

From the President

Dear all,

I write to you as a successful season of college rowing draws to a close. Our outgoing committee have done an outstanding job across the year, leading to many successes. Including an increased external racing presence and a few additions to our collection of silverware!

Trinity term has brought with it glorious sunshine and plenty of water time for all our boats in the build up to Summer Eights, which itself was an exhilarating week. The first and second eights enjoyed a trip to Bedford in early May for some invaluable racing practice ahead of bumps week, then honed in on technique with video analysis coaching sessions and plenty of quality miles accrued on the water. This clearly paid off as our men's crews continued climbing the bumps charts and our women's crews fought valiantly to remain in the top few places for first and second eights respectively. Our third boats had a thoroughly enjoyable week and show a promising level of talent for future years of bumps racing in higher crews!

Post Summer Eights, our top crews continued training hard in preparation for Henley, with a W1 4+ entered into Henley Women's and a M1 composite 8+ entered into Henley Royal. I'm sure you'll enjoy reading full race reports from our captains!

The Martlet Club has also had an increased racing presence throughout the year, with a very fashionable M4 crew racing at Summer Eights, and a Univ-Martlet composite racing at both WEHARR and City Bumps (and placing very competitively in both). Pippa Biggs continued the Martlet Club success, qualifying for Henley Women's Regatta in the Aspirational 1x category! As the Martlet club expands its numbers, if you are interested in racing again at any level, or even just returning to Oxford for a paddle, then I would recommend getting in touch at martletclubuniv@gmail.com!

One of the key highlights of the year has been enjoying a full social calendar with no restrictions. In particular, blazers were adorned recently by our top eights and committee for a delightful lunch at the Leander Club, kindly hosted by Ron Jordan, accompanied by many members of the 1965 crew. It was a spectacular day, with sunshine looking over the Thames, and brilliant company. As always, it's a pleasure to welcome back UCBC alumni for dinners throughout the year and I'd encourage you to make a visit and relive some of your glorious rowing memories with us!

As the Summer holidays begin, we are looking forward to our new tradition of an annual camping trip to Llandaff, taking an extended fleet of boats for some short 1km and 500m races and hopefully returning home with a few new pots!

We will also be looking forward to the year ahead, building on breadth and depth for our squad and working towards a possible shot at double headship at torpids. It will certainly be an exciting year, and I look forward to writing to you again in the near future.

All the best,
Charlie Kniebe-Evans
UCBC President 2022/23

UCBC students and alumni at the Leander Lunch in Henley-on-Thames





Bedford Regatta 2023: Univ first and second Vllls post racing, along with coach Jono and mascot Eve the Border Collie!

From the Men's Captain

Off the back of blades in Torpids, the senior men began Trinity Term optimistically. With various blues and fair weather rowers returning to the squad, competition for the first boat was exceptionally high—there were nearly two trialists for every seat. After one trip to Dorney and a dozen 1km seat races, a first and second eight were assembled.

The first task for the top eight was city bumps in 1st Week. With three subs in the boat (including M2 coach Mark Proberts) the crew started second in Division 1 behind an evenly matched CORC boat. Both rowed over in all four races and the positions were unchanged at the end of the day.

The next job was Bedford Amateur Regatta. At stake—the Jum Beckett Cup for College A eights. The first challenge, however, was to even get the crew on the water. Last minute substitutions and hitherto unknown British Rowing entry rules conspired to topple our carefully selected crew order. And after intense negotiation with the race committee, it was decided that the only legal configuration was an eclectic M1/2/3 composite.

Nonetheless, we headed into our first race against Emmanuel College (Cambridge) with confidence. Indeed, after quickly pulling away off the start, it was clear that something needed to be done to level the playing field.

Fortunately, the riverbank stepped up to the task and contrived to obstruct the way ahead, knocking us down two lengths in the process. Rattled but undeterred, we carried on and pulled level with Emmanuel once more. Unfortunately, we then faced our third tribulation, as we crossed onto the other station and decisively lost the ensuing blade clash.

