

The Scarlet Blade



PRICELESS FREE TO MEMBERS ISSUE 14

Chairman's message

by Peter King

It seems ages since I was last asked for a contribution for the newsletter. We were trying to get one out earlier this season but we ran into production difficulties and so we have had to postpone it until now. Last season's "Henleys" seem long gone, but I was fortunate to be present at both and able to enjoy the fine weather and the excellent performances that our crews put up. At Women's Henley Mary Stevens and Sarah Birch had a double success, first winning the Lightweight Doubles and then winning the Open Quads with Nicola Ledger and Kate Holroyd. Two weeks after Henley Royal we had the National Championships at Nottingham where we again notched up some fine results. Victoria Fangen with Mary Stevens not only won the Silver medal in the Lightweight Doubles but they then joined Jane Hall and Sarah Birch to win the Gold medal in the Lightweight Quads. Jane Hall, won the Gold medal with her partner in the Lightweight Pairs and another Gold medal in an

Open composite Eight. Joining her to win a Gold medal in the same Eight was Robyn Morris who also won a Gold medal in a composite Heavyweight Coxless Four. In the Heavyweight Coxed Fours Alison Barnett, Sarah Hay, Kath Cooper and Rachel Knight won the Bronze medal. Medal success was not just left to the women, the men too had a share of the medals, with Paul Mascaro and Simon Pullen winning Silver in the Lightweight Doubles and German Zappata and Ewe Dobler winning Silver in the Heavyweight Doubles. Both at the Henley Regattas and at the Nat Champs we had a full team and my congratulations go to all our crews who put up some sterling performances to give us one of our most successful years. One of the more amusing events at this year's Henley Royal happened after one of our members had just celebrated a dinner to mark his fiftieth birthday. Having enjoyed a very convivial evening with some of his chums, he decided to try walking on water on his way back to

his hotel. The whole episode took place outside Leander Club and turned into a fine example of syncopated swimming! The only pity was that the event could not be caught on camera and was only witnessed by a fortunate few, journalistic ethics prevent me mentioning the member by name but suffice to say he rowed very successfully for the Club in the late sixties winning a Henley medal amongst many others. Whilst mentioning Leander Club, the achievement of Redgrave and Pinsent at the Olympic games in Atlanta has to be something that everyone connected with the sport must be immensely proud of. For years we have missed out on the media coverage that other sports take for granted, let us hope that their success brings our sport the recognition it so desperately needs and the financial support it so justly deserves. Although we didn't have anyone representing the country at the Olympics, Mary Stevens, Victoria Fangen and Claire Fox represented the U.K. in Haselwinkel, at the Nations Cup for under 23's. In spite of this being an Olympic year, the World Rowing Championships held in Strathclyde were as hotly contested as ever, it therefore great credit to Jane Hall who won a Silver medal with her partner in the Lightweight Pairs, Robyn Morris who won a Silver medal in the Lightweight Coxless Fours and Nicola Ledger who came 4th in the Junior Quad. I have to say that as a member of KRC it gives me immense pleasure and a great deal of pride to write this brief report on our recent activities. It shows the real strength of the Club, from Juniors to Seniors, from

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International *report*

by *Jane Hall*

Olympic year is always much busier than others and last year was no exception. My season began in September and lasted right the way through to the middle of August. My intention was to make the Olympic Games in Atlanta in the lightweight double scull, hence all my training during the winter was done in either a double or a single. After countless trials, I was selected in the double and benefited from a number of training camps in Banyoles, Spain. We knew that qualifying for the Olympics was always going to be a tough task but we were encouraged by results from an early international regatta.

We hit a bad patch during mid May and had to pick ourselves up for the qualifying regatta in early June in Lucerne, Switzerland. A good preparation camp lifted our confidence and we raced as well as we could on the day. We could not have asked anymore of ourselves, but we lost out by 1.2

seconds on getting to the Olympics. To say we were gutted is an understatement, but we picked ourselves up and within a week we were back in the pair, preparing for selection for the world championships. Having gained selection we only had five weeks until the worlds and used the National Championships for race practise.

