

OTRC Match Report

Bedford 9th April 2017

Race organiser Simon Murrays race preamble;

Ten of the more enthusiastic club crews signed up for this event and we were well rewarded with the most benign conditions for racing.



Temperatures were above 20 deg.C for most of the day and the wind only picked up for the later divisions, i.e. after we had finished our races. Every little helps. As usual, everyone mucked in and helped with all the loading/rigging etc., making the organiser's job that much easier. A special thank you to Dick for towing the trailer, with all the attendant tasks and responsibilities that entails.

A good day's racing was marred only by the lack of bacon sandwiches as the cafe next to the boating area was closed. This clearly explains some of the performances described below.

Man of the match has to be Richard, who arrived in time for the first division, armed with camera to record the event, and was the last of our crews to race, in between helping everyone else with their boats, oars, etc. Mind you, I haven't seen the photos yet...



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Sen 4+: Charlie D, Aaron, Tim, Ian; cox: Claire M

Charlie D, Aaron, Tim, Ian; cox: Claire M, below.

This crew took both technical and technological leaps forward ahead of the Bedford race. Our 'getting together' has greatly improved over recent weeks and Stroke was now armed with a rate meter – having realised that 26 spm can also feel a lot like 24 or 28, or even 30 on a really good day! Cox Claire, was also keen to upgrade the Stern end of the boat by adapting her own 'sticky tape' prompt card solution to remind her of the technical calls to make us row faster. Donned in our racing attire, we paddled up to the start confidently with a few half and full pressure bursts. We marshalled opposite a Four from Broxbourne who looked in good shape – slightly concerned that they could be our Oppo. However, we quickly realised that they were coxless, unbeknown to Claire, who was more interested in the size of the chest muscles at their bow end. Thankfully Charlie was at hand to distract her with some steering tips for the course ahead. With all our heads now in the boat, we spun and set off into a good rhythm through the start. Our plan was to attack the first 500m at 28 spm and then settle down. 500m into the race, Claire called out to say that we were catching up with the Coxless Four (this turned out to be a white lie to spur our ego's on - which seemed to work) but sadly we were unable to offer Claire a closer view. We kept a tidy rhythm through the middle part of the race at a planned 26/27 spm, and gave it a strong push at the end with thanks to the cheering Oundle supporters. Claire steered a great course through to the end - receiving many compliments from Charlie who must try harder to keep his head pointing forwards whilst rowing!! Our time was not enough to worry our fellow Intermediate competitors, but given the technique and rating among this crew is of such a high standard, we can only point blame towards the lack of chest muscle for being off-pace. More improvements to come!



WInt 2x: Lucy, Vicky

8:38

As we were almost the last boat to leave the landing stage (we're not a family known for our punctuality) there wasn't much time to practice what we'd learnt from our two training sessions. We arrived at the start to see one of our opposition who would be chasing us down- a Star crew who in my mums words were 'very young' but to me seemed quite grown up. Once we crossed the start line it didn't take long for Star to start cutting down the distance between us but we managed to hold them off from actually overtaking us until we were approaching the final bridge- they and their coach later congratulated us on our 'gutsy' performance. Our best bit of rowing was probably the last 200m with a big cheer from the Oundle supporters driving us on! I don't remember much else from the race, I thought there was a near miss with the first bridge but apparently, according to my steerswoman, we were no-where near it! Although we didn't place highly in our category (probably full of more of those pesky "young people") I really enjoyed this morning's race and it was great to be back with OTRC!

Having now spent three years rowing for a college that doesn't even have a coach let alone our own boathouse or a trailer it's been nice to come back to the relative luxury of OTRC- and to have all the coaches politely point out the detrimental effect that rowing without a coach for three years has had on my technique! Well done today and good luck for regatta season OTRC!



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MasC 2x: Richard, Jon

Masters C Double Richard and Jon H 8 minutes. There were a lot of firsts in this race, the first time we had raced together, the first time I had stroked, first time I had raced a double.

To be fair we did manage a couple of practice outings to see if we could work together. Richard is such a good sculler he makes it easy for anyone to row well. Practice showed that we could move the boat in a straight line and Richard didn't end up being too wet, it is a water sport after all.

As we know Sunday was a glorious day so there would be no excuses on account of the conditions. Looking at the draw I saw that my old pairs partner from St Neots was starting directly behind us in a double, no pressure then but plenty of room for banter. This was made worse as they had already recorded a time of 7:59 in an earlier division.

With all this in mind my nerves were getting the better of me, why do we get nervous before a race, when we have been racing for too many years to remember now. So we boated early and made our way to the start, where we sat enjoying the sunshine. It could have been so much worse!

