

# Somerville College Boat Club Newsletter

## Hilary Term 2017



Dear members and alumni, I hope you enjoy catching up with one of the most successful rowing terms in Somerville's recent history! During Torpids, our M1 crew put in a brilliant performance and have now moved into division 2. On the women's side there was even more success as both our crews gave fantastic performances and managed to secure double blades for Somerville! Both our W1 and our W2 crews put in a sterling effort over the four days and secured our first double win since 1980! SCBC has also continued to perform well in external regattas, with a women's crew making it to Women's Head of the River again this year. With such a successful term, we are all looking forward to where the summer will take us, and we hope to see as many of you all as possible at Summer Vllls 2017!

Amelia Horvath, Boat Club Secretary.



## W1:

Wednesday: Bumped St Catz

Thursday: Bumped Trinity

Friday: Bumped Teddy Hall

Saturday: Bumped Balliol

Result: Blades.



## M1:

Wednesday: Bumped Brasenose

Thursday: Row over

Friday: Bumped by Exeter, bumped Worcester

Saturday: Row over

Result: Moved up one place, now secure in Division 2.



## W2:

Wednesday: Bumped Univ.

Thursday: Worcester W2

Friday: New College W2

Saturday: Wolfson W3

Result: Blades.



# MICHAELMAS TERM CAPTAINS' REPORTS



**Juliette Perry, Captain of the women's side, tells us how we managed to achieve what may have seemed impossible, and win double blades.**

Hillary has been an incredible term for the Women's teams in SCBC. We began the term with a huge squad, filling over 3 boats with enthusiastic and dedicated rowers. Seats in both W1 and W2 were very competitive which pushed everyone to fight harder for their place. By 3rd week we had finalised the boats and had begun training in fixed crews. Unfortunately, at this point disaster struck, as a W1 and a W3 rower were both involved in bike accidents, breaking an arm and a leg respectively. It was a huge shame for both of them to not be able to compete in Torpids – however both intend to return for our crews in Summer VIII. With a bit of reshuffling in the teams we managed to reorganise the boats to work to everyone's strengths. W3 was again hit by misfortune in 6th week, as a two further rowers dropped out due to injury and illness. Fortunately for rowing on two of our senior rowers, who had dropped out for their exams agreed to help out by rowing W3 through rowing on. W3 did excellently, especially as the crew had been rearranged so many times due to injury, however they were 8 seconds off from rowing on for Torpids. W3 took this set back in excellent spirit, the 6 remaining rowers who had trained all term had been a delight to coach due to their unending good nature through the amber and red flags where their training had to be cancelled. I look forwards to coaching and captaining them in to eights next term – where hopefully we will be less hindered by injury and return with a vengeance!



In 6th week W1 entered IWL, finishing the course ahead of many women's boats placed above them on the river for bumps, and making a strong statement for the Torpids to come. W2 also presented a formidable challenge to boats around them, beginning at bung line 10 in division 4 there was a good opportunity to climb. W2 had a spread of excellent erg scores and an experienced stern pair to carry them to some incredible bumps and over bumps through the week.

The first day of Torpids was incredibly nerve wracking, with two such talented crews who had worked so hard I was anxious that all that training come to fruition. W1 bumped St. Catherines on Wednesday within 20 strokes, before Donnington bridge. We didn't even finish our start sequence before the cox called that we were going for the bump, it was an amazing start to the week.

W2 bumped Univ, however it was not so straight forward, after a tangle with a bumped out Wolfson lead to a Jesus crew getting too close for comfort as well as a complicated appeal. However at the end of the day both crews had bumped (dreams of blades had been persevered for a day more).

Thursday W2 went on to bump Worcester II half way down green banks. W1 faced their hardest chase of the week, catching Trinity midway through the gut having pushed off from Green Templeton from the start. On Friday W1 bumped Teddy Hall before the gut and New College II fell to W2. It was all to play for on Saturday for both women's crews. W2 were now chasing Wolfson III who were also on for blades, and they had over bumped behind every day so far. W1 would be chasing a falling Balliol who had dropped out from division one but would be determined to avoid spoons. When W2 bump, the challenge is really on for W1. They sit anxiously on the start line in the pouring rain for longer than they race. They celebrate in the pouring rain for longer than they race. Both crews complete their blades in Torpids, W1 never even raced through the gut.

