

From the President

Dear Friends,

Warm and festive greetings to you all! I write to you as a rather cold and rainy term draws to an end. Unfortunate weather has meant that Oxford-based water time has been very limited, and several mid-term races have been cancelled. However, as always, UCBC has prevailed against the odds. Members of our senior squad have become well-acquainted with the commute to Dorney Lake and have had the privilege of valuable water time on the Olympic lake across several weekends this term. Our land-training regime has remained strong as ever and our club community spirit has been both motivating and uplifting.

We started the term with a trip to Bedford for their Autumn Small Boats Head Race, with 22 senior athletes competing in multiple events across the day. Following on from this success, we ended the term with a frosty visit to Cambridge for the Fairbairn's Cup, taking a much larger squad of 45 senior athletes and bringing home some nice silverware for the Martlet Club!

Our Vice-Captains have worked tirelessly across the term to keep our novices engaged in rowing despite the lack of opportunity to actually row on water. Upon the cancellation of the annual Michaelmas Novice Regatta, it was decided that we would run a replacement Univ Novice Ergatta. This event saw over 350 competitors from across the Oxford College community and its huge success is merit to the hard work of our committee and volunteers, in particular, our Vice-Captains.

The rest of our committee and coaches have been working very hard in their roles and going the extra mile with various exciting projects which you can read about throughout this newsletter. These include the planning of our inaugural Martlet Regatta, a special Golden Anniversary celebration, and a fundraising 100km Ergathon. I hope to see and hear from many of you across these events and hope that you enjoy reading all of our committee's updates.



The men*s and women*s first VIII working together to derig the women*s boat, Minnie Coleman



Thank you so much to all those who have given to our Christmas appeal. If you haven't given yet but are in a position to do so, then it would be greatly appreciated. Further details about the campaign and the donation page can be found here bit.ly/UCBCGift.

Warm wishes,
Charlie Kniebe-Evans
UCBC President 2023/24

From the Women's Co-Captains

Michaelmas term started strongly with a successful pre-season, maximising water time on the Isis. Unfortunately, this did not last long as heavy rain and flooding meant that the river soon became unrowable and remained so for the rest of the term. Nevertheless, the women*s side took this as an opportunity to focus on building strength and endurance, through Jono’s personalised weights training programme and erg sessions. The UCBC team spirit was bolstered by regular circuits with the novices on Wednesday evenings, often followed by a social. Kira, the ‘queen of the Isis’ and captain of the coxes, also hosted a weekly yoga session to help improve flexibility and to enable the club to relax after a busy week of training! Desperate for some water time, a mixture of fours and eights were also lucky enough to train at Dorney several weekends in a row. We certainly made the most of this precious water time, doing double sessions, and covering distances of up to 28km!

Due to the river conditions, many planned races, including Fours Head, were unfortunately cancelled. On the last Friday of term, however, we travelled to Cambridge to race in the Fairbairns Cup, where we had two eights and a Martlet crew racing. Our first eight was the fastest Oxford college and finished the 4.3km course in a respectable time of 18.00.1. Our second eight also put in a good shift finishing 11th out of the second eights and was also the fastest Oxford college in their division. Last, but certainly not least, the Martlet Club alumni eight won the women*s invitational category! These commendable results demonstrate that despite the lack of water time, the land training sessions are paying off.

Looking forward to next year, when hopefully the river will be rowable again, the women*s side will kick start the term with some competitive seat-racing, before knuckling down with some hard training as we hope to defend our headship title. We would like to take this opportunity to thank both Jono for his dedicated coaching throughout this term, and you, for your ongoing support to the club. We hope you have a happy holiday and look forward to seeing some of you next term at the Dino’s and Cassie’s dinner.

Alex Jones and Tara Narayan
UCBC Women*s Co-Captains 2023-2024



Left: W2 ready to race at Fairbairns

Top Right: W1 post race at Fairbairns

Bottom Right: W4+ A in action at Bedford Small Boats



Fairbairns Regatta 2023: M1 staying warm in their UCBC branded dressing gowns post race

From the Men*s Captain

Minimal water time notwithstanding, Michaelmas has been an auspicious start to the year for the Univ senior men. The main targets of the term were the Fours Head on the Tideway and the Fairbairn Cup in Cambridge. After some refresher outings in Week 0, we headed to Bedford Small Boats Head on 8 October with four combinations of 4+, two pairs, and Tom Ward in the single. While the quality of rowing was perhaps reflective of nearly scratch crews after the summer holiday, the results were promising: the Cicuta-Bridger-Moscrop-Lang four was 2nd in open fours and 5th overall; the Cicuta-Bridger pair was 2nd in the open pairs; and Tom W finished 8th in the open singles.

