



Northampton Head - Saturday 23rd January 2016

It was a surprisingly balmy day for a Northampton Head Race. No rain, snow or hail and just little wind. Maybe that's why we didn't come back with any pots: It took us all by surprise. The lack of a win was disappointing but a good day was had by all. The event was extremely well organised from both the Northampton and the Oundle end. Well done to everyone. Thanks to all who came and gave the rowers stellar support. Yet again, the OTRC support was by far the loudest. A great crew effort at de-rigging and re-rigging made the day an even more successful one. Notable performances off the water were made by Jack Stratton who seems to have the makings of an organisational captain and to Ben Honeywell who was everywhere and into everything, helping out in his lovely, cheerful way. Thanks to Rohan, are also voiced by Joe in his report. Our juniors really are members to be proud of!

WIM3 8+ (Vicky, Jennie, Becky, Jo, Libby, Zoe, Fiona, Claire, cox: Rhona). Time 07:49

Early start, first division, first boat. Started on a 34 rate, down to 30 for the remainder; quickly overtaken by some male youths. Hurried calls from the Cox for eyes to remain in the boat! Faded a bit in the middle but the bacon calling saw us home. Heated debate on red, brown or bi sauces. Pretty happy with our time. Bring on the next race. Tits and teeth the new motto. Time 7.49 (tbc) Jelly babies kindly provided by our 10th lady Keely.

Nov 8+ (Mark, Peter, Jason, Antony, Leslie, Dick, Jack, Ian. Cox Paul) Time 07:21

We did our usual warm up practise in fours as we left the jetty, then as a whole crew we started at 1/2 pressure over 5 strokes, and settled into a steady 28 SPM, very soon we were being shouted at to get into the right stream to the start, several comment in the boat about it not being that far.

We turned around next to 2 quads, our opposition were the last to the start area, a marshal shouted "strip", comments in the boat, that you will only get away with that at a rowing event, most of us took our hats off, our opposition were down to their one piece race kit. Then we were off, heading to the start with those very familiar words from our cox Paul, relax, on the legs, we shot though the start, it felt good. The boat was balanced, Paul shouted stride, I looked above

Leslie's head to see King Edwards school boat, our opposition start to gain on us. I had come to the conclusion that, we were likely to be overtaken, it was just a question of when, they moved to our starboard into clean water, Jason let out a war cry or two, our boat speeded up, we had a race on our hands, we held them off a whole 20 seconds, we have never been so fast in training. By this time we were 1/2 way though the race, Paul shouted heads in the boat, and relax, it was hard to do as by now we could hear shouts from the bank of support, "you can catch them" so at this point I'm sure that our technique went to pot as we tried to keep the boat hurtling toward the finish, Paul shouted only 25 strokes to go, 23 later we were over the line.

We ended the day being the fastest OTRC boat with a time of 7.21

W IM3 4x (Angela, Becca CP, Martine, Anita) time 08:46

A TIDY row according to all spectators of Division 2. Are we damned by faint praise or is it the Welsh version of tidy - which means "bl***y brilliant"? Unfortunately I think the former, as we didn't win. However, the old ladies were forced to row at IM3 so didn't really expect any honours. We were however, quite pleased with our row (and will remain so unless someone videoed the race and we are forced to watch it). Our timing was good and we maintained a good rate throughout but it lacked a bit of oomph in the third quarter.

VET E 2X Peter and Brian Time 08:36

Peter loves this area of Northamptonshire. He knows the area very well and described it all in great detail on the way to the start. His Gran lived over the tree to the right and his favourite village was over the fields to the left, and this was all his old stomping ground etc. All fabulous memories. The problem occurred, however, when nobody told him where the finish line was! In fairness though, if the finish tent was not in front of the finish post we may not have stopped prematurely and decided the job was done! Oh well, at least we gave the other Old Gits Double bragging rights and made the Coach develop a smirk knowing he had beaten our time. We'll be back!

J16 4x match (Ben, Joe, Alfie and Jordan) Time 07:51

The boat was quick off the start line and maintained speed through most of the race but felt like the pace was slowing down in the last 200m. Technique was good throughout and we didn't catch any crabs! The crew was changed around due to some late comers and some people who just didn't turn up. And it would be nice to see a few more of the juniors turning up to the rigging and de-rigging sessions. A big thank you to Rohan who, despite being messed around because of the changes and didn't get to row in the quad in the end but still stayed to help us at the jetty

and with de-rigging our boat. Also thank you to all those that organised and helped out to make the races possible.

WMasF 2x (Alan, Simon) time 08:30

The Master F Double aka Murray and McMurdo had their first competitive outing at Northampton. Rushed and scrappy, our heroes can do much better....perhaps not as 'much better' to get near the Nottingham Union crew that were 45 seconds faster....but much faster. Work in progress for our 'almost gentlemen of leisure' or should that read 'gentlemen of almost leisure'?

