

The Scarlet Blade



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL CATEGORIES OF SUBS ARE TO BE PAID, OR STANDING ORDERS SUBMITTED, TO THE TREASURER BY CHRISTMAS 1999. THIS INCLUDES RACK FEES. AFTER THIS TIME RACE ENTRIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED NOR WILL THE OWNERS OF SCULLING BOATS BE PERMITTED TO USE CLUB RACKS.

Chairmans Message

Carol Cornell

Leading up to Christmas there is a veritable plethora of exciting initiatives underway! Firstly, we have a willing and technically able person in the process of tidying and updating the KRC database. A small feat you might think -- but not so! When you consider that our club records almost span the period from quill and ink to Palm Pilot, this requires a substantial investment in terms of time, effort and love. The hard work of Craig Elliott will enable us to reach you more effectively than previously and ensure that you get both accurate and timely information. The database will have two main benefits. Firstly it will enable us to easily access both the membership details of current members and those who move on from Kingston and where appropriate assist us in retaining contact by suggesting they move into either social or vet categories of membership. (Accepting that both may be the same!) Secondly and most importantly, the revised database will

enable us to track revenue by facilitating the introduction of a **Kingston Rowing Club membership card**. Each card will contain details of the owner, the number and the type of membership. The number on your card is yours for life (or the duration of your membership) and will be in the following format yyyy/-----. The yyyy represents the current season i.e. 9900 being 1999-20000 and the following digits represent your membership number. The card will require a photo, and for those with sculling racks, there will be an adhesive label that you will be required to fill in and stick next to your sculling boat. No entries for regattas will be taken without the aforesaid card. The process will work in the following way. Once subs / rack fees have been paid, the information will be fed to the membership secretary, who will register this on the database and issue the appropriate level of membership card. This will provide visibility of payment and prevent the tedious comparison of paper records

and the unfortunate but historically inevitable habit of the vast majority who willingly pay club and rack fees, subsidising the small but elusive minority who believe club facilities and services should be provided free of charge!

Other initiatives include realistic sponsorship targeting, building better council relations (Nick Ronald),

updating our constitution in line with ARA requirements (for inclusion at the next AGM), Scarlet Blade by email and **Mike's Mission 2000!** – read on & joyous festivities!

(Closing data for vol 3 is 1st of Feb.

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Captains Report – Mike Smyth

To 2000 AND BEYOND!!

The end of the year is fast approaching and the opportunity to use year 2000 cliches will soon be over, so I thought I would take this opportunity to use one more before the year is out – **MISSION 2000. (or.. Mikes Mission 2000)**

This year's new year is promised to be the biggest and most spectacular ever – or at least for 100 years, although I don't think they had a British Airways Millennium Eye at the turn of this century. Does that mean, therefore, that our new year's resolutions have to follow suit? They will probably turn out to be as much as an anti climax as the night itself and disappear down "the river of fire" before the last firework has been lit, if we are to believe the sceptics.

However, the present feeling at KRC is not to be sceptical about the future, but optimistic. As many of you have already said to me, KRC is on the way up and in order to keep the momentum going well into the new year, I, in conjunction with the committee (& new Labour) am planning to produce a list of "new year resolutions" and action plans to be completed by the time of the next AGM.

In my last Captain's report I listed eight things which we had already achieved this year. Those eight items will appear on the list as already completed, so in that respect we already have a head start. The full list will appear, hopefully by the end of this year, or if not by January at the latest. Although it will be my promise to you to make sure those action points happen, I will of course need everybody's help to make the rest of this year a success – so look out for the list and if you can help **let me know.**

Are you a member?

That may sound like a silly question if you have been sent this edition, but what I mean is **are you a fully paid up member?** Some of you will recall that at this year's AGM I announced that KRC would be adopting a membership card

system to keep track on who still pays. It has taken a bit of time to source a suitable card but we are now ready to start the roll out. If you have paid your subs already (or sent back a standing order form) this year then you can expect to receive your card and membership number before Christmas (subject to Royal Mail). Life members and those Internationals and coxes who have the privilege of free membership fall into this category.