In Week 1, crews were set for the Fours Head, and we looked ahead to a grand term of intense training and abundant water time. Unfortunately, the river promptly flooded. So, with the invaluable support of Taylor Swift, we faced down a long term of ergs, weights, and land circuits, all interspersed with weekends at Dorney Lake—water time which would prove to be very valuable.

The next racing opportunity came at IWL A as the Isis briefly cooperated. Following a warm up at Dorney that morning, the B and C fours put in a strong shift.

The B four (Hutchinson-Cuff-Moscrop-Lang), despite winding it down behind a lethargic crew through the gut, were the fastest 4+ and also beat half the men's eights. The C four (Moor-Ward-Sakabani-and-supersub-Nally) were just a couple splits behind, finishing 3rd out of six. Peter Moor and Tom Ward also entered a pair, while myself, Paolo Cicuta, and Lloyd Arnold raced in singles, with varying degrees of success.

As the Fours Head approached, we were confident, and warm — IT officer and JCR stash rep emeritus Max Bolton equipped us with Univ branded beanies, awarded for outstanding commitment to training or socials. Unfortunately, after everyone had decamped to London to avoid a 4:00 am wake up, the news came through that the river conditions forced a cancellation.

So, now in Fairbairns crews, we returned to the ergs and Dorney with three weeks of term to go. On Saturday of Week 6, following historical precedent, the senior men sent just one top four to New College Indoor Regatta, a 4x500m indoor erg relay. This year, the challengers were Christ Church A and B, Exeter, Linacre, Lincoln, Johns A and B, Worcester, Queens, and two potential dark horses of undeclared college allegiance.

Yet buoyed by the Harvard 5V talent of new recruit Isaac Robinson, the Bridger-Arnold-Cicuta-Robinson combination easily dispatched them all with a combined time of 5:44.5 including changeovers.

The final task of the term was to see how we stack up against the Cambridge college crews at the Fairbairns Cup, a 4.3km head race on the river Cam. Concerned about allegations of unfair competitive advantage, however, neither M1 nor M2 took a single stroke in their racing combinations before the paddle to the start line. M1 finished 4th out of 27 first eights, 7 seconds behind the winners, Caius, and over a minute ahead of the next Oxford eight, historically strong Oriel M1. Not far behind were Univ M2, who, to save face for Oriel, raced with two subs and stopped rowing 100m before the finish line—M2 were nonetheless 6th out 13 second eights. Overall it was a promising day that showed great progress from last year.

As we head into the winter vacation and begin some yet-to-be-determined holiday training challenge, the senior men are looking forward with great anticipation to Torpids. Starting four bumps from the head of the river, the first Torpid is at its highest point since 1996 and stands within reach of the best result in living memory. The second Torpid, meanwhile, hopes to break into Division III for the first time since 2008.

Unrelatedly, the new film ‘The Boys in the Boat’ is released on Christmas Day in North America and 12 January in the UK. Should anyone be watching it, keep your eyes peeled for some genuine Univ talent masquerading as rough and ready 1930s choppers. Pay particular attention to the Penn state crew and the Czech Olympic VIII, as some crew members of these boats will bear a striking resemblance to the current squad.

Gregory Cuff, Men*s Captain, 2023-2024



Left: M1 at Fairbairns

*Top Right: Univ Men*s Four in action at Bedford*

Bottom Right: M2 at Fairbairns



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From the Vice-Captains

Michaelmas term once again saw a new influx of new members into UCBC! Our novice program began, as always, with our Taster Day. We had a great turnout, with novices being shown tours around the boathouse and participating in erg races. Our senior crews and coxes then took them out on the water to give them their first taste of rowing as a crew. We also all enjoyed a tasty BBQ to finish off the event! The enthusiasm amongst the novices to-be was palpable and we'd like to extend a massive thank you to everyone in the club who helped to support such a great day!

Our novice women*s side had a fabulous first term. After the success of the taster day, we split our women* into 2 crews: WNA and MNC, and promptly started our training. Despite bad weather and river closures, our tank and erg sessions were productive - they quickly learnt the basics of rowing under the careful coaching from our seniors. Despite a frustrating term of river closures, we ended our Michaelmas term with numerous keen novices, and we look forward to seeing their continued development over the rest of the year. We are now looking forward to bumps and seeing their full potential!