A slightly modified crew also entered the Open Eights Band 2 category at Bedford, and won the first heat against Radley College with a verdict of easily. In the quarter final, though, the eventual winners, Phoenix Boat Club, pulled clear by 2 ½ lengths. Bedford nonetheless provided valuable race experience, and we headed into Summer Vllls with the confidence that we'd already fulfilled our quota of bad luck for the term.

On Wednesday of Vllls, the crew began 11th on the river, chasing Magdalen, a frequent antagonist. Gaining immediately off the start, a three boat sandwich took shape, with hardly ¼ of a length separating each of St Catherine's, Magdalen, and Univ. Unfortunately, Magdalen bumped out on Catz first, who promptly stopped dead in the racing line.



Cox Chloe Bardou was obliged to hold it hard. But despite commendations from the umpires for acting quickly and avoiding a dangerous collision at speed, no penalty bump was forthcoming.

The crew therefore started Thursday in the same position, but this time chasing the Catz eight that had caused so much trouble the day before. And despite mistakenly winding it down and clearing the racing line too soon, the bump was eventually secured.

On Friday, Magdalen was once more ahead, but ahead of them sat an on-for-spoons Wadham. In the Univ boat, there was also an emergency substitution owing to illness: Lloyd 'very-good-telemetry' Arnold was out and in his stead stood Max 'cycling blue' Bolton, bought back from the claws of BUCS ambition. It was clear that Magdalen would catch Wadham immediately, and so the crew faced an unenviable over bump on St. Edmund Hall. A good effort was made, but the river ran out too early.

Finally, on Saturday, the crew quickly caught Wadham, and were the only boat in Division I to bump. Overall, then, the week was a success. The fact that going +2 felt like an underachievement just demonstrates the great upward momentum in the club.

Following a well-deserved weekend of rest and celebration, training started once more—this time with Henley Royal Regatta in our sights. After plans to revive the Wolfniv composite fell through, 'historically-good-at-rowing' Oriel graciously loaned us two bodies and an expensive boat. With these three additions—James Nally, John Gower Isaac, and the Jonathan Close-Brooks, respectively—a mighty 'Oniv' composite was formed.

Harbouring wide-eyed hopes of Henley prequalification, we set out to defend the Clayton Cup at Marlow Regatta in 8th week. Racing in a time trial against top eights from the UK and abroad, we completed the course in 6:12.2; not fast enough to hold onto the Clayton Cup, which fell by ten seconds to Sheffield University A. Our time seeded us in the middle of the I final, facing five club crews entered in the Thames at HRR, as well as Monmouth School A and Imperial College B—entered in the Princess Elizabeth and Temple, respectively. We had a strong race in the final, leading from 500m to the finish and convincingly fending off a last minute challenge from St. Andrew A. Now it just remains to find a few splits of extra speed before the HRR qualifying race on Friday 23 June.

Looking ahead to next year, the squad is in a promising position. All but one of the Summer Vllls first boat will be returning, as is nearly everyone in the second and third boats. Bolstered by a strong vacation of training and the usual prodigious intake of first year students, we'll hope to field very competitive entries at Fours Head and Fairbairn's in Michaelmas. All this building towards Hilary and Torpids, where the first eight will start 5th on the river—the highest position for nearly three decades.

Greg Cuff, Men's Captain



Left: M1 on Friday of Vllls
Top Right: M1 at Vllls dinner
Bottom Right: M1/2/3 Composite paddling up at Bedford Amateur Regatta

From the Women's Co-Captains

Following on from a very successful Hilary term, the women's side continued to train hard and have fun racing both in Oxford and further afield. W1 was set by week 1 of Trinity term after seat racing in Dorney and on the Isis. With five water sessions, two weights sessions, and an erg session a week, the crew quickly came together and bonded well.

Looking to get some racing practice in before Summer Vllls, W1 entered two divisions at Bedford Regatta. We put in a strong shift beating Teddy Hall by 1½ lengths, taking us through to the semi-final of the college division where unfortunately, we were knocked out by Peterhouse. With a few technical improvements to work on before the start of our bumps campaign, we returned to the Isis determined to make the most of every training session.

