

OTRC Match Report

Sudbury Regatta

Saturday 5th August 2017

Foreword by Race Organiser Simon Murray.....

We're nearing the end of the regatta season and Sudbury is very much in the tradition of club regattas; a dodgy stretch of river, proper beer tent, live music, good atmosphere, very friendly and real pots for the winners. The course itself is only 650 metres but includes several features (bends, banks) which provide additional challenges for the competitors (especially if you're steering). It's not always the fastest crew that wins - many a race is won by the crew that can keep in lane.

After a successful day out last year, eleven OTRC crews took part, making the long trip into deepest Suffolk. The advance party set off with the trailer the day before to be certain of getting a good spot on the regatta field. The weather forecast had veered (?) from fine and sunny to torrential rain and thunderstorms. We had both. It was the first regatta I'd been to where the organisers had to implement the thunderstorm plan. Unlucky if you'd just boated. Fortunately the heavens opened at a time when most of the OTRC contingent (except Daisy) were safely under cover of the Milborne shelter.



Although it was a long day (for some) a great time was had by all, the prize for the most cake eaten went to Hugh; man of the match was Peter who was in the club's first and last crews to race so enjoyed the regatta experience for the full day.



As ever, many thanks to John and "wingman" Jo for getting the trailer to and from Sudbury, and to those who helped with the re-rigging back at the club on Sunday.



DATE FOR THE DIARY

Club BBQ & Bonfire

Saturday 9th September

2017



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Could you run the OTRC WEBSITE?



Please contact zoesmeeth@hotmail.co.uk or any member of the committee.

Mixed masE4x **Jo**, Simon Vicky John

Having raced this line up and won last year at Sudbury, we felt the need to defend our title.



If we had made this decision a month ago we might even have got some more outings sorted out prior to the regatta, as it had been nearly a year since we'd been in a boat together.

As it turned out our oppo were the other Oundle crew, which meant serious bragging rights were at stake.

Two hasty practice outings (yes I know that's cheating in some people's eyes) and we were good to go.

Evenly matched off the start, when disaster struck the others, with a monster crab attacking their bow, sending them off track, and making recovery a challenge as they still had to negotiate the first sharp bend.

We pulled away, settled into a steady rhythm and crossed the line before them. Still feeling a bit sorry for them, we eventually went to collect our pots, and had the offer of a photo with the mayor of Sudbury, who kindly posed with the biggest trophy available for our official winners picture.



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W.J18.1x **Daisy**

I had just got out of the double boat nearly straight into my single whilst the sun was blaring down on the water.

Sat at the finish waiting for others to boat, when a big clap of thunder strikes along with torrential cold rain, with the stewards running around finding out what to say to us on the water. We got a command of “come in as quickly as possible” but with fours and doubles sitting in between me and the jetty I gathered it would be a long time. Just as I was about the park up we got another command of “we are continuing to boat for racing”, with a lot of annoyed boats having to reboat again.

Being as wet as the river I rowed up to the start eyeing up plenty of potential oppositions, getting cheered on the way up to the start. We paired up and got ready to race, GO!



The race was off my first 4 strokes felt powerful and strong but I found the bank pretty briskly, but manage to scrape through it giving my competitor a big lead for most of the race.

But overall a great race with great support, well done to other crews and thanks to everyone who helped with my boat derigging and rerigging.

WmasD2x **Jo** and Vicky

We returned to Sudbury hoping to race the Sudbury double, who we have had some close races with recently, taking it in turns to win.

Unfortunately they lost their heat, and we had a straight final against their opponents, a Leicester duo who looked very tidy and experienced.

We had a good start on this notoriously bendy course, but a visit to the bank after the first bend and some errant buoys along the way impeded our progress, and despite a strong finish as we drew closer than they were expecting we ran out of river just before they crossed the line ahead of us.

Men's Vet E 1X: **John**

Sometimes with time comes great wisdom, sometimes just confusion and faded memories.

John had raced at Sudbury for the first time last year in his single. In his own mind, with just limited training, managed to be competitive and in a close race just lost out to the eventual winner by the narrowest of margins. With these murky memories floating around his head, he assumed that this year with just a couple of training sessions it should see him in with a shout of a pot.

On arrival at the course it seemed to John that the river had got narrower, his completion fitter, and better at sculling - surely just a trick of memory. Helped with boating and encouraged by Daisy, one of the club's crop of top junior scullers, he set off for the start. Even at such an early stage there were warning signs, he had forgotten how much flexibility he has lost and struggled just to get into the boat. Once up at the start he resorted to Plan B and engaged his opposition in a bit of banter in an effort to distract him in to making a steering error. Other match reports will have demonstrated how important steering would be on this course.



Now on to the race proper, John's opposition was indeed stronger and better at sculling (and steering) and shot off the start; but there was still Plan C. In giving his opposition some banter, John had learnt that this was his opposition's first year in competing at Sudbury. So after a little problem with negotiating the correct line on the major corner John decided to row at his opposition and try and force a steering error, but he was never able to get close enough to force such an error.

So for John another year older and another year more deluded. Let's hope he reads the match report before entering next year and does some proper training.

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Ian and Charlie

After losing to Lea Rowing Club by a very long way!

