

OTRC Match Report

Peterborough Regatta

11th/12th August 2018

Captain's Intro by Angela Hook

This was our second visit to Peterborough this year as we took advantage of the close location and the familiarity of the event. This time, it seemed even busier than usual. The area around the rowing lake was literally heaving with trailers and boats, so that the day was a constant juggling of boats and trestles and finding space to rig and de-rig. It was even difficult to find a path for individuals, let alone people carrying boats. It's a very popular event, and seems to be getting more so, if the numbers were anything to go by, and so is quite competitive.

In contrast to the Peterborough **Spring** regatta where we had to slather on the sun cream, the **Summer** regatta was a grey and intermittently wet day. Take the waterproofs off and it rained, put them back on and it stopped! All very contrary and annoying but at least it was warm rain.

All OTRC crews performed well. Charlotte and Jessica got through the heats in their WJ14 Double and came second in the final putting up a great fight. Nick and Keely lost the repercharge in their Mixed Double by less than a bow ball. However we were all delighted (and rather loud) when Keely put up a seriously gutsy performance to win her Mas A 1x race. This was only Keely's second ever race in a single and she did herself and the club proud.

Daisy spent a short time in the resident ambulance after slipping on the mud while helping the Ladies quad (for which they feel a bit guilty). She was ably attended and monitored by a pair of random osteopaths who popped up and claimed a connection to the club. Who were these guardian angels? We hope she's well on the way the recovery.

Thanks, as ever to our trailer drivers Nick and Dick (is there a joke there? I feel there should be but I can't come up with one at the moment) and to John for the trailer loading plan and boat juggling.

Our next club event is Milton Keynes Regatta on 22nd September (followed by a club social) so start getting your entries in now.

DATE FOR THE DIARY

Club Social - The Ship

Saturday 22nd September 2018

OTRC Match Report

Ladies Quad: Vicky (sub), **Fiona**, Angela, Claire

Poor Jennie was indisposed and a steering sub was needed on the day and there was a collective moment of dread when we thought that one of us would have to do the job: thank heavens Vicky stepped in - someone who is undeterred by the task.

We had a practice start on the way down which could only be improved upon!

We set off with our 4 second head start and it took a little time before the eventual winners overtook us; we had shouts for all parts of the stroke that you could care to name (finishes, legs, blah blah...) and managed to hold off Norwich as we went for the line.

Not winners, but not last either.

We missed you Jennie!

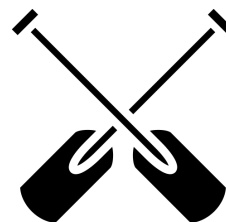
There were great shouts of support from the bank from the Oundle club, thank you.

J18(open) 2- Will, Joe

Although we'd had a break from the pair we were feeling good and were happy with the pieces we had done in training, for once we had a lot of opposition however when we lined up at the start we realised they were all about double our age!

We had a good start and managed to row a clean, smooth race, and even staying in our lane which was looking more and more unlikely due to the strong diagonal tailwind.

We finished in third which we were both happy with and are now feeling confident about our future races in the pair



W Mas E 2X (Angela, Claire)

Some straight racing at Peterborough always seems to make the 500 mt course seem longer when there are no bends to distract you and take your mind off the race.

Our race was a straight final in the afternoon and as Angela had been keen to help out for the day, arriving at 8am, she had had a long time to wait for this race.

We had been practicing our 500 mt routine and had come up with a plan that seemed to work which broke the course into small parts for us to focus.

We were drawn with Oundle D - Jo and Vicky, Peterborough E (our nemesis) and Milton Keynes, who decided not turn up. We had a 4 second advantage along with the Peterborough crew and we were off. Angela shouted the bespoke commands at the appropriate moment to stick closely to our game plan and we kept our heads in the boat. Our row was steady and the water, we had felt was a bit 'heavy' on the way up, seemed 'thinner' during the race. The OTRC cheer leaders were a welcome cacophony, as they told us 'we were nearly there!' We crossed the finish line in second place.

We were pleased with our row and know now that the game plan works, but now we need to improve our muscles and lung capacity!

