on the first day in the 1937 Programme.

Oriel almost certainly rowed over as Head all week. The only day in doubt is the Tuesday in that the 1937 Programme shows them starting the 1937 week at Head.

1937 Doom and Gloom

Anyone thinking that 1936 was bad should think again. In those days Colleges, or at least some Colleges, produced their own Chart of the Eights. I have Worcester's and New's for 1937 (I hope to be forgiven for keeping it simple and describing these as Programmes above, which they strictly are not).

These both show results as bad as they can be. The First Eight went down six in to the Third Division and I suspect the Second Eight also went down six to 58th, sixth from Bottom in the Fifth Division. The doubt arises because the last day has not been manually entered for the lower boats on the Charts I have. The Second Eight certainly went down five till

the last day. New College bumped Oriel on the 2nd day and stayed Head the remainder of the week.

Back to the 1936 Programme, there is a page on the History of the Eights which were first rowed, we are told, in 1815 (Waterloo!). BNC rowed Head in that first year. By 1935 the House had rowed Head no fewer than 23 times, Oriel only managing a measly total of four.

If anybody has any other Programmes I could beg, borrow or photocopy I should be most grateful.

Blazers

Inspired either by Leslie Singleton's AGM plea for more widespread wearing blazers (dual-piped with only the correct colours, naturally) or by former Captain Darren Chadwick's status as a fashion icon — both explanations seem equally implausible to me — several members of the Men's 1st VIII have decided to take the financial plunge and approach Walters, in The Turl,



to have St Catherine's blazers made up. They've been quoted £240 each, with small discounts for orders of 3 (5%) or 6 (10%). If you're interested, the phone number for Walters is 01865 241848, and their email turlst@shepwood.co.uk

Darren Chadwick (M.03), modelling The New Look for The Noughties.

Coming Up ...

In the next newsletter there will be reports on the University Boat Races and arrangements for Eights. There will also be a look back at the Boat Club of 50 years ago, 1957, when David Gebbett was Captain. Items for the News from Alumni section are always welcome.

Anu Dudhia

email: dudhia@atm.ox.ac.uk

Row.Soc: <http://www.atm.ox.ac.uk/rowing/rs.html>

Diary

1 Apr 2007	Henley Boat Races
7 Apr 2007	The Boat Race
23-26 May 2007	Eights
26 May 2007	Boathouse lunch