



From the President

Hello,

Women's Headship.

Don't worry, you haven't accidentally opened last Trinity's newsletter, they've just done it again.

With that headline announced, I hope you are all doing well and are strapped in and ready to hear about the successes of Hilary Term. This is going to be brief from me, as the majority of the excitement occurred at Torpids which I'm sure will be covered extensively by the captains in their individual reports.

As you may have gathered, it was a hugely successful Torpids for the women's side, with W1 bumping up to headship and making the job of remembering their position in the Eights/Torpids bumps charts that much easier. Alongside this, W2 also bumped up to 35th on the river (11th in Div 3) retaining their title as the second highest second boat. W3 had a slightly rougher times of things, but it's not always about the results, it's the friends we make along the way.

There was plenty of success to be had on the men's side as well. Building off the back of last Torpids' four-bumps-up-three-thanks-ourcs campaign, M1 saw themselves starting at 9th in Div 1. The whole week proved to be little more than a formality, however, with M1 easily securing the four bumps they needed for blades and reserving "rowing through the gut" as a job for the paddle home. With it being so long since M1 has secured blades in Torpids, this has raised some questions about what changed this year compared to the last few - a question this president does not care to inspect too closely. It does, however, leave M1 5th on the river (their highest position since 1996) a prospect which some call "headship potential" and the women call "breakfast". A similarly dominant performance was delivered by M2, who obtained blades for the second year on the trot and finish 38th on the river, their highest position since 2008. M3 had a slightly rougher times of things, but it's not always about the results, it's the friends we make along the way.



*Left: W1 rowing over at Head of the River on Thursday of Torpids
Right: M2 racing at the Head of the River Race (HORR) in London*

Alongside Torpids, Hilary Term also saw some external action, with W1 putting in a fantastic performance at Women's Head of the River and with both M1 and M2 putting in great rows at Men's Head. W1 (plus a few Martlet Club subs) finished 103rd out of 305 crews, finishing as the fastest Oxford college crew and the third fastest Oxbridge crew. With their current trajectory it's only a matter of time until they are head of that river as well. It was a similar story for Men's Head, with M1 (bolstered by a few Wolfson subs) finishing as the fastest Oxford college crew and the second fastest Oxbridge crew. M2 might have been the most stand out performance, however, composed of 100% organic univ talent, they beat out many of the college M1s and were only nine seconds off last year's headship winners, Oriel.

Off the water, the end of January once again saw the annual Dinos and Cassies dinner. As always it was an excellent to see so many Univ Blazers back in Oxford and we hope everyone enjoyed the evening as much as we did. As last year, the dinner was held at Vincent's Club and then post dinner refreshments were enjoyed in the Univ Bar. It is currently unclear whether this will be the same case going forward. I am hoping to discuss the options with college and so if you are willing to contribute your opinions please fill in this google form if you have time: <https://forms.gle/Mos2kZPqT3h9SVN87>

In further alumni news, the Martlet Club is still on the lookout for members. Whether you are in and around Oxford looking to train consistently or you are further afield looking to do one race a year and relive the glory days, I'm sure the club can provide you something of value. For more information, please visit the website:

<https://www.univboatclub.com/the-martlet-club>

Finally, for those of you who find yourselves with an excess of capital and a dearth of eponymous boats there are three shells in our fleet that are unclaimed – a heavyweight men's single, a heavyweight men's pair and a women's/ lightweight men's pair. If you would be interested in securing your UCBC legacy and purchasing the naming rights to one of these boats please get in touch (ucbc.president@univ.ox.ac.uk) and we can discuss an exact price but we are anticipating around £2000 per boat.

That's pretty much all from me, again, hope everyone is well and looking forward to seeing many of you back for Summer Eights (24th-27th May)!

Andy Bridger

UCBC President 2022-2023

Key Dates for your Diary

Bedford Regatta	07/05/23
Summer VIII's	24/05/23 – 27/05/23
Leander Lunch	03/06/23
Metropolitan Regatta	03/06/23 – 04/06/23
Marlow Regatta	17/06/23
Henley Women's Regatta	16/06/23 – 18/06/23
Henley Royal Regatta	27/06/23 – 02/07/23



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From the Women's Captain

Hilary Term has been another extremely successful term for the Women of UCBC; the highlight, of course, being the **first ever Torpids Headship** for Univ W1. Earning the Headship title was by no means easy, the fight for Headship on the third day of Torpids has been dubbed as 'the best bit of bumps racing ever' by the Oxford College rowing community (there are plenty of YouTube videos to prove it). The success of our bumps campaign this term is certainly down to the dedication the crew had to training, with Univ showing once again what college rowing is all about.

