



## From the President

Dear Friends,

We've spent our gruelling morning land sessions this term running in imperceptibly lighter conditions every week. The sun rose slightly earlier and set slightly later day by day, and we look forward to sunny Trinity days with the cold hard slog of Hilary behind us.

The phrase 'cold hard slog' may describe the weather and training intensity, but in no way captures the camaraderie and buzzing atmosphere of UCBC this term. We fielded an impressive six crews for Torpids, and the progression of our successful novices last term mixed in with senior rowers across the highest to the lowest boats was inspiring to watch.

In the women's side, both W3 and W2 went through rowing on to win blades in the same division, the latter climbing seven places to reclaim their position in fixed divisions in a timely celebration of International Women's Day. Both M2 and M1 climbed tantalisingly closer to bumping up into Division 4 and Division 1 respectively. We celebrated with heartfelt speeches and spirited fun at Torpids Dinner.

This term also saw first-year Nicholas Ryan gain a seat in the OULRC Blue Boat, and Linda van Bijsterveldt make OUWBC Osiris boat. Congratulations go to both of them.

I would like to extend a massive thank you to all the people who contributed to the success of UCBC this term, from the wonderful hard-working committee to the committed and inspiring coaches, senior members, Jim the Boatman (and Oscar the dog!), college staff and most of all to the Friends and Old Members of UCBC who support us in everything we do. We enjoyed celebrating the club with many of you at Dinosaurs and Cassandrians dinner this term and look forward to The Leander Lunch in Trinity.

I hope you will all be able to come and join us at Summer Eights next term. Saturday of Vllls (1<sup>st</sup> June) holds in store exciting racing from our many promising Univ crews, sunshine, food, drink and a chance to reminisce. I look forward to seeing you on the riverbank and in hall later for the Annual Boat Club dinner!

Many thanks,

**Lara Drew**  
**UCBC President 2018-19**



*M1 and W1 with their coach Jonathon Cheesman after Torpids*

## From the Captains

The First Women's Eight was set in 0<sup>th</sup> week, allowing us to spend the whole of training camp together. By 1<sup>st</sup> week, W1 settled into what would be an intense 6 weeks of consistent training, with the aim of getting our 4 novices and novice cox up to speed and ready for Torpids. The crew also consisted of 3 returning W1 rowers (with Hannah Farley returning for her 6<sup>th</sup> year of college rowing) and a returning W2 rower, who had all been training hard in Michaelmas term.

Torpids came rolling around and we were ready to perform our 33-stroke start from the 11<sup>th</sup> bungline. Unfortunately, it was not enough to stop Green Templeton College (GTC) bumping us before Donnington Bridge (who got blades by the end of Torpids). Our sights were then immediately set on New College, and with only a length separating us, we thought we could get them, but they managed to catch St John's just before we could reach them. So now our focus was on St John's and with our killer 28-stroke finish, we caught them just before Univ's Boathouse!



*W1 racing through the gut*

Our weeks were split into 4 hours of land training on week days: a mixture of long steady-state ergs, sprints of varying lengths and weights, all of which were adapted to our own levels of fitness through lactate testing and heart rate monitoring. This was followed by 4 outings on the weekends at Abingdon. We worked on our starts and doing pieces from the first week. The crew as a whole saw significant progress with the programme, as the improvements of the novices put pressure on the seniors to produce their best erg scores. On the water, the commitment of the crew was impressive from the beginning and we saw our split steadily drop as the weeks passed. This W1 crew never gave up, not least when we had to row back towing the launch (as it had some technical issues) against a strong stream.

A first bump for many in the boat. On the second day, with St John's behind us we only had to look ahead and push for the over bump on New. GTC got New straight off their start again, leaving us 4 lengths apart after the Gut. This was one of W1's best rows, as we consistently ate away at this distance and a special mention goes to our cox for making us believe we were 1 length away from them. We finished the race with only half a length between us (or a canvas if you asked our cox as he was heard shouting concede past boathouse island).