J16 4+-coxed (Joe, Rohan, Will, Conor and coxed by Ben H) time 07:51

This was our first sweep oar race, I don't think that we won but we had a good start and overtook a men's four in the first 500m. I could feel that the pace was kept through the whole race and the boat felt in time and level. I believe that our time was 7:50 and about 20-30 seconds behind the eight so hopefully, with some more practice, we will soon be flying past the oldies. Thank you to Ben for coxing and to everyone who organised or helped out, it was a good day and slightly warmer than last year.

Mas E 1X: John Milborne. (time: 8.33)

I was abandoned by my crew mates with some weak excuses about skiing injuries, (as if anyone hurts themselves skiing. There were also some mutterings about my steering after the last event when the quad lightly tapped one the bridges at Bedford, so I was forced into 1X competition. My mood was not helped when the Draw came out to find that I was up against a sculler who had previously beaten me by some considerable margin. (I've got loads more excuses but it would make the report too long).

I was followed down the course by Richard, who made sure he got very close off the start so we were involved in an OTRC race for the first half of the course. Richard has upped his game with some on land training, so any spectators would have been entertained by some close racing. Our little private match was then interrupted by a rather novice girls 2X which was weaving over the course. Having negotiated this moving obstacle two J16 1X, involved in their own tussle, caught us up. The youth of today have no respect. This resulted in more steering adjustments at the polite request of the race marshals. There then ensued another race as this fat old sculler refused to let the youth pass without resorting to my usual tactic of ramming them.

So the take home message for my crew mates is that I negotiated the course without hitting anything, including overtaking a 2X.

My own take home message is that I ought to reacquaint myself with the gym.

WMasB/D/E 2x (Jo and Vicky) time 8.12

Vicky and I headed back up to the start in division 3, having already raced the w8+ in division 1. As ever when in a small boat, we noticed that the wind had picked up a little and we were held at the start for longer, so we're fully able to appreciate that the temperature had also dropped a bit. Not that we were complaining; there was no snow or hail, and no thunder or lightening, unlike in other years at (Northampton head).

We set off down the course, and quickly settled into a steady rhythm. Going against the wind and flow it felt like quite hard work on our legs, but not too laboured and the timing felt OK, given how little boat time we've had in the double since last summer. Although we only rated about 28-29spm, each stroke felt long and strong, and we were happy with the row at the end of it. Despite the handicap given to us by the MK WvetB crew, we didn't trouble the engravers this time, but were suitably wobbly -legged at the end to know we had tried hard.

WMasB/D/E 2x (Angela and Claire) time 8.29

Division 4 was rather chaotic. It started with a barge meandering down the river then back up, delaying the start. The steering of the crew in front of us was 100 times worse even than that of Mr Milborne, and we were made to stop about 5 metres from the start line and wait for them to get sorted, so no build up to firm pressure there. Then we got caught up in a game of bumper cars about 2/3 of the way down. 3 crews of young boys decided to steer random courses perpendicular to the river to try and overtake each other. Auntie Angela did have to shout at them. Claire did a fantastic steering job in the circumstances. In spite of all the drama we enjoyed the row - in time and rhythmical. Just not fast enough!

And then there was the struggle over our handicap, but that's a seriously boring story

WJ164x- Olivia Moyses,Beatrice G-S, Ellie Nesbit,Louise Martincrew – time 08:36

The J16 girls' quad put in a strong performance on Saturday in Northampton, coming second in their class.

They set off well, quickly establishing a strong rhythm. Although being overtaken by a quad at the start (they were J18!), they were not discouraged. As the race progressed, they rapidly approached an eight giving them great encouragement and almost caught them on the line!

WJ18 4x- Becky, Rochelle, Sofie and Daisy Time: time 07:41

We boated up and went straight down to the start after the quads were called down, warming up and a bit of square blade rowing, getting told where to go every 250 meters approximately by the stewards.

As we got down to the start, we were wishing nearly all the Oundle crews (sorry Angela and Claire), keeping warm and entertained by ourselves throughout the long wait... no thanks to a long boat going up and down the river slowing the division start down.

We all agreed that we would push hard at the start and finish off the race to increase maximum power, which seemed to work, as we beat our personal best by 10 seconds (yay!). However, throughout some parts of the course we began to slow down so myself and Becky shouted 'push hard for 10' and 'lengthen'.

On the way to the finish we had an awesome amount of OTRC sprit coming from the banks, making our quad be motivated and determined to move faster and to push harder... so thank you for that!!

After the race, all of us were extremely tired and out of breathe but, overall, happy with the result time and the race pace we completed the race with.

Well done to all the crews as today was extremely tough due to the current and wind; both against us the whole way, so WELL DONE!!

No Reports for:

IM3 4+ Dunkley - time 07:38

J16A 2x Harry and Jordan - time 07:48

WJ15 4x- Hutchinson crew - time 08:36

WJ17 2x Becky and Rochelle - time 08:38.3

WJ14 4x- Messenger crew - time 08:58

Nov 1x Richard - time 09:04