Then it was time to go, as we cleared the railway bridges Richard gave the call to build and we were off. The boat picked up well and to my surprise when I checked the rate meter we were at 30 strokes a minute. Which was a surprise as Hugh will no doubt comment I always complain at that rate in the quad!

As usual Richard steered a blinder and we were through the bridges with no problem and still rating 29, things were going well, and more to the point St Neots were not gaining on us. Has to be said their steering wasn't as good as Richard's through the bridges.

We pushed off the town bridge and it felt controlled even at this unusually high rate! When St Neots cleared the town bridge it looked like they started to close us down a little. This gave us the incentive to keep pushing hard despite our legs burning, which meant we were catching the Peterborough double in front.

With one final push off the last bridge, and if you can believe it the rating going up to 32 we went for the line. Crossing the line with legs screaming but still well in front of St Neots. They did actual record a faster time 7:54, but they certainly kept us going when the going got tough!

We were very pleased with our first race together, the efficiency of Bedford time keeping and website meant that by the time we were back at the club for re rigging we knew club doubles bragging rights for the day were ours!! Not bad for a first outing!!



WJ18 2x: Daisy, Becky

It was a nice, warm and sunny day, which was perfect on the river. We were rigged up and ready to go before division 1 started to race down.

We had some time to spare so we went McDonalds, as we returned we saw division 1 was down at finish and helped them get out of the river.

We got on the water and boated, rowing a steady pace down to the start, watching for our competitors. It got to the start feeling the sun and hoping we put enough sun cream on burning away.

We pulled away from the start feeling really good but around the 1000meter mark we started to slow, both of us noticing this. Becky and myself both called for legs and for power to occur whilst pushing for the finish. Where most people have said we look alright so that's the main thing really!

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Away overall we got a time of 8:21 coming 4th out of 8 and a personal best by 10 seconds, we are both really happy with the result.

Well done to all the other crews and thanks to Dick and Claire for bringing the trailer!

Mas F 2x: John B, Nick

For a change, we had a glorious sunny day for our head race at Bedford. John and I set off well knowing that we had the obstacle course of the island and all the bridges ahead of us. We navigated the course well but came out from under the town bridge a little wide which unfortunately threw us off course. From this point we found it hard to maintain our pace and finished with a disappointing time. We enjoyed the event, there was a great club atmosphere and we hope to perform better on another day!

WMasE 2x: Claire, Angela

09:26

Claire and Angela again. Bedford bridges again. Didn't win again. However, no wind, no rain, just sunshine and good company.

We stuck to the game plan, apart from Angela not telling Claire we were moving at 30 instead of 28 spm. What's a couple of pips between friends? Felt good, if exhausting.

We were followed down the course by a double from P'boro who were in the same category as us. There was a big tussle at the end, which probably made us row harder than we would have otherwise.

They pipped us to the post, but our disappointment was slightly reduced on finding out that one of the P'boro crew was an elite rower, racing and winning pots since 1974, and the crew train together every single night. Obviously that's where we are going wrong. That and the fact that we had an ice cream to reward ourselves instead of some high protein, low fat 'treat'.

MasE 2x: Simon, Dick

Time: 8:29; 5th out of 6

I knew as soon as we had negotiated getting the trailer into the boating area that we would have no trouble with the course. And so it proved with Dick steering an impeccable line throughout. Maybe it's having that GPS thingy on board. Despite only deciding to race three weeks ago, we had managed to engineer some sneaky outings so were up to the usual OTRC level of prepared-

Entertainment before the start was provided by two ladies from Sudbury complaining about their "equipment" (and then invited us to their regatta). The race itself was without incident, we kept a good rhythm and a rating of 30 to finish in 8.29 which was a creditable effort while not troubling the engravers. We did however beat a double from Sudbury, so maybe we will go their regatta.

MasE 4x: Jon, Simon, Brian, Hugh—7.24



Yes the 'One second Wonders' have done it again!

Beautiful weather, a solid first 500 m, a rating of 30 spm, a great racing line from John, stroke man remained seated throughout and everyone felt that they had had an enjoyable row, so winning was the icing on the cake!...but I think perhaps we should go for a 2-3 second lead next time. Thanks to Simon for stepping in as 'super sub' and commiserations to Peter who we believe was the back legs of the Pantomime Donkey at the Titchmarsh Palm Sunday service...his reward will be in heaven...but we get the pots..



WJ16 2x: Erin, Laura

Erin and I were in a double together in the j16 event as there wasn't a j15 race on offer. Our race was okay but quite a lot slower than our other race in a double at Bedford, but it was a good experience as the two other times we've been here something has gone wrong and we have had to visit star club boathouse for a couple of hours (we forgot the lifejacket for our quad and our rudder was damaged the other). In the race we kept a constant pace but felt we could have gone faster; we both enjoyed the race :-)