

New College Boat Club

Newsletter, Hilary Term 2020

President's Welcome

Happy new year! Michaelmas term was a mixed bag for NCBC; we had an excellent start to term which saw great recruitment (in the form of 3 men's crews and 2 women's) following a huge effort from our LBCs. Sadly, our small army of novices did not get to see much of the river due to flooding. Despite this, we can assure you that they have been well and truly whipped into shape on the ergs, and did finally manage to get some water time during our Winter training camp which took place in early January. As the new decade begins, we're hoping for some nicer river conditions so we can show the novices what a river is in time for Torpids.



I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at our London Drinks at the Oxford and Cambridge Club on the 13th of February. I will be joined by our Men's and Women's captains, our Alumni Secretary and the Warden for the event. See our 'Dates For Your Diary' page below for more details. We will also be using this drinks event to debut our new NCBC lapel pins (see picture below). Though NCBC ties (in designs past and present) remain a firm favourite, we felt the Boat Club needed an item that could be worn to show allegiance when the tie might be inappropriate or unsuitable. These will be

presented to rowers leaving the Boat Club at Eights Dinner each year to welcome them into the alumni community. Current alumni will be presented with one when they attend any NCBC event, and we hope to gradually make it a universal symbol of the Boat Club among Old Members.



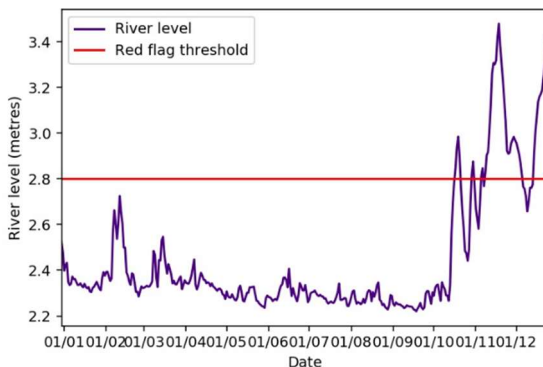
The new NCBC lapel pin

Eights Dinner this year will be extra special as we celebrate 40 years since the first official NCBC women's boat rowed in Eights. We will be celebrating the achievements of past and present NCBC women in the form of a small exhibition and some guest speakers and so we would love to see as many of you there as possible!

GDBM,
Beth Carter
NCBC President 2019-20

Hell and High Water: Isis Flooding

The river recorded the worst conditions of any Michaelmas term since detailed records started being kept. Our captains and coaches became experts at complaining about the weather, as heavy rains for most of the term led to floods and kept us from taking to the river. Our seniors moved their boats to Godstow at the start of term, hoping for more favourable conditions, only to have to bring them back at the end of term without having been able to row in them. Our novices made good use of the newly-renovated erg suite, where they became very proficient at indoor rowing. The towpath and even the New College sports ground were flooded, and at the height of the river levels we even worried that the erg room could be flooded! The river conditions meant that all of this term's races were cancelled, to great frustration for all of our rowers.



A graph showing the river levels across 2019, and the river level that causes an automatic red flag (no crews on the river).

New College Indoor Regatta 2019

The exception to this spate of cancellations was the New College Indoor Regatta, which saw record interest and attendance. 38 crews took part, which was at the limit of what we could accommodate in the erg suite over the few hours of the race! We had to make some small changes to the format, like increasing the number of crews racing at any time, to let everyone take part, but on the day all went smoothly and the competitors were glad to finally have a chance to race! At the NCIR our novices showed off the amount of training they had got on the ergs over the term: our men's and women's top novice boats qualified for the finals and came first and second, respectively, in the novice categories, recording times of 6:11.3 and 7:32.2 over the 2K distance.