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Keely - 'Winner, Winner Chicken Dinner!!! - Ed'

I sometimes think 'why' on the day of a race, Peterborough was definitely one of those days!

500 meters seems like a short distance in a head race but looking at the course in the morning it looked longer than the 1k Nick and I had raced the day before.

I managed a good start and stayed reasonably straight down the course which was a relief. I have no idea what the rating or check was for the whole of the race, but people that know me will realise it was not low!

One person had some steering problems but I tried not to get distracted and somehow (I am not sure how) I was able to stay ahead of the others and crossed the line first to win my first pot in ages!

It has since been used.



Jessica and Charlotte

The weather was changing constantly throughout the day with it raining one minute to being somewhat warm the next, thankfully we were rowing with the wind instead of having to battle against it.

Our first heat was at 1:30 so we got our boat rigged and on the water 20mins before and rowed straight up to the start, there weren't many boats at the start so we were soon backing down onto the stake-boat ready to race.

Our racing start was good and we got off from the stake-boat rather quickly, we were currently in 2nd place and managed to keep it that way throughout the race, despite our attempts to catch up with Newark who were about a boats length ahead of us.

We got through to the final which was 2 1/2 hours away at 4:30. Finally after a few hours of waiting we were back up at the start line with a bit of a wait this time as there was quite a lot of boats waiting for their race too.

When it was our turn to race we backed down onto the stake-boats with no difficulty and were soon ready to race.

Our start wasn't as good as the one in the heat but still good enough to get away from the stake-boats into 2nd place, once again, we rowed really hard all the way down the finish and came 2nd overall, which we are both really happy about considering as last time we raced at Peterborough we didn't make it into the final.



OTRC Match Report

W Mas D 2x (Jo and Vicky)

Peterborough summer regatta. A nice local event. What could possibly go wrong? Well, brace yourselves, dear reader... As you all know, Vicky and I have rowed together for over a decade, and our double has always been our first crew. Mostly in the same boat, in the same order, and often against the same people...sometimes we win and sometimes we lose, but we always try and stay chirpy. And yes, we were younger then.....we started as WVerC fledglings, so how could we possibly be racing in a WMas E race? Well, here's the story of our old birds race at Peterborough and how we went from being hot young chicks to a couple of old turkeys...

Unlike last summer, when we trained hard for the British masters championships and turned up to find out they had abandoned it half way through the afternoon, this time we raced. However, just like last year, all subsequent races through the summer for us had no opposition for the events the club chose to enter, and so it was for Peterborough. We felt as if we'd had our wings clipped again! Whereas St Neots gave us a straight forward rejection, Peterborough cruelly allowed us to race against people even older than us (yes juniors, there are some,) but as some of these nice old ladies were the people using the same boat in the same race, (Claire and Angela) Vicky and I would either have to decline the invitation and forfeit our entry fee or find a different boat. How frustrating!

Nick Hurford very generously offered to lend us his beautiful boat, the Red Kite, and so it was that two days before our race we stepped into it together for the first time and found out just how different it is to our usual coop, Oarsome Spirit.

As Nick and Keely would be racing just before (and possibly after) us, the etiquette of using an owners boat meant we felt it was not appropriate for us to make adjustments, so we tried to adapt all the stuff we've worked so hard to ingrain to fit the boat. Reader, how hard can it be?

Well, first of all, we had a small altercation on the way to boat with an arrogant and very cocky young man in his GB plumage who nearly took the stern off the red kite by standing up underneath us whilst holding his single scull, and then tried blaming us for being in his way. (It's ok Nick. No contact was made!) So we told him off for being so rude and carried on to the boating area, clucking and tutting as we went.

Then we got blazed as the Marshall wasn't happy with the bow seat heel restraints, despite the fact that the boat had raced twice already that day. He gave us a chat about juniors' safety, and was really nice, so maybe we still look like poults, and not the wiley old birds we pretend to be..?

We flew up to the start. There was just us, the Peterborough WmasE 2x, and Angela and Claire. No Mk? We had to give a 4 second head start to both the other old ladies crews, and sat perched on the stake boat until the starter was ready to let us join in the race...

We had a reasonable start, but struggled a bit to hit a rhythm and keep our blades covered. I might be a suitable weight for the boat (I've got loads of lead amalgam fillings) but Vicky definitely isn't, despite all those flapjacks she eats..

