



From the President

Dear Friends,

Some might say Oxford rowing as a sport did not have much luck in the past year, due to a mix of flooding and two national lockdowns. However, as a club we did our best to strive in these unfortunate circumstances, and we are proud to say we used every possible opportunity to carry on training and to maintain club morale.

As soon as the national restrictions began to be lifted at the beginning of Summer, we opened the Boat House which allowed the athletes staying in Oxford over the vacation to use singles, and following that, doubles. This opportunity has been popular mostly amongst graduate students, who appreciated a chance to get out on the water and work on individual fitness.

From the beginning of Michaelmas term, the club moved into 'fully operational' phase. With the great help of our irreplaceable coach Jono, and thanks to college support, we were able to allow training in both IVs and Vllls to restart, as well as organise some land sessions. The club considers the safety of our athletes as our main priority, and thus we have carried out an extensive risk assessment, which not only greatly reduces the infection risk, but also allows us to respond quickly to the dynamic situation and changes in national or university regulations. Thanks to that, in Week 1 we ran a very successful taster day, during which the novices had a chance to get out on the water, try out ergs and newly built tanks (big thanks to Jono and Jim), as well as chat to the senior rowers.

The event was very well received, and many novices were enthusiastic to start regular training.

I am very happy to say that both senior and novice rowers dived straight into training. We managed to run some water sessions, and the athletes were able to book one of two ergs available in our bay or use some individual training plans designed by our coach. We also ran regular circuits, which are a well-established club activity by now.

Sadly, the introduction of the second national lockdown forced us to close the boathouse once again. Despite that, we made our best attempt to allow people carry on with their training throughout the following weeks. We placed ergs and circuit equipment in the main site of college, Staverton and Harberton Mead, which proved to be very popular amongst both novices and seniors. Furthermore, our captains ran a set of challenges encouraging people to participate in individual training.

We were really happy to be able to reopen the boathouse with the end of lockdown, which unfortunately coincided with the beginning of the Christmas break. Nevertheless, we are looking forward to be back in training next term, and we hope to be able to share more news of club life with you!

We also hope that you will be able to join us soon in person on the river banks and in the college dining hall!

Wishing you all Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Nina Handzewniak
UCBC President 2020-2021



From the Captains

The Isis clearly knew it was Michaelmas when 0th week began as with the start of term came the dreaded rains. But, mercifully, the river stayed pretty much rowable which meant the UCBC women could finally get back on the water. A Univ 4 of variable crew was out on a number of occasions, and at long last we saw some competition with Alice Evans racing a single in the IWL, finishing in a fantastic 3rd place out of 7 boats.

This year we were joined by two new seniors as well as an impressive number of novice women who kept up the enthusiasm despite outings being somewhat few and far between. Although the lack of Christ Church regatta meant the novices weren't yet able to display their talents, if the first outings are anything to go by, we have high hopes for the upcoming year. Increased restrictions

may have cut water time short, but a national lockdown wasn't going to put a stop to training: Jono's Strava running challenge was taken on by a number of the seniors, whilst the virtual Oxmas competition saw Clare Lyle being crowned 700m erg sprint champion. Unfortunately, training camps will not be able to go ahead next term, but we're all excited at the prospect of getting back to the boats.

Whilst it's too early to say what will happen with racing, we appreciate the effort being put in on so many fronts to give us some kind of Torpids. Rest assured, we'll be ready to face whatever is thrown at us next term!

Harriet Atherton
Women's Captain 2020-2021



Alice Evans sculling her way to 3rd place at IWL A

There are no prizes available for guessing the main adversary of the season so far – our increasingly old friend, COVID-19. As may or may not have already been discussed, the ever-changing restrictions have posed a significant challenge to training – with crew limits varying from eight all the way down to zero.

To add to the issues, the weather seemed to be in on the anti-rowing agenda with a ‘complementary’ schedule, as the lifting of the government restrictions were met in tandem with bouts of amber and red flag, ready to smack us back indoors if we even thought about getting an eight damp.

far corners of Oxford and bookable ergos set up at key college sites – Staverton Road, Haberton Mead, and Main site. These contingencies meant that what could very easily have been a write off term has not been without its merits, and this was highlighted best by the Men’s four’s triumph in IWL A (I am, of course, a bit biased on this matter). To expand, IWL A was the only spell of racing that managed to sneak through the otherwise iron-clad defenses of COVID and inclement weather, culminating in the men’s four (pictured somewhere on the page - I’m not doing the formatting) walking away with the fastest time in the 4+ category (and inexplicably only 4 points out of a maximum of 25).



IWL A Men’s 4+: Nikolaos Kanellakis (C), Andy Bridger (S), Theo Fawcett (3), Bernd Sturdza (2) and Peter Manshausen (B)

MT was not all been doom and gloom however; dotted throughout the term, we managed to get a men’s 4+ out semi-consistently. Alongside this, thanks to the endless ingenuity of coach Jonathan Cheeseman, a broad and diverse range of land training filled the outing droughts and bridged the lockdown gaps. This consisted of ‘Resistance Circuit Care-Packages’ being shipped out to the

Despite the dismal recognition of our victory being arguably the worst thing to happen in 2020, we were encouraged by the result and hold out hope that, should Hilary Term permit us, we can deliver some comparable performances.

