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## Friends of St. Hugh's Boat Club

Newsletter – TT 2013



*W2 celebrate winning blades in Summer Eights*



*The Men's Novice Four after their win at Shrewsbury Regatta*

Dear Friends of SHBC,

I guess this is the last thing I'll be writing for SHBC. Thank you all so much for your amazing support over the course of the year, I was overwhelmed with the turnout at VIII's dinner, showing huge support. Lots to celebrate from this campaign, especially a set of Blades for W2 (I got to award blades, yay!!) who absolutely beasts their campaign, getting quite a few bumps before the gut! Whilst M2 and M3 might not have felt their campaigns went to plan (though M2 won the coveted 'rolling pins' award for rowing over in the same position every day), if you consider that when I first got here M3 didn't exist and M2 were foot of the river, to be where they are now (M2 Mid Div VI, M3 near top of Div VII) is fantastic. If we can keep the momentum going and still put out crews next year, soon enough we'll be looking at having our lower boats in fixed divs! M1 and W1 had it tough, with an 'epic' Corpus M1 behind M1, and W1 facing 'on for blades' Trinity (although denied by Mansfield). They did us proud, keeping their heads held high and are already raring to go for next year!

The amount of support and people rowing right now is impressive, and I hope SHBC can hold on to that for next year, since I can already foresee some astounding campaigns to come if so. Best of luck SHBC, I shall now pass you over to our new President. You might know him from the twitter feed, Facebook and mentions on other web based publications (\*cough\* TR \*cough\*): Our resident funnyman, Mr Ben 'awesome webmaster' Wedd. Best of Luck Mr Wedd.

*Thomas Griffiths – SHBC President of Boats 2012-2013*



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Many of you reading this will have met me already, and if you haven't, you'll feel like you have. I'm Ben (or 'Wedders', as I am affectionately known), and for the past year I've been sitting at 7 in M1 and posting incessantly on our Facebook, Twitter and website, keeping you entertained and informed about the world of SHBC as our webmaster. It's a bit of a step up, then, moving to the dizzy heights of President, but I'm going to do my best to carry on Tommy's good work and keep the boat club climbing ever higher.

First off, some thanks. I think I speak for the whole boat club when I say what a fantastic job Tommy has done this past year as president. It might not be so obvious to the wider world, but the amount of work he's put in behind the scenes has been phenomenal. So thanks Tommy, and good luck in the big wide world working for Shell! We'll miss you, and no, we're never going to let you forget the 'communication' email. I'd also like to thank our other outgoing committee members, Andy, Sofia, and Beth, who have all been brilliant in their respective roles. You'd all better come back and visit whenever you can; we're going to miss you!

My agenda for the boat club over the next year (and beyond) is simple and of three parts. Part one is all about you guys, our alumni. With the help of our new development secretary, Jono Harrison, we're going to make a big push for alumni attendance at all of our major events, because you're the people who have made the boat club what it is today, and you should be here to enjoy the fruits of that success with us. Our reach currently only extends a relatively short way into the past, which is a terrible shame. We had a fantastic turnout at Eights Dinner this year, with over 70 people attending, many of them alumni, and it was brilliant. But it can be even better, so let's pack out that dining hall.

Part two is all about money. Obviously any donations we can get will be fantastic (and many thanks to anyone who has donated in the past), but we're also heading down some different routes. We're looking for a sponsor company, so that like so many other boat clubs we can enjoy just that little bit more freedom to spend money on things like coaching, external regattas, and equipment of all kinds. If you're part of a company that you think might be interested in getting in on the wealth of advertising opportunities that come with sponsoring SHBC, get in touch. Myself and Jono will be most interested in hearing from you, and we'd love it if you could help us submit a sponsorship proposal to the big dogs in your company.

The third and final part of the plan is success. As a boat club we have a wealth of one thing in particular: enthusiasm. We're probably the keenest boat club in Oxford, so let's use that keenness to show these other boat clubs what we're made of. Our women once held 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place on the river. I realise asking for that again would be a tad ambitious, but it doesn't mean we can't aspire for our women to be up in div 1 once again. Our men have never enjoyed the luxury of headship, but we're currently bobbing around near to the highest positions we've ever held in both Torpids and Eights, and we have the potential to push up into div 2 in both. The only way is up.

Be sure to keep an eye out for updates on what we've been up to on the Facebook page and website, and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at events over the next year. We're hoping it'll be our most successful one yet.