In true winter rowing fashion, the term began with a flooded river and no rowing. In fact, for the first two weeks of term, the river was out of bounds – not ideal when Torpids had been moved to Week 6 due to the earlier date for WeHoRR. This meant trips to Dorney were in order, however, even that proved difficult when thick fog closed the lake. By the start of Week 3, the confirmed W1 crew had not yet even rowed together, which was quite a daunting prospect considering there were only three returners from last year's Summer Vllls Headship crew. We did not let this phase us and got stuck in with land training and crew socials, increasing our strength, stamina, and crew morale.

By Week 3, the rains had eased, and we were back on the Isis. However, it wasn't long until the Isis began feeling a tad small for the armada of UCBC crews. In a quest for more mileage, three Univ Vllls headed into Iffley Lock on a chilly Sunday morning. We then ventured into the realms beyond the Oxford Ring Road, completing a 24 km row to Abingdon Lock and back again. It was during these gruelling sessions that the crews really came together, but more importantly, built the mental stamina to

keep rowing, even when every inch of your body is telling you to stop.



Univ W1 nearing the end of a 24 km lock trip to Abingdon and back. Photo taken by our cox Kira Baughan. From Stroke to Bow: Liv Atkins, Charlie Kniebe-Evans, Rhianna Harding, Becca Tanner, Kim Becker, Tara Narayan, Louisa Boulton, Alex Jones.

The first fixture of the term soon came around, with a trip to Bedford Head at the end of Week 4. This 1.6 km head race provided the crew with our first rehearsal of a race the length of the bumps course. The crew raced twice, and both times finished with a time of six minutes. Whilst this was a very respectable time, the crew knew that there was still plenty to work on, especially as close rivals Oriel beat us by nine seconds. So, with under two weeks to go, the final push of the Torpids Campaign begun.

For the Captain, these final training sessions on the lead up to Torpids are by far the most stressful, but the crew truly put their heart and soul into these sessions, and I knew that I would be proud of the crew regardless of the Torpids result. We all knew that every weights session, every erg, and every row, could really make the difference, so I couldn't congratulate the crew more for their dedication. Another locks trip and several long pieces later, we were ready for Torpids.

The first day of Torpids is always the most nerve-racking, as you have very little knowledge of the crews around you. Univ W1 started at second, with Wolfson out in front, and Wadham at third. Univ were quick off the start and by the start of the gut, had overlap on Wolfson. We then got the bump by mid gut, securing our spot at Head of the River. Now the hard part began - maintaining Headship; something that was going to prove a challenge considering we had two subs over the next two days.

On day two we were prepared for a relatively stress-free row over since Wolfson were now starting behind us at second. Whilst we did maintain Headship, Pembroke and Oriel had both put in incredibly strong performances, meaning we would be starting day three with Pembroke at second, and Oriel at third. Naturally, we were worried, especially as on day three, we had lost our stroke. We not only had a sub, but a completely different crew combination.

Day three has quite rightly been described as the best example of bumps racing in living memory, so I believe it is my duty to describe the events to you in detail: In preparation for Torpids, we had gone through every possible scenario as a crew, including getting bumped. Whilst we did not wish it to happen, we knew it was a possibility, but we certainly weren't going to make it easy for those chasing us. Off the start, we were strong, but not our strongest, and it was clear that Pembroke were coming for the Headship. Coming out of the gut they had overlap, and they put in a final push to empty the tank and take the bump. Kira, our cox, was having none of it, and even when Pembroke Bow's blade almost hit our stern, she did not concede. It was at this moment that all the long rows to Abingdon and back had paid off, as we kept a hard, steady rhythm

despite the circumstances, and just about held Pembroke off. We then pulled away as Pembroke had emptied and not gotten the bump, allowing us to cross the stream and come past Univ Boathouse to a chorus of chants and screams for our crew.

