

OTRC Match Report

Northampton 20th January 2018

Race organiser Angela Hook's foreword....

What a great start to 2018! OTRC had seven winning crews at the Northampton Head on 20 January. Congratulations to them all (see the match reports below for details).

This success went a long way towards making up for the seasonal but disgusting weather on the day. Although the forecast had predicted cold but dry, it turned out to be cold and very wet. In fact it even snowed during Division 3. We think this was a first, as no-one can remember the club ever racing in snow before.

However, the OTRC Spirit was very much alive on Saturday, despite the conditions. Juniors and their parents responded brilliantly to some last minute changes of plans brought on by the dreaded 'lurgy'. Adults swapped crews for the same reason. Many pairs of cold hands rigged and de-rigged continuously throughout the day, anticipating all the requirements of the different divisions.

Thanks to everyone for making it such a successful day. Special thanks to the juniors and their parents who changed their plans, to our hardy volunteer coxes (Anita, Paul, Will B and Conor), to Paul for efficiently taking on the admin of the event, to our trailer drivers, without whom we would literally be stuck at the club – this time they were John M, Dick and Nick. And to Gary who stayed behind to find out the results and collect all the pots/medals and bring them back in a LARGE bin bag. No carrier bags for OTRC – too many pots!

Well done to everyone, even those who didn't win, for surviving the weather and remaining cheerful right through to re-rigging at the club in the dark.



**OTRC Division 3
Sculler Keeps His
Cool At The Start
Line**

OTRC Match Report

B3 4 + Hugh-**Leslie**-Martyn-Richard + Paul 7.27 Third in category

"Ebola or African Swine Fever?" I muttered to myself when I read that Peter Dunn was ill and would be absent at Northampton. A potentially serious blow to our performance.

We had trained for the last six weeks or so with Peter at stroke on bow side – the boat being 'frig rigged' for this purpose. But who to sub?

The gallant Richard stepped forward. We changed the boat back to conventional rigging and moved Hugh from the comfort of the Bow seat to the pressure of the Stroke seat with ten minutes notice.

In the race we followed the young and virile OTRC lads four and were chased by the OTRC middle aged swingers quad thingy which almost caught us.

The boat was well balanced and Hugh set a great rhythm and Paul steered a good line. Thank you Richard for making it work.

Despite the last minute changes to crew and rigging, and the cold and snow, and the delays at the start we enjoyed a thoroughly good and respectable row in the snow in a time of 7.27.

Even Martyn managed some positive words at the end.

Get well Peter.



MxMas F 2x John Bishop & Anita Dunn

Time 7:58 Placed 3rd of 4.

Back to Northampton for a post Christmas trial of the elements.

I had been looking forward to the lovely sunny & mild day that had been forecast earlier in the week but Northampton seems to have its own microclimate when it is race day. Bish & I boated in the rain for Division 2 after much debate about whether we were going to get too hot/wet/cold? Standard.

We had a decent row to the start and waited in what was now sleet, our fingers gradually becoming more and more numb as we saw the Abingdon Girls 2x strip off to unisuits just before setting off.

The race itself was not our best row, we have rowed better, smoother and more powerfully in training - this was our first race.

The novice at stern came up with a schoolgirl (I wish) error and caught a crab half way down the course and we then had a contretemps with another crew, so unfortunately my elite crewmate was not to be rewarded with a pot on this occasion.

Still, our first race in the bag- onwards and upwards.

Club motto rules.....

OTRC Match Report

Mas B//D/E/F 2x **Peter C**, Ian 7.44.4

Usual long wait before the start with plenty of time to get wet, freeze and negate the benefits of the warm up.

Good start and we were holding off a B2 double that started after us. Kept up a reasonable pace until the mid point and then the double overtook us. Pace slackened off, 1 month lay off is probably not good preparation for a head race. Thereafter it was a repeat of last year, we hit the bank, resumed and finished. Slight improvement in the time, but last by a long way.

Masters E 2x (Div 3) - **Nick** & Jon H

Well, I've come to the conclusion that the third division hit the worst weather of the day! Whilst sitting on the river waiting three quarters of an hour in the snow, we were shivering and my fellow racer said 'I'm not doing Northampton again, there's no fun in this'. Well I have to say at that point he was right!

The divisions started with the eights. The first three boats clashed on the first bend, so the organisers started the whole division again delaying us all another 15 minutes.

When our race did get going, we were so cold. It was great to be moving and we soon got to a good pace; we settled well and we had a good strong row without any incidents or clashes. We just wanted to get to the end of the race warmer than we started! We did a reasonable time, but I must say that we can do better - a good effort but lacking a bit of our usual race sparkle and attacking form.

