

OTRC Match Report

Doncaster 11th February 2017



Race organiser Anita Dunn's race preamble;

The South Yorkshire Head Saturday February 11th 2017

After a desperately early rise for those racing in Div 1, some shenanigans for John with the "Big Trailer" and delays on the A1 for others, we found ourselves with little time for rigging but in true OTRC spirit, we all helped one another and the damage was limited.

This event is always a challenge as the distance is the longest on our regular calendar, 4km, and there had been doom & gloom from the weather forecasters about the weather such that the race organisers sent various missives about appropriate clothing and not being allowed on the water. Fortunately the weather was not quite as challenging as forecast and the Doncaster RC members were as kind and accommodating as ever.

The day flew by in frantic activity getting boats on & off the water and getting crews ready.

We have one definite win for the McCormack MasE 4x- beating the Hurford MasE 4x- by 1 sec allowing plenty of potential for banter & "friendly" rivalry there.

There are also some disputed results yet to be resolved, so there may be further wins. Thanks to all the competitors, the supporters who helped tired & cold crews off the water and with de rigging along with the trailer drivers John & Peter.

The hardest and earliest back made it to the pub but many were still warming up and the gathering was small but the tales were still as tall.

As ever I am thankful to be part of such a wonderful club as OTRC.

The next event is either Abingdon or Bedford on April 9th, see you there.

Rohan, Will, **Alfie**, Conor Cox: Anita Time: 18:25

It was a good effort from all of us. 4k is further than what we are used to, but everyone managed to keep going strongly until the finish. It was very cold and there was a lot of hanging around on the water before and after the race, however I think everyone enjoyed it despite this. Thanks to Anita for coxing.

MasA.1x (Div1) Time 18:10 **Philip**

An inhumanly early alarm at "Oh" 500 hours (what does the "Oh" stand for? – "Oh" my god, it's early.....) was only the beginning of a very long day for most of us. I wasn't looking forward to the long wait of the single scullers (first into the water, last to start racing) but at least the temperature wasn't as low as I'd anticipated: only ridiculously cold rather than hypothermically so – that came later.....

The good points were that I managed to boat with dry feet, the river was relatively benign; I overtook two boats and caught another.

A steady row at a sustainable 28 rating is what I wanted and, largely speaking, what I got. My disappointment was in the check which was higher than I manage in training....whether this was down to the current or just the fabled red mist, I'm not sure.

Finally, in true academy award style (even though I didn't win), I'd like to say big "Thank yous" to John for a lift in the Landy (meaning I didn't really have to be wide awake until about 7 o'clock); to the whole Oundle "Posse" for contributing to the Oundle Roar which, if it could be bottled, would be worth a fortune; to Anita for organising our entry; to the rigging fairies who kindly de-rigged the single whilst I was back on the water for Division 2.....and finally to Jo for not mentioning the teasels....



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Masters E 4X- Peter, **Jon**, Brian, Hugh. Time 16:33.

The weather forecast for Saturday was dire, so it was with no small degree of trepidation that we made our way up the A1 at some ungodly hour, for a Saturday morning, through the drizzle. When we arrived, though cold we were pleased to see that the forecast wind, rain and snow had not turned up.

There was the usual rush to rig the boats for the first division having been told we should allow 20 minutes to get to the landing stage for our allotted boating time. There was confusion over our number which was not in the pack, so Peter had to go to race control to sort it out leaving the other 3 of us to carry the boat down.

Having resolved the number issue Peter joined us at the landing stage and we got boated, only slightly behind our allocated time.

The 2K row up to the start was uneventful and we settled into a good rhythm, we arrived at the start feeling confident and were told to marshal just past the start by the prison. So far so good, so we waited and waited and waited some more. The division start time came and went, and we waited, all the time getting colder. About 20 minutes after the start time the division finally got under way.

There was a rather young and fit looking Doncaster quad marshalling behind us, who we suggested should start in front of us. They felt this would cause problems for their time keepers so they stayed where they were for now, a decision that would have consequences later.

The marshal called us forward and we set off. We heard a go called from the bank so picked up the pace, only to hear go again a few strokes later as we passed the start. Once round the tight left hand bend that followed the start we picked things up and settled into a rhythm all be it at 2 strokes a minute higher than planned.