As far as the National Championships are concerned, they were very successful for Kingston's women's squad:

Jane and Robyn were in the winning eight;

Jane won open coxless pairs;

Mary and Vic, the promising under 23 lightweight double scull took silver in their event;

Jane, Sarah Birch, Vic and Mary smashed all opposition to take lightweight quads;

And the women's coxed four had a strong row to take bronze their event.

All in all an excellent weekend for the women. Two weeks later came the World Championships in Strathclyde. The weather wasn't as bad as anticipated, although like Nottingham, it was quite windy. Me and my partner, Alison Brownless, managed to win our heat with something to spare. The final line-up saw the return of last years winners from the USA and the Romanians who had just taken Olympic gold in the lightweight double scull. We were a little out of touch with the field at 1000 metres but managed to overhaul the Romanians to take silver behind the yanks. Robyn too had a tough and closely fought race and took a well earned silver medal in the lightweight coxless fours event.

The women's squad, as a whole, has produced some very notable performances over the 1995-96 season and hopefully we can both match and build on these results in the coming year.

Perchance to meet, perchance to eat!

Congratulations! Maybe it's a sign of the changing economic times, or perhaps because the mailing list has been improved or could it be that at last you've decided to heed my exhortations to come and enjoy yourself at the Club.

A fantastic total of 360 different people attended either of the two veteran suppers or the Annual Dinner last season. May I take the opportunity to say 'thank you' and about time too!

The Veteran Supper last autumn attracted a record 90 people and most people had a great evening (sorry Bill and Richard). The Annual Dinner was back to the traditions we came to expect in the past at a superb venue at Hampton Court comfortable filled by 260 people with the option of a leisurely beer for 100 or so on the river courtesy of the Turk's launch.

The second Veteran supper had some 65 people many of whom had not come to the first evening and this was great to see from an organisers point of view.

Incredibly impressive though these figures are, there are still around 100 people who did not come to at least one event. How can I persuade you to come along? Why not ask someone who did

come if they had a good time, you could even write to me direct or via the Rowing Club if you have some long-standing grievance (or if you're just plain shy!).

We do want to see you at the Club, there will be people there that you know and you will have a good time. If you haven't heard from me at all for some time please contact me as we may not have your current address.

This year's Annual Dinner is again being organised by Libby MacIntyre and myself on Friday 7th February at Sandown Park. I will give you more information in the next newsletter regarding speakers and other arrangements but you may like to start compiling a table (round tables of 10) with friends from your own rowing era.

The Dinner is a break-even event for your enjoyment and the Veteran Suppers provide funds for extra Club needs (such as refurbishing the Karlische 8 and the Aylings co-dess four) freeing Club funds for everyday usage.

See you at one of these events this season - they are organised for YOU!

Scott Tunbridge

Captain's *report*

by *Gary Meecham*

I would like to start my first report as Captain by thanking those of you who voted me into the position at the Annual General Meeting, with a special thanks to Jane Hall who spoke on my behalf as I was working in Australia at the time!!

Since my election, I have appointed 4 Vice-Captains who will be working alongside myself, ensuring the smooth running of the Club during the 1996/97 season. They have all been appointed with a view to representing different sections of the Club:

Nigel Main	Mens Vice-Captain
Laura Binns	Womens Vice-Captain
Jane Hall	Internationals Vice-Captain
Scott Tunbridge	Veterans Vice-Captain

I would ask that anyone who has any ideas, suggestions or problems that need resolving to approach either myself or a Vice-Captain at the earliest possible opportunity.

During the coming year it is very important that we all pull together with a view to maintaining Equipment, maintaining the upkeep of the Boathouse and attend as many social functions as is possible so that we can fund equipment purchase. I will be looking to organise some sponsored events so that we can update the Fleet of Boats such as Sponsored Rows, 24 hour Sponsored Ergo, HorseRace Night or a Pledge Night. If anyone has any ideas re the above or with regards a Sponsor for Kingston Rowing Club or would like to help with the above, then please contact myself or a Vice-Captain at the earliest possible opportunity. On the Rowing front, I have brought Chris Elmitt in as the Chief Coach of the Club. Chris will mainly concentrate on the Senior Men and Women but will also overview the Training both on land and water whenever possible of the lower squads. This will help ensure a consistency amongst the training programmes /styles throughout the Club.

