

OTRC Match Report

Nottingham Masters and Club Regatta

Race organiser Simon Murrays race preamble;

The usual format for these introductions is to remark on the weather for the event and a brief summary of our performances. Safe to say that this time the former was better than the latter. Rain accompanied our departure from the club at the customary early Sunday morning start, but had cleared by the time we arrived at Nottingham.

From our vantage point opposite the finish, the course looked inviting in the warm early summer sunshine with a gentle (see below) breeze blowing. So it was with some optimism that we rigged boats and prepared ourselves to race. Near the start the gentle breeze had transformed into a tempest of near biblical proportions making attaching to the stake boats particularly tricky. Our limited experience in these conditions made the races more challenging and contributed to the slower than expected times. Despite this, the club spirit shone through and cheered by our supporters a good day out was had by all.

Thank you to all those who came to watch, especially Daisy; to Angela, Claire, Brian and others who managed the de-rigging and trailer loading beforehand; and Anita for towing the trailer with an ease and nonchalance borne of years of experience.

MasF 4x- **Rob**, Brian, Nick, Bish

MF4x squad has a good track record this year, with many wins under its belt and we sculled down to the start full of confidence and anticipation.

We had only been practicing in this formation for the week prior to this event, but during this time we had rehearse our racing start – which we knew would get us off to a good start to the race.

We were also up against a crew from Peterborough, which was a bit of a grudge match for at least two of the crew.

After a long delay at the start – for the umpires to change over – the race got off as planned.

We set off at 44spm, moving quickly into the lead as we strode the rate down to 38spm. Despite a very 'splashy' row, by 250m our lead over the crews next to us was becoming established, but (I'm not one to look around during the race, so not sure when this happened) it was becoming clear that the crew furthest away from us was keeping up with us.

The first half of the race was pretty much to plan (ignoring the crew furthest away from us) and the half way push was called for (500m rating 36/37).

This went well, but unfortunately for us, the push by the crews next to us was longer and better, so by 750m, we had been overhauled by (importantly for some, Peterborough next to us and) the other crews and our third push was much less effective (750m rating 33). Shortly after this point, we heard the finish beep for the winning crew. Two beeps and 16 strokes later, the beep for our finish greeted us – with some relief! - 16 strokes @ 33spm – about 30s after the first crew home.

Hmmm – 30 seconds. Where have we seen this before?



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J17 2- Will, Joe

Last week we had previously done a double at Eton in which we had reached the final but didn't win anything so were hoping for a bit better luck at Nottingham. We have only had about 5 or so outings in the pair, ever, so weren't sure how the race would go but seeing as we must be the only juniors in the country brave enough to race in a pair we were put into the IM3 race category. The weather was sunny and the wide course looked fairly good for rowing on. However, as we rowed up to the start it was very windy and we noticed the waves getting bigger and starting to come over the riggers, which increased the level of difficulty.

On the start we took short but slower and more controlled strokes so that we didn't end up in someone else's lane. This worked well and we kept good balance and technique while battling against the wind and waves. Unfortunately, the other boats had that bit more strength and experience just to push a bit harder and pull away from us however we kept at around 4/5th place almost until the end where unfortunately we lost an oar which caused us to slow and restart for the last 50meters over the line.

Despite this I think that we rowed very well and am looking forward to trying the pair again at Peterborough.

Thanks to everyone who helped and made the day possible :)



MasB 2x Peter, Ian

Time 4.38, position 3 out of 4

Arrived at the venue nice and early to park, find trailer, rig boat, get acclimatised, check out the conditions.....usual stuff.

The trailer was conveniently parked level with the finish line, and the conditions from this vantage point looked relatively benign, reasonably calm water, wind sock indicating a variable light to moderate head wind, sunshine. Deceptive, we should have taken greater note of why the early junior competitors were seemingly taking a long time to complete the course and why there were a number of warnings about staying in lanes. We registered and got our number, but back at the boat there was nowhere to put it. Fortunately Anita had brought a spare empacher slot, and with a quick bit of screw driving and a brief clothing discussion (bow opting to be the briefer dresser) we were ready to boat. The early part of the warm up was very similar to what we do back at base, but from about 500m up the course conditions started to change and we were rowing through proper waves, I think the technical term is chop. Conditions continued to deteriorate and stroke seat was getting increasingly anxious and a little sea sick. A few practice starts to try and calm the nerves, a reminder that we doing this through choice and for our enjoyment, and on to the stake boat. Apparently stroke has to keep arm aloft until ready, but stroke was too busy holding on to both blades and keeping balance. Quick intro into the start procedure, Attention, Go! A very shaky start and then we were into it, battling mountainous seas and monsters. Steering had gone to pot probably because we couldn't see the lane markers through the waves, started in lane 5, went across to 4, back into 5, across to 6, back into 5, finished in 4. Marshalls didn't trouble us to adjust, we were too far behind to worry the occupants of lane 4, lane 6 fortunately was empty. Never really got going although the GPS data indicated some good bits in the middle when we were able to get some work on. One to chalk down to experience.....we will be mentally better prepared and hopefully more technically accomplished to cope next time.