The afore mentioned Doncaster quad were unfortunately closing us down and by the time we reach half way, we were side by side as we came round the bend up to the club.

Peter was steering well going wide so they could have the inside line, despite his best efforts there was a coming together of blades and bow pair had to stop rowing to prevent a more serious clash.

This naturally broke our rhythm and cost us a few, maybe vital, seconds as we got the boat moving again.

Having got into our stride again and out of the wash from the Doncaster quad we pushed on for the second 2K. We kept it together without much of a fade, with a final push off the A1 bridge finishing strongly. The Time would tell the true story.

Our only concern was would it be fast enough, to beat the other All Stars Oundle Masters E quad, and secure the club bragging rights!! Would those few seconds lost with the clash of blades cost us dear? As things turned out it was by 1 second!!, so all's well that ends well.

Rumour has it we may have won the Masters E quads, but not sure how Doncaster RC organised the Masters event.



WJ15 2x **Erin** & Laura

Laura and I were racing in a double in the first division. After a very long cold wait at the start any nerves we first had were gone as we really wanted to go to warm up. We started at a good pace and managed to keep it up for the whole race. Despite having very painful fingers at the finish we were feeling happy about how we rowed. Thank you to everybody for who helped us and we are looking forward to the next race.

WMas D 2x **Jo** & Vicky

This is as much a tale of dressing and undressing as rowing, as much of our day revolved around the clothes.

We arrived at the club in what felt like the middle of the night to collect the large boat trailer, when Vicky realised she had left half of her racing kit drying on a radiator at home. She was dispatched to collect the rest of her stuff, and we finally left to head to the frozen North just before 6am, well wrapped up. As the heating in the Landy kicked in, some of our many clothes layers came off. We were hoping that the sun would come up at some point, despite the forecast, but alas, it seemed that we were going

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to be rowing in the cold damp drizzle in semi darkness for the whole day. We arrived at Doncaster and got out to rig some boats in the gloom. More clothes on. Philip then added to the clothing excitement by producing some teasels from his pants. (Don't ask.) We boated about 8.30 in the sleet. More clothes on. We rowed up to the start and warmed up a bit. Took a layer off. Then sat at the start for 2 hours. (All layers back on.) Time to spin (lots of layers off). We had a steady and solid row down, hitting a few purple patches with the rhythm and holding our rating at 30spm or above pretty well most of the course. Vicky steered well as usual, and we had no collisions or incidents, and crossed the line in 19.39. Clothes back on. Rowed back to the club house. Another change into more clothes before the next race, and I still had some spare socks to lend Paul after his swim. (No men's pants though. Those came from Peter. And without teasels, sadly.) Finally home just after 8pm for hot shower (all clothes off) before re-dressing and heading to the ship. (With clothes on.) Vicky stayed home to warm up. Clothes on or off? Your guess is as good as mine....

WMas E 4x time 20.27 Angela, Jennie, **Rhona**, Anita.

So when I told my friends I was racing at Doncaster this weekend, they must have misunderstood as they started talking about furlongs, jumps and some guy called St Leger. I just kept saying 'no it's 4K' but they didn't listen.

We all set off before dawn and boated early, as instructed, so loads of time (too much.....!) to decide whether pogies on or off. And a pleasant view of very solid lock gates.

4km steady race with shouty coxes annoyingly coming past us, leaving us with the outside of the long bend and dirty water. The railway bridges were a welcome sight, a push for the finish from the road bridge and the finish hooter was a relief.

Beyond the finish there was a proper logjam of boats and an even closer view of very solid lock sides! Then we rowed back to join the queue back to the jetty, kept going by thinking about dry land and the smell of bacon wafting our way. We hot-boated at the jetty with the mixed quad, thanks guys. Thanks to Angela who took on the driving and to Anita for steering us safely down the course.

Mas A coxed 4. Peter, Martyn, Andrew, **Hugh** cox Paul (time - who knows?!...clearly not the marshals at Doncaster Rowing Club)

Let's get the technical bit out of the way first and then move on to the drama! After an extremely long wait at the start, eyeing up the opposition, we were pleased with our performance over all, although there are a lot of technique issues that we still need to work on.