For those of you that don't know Chris, he took part in the 1990/91 Junior World Championships, was a

member of the GB Lightweight Quad at the World Championships from 1992 through to 1995 and won a Silver Medal in the Single Scull at the 1992 Under 23 World Championships. He has assisted in coaching from 1991 in addition to competing, at St Pauls School, Kingston Grammar School, Wanganui School (New Zealand), Cambridge University Womens Boat Club and Cambridge University Lightweight Boat Club.

Chris will be assisted by Damian Hammond who has been very effective as a coach for the past few seasons. Nick Ronald will be assisting with land training whenever possible.

The mens development squad is under the control of Gary Smith who has joined us from Auriol Kensington whilst the womens development squad is the responsibility of Alistair Graham.

The mens novice squad which is fast expanding (in numbers not size) is under the control of Laura Binns with Dave Baldwin in charge of the novice women.

In addition Ian South will continue to look after juniors/junior women progressing on with them as they move up to senior level.

The club has now taken part in 3 heads this season - the fours head of the River race, Kingston head and Tiffin head. The performances of all crews has been very encouraging with many good wins and close seconds. At the 4's head the clubs top 2 boats both finished in the top 20 with identical times. I will give a full run down of these races in the next edition of the Scarlet Blade.

I would like to thank anyone who has assisted in the decoration and improvements that have been made to the interior of the boathouse/clubhouse. This work has been totally voluntary and is helping to make the club a much more homely place.

I would like to finish by wishing everyone a very merry Christmas and happy New Year, hoping that 1997 proves to be very successful for Kingston Rowing Club both on and off the water.

Chairman's *message* continued from front cover

Lightweights to Heavyweights. Credit must be given not only to the athletes for their determination to get to the top, but also to the coaches for their dedication in helping them achieve their aims.

Nick Ronald who has served the Club so very well these last two years stood down as Captain and Gary Meacham was unanimously elected in his place. Several of last year's Committee also stood down and I would like to take this opportunity of thanking them publicly for all the hard work and time they put in, as I said at the AGM the task of running the Club is similar to that of running a small company, the difference being that we all do it voluntarily. This year we have four Vice Captains and a

full strength Committee, I have to say that it is a real example of the spirit that exists at the Club, that so many are prepared to do more than just come down to the Club, train and then go home. Talks are still proceeding with the Council to extend and ultimately purchase the premises and because of this and the fact that we will need a vast amount of money to achieve these goals, we have deliberately not approached the Sports Council for any grants from the Lottery for new equipment. As a result we have had to bear the virtually all the financial costs of providing new equipment for our rowers. I say virtually because last season we were very fortunate to be given a Club single by Mike Bate, and a new four by Bentalls.

Without their generous help we would not have been able to afford these boats and we owe them great deal of thanks. You will have already received your subscription reminder, and for those of you who do not pay by bankers order. prompt payment of your these will be a great help to the Club as well as being much appreciated by the Treasurer. I am delighted to report that Leslie Parsons is still battling on and is in peaceful retirement in Weybridge. He was 91 a few weeks ago and I am sure you will all join me in wishing him a belated many Happy Returns. Finally as we enter the festive season and the days of 1996 gradually disappear may I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

STOP PRESS

DATE CHANGE

Please note the date of the Annual Dinner has been changed from 31st January to the 7th February.

JOHN KIRBYSHIRE

It is with regret that I have to inform members of the death of John Kirbyshire.

John stroked the 1948 Wyfold Four that lost to the winners of the event and rowed for the Club in the 1949 and '51 Grand crews. He continued rowing for the Club until 1956. holding the office of Captain from 1955 until 1958. Upon his retirement he was elected a Vice President.

After leaving Trinity College Cambridge, he joined the Bank of England, working his way up through the Bank to the position of 'The Chief Adviser to the Governor' a post he held until he retired in 1985. John and his wife moved to Suffolk on his retirement, his wife sadly passing away in 1994.

He leaves a son, two daughters and three grandchildren.