On the third Day, following the amazing row we had just had, we felt confident in our ability to catch New. However, they decided to substitute 2 former blues rowers into their boat, which gave them the power to run away at the start before we could get close. We had changed our

start to make it 20 strokes, longer but this was still not enough and we were bumped by Balliol instead before Donnington bridge (who also achieved Blades), leaving us with a long, hard row over to finish the race. We finished strongly on the fourth day, with Jesus College left 7 lengths behind us. Next year, we will be starting only one place down on the 12<sup>th</sup> bungline.

Overall, I am so proud of this crew and all the effort they put into every training session this term. For comparison, all but one college crew with 3 or more novices (St Johns, Oriel, Christ Church) got spoons in Division 1. I would like to thank our coach Jonathan Cheesman, as without him all these outstanding results wouldn't have been possible, and the crew is excited to see how much progress can be made under his guidance.

Looking ahead W1 have already started their Easter training Programme. For next term, W1 will have 3 returning blues and currently has 13 girls trialling for the boat (with another 12 trialling for W2). It looks like the boat will be extremely competitive and will be set by the end of training camp in -1<sup>st</sup> week (with normal training commencing in 0<sup>th</sup> week).

**Emma Lepinay**  
**Women's Captain 2018-19**

M1 got off to a good start, with no fewer than five returning members from 2018's Summer Eight's first boat, the remaining seats being occupied by experienced senior rowers from a previous M2. However, it was equally promising to have rowers recently graduated from UCBC's novice programme demonstrating so much interest in rowing at this level.

The boat set, M1 settled quickly into a new style of training that combined bi-weekly land sessions, focusing on weight training as well as varying breeds of erg-based exercises, with longer water sessions at the weekend at Abingdon – M1 would like to thank the foUCBC for their kind support in securing a rack for our boat there.

This year's M1 entered Torpids feeling strong, 4<sup>th</sup> in Division 2, but well aware that a strong Keble crew, still sore from their disastrous crab this time last year, would be on us right from the gun. We were right – a strong New College crew bumped out ahead of us, leaving a long stretch of open water to our front, but a rapidly closing gap to our rear. Keble, who went on to win blades and progress to Division 1, bumped us through the gut, and we were left to go for the over-bump on Pembroke II, resulting in a row-over after a grueling race to the line.



*M1 waiting to push off at Torpids*



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Day 2 brought a fresh threat in the form of Exeter, who pushed hard off the start with explosive pace off the line. However, to its credit M1 had learned from the frantic and panicked escape attempt from the day before, and maintained a much calmer and more effective race plan to keep them at arm's length – that is, until we clattered blades with New College who had collided with the bank, taking us out of Exeter's way and putting us right back where we'd started the day before.

Day 3 had us holding a bitter New College crew and chasing Pembroke II again, who had escaped on Day 1. This time it was different – our simple race plan was clinically executed, and having bumped by the gut we went into Day 4 one up on our starting position.

We entered the last day of Torpids racing buoyed by two days of successful racing, encouraged by the (albeit slim) chance that we could in theory be racing again later as the sandwich boat for Division 1. We chased a strong Magdalen crew right to the line, while again holding off New College behind us, eager to regain their position on the river. In the end all three crews rowed over after a hard-fought race that was arguably our best of the season, combining all our strength and conditioning training, our work in water sessions and simple grit.

As unfortunate as it is to lose half of our rowers to exam season as we move on to Summer Eights, I am equally as excited to bring some new talent into the Men's first boat as we bring some new talent to the Dino's club.

M1 would like to say a massive thank you to Jono, who has joined the club as M1 and W1's new coach this year, and has had a huge impact already on both crews.

**Ruairi Clayton**  
**Men's Captain 2019**

## From the Vice-Captains

Hilary term was enormously successful for the women's lower boats, with both boats qualifying for Torpids via rowing on and subsequently going on to win blades, and W2 bumping back up into fixed divisions. The start of the term saw a lot of returners, both seniors from previous years and new recruits from novice term. In particular, there were a lot of keen and skilled girls trying out for W2; their coach Argy held trials in second week and ended up extending them into third week as all of the candidates proved strong and choosing just eight for the boat was a challenge. By the end of third week though, the boats were set and the girls began training with their crews.