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MasF 2x **Alan**, Simon

Progress...no official warnings this time. Instead the revenge of Billy Breeze and his pal Gary Gust.

Beautifully backing down onto the stake boat and these two miscreants 'all of a sudden' make an appearance and have us at 45 degrees to the lane. The poor lad who was trying to hold us on the stake boat was nearly pulled into the water so he, rather sheepishly suggested we try the adjacent and thankfully empty lane. This we did [having obtained 'blazerly' approval] and we were sorted.

Being young whippersnappers however we had to give some old boys a 9 second lead....now you have to be pretty bad to give up on a 9 second lead, even in such interesting conditions....and lo it came to pass we did not come to pass.... anyone... a valiant last....

WMasE 2x **Angela**, Claire

On a wind-no-rain day at Nottingham Holme Pierrepont, these two lady members decided to take on the challenge of the waves and stake boat start. Yes, waves on a rowing lake! And big ones at that.

The start was eventful, as - because of the wind/waves - we were at 45 degrees to the stake boat when the umpires shouted go. The plan of 'long and on the legs' was discarded temporary, while we struggled to get the boat pointing in the right direction. Not the best rowing technique employed in the panic! This was rather disappointing, as the best bit of our race is probably our start. It wasn't until we reached the 500m marker, when the waters had calmed somewhat and we were properly straight, that we reacquainted ourselves with plan A. By then it was much too late and we were royally beaten.

We came in last with legs shaking and nothing left in the tank. Back to the drawing board and on to eBay for new muscles and 2 pairs of lungs!



WJ15.2x Laura and **Erin** (5:03)

We were quite nervous about the race as we hadn't rowed at Nottingham together before, but after a helpful warning about the choppy water and the "yellow sausage" from Claire, we were ready to go.

Our start was ok but after all but one of the other crews were ahead of us we realised we had to have a good row. We quickly got into our rhythm and put in three or four good pushes which increased the rate. We were really happy with this as at the Ball Cup we felt we had no change of gear. After some dodgy steering and getting confused about where the finish was, we finished 4th out of 5. We were really happy with how we rowed because we thought we had a better race plan and kept the pressure until the finish better than our last race.

Overall we had a great day and are looking forward to Peterborough. Thanks to everybody who helped out :-)

J14 2x Jacob, **Leon**

I was at stern and Jacob at bow, we were anxious to start for we now had previous experience with a race like this and we were looking forward to it. We rowed up past the start and got into our lane. We were waiting for about 10 minutes before we were ready to go, then the starter called "Attention", "Go" really quickly.

We set off to a bad start but we didn't let it get to us though and we rowed strong throughout the race. We were relieved when we crossed the finish without falling in.

WMasE 4x- Anita, **Angela**, Jennie, Rhona

Arrived early, waited until 3 pm to get on the water, steering wire snapped on the way to the start. No race. Disappointed crew.

Special commiserations to Anita who towed the trailer there and back and didn't get a row.

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WJ14 2X **Holly** and Lizzie
This is a detailed account in a poem.

Had my fix of coco pops,
Putting on layers of navy blue tops.
Time for Lizzie to pick me up,
Downing the tea from a cup.
Singing hallelujah all the way there,
What can I say we're such a pair!
Arriving at the event,
Didn't know where to be sent.
Rigging the boat and eating food,
Getting into that rowing mood.
Collecting our number from the stall,
Putting it on and looking cool.
Getting in our boat was very tricky,
But we had some help from a man named Ricky.
Rowing up to our lane,
It wasn't really much of a pain.
Compared to the turning around,
Until we heard that starting sound.
A false start is what we had,
Which was very bad.
Everyone zoomed off except for us,
You should have heard us make a fuss.
Trapping her thumb, Lizzie was bleeding,
Everyone else in the race was leading.
Carrying on we crossed the line,
Sadly our time wasn't very fine.
Cheering us up we had an ice cream,
But at least we make a very good team.
Eventually it was time to leave,
Except we didn't exactly achieve.
Next time there will be no false starts,
Because the desire to win will be in our hearts.

