

OTRC Match Report

Ball Cup Regatta—Eton Dorney

Race organiser Anita Dunn race preamble;

The Ball Cup is, traditionally for OTRC, our one Junior only Regatta of the year held at the Olympic venue at Eton Dorney over 750m. It was originally started as an event for clubs of less than 40 Juniors to promote junior rowing and to give smaller clubs an event at which they can be competitive. This however has changed and OTRC were in the company of some well established and large Rowing Schools & Club squads.

OTRC fielded a good range of crews from throughout the squad in all disciplines and most rowers raced in 2 events. Unusually for ED the wind was not an issue. We had one lateness problem & some technical issues, one involving the taping of Peter's lunchbox lid as a makeshift hatch cover, but all the crews got to their races successfully. There were some good performances and several crews qualified in their heats to reach finals. Congratulations to Daisy on her Bronze medal in the WJ18 1x, the first race of the day, a straight final and her last opportunity to race in the Ball Cup. The day was busy so thanks to the Junior Squad who were responsible and relatively self sufficient and to the parent groupies who helped in the usual way with shoes and rigging/derigging. OTRC were 27th in the overall Victor Ludlum with 6 points.

Op J18 4x- Rohan, Conor, **Harry**, Alfie
As Rohan, Connor, Alfie and I arrived late to the start and suffering a swift telling off from the marshal, it was only a matter of 20 seconds before our race started. With absolutely no rest at all at the start line and with calm conditions on the water and sunshine, our race was announced and we came to attention and were ready. Our race was set strongly as we gained a length and a half on the boat on the next lane and 2 lengths on the boat on the last lane. With only being half a length from gaining a medal at 3rd place which wasn't as bad as it should have been; especially with the lack of rest at the start line. Without a doubt if our technique was cleaner the medal would have been up for grabs which. The catches and balance of the boat was not as clean as it could have been. But overall a great effort attaining 4th place finishing very tight on the boats ahead of us not letting them pull away as easily as they would have liked.

J18 2x Rohan & **Conor**

We hauled our boat to the jetty for inspection where we were informed that the condition of our bow ball was "pathetic". Feeling slightly disgruntled we proceeded to row up to the stake boat. Despite being a little overwhelmed by the start procedure with traffic lights and blaring horns, we had a strong start. We began to lose some ground in the middle section of the course as fatigue kicked in. With one final push on the run up to the finish, we secured our place in fourth, just 6 seconds short of qualifying for the final. Rohan, as usual, made for an excellent pace-setter and I, a competent steersman (not difficult on a straight course with minimal wind)!



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W.J18.2x Becky and **Daisy**

Where do we start? We had a brilliant idea to stuff our faces half an hour before the heats, forgetting we had to race soon leaving us ten minutes to get up to the start for our race. Luckily when we reached the start we realised we weren't the last. We got stake boated very easily and prepared for our race. Our start felt incredible and we managed to settle well into a good pace leaving 2 crews behind at the start.

Throughout our race we managed to stay side by side with Guilford slowly pushing past them with every stroke we took... Resulting in us finishing 3rd in our heat, giving us a time of just under 3 minutes (3rd/12).

On to the finals! We had learnt our lesson from before and decided to boat early allowing plenty of time to get to the start. Our plan was to do the same before, hoping to get our bronze. All started well until our 3rd stroke when we both realised Becky's gate came open on bowside (...due to power!) We both tried to carry on but it got caught up on the gate, making Becky unable to feather. We stopped allowing time to do the gate up but by that time the other crews had gone too far to catch up, however we pushed on fighting till the end so the gap wasn't too bad. (I still think it was so we didn't show them up ;)!).

Overall we had a good time and many lessons were learnt! Thank you to Anita and Peter for towing the trailer and for helping us get through so many of our races.

J18 2x Joe and **Will**

Although it was an early start, we were ready and awake as we boated and rowed up to the start, getting on the stake boats was made harder by the strong wind and flow against us, but nevertheless we got lined up and the race started, we pushed hard as we knew Rohan and Conor were also trying to get into the same final, although the speed dropped off towards the end we held 4th place and after checking the times, we were in the final! We had a short break between the heat and the final and during that time, the weather became sunnier but windier, so the start of our final was even harder, with the wind knocking us out of our stake boat holder's hands! We had a good start and got into a good position within the first 100m but having not trained in a sculling boat for about half a year, the other crews started to edge past us and we ended up in 5th or 6th but as our first sculling event in a while I think it was a good result.