This term was certainly a competitive one, competition for seats in every boat was fierce, and we fielded very competitive boats for Torpids. Each and every rower, from the 4th years in W1 to the freshers in W3 were dedicated to their training, I was only phoned at 6.40 once when someone forgot to turn up to an outing, and have enjoyed working with such an enthusiastic squad. For some rowers, notably our President Nina and Secretary Milly, this is their final bumps campaign (although we certainly hope to see them cheering us on at the river for Summer Vllls). Looking towards Trinity Term I am strongly optimistic of another successful bumps campaign.





## Ed Stowell, Captain of the men's side, and other members of M1 give us a day by day account of Torpids.

The start of Hilary term marked the return of cold, wet and dark morning outings for us all to enjoy. On the men's side, we had two rowers trialling with the university lightweight squad which meant that two of the novices had to step up into M1. In total M1 had three rowers with less than three terms of rowing experience. Thus, water time was crucial to make sure that we were up to scratch come Torpids. Everyone in the squad really committed to training this term with five water sessions and three land sessions a week, no small feat. (I can confirm that cycling down to the boathouse at 6:00 am on a Sunday morning certainly causes one to re-assess one's life choices). The boat improved markedly through the term and this was completely down to the hard work of the squad and I would like to take the opportunity to thank them all for their determination and commitment.

The hot news a week before Torpids was that the Magdalen men's side declined to enter any boats in an attempt to limit their losses. I am told that this broke a one hundred and fifty-seven-year tradition in the process. Normally this would have little significance to us, however it meant rather than starting first in division three our start order was last in division two meaning we avoided the position of the dreaded sandwich boat! Overall Torpids went very well and we moved up one position. I think the week went extremely well for the men's side given the inexperienced nature of the crew and we certainly exceeded expectations.

**Wednesday:** It was a beautiful Wednesday and the weather was looking stunning. As one of the novices in the Somerville Men's Torpids Eights, I was certainly filled with excitement. The goal of this race was as clear as the sky above: get Brasenose. When Tom Udale decided to include 50 squats into the warm routine, the weather responds with distant rumble and gathering clouds, but the whole crew kept their complete focus and 'head in the boat'. With the canon firing at five-minute mark, a silent countdown ensues in my mind. The boatman went on about the final adjustments to the position of the boat and the bow ball pointed directly at the back of Brasenose. When our coach Alissa's countdown stops five second ahead of the canon, everyone knew all our outings and trainings this term has come to this one moment. The canon fired.



## Captain's report continued.

Everyone pushed hard and followed the person ahead. We were in time and the boat was sat. Although aware that this will be a long race, I was hoping for Alissa's whistle, which would be blown when we are closing in on Brasenose. I did not have to wait for long. Just as Rafa had predicted, it becomes much harder when we get closer and closer to Brasenose. The crew started to feel the wash and the boat becomes a bit unsteady. As we powered past the Donnington bridge, the whistling gets more and more intense and I had to suppress the urge to turn my head and have a cheeky look. To close the final gap, everyone simply need to push even harder without getting messy, and that was what everyone did. I heard the sound of collision whilst sitting at bow, and I knew we have accomplished our mission today. In typical novice fashion, I let out a shout and simply stopped rowing, making Sarah's coxing much difficult and the boat ran into a tree by the side of the river, though no damage was done. With one victory in hand, there were smiles on everyone's face. We gathered in the boat house and briefly planned for the race on Thursday.

