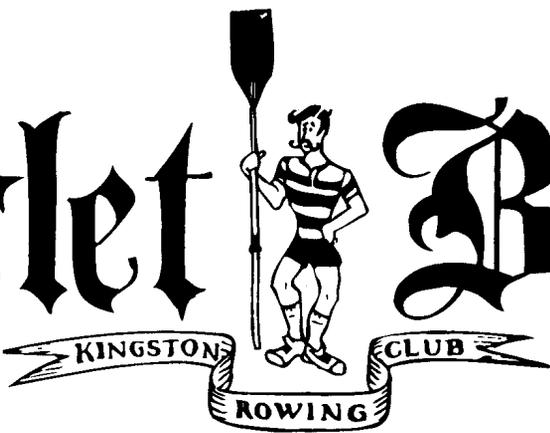


The Scarlet Blade



PRICELESS

FREE TO MEMBERS

ISSUE 9

Chairman's *message*

by Peter King

May I start by wishing you all a very happy New Year, and hope that you have had an enjoyable and peaceful Christmas.

With the start of this year we see the safety guide-lines laid down by the A.R.A. become obligatory on all Clubs, and I would like to take this opportunity of once more thanking the Council for their generosity. Their grant has enabled us to purchase all this equipment without having to dip into our already over-stretched equipment budget.

With the passing of each year, our list of members invariably changes, and as time marches on so we gradually lose members whose associations with the Club go back to the fifties and beyond. I would particularly like to appeal to those senior members who are reading this newsletter to look through their records and momentos, and put aside anything that is relevant to the Club's history. In 1983 to mark the 125th anniversary of the Club we produced a booklet that traced the history of K.R.C. from its inception through to that year. It was as complete as we could make it then in the time we had available to us, it would however be nice to enlarge upon this for the

second edition that will mark our next major anniversary. If you have any relevant documents, old newspaper cuttings, or photographs, I would ask you to keep them in a safe place; if possible send us copies, or send them to us at the Club so that we can store them in the Kingston Archives, where we have other documents that are relevant to the Club's history.

The Annual Dinner will be held next month in the Clubhouse. Fred Smallbone has very kindly agreed to propose the health of our Club, and Martin Nichols is replying on behalf of the guests. Those present at last year's dinner and heard Martin speak, will I am sure remember the occasion well, and having given us one of the most amusing replies on behalf the guests that we had heard for some time, we have asked him back and set him the task of repeating his performance again this year. He has promised to rise to this challenge, and if you like myself enjoy a good meal with some excellent speeches, this looks like an occasion not to be missed. Numbers are limited (108) and tickets are on a strictly first come first served basis, if you want to come along please do not leave it until the

last minute, as you may be disappointed.

Although we are still in the early stages of the rowing season, we have already made a promising start and I am pleased to report that things are shaping up well for a successful season. The Heads have now started and although the weather can be annoyingly unpredictable at this time of the year, I would urge as many of you as possible to come along and support our crews at these events. When it is blowing half a gale out there on the water with the temperature barely above freezing, and a fine rain that manages to permeate even the most modern of rowing apparel, encouragement from the tow-path is most welcome. The various events we are competing at are in your calendar.

In closing I would just ask that should anyone win a major prize on the National Lottery, to please not forget us! As the seasons move on our equipment grows ever older, and in spite of the care and attention it receives from the many active members who work to maintain it, wear and tear eventually take their toll and it has to be replaced. This like everything these days costs more and more, and the task of providing our rowers with the equipment that allows them to compete on equal terms against other clubs becomes harder and harder. If anyone strikes it lucky, we can provide you with a very worthwhile cause, - no donation ever knowingly refused.

We will be 137 years old this year, and this makes us one of the oldest rowing clubs in the country. Over this period we have built up a reputation, for catering for all standards of rowing, and it is no idle boast that unlike a lot of clubs we have made our senior crews from previous years' novices and juniors. Today the rowers train harder than ever with a determination that must be the envy of some other sports. As our coaches continue the task of making winning crews, may I wish all of them on your behalf, every success in 1995.

HAPPY NEW YEAR! • HAPPY NEW YEAR! • HAPPY NEW YEAR! • HAPPY NEW YEAR! • HAPPY NEW YEAR!

'blade gossip

by Our Man in the Beer Tent

As reported in the last Blade, the draconian training regime is taking its toll on the social life of most of the 'affleets' - both sexes. Yes, those are girls, not just effeminate oarsman with over-developed pectorals, but God knows there are enough of those about!

Sales of blackcurrent cordial have never been so high and the beer pumps are seizing up from lack of use. All this serious training has inevitably quelled tales of indiscretion and ner'-do-wells. However we did hear of one not-so-active oarsman being strip searched at Dover on suspicion of smuggling drugs. We understand that the customs officials did don rubber gloves for a thorough search. - If anyone has a child's inflatable swimming ring they are willing to

lend, would they please pass it to me and I will ensure that the person concerned can sit down without wincing for the first time in three weeks.

Despite the harshness of the training schedules, the coaches do allow the rowers an extra hour's lie-in the morning following a Club do. Are they going soft?

This year for the first time we had a combined Rum punch 8s and Christmas review, with the intervening period filled by a happy hour and video session - showing the oarsman at their best - no not rowing, but mincing about in front of the cameras in outlandish costumes wearing make-up (so what's new! - ed.)

