

# OTRC Match Report

## Bedford Star Head - Feb 2018

Foreward by race organiser Simon Murray;

The Eights and Fours event is Bedford Rowing Club's annual head for larger boats, attracting a strong entry from around the region. Over 200 crews were entered across all 7 divisions. With mixed crews having been rejected by the organisers, and it being half term, our entry was limited to five crews only.

The forecast was for dry weather with a strong westerly breeze (tail wind) increasing during the day. Our crews had been entered in the first three divisions, so any worsening weather would more likely hinder opponents in the later divisions. Unusually for Bedford RC, the first division ran slightly behind schedule due to a wayward octuple, but otherwise the event ran without incident (at least for us). A most important feature was the Longholme café which opened in good time to allow half the men's 8 a well earned breakfast after our race.

Arriving at Bedford shortly after sunrise, boats were unloaded and rigged smoothly with the OTRC team working like a well-oiled machine. Timing of boating was key - too early risked a long wait in the cold at the start; the trick was to leave it late without attracting the attention of the marshalls. We were top club in this regard - all our crews left the boating area last or next to last!

As always, OTRC crews looked neat and well drilled, although not enough to produce many wins. Maybe more training required!

Although it was an early start, the advantage is that we were home and hosed in time for the rugby (almost). As ever, thanks to everyone who helped with the rigging/de-rigging etc., especially parents; your support is always much appreciated.

And a special thank-you to Dick for not only towing the trailer, but also fixing the electrics on the trailer in an unscheduled pre-dawn repair, and for going off-piste to PC Boats on the way home to deliver a boat for refurbishment.

## **OTRC HEAD RACE 2018**

**SATURDAY 24TH MARCH FROM 9AM**

**REGISTER TO RACE AT THE BOATHOUSE**

**OPEN TO ALL ROWERS**

**MORE DETAILS TO FOLLOW**

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## Conor

Our race was a bit of a roller-coaster, in both the emotional and literal sense of the word. Spirits were high as we overtook an eight with relative ease, only to be, ourselves, overtaken by a four soon after: a cruel but welcome wake-up call. In the early sheltered sections of the course, we were focused and quick. Our technique began to slip only in the later choppy stretches of river which compromised our stability. All in all, we put up a good fight and are pleased with our performance.



## Op4+ (Ian Charlie Will Conor)

A new combination for Bedford under cox Rohan. The draw offered us a mix of seven University and College crews, so we were quietly confident with two practice rows under our belts!

As everyone else, we found conditions cold and the water considerably choppy on the way up to the start. Once marshalled, Charlie found multiple opportunities to commentate on the boats around us. The stretching of the Stroke seat in a Bedford Quad was interpreted as the dance moves to YMCA, much to the amusement of this fellow crew members when Charlie started singing along his moves. Next on the agenda was the sexuality of the three seat in a Women's Bedford Star Eight opposite, much to the amusement of a Bedford Modern School Junior Girls Quad who were next to us. After embarrassing ourselves and the other boats around us, we decided to turn and get ready for the seriousness of the race!

We got off to a good start at 30spm and cruised along for the first quarter where conditions were relatively smooth. The bend leading up to Town Bridge was where our technical capabilities were challenged. Stroke was almost certain that the cry from Charlie behind was from a wave of water directed inwards, and thus a call to tap down was made to maintain our speed. We stepped the pace up during the last quarter where conditions were calmer and then we took the rating up under the butterfly bridge for a final push.

Rohan made some excellent calls throughout the race which undoubtedly made a positive impact on our time. 7:43 wasn't enough to trouble our competitors but offered a significant improvement to previous Oundle Fours that we've raced in, particularly considering the conditions and the on the water time beforehand.

It will be interesting to see what the 'younger' Oundle squad can achieve now that the previous Juniors are in senior racing territory.