We rated a steady 33/34, then just as we were drawing level with the other Oundle crew, disaster struck. We went from being a red kite to a couple of ugly ducklings. We caught a crab that stopped the boat as dead as a dodo! A lame duck! We were sick as parrots!

Having run out of bird metaphors, we started rowing again and crossed the line feeling a little (eider) down in the mouth. Sadly this was probably our swan song for this year, as we are probably not racing at MK, Bedford or Star.

Actually, we are both thinking of flying south for the winter.... 🦢 🦢

Many thanks to Nick for the kind loan of the boat, and for taking it to the event for us. Thanks also to Dick for bringing it back!



OTRC Match Report

Will P

Nervously, I started off following a launch boat up. Before I went it was only Angela and myself so I felt alone but glad that I had someone there to help and cheer me on. Being shouted at by angry marshals is quite intimidating but I had to get inline and as the race began to start. I looked around cautiously and noticed one thing, all the other rowers in my race were a lot taller than me! Having decided on that I lost confidence and rowed on to the start boat. Before I could get myself straight the race had begun...

The race started successfully and I was in line with the other crews but as we progressed, I didn't and the others continued. Although I managed to keep up with the Norwich competitor, I lacked in energy. Yet it was nice to hear other OTRC members had turned up and were cheering me on. But it wasn't enough as I just came in last. I looking forward to the next competition...

W.1x Daisy

My race was up against Birmingham, Globe and Agecroft, which I was very nervous about due to them being very big clubs.

I got up to the start and had a lot of red mist meaning most of my technique was out of the window and plan wasn't there, leaving me last throughout the race. Until globe somehow managed to be holding the blade instead or the oar handle leaving me third. Wasn't the best row I could have done but hopefully I will train a lot harder this season and get better.

Well done to all the other crews and thanks to Nick and Dick for towing the trailer.

W.J16.1x Erin (2:11)

Thanks to Daisy rowing in my boat just before my race, I was allowed a lie in on Sunday morning. However this didn't calm any of my nerves and I was extremely scared before arriving in Peterborough.

After a quick change around I rowed down to the start, which was pretty uneventful, then got into lane 1. Strangely everyone was very chatty at the start and all eight boats from both heats were happily chatting about upcoming races, the weather etc.

Once I got the the stake boats I lined up and tried to keep relaxed. My start was good and I was level with the other boats. However, a cross wind along with some dodgy steering (despite having the widest lane!!) caused me to catch my oar on the weeds for quite a few strokes and I fell behind the other boats. After this altercation with the bank, I moved into the centre and kept pushing hard. I tried to remember to keep rowing long and leaning back more as I felt I could have done this better at St Neots. Surprisingly I started to catch up with the other boats but still finished fourth. For once I actually wished the course was longer!!

Overall I was quite pleased with the race as I realised that I wasn't a million miles of the pace with only a few weeks training in a single.



OTRC Match Report

Mas D/E Quad:

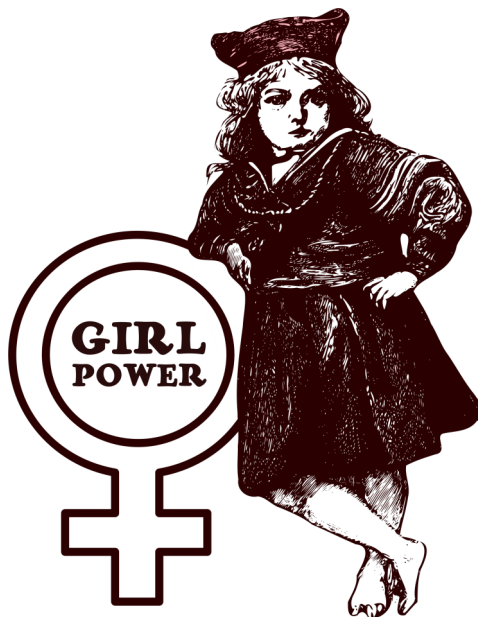
Final: 3rd out of 3 - (Jo, Nick, **John**, Vicky)

This is a relatively new combination and as such had very few outings together. Nick being one of the most committed racers in the club it is difficult to catch him when he is not rowing in another crew! So with the club motto of “not bad for a first outing” ringing in their ears the quad entered a couple of races at this later stage of the summer. At St Neots there was no mixed opposition and the crew had to race in the Men’s event (losing by only 1/2 length) and once again at Peterborough there was no mixed event at Masters level and so Oundle raced in the Men’s event.