If you have not paid, or submitted a standing order form, then you need to do so before the year is out. Spot checks will be carried out on those using club equipment in the new year. As each year changes so will the membership cards, so don't expect to pay this year and stay a member for life!

Remember, sculling rack allocation requires you to be a fully paid up member. In this regard, sculling racks have been allocated and will remain so allocated until Christmas. Anyone who has not paid their rack fee will lose their allocation. We have now lost 8 racks to accommodate club crew boats, so there is a waiting list of people waiting for you to default!

What's new?

Well, a lot of equipment for starters. The new men's eight and coxless four have been delivered and we have acquired two second hand lightweight women's Janousek's. The new Ray Simms coxless four is also on its way which will serve the women or any lightweight men that are around.

There have been a number of head races which I am sure Farrell will deal with in a lot more detail in his piece. Although I was away for Tiffin, I am very pleased with what I have seen so far.

Special congratulations to our women's quad

Our women's lightweight quad, stroked by Jane Hall was the fastest women's crew at this year's four's head. All credit to them and I am very pleased to hear that they will all be basing their training out of KRC this year. All these girls have stayed loyal to KRC throughout the "Marlow Years" and it's a pleasure to have them back.

The club group also seems to go from strength to strength, with good performances from our men's Senior 2 coxless four and senior 3 coxed four. The women are also starting to show promise and I have high hopes for them later next year.

And finally.....

.....a word of wisdom. When asked whether he trained on Christmas Day, Daley Thompson said yes, because he knew that nobody else was training, and

therefore by training, he would manage to get ahead of the rest. Whilst I do not expect everybody at KRC to be training on 25 December (or 1 January for that matter) try to abide by the sentiment. A missed training session could mean the difference between winning and losing. Ultimately, training doesn't hurt as much as losing.

Coaching Co-ordination and Club Group Training! by Farrell Mossop

A smattering of wins (& near wins) in recent small boats events seems to have brought a pre- millenium feel good factor to the club group.

A pleasant atmosphere was present in the bar after the Kingston Small Boats event . Steve Chasey was quenching his thirst, Dennis was happily swinging a stool around his head trying to connect it with Richard West's head and Richard (who luckily was nowhere near where Dennis thought he was!) was kindly offering (at length) to teach Tara Mossop (aged 6) how to cox. Tara , being more mature than the average veteran , was keeping her options open! Ok well done!

Seriously though it is nice to see Steve Chasey's men with two wins under their belts already in the S2 division and the S3's getting so close to winning (e.g 2nd twice) in the events so far.

In the Fours Head the club looked good to the outside world by winning the fastest women's crew pennant (thanks to our international standard lightweights in the 4X) and by finishing 2nd in the women's 4- (thanks to the "scratch crew" of Vic, Robyn, Tessa & Izzy who borrowed the mens 15 stone boat on the day).

However, leaving aside the opportunity to bask in the reflected glory from these international standard women, we know internally within our club group that there is still a lot of hard work to be done if we want the club as whole to be successful in the Y2K summer regatta season. That's the

reality and that is what was shown by the Four's Head results overall - some club crews performed well and some didn't - by next summer we want all our crews to perform to their full potential, whatever that may be!

We are now halfway through the second training cycle (remember there are seven of these six week cycles between the start of winter training and the National Championships in mid July) and the majority of rowers appreciate the need for hard work.

The men's section is training well under Steve Chasey and the womens section (guided by Gerry Hughes) has expanded in numbers from one girl at the start of the year to enough to form the basis of a good four plus a possible quad. The big surprise though, has been the successful growth of the women's novice section with their dedicated efforts under the watchful eyes of Jolyan Manning & "Scully" Burrows - this lot are great and are a valued addition to the club. So with all this going on we are now adding a 'Small boat & Sculling section' to the Club Group with the help of Andy Kapica. This is specifically aimed at helping all the talented people who train frequently but can not commit to the regular times required for crew rowing (who put Boysies name on the list?). The ingredients are now there for a good club regatta season next year provided we keep working hard.