Ian: "I'm not normally a sore loser but what happens when your opposition has forced you to crash into the bank?"

BR Umpire: "Ah, I think I know what race you were...are you lodging an appeal, then?"

Charlie: "Well, we wouldn't normally appeal but I'm sure we had a good chance if they can't steer?"

BR Umpire: "Ok, I'll need to lodge your complaint and discuss it with the race marshals, so can you come back in 10 mins..?"

Tannoy Announcement.. "Can representatives from Oundle Town and Lea Rowing Club present themselves to Race Control?"

BR Umpire to LEA Pair: "Oundle Town have appealed stating that you forced them towards the bank in their lane and took an unfair advantage. The umpires have agreed that it is a fair point and the race should be nulled. Can you be ready to boat now please and we will have a re-row..."

The Lea Rowing Club pair had arrived to race control with their BR cards in hand, unbeknown about the appeal. It was an icy atmosphere as the situation was explained to them. Eye contact was avoided and OTRC back up were on hand, just in case (thanks Brian). We felt like stropky children calling out to the headmaster following a bad tackle in a sport final but they must have agreed that it wasn't a deserved win. After all, a shiny pot and BR ranking points were within arm's reach.

We arrived to the boating area for the grudge match and were congratulated by a separate BR umpire for winning our appeal. The Oundle Quads were boating for their final and cheered as they realised that we were joining their division. We boated and marshalled in sight of the LEA pair. We did a practice start in their sight and hopefully put some doubts in their boat. We proceeded up the course to the start with full OTRC support on the bank who had seen the incident unfold in the previous race.

Our grudge match was the first race to set off. We had a good start and like the last race were level, if not slightly ahead. However, within 5-10 strokes LEA began veering towards us like the last time! Learning from our mistakes, we held our ground forcing them back into their lane. Coming round the bend we were neck and neck and as we began to straighten I heard their stroke man call, "Come on lets go, now!".... (They hadn't completely finished the bends yet?!)

We saw their boat speed increase but were comfortable with what we were doing, knowing that our push would come after the Pillbox. The LEA drifted over in the opposite direction becoming increasingly closer to the bank. With just less than 300m to go their bow side blade came too close to the bank and caused trouble. We immediately called for a power 10 which finished the race off completely. We watched the LEA pair meander down the course for the final 250m and we raced the clock instead, upping the rating towards the end to put as much distance as possible between us. Verdict: "EASILY".

Back at Race Control...

Me: "Hi! Oundle Town Pair to collect our point please?"

Sudbury Volunteer: "Oh you won your re-row?! That's great news, I'm glad you did".

Full credit to Charlie for steering the course – it's not easy in a pair. We saw the LEA stroke man after we had collected our pots later on and he congratulated us on our win – so a good decision was made in the end. Many thanks for the back up from OTRC. We had almost decided to leave the appeal given that it was a fun day out but we are now further up the IM3 ranking with another pot for the collection. Not bad for some Thursday outings over the Summer.



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Mx 4x (Masters E) Dick **Mark** Fiona **Claire**

Sudbury was the venue for the OTRC V OTRC mixed quad side by side straight final race.

Many comments from fellow rowers had been heeded over the last few weeks about the tricky bends and river furniture that featured down the course lurking to catch a passing boat out. So having watched the Sudbury web site aerial footage of the course at least eleven times to determine a strategy for a race from each lane...as unsure which we would be drawn in.. Claire felt quietly confident about the steersman's job.....but no one had taken account of what was to ensue!??

Our mixed quad was formed about a year ago, had a few outings and then due to circumstances and availability, folded. Having enjoyed the experience we decided to rekindle and have a last 'swan song' at Sudbury.

So arriving at Sudbury we were ready to see how we managed against our colleagues. But before we could be really ready once again one crew member, Mark, had to borrow a club colours top from one of the women - he really should get round to buying one and washing it afterwards himself! This has been mentioned in reports from last year. However properly dressed, the weather turned sunny, and we boated in near perfect conditions to get ready to race.

One the day on the staggered start, with OTRC oppo slightly ahead to accommodate the bend. We had a plan. We had managed a couple of practice outings enough to realise the splashy, fast slide, high check rate and short strokes would not get us anywhere, so out plan for a slow and long stroke was hatched. Although this was the point at which Mark, in his snugly fitting women's OTRC top, was wondering if or how he could achieve 'Long'!

Fiona in number 3 seat, was doing a great job of keeping us rowing together with set commends. So we were all set! Under starters orders we got off to a great start, navigated the bend...but Claire caught a humongous nay mahusive, crab, although the rest of kept rowing so we crossed the river and had to stop. A quick restart was needed, by which time, on the short 650mt course the oppo were well out of sight, and they were provided with the opportunity to row a course away from trouble and in a relaxed fashion, so no chance for us to capitalise on any unfortunate bank incidents from them!



Having realigned and dusted ourselves down the rest of our race went well, we kept to our game plan and rowed a solidly. Dick did sterling work at Stroke keeping to the new rowing plan. We were pleased with the latter part of the performance and look forward to seeing the data on Dick's GPS....hoping this confirms our thoughts!

So we will now never know how close we could have come to our OTRC revivalsmay be next year with a new bow rower for us!!!???

Congratulation go to the Milborne x2, Murray and Birchall