Lorenzo Venturini

Indoor Regatta Secretary 2019-20

River Level Expert

Novice Report, Michaelmas 2019

Four Lower Boats' Captains came together at the start of Michaelmas 2019. Their coaches had been selected, their recruitment video finely edited and their plans of river wide domination laid out in full. The term started out well with 3 men's boat and 2 women's boats signing up, all as keen as anyone could be to risk the freezing Isis. Tragedy befell our plucky recruits when, though swim tests were (mostly) passed, the river proved an indomitable beast with flooding levels too high to allow more than a few outings (*see Lorenzo's report above*). While the LBCs were dismayed at no longer having the opportunity to sub in at 6am for disorganised novices, they quickly set to work on a new plan. Tank sessions were booked as we sought to be the strongest crew on land, if not on the water. The New College Indoor Regatta came first. The hard work from the rowers and coaches alike, coupled with the supporting cries of fellow NCBC rowers giving us the full home turf advantage, brought us outstanding results with Men's purple taking first place and women's purple a close second. Thoughts then turned to how we would prepare these landlubbers for the choppy carnage that awaited them in the Christ Church Regatta. Fortune, however, was smiling down on our still hardly used blades as the river remained too flooded to race on. On enemy territory, on unfamiliar "dynamic ergs", at what is frankly the "dodgy end" of boathouse island... we knew we were very much up against it. Valiant efforts from Men's Pirate and Women's Gold were cheered ever so loudly

by our now voiceless and sleep deprived LBCs. They were both unlucky not to make the final of the plate competition, but the best was yet to come. Men's Gold faced Christ Church in their own boathouse and on their chosen battleground of the tiresome moving ergs. Even our LBCs struggled to get the hang of these, though this was possibly due to their overall lack of training. The race was veering out of our hands in the first 1000m. A sudden monumental equalising effort was only outdone by a ridiculous final split time which squeezed home the win. The small winners' cup proved the perfect size for the crew to drink their Prosecco from. Expectations were high for our Purple boats in their competition. Women's Purple faced tough quarter final opposition and battled hard to push eventual finalists Oriel all the way to the end. Men's Purple dispatched their opposition in the heat stages and made it to the semi-final. They were unlucky to face Christ Church A, who proved too well practised at the tricky changeovers. We retained our 100% record against Magdalen and the resounding celebrations reflected the hard work that had been put in to achieve such outstanding results. When our recruits gave their speeches to thank their coaches it was clear that they really had enjoyed their first term rowing. They may not know what a blade is, but they are certainly part of the ever-beating heart that is this glorious boat club.

Harry Forsyth *Rachel Laing*

George Williams *Emily Dodds*

Lower Boats' Captains 2019-20

Sponsorship Opportunities & Corporate Experience Days

NCBC is currently looking for a primary sponsor, to help us continue competing at the highest level in races across the South of England and provide the highest quality equipment for our rowers.

The Boat Club is New College's largest society or sports team year on year, and our sponsors have unique access to the diverse undergraduates and graduates who make up our crews. Our sponsor's branding will be prominently displayed at the Boathouse through the year and especially at race days.

We are also hoping to offer corporate experience days for the first time this year, developing leadership and teamwork skills in the context of learning to row.

If you or your organisation might be interested in either of the above, please contact Charlie Baker, Alumni & Sponsorship Secretary, for the full brochure by emailing charles.baker@new.ox.ac.uk.

Dates For Your Diary

Thursday 13th Feb 2020, NCBC Alumni Drinks

The Oxford and Cambridge Club will be hosting our annual London drinks. The cost is £25 per person, please email charles.baker@new.ox.ac.uk to reserve a space.

26th – 29th Feb 2020, Torpids

Due to the high river levels, this will be the first University-wide race of the academic year, and a welcome chance for new rowers to compete on the water.

27th – 30th May 2020, Summer Eights

The final race of the year, when dreams come true or emerge dampened from the Isis. The women's first boat will seek to repeat 2018's blades, while the men's first boat battles it out to claim a spot in the 1st Division.

Saturday 30th May 2020, Eights Dinner

A chance to reflect on a year of racing, we will also be celebrating 40 years of women rowing for New College at this year's Eights Dinner. We especially hope rowers from the earliest women's boats will be able to celebrate with us.



(clockwise from bottom left)

Some of this term's novice crews: Men's Gold Boat, victorious at Christ Church "Ergatta"; Men's Purple Boat, victorious at NCIR; Women's Purple Boat, also victorious at NCIR.