Finally I would like to mention Dave Brook who pointed out that his crew

(who finished 4th out of 30 in their division of the Fours Head) were the fastest 'Club S2 4-' in the event and the 16th fastest club crew overall.

I'm not sure if this level of data analysis has been fully recognised by the outside world in the same way as the womens

results , but then yet again who am I to dampen the enthusiasm of Dave as reaches out to grasp the straws of success!

Happy Yule - Faz

RR's Veteran Events stuff

"LAZARUS FOURS"

For those still with memories and the ability to regurgitate nonsense about the good times (in every sense) of long ago – do **you** remember Angus, Paul, Peter and Colin, one the Club's more successful quartets of the Seventies? (Colin Barratt, incidentally, is back in the area as rowing Master at Tiffins) They are planning a reunion outing on 19 December, so this is now being touted as a "Veterans` Sunday" – congenial (?) company, something to eat, drink etc, and still time to go on to other events such as Sherry Parties elsewhere if you are so inclined. Hospitality is anticipated from at least 11:30, or make it earlier if you have aspirations towards the water(although some form of prior warning will save disappointment in respect of seats in casual crews).

WANDERFAHRTS

The practicality of a week-end with degustation and (a bit) of rowing based in Sachsenhausen (across the river from Frankfurt-Main) at the end of April is under investigation. This could be followed in late September by a 10(?)k Classic on the Starnbergersee just outside Munich, timed to coincide with other local festivities. Watch this space.

COMMENT.....

KINGSTON EVENTS

We have just had another successful Small Boats Head, for which congratulations and copious thanks are due to the organisers, particularly Richard Higgins and Barry King who have led, stimulated, encouraged, cajoled, blackmailed or otherwise inspired people to make the event possible.

However, like gardens, such events do not run themselves and are not made successes by "sitting in the shade" (or in bars) and talking about it. There are specialist teams covering all sorts of activities on the bank and elsewhere who can always use more bodies and if you feel envious of those who did take the benefit of the bracing November air or feel in some way unrecognised or able to contribute something, please contact Barry initially so he can rope you in and point you in the right direction (phone – 0208 287 7427 e-mail Chesswun@aol.com.uk)

Some of you may recall the attempt at the 1998 AGM to establish an Events Committee to provide the framework for running the three established Heads on the Kingston Reach (Junior Head, Small Boats Head and KHORR) and to ensure continuity as people come and go (as is their wont). This did not work out as planned and the Club Committee is working on reconstituting the body to ensure that there is some accountability to the Club for the running of the events. Still, and inevitably, the burden of the work falls on relatively few shoulders, so any help or support you can give Barry (as currently our initial contact on Events Committee matters) will be greatly appreciated.

On a different tack, some of you must have been attracted by the thought of following losing crews at close quarters in exposed and generally uncomfortable launches (or not?). Umpires actually have an important role in the world of rowing these days, beyond the obvious duties involving flag waving and ringing bells – they are an obligatory part of the organisation and running of events. Six members of the Club are at present qualified umpires: Sooty, Maggie Phillips, Richard West, Steve Drury and Queenie. Their identification with the Club enhances its standing and our ability to put on events, with all the consequent benefits that accrue. If you have any inclination in that direction, or think you might have, Sooty (e-mail: David_Biddulph@compuserve.com) / or Richard (who is also Div Rep) (e-mail: rwest@avgint.freeseve.co.uk tel: 01932 343326) will be pleased to help get involved. All the umpires will, of course, be more than happy to talk through how the whole thing really works if that would be a starting point.

Kingston Coxswain calls Easy Oars at 92
by Richard West

I regret that I have to report that R B (Dickey or Pissy) Smith called easy oars last week and died in his sleep on Sunday 7 November. His Kingston blazer, which was conservatively estimated to be seventy going on eighty years old will not be seen on the banks of the Thames or at Henley again since he was wearing it when he was cremated on Friday, November 12.

