

# The Scarlet Blade



December  
1988  
1989

GREETINGS ONE AND ALL. The new season is under way and we have already won some events. In this edition we have a run down on the new squads ; a run down of social events; committee news; the Annual Dinner; Scully's travels; a special article from a disinterested supporter and of course some juicy comments in the Scarlet Blade.

## CREW NEWS

A cool hundred men and women have been pounding their bodies and straining their sinews (at least I hope they are as they are certainly not drinking enough beer) since October to remove the summer excesses.

The senior womens group under the enthusiastic control of Ian Shore has mushroomed to around 26 providing the strong element of competition required to improve standards. There are also a number of girls in the sculling group who will be trying for international selection once again.

The mens senior group is under development this year and is currently boating three fours. Our new captain Farrell Mossop is combining with Dermot Sweeney to bring on some very promising young athletes.

There is also a thriving sculling group being organised by Maurice Hayes, though many of the scullers are undoubtedly hoping Maurice will need a little more sleep when the new addition to the family arrives in January. The 7.30am outings have a distinctly frosty edge to them both in weather and tempers! A regular 14 scullers are doing many hours of steady state each week.

The womens novice, senior II and III groups have been run by Simon Allen and Jack Kerbal, both confirmed womens "assistants". This group is boating up to 20 women.

Now if you think the club is gradually being taken over by the women, you may be correct, but the mens lower status group makes up for the deficiency in numbers. A total of 40 have been training with Nick Ronald and Colin Maddison so far. This squad will be cut to around 24 within the next month and there is plenty of potential for successful crews for the heads and the summer.

In case he thought I had forgotten, Ian South, the quiet man of the club, has been handling the junior women - in the purest coaching sense. For the first time they have started full winter training and the results look most promising with wins at the recent Hampton junior head in coxless pairs.

Other winners so far include a storming third place overall and an easy senior III win for Chris Andrews (just 12 seconds behind the winner) and a good win in novice sculls for Aggy Barnett at Henley Sculls.

This weekend is the Fours Head and the Kingston Small Boats Head so there should be plenty more wins to report in the January issue. A rough programme of forthcoming events is enclosed and we promise a full calendar for all our members in the next newsletter (if not before!)

## SOCIAL EVENTS

The list is appended so you have got no excuse for not attending! Seriously though, we need you to come and drink at the bar. Money will be tight this year so the bar profits are vital. We have finally persuaded Courage to do the necessary improvements to the cold room so your pint will taste even nicer.

Lindsey Montague and Lesley Dunlop have been extremely active. More of this later. And Lindsey has been doing plenty of work designed to feed our faces. On Saturday and Sunday morning she has organised breakfasts in the bar, most successfully, AND SHE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM ANY POTENTIAL HELPERS. On Thursday evenings there is club night when we expect all the active oarsmen to have a few beers and we encourage our older drinkers to come and enjoy the atmosphere. Food is served every Thursday at very reasonable prices (£1.50) to encourage you to drink more!

The Barn Dance has been put back to February this season due to a booking mix up from last year.

The now (in)famous Kingston Revue will take place on 17th December and tickets will be on sale before the day. This is one of the most popular events in the calendar, so book early to avoid having to stand in the corridor. We need raffle prizes, sausage rolls and mince pies for the day so any donations please see Lesley or Lindsey. Any contributions for the Revue should go to Anna Chate - any subjects catered for and the more people who get slated the better - don't leave it too late.

The KRC Sherry Party will be on the following ~~Sunday~~ <sup>POSTPONED</sup> 18th December and we will be sending out personal invitations to everyone to help celebrate the prospect of another successful season. If you don't like sherry, there are plenty of other drinks to help you celebrate with at the bar!

The Annual Dinner will be held on February 10th at Twickenham Rugby ground once again this year and double Olympic champion, Steve Redgrave (and more important still, husband of Ann) has been asked to be the principal speaker. A form for you to send back to Louise Norie will be attached to the next edition.

Finally a reminder about the Rum Punch party on January 8th, which is the time when you can find out if you have won the big prize in the 200 Club. Stanley tells me there are a few places left in the draw, so see him on a Sunday at the bar to snap them up!