Before long, Summer Vllls was upon us. On day one, hunted down by a Christchurch boat made up of five blues rowers, W1 got off to an impressive start and managed to hold them off until just after the gut. On days two and three, W1 maintained their position as second on the river.



On the final day of our bumps campaign, Teddy Hall put in a gutsy performance giving us an extremely strong fight. W1 got off to another strong start before striding and settling at a good pace. Coming past Univ boathouse, Teddy Hall began gaining on us but the cheers from Univ boathouse helped W1 to find that extra gear and drive on. Digging deep, the crew gave everything they had, however Teddy Hall just managed to bump us at the end of Boathouse Island. Finishing an exciting week of racing in the top three as a crew composed completely of college rowers was an amazing achievement and puts us within reach of another Headship in years to come!

After Summer Vllls, some of the crew began training in a 4+, looking to qualify in the Frank V Harry Cup Development category at Henley Women's Regatta. With one of our rowers learning to row on the opposite side, and a fast, but very difficult boat to set, the crew (and Cassandra the weight), had quite a few splashy outings however following some dedicated training, alongside Jono's support and coaching, we improved massively and came together as a crew. We entered Reading Regatta and put in an impressive shift to beat Wallingford Rowing Club by ½ a length in some extremely difficult conditions. Unfortunately, the rest of the Regatta was called off due to thunder and lightning.

The following Friday at Henley Women's Regatta, the crew rowed well however did not manage to qualify. On behalf of the crew, I would like to say a massive thank you to Jono for all his time, support and expert coaching over the last year. I'm looking forward to another successful year on the river!

Alex Jones,
Women's Co-Captain (alongside Tara Narayana)



Top Left: W1 in action during Summer Vllls
Bottom Left : W1 post-race at Bedford Regatta
Right: W2 post-race at Bedford Regatta

From the Women's Vice-Captains

This trinity term we are delighted to say that we managed to field two very strong second and third women's boats!

Following a competitive trials process, both crews were set by the beginning of week 1 of Trinity term. With five water sessions a week and Argy's excellent coaching and technical tips, W2 quickly came together and bonded well as a crew. Their first race of the term was Bedford Regatta at the end of week 2. For many, this was their first time racing externally and it was a great experience from which the crew learnt a lot and looked to build upon in the coming term!

W2 put in a strong and gutsy performance every day of their bumps campaign. Their hard work and dedication to training throughout the term was reflected by their smooth rowing technique. Surrounded by other college's first crews in division 3, W2 managed to put up a good fight but they were unfortunately bumped each day. This did not dampen the crew's enthusiasm however and with the introduction of a weights programme for W2 next term we hope that they will be able to climb back up the division! A special thank you goes once again to the amazing Argy for all his time, commitment and dedication to coaching the crew - you always go above and beyond and the club are greatly appreciative of this.

W3 also had an amazing term of rowing. The crew put in an impressive performance in Rowing On to successfully qualify for Summer Vllls. The following week, with the sun shining, W3 started their bumps campaign as they meant to go on, bumping Corpus Christi's W2 very quickly.

On day two, the crew continued to put down a strong row, bumping Christchurch's W3. On the final day of their Summer Vllls campaign, W3 rowed extremely well and gave Peter's W2 a hard-fought race before eventually being bumped. Despite this, the crew had an amazing week of rowing and the net gain of +1 stands future crews in good stead! Many of the crew have said that this was their favourite term of rowing so far and this is testament to the excellent coaching from Charlie, Becca and Kim who gave up their time and ensured that W3 had three water sessions every week and several weights inductions sessions in the lead up to Summer Vllls.

In the final few weeks of term, the women's side enjoyed casual outings in the sunshine. Looking to next year, we hope to build on our successes from this term by continuing to ensure that UCBC remains a friendly and supportive club with great squad depth.

