



Bedford Small Boats Head - Sunday 12th April 2015

Hi, ho, hi ho. It's off to Bedford we go. Again! We're almost all on auto-pilot now with no need for a SatNav.

It was a nice dry day, with a bit of sun. Unfortunately, the wind (rather than snow, rain or fog) caused havoc on the day, as highlighted in the numerous match reports below. By the end of the Saturday evening Social at The Ship (all welcome) we will have rowed through force 10 gales with tsunami-sized waves, possibly populated by sharks and giant sea monsters. And we did it all 'backwards'.

We may not have won much, but we all coped well with the difficult conditions and did ourselves proud. As always the support was amazing all the way down the course. We may be a small club in numbers, but we have big voices! Thanks to all who turned up to re-rig at the end of the day, too, making a tough job much easier.

Well done to Emma's crew, who won a POT (well, actually, it may have been medals). Well done to Rochelle, too, who coped with her 'early bath' with great fortitude and true OTRC spirit. She's a fully-fledged sculler now!

W.MasD.2x: Vicky, Jo - Time 08.48

We arrived at Bedford to clear skies, but a howling wind. We boated and rowed up to the start, bouncing from the crests of waves into the teeth of a cross wind. Having settled into a sunny corner by the bank at the start, we eyed up the other two boats who were our competition in division one. Funnily, as we are new to the vet D category, we thought they looked much older than us. (As it turns out, they were older than us, with both Star crews being Vet E, so we would have to give them 13 seconds in handicapping).

We set off well, with Vicky steering an excellent course, as always. The wind continued, blowing us across the river and over the waves. Despite this we managed to maintain a steady rhythm, rating between 29 and 31 most of the way, with enough in the tank for a big finish, responding to the OTRC cheers from the bridges. (Thanks guys.) Feeling rather sea sick from the bouncy ride, we then had to wait for the times of crews from the other later divisions to see how we had fared.

It turns out that we had done enough to beat the two vet E Bedford Star crews in our division despite the handicapping, but were beaten by 2 crews in later divisions (Leicester and Peterborough), who we can only assume had a tail wind which blew them down the course instead of across it! We also think this is why Lucy and Lel sneaked another narrow victory over us...

MasE.4x: Simon, Alan, Peter, Hugh - Time 07:58

When one is approaching retirement it is important to make sure that all earnings are maximised. With this in mind the intrepid foursome paid a close inspection visit to some very interesting stonework on the underside of one of the bridges over the Great Ouse in the sunny town of Bedford. This might well have cost them 10 seconds or so but provided invaluable inspection time to ensure that a competitive tender will be put in when the stone mason job goes public.

Apart from that little detour the row went well, the check under the rating for most of the way and a very respectable 7.43...only 3 seconds slower than the winners ...and the winners of the Master D category as well. Bring on the regatta season!

W.J18A.1x: Lel - Time 09.14

All in all, I was quite pleased with the outcome of my race. The wind, as you all were aware, was horrendous and I definitely felt its strength in the middle 1000m. However, I managed to find that 'extra gear' at the end of the race. I wouldn't say it was my best technical performance, but it was consistent and strong.

MasE.4+: John W, Brian, Mark, Jon H, Cox: Paul – Time 07:58

No report

W.MasD.4x-: Fiona, Angela, Kate, Anita - Time 09.03 adjusted to 08.49

We had a lovely, sunny, warm day for our jaunt down the River Ouse and were spared the later wind by being in the second division. We started off smoothly, guided all the way by Bow's commendable steering. We got a bit splashy during the middle, choppy bit and so got our bath for the day out of the way. We then settled in to a nice, even rhythm with Stroke experimenting with a stroke meter. Handy gadget, that. Unfortunately, we were passed by a four with a very loud cox, but 3 boosted our spirits with encouraging calls and we pressed on with strength to the

finish. Despite my saying to everyone afterwards that I thought the race felt slower than our last one, I was wrong. We were faster. By 12 seconds. So that goes to show what I know...

W.Nov.2x: Keely, Libby - Time 09:02

No report

IM1.2-: Charlie Dunn, Ian Bradshaw - Time 08:57

No report

WJ16A.1x: Rochelle

It was a very windy day but much better weather than at the previous event in Lincoln. I rowed up to the waiting point before the start and I was lucky to be waiting on the part of the river that captured the sun; so I took my layers off and enjoyed the heat, which reminded me of the scorching hot sun that I had had the pleasure of experiencing the day before, pre my flight back from a week in Spain on early Saturday morning.