## COMMITTEE NEWS

The latest addition to the Committee is indeed most welcome. Lindsey Kirby has agreed to help promote the club with the press to keep everyone informed of our successes and to help push our sponsors involvements with the club.

As usual we need more money. When have you heard this before? We are looking for new sponsors, particularly to assist with the purchase of equipment for the burgeoning womens section. One area in which we need volunteers is to raise money for our events. These days it is increasingly difficult to attract large numbers of competitors to our regattas particularly. Consequently we either need a large number of small donations to pay for the prizes or, one or two large sponsors to inject enough cash to provide prize money for certain events. The requirement is for half a dozen volunteers to help contact local companies and shops to ask for their donations. The more people involved the easier the job. I will be setting a date in January for a meeting of anyone who can help to outline what we need to do.

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I now have a package to send to potential sponsors which includes a list of our requirements and their costs. From supporting a crew at Henley for £500 to the purchase of an eight for £7,000. If you think your company might be interested let me know and I will work with you on an approach. Please try to work through me to ensure we do not underplay our hand for too small an amount of money.

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

For all active members. You have until **1st December** to pay your subs before you will be asked not to use club equipment. The subs were due on 1st October so there can be no excuse for not paying up. If you have a case of extreme hardship please see Colin Green, RR or Farrel to plead your case to spread the payment. Quite simply, we need the money to run the club. No subs means cold showers, no lights, broken equipment staying broken, no training facilities, no transport to regattas, no central heating and so on. Please pay up now!

### THE BAR

We need some more volunteers to help on the bar, especially on Sunday lunchtimes. Les Hughes is compiling a list of helpers to do the bar once every couple of months. If you can help contact Les or Guy Lewis who can slot you in.

Remember Thursday night is supper night and is a great time to come down for a beer. We are now getting the heavies from the mens group, the slightly older heavies with Colin Green and the treacles as the older women like to be known, coming down for a little light (s)training or a number of beers. Come and join them.

### KINGSTON POLY

There was a marvellous response to rowing at the Poly recently with over 150 stating an interest. We now have a nucleus of about 60 coming down on Wednesday and Sunday afternoons to try out the sport and hopefully feed into our lower status groups in the future. Stirling work is being done here by Camilla Sykes and Paul Reynolds.

And now a new contributor to the Scarlet Blade who wishes to remain anonymous but is a rowing widower. Incidentally if anyone else wishes to publish a funny anecdote just send it to me at the club.

## ROWBOAT

Autumn, season of mists and mellow fruitfulness! Season, more to the point, of rowing, training, ergos and all things aquatic. Now is the time when previously sane people leave their homes and loved ones in the early hours of cold and frosty mornings, don strange articles of clothing that play havoc with their personal hygiene and drag themselves to the water's edge in pursuit of .... what?

I do not row, but my wife does. Don't get me wrong, I actually like the idea of rowing; it's the boats, the training and the water that get me. To me, nothing could be more pleasant than a stroll to the river's edge, a glance at the ice floes migrating eastwards, and a rapid retreat to the bar for 17 pints of Futtock's Old Dirigible. This is rowing at its best; land-based competitive drinking with no witnesses to query the tale of how you beat Steve Redgrave over 500 metres, and rowing solo in an eight at that.

Water spoils all this. It is cold, wet and it brings an unnecessary element of realism to the entire concept. Fish screw in water. Drunk people talk to it. Vampire swims in it and fishermen fill it full of lead. The Thames is clearly a health and hazard and should be drained immediately to bring rowing back to its rightful place: the bar at midnight on a November night with a Veteran eight stroke telling us for the 29th time how he should have won the Thames Cup. This is what true British sportsmanship is all about.