Our time given at 6.43 (time adjusted masters handicap) placed us 3rd in our category - that's 12 seconds behind 1st and 6 seconds behind 2nd... so at least we know we are in the running!

Masters F 2x (Div 4) - **Nick** & Bish

A quick report on this one; we scratched our race so we could both sub in the quad as they had two chaps down with sickness

see masters quad report!



OTRC Match Report

Masters F8

John, Jon, Bob, **Brian**, Martyn, Andrew, Dick, Mark. Cox Anita

1. Oundle RC. F8. 5.59.6. **Winners**
2. S on A. D8 6.00.4
3. S on A. D8 7.32.3

Winners!



The Eight has turned Masters F this year (60+). The advantage of this is that under the handicap system any competition from a younger boat has a handicap of usually 14 secs over 2k for each age category. The disadvantage of this ageing process is that they have to stop for a toilet break on the way to the start of the race and have to be reminded about what they're doing at the start in the first place! This is true. However, despite this handicap of age, the crew managed to pull off a magnificent 0.8 sec win over two Vet D crews from Stratford upon Avon. (0.8 secs = the width of a single nasal hair). Racing in Division 1 (9.15) on a miserable wet day the crew made a strong start and consolidated their rhythm at a manageable 30 sps. Data shows that Strokes' attempt to push the rating higher had no benefit on boat speed. Good progress, with some excellent coxing by AJ, allowed the crew to pass easily one of their competitors and make some distance on a D4- ahead of them. Fade during the race, although still apparent, is reducing, as the crew develop their stamina in training. The Eight provided the second fastest row in the competition.

The other D8 from Stratford (who were predicted to be faster!) were in Div 4 and it was a good while before the news of this incredible narrow victory was relayed. Facebook...Whatsapp... a lot of fake news...fake news...blah.

Celebrations were exuberant and exhausting.

A good start to the year. This crew will only get better as they prepare for their attempt on Gold at the Masters in June.

J18 2- **Will**, Joe -7:35

With weather forecasts getting progressively worse throughout the week, we were not skeptical about the weather and it didn't disappoint, with darkness, cold and rain starting the day off, and although we warmed up on our way to the start, after waiting an hour we had cooled back down! Eventually the race started and the race felt good with no hiccups although I feel like we dipped a bit towards the end of the middle section but we managed to pick it back up for the finish but it was not enough to beat our one opposition

J14 - **Charlotte** and Jessica

Our race was moved to division 3 instead of division 4 due to the absence of George in the quad. This meant that Jessica and I were rowing in rain and snow throughout the wait and the race. When we reached the start, there was a collision of an 8-person boat which meant that the whole division had to be restarted, so we were waiting even longer on the river in the snow. When it was finally our turn to race we had no trouble during the actual row and we did overtake a double in the older category. No one ended up overtaking us and we thought we had done well. When we reached the end, there was a long wait to get the boats out of the water and by that time we were both extremely wet and cold! I am so glad we pulled through and won the race and well done to all the other rowers for competing in such bad conditions.

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WMas 2X Vet E Angela and **Claire**

Time 8.01 [2nd of 3]

In her new role as club captain and organiser of the Northampton event, Angela arrived in Northampton with the rest of the early bird crews to get as wet and cold as she could before her 13.00hrs row in her double with Claire. All good preparation for the race in the true OTRC way.

No doubt every report commentary will make reference to the type of weather, so we will give this detail a wide berth.....but it was after allNFN...normal for Northampton!

One point worth a mentioning was that after some lengthy debate as to when to remove the rain wear and other cosy clothes at the optimum moment pre-race,a decision was made Angela went first whilst Claire balanced the boat...it was obvious that the rain wear had served its purpose and could be later swapped soon, for fresh, dry attire. However, just as she had got all the layers off and brace the elements, a 'Stop! Stop! Stop!' cry came out of a mega phone on the bank....apparently there had been an incident on the course and a delay was announced, so clothes had to be put back on!!!! Much harder to put on than take off when wet!

Finally, we were on our way, surprised, as the eight was at such a short 'run up' to the start. We took the planned route to allow some single scullers to pass unobstructed and got into a steady rhythm, although Claire did tend to rush the slide and 'go in first' no change there then! But with good calls from Angela we settled down, then a call for a push, with calls of encouragement from the bank we were almost home, before the finish ...according to the GPS ...we had shortened our stroke length a little, so lots to work on, once the conditions are more conducive?

Dry clothes and a hot cuppa were just perfect!



OTRC Match Report



WMasD2x (**Jo** and Vicky) 7min 39.7

We left Oundle in the dark and headed off to Northampton for the first division. As is traditional at this event, there was sleet and rain forecast. Luckily John had had the landy heating fixed, (but, as it turned out, not all the electrics!)