*Ben Wedd – SHBC President of Boats 2013-2014*





## Captains' Reports

### *Women's Rowing*

#### **BLADES for W2!**

Trinity Term 2013 has been an especially exciting time for women's rowing. What with two new captains getting to grips with their new responsibilities, a brand new coach, both a W1 and W2 squad, and multiple launch issues, it is needless to say that this term has been filled with highs and lows, however, the girls pulled it all together when it mattered the most. Without the girls' cooperation and willingness to sub into outings last minute, and to put in extra water sessions when necessary, our jobs would have been a lot more difficult. In the end, it all meant that we had a successful campaign during VIIIs.



Over the Easter break, we hired Hannah Glover to coach both W1 and W2, in the hope that she would be able to transform two boats, who were predominantly made up of novice rowers, into crews who were strong enough to compete with the other crews surrounding us in VIIIs. The girls responded well to Hannah's method of teaching, and we saw improvements within the boat each session we had. The girls trained hard throughout the term, attending regular erg and circuit sessions, which still

continued to be as popular as last term.

On Friday of 4<sup>th</sup> week, W2 rowed on, completing the time trial in an impressive time of 3:43, meaning that they had no problem in qualifying. This in itself was a rather big achievement for W2, but when we saw the division that they had been placed in, and the crews surrounding them, we were quietly confident that they would be a



successful campaign and boy were we right! The girls' commitment and focus meant that they bumped every day of their campaign. On Wednesday, they bumped Green Templeton III before even passing all the bunglines, and the story was similar on Thursday, and Friday when they bumped Oriel III and Exeter III within seconds of starting. These results raised everyone's hopes for the grand finale on Saturday. We knew that Magdalen III had also had a successful campaign so far, and knew that the girls would

have to work harder to catch them. But as they had on the previous three days, W2 rose to the challenge, and despite a mid-race crab, they pulled through and bumped Magdalen by the race desk. This of course meant blades, and also made W2 the most successful team of this campaign. The girls did us proud, and their thorough commitment to training meant that their hard work paid off. Although all of the girls rowed well, there is one member we would like to thank in particular. Heather Belen joined W2 on Wednesday of Eights week after having just got off a plane from America, and rowed with us for the entire of our campaign. Her enthusiasm, experience and ability to adjust to the crew so quickly certainly aided the girls in having such a successful campaign!

W1, although not as successful bumps-wise as W2, still showed a lot of promise as a team, and should be commended for their efforts, particularly as they were one of the least experienced W1 crews on the water. Training sessions demonstrated the individual strength of each girl in the boat, but a lack of experience in racing put them at a slight handicap when it came to VIIs. Despite being bumped three out of the four days of racing, they still came together as a crew and showed their potential to become a strong crew, given more experience. The girls learnt a lot over the four days of racing and showed their strength and stamina in an impressive row over, where the girls made good ground on the crew a couple of boats ahead of them. Next year, we hope that all our rowers will come back all guns blazing, ready to hit the ground

running and prepare for another year of rowing success.



We cannot deny that this term has brought a mixed bag of results, but the girls must be congratulated for their enthusiasm and determination shown in both training and racing. We look forward to welcoming the novices back as senior rowers, of which there will be many, and the promising work we saw on the water means that hopes are certainly high for a successful campaign next year. Many thanks to Hannah, the committee members, and of course the W1 and W2 crews for the support they have shown to us both this term.

*Georgia Comrie and Poppy Ellison ('Goppy') – Women's Captains 2013-14*

## ***Men's Rowing***

### **M2/M3: "Banned from the Isis"**

In welcome contrast to the rest of the year, Trinity proved dry and largely warm throughout, setting the scene for a competitive Summer VIII's campaign amongst the lower divisions. For SHBC there were highs and there were lows; suffice to say there was sufficient excitement throughout the term!

Over Easter we hired bumps veteran Tom Chapman to coach M2 and M3, whose enthusiasm and dedication was an asset throughout, ensuring we were all well and



truly whipped into shape. His love for pieces saw us practising the entire 2k course multiple times per session at race pace, with a few 500m bursts thrown in for good measure too; and Saturday morning double outings provided an opportunity for technical focuses too. Our squad of both summer-returners and first year novices was privileged enough to be joined midway through 3rd week by Isis cox Laurie Harvey in the M2 2-seat, whose technical prowess and knowledge proved extremely helpful for us all. As if that wasn't enough, three days later we were joined by Harvey's blue boat colleague and infamous BBC superstar Oskar Zorrilla, whose surprise addition to the crew was truly an honour.