W.J18.1x **Daisy**

Before I start I would like to say thank you to Anita and Peter for helping me and towing the trailer even though they were not racing themselves.

Terrified... Scared... Nervous... all of these words were going through my head before the race; I had rigged and had everything ready at least an hour before. Boating in time for my straight final! Sitting waiting for instructions on the water having marshals telling me to go left right and centre. I had got up to the start running through the race plan so many times in my head.

I had anchored myself to the stake boat talking to them about the race. Whilst waiting for the other crews to get attached to their holder. GO!!! we were off, I had a great start managing to hold on to my opponents, in the middle I did a huge push of 15 allowing me to pull off 2 of my opponents whilst bow ball with one other. At the last few 50 meters I had enough in me to just slightly pull away from my side by side friend. Resulting in third place, the only thought I had was 'Yes! I didn't capsize!!'

Smiling away and saying well done to my other competitors. Well done to all the other crews.



Ball Cup 4+ Rohan Conor Will & Joe Cox Alfie

The race was a bit of a rush before the boat was even in the water as we had to cover one of the hatches with a Tupperware lid and some black tape (to make it less obvious). We headed up to start hoping the marshals wouldn't see the taped up hatch cover. Turned out they didn't bother checking as we only had 5 minutes to get to the start. Once we had reached the start we got in position and got ready to race. The light went and we were off. Some 10 seconds later we were in the wrong lane and began clashing blades with the opposition. The 500m mark came up and we started to gain on the crew ahead, just beating them to the finish. We came 5th but it was a close and enjoyable race nonetheless.

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W.J18.4x- **Daisy**, Becky, Saskia and Chloe

Our second time outing with the crew, with the first being on Saturday having a few technical problems. It was a warm and sunny day at 4:55, managing to boat on time with everyone ready.

We managed to get attached to our human anchor pretty easily whilst talking through our racing plan. Everyone ready, everyone prepared for our race against some big and scary competitors. The start was best one we have done yet strong and powerful but was unable to settle into a rhythm during the race.

We had some powerful pushes in the middle whilst trying to avoid a lot of the bois (apologies). Luckily enough we came in 3rd place just quick enough to get into the final at 6:05.

The final race of the day was Becky's 4th race and Daisy's 5th race of the day. We were all very tired by that time. We had a quick break before this race allowing time for us to go to the toilet and get us a drink. But we went to get boated, and realised that we didn't have our oars as someone had got mixed up with their own blades. We decided to borrow other blades and raced up to the start before we missed it. The race started well and we pushed our hardest to the finish but unfortunately the other crews got away from us, however it was a good experience in the quad.

Well done to all the other crews and a huge, huge thank you to Anita and Peter for towing the trailer and helping us all out!!!

WJ15.2x Laura and **Erin** (3:07)

We were quite nervous rowing to the start but tried to relax with some of Lauras breathing techniques. We had a good start and quickly got into the rhythm to be equal first. However, near the end we began to tire and the other boat pulled away. Unfortunately second wasn't enough to get the the final as the other heat was much quicker. Although we were pleased with how we rowed we were a bit disappointed because five boats in the final were only 3 or 4 seconds quicker than us which we felt we could do. Overall we had a great day and were happy we got to row after last year's eventful day. Thank you to everybody who helped out and we are looking forward to the next race.

WJ15 4x+ Jacob, Laura, **Erin**, Maddie and Emily

While the rest of us were "hardened experienced racers", it was Jacobs first ever race coxing, but thanks to his loud encouraging calls all the way through we managed to finish in fourth place in the heat. This was a big surprise as after leaving the landing stage we all felt that the timing wasn't too good and were a bit worried about the race ahead. Despite waiting for ages at the stake boat, our start was pretty good and we were into the racing. Straight away Jacob was loudly encouraging us and keeping us in shape and with some good calls for bursts every time we reached a sign, we were all pleased with how the race went. Thanks to everybody who helped out, especially to Jacob for coxing us (we hope you don't mind the nickname too much) :-)

W J15 4x+ Emily, Maddie, Erin, **Laura** – Jacob Cox

Emily, Maddie, Erin and Laura were in a quad for the ball cup with Jacob coxing us. We were excited for the race even though last year our doubles were cancelled as of the obviously very strong wind (though we all knew it was as they were running late). We hadn't practised much in a quad together recently, so we were a bit nervous. We lined up well for the start with; we had a good start and kept a good rhythm for the rest of the race with Jacobs amazing coxing. We felt like we pushed ourselves but sadly we weren't fast enough to get through to the final of the heats so we need to keep practising for future races, it was a really good day :-)