Paul did a great job of coxing and we maintained a rating of between 27 and 29 strokes a minute throughout the course and caught up with the crew in front - our very own J18 boys (shame on you boys - letting 4 old codgers catch you like that!)the mystery was that despite catching them up (sorry to rub it in) we only beat them by 4 seconds!?!???... Another long wait and some jockeying for position at the jetty and we finally docked.

.....at this point our esteemed cox took it upon himself to throw himself into the river - despite sub-zero temperatures - presumably in celebration of yet another pot for his collection (if you're going to get a dunking, Paul, your hard working crew get to do it - and you need to make sure you've won first)

With Paul and Hugh in the boat we obviously must have won, but will probably never receive the accolades we deserve, due to the seeming inability of Doncaster RC to get anything right on the day!

Thank you on our behalf of myself, Andrew, Martyn, Peter and Paul, to all those who helped out in the crisis - I think Paul's highly professional 'rub down' from our own Jo Milbourne was some compensation for what he'd been through and he was supplied with spare clothing and hot drinks by various club members whilst he was 'in recovery'

The most remarkable thing was that not only did Paul not lose his glasses, but he didn't utter a single profanity throughout the whole sorry affair- I think you need to get your laminated prompt card updated, mate!

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And whilst on the subject of the trials and tribulations of being a cox, can I just say what a fantastic job our OTRC coxes do.

Not only do you have to contend with the daily frustration of not being able to reach stuff on the top shelf of your kitchen wall cupboards, but you also endure hours of being wedged into hip crushing spaces with hard wooden seats, often in cold wet weather, at uncivilized times of day, yelling at halfwits like us! (ok -one halfwit like me) ...At least we get to warm up ...and develop our 'six packs'- when we're rowing!

In praise of coxesan attempt at poetry, to lighten the mood.....

Several pairs of trousers, 3 pairs of socks,
2 hats, a fleece, a coat, a water proof , who'd want to be a cox!

Wedged in a cold hard seat, in wet and wintry weather,
Screaming at incompetent crews, thrashing down the river.

Hours on the water watching other people row,
Without a bit of exercise or a 'six pack' to show.



.....anybody got any ideas for another verse or how to improve the syntax? - I've run out of ideas?

MasA.4x (Div2) John, **Philip**, Simon, Nick 16:34

In a move designed to give the established men's Quad a "bit of banter", John put together a last minute entry to this class. With two sneaky outings to our credit, we were up for the challenge on the day. Another long wait at the start was improved with the distribution of some much appreciated flap-jack from Mrs C: something I trialled successfully earlier in the day in order to keep my spirits up whilst waiting in my single. We also enjoyed a bit of banter with some lads in quad from Leeds.

We set off with a plan to row at 28 stokes a minute in order to assist our fledgling attempts at rowing in time. Armed with a stroke meter, number 2 was charged with calling. Twenty strokes in and with a rating of 33, the "Down 2" call was made. It seemed Nick was enthusiastically affected by the red mist, so further calls of "Down 2" followed throughout the outing. By rights we should have finished the race at a rating of about 5 strokes a minute, but in fact didn't drop below 30!

We also proved the "Splashy crew" rule, that the nearer the bow, the wetter you became: poor John nearly succumbed to hypothermia – although not quite to the degree suffered by another club member....

Whilst waiting at the finish the Leeds boys complimented us on our performance...convinced, as they had been, that we wouldn't trouble them, we did in fact give them a run for their money and were 11 seconds faster.....not bad for old boys!

Our performance was effective in that we finished only a second behind our Oundle oppo. We gave a good chase, but they retain the bragging rights....just!

Not bad for a ~~first~~ third outing.....

MxMas A (why A?) 4x Claire, **Fiona**, Dick & Mark F

Car line up the same! Although like the royal family should we not travel together? This crew was fortuitous in many aspects of our visit to South Yorkshire – others had left home at the crack of sparrows while we had the benefit of a leisurely start. We had some anxiety about making it at all due to a nasty accident on the A1, and plan B was to go to the Fat Boy Diner. However, arrive we did, and finding that our boat with its previous crew on board was just pulling into the jetty, we hopped into those hot seats; a quick change of blades and off to the start line. Wow

Our plan was to de-rig after putting on dry clothes, getting some hot tea and bacon butty – and we returned to find the boat all done and put away. Wow again, and many thanks to those who did it. We hope there won't be any banter on that one!