With all that being said, I would like to thank college for being so accommodating this term, it would

have been very easy for them to shut up shop (as seen by some other boat clubs) but their willingness to keep things going has really been appreciated. Hope you are all well, don't do anything Boris wouldn't, and hopefully next terms update will be less dour.

Andy Bridger
Men's Captain 2020-2021

From the Vice-Captains

Well, after a liberal sprinkling of blood, sweat and 'tiers' we have collectively made it to the end of 2020.

Despite the difficult circumstances, nothing was going to keep us down and we welcomed a large number of men into the novice section – both new faces, and a few old (who are continuing their novice training after an incomplete first year of rowing).

After last year's land-based labours, the first few weeks of term were happily spent water based, with the novices rowing in mixed eights developing their technique under the sage gaze of the seniors. In the three weeks before the November lockdown, we were able to get out an impressive number of novice water sessions – at least one each day, with two on the weekends. This was all thanks to the hard-work and dedication of the whole squad in making the most of what little time we knew we may have.

Alongside the daily water sessions, our coach Jonathan Cheesman put on weekly circuit sessions down at the boathouse. These were widely attended, and open to all squads giving novices the opportunity to properly meet other members of UCBC - all

socially distanced but very welcome in keeping club spirits high.

It is important to mention the tireless efforts of Jonathan and the committee in keeping us safe from coronavirus; between the gallons of hand-sanitiser used, and the hundreds of facemasks worn, their instruction and guidance helped avoid any outbreak of the virus within UCBC – and for this we are very thankful. And while some of these new hygiene standards will be carried forward into more regular use, I hope that just like shell-suits in the eighties, we can leave coxes wearing face-shields behind soon.

Having completed our crash-course of the rowing year in only eight weeks, the second half of term was solely land based, due to new government restrictions. But never ones to give up, the novices gladly took to embracing the weekly erg and circuit sessions set in our training plan. Unfortunately, the highlight of the novice rowing term – the Christchurch regatta – was cancelled due to the pandemic; but not choosing to be defeated by Covid, the novices then took part in a club wide, Christmas, land-based fitness competition, which saw them competing in multiple events from erg sprints to distance running. I am happy to congratulate Lloyd Arnold for winning the men's novice category – with times that even pushed some of the senior rowers!

Overall, while the pandemic looked like it was going to hamper the development of the novice section – thanks to the hard work and motivation of all, we were able to power through and are looking forward to entering competitive crews into Torpids next term.

Matt Hudson
Men's Vice-Captain 2020-2021



Novice 8+ outing

This year has been a year like no other. We were faced with training up last year's cohort of novices who had initially had little water time due to flooding and then the national lockdown due to covid-19, as well as freshers from this year. Organising taster sessions with changing crews was made possible thanks to Jono's unrelenting work with the college to ensure our safety and compliance with local and national guidance. We had just reached the point of getting almost all the novices out on the water 4-6 times and were starting to look forwards to teaching feathering and rowing full crew when the November lockdown, and subsequent restrictions on team sporting activity, was announced. Despite these challenges the UCBC novices remain as enthusiastic as ever, and we are hopeful to get them out on the water next term.

Whilst any racing opportunities would be fantastic, to be completely honest this year has really reminded us how much we do enjoy being out on the river, and how lucky we are to have the

opportunity to take part in and coach a sport like rowing. Here's to a better 2021 all round, and we won't be the only committee members looking forwards to Hilary and then hopefully a sunny Trinity, with lots of opportunities for mucking about on the river (in covid-secure manner, of course!).

Novice training is never possible without a raft of senior rowers and coxes, acting as coaches as well as subbing in. That has never been more true than this year, where self-isolation periods have added to the list of reasons that someone might be unable to make an outing all of a sudden, so we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported the novice rowing that did manage to take place this term. We hope you have a restful vac so that you are ready for more messages from us seeking subs next term!

***Hannah Farley and Sarah Chapman
Joint UCBC women's vice-captains
2020-2021***

Novice Report

Michaelmas term saw over 20 women novices enthusiastically sign up for college rowing. While COVID restrictions remained tight at the start of term, thanks to Jono's relentless hard work and the help of the senior rowers, we were able to mask up, sanitise, and get on the water. It didn't take long for me and the other novices to get the rowing bug. Thanks to our patient captains, and let's just say, more than a few, balancing the boat exercises - our skills began to improve. Sadly, after only a few outings, the nation went into lockdown, so too did the rowing club. But this didn't deter our captains, who organised an Oxmas challenge for everyone to keep us in shape and connected with one another. Although many of us hoped for one last rowing outing before the end of term, restrictions meant that simply wasn't possible. Still, myself and the other novices are more keen than ever to get back out onto the water and take on a regular training schedule - fingers crossed this happens next term! A special thanks to Hannah, Sarah and Harriet as well as Jono for all their hard work and organising the training.

Kimberley Becker



Some of the senior women not letting the November lockdown keep them away from the river

Tentative, hopeful, covid-dependent and weather-dependent dates for the diary:

Torpids: 24th – 27th February 2021

Women's Head: Saturday 6th March, 9:30am

Head of the River: Saturday 20th March

Summer Eights: 26th – 29th May

Nicole Szekeres-Tapp

Vice-president 2020-2021



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