We then started to turn around and row to the start, I was rather hot, sweaty and thirsty from the sun but little did I know at that point I was soon to get a nice cool down. The first 750m of the race were very good, fast and strong and I managed just fine navigating through the bridges. However, about half way through the race me and another single female sculler were side by side and it was a bit of a squeeze around some of the corners and then I noticed that our blades were going to clash but she didn't seem to move to the side so I made the decision that I would have to, so I took a hard stroke on stroke side, in an attempt to avoid a collision. However, it was bad timing for me to move a bit over to the left because I was unaware that it was round a corner where there was a few buoys and so my bow side oar hit and got caught on one of the hidden buoys that I didn't see and boom! Before I knew it I was underwater. The launch quickly came to my rescue and virtually everyone from Oundle club was there to help me, give me a big warm hug and hand me lots of dry warm clothes and I thank you all very much for that J it was a negative and disappointing experience at the time but it certainly hasn't put me off rowing in a single, I am now able to laugh about it as it was an exciting capsized and it gave me experience and it was going to happen at some point in rowing.

Lesson learnt; always take spare kit!

I am glad that I did get a very nice cool down after sitting in the boat at the start in the sun and heat. I was rehydrated and cooled down! And glad that the single sculler next to me managed to successfully have room to move forward and complete her race without collision

Thank you everyone again for the support xxx

W.Mas.C.4x: Smithy, Jo, Jennie, Vicky - Time 08:26

Somewhat windier conditions than we would have liked prevailed on Sunday, however despite few recent outings as a complete crew, we all felt that we gave a good account of ourselves on the whole, even if we were as usual slower than our nemesis rival crew. Great steering from Vicky as usual. Plenty to be positive about, just no pots yet....

W.NOV 2x Lucy and Lel - Time 08.33

The race proved highly enjoyable for the both of us. We only had two outings together whilst Lucy was back from university but we soon got into the rhythm we once had – fortunately our old habit of leaning had not redeveloped! Like earlier in the day, the wind was proving to be an issue in the first kilometre but we kept focussed with tidy catches and an excellent pace set by Lucy. The last 250m was extremely powerful and we pulled further ahead from the crew behind us. We finished 3rd out of eight, so we were both really happy considering the little time we had practised beforehand. It will be great to race in the double again – hopefully in the very near future. Thanks, Lucy!

IM31.1x: Jack - Time 08:20

Not great at rowing in choppy waters, I wasn't really looking forward to the race, especially as my sculling time has been limited this season. I can't exactly say my steering was on point either during the race as apparently my boat had stone magnets on stroke side so I took what could be called a wide line. With a Guildford sculler on my tail I tried to stay in front whilst also having a clean, quite ambitious really but at least I managed to keep him at bay thanks to my fan club on the bank (I'll give autographs next time I'm back).

Jack also rowed with his Dad on the day, but, I suspect not as an OTRC crew (BLAZER, JUDGE!). Here's his report on that race:

IM2 2X 7:29 (Stratton Senior, Stratton Junior)

So after a solid eight month holiday from rowing together, me and a grey old man decided to jump back in the double which worked so well over summer (aka beating Hugh and Phil). We'd been relegated into a rather heavy boat (club politics eh?) and so weren't thinking overly positive going it the race. Luckily we got up to the start fairly early and so had time to recover as the wind

had picked up again, typically. So we set off giving a fairly large gap to a girls quad in front of us (marshall's orders - we obviously looked the part!). I felt like reminding my Dad what it was like to be in a boat with John Milborne and so skimmed a pillar of the town bridge which may have required us to stop rowing... Anyways after being soaked after the city bridge we pushed on and overtook the girls quad, and finished strongly (with only a small contingent of my fan club remaining) giving us a respectable time, quicker than the men quad - just felt like dropping that in there.

J16A.2x: Rohan, Connor - Time 08:29

Despite the 20mph winds, we pulled through with a pleasing 08:29 on the 2km course, putting us in second place in our category. Although we struggled to maintain our stability through the choppy waves, we rectified our loss of time with a quick sprint in the last hundred metres. We achieved a time which was 7 seconds faster than that of which we completed in our previous event at Northampton. Although it was only a small improvement, we were still pleased with the result!

