



## From the President

Dear all,

I wish I could say this Hilary brought us more rowing than last year... but alas! The term saw a flooded river yet again, so the squad committed to weeks of gruelling land training, and ventured far and wide in the hunt for rowable water. This culminated in a one day "TorpHeads" in lieu of the much missed Torpids, where our first and second boats put in an excellent shift to show off their hard work! Unfortunately, all other boats weren't allowed to race on safety grounds, preventing our planned 11-crew fleet from dominating the river.

At the end of term, we sent two crews each to WeHoRR and HoRR. W1 were the fastest Oxford college to race, just 0.2 seconds off the OUBC Dev squad, and W2 were the only Oxford college second boat, further cementing their dedication to rowing! As I write this, M1 and M2 are due to race at HoRR tomorrow - I'm sure the captains will give a detailed account below!

It was wonderful having so many people returning to Univ for Dinos and Cassies in January, and we hope to see you down at the boat house next term for Summer VIIIs (Wednesday 27th - Saturday 30th May)! At Eights dinner, we will be hosting a 30-year reunion for anyone at UCBC between 1995 and 1998 (*note: all alumni, regardless of time at University, are welcome to join Eights dinner!*). On Sunday 31st May, we will be hosting our Martlet Regatta and BBQ, to welcome back all UCBC alumni and your families! You should be able to register your interest for both of these events here - <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/summer-eights-dinner-2026-tickets-1984466108551>.)

We have 2 athletes who learnt to row at UCBC racing with the Blues on the 3rd/4th April - Paolo Cicutta (Isis, stroke) and Olivia Pegge (Lightweights, 3 seat); plus new Univite Phoebe Forward (Osiris, stroke). Best of luck to them in their races next week!

As always, thank you for your continued support of the club. We wouldn't be where we are without you!

Hope to see you soon!

**Louisa Boulton**  
UCBC President 2025-26

## From the Women\*s Captain

Despite an extremely challenging term due to river conditions, UCBC women have much to celebrate. The Isis has been unrowable for the entire term, with the only exception being TorpHeads, which meant many external weekends at various locations. We are grateful to Gloucester Rowing Club, Burghfield Sailing Club, and Dorney Lake for allowing us some water time, and to UCBC's kind donors to allow us to fund such external trips. W1 was set early on in the term, allowing plenty of time to train together and push each other. We've been keeping each other consistent in the erg room and the weights room, with excellent commitment and morale in the face of an unfortunate lack of water time. This dedication undoubtedly paid off, allowing us to finish second in TorpHeads (a replacement head race instead of Torpids, which was deemed unsafe to run). W1 quickly caught up to Christ Church ahead, overtaking at the earliest possible opportunity after exiting the gut.

One week later, attention turned to Women's Head on the Tideway. W1 showed incredible grit, starting at bow number 191 and finishing in 125th place with a time of 20:59, less than 3 minutes behind the winning time of 18:18. The crew enjoyed around 2k of side-by-side racing with bow number 190, who we caught up to at Hammersmith Bridge and remained seat for seat until the finish line. We were the fastest Oxford college present, confidently beating Pembroke (among others), who had beaten us the week before at TorpHeads. W1 were also excited to come very, very close (0.2s) to beating OUBC's development squad, with whom several members of the squad have been training this term, including one Univ member who was racing in their WEHoRR crew. We are extremely proud of the work put in by W1 (and the whole squad) this term; we have truly made the best of an undesirable set of conditions and look forward to seeing how this hard work manifests in our Summer Eights Headship campaign.

**Amber Ford**  
**Women\*s Captain 2025-26**



*W1 at TorpHeads*  
*Photo by Ben Piper*

## From the Men\*s Captain

After one of the busiest Michaelmas terms in recent memory, Hilary unfortunately saw the Isis return to form. An ever-present red flag meant that training during the week was limited to the erg and weights rooms, while weekends were spent adventuring beyond Oxford to find rowable stretches in Gloucester and Burghfield.

After seats were decided early in term, we set our sights on Bedford Head as an opportunity to gain some racing experience and show what we could do. Unfortunately, the weather once again foiled our plans, as heavy rain in the preceding week led conditions to be deemed too dangerous for the event to go ahead.

Attention then turned to the term's key racing fixture, Torpids. With the weather improving, we clung onto the faint hope that bumps might be able to go ahead as planned. Alas, the rain won out once again with OURCs taking the decision to cancel bumps, to be replaced with 'TorpHeads': a one-day head race on what would have been the Saturday of Torpids.

TorpHeads was a great opportunity to see how we stacked up against the crews around us in the bumps charts, and, despite the absence of any bumps, there was a real sense of occasion on the day. M1 put in a solid performance, finishing 4th out of all college crews and handily beating Pembroke's M1, who currently sit immediately above us in the Torpids starting order.

The end of term finally brought with it a change in the Isis flag, and so M1 were finally able to get out on the river both here in Oxford, and downstream in Reading. The final racing opportunity before we turned our full attention to Trinity came in the form of HoRR. With the help of a few subs from M2, we were able to get 2 weeks of consistent training to find some rhythm and arrived on the Tideway full of confidence.

Another strong performance saw us finish 3rd quickest of the Oxford colleges, closing the gap on boats who finished ahead of us at TorpHeads, and finishing 175th of 375 crews overall - a big improvement on the same time last year. We will look to carry this strong momentum forward into what promises to be an exciting Trinity Term, with regattas aplenty and the prospect of finally getting some bumps racing at Summer Vllls!