## OTRC SOCIAL

Saturday 24th March 2018

@ Oundle Rugby Club

To watch the Oxford/Cambridge Boat Races - All Welcome (first race from 4.30pm) More details to follow



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## J14 quad - **Will P**

We set off and began to warm up. Having been told how windy it was out there, we expected a bit of trouble, but we were not prepared for what happened. We got around the first corner and suddenly, we were pushed towards the side in a strong wind. This prepared us for the proper race... kind of! The water wasn't calm from then on and the wind was strong, but we made it to the waiting area and grabbed onto a tree root to prevent being blown back out into the middle of the river. The waiting was cold, and then we had to take our jumpers off. Shivering, we were ordered to turn and start paddling down. From then, it was just pacing up to the start.

The race had started, and things were cold. The water was hard to row in due to the wind and we were being blown about a lot. Also, we had been overtaken by a group of older rowers from another club. We pushed on, legs aching, and passed the 1000m sign. It was great to hear the Oundle coaches and parents cheering us on. And as soon as it started, it ended, and we could start to get the feeling back in our hands. This cold weather is horrible!

Well done to the crew and all other rowers!





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## **Masters D/E/F Eights. WINNER on 7.08 (6.43 after handicap)**

Anita, John, Rob, Dick, Simon, Brian, Jon, Leslie, **Mark**.

It's still dark at 6.30am, and where was Dick? I got out of the car and slid down the slope at the club, and Dick turned up, doing a turn and sliding magnificently sideways into position in front of the trailer.

Simon arrived to help. Light test – no trailer lights. Opened up the plug to find two wires out of their place. Thank goodness for Dick – a magnificent display of electrical expertise got us off only ten minutes late with a trailer that lit up and all the stuff Simon remembered we should take.

Arrived just a bit late and found a good parking place and all the crew ready to rig up and get everyone ready for the Division 1 launch. It was pretty cold and windy.

We set off, quite well balanced so perhaps training helped. A bit stop and start on the way as other boats pulled out in front of us, but we did manage two start sequences including in the reach we thought (rightly) would have the most disturbed water. Got to our place and a good hold on the bank and waited, out of the wind and reasonably warm. The turning around in some sort of order and off gently through the bridges and into our start up routine, in the sun – and I have no idea what happened after that other than calls to “Finish there” and “SIT UP TALL” with a bit of a wobble at one point when we seemed to lose rhythm and then “keep on rowing light”, “we need to keep rowing” and Claire gallantly trying to pull us in risking a dip.

Later – cripes that was a lot for four bacon baguettes, our time was 7.08, a training schedule from hell, and “at least we beat the boys (only by 4 seconds though)” as the only thing the leadership was interested in until it emerged we won on actual time as well as on handicap. Lots to work on but a good row enjoyed by some of us at least. Thanks to Anita for sticking with us pending becoming a granny and thanks to Leslie for being a committed sub.



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Ladies Quad, Angela, Claire, Fiona and **Jennie** - time 8.42 adjusted to 8.30

By comparison to the norm we had a relaxed start to the morning being in the second division, and the boat on trestles on arrival ready to be rigged - thanks To the early birds of div 1. We even had time to cheer on the 8 as it approached the finishing

So relaxed I guess it isn't a surprise that we then heard the warning of now or never onto the water. there was a slight contretemps between Bow and a blazer on the side, but never mind, it was all part of the rather warm warm up racing to the start rather than face disqualification for being tardy.

with the current against us and 15 to 20 mph winds and water resembling the North Sea in some areas, we got into a good rhythm, my challenge of getting through the double railway bridges behind us, until we were challenged by a quad of a much younger variety of rowers who hampered even our usual steady row in fact we even had to slow down. Captain Hook gave them a short blast and a course may then have been very assertively plotted so that they then went for the faster flowing channel through the next arch and promptly crashed. feeling vaguely satisfied with this we finished the race benefitting from fiona's great calls and somehow straight steering. We may also have been helped by Fiona's lucky merino pants, out for their first outing.... however will need to see what the science from GPS watch says before we all go and buy some...

Anyway chocolate brownies and tea and coffee were the order of the day to recover from such an eventful row and to celebrate the fact that we were even slightly quicker than last time.

Thanks to Dick for trailering and for Simon for organising us all for the event.



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## THE OTRC SPIRIT

All contributions for the March 2018 newsletter gratefully received by Tuesday 27th March 2018

*Congratulations*

Many congratulations to Peter and Anita on the arrival of their first grandchild.

Looking forward to seeing photos. x

