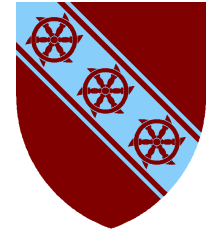




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College,
Oxford OX1 3UJ



14th May, 2005

In this issue . . .

There is a round up of the various Boat Races, arrangements for Summer Eights and a look at the Boat Club of 50 Years Ago (incidentally, the College seems to have lost contact with the then Captain, Stewart Fraser, so if anyone is still in touch please pass this on). Several alumni from that era, including one of our Vice-Presidents, have written to point out that that the A A Milne boat-naming theme started rather earlier than 1959 and other alumni send news of competing in the Cambridge Lents and, via Switzerland, the Head of the River Race.

Results

The Henley Boat Races, 26th March

Men's Lwt Reserves	Oxf	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	L	6:07
Women's Reserves	Oxf	1 $\frac{3}{4}$	L	6:48
Women's Lightweights	Oxf	$\frac{4}{2}$	L	6:55
Women's Blue Boat	Cam	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	L	6:36
Men's Lightweights	Oxf	3	L	5.51

The Tideway Boat Races, 27th March

Men's Reserves	Cam	5	L	16.48
Men's Blue Boat	Oxf	2	L	16:42



Sunrise over the Isis. One of the joys of summer rowing is how ridiculously early in the morning it is possible to find yourself down at the boathouse. Photo from Theo Bruening (but I was coaching that outing).

2005 Boat Races

The crews in this year's Boat Race were reputedly the best there have ever been, and neither would have looked out of place in a World Championship final. As it turned out, Oxford took a lead off the start and the only time that Cambridge managed to claw themselves back into the race a well-timed push from Oxford re-established their lead. They finished 2 lengths ahead in the fastest time ever recorded by an Oxford crew (and not in particularly helpful conditions).

Of the two Catz men, Chris Liwski, rowing at 5, becomes our first winning American Blue and stroke Andrew Triggs Hodge went on to win the GB pairs trials and now finds himself in the top boat: the coxless four. Colin Smith, who just missed out on the last seat in the Blue Boat, had a less happy time in the Isis-Goldie race; an outstanding Goldie crew just rowed away from Isis off the start and that was that. However, Colin has subsequently been selected as the GB single sculler for the first World Cup race at Dorney Lake.

Oxford's total domination in the Women's Boat Races for the past 3 years was finally broken when CUWBC beat OUWBC at Henley. Osiris and the Women's Lightweights continued to win though, as did both the Men's Lightweight crews.

Our two Blues bring Catz up to equal third in number of OUBC representatives (7) in the past 10 years, behind Keble (14) and Oriel (10). We're also third for Men's Lightweight Blues.

With new Boat Race sponsors and new TV coverage (I thought ITV made a decent job of it, by the way) there's once again talk of whether the Women's Boat Race should be moved to the Tideway as a curtain raiser to the 'main' event.

Finally a word on the Veterans' Boat Race (24th March) from Tony Mitchell (M.78):

'Just for the record, I was invited to step into a pretty scratch vets boat on Wednesday for 2 outings and a race against the filth. Sadly the tabs had been practising and so we were fairly well thrashed. I hope Oxford old boys will learn their lesson from this and not make it so easy for them in future.'

Tony did at least go on to win the Vet C category in the Tideway Scullers Head.

President: Tony Hancox

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

50 Years Ago ...

I've received a couple of letters regarding the boat naming debate which relate to the summer of '54, so included these as well extracts from the Minute Book as reproduced in the Boat Club History. In 1955 the 1st Eight finished 15th on the river, the highest it had reached that century and not bettered until 1971.

From Charles Hunt (M.52)

May I nail the *Winnie the Pooh* debate? This was the name of the shell the 1st VIII rowed up from Sims at Hammersmith when Tom Horne was captain — summer Vllls 1954¹. The wish-bones of the chickens from the famous Inn at Bray adorned the bows! Why the Milne connection I don't know — just a break from the *St Catherine of Alexandria* series. We had to do a real break — the year before in Torpids we'd had fixed pins! This term Conybear [style] and barrel blades, and it did work to some extent: 3 bumps and a pot-hunting sortie afterwards.

Minute Book, Wednesday, 9th June, 1954

Following damage to their Barge on the last night of Eights, Pembroke had sent in a bill for nearly £30. £5 of this had been paid by the people who removed trays, and a further £5 would be paid by those who had tied rafts across the river. The balance would have to be raised by a levy on members. A sum of 2s 6d was agreed upon, the balance to be paid by the offenders.