W2 had three outings per week with their coach Argy, with Saturday's being a double session. They also had the option of land training sessions with first boats' coach Jono. W2 also competed in IWL-E in the lead-up to Torpids as practice for Rowing On. With an impressive time of 05:36.5, they beat several women's first crews from other colleges and were the second-fastest W2 boat behind Pembroke.

W3 had two outings each weekend with Hannah Farley, one of UCBC's most experienced rowers who had coached many of the girls in their novice term. They also



*W2 and W3 celebrating their bumps*



*W2 with their coach Argyris Stasinakis*

enjoyed the opportunity to attend land training sessions with Jono and W2. Both teams raced in Rowing On to qualify for Torpids in the subsequent week. W2 came in first, finishing well ahead of all other crews by a solid margin of 5.5 seconds. W3 also qualified, coming in seventh out of fourteen crews racing.

Wednesday of Torpids saw W2 starting from bungline 7 and W3 starting from bungline 13 in Division V. Both crews had strong starts and quickly caught up to the boats ahead, with W2 bumping Keble W2 before Donnington bridge and W3 bumping Exeter W2 shortly afterwards, narrowly catching them before they bumped out on St. Benet's W1. As both of these crews then went on to bump later in the course, both W2 and W3 moved up two places.

On Thursday, W2 began from bungline 5 and W3 from bungline 11. Once again, both crews bumped up quickly, catching Green Templeton's W2 and St. Peter's W2 respectively before the gut. Friday was anticipated to be more of a challenge for W2, as they were being chased by New W3; a beer boat rumoured to be populated by ex-blue and W1 rowers. However, on the day New W3 did not stand a chance as Univ W2 pulled away from them right on the start, bumping Corpus W2 before Donnington bridge. W3 followed soon after with a bump on LMH W2 before the gut.

Saturday began with W2 at bungline 3 and W3 at bungline 9. As before, both crews rapidly bumped out on Worcester W2 and Green Templeton W2 respectively, winning blades. However, Worcester W2 then went on to bump Hertford W2, allowing our W2 to race as a sandwich boat in Division IV. The race began with some confusion. Balliol W2, starting two places ahead of Univ W2, had collided with New W2 on the way to their bungline and damaged their boat. Consequently, Balliol W2 began sinking as the race began and pulled to the side, allowing both St. Hughes W2 and Univ W2 to row past them. However, it was unclear why they had stopped; believing Balliol had simply bumped out, W2 continued racing and subsequently caught Jesus W2 in what would have been an impressive overbump just past the gut. Univ W2 was eventually awarded the bump on Balliol, finishing 12<sup>th</sup> in Division IV where they will start from in Torpids next year.

I would like to thank the coaches, Argyris Stasinakis, Hannah Farley, and Jonathan Cheesman, for devoting their time and expertise to helping these girls succeed. I would also like to thank the members of UCBC who stepped in to sub for W3 when needed; particular thanks go to Amy Hughes, George Russell, Isabel Ewing and Angus Menzies for their help in W3's Torpids campaign. Thanks also go to the X-status coxes who subbed for W2 and W3 while the Isis was on blue flag; Nina Handzewniak,



*W3 with their coach Hannah Farley*

who also raced in two IWL-E divisions to help out W2, Nikolaos Kanellakis and Richard Mifsud.

Finally, thanks must go to the crews themselves for being enthusiastic, motivated and supportive of each other; their success is a reflection of how willing they were to step up and help each other out when needed to make sure their outings could go ahead.

***Sarah Faulkner***  
***Women's Vice-Captain 2018-19***

Following on from a successful novice campaign, Hilary term saw the return of the vast majority of the novice squad along with a few returning seniors. This resulted in one of the largest men's squad UCBC has had for Torpids for some time and a very competitive M2 and M3.

