



## From the President

Dear Friends,

I hope that, wherever this newsletter finds you, it finds you well. UCBC has spent another term as one of the strongest and most vibrant boat clubs in Oxford. As the days grew longer, our crews took advantage of particularly pleasant weather to spend more and more time on the water. For the first time in many years M1 and W1 shared a coach, ex-Oriel rower Maximilian Lau, who provided a nice connection between the two first eights of the club. I shall let the captains tell the full story of their crews this term, but M1 finished seventh on the river, W1 finished fourth, and we continued to have five boats in fixed divisions.

Writing this newsletter naturally made me think about what has specially marked this year out. From the point of view of this president, this year was the year of the cox. Several novice coxes cut their teeth at Summer Eights and despite the mayhem performed spectacularly. Lottie Hayton's escape tactics snatched victory from the jaws of defeat for W1 and Helen Bennett deftly negotiated men's division 3 for M2. M1 cox Holly Metcalf was awarded the Porter's Plate by Dusty Miller for her

unwavering commitment to her crew and Mack Grenfell managed to cox W2 whilst simultaneously rowing for M1. The coxes of UCBC have a lot to be proud of.

A special mention must also be made for Rebecca te Water Naudé for representing Oxford in the women's boat race. Despite juggling a medical degree and Blue's training, she still proceeded to row with W1 in Eights. As ever, all the training and racing, memories and friendships, disappointment and elation, are only possible because of the generosity of our Old Members and Friends. I would like to extend the gratitude of the club to everyone who has supported us this year, financially or otherwise. I hope you can find the time to make your way down to the river sometime over the coming year. It means a lot. Next year promises to be an exciting one. In October, we shall endeavour to lay the groundwork for a strong year and as always introduce this fantastic sport to as many novices as possible.

***Joseph Dolphin***

***President 2017-18***



## From the Captains

**M1 had been hoping** to race at the Mens Head of the River but unfortunately the race was cancelled due to bad weather conditions. Despite this, M1 headed into Trinity with renewed determination and a new coach. Training began in -1st week and from here we focused on getting as much water time as possible. We trained in the eight every day and every weekday a four or pair made up of M1 rowers also had an outing. The training in the eight was very intense with almost every outing consisting entirely of tough pieces. All this water time meant that individually we were all making big improvements. Unfortunately, some people had exams which delayed our final selection and the boat wasn't selected until fourth week.

We needed to make sure that we were converting our hard training into good race performances. Therefore, we entered Bedford Regatta and this showed us that we had a good race boat speed but that our start was slow. We won our first race against South African Schools, a boat which was made up of schoolboy rowers from across South Africa. However, we lost against Shiplake College and St Catherine's College. Both crews pulled away from us off the start and we only succeeded in holding our position for the remainder of the race.

M1 had a tough Summer Eights, after last year's strong performance we knew we would have to row our best to move up. We also knew we had trained much harder than Wolfson who we were chasing. The Wolfson crew was much bigger than us however, we believed our frequent and long water sessions had given us the advantage. We went into the Wednesday of Summer Eights focused on bumping Wolfson. We weren't concerned about Magdalen chasing us as they had not entered Torpids

we thought they would be a weak crew. Off the start we moved up on Wolfson by a quarter of a length and pushed off Magdalen. Unfortunately, we failed to settle into our race rhythm and Wolfson moved away from us as Magdalen started to move up on us. Coming through the gut Magdalen were just a canvas off us. But a big push leaving the gut allowed us to hold them off as Wadham bumped Magdalen. We then proceeded to row over, winding down just after Univ boathouse.

Going into Thursday we knew we were being chased by a strong Wadham crew. But, we knew that we could row better than we had the previous day. We were determined to hold Wadham off and make it a good race. Unfortunately this wasn't to be, from the start Wadham proved they were the faster boat and steadily gained on us eventually bumping us in the middle of the gut.