My wife, however, Does Not Understand Me. She fails to understand why I don't row and why I prefer to pursue such pointless and trivial hobbies as the theatre, good conversation, friends and sex. She cannot comprehend that I get all the exercise I need by breathing heavily and sleeping until midday at weekends. In reponse to my pleas she has, however, cut down on her rowing. Now she only rows on Saturday and Sunday mornings and Tuesday and Wednesday nights, with training on Monday and Thursday. On Friday night she reads Regatta magazine, swims 300 lengths of the bathtub and falls asleep while watching a video of the Daf Sprints. She has an exquisite body which I last saw in 1973. She can benchpress 500lb and even her muscles have muscles; I don't mind that, it's the pipe and the tattoos that worry me.

She has tried in vain to persuade me that rowing would be a Good Thing for me, but I am made of sterner stuff. Other rowers have offered to teach me in some instrument of torture known only as The Tub, but I have stood firm. They have even resorted to bribery, with such offers as the quasi-mystic First Pot of the Novices, the Hallowed Status of Senior II and even the Trendy Red-and-White Striped Rowing Strip, which make all who wear it look like a zebra which has been through a liquidiser. I was even offered a night of passion between Kingston and Twickenham regattas, but I declined. Dave Longden isn't my type anyway.

Thus I remain, landlocked and lubbered, defiantly holding the fort in the name of sanity and highly-trained laziness. This is not to say that I do not enter into the spirit of rowing; far from it. I can converse happily on all aspects of the sport, in fact I have to, since all the people I know talk about. I can find my way to the club blindfold, mostly by homing in on the screams of pain from the training room. I have attended many regattas, lured by the promise of wild nights sniffing Ralgex and sunny days cheering on my beloved to great victories. Each time it has pissed down with rain and my beloved has lost by 45 lengths. I have cheered myself hoarse as various Kingston crews have sunk, collided with barges or were boarded by the River Police in search of illicit goods.

I am, in short, a true believer in the spirit of rowing, as long as I don't ever have to actually get into a boat. If God had meant us to go rowing, he would have fitted rowlocks to our thighs. See you in the bar.

### SCARLET BLADE

The rowing club is becoming more like a lonely hearts club all the time. Another pair bites the dust - congratulations to Nick Ronald and Lindsey Montague - both good committee members, on their engagement. I am assured that this decision was not just to persuade Lindsey to keep typing the club's minutes after the Committee meetings!

The club members involved in the Dragon Boat race at the Serpentine Regatta recently were greatly disappointed to lose by the length of a dragons nose in the final. For the uninitiated, Dragon Boat races are for midgets and super lightweights as the more people you can get into a boat the faster you go. The prize is a subsidised trip to Hong Kong for the World Championships and with the possibility of its inclusion in the next Commonwealth Games, it's an event worth going for. Good luck to the skinny men.

A number of amusing incidents have occurred in the mens loos with the repositioning of Dinsdale's cupboard for some painting. Listen chaps, have you ever walked into the loo and checked your hair in the mirror? No? Well ask Farrell and Steve Fraser how they felt when they checked theirs in the mirror and walked straight into the cupboard - even the bloke in the mirror was laughing!

Our congratulations go to Peter Hope and his fiancée on their recent engagement. They seem to have much in common, long legs, mini skirts, tight jumpers, but what about the extra vertebra?

A word of warning for Thursday evenings. It seems that one of the novice group has been practicing driving as fast as he can with a completely opaque windscreen. The net result was a squashed Vauxhall Astra and extremely bent golf clubs! A suggestion to other novice members - don't try it: Dave Longden says it may damage your health (or at least he might)!

As for the veteran championships, it was a triumph for the 'treacles' eight who all seemed to enjoy themselves ENORMOUSLY. In fact some of the gossip was so 'uplifting' that I have been requested by the CAPTAIN not to 'reveal' the object of their HARD nosed conversation. All I will say is that a certain not so tall young lady with not so slim thighs managed to shake hands with Farrell's not so young opposite of a woman. Confused - you will be .....

And finally, I have been trying to obtain some hilarious copy related to Scully's suitcase which was lost on the way to Scotland. I will enclose the correspondence when I receive it but suffice to say when it eventually materialised it resembled a rather large, sweet smelling, wafer thin mint. And you thought you just had problems when you go on holiday to Spain.

Hope to see you all in the bar or at one of our functions soon.

*SCARLET BLADE*