

OTRC Match Report – Peterborough, June 2016



Simon says

The rowing course at Peterborough is one of only a few multi-lane courses in the country and their Spring Regatta is one of the most popular events in the summer racing calendar. As usual OTRC supporters were out in force to cheer us on which is always much appreciated. The sun shone (finally), the wind blew (as usual), from the North east (ditto) which meant that race times were fairly slow into the headwind. A total of fourteen crews from OTRC took part and despite the intense competition in some events we acquitted ourselves well and achieved a spread of finishing positions from 1st to 4th, including some excellent performances. A big thank you as always to those who helped during the day and especially with the re-rigging back at the boathouse after the event (which always seems to take 45 minutes!). Blazer of the day goes to the senior captain who omitted to bring the cox box for the Masters E 4.

Nov 2x LeI and Richard - time 04:34

It was a rather early start for Richard and me - strolling to the trailers just after half past seven. As we were so early, we waited patiently for the landy. John arrived soon after, bringing the boats at such an outrageous hour just for our race. Thank you again John!

As Peterborough wasn't offering a mixed novice double event, we were given the challenge of racing in the men's novice races. Tempted as I was to grow a sporting moustache for the event, the rising temperatures would have made it rather uncomfortable. Pulling up to the start, the Northampton crew in lane four were trying to carry off some kind of mental intimidation through faffing around when attaching to the stake boats and de-layering right before the word go. This did not faze Richard and I one bit.

Our start was spectacular and we were leading for the first 250-300m. Lanes 1 and 4 then began to pull ahead in the next 100m but we were increasing our gap ahead of Milton Keynes (who appeared to have some steering issues). We tried to bring it back in the final section, but the leading crews were unfortunately too far ahead.

To finish third in such a strong heat was quite pleasing and most definitely reassuring for our mixed events in the future. Thank you Richard!

WMasE 4x Angela, Jennie, Anita, Claire - time 05:03

A distinguished collection of crews in one quad, I thought, and we had had the usual requisite training of 2 whole outings, although, of course some might say that was excessive for an OTRC racing crew. With Claire's fab steering and Angela setting the pace, we had a good start and settled down for the remainder of the course and because we were having such a good row we stayed on the course for a bit longer than the other crews and so we were a bit disappointed with our time. It was a great day and great company, thanks very much ladies.

WIM3 4x Emily, Saskia, Daisy, Becky - time 04:20

We didn't know what to expect rowing in IM3, seeing as we're J17/18 against universities but we were defiantly for it. The row up to the start felt really good and we did a few practice starts. The wind had dropped by the time we reached the stake boat. They started to call us to start but we were still getting lined up so off the start we hadn't straightened up properly. Apart from that, the first 5 or so strokes felt really powerful till we visited the reeds. We were last off the start but we got it back and were in front for the first half of the course but then we were over taken by 2 boats. We tried to get it back but just couldn't do it in time. We gave it our best shot but didn't make it to the final. Turns out, if it was done on times, we would have been in the final which is a bummer but it was a great row.

WJ154x Laura, Erin, Eve, Rhianna; cox: Daisy - time 04:36 **WINNERS**

This was a J14 crew racing in a J15 race. And they won! The girls were ahead at the start but looked to be flagging in the second quarter. However, they pulled away in the final stages and returned triumphant to the jetty. A great race from the crew, ably and amiably bullied by cox, Daisy (*the Editor*).

MasD1x Steve - time 04:59

No report submitted. He came second!

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WMasE 2x Angela and Claire - time 05:29

After an excruciatingly long wait at the start (only mitigated by the possibility of a suntan), while we waited for some VERY IMPORTANT MEN'S EIGHTS (including the one mentioned below) to jump the queue, we had a bit of a wonky start, requiring a bit of steering. This didn't set us up for a rhythmic race and it didn't get any better. Unusually for Claire "Thread-it-through-the-eye-of-a-needle" Izod we had difficulty with the steering all the way down the course. Either a wonky boat or dodgy technique – the jury's still out! Add to that, the fact that the blue stuff they had put in the water to kill the algae made the water very heavy (in our opinion)! In fact by the time we got to the end of the race it felt very much like that stuff you get in ice packs. OK. Enough excuses. We will battle on, because we do enjoy it, really!

WMasD 2x Jo and Vicky -time 04:52

Not getting up at the crack of dawn in order to race was a revelation. Time to get some jobs done before leaving home!

Back to the racing - we followed our warm up plan to the letter, but had a wait more fitting for a head race (except the weather was kinder) and plenty of time to chat with our opposition. Then we were onto the stake boat and off. Not the fastest start, and lane 1 got away from us quickly. We pulled away from lanes 3 and 4, and kept in touch with lane 1 never doubting we could "pull it back", However a push at 500metres and finally finding our rhythm in the second half was not enough and we came in 7 seconds behind the winners. How do we find 7 seconds before British Masters Championships on Sunday?

MasD 8+ Dick, Andrew, Peter, Leslie, Antony, Jason, Richard, Mark; cox: Paul - time 4:09

Without a Master's Novice category, we entered into the Masters D open class, competing against far more experienced crews. After a bit of hurrying only to find ourselves waiting, we arrived at the start. Despite the marshal' calls of "two minutes" until the start, we were called to attention within 30 seconds, and perhaps catching us a bit mentally unprepared. We set off at 32 spm and, after calls to lengthen, we settled into our planned 30 spm rating, focusing on longer strokes and fast hands in an effort to maximize our power and not rush the slide.