Coming past Univ, Pembroke came on our inside and went for another push, chasing us down to a canvas. However, Kira had been scheming: Being a well-established Isis cox (unlike Pembroke who row at Godstow), she was well aware of a sunken boat off the towpath which is marked by an orange buoy. Kira steered us close to the buoy, forcing Pembroke to go closer to the bank and ultimately causing a Pembroke blade to hit the buoy. This resulted in a crab, and Pembroke's attention quickly went from us to the oncoming Oriel boat closing in on them. Meanwhile, we cruised past the Coxing Stone and held Headship for another day.

On Saturday of Torpids, we had our full crew back and after the events of Friday, we were ready to fight for Headship once and for all. Our start was perhaps our strongest ever, and by the end of the gut, we were four lengths ahead of Pembroke. At this point, we knew Headship was ours, so we settled in for a victory row over.

Unfortunately, crews further down the division had other ideas, and a crash



Univ W1 at Torpids Dinner, celebrating Headship. From left to right: Kim, Tara, Liv, Becca, Rhianna, Louisa, Charlie, Alex, and Kira (kneeling).

resulted in a klaxon. Whilst we may not have been able to row past the boathouses, we knew that we had truly earned our position on the river.

Celebrations followed, but not for too long, as Women's Eight Head of the River Race was only a week away. Due to several members of W1 not being available, we decided to enter a W1-Martlets composite for the 7 km head race on the Tideway. The crew put in a phenomenal row, overtaking three crews during the race, one of which being the Oxford Lightweight Reserve Boat. We started at position 163 and finished in position 103 out of 305 racing crews. We were also the fastest Oxford College, truly earning our title of Head of the River. Unfortunately, the day was ruined by Jono's car being broken into and several bags being stolen, resulting in the loss of three phones, and iPad, and a wallet. This certainly put a downer on an otherwise incredible race, and we will certainly take extra precautions when returning to the Tideway in the future.

That brings us to the end of another successful term, and the final time that I will be writing to you as Women's Captain. I'd like to finish by thanking our coach Jono, who had worked tirelessly to pull this crew together and realise our potential. I'd also like to thank the Old Members who continue to financially support us and allow us to enter races and train externally, which ultimately allows for our continued success. After this year's Summer Vllls, I will be passing over to the next Captain who I'm sure will be writing to you with even more successes at the end of Trinity. Until then, I look forward to seeing those of you who come to Oxford for Summer Vllls, and to Leander Lunch shortly afterwards.

Becca Tanner

Women's Captain 2022-23



Univ-Martlets Composite at Women's Eight Head of the River Race. From Cox to Bow: Kira Baughan, Liv Atkins, Charlie Kniebe-Evans, Sophie Wicken, Pippa Biggs, Kim Becker, Becca Tanner, Jocasta Bird, Alex Jones.

From the Men's Captain

Overall, I think it's safe to say that the men*s squad at univ is in frankly incredible health. With the prospect of highly competitive trials for the first eight, everyone put together a huge chunk of mileage over the Christmas vac, ready to hit the ground running as soon as term began. Alas, the river gods had other ideas, condemning us to long ergs and trips to Dorney, for seat racing and our first taste of water time.

The floods did not however last forever - by midday through week 3, the river was rowable once more, and keen to make up for lost time, we took to the Isis. With one busy week of locks trips, double sessions, video analysis, and many meals at the highly acclaimed new breakfast bar 'Papa Jonos' under their belts, it was off to Bedford head, for the first competitive test of 2023.

It's safe to say we passed - two cracks at the course saw us dispatch of reigning headship crew & Isis bogeymen, Oriel M1, twice, increasing the margin of victory by 100% between the races (we took 1 second up to the decisive margin of 2 seconds!). Despite coming within spitting distance of a shiny tankard, we were denied by cruellest fate and what I am reliably told is a novel problem for univ men - being seeded high because of an abundance of BR points.



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A lot was learnt on that short stretch of the Great Ouse, and so with two weeks left to torpids, it was time to make adjustments. Returning to Oxford, many hours were spent fine tuning and eeking out every last drop of speed to make sure that the crew on the bungline was the fastest possible.