Alex Jones, Women's Vice Captain 2022-23

On behalf of

Ali Gowlett, Women's Vice Captain 2023-24

Grace Kimber, Women's Vice Captain 2023-24



W2 during summer Vllls



W3 during summer Vllls

From the Men's Vice-Captains

After a successful Torpids Campaign, M2 and M3 were on top form coming into summer eights. We once more fielded 4 boats, showing off Univ's immense depth of squad. We started off with high hopes for our lads.

With the close guidance of our new 'Brookes coach', Mark Probets, we have seen a strong development in the competitiveness of M2 this season. Off the back of a Blades winning performance in Torpids and then very successful racing at city bumps in the beginning of term, M2 were rearing to start this year's Summer Eights campaign. The week began with a very quick bump on Antony's M1 on Wednesday, securing their place in division 3. Unfortunately for their friends who came to see them race, Thursday was much the same, with M2 bumping Anne's M1 after only a couple hundred meters. By Friday M2 were still yet to make it to Donny bridge after another bump, this time against Keble M2. Going into Saturday they knew that they would likely end up at the back of a 3 boat sandwich, M2 prepared to go for the over bump on a very competitive Linacre M1. After a valiant effort they managed to catch up to Linacre by 5 lengths over the race but unfortunately was not enough to pull off the over-bump. Alas, M2 still had a tremendously successful campaign, gaining 3 places and securing their place in Division III.

M3, after a strong placing in rowing on, were ready to go for Summer Eights. Made up mostly of rowers in their first year of rowing, with very little training as a crew, they managed to put in excellent rows throughout the week. Unfortunately division VI was wrought with klaxons, meaning they were unable to consolidate a bump on Worcester M2 on Wednesday.

After getting bumped on Thursday by a blades winning Linacre M2, they then performed excellently on Friday, rowing over the full course. Finally on Saturday, after getting into a rather dramatic entanglement with Osler house, M3 maintained their position and enjoyed an exciting ending to an exciting bumps campaign.

Lastly, we were lucky enough to enter a fourth boat this year, our famed beer boat. Filled with the hardest working rowers, alumni, and even Mark our, 'Brookes coach', they graced us with outstanding outfits and even more outstanding rowing. On Wednesday they pulled off a good bump very quickly on Exeter M3. Then on Thursday an excellent row saw them bump Hilda's M2. Faced with a challenge on Friday they performed an exquisite row over. Finally on Saturday, whilst dressed in black tie, they narrowly missed out on bumping Wolfson M4 due to a pile up and subsequent klaxon which M3 may or may not have contributed to. Nevertheless the beer boat had a tremendous week, gaining a total +2 and doing so in style.

Ciaran Moscrop & Toni Mihai, Men's Vice Captains



Left: M2, Unsure of how blades work on Saturday of Vllls, with coach Mark Probets

Top Right: M3 at Eights Dinner in their iconic trademark yellow blazers.

Bottom Right: The Beer Boat (M4) in their cycling themed outfit on Friday

From the Social Secretary

The social side of UCBC has been as lively as ever this Trinity term, with events ranging from the typical oxford crewdate to the more placid picnic in the park (with a side of football). The highlight of the term was, of course, Summer Eights, and the dinner that accompanied it. With the final dregs of covid behind us, the dinner was once again catered by college as a delicious formal style meal, allowing students and alumni to come together to celebrate a successful year for the club in an evening of joyous jubilation, and compare the various different styles of buttons on their highly fashionable blazers. The term ended with a barbecue to have one final hurrah for those moving on to new things, although we hope to see them return in future as members of our alumni club, the martlets.

Whilst we are entering a new academic year, one can only hope the club stays as successful, and as social, as ever. Events, some new, some improved, and some left just how they are, will be coming thick and fast to satisfy the appetite of the new batch of novices, who will undoubtedly be eager to get stuck into anything, and everything, that is thrown at them.

Bertie Coomber, Social Secretary



Top: The whole club at Vllls dinner
Bottom: M1 and W1 reacting in real time to a bench falling over mid photo