We also had two excellent live bands at the review. To everyone who attended the 12 hour

extravaganza, congratulations on your staying power. The bar took a fortune. Many thanks to the social secs Rachel and Fiona, to Matthew Christie who, against his better nature sold beer at 80p a pint during the happy hour, to the novice and senior Ill oarsmen and women who made a day of it and to Mike Smythe, who worked tremendously hard organising the evening's events.

For the growing group of senior oarsmen who seem to be boycotting these events - shame on you! - they are always good events and its good to see the Club in a different light, (ff) your eyes aren't stinging with sweat and you're not wearing smelly kit.

The new year's eve party, now a regular feature in the social calender was again a great success albeit less well attended than the previous two years. Nevertheless, the hardened socialites managed to stay till 4:30am and then faced a walk home with the lower Ham road flooded under a foot of water - I doubt if any of them would have noticed.

We are now entering the time of year where we all have to stiffen our resolve. The only reminders of Christmas are the huge credit card bills that will probably accompany this edition through your letter box sculling rack fees are now due (and Simon means now!), the weather is pig awful, the river is un-rowable meaning extra land training, taking our training work load from intense to hysterical levels - I wonder whether Amnesty International is aware of our suffering.

The good news is that we are approaching peak fitness and should do some serious arse-kicking in the summer months - yes the heads are only seven weeks away, signalling the start of the regatta season - roll on summer!

PS - Late News - Congratulations to Steve Ross who has been invited to attend the GB squad's closed trials.



So, lets talk about selection Rachel!

Captain's report

by Nick Ronald

We are coming up to a busy time of the season and all the active oarsmen/women are hungry for racing understandably after a long winters training. I have no intention of making any predictions or promises for the Heads but I would like to say that I am extremely pleased with the high degree of motivation at all levels within the club.

Having now been a member for longer than I care to remember, I feel a strong indicator of how successful things are going is the level of attendance throughout those hard nights of weight circuit training. As far as I could tell an observer there has been very little drop off in any of the groups and, where it has occurred, this is largely due to injury.

Crews for the Heads this year will be selected on speed rather than status, although, selection will no doubt enable us to enter different status events.

Prior to Christmas we had some considerable success in the small boat Heads and on 2 out of 5 occasions were team winners. This was against some extremely good opposition which included Oxford University, UL and Tideway Scullers. The majority of men and women who took part were

rarely out of the top 3 in their status and we produced far too many winners to mention in this report. I would, however, like to mention Steve Ross who produced some excellent results at both Heads and Trials. Of particular note was Henley Sculls where he was fifth overall despite being a lightweight sculling into an extremely strong headwind.

Safety

This is becoming a much more serious issue on the river and our cavalier practises of the past have to cease. The ARA have introduced a safety code which we will be foolish to ignore. I would ask all of you who go out on the river to carefully check the conditions and if you are uncertain if it is safe, stay on shore. Please also remember there are many other river users some of which are more experienced than others in the ways of the river.

Don't assume that as oarsmen/oarswomen you own the river and always put safety first. Your cooperation would be appreciated.

Annual Dinner

This is one of the most important social events in our calendar and I would ask as many of you as possible to attend and support the club. I look forward to seeing you there.

Annual Dinner

A final reminder to those who haven't yet bought their annual dinner ticket yet - Buy one! - Places are limited and the event will sell-out.

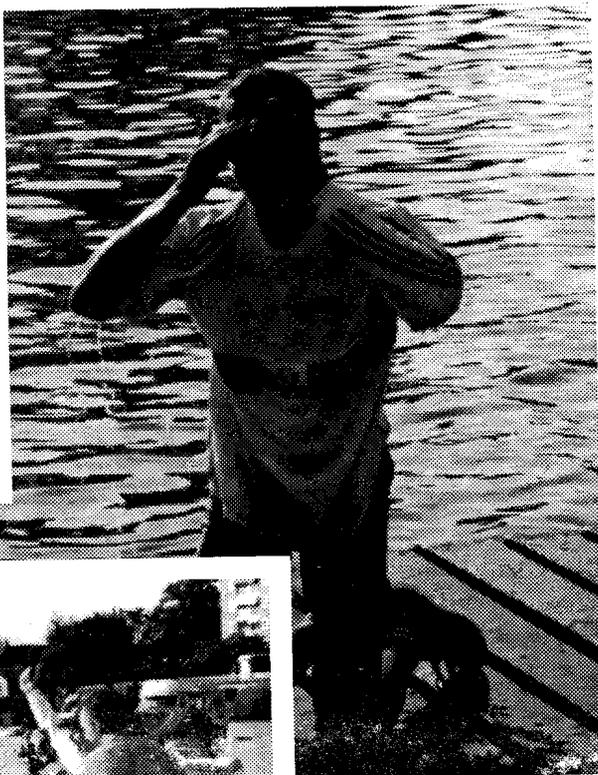
You can buy either by sending a stamp addressed envelope to Matthew Christie at the Fox and Hounds, 60 Portsmouth Road, Surbiton, or you can catch him at the bar on most Thursday evenings.

The for those who don't know, the principal guest this year is Fred Smallbone, Henley Steward, ex-Olympic oarsman and finishing coach to Oxford. We also have the added bonus of last year's professional speaker Martin Nicholls, who gave one of the funniest after dinner speeches most of us have ever heard and is threatening to outdo himself this year.

The price this year is £22.00. Some may think this is quite a high price for the dinner at the Club, but the ticket price will ensure a healthy donation to Club funds. The Club is in need of some maintenance work and new rowing equipment, so oarsmen and women bear in mind - this will help buy the new chopper blades we need for the season - see you there.



The ups...



99, 100 -
Coming -
ready or not!

and downs of being a coach.

That's all Folks!