Friday was a crucial day for M1 as St Edmund Hall, two places behind us, was being chased by Balliol who were on for blades. So, if we could hold Magdalen off on Friday then Magdalen should be bumped by Balliol on Saturday giving us an easy row over. If we were bumped by Magdalen on Friday then we would ourselves be chased by the strong Balliol crew on Saturday. Thankfully, the men of M1 delivered and we rowed a steady race holding Magdalen at a length down to Univ boathouse. After Univ boathouse we attempted to wind it up for the finish but the boat fell apart and Magdalen gained half a boat length in only a couple of strokes. We managed to regain control of the boat and held our steady race pace till the finish to seal the row over.

During the first three days of Summer Eights it had been very hot with the crew focusing on keeping cool and hydrated. But thankfully, on Saturday it had cooled down and the river banks filled with spectators. M1 was confident of a comfortable row





over by making sure we went off hard to hold off Magdalen, who would be caught by the blade hungry Balliol boat. Sure enough, we held Magdalen off once again and Balliol bumped Magdalen in the gut. The Magdalen cox conceded too late and Magdalen crashed into the wall of the gut. This resulted in Balliol's bow pushing the Magdalen cox out of the boat and Magdalen's bow being snapped off. The gut marshal did not effectively klaxon the race so we continued down to just passed Univ boathouse when the race was finally klaxoned.

To summarise, M1 dropped one place to 7th but next year because we will have many strong returners in both M1 and in the lower boats we can work towards climbing back up and beyond.

I would like to thank Max Lau for his excellent coaching of M1 in Trinity. I would also like to thank the Friends of UCBC for their generous donations and I look forward to working with you all over the coming year. It is a privilege to be Mens Captain and I hope to use my past experience to bring new ideas to the boat club.

### **Angus Menzies**

#### **Men's Captain 2017-18**

**The W1 squad returned** in 0<sup>th</sup> week of Trinity term with something to prove, following an unlucky performance in Torpids. Having bid goodbye to some of our strongest rowers, our cox and our dedicated and long-suffering coach John Ewans, we kicked off the term with some fresh faces rising up through the ranks and a brand-new coach in Max Lau. He subjected us to an unprecedented volume of training, switching focus from circuits and ergs to water

sessions (sometimes exceeding 14 hours per week) in order to prepare for Summer Eights looming on the horizon. Oxford City Bumps was sadly cancelled this year, but Univ W1 had the chance to test themselves against other college crews and outside clubs in a competitive environment at Bedford regatta on Saturday of 2<sup>nd</sup> week. A nail-biting first race against New College W1 saw us storm through from six seats down to win the race on the final stretch, a testament to stamina and fitness built up over the year and to the benefits of a calm and focused attitude. We easily won our quarter-final against Pembroke College, Cambridge, before narrowly losing to an extremely strong Green Templeton College crew in the semi-final. It was a wonderful chance for the novices to experience the stress of the racing environment and presented a challenge to our newly-hatched cox Lottie Hayton, who had only begun coxing three weeks before and performed far beyond everyone's high expectations. Many thanks go to our loyal supporter/photographer David Hunter who came to cheer us on!

After Bedford Regatta, we threw ourselves back into training for Eights, perfecting a flowing rhythm and focusing particular attention on transferring power through the legs. Rebecca te Water Naudé, fresh from the Women's' Blues Boat Race, joined us in the engine room of the boat and brought with her several useful points of focus for the weeks to come. Countless high rate high pressure pieces revolutionised our power output and the crew improved dramatically over the term, earning the right to move into our precious Empacher boat in order to maximise speed. Spurred on by our high position as 3<sup>rd</sup> on the river, and by the strength of the crews starting around us, many reinforced by the addition of Blues rowers, we were



nervous but excited on the eve of Summer Eights. Coach Max helped us perfect our race plan with the introduction of pre-planned calls and moves which could be used by the cox to respond to the racing situation, which we practised to great effect when battle paddling with other college crews. John Ewans kindly returned for the final weekend to help fine-tune our technique, with a particular focus on race starts in the last few technical sessions.