Fiona was disappointed that she was not frisked to check for adequate clothing as this did seem to be promised in the email before the event. She was wearing her best vests, and Mark apparently had his

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leopard print tights on under his other items.

A new crew (Anita's idea) and still sorting out the preferred rowing order we opted for Mark steering who met the job description admirably.

Fiona did her Sargent Major impersonation in the number 2 seat of shouting commands that all could hear - including the other competitors! Dick pendulum Meads did Stirling work at stroke and Claire loved sitting at 3 with no additional responsibilities!

We were pleased with our row... not bad for a third outing! It was fairly rhythmical and solid, but splashy in places, over taken by one youthful looking uni crew. We maintained a steady distance on the boat behind. One command to 'wind down' at a loud buzzer was met with a shout from bow to 'keep rowing! ...' sadly it was not our buzzer! woops Some statistics about the day: Time spent in sitting in car 3.5 hrs Time spent sitting in a boat and not rowing 2 hrs Time spent sitting having a bacon buttie- 30 mins Time spent getting to and from race 20 mins Time spent racing 18min 10sec (corrected to 17.34)

Mark kindly translated this into race ratio = 20: 1 who says rowing keeps you fit! Thanks to Anita for organising the whole day and to the trailer drivers.



WJ15 2x Emily & Maddie—no report

WJ18 2x **Daisy** & Becky. Time 19.16

It was a cold and soggy start to the day with rain coming down. With both of us arriving before division 1 with Anita and Peter, we had a long wait before our race began and plenty of preparation time (not my strong point). As we got on the water and had a great smooth row up to the start with marshals telling us where to go left, right and centre. Once we got up there we had a long, long wait. Stalking our oppositions and noticing they were behind us, talking about strategy, whilst we tried to figure out what we would do once the race had begun.

We were off and at the first bend we zoomed around catching up a boat we had followed off the start, noticing our opposition had hit the bank and hadn't come out. *Sighing from relieve*. But still having a long race ahead of us we pushed hard and was going strong for the first 2500meters.

We knew the last 1500 meters would be a struggle like last year but conquering through it we had managed to overtake 2 boats (coxed junior quad and another girl's double).

We came 2 out of 4 so overall, it was a great row and a good day out.

Thanks to everyone who helped out and well done to all crews.

Mxd Masters E Quad: Jo, Andrew, **John**, Vicky Time 17:37

These hardly souls stayed on until the last division to race their mixed quad, while the rest of the club headed back for re-rigging and a night in the pub. The ladies had raced in Div 1 and the gentlemen (in separate crews) had raced in Div 2 so the early emphasis was on getting rehydrated, re fuelled and a set of warm dry clothes.

Suitably refreshed the crew set off to the start; a little bit of half pressure paddling and some practice starts got the blood flowing. However, once parked at the start opposite the Men's University Eights the blood was flowing much better in the lady's half of the crew. The moment of stripping down to race was eagerly anticipated by the OTRC women, and they were not disappointed as the fit young men got down to their all-in-ones.

Meanwhile the OTRC gents were engaged in a little banter with a University crew. So the OTRC gents were thinking they were on a par with these young men while the University crew thought they were quaint little old men. So with both halves of the OTRC crew deluded in their own way, they set off down the course united in their desire to beat the youngsters around them.

Vicky steered a great line but as the balance was slightly down on stroke side there was a suspicion that she might have been leaning out to get a better look at the bowman in the chasing Men's Four. The gents in the middle of the boat were determined not to let the youngsters get too close to help the balance; and Jo had set off to catch the better looking University



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crew. Funny how the same event can be experienced differently.

Our OTRC crew battled gamely down the course and despite being surrounded by youngsters, held their relative position down the course. Once at the finish, and having got their breath back, the OTRC crew returned to chatting up the youth. One of the youngsters thought our OTRC were quite quick for “oldies” and were surprised at our speed. The gents in the OTRC were “bigged -up” by the complement, but the ladies in the crew were not impressed with being “oldies”. Same experience, different perspective; one of the joys of mixed rowing!



March Newsletter

Would you like to submit an article, a story, training guidance, photo, drawing, poem, joke, advert or words of wisdom for the next newsletter?

Please submit to zoesmeeth@hotmail.co.uk by

Friday 3rd March 2017.