Mx.MasE.2x: Simon, Claire - Time 08:46 adjusted to 08:34

Attention all shipping (and ducks, swans, junior doubles)

General synopsis at 1300 hours BST Sunday 12th April

Warnings of gales in sea areas Star, Clubhouse, Bandstand

Steering moderate to good

Choppy forcing tap downs but no crabs

Boat veering south-easterly at bridges 5 or 6

Visibility poor (competition out of sight)

Quicker than last time

Outlook good (there's always next time)

Next shipping [boating] forecast due on 13th and 14th June?

Masters E 2-, Jon H and Quiggers, Time 08:22

We had been looking forward to rowing at Bedford again as we know the course well and had not had the opportunity to give Nipper a competitive outing for a while. Unfortunately as we all know the weather was not the best, far too windy, generating a lot of swell. For a couple of guys who like to keep their blades close to the water this did not make for a comfortable row. On the way to the start we came to a dead stop a couple of times when hit by particularly strong gust giving the riggers a good wash too. Arriving at the start in good time, and marshalled to the sunny side

of the river we waited for the start, enjoying the sunshine. It was so warm we had to get our kit off early!!

Having successfully negotiated the railway bridges at the start we set off, but the choppy conditions made it hard to find a good rhythm as we were bouncing around like a cork, struggling to stay on line as the wind insisted on blowing us out wide. Through the town bridge and things got more difficult if anything, still trying to fine our rhythm. Eventually the final bridge came in view, as we passed under the wind dropped and the river calmed, the last 10 strokes to the finish were the best of the race.

Too little, too late though, as our time showed - 8:22 well down on our best, but only 6 seconds behind the winners for second place in our event. If we had gone in the first division when the wind was less, who knows? But then we would have had to get up too early!! Can't have it all ways I suppose.

J15A.4x+: Joe, Josh, Will B, Jordan, cox: Rohan Time 08:09

Despite being an extremely windy day our crew (Will, Joe, Josh, Jordan and cox Rohan) were ready for the J15 4x+ division 4 race. The boat flew off at the start with the wind in our favour, but once we came to the middle section of the race the water became rough making it difficult to row in. Once we had passed the rough waters we were back into a flying pace which led us across the line with a time of 8:09 minutes. Unfortunately it was 13 seconds off the winning team which was a great effort seeing as it was the whole crew's first time rowing together.

W.J16A.4x-: Becky P, Sophie, Daisy, Becky S Time 08:17

No report

NOV.4x-: Antony, Jason, Steve, Emma Time 09:23

The novice quad visited Bedford for their second trip down the River Great Ouse, looking to improve on a disastrous experience at Lincoln, with a goal of cracking the elusive 9-minute barrier. The race was an improvement, but we again missed our goal. In fact, we rowed 11 seconds slower than our previous race at Bedford, and posted the slowest Oundle time on the day. Much work to be done for this crew, but we do enjoy paddling and learning together.

Our most sincere thanks to Emma Stratton for being a super-sub at the last minute. She coached and steered us through the 2,000m course, giving us excellent motivation, and went on to win her event just a few moments later! Well done.

**W.NOV4x+ (OTRC/Gloucester Uni composite): Emma, Amy, Molly, Rosie, Cox:
Rhona WINNERS: Time 08.13**

#HeyHoLetsRow is our club motto for anything we do. After doing a 3 hour drive across country (involving several diversions) on Saturday night we successfully made it to Bedford on Sunday with plenty of time to spare (with a lie in and a bacon sarnie). With our matching visors and variety of all in ones, we nicked Willow off of the J15 boys before they even had chance to get out, and darted up the path to the boating area...not forgetting our jelly bunnies (magic winning ingredient). After a windy painstaking row up to the start Molly decided to have a coughing fit just as we reached the start line, the only person who didn't look concerned was the Cox, but we all soldiered on through the gusts of wind and swans...and once again 'boshed it'. We couldn't have done it without Rhona who voluntarily stepped up to take us under her wing. Thank you to Smithy who helped us sort out a boat and enter us...definitely a team effort! Maybe we could do more composites in the future? UOG are up for it, and it'll keep that OTRC name going around #oarmazing...