**Thursday:** Following the previous days success we arrived at the boathouse with a sense of optimism for the week ahead. Knowing that we had bested Brasenose all eyes were looking forward to a Merton crew who had rowed over the previous day. Knowing that Merton were similar in speed to ourselves the plan was simple, get a good start, settle down into a good rhythm and hope that Merton die later after failing to bump out. Our start was good and we quickly pulled away from Brasenose holding them at 2 lengths and began to move on Merton. By the gut we had pulled to within half a length of Merton and it was time to attempt to go for the bump, we built up the rate and the pressure in the water and were able to move to a quarter of a length. However, the Merton crew were a well drilled unit and were able to hold us off in their wash before we faded,

falling back to a length where we remained to row over for the day. Not the result that we were hoping for but a well rowed race.

**Friday:** Friday saw a shake-up in the boat with our 2-man, Rafa (a veteran of 45+ bumps races), having a prior commitment that left him unavailable to



row. Luckily, I was able to sub in. I rowed with Somerville all of last year, including in the Torpids and Summer VIIIs campaigns, but had chosen to row with the Lightweights this year. Hopefully this late-stage change would not upset the boat too much. We utilised our warm-up row to the bung-lines well, squeezing in a number of practice starts to get used to the new personal. When the cannon went off it looked as if this had paid off well, with the crew getting away quickly and cleanly.

But not quickly enough, unfortunately, as our targets - Merton - were able to bump out on a plummeting Worcester before we could bump on them. Next thing we knew Exeter were on our tails, getting the bump right at the entrance to the gut (they were still on for blades at this point, but were denied by Merton the next day). This left us needing to over-bump on Worcester, and after a long chase down Greenbanks and past the boathouses we finally managed it with only a few hundred metres left.

**Saturday:** The final day of Torpids was upon us and the pre-race routine was well established. The discussion of the race plan began an hour before the race as always and the result boiled down to the same plan as always: bump the boat ahead and avoid the boat below. We were being chased by Worcester, who we bumped the day before, and chasing Exeter, who bumped us. This was a good place to be; the opportunity for a re-bump on Exeter and with a boat behind that we knew we could outrun. The goal was never clearer. A calm and collected start led to a 3 length lead on Worcester by the time we reached the gut. During the stretch before the gut we had come within a length of Exeter, and they gave us a good race through Greenbanks. We knew if we were going to catch them we had to empty the tanks just outside our own boathouse. We did, but to their credit the Exeter crew had given themselves enough space through Greenbanks to keep their lead until the finish, leaving us even for the day and up one overall. I was extremely proud of the way we had rowed all week and was looking forward to coming off of the drinking ban and celebrating.



I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the girls on their double blades and the hard work that went in to achieving them. I would also like to thank our coach Alissa Bray who has done a fantastic job improving the crew and particularly the novices so that we were ready come race day. Finally, I would like to thank all of the coxes, rowers and supporters for their help with running the boat club this term. Lastly, with returning rowers on the Men's side and a very deep squad on the women's side Somerville is well placed for a strong showing at eights. I am sure we would all welcome your support throughout the week and particularly on the Saturday for eights dinner.

# Boat Club Dinner 2017.

Somerville College Boat Club would like to welcome all alumni to join us at the Summer Eights' Dinner on Saturday 27th May. This year we are not only hosting drinks at the riverside during the races, but we also welcome you to join us in a champagne reception in college. We strongly encourage all our alumni to join us in this celebration of SCBC's illustrious history, and its wonderfully successful 2016/17.



The Presidents of Somerville College Boat Club & the SCBC 1921 Association  
request the pleasure of your company at

## **SUMMER EIGHTS 2017 & the EIGHTS ' DINNER**

on Saturday 27th May 2017,  
at University College Boathouse and afterwards at Somerville College

£50 (and guests)

Black tie

RSVP [alumni@scbcrowing.com](mailto:alumni@scbcrowing.com)

4pm - Riverside drinks (informal)

7:30 - Pre-dinner drinks (tbc)

8pm - Dinner (Hall)



For more regular updates, don't forget to follow us on twitter and instagram!

Instagram: [somervillerowing](#)

Twitter: [@someboatclub](#)

Our website also has a day by day account from various members of the W1 throughout Torpids, and further reports on external regattas.