Perhaps the Peterborough rowing lake has its own version of the Lock Ness Monster, as mid-way through the race we encountered a dramatic rush of destabilizing wake, briefly interrupting our focus and rhythm. We recovered and finished the race strong, but well behind our opponents.

Ultimately, we didn't perform to our potential and accordingly found the day to be quite a disappointment. Still, the multi-lane racing always provides excitement and more importantly opportunities to learn, an experience which will prove valuable as we continue through the regatta season.

MasE 4x Bob, Charlie, Jon, John time 04:05 **WINNERS**

After months of scrutinising split times and agonising over damning video evidence, the first real test of whether we could cut the mustard came on Sunday at Peterborough (the place where you need a thousand-yard stare just to see the end of the course).

Being keen we decided to go for a warm up row on the river to calm a few nerves and practice our starts. Second start on the way back and disaster! – I'd like to say that extreme leg drive caused my bow side blade to snap – but that would be an untruth. In reality, a lurch to bow side and the blade was snatched from my grip only to end up under the boat-seconds later. A loud crack confirmed that carbon fibre isn't as strong as the old wooden blades (we used these in the days before iPads). Warm up over, stern pair were kindly rowed back to the landing stage by bow pair – who were very nicely warmed up by now.

With fresh blades, we made our way to the 'Start' car park. When our turn to go came we sprinted off the stake boat. A teensy bit of red mist saw us strike 36 for the first 100m before settling at 32/33. By this time, we were 2-3 lengths up and had the rest of the course to smarten up our rowing for the cheering crowds at the finish (at least that is how I remember it). Not the fastest Mas E quad ever –but some mustard was cut and the silverware was welcome. Confidence is high for the British Masters next week.

WJ14 2x Laura and Erin time 04:54 **WINNERS**

In their second race of the day these two girls amazed everyone with their power and strength, ending up 30 seconds ahead of the rest of the field to win their second pot of the day. Erin looked hot but happy. Laura didn't even look hot! It was a beautiful row and the girls would seem to have a great future ahead of them (*the Editor*).

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MasF 2x Alan and Simon - time 05:03

NINE SECONDS!!!! How do they work out the handicaps? How is it that when you're in a Masters handicap event, you're always the younger crew and have to wait around while the oldies get off to a head start? Anyway one bit of good news, we did get a bye straight into the final. So the other crews from Star (Mas F) and Sudbury (Mas G) had to fight it out for the privilege (?) of meeting us in the final. Having checked the times for the heat, won in a time seven seconds slower than we had raced at Nottingham three weeks previously, we had high hopes of a good performance. Alas we had not taken account of the head wind. There was some amusement at the start when one of the Star "F" crews set off at the same time as the Sudbury "G" crew and were still trying to get back onto the stakeboat when the umpire called the second start so we felt we were in with a good chance. For about the 150 metres it took for them to overtake us. After that it was a bit of a procession. Our row was better than our previous race but not enough to trouble the leaders who had finished and "three-cheered" the other crews by the time we crossed the line. Hey ho, there's always the next race.

MasE 4+ Martyn, Andrew, John, Peter; cox: Anita - time 04:25

Having already covered the Brexit debate in training on Saturday we were unusually quiet while queuing for the start. Perhaps we were getting focussed or maybe it was because Hugh was away (?) 😊

We got a fantastic start and set into a good rhythm holding our own for the first 500. Then it all began to get a bit wobbly and uncoordinated and consequently very hard work. This was a race we lost rather than the opposition won.

Luckily having a guest appearance by John "Rowing Geek" Milborne means we have good GPS evidence that too much red mist at the outset (so not such a great start!), causing us to run out of puff half way and ignoring what we do in practice, was not helpful. A useful lesson and one we must focus on in training. Thanks John!

WJ18 2x Saskia and Emily - time 05:32

"Are the lane assignments rigged?" was possibly one of the first thoughts on our minds when our helpful competitors/team-mates handed us our lane number.

After being placed in Lane 1 in the quad and having a brush with the reeds, Saskia and I were not particularly confident about being placed in said lane again and were quick to check that Becky and Daisy had not in fact swapped the lane numbers around to give themselves a better chance in the race! (Which of course they did not really need) Lamentably once again the reeds were all too happy to loom up behind us without a warning and resulted in not the most positive outing for us.

That being said, it was only our second outing in the double together, training and racing included, and it was Saskia's first time competing with us against her old club. We managed to get back into the flow from the 500m mark, where the supportive cheers of "Come on Oundle!" aided us in finishing the race at a good speed, unfortunately that was a little too late to bring us up to speed with the other boats, but we are keen to show that we've got much more than what was displayed on that strangely blue boating lake!

WJ18 2x Daisy and Becky - time 04:47

It was a great warm day for rowing and the last race of Oundlers in the final...

We had a great start with perfect timing and skills, in line with the winning crew, starting to pull away from them with extreme power after the first 500m but was starting to slow down causing the winners to catch up and overtake. And allowing another to catch us up. We got to the final 250m with the crowd supporting us, and pulled away from one of our oppositions, causing us to come 2nd, which isn't bad considering the heat and our 2nd race together.

Would like to say thanks for everyone who supported and well done to all crews, all did really well!!!

The End!