A strong and promising M2 began training in 1<sup>st</sup> week under the guidance of Rufus Tilt who made sure the boys were really put through their paces. With six members of crew having just moved up from the novices, their relative inexperience did not prove to be an issue as they looked assured and confident on the water right from the off. Sporting their trademark bucket rig, the boys put in a decent performance in IWL and were aiming to avenge last year's meeting with the bank this Torpids.

Starting at the top of Division V, the crew were unfortunately caught on the first day by a strong Lincoln M2, before a swift bump on Hertford M2 on the following day returned them to their position as the sandwich boat and gave them a shot in the division above. Chasing an unlikely double overbump, M2 rowed over in Division IV but were bumped by Regent's Park M1 on the following day. The boys regained their spot at the top of Division V on the final day by bumping Wadham M3

and, once again rowing in Division IV as the sandwich boat, were unlucky not to catch New M2 on the overbump, meaning they finished the campaign level, 1<sup>st</sup> in Division V.

A fresh-faced M3 was formed entirely of newly graduated novices, with Univ's own Mark Brookes continuing his role as coach from Michaelmas term. A thoroughly keen and enthusiastic group, M3 unfortunately struggled for time on the water this term and were unable to get as many outings as they had hoped for. This ultimately meant qualification for Torpids was a step too far for the boys, as a valiant performance in Rowing On did not prove to be enough for them to secure a position in the main event.

This term on the whole proved to be a success for both crews with most of them experiencing bumps for the first time. A huge thank you to Rufus and Mark who have been incredibly dedicated in their roles as coaches and must take much of the credit for the boys' own personal development. With the squad now looking to push on into Trinity term, a successful Summer Eights is surely in the offing for UCBC's lower boats.

***Dylan Dissanayake***  
***Men's Vice Captain 2018-19***



*M2 on the Saturday of Torpids*

## From the Social Secretaries

So far this year, all of UCBC have found many ways to enjoy the social side of rowing! This includes our now traditional termly pub crawl which this term saw M1 traipsing round oxford dressed in an astonishing variety of pink clothing while W1 opted for the more classical colour of “leopard print”. The women of UCBC have been busy sampling many of oxfords premier brunch spots having indulged in regular post-training breakfasts keeping pancake intake and morals at an all-time high.

Dinos and Cassies was another major success this year with the opportunity for W1 and M1s past and present to get together and celebrate another strong year of rowing. Our huge thanks to the hall staff for a fantastic meal, which was followed by a number of fine speeches before we made our way from college to Park End by a rather haphazard route to continue the festivities. Big congratulations to Alisa and Angus for organizing a great evening. As always, we are very grateful to all the Old Members who made the dinner possible and the Friends of UCBC for their attendance, continued support, and endless patience in the meeting the morning after; the boat club relies on its members and it's heartening to see that commitment continuing in and out of the boats. In short, we all very much look forward to the reunion next year.

The beautiful weather at the end of Hilary ensured that many univites lined the banks of the Isis to cheer on their peers; rowers and non-rowers alike came to show their support for UCBC's exceptional Torpids campaign – a practically perfect way to showcase the highs and lows (lets be real – mostly highs) of rowing to the remainder of college. After such a tremendous regatta, Torpids' Dinner was a very much deserved celebration of success that saw many more heartfelt and somewhat unscripted speeches from everyone involved. The revelry carried on down into the bar and long into the night as many of the boat club did eventually managed to find their way to Emporium. A massive thank you to the Chaplin, Andrew Gregory, for his enormous help in organizing the evening and for graciously sitting through Ruairi's acceptance speech.

There are rumors that we are ditching the water in favor of land as we form a UCBC team to run in the annual Town and Gown 10k to raise money for Muscular Dystrophy UK. We are all looking forward to next term and all the fun that summer VIII's brings!

***George Russell and Philippa Biggs***

***Social Secretaries 2019***



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