From the Rev. Joseph Bell (M.53)

Thanks for the March newsletter. The Boat Naming allusion to 'the start of naming our boats along the A A Milne theme' in 1959 continues a lapse of memory by Stewart Fraser, or possibly a misprint in *A History of St Catherine's Rowing* p106². It was the 1st VIII which 'pushed' for the new shell to be named *Winnie the Pooh* in April 1954, collected the boat in Putney and started training for Eights by rowing up to Oxford during the Easter vac. The tow-path 'convoy' was, at least until the final day, Biddie Horne, the Captain's sister, in a tiny MG. The entire VIII 'surrendered' to the Proctors and the four of us were fined 16s 8d as graduate scholars after the Censor spoke up for us and pleaded provocation over the taking away of Pembroke's barge and punting it round into the Cherwell and mooring it by the Iffley

¹He actually wrote '1953', but I think he means 1954

²which claims it was 1955, but see preceding footnote!

Rd Sports ground. We collected the £25 to repay the Pemmy boatman.

The 1st VIII won pots for the Junior Vllls at Wallingford and Tom Horne and I took the pair out in the Oxford Town Regatta and rowed over. I could only steer when the pair's rudder entered the water as I reached front stops!

Winnie the Pooh was a real mover. The 'new style' using spades and sliding them through the work meant that the crew had to bind together very early in the term and abandon any thoughts of 'pretty paddling'. Coached by Neville Mullamy (Balliol) and Chris Davidge (Trinity/RAF Benson), we bumped Merton II, St John's and Wadham. Neville Mullamy used us as a pacemaker for Balliol and we boated from RAF Benson c/o Christopher Davidge. 'The Beetle and Wedge' became a familiar discipline on the lower river. Ergs were unknown; river mileage was the recipe for success — added to a burning conviction that Conybear would win races.

Minute Book, Friday, 19th November, 1954

The Captain and two members of the Club had visited Stuttgart Rowing Club at their invitation, and presented them with a trophy in behalf of the Boat Club, the JCR and OUBC. [For the History, Stewart Fraser wrote from Australia with his recollection of the event: 'We 'organised' an invitation from Stuttgart and had OUBC pay our expenses as we were also representing the University. I purchased for a few bob a huge and ornate EPNS cup, vintage circa 1900; the previous inscription was erased and a new one engraved to commemorate our forthcoming visit, on behalf of SCBC and, of course, the OUBC. In the event our hosts were most appreciative and extended lavish hospitality, with visits to nearby camera and car factories as well as a mayoral reception. I think some Stuttgart RC folk visited Oxford at a later date and were entertained by the Master *et al.*']

Minute Book, Wednesday, 2nd March, 1955

The Club passed nem. con. a motion that new members would contribute a sum of 5s to a fund against the day when we had a Boathouse; this would demonstrate interest, and a willingness to help.

Minute Book, Friday, 10th June, 1955

The Captain [Peter Ainsley] produced the Fraser Cup which his predecessor had presented to the Club to be awarded annually to the novice who had made most progress with his blade during the year.

News from Alumni

Nicholas Chubb (M.51)

I was Shanghai-ed into being a member of the Rugby Club boat in 1954. Because of the weakness of the Rowing Club (it could only produce 2 boats for Eights Week!) we were promoted to be Catz 3rd Boat. This meant that we had to do much more practice than is usual for a Rugby Boat. Highs and Lows. High: I've always been glad to have had the experience of rowing and now that I have retired to York can enjoy watching crews of various sizes on the Ouse, imagining the pleasure the rowers must be having. It also makes me watch the Boat Race with a little understanding of what is going on even if the result is not always palatable. Lows: missed, because of novice practice, seeing Roger Bannister run the first sub-4 minute mile. I can't now remember who was also in the boat, but I do remember some of those who rowed properly!

Douglas Adams (M.52)

Living in Swansea I find it difficult to get to Oxford more than one in ten or twenty years! Nonetheless it is good to read of the exploits of my successors in the Boat Club — congratulations on keeping a good balance.

Having been a member of the committee who decided on the name *All Rabbit's Friends and Relations* back in 1957 or 58, I must correct the impression that this was the first of the Pooh boats. There was certainly quite an old shell called *Winnie the Pooh* and I am pretty sure there was a *Tigger* too. It would be good if you could find out when the first one actually was; a bigger project perhaps would be to record all the other ones since.

While I am writing I wonder if the new boathouse is full of old blades yet? If not, would anyone be interested in mine, won as no.3 in the Schools Eight of 1959. It is in good condition although the varnish has yellowed somewhat. We were also winners of the Getting On race. By comparison with the heavy-weights of this year's Boat Race crew, our average weight (apart from No.4 at 16st) was only 11st 5lb! The cox was 11st 10lb. The blade is about a metre long. [More on this in the next newsletter]

Peter Ainsley (M.54)

Fifty years ago! Much water under many bridges. Having 'retired', I am:

1. Teaching part-time at Surrey University (Business and Management Topics)
2. Rowing regularly in a coxless IV at Upper Thames

3. Trying to generate some interest in an Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race for 70 year olds.

Happy days

Sarah Askew (M.94) (Cambridge Lents)

I can't quite believe I'm still involved in bumps 10 years after my first bumps race. This year I was moved down the boat to the stroke seat (largely due to crew injury problems).

We approached the bungline on day one with some trepidation as we'd managed only 3 outings as a crew (technically 10 outings are required, but we figured nobody would notice as we've all been rowing for 3 years or more and had only changed 2 rowers and a cox since Lents last year).