Friday of 4th week brought 'Rowing On' and neither crew disappointed. M3 posted a time of 03.16 which placed them 21st out of 36 entries, whilst M2 'Empacher', two blues and all, came 9th with 3.04. Moving on to the main event, Wednesday saw both



M2 and M3 start in division 6. M3 started brightly by closing to 1/4 length on Brasenose M3 but their inexperience cost them in the form of a crab when going in for the kill, leaving them dead in the water for Oriel M3. M2, meanwhile, had closed on Univ M3 but were left to row over when Univ bumped out on Trinity M3 along greenbanks.

On Thursday, M3 were sadly caught by the Somerville M3 schools boat. M2, more hopeful of getting Trinity M3, bumped down the previous day, were thwarted by Univ's incapacity to steer, resulting in a love-in between them and the bank just ten strokes in, leaving M2 to row over again. Thursday night also proved eventful- but again for the wrong reasons. Late night calls and emails from OURC's and the race committee informed us that Zorrilla, having boated without a lifejacket earlier in the day, would consequently not be allowed to race henceforth. The phrase 'banned from the Isis' comes to mind- and was repeated multiple times during sconcing at VIII's dinner. This regrettably set the scene for Friday also: in high winds and rain M3 were caught by another schools boat whilst M2 once again had the unenviable task of rowing the whole course. A familiar story, then.

With the sun shining on us on Saturday, hopes were high for a change in results too. M3 started the day positively for Hugh's, rowing over and avoiding spoons. Having just heard of our women's counterparts achieving blades, M2 boated positively, having opted to adopt the famous 'fly or die' strategy in a bid to finally catch our Univ nemesis. Unfortunately the gamble did not pay, with Univ bumping out before the gut, leaving M2 to row over for a fourth time in front of a challenging St Anthony's M2 crew.



So whilst neither campaign was ideal, both crews showed

considerable team spirit and camaraderie, really demonstrating their determination. On a personal level, I feel extremely privileged to have rowed with two blues (!) and achieve the now-coveted 'rolling pin' award for rowing over every day. As the only crew to do so, that has to count for something, right? Many thanks to Tom, to the committee, and most of all to the crews for the enthusiasm, commitment and support shown to me over the term.

*Oliver Bishop – Men's Co-Captain 2013-14*

**M1: "I would row 1500 miles..."**

This whole captaincy business had barely begun when I realized that I had to start organizing training immediately. On the advice of our M1 coach, Alex Rhodes, I organized a training camp at Reading Rowing Club at the start of 0th week. We had a strong dozen M1 hopefuls come along to put in over 1500 miles of rowing in three days.



With training underway and crew set, we started thinking about external regattas. Perennially, captains seem to say that they are going to try to go to one and burst the Oxford bubble. I am pleased to say that, while we didn't manage to get an VIII together, M1 sent a IV+ to Shrewsbury Regatta, where we won the novice category. Off that high and only two weeks before VIIIs we had a bit of a crew shakeup, losing one guy to injury, another to 'personal difficulties', and a third to exams. However, we managed to replace them with an even stronger boat – pulling in an Isis rower and an ex-Glasgow Uni rower as well as asking one of our M2 guys to step up and row with M1.



VIIIs was a great week, though perhaps a bit frustrating. With the exception of the very strong Corpus crew that caught us on Thursday, we faced no opposition from behind.



But despite chasing Merton three of the four days and gaining considerably each time, we didn't quite manage to convert that into a bump. More is the pity because the stroke man in the boat must have been scared to see that our bow seat was held by the Finnish beast that is Oskari.

The plan now is to build M1 and M2 to compete at Wallingford at the end of Michaelmas. Having done one external regatta, we aren't going to stop now. We have a strong returning squad and

are looking at a great year to come.

*James Van Horne – Men's Co-Captain 2013-4*



## Upcoming Events

**Christ Church Regatta 2013** – November 27<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> 2013

**Christ Church Curry 2013** – November 30<sup>th</sup> 2013

It's coming once again: the annual carnage that is Christ Church Regatta. Relive your early experiences of having first stepped into a boat by coming to watch interesting new interpretations of what we call rowing. Unless it rains for the whole of November again. Alternatively join us afterwards for a celebration of the term's rowing at Christ Church Curry.

**Alumni Dinner** - Autumn 2013

SHBC cordially invites you to join us for a celebration of the boat club community past and present. Further details will be released closer to the event, however please get in touch with Jonathan Harrison at [jonathan.harrison@st-hughs.ox.ac.uk](mailto:jonathan.harrison@st-hughs.ox.ac.uk) if you have any questions.

*More information will be released closer to the event.*