I first met Dickey at the Club during the mid-fifties but only really got to know him when he called for the last thirty. I don't know when he first joined the Club nor of his early

exploits in the coxswain's seat of an eight but have listened many times to his stories of various regattas and to his friends regaling him with memories of races up and down the Thames. It seems that Umpires in those days suffered from poor eyesight, a lack of knowledge of the rules of racing and a propensity for local decisions; perhaps I do them an injustice aided and abetted by the fogging of memories brought on by pints at Remenham or the Bridge Bar. Dickey certainly visited Henley during his late teens since just two years ago he received a lovely letter from the Secretary of the Royal

congratulating him on being a member Stewards for seventy five years and becoming it's senior member. The first time he coxed at Henley for was in 1924 for the National Provincial Bank in the Thames Cup. His first Kingston appearance was in 1931 when he steered an eight that included a trio of Offer brothers, again in the Thames Cup. His name appears regularly on the Club boards thereafter coxing either Thames Cup or Grand crews for the Club. Should you wish to know more, I am sure that Dick Offer our President can regale you of a few memorable tales over an appropriate beverage.

Dickey married Kitty in 1939 just in time to spend his honeymoon at Henley where he was responsible for transporting the boats and the crews to the Regatta. The mode of transport being a coal merchant's lorry which, according to the bride lacked both suspension and cleanliness. After service in the RAF at Zeals in Wiltshire they set up home initially in Esher and then later in Zeals far too far to travel to cox and coach at Kingston. During the Fifties Dickey volunteered to commentate at Henley and continued to do so until earlier this decade. When he started, and until the mid-eighties, commentary was live from the signals on the course. I well remember the telephone jangling after one terrific race involving a Kingston crew, to be told by Chris Davidge (Steward in charge of communications) to remind the commentator to be less partisan

since not all the spectators were members of Kingston. The following day the message was the same as it was on the third day – Dickey's response was to ignore the message since, as he said, he had heard it every year he had been commentating.

Dickey was also active in the Zeals community and was a founding member of the Committee that established, thirty years ago, the Fête Champêtre at Stourhead Gardens – now run by the National Trust. The purpose of the Committee was to raise funds for local charities. The first year the event raised £250 and this sum rose a thousandfold during the next twenty-five years. I became involved in this festival after a contretemps between Dickey, Bath Rowing Club and a Bath Boathouse by arranging the supply of skiffs to be used to ferry visitors across Stourhead Lake from the "Show" area to one of the bars. Last year Dickey was very much in evidence organising the crews the roster and the customers.

We will miss Dickey who is survived by his wife Kitty, his son Mike and grandchildren and his daughter Jane. But we have an opportunity to recall all that he achieved at a memorial service to be held at **Zeals Parish Church on Friday 17 December at 12.30.** (Zeals village is just off the A303 five miles to the East of Wincanton).

Regatta Dates for your Diary 1999 - 2000

December

- 6th – Walton Small Boats Head
- 11th – Burway Small Boats Head
- 18th – Tideway Small Boats Head

January

- 29th – Hampton Head (Juniors & Schools)

February

- 5th – Henley Fours Head
- 12th – Molesey Vets Head
- 19th – Burway Head
- 20th Janousek Sculls
- 28th – Reading University Head

March

- 4th – Womens HOR – (15.15)
- 5th – Weybridge Vets Head
- 11th Kingston Head
- 18th – HOR (15.30)
- 19th – Vesta Vets Head
- 25th – University Boat Race
- 26th March – BRITISH SUMMER TIME

April

- 1st – Scullers Head
- 16th – Vet Scullers Head
- 29th - Wallingford / Evesham / Chiswick
- 23rd - EASTER
- 30th – Wallingford / Evesham Sprint

Looking Ahead

1. Millennium Club Dinner on Friday the 18th of February to be held at Twickenham Rugby Club – *more details to follow*
2. Royal Henley – 28th June to 2nd July

All the above information and more can be found on
http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/david_biddulph/2000cal.htm