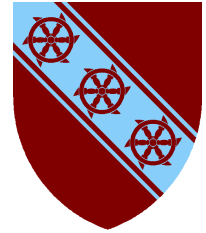




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College
Oxford OX1 3UJ



29th January, 2012

In this issue . . .

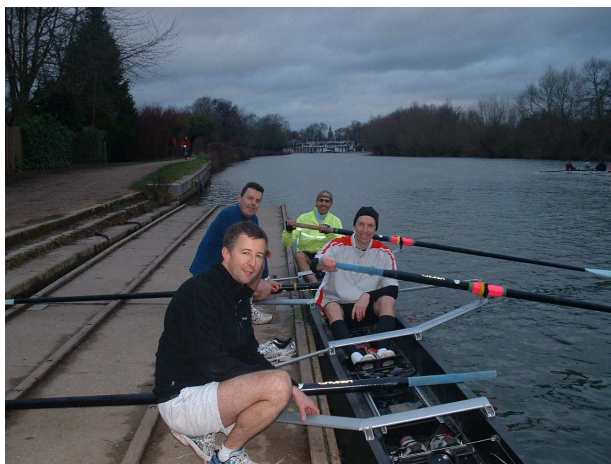
The Boat Club has already been in action in the first of this term's IWL races and the men have been trying out their new boat. Torpids will be from 22–25th February, with the RS AGM and dinner on the Saturday (invitation enclosed). We also have news of our triallists for University crews.

A couple of weeks ago I was contacted by Pete Collini (M.84) asking to take out a four prior to an Engineer's Dinner on January 25th — see photo below and 'News from Alumni'. More and less historically, I've received photos from 1968 from Nigel Bennett which have provoked some discussion amongst those who were there (and if you can remember being there in the 1960s . . . etc), and there is a recollection of the events of 20 years ago.

Results

Isis Winter League C, 22nd January
64 crews raced

4th	4:35	Men's A (1st VIII)
11th	4:51	Men's C (1st VIII)
20th	5:09	Men's B (2nd VIII)
48th	6:12	Women's A (11th/26 W8)



Return of the Four Engineers (some 25 years after last stepping into a boat): Peter Collini (S), David Meller, Nick Curson and Andy Sutton (B).



The Men's 1st VIII, rowing as Catz C, in the IWL C.

Hilary Term 2012

With Torpids a week earlier than usual (6th week rather than 7th) there's not been much time wasted, with Catz crews competing in the Isis Winter League C at the end of 1st week, and another two IWL races to fit in before Torpids. However, their coach, Rory Copus, believes there's more to rowing than just racing on the Isis so the 1st VIIIs are also entering the Henley Fours and Eights Head on 11th February.

The Isis Winter League is a series of time-trials over a course from Donnington Bridge to the bumps finish, held during Michaelmas and Hilary Terms to allow crews training on the Isis to get some head racing practice and give OURCs an opportunity to train up marshals before Torpids. In the past these were separate, low-key races with the only prize being the honour of seeing your name at the top of the results list. This year, however, OURCs are offering trophies for the crews with the best performances over the series (taking the best three results), which seems to have attracted many of the top men's crews who wouldn't normally be seen on the Isis until Torpids.

Over the Christmas break, the men took delivery of a new (well, 'pre-used') boat: a Hudson. These Canadian boats are relatively rare in this country but Cambridge used one — not this one! — when they surprisingly lost last year's Boat Race, which might explain how we managed to get a such good deal on a boat that would normally be out of our price range.

President: Bruce Mitchell
 Vice Presidents: Don Barton,
 Richard Peters,
 Sir Matthew Pinsent CBE,
 Ben Sylvester.

They've been using it since the start of term and, by all accounts, are delighted with it but the cox will be even happier once we fit a rudder designed for steering round corners rather than keeping the boat straight down a 2000 m course. At some point we hope to have an official naming ceremony but first we'll need a name — we await the Boat Club's decision on that.



The Women's 1st VIII rowing in the IWL C.

Torpids 2012 will be from 22–25th February, with racing starting at noon each day and finishing with Men's Division I at 5pm.

Both our 1st Torpids are 4th on the River, and the Men's 2nd Torpid is in Div V. Other crews will have to qualify in Rowing On on 17th February.

Torpids 2012: Wednesday Start times

Crew	Division	Bungline	Time
Men's 1st	I	4	5.00 pm
Women's 1st	I	4	4.30 pm
Men's 2nd	V	2	1.00 pm
*Women's 2nd	V	?	12.30 pm
*Men's 3rd	VI	?	12.00 pm

*Subject to qualifying in Rowing On

On the first day the men's 1st boat will be chasing Magdalen and pursued by Balliol, neither of whom have competed in anything I've noticed so far this term or last. Pembroke have been in storming form, and I'd expect them to take the Headship from Christ Church on the Wednesday and keep it.