The OTRC crew was up against Twickenham, who have previously given OTRC’s mens quad some close racing and St Ives who have been the stand out quad both regionally and nationally, also winning at World Masters level. So on a day when “girl power” was the order of the day for OTRC (Keely in 1X and WJ14 2X) the two girls in the crew stepped up to the plate.

OTRC and Twickenham being the more “mature” crew had a few seconds handicap on St Ives. Although the men’s crews had expected to get away from Oundle with ease, this turned into a cracking race for the wooden spoon between Twickenham and Oundle; St Ives were in a class of their own out in front. Twickenham took a slight lead off the start but were surprised to find that by half way OTRC had found a solid rhythm and would not give in, if anything they were showing signs of closing the gap. Despite the valiant efforts of the Oundle crew they could not overcome the horsepower advantage of the Twickenham crew, with skill alone and were beaten by just a couple of seconds.

All is not lost though, as in the telling of the story this has turned into a moral victory for Oundle the brave effort of the Oundle girls more than matching the power of the men. Here’s to girl power!



OTRC Match Report

Mens E/F Eight

Final 3rd out of 3

(cox: Smithy, Str: Bob, Brian, **John**, Bish, Simon, Leslie, Dick, Mark)

Despite being long in years, this bumbling group of old men still has the competitive spirit; but not always the wherewithal to organise themselves. Masters F is quite old! Throughout the year various members of the club have stepped in to try and cox this enthusiastic group of old buffers. What had poor Smithy, who is lovely young vibrant lady done to deserve this job.? She must have started to worry when emails circulated with the starting sequence for the race, as none of the old codgers seemed to be able to remember them.

They had started the year full of enthusiasm, but were regularly being beaten by several of the local club Eights. Somehow, through the support of some long suffering coxes, coaches and wives this enthusiastic group of old codgers have been transformed into something resembling a crew, once they can be rounded up and get into a boat. There have been ups and down throughout the year, but when they can remember the start sequence, the journey has been upwards, culminating in a win at St Neots against Star club who have been the nemesis for several crew members, or those who can remember having raced them. (Smithy must have heard tales of these improvements or she would never have taken the job.) Despite several crew changes, the few practice outings seemed to go quite well and the old buffers responded to all Smithy's commands and she might have been lulled into thinking all was well.

Once at Peterborough the full horror unfolded. Firstly the crew had to comprehend that some of the members were racing in other events and had in fact turned up but were not present by the trailer to rig. Next the tricky manoeuvre of getting into an unlocked car proved too much for many of the crew, so they couldn't get the seats to the boat. This must have distracted those members who were rigging the boat who forgot to tighten the nuts holding the two halves of the boat together. Or maybe they were distracted at the last minute by Leslie welding a full socket set trying to change the main rigger bolts. Poor Smithy did a cracking job in getting them assembled for a pre race pep talk only for one crew member to remember they needed the toilet and for another who had forgotten a vital bit of electronic technology. Once on the water the problem of the nuts holding the two halves of the boat together became apparent, but Smithy came to the rescue with a rigger jigger as Simon had to bail several gallons of water every time the boat stopped.

There were 3 crews in the race, Twickenham and Oundle are Vet F and the beefed up Star crew focussed on revenge at Vet E, so the older guys had few seconds handicap. On the "GO" all the crews had nothing else other the rowing to think about and morphed in fully functioning racing Eights. This turned into one of the best races for the neutral supporter with all 3 Eights capable of winning and within just a few feet of each other over the whole course. Although none of the OTRC crew can remember the race and several still don't know who won, it is with sadness that I have to report that 3 seconds covered the whole field and Oundle came third.

For the old buffers in Oundle squad the year has been one of gradual improvements and great fun, for Smithy one can only hope she has a short memory!