M1 paddling back on Thursday of Torpids, with super-sub Nic Steyn in at 4

Wednesday of Torpids came around, and ahead of us were Teddy Hall. A largely unknown crew, having spent their time training down in Abingdon, we weren't sure quite what to expect, but were ready to fly out of the blocks. An explosive start and about 30 strokes later and the concession came - a bump about 10 lengths off the start. Exciting, but much work yet to be done - Thursday saw us going after Wadham. Different day, different crew (Nic S in for Greg), similar story - an explosive start, an early concession; this time coming around Donny bridge. Halfway through, and spirits are high. Rest up, go again on Friday; Catz in front of us, aggressive start, concession outside Falcon. After last years' experiences, we scarcely dared to dream, but blades were in sight. All that stood between us and eternal glory / a bit of wood with our names on (delete as appropriate) was Pembroke M1. Expecting to go the distance, we mentally prepared, and went out on Saturday looking for a race. But, once again, it was over before it started - a three boat sandwich by the steamers was brought to an abrupt end,

after Balliol clipped the bank, giving us a clean row past. **Blades!** Four days, four bumps, and not entering the gut once - the hard work had paid off. Plus, finishing in 5th puts us just one blades campaign away from headship next year - a tantalising prospect.



Immediately after clearing the line on Saturday; celebrating blades with Chloe (cox) cheering

Although torpids was out of the way, the campaign was not - there was still HoRR, for 6.8km of fun! Half of M1 decided they had 'things that aren't rowing' to do, so we approached Wolfson men and decided to once more breathe life into the mighty Wolfniv composite. A few weeks to bring the styles together, and it was time to go. Some would say the 'stream was high', I personally choose to believe we were simply fast enough to sit at a 1:22 average split; whatever it was, something went right. Fastest Oxford crew by nearly a minute, second Oxbridge crew (losing out only to LMH Cambridge, current headship) and many universities falling to our proud bunch of college choppers - overall, a good day out.



M1 on Saturday of Torpids

Results aside, it has been an absolute pleasure to be part of UCBC recently; the successes of the women's crews are always inspiring (their headship scrap on Friday of Torpids was amongst the best races I've ever seen), our M2 is one of the fastest second eights on the river, and the whole squad is consistently strong.

Looking to the summer, we have about 17 triallists for the first VIII, so every seat in the first eight will be hard earned. I am so excited, about where we are in eights and beyond - a busy summer of racing awaits.

As always, a huge thankyou to our friends for their ongoing support, a thankyou to Jono for his impeccable coaching, a thankyou to Greg + Nic for their support of the novice program, and a thankyou to mark, our new M2 coach.

I look forward to seeing many of you on the banks of the Thames, and am confident in the prospects for the summer.

Lloyd Arnold

Men's Captain 2022-23



'Wolfniv' composite crew post racing at HRR

From the Women's Vice-Captains

What a term for W2! Despite beginning with river closures and tank sessions galore, Hilary saw an excellent bumps campaign from Univ and we are so proud of our girls. W2, once again coached by the fabulous Argy, showed off their technique by bumping on the first two days. A tough push followed on Friday, rowing over and maintaining their spot on the river. The week ended with Queen's W1 getting the bump on Univ W2 and an unfortunate swan klaxon before they had the chance to get a bump themselves (typical!). Despite this, the net gain of +1 keeps Univ as the highest undergraduate W2 on the river – well done!

Undeterred by the river closures, Univ also managed to field a strong third boat this term who were very keen to row! Despite the lack of water time, the crew quickly came together and managed to put in a gutsy performance in Rowing On to successfully qualify for Torpids. The following weekend, energised by their recent success, W3 commenced their Torpids campaign, looking powerful, and steadily gaining on Keble. Unfortunately, before the crew got the opportunity to bump, the race was klaxoned. On day two, the crew returned hungry for the bump and keen to put on a strong performance. It was not to be however as the race was klaxoned yet again. The next day, the crew got off to a great start and starting closing in on Keble again. Due to a blade coming out of a gate, the crew were forced to concede to Linacre. Despite this, W3 quickly recovered and powered through to the end. Day four proved slightly more challenging for the enthusiastic W3. Following another encouraging start, the crew were forced to concede to Exeter, having clipped the bank. Exeter bumped our boat causing the crew to block the racing line and so unfortunately Torpids ended for W3 with yet another klaxon.

Nevertheless, we hope that the crew's excitement for rowing continues into Trinity where Summer VIII's will give them the opportunity to showcase what they are capable of! Special thanks goes to Lovisa and Aneka, the fantastic W3 coaches, who have greatly helped to increase the squad depth of Univ women through their supportive and committed coaching.