Day 1 of Summer Eights saw all crews keyed-up and ready to test each other. We held a strong position ahead of an unthreatening Magdalen crew which acted as a buffer and ensured we could focus our attention ahead of us. After a strong start, we gained significantly on Pembroke W1 in the first sections of the course, before settling to comfortable rhythm to row over and maintain our energy for the next day. The blues-heavy Christchurch crew behind us on Thursday put in a powerful start which was too much for our naturally lightweight endurance crew and bumped us early, therefore putting us down to 4<sup>th</sup> on the river and in contention with Keble W1 the next day. Inter-collegiate gossip suggested that they were a very fast crew and believed we were theirs for the taking. After an exciting start which saw them leap towards us and catch up by the gut, they had overlap on our boat and swiped twice, only to miss thanks to incredible steering by Lottie. Once we had settled into a powerful rhythm, we opened up a significant gap between us and the disheartened Keble, crossing the line with a huge adrenaline rush at our unexpected performance. On the last day of Summer Eights the Univ boathouse was filled with supporters, friends, family and Old Members, and we were determined to repeat the success of the day before. However, down on the bunglines an unprecedented incident

occurred in which the Keble rope came unattached from the bank ten seconds before the cannon, and a strong tailwind blew them into a more favourable position. We were caught quickly and unceremoniously pushed into the bank by the vengeful crew, and were disappointed not to experience the huge crowds of supporters further down the river. However, an appeal was launched and was successful, awarding us a technical row-over which means that Univ W1 stays at fourth on the river.

I congratulate all the rowers on what is a hugely impressive achievement for a young, fresh crew, and also Max for his extremely impressive work transforming our crew in just six short weeks with unwavering enthusiasm and dedication even on the many early morning and late night sessions. We are all very excited to see what we can do next year.

We rounded off the year by entering a mixed M1/W1 college eight into Oriel Regatta, and made the most of the summer sunshine by teaching the novices how to scull and doing many small boat outings and open-air core circuit sessions. Many thanks to all who have supported us over the year and turned up to watch us race, to the Friends of UCBC for their generosity, and particularly to Katie Hammond, who has been fabulous captain this year and has dealt with many challenges admirably. I look forward to taking on the role proper in Michaelmas term and hope that, with promising young talent in our ranks, we can deliver more success next year.

***Lara Drew***

***Womens' Captain 2017-8***





## From the Vice-Captains

**Two men's lower boats** competed in Summer Eights this year, and there was a healthy mix of novices and returning rowers vying for a seat.



Coming off a very successful Torpids, and having only been denied blades by a klaxon, M2 meant business. The competition was going to be much stiffer though as they were placed two divisions higher in Eights, and were the fifth second crew on the river. Training started in earnest, and there was a healthy competition for all seats in the boat. The crew came to a consensus that boat speed would be helped more by spending time on the water, and as a consequence had few gym sessions. This was ultimately rewarded, as after having several permutations in the boat, a strong M2 was chosen in 4th week. We are very grateful to Nathan Williams who stepped in as coach for Trinity this year. He worked very hard in the few weeks of training and succeeded in sharpening the crew's technique and race plan.

Racing started at 4:45, and the sun was out and about. M2 had their eyes on Somerville M1, and were being chased by Wadham II. In what proved to be a competitive first race, Univ gained on Somerville and were half a length off in the lower gut, but couldn't sustain the pressure. Wadham kept coming very close, and at a point were two feet off Univ's stern. Some brilliant coxing and a firm push from Univ along with abysmal coxing from Wadham helped Univ keep Wadham at an arm's length. In the tightest

of finishes, Univ rowed over, and Wadham were bumped by Keble II at the line.

The next day, being chased by a strong Keble second crew, Univ were calm and focused. Despite some excellent rowing, they were bumped in the gut. Friday was going to be a challenge, as the boat was again being chased by Wadham and had a fast Keble crew to chase. M2 stepped up to the challenge, and didn't let Wadham gain more than half a length on them and rowed over comfortably.

On the final day M2 were hungry for a bump, which had eluded the boat club at 8s this year. They were chasing New II, who were up for spoons, and chased by Wadham once again. Saving the best for the last, M2 bumped New at the end of Boathouse Island in an exhilarating race and finished level at eights.