Our novice men*s side has been both strong and numerous after we had a great turnout on our taster day and subsequently formed two novice men*s crews, with over 20 aspiring athletes in total. Once we settled into the terms of training, there was unfortunately limited opportunity for our crews to get onto the water as the Isis River level was definitely not on our side! Regardless, our novices remained dedicated to their crews and spent many hours getting to grips with the sport, whether that be in the tank, on the ergs or through attendance at club circuits. Their collective commitment and camaraderie shown this term bodes well for the future of UCBC.



Univ Ergatta in Full Swing



Univ Novice Crews post Ergatta

Clockwise from top left: MNA, WNA, MNC, MNB

As usual, novice rowing in Michaelmas culminated in the novice regatta in 7th week. Unfortunately due to the extremely poor weather causing river conditions that would've been unsafe for novice crews, the organisers were forced to cancel the regatta. In response to this, Univ decided to host an alternative for the whole Oxford Rowing Community, and thus the Univ Novice 'Ergatta' was born! Over 40 crews entered from 20 colleges for an 8x200m relay race! All of our ergs were placed in front of the boat house and were linked up together for live race tracking all thanks to our IT Officer Andy. We also held individual sprint races to find the fastest single novices and coaches alongside a hot drinks sale in aid of our funding drive for new W2 blades. Univ crews performed strongly compared with other colleges, suggesting promising things to come next term! WNA had an amazing team spirit and MNC, in their composite with crews with St Hugh's College, showed their power on the ergs. Additionally, MNA and MNB put in a huge performance, finishing competitively amongst the best novice crews. Massive thanks to everyone in the club who came down to help with the running of the event, especially after a long morning at Dorney! Your help ensured a successful and rewarding day for all novices across the community and an excellent way to conclude Michaelmas Term's rowing!

Ali Gowlett, Women*s Vice Captain 2023-24
Alex Rigamonti, Men*s Vice Captain 2023-24
Ciaran Moscrop, Men*s Vice Captain 2023,24
Grace Kimber, Women*s Vice Captain 2023-24



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From the Social Secretary

This term has been yet another resounding success for the UCBC social scene. Starting with inducting the novices into boat club life with a friendly pub golf, before branching out into the typical crewdate shenanigans with a sprinkling of kahoot that I'm sure any seasoned rower is used to. The term culminated with the inaugural Michaelmas boatclub dinner, which was a resounding success. Many new traditions were made, and I look forward to seeing how this event further matures with the years to come. The final event of the term saw the senior squad head to Cambridge post Fairbairns, for a social with our sister college, Trinity Hall, in their college bar. This culminated in a light boogie in one of Cambridges finest nighttime establishments, with some members leaving earlier than others.

Remember to sign up for the Dinos and Cassies dinner, as well as keep an eye out for invites to Eights dinner later next year. Hope to see you all there,

Bertie Coomber (social secretary)

From the Martlets

It's been a very successful term for the Martlet Club, both in building our ranks and results from regattas. Not only have we had some lovely social gatherings (e.g. park run followed by brunch), we have also been training hard both on land and on the river. To help facilitate our training/ appease the Oxford rowing bureaucracy, the Martlet Club have now got a small fleet of MTL boats and some lovely Martlet specific blades, giving us freedom to train around our busy work schedules.

The first regatta of the season was Oxford City Regatta, in which the Martlet Club entered a variety of small boats including doubles, pairs, quads and singles. Ahead of their wedding a week later, Claas and Aurelia collected two very comfortable wins in the mixed double category. The women*s pair got through 4 rounds of racing before being bested in the final and the women*s double won two very well fought and close races and, as usual, Pippa won in her single.

Following on from the successes of Oxford City, the Martlets entered a women*s pair at Isis Sculls and secured a win over the women's double that was mistakenly put in their category.

Pippa Biggs then once again returned to the tideway in her single for Scullers Head of the River in the Senior Women's category, after battling the windy conditions she finished in a very impressive 6th in her category.

Having missed out on a position at Pairs Head, we set our sights instead on Bedford Autumn Small Boats Head where we entered a 4- (a composite with univ), a pair and single, returning home from the day with three gold medals and a very tired support border collie (follow @evethebordercollie for regatta dog content, as seen on British Rowing!)

However, by far the biggest success of the term was the first ever Martlet Alumni women*s eight that competed at Fairbairns. Univ alumni from the last 10 years travelled from all over the UK to meet in Cambridge on 1 December. Despite the freezing temperatures, the surprise bucket in the stern and the minimal warm up (maybe 4 strokes?), they went on to win the invitational women's category by a comfortable 11 seconds.