**Charlie Towle and Rory Proudfoot**  
**Men\*s Co-Captains 2025-26**



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*M1 at TorpHeads  
Photo by Gareth Ardron*



*W2 at WeHoRR*

## From the Women\*s Vice-Captain

The women\*s lower boats have done incredibly well this term! With our novices from Michaelmas now joining the senior squad, we started the term with 4 full women\*s crews prepared to race at Torpids! Unfortunately, the weather was not on our side this term, though and turbulent river conditions meant that outings on the Isis were very few and far between. Despite this setback and the cancellations of the much anticipated Bedford Head and Torpids, the women\* have worked hard and kept things ticking over! From multiple external training sessions in Gloucester and Burghfield and sessions on the ergs, in the weights room and in the tank, we've seen significant improvement from everyone!

Although W3 and W4 were unable to race, W2 also managed to row in the replacement TorpHeads, finishing 2nd of all the 2nd boats and surpassing 6 first boat crews! And to top things off, W2 also took to the Tideway at the end of term with a very successful race at WEHoRR, finishing the 7k course in less than 23 minutes!

Looking ahead to Trinity, we're expecting big things! With the river finally rowable again, and more breadth and depth in the club than ever before, you can be sure the women\*s side will be taking the Isis by storm! We're hoping to once again put forward at least 4 women\*s crews for summer 8s (maybe even 5, we will see!) Well done everyone for your hard work and powering through Hilary. Many thanks goes to our coaches Argy and Jocasta who have been a great support this term both in improving the women\*s side rowing and boosting morale!! Only up from here!

**Ellice Chen**  
Women\*s Vice-Captain 2025-26

## From the Men\*s Vice-Captains

We began this term hoping to build on an excellent Michaelmas, with a particularly impressive set of novices joining the senior squad. Unfortunately, the Isis had other plans – a red flag for the whole term! Despite this, we still selected an M2, 3 and 4 and had off-Isis sessions on a variety of less flooded waters, alongside lots of indoor training.

Despite this work, the weather did not improve, and unfortunately, M3 and M4 were not able to race at Torpids, and M3 also had their planned first appearance at Bedford Head thwarted. We are still incredibly proud of M3 and M4's commitment to training, especially during such a bleak term, and they are undoubtedly in a strong position for their next two major assignments – BUCS and Eights.

M2 were able to race at a revised Torpids, a head race on the Saturday, and came away with an exceptional result.



*M2 at HoRR  
Photo by David Hunter*



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They were the fastest M2 on the river and beat some historically very strong first VIII's, including Keble and Christ Church, by significant margins. Their progress culminated in a strong showing at the 100th iteration of Eights Head of the River on the Tideway, finishing as the fastest M2 and finishing above Division I Crews! With half the boat made up with people who learned less than 6 months ago, we were very impressed! M2 are clearly in an exceptionally strong position heading into Eights. We believe M2 will move further up the river, potentially even entering Division II!

Thus, despite the dreadful weather, it has been an excellent term for the men's lower boats. We hope for more rowing on home water next term and look forward to eights – where we are aiming to put out seven men's boats for the first time since the 70s! Keep an eye out for Beer Boat sign-ups if you are in Oxford and are keen to get involved!

### **Seb Collins and Fred Eccleston Men\*s Vice-Captains 2025-26**

## **From the Social Secretaries**

Hilary term was a resounding success for the UCBC social scene as many long-standing traditions were balanced with fresh initiatives to strengthen club bonds. We continued our popular crew dates with Oriel and lively bar crawls with Balliol College, while also expanding our horizons through our second termly boat club hot pot, which has provided a welcome alternative outlook on social life within the club. Although the shift to TorpHeads differed from the usual Torpids format, the spirit of the club remained high during our annual dinner in the hall. With over seventy attendees gathered to celebrate the term's progress and favourable racing results, the evening was filled with an entertaining pop quiz before the celebrations moved down to the bar for further socialising.

Looking ahead to Trinity term, the calendar is packed with exciting events, including a dedicated women's social and further inter-collegiate crew dates.



*Photos by  
Nikola Boysova*

The clear highlight of the upcoming weeks is Summer Eights, taking place between the 27th and 30th of May. The historic tradition of racing along the Isis is an experience not to be missed, and with high anticipation for all boats to bump up, the Summer Eights Dinner on the 30th of May promises to be a landmark celebration for the club. To round off the festivities, the Martlett Regatta will be held as ever on the following day, the 31st of May. You can secure your place at these events via the Eventbrite link in Louisa's round-up.

### **Amy Welsh and Alex Lake Social Secretaries 2025-26**

## **Our Blues**

This weekend, three UCBC rowers take on Cambridge as part of University Boat Races.

Liv Pegge (2024, Earth Sciences; bottom left), who learnt to row at UCBC, races in the 3-seat of the Lightweight Women's boat at 13:50 on Friday 3rd April. Liv started in September with the intention of trialling as a lightweight, but progressed remarkably quickly and was almost selected for the bow seat of Osiris (Women's reserve boat), a highly impressive feat in only her second year rowing. The lightweights will be thankful for the power Liv will provide.

Phoebe Forward (2025, Experimental Psychology; bottom middle) strokes Osiris at 14:36 on Saturday 4th April. Phoebe learnt to row at Nottingham and Union Rowing Club and brings GB rowing experience to the boat which UCBC looks forward to welcoming in Summer Eights!

Paolo Cicuta (DPhil Chemistry; bottom right), who learnt to row at UCBC, takes on Goldie at 14:51 on Saturday. Paolo will be stroking Isis, having sat in the 3-seat last year. Paolo narrowly missed out on the final bowside seat in the Blue Boat. Stroking Isis is a remarkable achievement and everyone at UCBC is immensely proud.

I'm sure you'll join us in wishing all three the best of luck!