[There followed 3 days of mass carnage, a re-row, and two bumps . . .] leaving us confident of a further bump on CCAT on Saturday. However, this was not to be. CCAT apparently injured a rower on their way up to the start and then further depleted their crew by sending their Boat Club Captain with her to hospital (fortunately their rower was fine). We were more than a little surprised when they finally arrived on the bungline with an ex-Cambridge rower at 7 and a guy borrowed from their Men's 1st VIII at stroke (both of whom had been cleared as acceptable subs by the senior umpire). We rowed over 1–1.5 lengths behind them, but couldn't help but feel it wasn't really a fair race.

Still, up two for the week probably isn't too bad given our lack of outings and I'm happy to report that I still haven't experienced being bumped.

Caroline Trotter (M.95)

You don't have to put this in the newsletter! [but I will anyway]. I have no news from the Women's Head this year as I have finally hung up my oar at Vesta (on a high with a women's Henley Medal, but with a broken rib preventing me from further action at the Nat Champs). I finished my PhD over a year ago and am currently unemployed and homeless, travelling round the world with Mark (a Catz man, but of the Cantab variety). See www.travelpod.com/members/bush-trotters for more info! Looking forward to meeting up with Em Thomas and Richard Law in San Francisco on the return leg of my journey in May.

Paul Halfpenny (M.97) (Head of the River Race)

Well, despite everything, 135th up from 186 starting position.

The despite everything being that even at 8.45 when we were due to boat at 9, we still didn't have a boat! Our Empacher (which would have had its first birthday on the day of the race) being one of the ten

Swiss boats trashed on the autobahn on the way to London. We finally got a boat with oars of questionable taste from Crabtree. Not the best warm up to a race trying to rig the thing to fit whilst tangled up in the trees waiting for the start under the Mortlake brewery.

2005 St Catherine's Eights

Hopes of reinforcing the successful Men's 1st Torpid with our Blues and Isis rowers for the summer took an early nosedive when someone realised that the first round of the Rowing World Cup, at Dorney Lake, was the same week as Eights. Further depredations due to injuries and examinations have meant our 1st Eights are now combinations of the 1st/2nd Torpids and it's been a struggle to get even 2nd Eights together to fill our 'fixed' places. These are the crews that were officially entered, although judging by the photos from this morning's training there have been a few changes since then.



The Men's 1st Eight.

Men's 1st Eight	Women's 1st Eight
<i>B</i> Oliver Phillips	<i>B</i> Ariana Berengaut
<i>2</i> Michael Tran	<i>2</i> Miriam Nemeth
<i>3</i> Erik Vincent	<i>3</i> Jennifer Cormano
<i>4</i> Darren Chadwick*	<i>4</i> Katherine Lampe*
<i>5</i> Evan Burfield*	<i>5</i> Lena Matthai*
<i>6</i> Peter Goult*	<i>6</i> Clare Shakespeare*
<i>7</i> Steven Wicks*	<i>7</i> Katharine Pierce*
<i>S</i> Carl Fliescher*	<i>S</i> Amy Banham-Hall*
<i>C</i> Fleur-Estelle Shaw*	<i>C</i> Stephanie Sit*

*ex-1st VIII



The Women's 1st Eight

Eights Week

Eights will run from 25th–28th May. On Wednesday–Friday racing starts at noon with the last division at 6.45pm, however, as in previous years, racing on the Saturday will be one hour earlier.

Eights 2005: Wednesday Start times

Crew	Div	Bunline	Time
Men's 1st Eight	I	10	6.45pm
Women's 1st Eight	I	11	6.15pm
Men's 2nd Eight	IV	4	3.30pm
Women's 2nd Eight	IV	4	2.55pm

NB: on Saturday all divisions race 1 hour earlier

On the Saturday there will be a buffet lunch in the boathouse for members of the Rowing Society and their guests, for which you will need to buy tickets in advance (see attached information). However, strawberry teas and drinks will be available for all throughout the afternoon.

For the younger at heart, after the end of racing on the Saturday there is a plan for a boathouse party for all the Boat Clubs sharing Long Bridges. Contact the Men's Captain, Darren Chadwick, if you think you're up for it.

1st & 2nd Eight Ties

And, on possibly a related note, thanks to the Men's Captain's desire to smarten up his crews off the water, Walters in Turl St now have a stock of silk 1st and 2nd Eight ties at £19.99 each. Telephone 01865 241848 or email turlst@shepwood.co.uk if interested.

Coming Up ...

In the next newsletter there will be report on Eights, details for the Rowing Society Paddle (timed to coincide with the Gaudy) and a piece on the Boat Club of 60 years ago. I doubt if we have many alumni who rowed in 1945, but news from alumni of other years also welcome.

Anu Dudhia

email: dudhia@atm.ox.ac.uk

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

Diary

25–28 May 2005	Eights
28 May 2005	Boathouse Buffet Lunch
02 July 2005	Rowing Society Paddle followed by College Gaudy