The women are chasing Wadham and being chased Oriel. Wadham were faster than Catz in IWL B and Oriel slower in IWL C so it could be a quiet first day, just to settle the nerves. Magdalen start Head but they haven't raced since IWL A when they were 2 seconds slower than Catz, and S.E.H. who start 2nd, don't seem to have raced at all. Perhaps it's going to be Wadham's year.



The Men's 2nd VIII rowing in the IWL C.

20 Years Ago

The year 1991/92 was a difficult one for Catz Boat Club, particularly the women who had to fill their 1st VIII with a large number of novices. And with the women's Captain trialling with OUWBC, it was left to their vice-captain to try and keep things together.

The following extracts are from the RS newsletters.

Michaelmas Term, 1991

Matt Mowbray, Men's Captain

The third day of Christ Church Regatta is notorious among Catz crews for being the day of reckoning, the reason being the small matter of the preceding St Catherine's Night. The Boat Club, not being as oppressive as some are to their novice rowers, does not ban alcohol consumption on this (or, indeed, any other) evening. From the experience of the past few years, including my own recollection of a headache that morning, perhaps we ought to ask them to change the dates of the regatta. After all, Saint Catherine couldn't choose when she died.

The term was rounded off nicely by the Christmas Pudding Races. Six crews in various states of dress and undress entered the free-for-all, causing a fair degree of havoc and amusement on the river. Can somebody remind next year's captain to teach pudding-race coxes how to steer before letting them loose with eight people rowing on their wrong sides. Chaos was not only caused on the river — one lady cycled into a wall near Carfax at the sight of a rower with a phallic object tied to his back, accompanied by a Frenchman in drag. By comparison, the mince pies

and mulled wine after everybody had got into clean dry clothes were a quiet affair. I felt quite emotional at the thought of it being my last function in my first term as Captain of Boats. I soon snapped out of it.

Hilary Term, 1992

Katie Ryde, Women's Vice-Captain

The women's boat club has managed to form four crews for Torpids this term, comprised of primarily Michaelmas' first-year novices, and a handful — yes, five — second and third years. The 1st Torpid has apparently been written off already, being 3rd on the River, and, in the words of a certain men's captain, 'The most you can hope for is to stay there'. Despite the obvious lack of support, however, the crew concerned is looking surprisingly good, and an interesting alternation of coaches doesn't seem to have done any harm. Whatever happens in 6th week, at least we will have enjoyed ourselves on the way. We have a lot to learn, admittedly, but everyone is willing to try, and that's all you can ask.

With the Men's Boat Club ticking over rather less traumatically, they've found time to indulge their theatrical aspirations. There's a play doing the rounds (currently at the Oxford Playhouse) called *One Over the Eight*, describing the efforts of a 'Provincial University' crew (Cambridge?) who've rashly challenged Oxford to a race. Since the director, Alan Ayckbourn, is currently the Cameron Mackintosh Professor of Contemporary Theatre at Catz, and needed someone to coach the actors in rowing, the local Captain of Boats seemed the obvious choice (though not if you'd actually seen him row). Anyway, if you ever get to see the play, you'll now know how they got that hang at the catch.

Matt Mowbray, Men's Captain

For the Men's 1st Torpid, I have the sad task of reporting a rather disastrous term. Yes folks, we got bumped every day and are now Sandwich Boat between the first and second divisions. If this has achieved one thing, it is to persuade some of us that we will be rowing in our third year in order to restore us to the 1st division.

The Women's 1st Torpid also dropped 4 places.

Trinity Term, 1992

This year, the men are back training at Radley, once again under the sharp eyes of Jean le Manac'h and the somewhat myopic gaze of his faithful spaniel 'Cleo'. Although Jean insists that she no longer gets excited

by the vibrations from the outboard motor, I still prefer to keep that dog safely at arm's length when I go along as a passenger in the coaching launch. The Men's 1st VIII went to Wallingford Regatta at the end of 1st week and very nearly won their first race. With just a couple of hundred metres to go, they were a full length up and looking strong (allegedly) when Jane [the cox] blurts out: 'Come on! I've never won a race before!'. Never mind, perhaps they're saving it for Eights Week.

The Men's 1st Eight gained one place, finishing 17th on the River, while the Women's 1st Eight dropped two places to finish 14th.

1968 2nd Torpid

Nigel Bennett (M.65) sent me copies of some old photos of his showing the 1968 2nd Torpid (all now on the RS web-pages, in the 'photoarchives'). With the aid of some others we think we've now identified everyone in the crew.



The 1968 St Catherine's 2nd Torpid (middle lane) approaching the finishing line. Photo from Nigel Bennett.

