



Bedford is one of our most favourite and frequent racing venues, and we always try and support these events. Due to the half term holiday, our entry was smaller than normal; however we still took 8 crews. The fours and eights event is slightly more relaxed as without all the smaller boats, the divisions are smaller and boating is quicker. OTRC took the slightly more relaxed approach to the limit, with one crew almost turned back for being too late and several of our crews only assembling with seconds left until last boating time. (Please do try and get to the venues in good time, it plays havoc with the captain's nerves).

As for the racing, although there were no wins this time, there were some encouraging performances. A special mention for the J18 girls, entered as novice and finishing 3rd, having never rowed in that combination before; and the Ladies Masters D quad who competed with similar status crews from Marlow and Sudbury, all 3 crews finishing with 6 seconds of each other.

As usual, thanks are due to everyone who helped with boat loading, rigging etc., both at the club and at the event. I'm not sure if it was the lure of lesser nations' rugby, but boats were rigged and back in the boathouse by 3.40pm - possibly a club record!

Particular thanks are due to Michael Birchall who gave up his Sunday morning lie-in to tow the trailer, and to Steve Bone for towing it back afterwards.

There were a few candidates for Man of the Match - the award this time goes to Rochelle Cox, who not only agreed to sub in the novice girls' quad, but rowed twice in successive divisions.

Masters D/E/F 8+ Hugh, Charlie E, Martyn, Andrew H, John W, Peter C, Dick, Peter D cox Rhona Time 07:36 adjusted to 07:25

The men's eight is a multi-talented crew with lots of club members contributing their energy and efforts to our progress. This weekend proved no different. Brian gave us some much needed support on Saturday when Peter C went off to sing "Swing Low Sweet Chariot" at Twickenham, and Dick nobly volunteered to step in for the ailing Bob who was struck down by a particularly nasty strain of Man Flu. We went for the early start at Bedford (to get our oar in first!) – setting off with a decent rhythm and wondering what the race would bring us. Hugh at Stroke set a delightful pace and, despite his anxiety at stepping into the hot seat, did a great job at getting us down the course at a comfortable rate of 30 . No dramas to report. The water was wet, the river

looked very much like it did last time and Rhona steered us a good race. A very quick Bedford Mas F crew followed us down the course and although they caught us up they didn't pass. We had a solid row, gave Dick a chance to test his mettle in a 2K race (he said his legs and lungs still worked afterwards) and sadly did not manage to win. We were the fastest Oundle eight on the day though!

Vet E 4+ John, Brian, Mark, Jon, cox Paul Time 08:13 adjusted to 08:01

Overwhelmed with issues of obesity, alcoholism and drug abuse this Vet E 4 managed to demonstrate the advantage of being the underdog (notably to Star Hunt).

After a forlorn attempt to find 3s lost hat at the start from the previous race-very uncaring attitude! - Stroke, invigorated by his previous night's Valentine experience set the crew off at a demanding 35/36 rate and quickly settled to 31/32 which seemed to work very well establishing a good rhythm throughout the race. A good stable row and strong finish gave the crew a deserved second place to Hunt ahead of three other crews.

This fine effort was noted by the kind and gracious marshal who allowed them to de-boat ahead of all the other crews patiently waiting!!

Womens Novice 4x Emily, Rochelle, Becky S, Lel Time 8:15

No Report

Womens Masters C/D 4x Vicky, Becky, Libby, Claire Time 08:40

No Report

Mixed Mas. D 4x Smithy, Brian, Simon, Vicky Time 08.14

This was the first race and only second outing for this Mixed Quad. They had been entered in the Men's Division as there was no other mixed competition. Only just making the start after late boating the crew had a very good start and quickly found their rhythm and pace for the first 500m.

Choppy water after the Town Bridge upset their balance for the rest of the race but they ably held it together despite getting quite wet. A very respectable time of 8.14 compared to the other Men's crews in this division and only 1 sec behind the Oundle Vet E 4+. Not bad-very promising!

Womens Masters C/D 4x Fiona, Angela, Kate E, Anita Time 09:15 adjusted to 09:00

Mixed messages from the Blazers caused a bit of consternation at the point of boating. We had been personally visited by a Blazer to tell us to be sure to be on the water by 10:15 BECAUSE OUR MIXED QUAD HAD BEEN LATE!!!! Then all of a sudden, there's an announcement over the tannoy at 09:59 precisely to tell us if we weren't on the water in 1 minute we would be too late. This caused huge brain freeze, we put our boat in back to front and Auntie Angela has to admit to putting an oar into a gate backwards too. Anyway, after the inauspicious start, we paddled calmly up to the start, with many boats following us.

The race itself was a big improvement on Northampton's Head and we maintained a nice rhythm, with some clean rowing, until the blade clashing incident near the weir (young whippersnappers trying to overtake). We recovered quickly and powered on to the end. Anita steered a great course, Fiona stroked beautifully while putting up with the ex-teacher's shouting again (no-one else could hear her) and Kate was silent and strong in the No. 2 seat. We were pleased with the improvement, but there's more work to do!

WJ 16 4x Time Becky P, Sophie, Daisy, Rochelle Time 08:29

No Report

J15 4x+ Jordan, Rohan, William, Connor, cox Ben. Time 8:19

Although our training as a whole crew was very limited over the Christmas and January period due to the bad weather and the break for Christmas, we only managed to get one training session the day before in the race in the order we would use. After being put under pressure from the boating marshal as we were the last crew to boat, we had a fast warm up to get to the start in time. After a couple of minutes wait, we set off. We had a good start, feeling fast, we soon saw the following crew disappear from our view. We quickly arrived at town bridge and Ben navigated us safely through, suddenly a creaking noise came from behind me (Rohan had slipped off his seat). Connor and I carried on rowing while the bow pair quickly sorted out the situation. Soon we were rowing as a full crew again, due to our speedy recovery we didn't lose much time.

Our result gave us 2nd place 1:02 behind the winning quad and 14sec in front of 3rd place.