**M3 had** an overwhelming majority of novices in the boat, and were the fun boat on the Men's side. They were surrounded by second boats and faced stiff competition. Unfortunately, they never got past Donny bridge, despite an Oxford lightweight subbing in on Thursday. Having got spoons this year, M3 are still in the fixed divisions, and look to reclaim their firm footing in Div 5 next year.

**Aashraya Jha**

**Men's Vice-Captain 2017-18**



**Summer Eights 2017** saw W2 fighting to defend their impressively high place on the river as the third highest second boat following the great successes of the previous Summer Eights campaigns. With the return of people who had rowed in previous years for boats ranging from W1 through to W3 as well as our dedicated and loved-by-all coach Argy, mixed with novice rowers who started in Michaelmas term, this year's W2 saw a healthy blend of very experienced and fresh talent which ensured that the older members could aid the newer ones and pass on any advice and experience which will ensure continuity for the years to come. The fact that the majority of this year's W2 members have expressed interest in staying on for the following years bodes extremely well for the future of the women's lower boats, as we will have many experienced and enthusiastic rowers, which hopefully with the influx of new novices from Michaelmas 2017 will make for some keen and successful boats for our following bumps campaigns. Unfortunately, due to many people's clashing schedules, the W3 that was planned to compete in this year's Summer Eights was not able to enter, however this leaves a whole boat of novices keen to compete in Christchurch regatta and ready to build on the experience they've already gained in some training sessions – so here's to a successful set of novices in Michaelmas term!

In both Hilary and Trinity terms, many members of W2 were able to train several times with W1 in both their outings and land training which ensured that their technique improved rapidly and they were able to row more confidently whilst in the environment of more experienced rowers. The fact that W1 and W2 training was not strictly separated also ensured that the rowers were able to get to know each other more and will aid co-operation and team bonding for the following years.



W2's training in Trinity term consisted almost entirely of outings in order to maximise the amount of time spent on the river perfecting technique and racing style. A mixture of outings in small boats and eights ensured that the rowers' technique and sensitivity in the small boats could improve quickly and be applied to race situations in the eight.

After a short training period of around half a term, Summer Eights kicked off in 5th Week with some beautiful weather. Unfortunately, W2 were bumped on the first day by a strong Pembroke – whose first boat was also very strong as second on the river. On the second day, where other Univ boats fell, W2 managed to hold off Worcester II and successfully rowed over. Day 3 brought a difficult challenge for them in trying to hold off Christchurch II, which they did successfully. Unfortunately, a strong Christchurch came back on the final day with vengeance to bump W2, leaving the boat two places lower on the river than where it had begun. Nonetheless, W2 remain one of the highest-ranked second boats on the river and firmly within Division 3 - surrounded by many first boats! This leaves them in a strong position to challenge the other second boats around them for the following year with a stronger and more experienced crew to hopefully secure some bumps. A huge thank you to our amazing coach Argyris Stasinakis, whose unwavering dedication to the boat is greatly appreciated by everyone, and to anyone who helped to sub in, cox or bankride any of the training sessions. Without you there would be no W2!

***Alisa Musanovic***

***Women's Vice-Captain 2017-18***



## From the Social Secretary

**Another great year** for UCBC! This term has seen social events continue despite the looming threat of exams with crewdates providing much needed revision relief. Summer Eights saw many Univites both current and past, rowers and non-rowers come down to our fantastic boathouse to offer their support to our many crews. It was great to see the rowing and college community coming together and the famous Univ cheer lived up to expectations and continued spurring our crews on.

Summer Eights Dinner was as enjoyable as ever with crews celebrating or commiserating as required. Regardless it was a brilliant evening with speeches from our old members and the committee both old and new. While we were sad to say goodbye to some our rowers at the end of this year they all leave with fond memories of their time at UCBC and we look forward to seeing them at events in the future. With a touch of trepidation the new committee assumed their roles hoping to live up to the high standard set this year.

Even though racing had ended rowing continued at UCBC with a fantastic taster day and barbeque in Eighth Week to entice even more novices next year. The turnout was good and it would seem that we will see even more faces at the boat club come Michaelmas. We ended the year looking forward to success in the next and a fun-filled social calendar – that I shall endeavour to provide!

***George Russell***

***Social Secretary 2017-18***