The day was overcast and we were bundled up in as many layers as we could wear. Vicky had two hats and I had three pairs of trousers on. Multiple layers of tops was going to make rocking over interesting, but we've been here before and the wait at the start is always long and cold!

We rowed up, chatting to a friendly sculler on the way, did a couple of practice starts, and thought it might feel like a long row down the course. We were marshalled into the cut and sat waiting for the big boats to arrive and spin. A mild drizzle but no wind, so we hung on to our layers as long as we could, then set off when instructed and had a steady solid row down. A very brief brush with a bush on the bank didn't impede us too much (crikey, try saying that after a glass of wine..) and we finished in a respectable time of 7.39.7, a little warmer but quite a bit damper than when we started. Many thanks to Anita for lending me her dry Wellies, as my boots had filled with rain by the time we got back to the jetty.



Mas E 1x (**Philip**)

With the rest of the Division 1's small boats I was on the water, in the rain, by about 8.30....cue the wait for the start!

Having arrived at the cut, I passed a pleasant 50 minutes chatting to a Mas D 1x competitor from Stratford-upon-Avon, although the reason he was so chatty became apparent when he asked me to switch on the Go-Pro attached to the stern of his boat!

The very authoritative marshal ordered us to "Get your kit off" which I dutifully did and minutes later I was off.

As usual, by the time we were ready to row again in division 3, the snow was falling, as was our core temperature. But that's for the mixed quad match report, which was an altogether more entertaining event..

One of my oppos was right behind me and, being my first race in 12 months, I allowed his uncomfortable proximity to irritate me. The result was that I was gripping too hard and was tense through the whole stroke. Even with extra effort I could make no difference to the separation...

Eventually, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way down the course, I relaxed my grip and started "hanging" off the handles and lo & behold began to ease ahead overtaking a double in the process.

A good experience in the end which saw me at the top of the leader board until I was knocked into 2nd place by my MK nemesis who rowed in Div.3.

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Mx. Mas E 4x- (John, Jo, **Philip**, Vicky)

Having only rowed in this combination twice before, we were hoping to learn from the competitive experience to consolidate our training. Setting off from the jetty with plenty of clothing (it was now sleetting) we tried a couple of start sequences to warm ourselves up. As with all the other bigger boats we know we wouldn't have long to wait at the start.....well, thought we knew!

For whatever reason however the wait did not seem brief, especially when the snow started....not only that but it started to settle on our already damp pogies....!

The call to start the Division came up. so off the Eights headed in front of us only, a short time later, to be called back after a crash involving boys from Stowe School & girls from King Edward VI School....who'd have thought it: boys chasing girls....! Cue another delay during which however, we were entertained by a neighbouring crew who, on the basis of the chatter, might have been considered to be suffering from hypothermia, but in fact were just junior girls acting normally....! (Not typical of Oundle Town's always sensible junior girls, you understand J)

Anyhow, off we went at a relatively high rating of 31 which we maintained throughout. A decisive & efficient course was steered by our bowman (no bridges to hit on this course) and with some apposite words at crucial points from our number 3, we held a good rhythm and passed another quad with a clash of blades. We held our line, heads in the boat....and they fell to pieces!

When the results came in we learnt we'd won: a great start for a new crew!

A great, well organised day out, so thanks must go to Auntie Angela Captain Hook for her exhaustive preparation and attentive presence on the day....and of course for her as-ever delicious fruit cake!



Ewan, Will, Jacob, Charlotte

We were nervous because of the cold and the snow. I think the race went well it even though we couldn't find all same coloured oars, it was very cold before the race but when we were rowing i heated up. The coldest bit was waiting to be sent down to race. Thankfully it didn't rain when we were racing and it was warm compared to the rest of the day. It was a pain waiting to get out because that was very cold and when we rigged the boat it was also very cold.



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J14 double **Will Pratt**/Jacob Cruise

We got onto the river and got going. We paced ourselves up to the start line/waiting point and discussed what pressure we were going to go. Both confused as to where to wait, we sat, shivering, waiting for the start. Having been told, before getting on the water, to take off our jumpers pre-to racing, we got ready. But we both misjudged the start of the race and took our jumpers off too early, so we sat there freezing in the sleet. Then to our surprise, they had to restart the race so we continued, freezing, to chat about our tactics.

We got going for the start of the race and paced ourselves. Slowly increasing pressure, it began, the snow and then the race. We got overtaken by another double and then we overtook two boats. And just as quickly as it started, it finished. We both agreed we were happy with our performance!