Alex Jones and Louisa Boulton
Women's Vice Captains 2022-23

Below: A collection of images of W2 and W3 enjoying rowing with UCBC in Hilary term



From the Men's Vice-Captains

Hilary was another successful term for Univ's men's lower boats. Over the vac, the club hired an excellent new M2 coach—Mark Proberts—who immediately dedicated himself to a rigorous crew selection procedure involving ergs, tank sessions, and seat races at Eton Dorney. Capsize, fog, and high stream notwithstanding, the crew was set by the second week of term. In due course, M3 was selected by coaches James Trenaman and Cam Lang, though river closures and restrictions meant that their training was mostly confined to the erg room; true to their name, M3 had only 3 water sessions before Torpids, none of them in the final crew order.

Both crews had strong bumps campaigns. In fact, that is an understatement. Univ M2 easily bumped St. Anne's M1 on Wednesday, Keble M2 on Thursday, and Trinity M2 on Friday. Saturday's race saw a mix-up and klaxon, but Univ came out on top with two more bumps: St. Catherine's M2 and New M2. Univ is now 6th out of 27 second Torpids, and have bumped for 10 consecutive days of racing—more than any other current crew on the river. Not since 2008 have Univ M2 been so high. If the current momentum in the club continues,

the crew will look to break into Division III next year.

Univ M3 started the week as they meant to continue by bumping Trinity M3 on Wednesday. On Thursday, they found themselves chasing an evenly matched Queen's M2, but were hunted down by a quick Pembroke M3, who had placed second in Rowing On. First place in Rowing On had gone to Hertford M2, and—unfortunately—it was the dominant Hertford M2 who chased and caught Univ on Friday. On Saturday, Univ got their well-deserved bump on Queen's M2, but were also caught by Wolfson M3, so rowed over. Last year, Univ M3 won blades and moved up a division, so just holding their position in Division V was impressive enough. Perhaps more impressive, though, is that Univ M3 have never had spoons in their 31 years of racing Torpids, despite their longstanding tradition of bumping the bank when the crews ahead are out of reach. Looking ahead to next year, Univ is 3rd out of 10 third Torpids, with Wolfson M3 and Pembroke M3 close at hand.

The fourth Torpid—a scratch crew—put in a valiant effort for Rowing On and were a few seconds away from qualification, but ultimately only Wolfson were able to qualify a fourth men's Torpid.



Left: M2 celebrating a bump on St. Anne's M1

Right: M3 outside Univ Boathouse

Under the eager watch of their new coach Mark, Univ M2 spent the final weeks of term preparing for the Head of the River Race in London. The work clearly paid off: *they beat Linacre M1, Teddy M1, and New M1 (all Division I/II crews), not to mention six Cambridge college M1s. Indeed, over a 19 minute race, M2 lost by only 9 seconds to Oriel M1, head of the river in last year's Torpids and Summer Vills.* These results are a direct product of the depth of the men's side, which bodes very well for races to come.

Gregory Cuff & Nic Steyn
Men's Vice Captains 2022-23



Left: M2 racing at HRR 2023
Right: M2 at Torpids dinner with coach Mark

From the Social Secretary

Hilary term has been another joyous ride for all involved in UCBC, in no small way thanks to the incredible social calendar the social secs expertly crafted. Events big and small took place in various prestigious establishments around Oxford, ranging from the humble pub golf to the luxury of a crew date in one of Oxford's finest restaurants. These events ultimately culminated in a pre-torpids inter-crew competition, in which M1 were victorious and took home the mighty prize: hand personalised spoons.

Torpids dinner was once again the highlight of the term for many, with celebrations in order after the fantastic performance of the club in the prior days. College kindly agreed to cater the dinner, so the authentic Oxford formal experience was once again enjoyed whilst clad in highly fashionable blazers. After a scrumptious dinner, many chose to attend the college bar for a couple of beverages after the hard day of racing before attending Park End to dance the night away.

Looking forward to next term, I'm sure this vibrant, fun and funky social life will continue, with various events already beginning to be planned. Of course, Eights Dinner will be the highlight of the term. This will be on the 27th of May; please come along if you can – I'm sure there will be just as much, if not more, to celebrate than last year.

Bertie Coomber
Social Secretary 2022-23



UCBC current members and alumni in Univ bar after Dinos & Cassies dinner in January