Since 1960, Torpids had been raced as a multi-lane event, with crews splitting into two lanes at the start, and then three lanes after the Gut. You could only bump crews in your own lane but you could also gain places by finishing ahead of those in other lanes. The intention was to allow good crews to rise by more than one place a day but, even using boats equipped with huge rudders, the result was often confusion ('single-lane' racing was restored in 1980).

During the late 1960s the St Catherine's 2nd Torpid had generally been dropping a few places each year, but in 1968 the boat was filled with ex-1st VIII oarsmen who, temporarily, halted the decline by gaining 7 places.

The photo also shows two barges moored alongside Christ Church meadow: ours is the furthest upstream and I believe the other belonged to Wadham.

University Triallists

Last year's Isis cox, Zoe de Toledo, featured in the OUBC Trial Eights race held over the Boat Race course on 13th December. She coxed the 'High Water' crew which was beaten by $1\frac{3}{4}$ lengths by 'Hell' although, judging from the race reports, the outcome wasn't determined by the coxing. The official crew announcements will be on March 5th.

The Oxford men's lightweights held their own Trial Eights races on the Henley stretch on 18th December (with Matt Pinsent umpiring). David Zimmer rowed in 'Ridiculous', beating 'Sublime' by $\frac{3}{4}$ length. He survived an intense pre-term training camp at Temple sur Lot but unfortunately he's just missed out on selection for the Lightweight Blue Boat and will instead be competing with the second boat, Nephthys, in the Head of the River Race on 17th March (Cambridge being no longer willing to field a lightweight second boat to compete at the Henley Boat Races which take place the following week).

Charlotte Marshall trialled with OUWBC last year but ended up on the bank as reserve. She's obviously be hoping to get a closer view of the racing this time around. She's joined in the current squad by Sonja Noll, an American graduate student who's followed Charlotte's tyre-tracks by stepping off a racing bike and straight into the OUWBC squad after a just a term's rowing at Catz. They also both spent the early part of the year training at Temple sur Lot.

News from Alumni

Pete Collini (M.84)

I set up Riverhill Partners LLP in 2005 providing restructuring and debt advice to companies having been an MD in Deutsche Bank's restructuring team where I was from 1996. The Institute for Turnaround named me Turnaround Professional of the Year 2009. I married Julie Duncalf, a geographer and cox at Catz 1984-87, and have a 13-year old son and 11 year old daughter.

Nick Curson (M.84)

After finishing my Engineering degree at St Catz in 1987 I traded derivatives for an American insurance company (*cf.* Paul Miron) which kept me happily occupied until the turn of the century. Then I had an (early!) mid-life crisis and left the City to pursue my other passion, flying. I am now a Training Captain flying for easyJet at Gatwick. This takes me all over the place but always home each night to be with my wife and two daughters, now 6 and 8. If anyone connected to St Catz hears me introducing myself as the Captain onboard an easyJet flight, please do pop into

the flight deck to say Hello. Oh, and Pete Collini and I are cycling from Land's End to John O'Groats for charity in March 2012 (this is part of Pete's mid-life crisis).

David Meller (M.84)

I'm currently the Group Finance Director and Head of Legal for Belron, the world's leading vehicle glass repair and replacement business with operations in 34 countries and trading as Autoglass in the UK. After leaving college I joined Price Waterhouse where I qualified as a Chartered Accountant. Subsequently I left to join McVitie's as their Finance Director before joining Belron in 2003. I have been married to Eira Ellis, a geographer at Catz from 1984-7, for 22 years and we have two daughters aged 11 and 13.

Andrew Sutton (M.84)

I rowed in the 'social eight' in 1987 and was delighted when Anu offered to take us out for another (very) social outing 25 years later. After Catz I worked in automotive manufacturing ending up in Italy where I met my wife Silvia. We now live in Durham with our eight year old daughter Emily. Having started in engineering I am now a self-employed management consultant working mostly around London (where I'm always free for a drink).

Matthew Mowbray (M.90) *I was spotted by Matt Mowbray and his wife Alayne, (née Wilson, M.91) last summer while I was running along the banks of the Cherwell. They were in a punt with at least two children, presumably their own.*

Coming Up ...

In the next newsletter there will be reports on Torpids and further progress of our triallists, and hopefully a naming ceremony for the new men's boat. Also, space permitting, a look at the events of 30 years ago under the captaincies of Tony Mitchell and Hazel Barker. Items for the 'News from Alumni' section are always welcome — don't feel you need to wait to get into a boat again.

Anu Dudhia

email: dudhia@atm.ox.ac.uk

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

www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=93221115264

Diary

11 Feb 2012	Henley 4s & 8s Head
22-25 Feb 2012	Torpids
25 Feb 2012	RS AGM & Dinner
25 Mar 2012	Henley Boat Races
7 Apr 2012	The Boat Race
23-26 May 2012	Eights