It was so much fun to row with alumni from a variety of crews over the years, to catch up with people that we hadn't seen in a while and even meet people that we never rowed with before. We want to be able to provide more alumni with these opportunities in the future so if you are interested in joining the Martlet Club, socially or to be involved in more races like this in the future, then please do reach out to the martlet club committee or refer to the website (<https://www.univboatclub.com/about-martlet>) or follow us on Instagram (@martletclubuniv).

**Sophie Wicken, Martlet Captain 2023-2024,
Aspiring Chief Mart of the Martlets**

*The Victorious Fairbairns
Martlet VIII*



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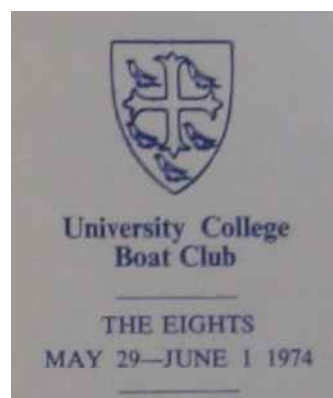
50th Anniversary Crews

50-Year UCBC Reunion

It is our pleasure to invite Univ Boat Club members from 1973-1975 to join us at Eights Dinner 2024 for a special 50th-anniversary celebration on Saturday 25th May 2024. The weekend's celebrations will include bumps race spectating at the Boathouse, followed by a special alumni drinks reception hosted by the Master. We will then invite you to join current students and more recent alumni for a whole-club reception and crew photographs in the Radcliffe Quad, before proceeding to enjoy Eights Dinner all together in the Hall. On the afternoon of Sunday 26th May, we will be hosting our first ever 'Martlet Regatta', where alumni will have the opportunity to take crew boats out and battle paddle against our current student eights if they so wish! It is set to be an exciting weekend and a brilliant opportunity to reconnect with past crewmates. Invitations are due to be sent out soon, however, our committee would be delighted if you would save the date and send an email to ucbc.alumni@univ.ox.ac.uk to register your interest!

All our best,

Charlie Kniebe-Evans & Jack Zoeller
(President 23/24 / Captain 73/74)



Dates and Notes for the Year Ahead

I hope 2023 has been a happy and healthy year for you all! As we look ahead to 2024, I would like to share advance notice for various events that will be taking place in the boat club calendar.

The first thing to draw attention to is that our wonderful boat man, Jim Ronaldson, is, by the time you receive this, somewhere in the middle of the Atlantic in a double. After two and a half years of preparations, both Jim and fellow rower Ian Davies will be aiming to set the world record for the oldest median age of a crew to cross the Atlantic, with an average age of 65.6. This is being done in support of Papyrus suicide prevention, and Myeloma UK. If you wish to track their progress, this can be done on the Talisker Whiskey Challenge website. If you wish to donate, you can do so here. <https://sponsorme.charitiestrust.org/event/c2598bc1-5897-451e-9c06-0252a8d49657>

On the topic of charitable fundraisers, UCBC will be undertaking a 100 hour ergathon from January 15th – 19th. Proceeds from this event will be split 50/50 between the club and Oxford based charities, with the charities to be finalised in the near future. The club is hoping to raise enough money to rehandle our W2 blades. Further details will be posted nearer the time on our social feeds, so please keep an eye on those!

Much later in the year, we have the exciting addition to the calendar of the 'martlet regatta', an event jointly organised by UCBC and Martlet committee, that will give old members the chance to take boats out, and if they so choose, have some battle paddling against current members. This will take place on the Sunday after Summer Eights has concluded, so we hope that many alumni down for the dinner will stay and join us for brunch and a row on the Sunday.

Dates for the diary:

- UK Release of Boys in the Boat 12/01/24
- UCBC 100 Hour Ergathon 15/01/24 - 19/01/24
- Dinos and Cassies 27/01/24
- Bedford Head 11/02/24
- Torpids Rowing On 23/02/24
- Torpids 28/02/24 - 02/03/24
- WeHoRR 09/03/24
- HoRR 23/03/24
- City Bumps 21/04/24
- Summer Vllls Rowing On 18/05/24
- Summer Vllls 22/05/24 - 25/05/24
- Martlet Regatta 26/05/24
- Met Regatta 01/06/24 - 02/06/24
- HWR 21/06/24 - 23/06/24
- Marlow Regatta 22/06/24
- HRR Qualifiers 28/06/24
- HRR 02/07/24 - 07/07/24
- Oxford City Royal Regatta 17 – 18 /07/24



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