

Spring 2000

The Scarlet Blade



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Chairpersons Report – Carol Cornell

For what was meant to be a low-key release of the now infamous Scarlet Blade, we have yet another action-packed edition! Three important points to make:

Firstly – the club belongs to all of you and the committee is elected by you to run the club on your behalf, if part of the infrastructure / assets of the club is damaged don't leave it – let someone know and we will do something about it. A club of this size cannot operate without good communication. (See Farrells report)

Secondly it is nearly that time of year again when club elections loom. What can you do? This year we were lucky to have an influx of new committee members, we need the same again next year and given today's technology it is easier to manage tasks from home (and work) than ever.

Finally – on behalf of all of us many congratulations and thanks are due to Josh for organising the sponsored erg, John Keane for taking on the role of treasurer mid-term, all those volunteers who turned up for the sport of "bar-painting", those who turned out to help for the Kingston Festival of Sport and last but not least to Rebecca Romero who has taken on the role of our representative within the sports division of Kingston Council. Your time and efforts are much appreciated!

CAPTAINS REPORT – Mike Smyth

THE REGATTAS ARE HERE AGAIN!

Three months is a long time in the life of Kingston Rowing Club and that's how long since the last Scarlet Blade and look what's happened...

In February it was cold and gloomy. Winter training was becoming a bore and Henley seemed a distant prospect. It's now stifling hot as I write this (still gloomy mind you), the first regattas have been and gone, and Henley is less than two months away.

For the less competitive amongst us the prospect of sipping Pimms by the riverside is now a reality, whilst for the athletes the minds are focused upon crew selection and beating the opposition.

Since the last issue we have of course had the major heads which sometimes can offer an early indication of future regatta success. At the women's head our top crew finished in 5th place, unlucky not to finish higher, whilst our second crew finished a little lower in the order but still a credible performance given the relatively few outings achieved.

At the men's head, our top crew finished 44th retaining their top 50 placing, and for the first time in about 8 years we achieved a top 100 placing for our second eight who you will see racing in combinations locally this Summer. In between we had good results at Kingston Head, in particular the Women's S3 four who won and the veteran eight who later went onto win their category at the Veteran Head. **Well done everybody.**

Where to see our crews

It is anticipated that the Men's group will follow the usual run of regatta's throughout the season, opening at Thames Ditton, followed by the two Docklands regattas, Reading, Henley Royal, Kingston and the National Championships followed by a series of local regattas to round the season off. The Women's group will follow a similar pattern with Women's Henley in

between. Our thriving Novice women's group are likely to be seen at the more traditional river regattas and don't forget to follow the International circuit where you may see the likes of Rebecca Romero, Kirsten McClelland, Colin Greenaway, Jane Hall, Robyn Morris, Jo Nitsche and Sarah Birch. Wherever you are, give you maximum support to anyone wearing the now infamous "candy" red and white stripes. A bumper Henley edition of Scarlet Blade will be out shortly.

The philosophical bit

This time of year can be very stressful or very enjoyable for an athlete or coach depending on his or her frame of mind and circumstances. The desire to win can sometimes be overbearing whether it is due to a need to stop a losing streak or maintain a winning streak. Part of an athlete's ability lays with his or her ability to manage stressful situations. Throughout the winter an emphasis is put on hard training and technique, but it is only in the summer that the athlete's psychological make up is tested to the full.

We can all help each other by giving each other our support whether it be at novice level or International level. That support is the foundation of this club and now is the time to show it. **Whatever your circumstances, have a good time and enjoy your racing !!** Jimmy Connors once said:

"The whole thing is never to get negative about yourself. Sure, it's possible that the other guy you're playing is tough, and that he may have beaten you the last time you played, and okay, maybe you haven't been playing that well yourself. But the minute you start thinking about these things you're dead. I go out to every match convinced I am going to win. That's all there is to it."

Faz's Bit

Well there are only three things worth reporting.

No 1 is that after I had been away for a couple of weeks I noticed that the Mens bog was still full up to the brim and was a total turn off to both new and existing people coming down.

Being a good member I bought some rubber gloves and bleach, stuck my hands down and cleaned it all up. The reason being that in the words of the immortal Gus Gait "People don't really care how many flash articles or flash minutes or press releases are made, but they do care if they can't have a shit"! They also care if they can't have a shower. So there!!

Now that I have hopefully shamed the people who have not bothered to act on this issue, I make one request to the "Hose Committee" which is please **please please** get some soda water or fizzy mineral water for the bar, so that I can drink healthily and avoid the so many Stellas in the future. Many thanks , in anticipation for your kind consideration and implementation of my request.

No 2 is that the coaches in this club (including the Captain) have historically had to put their hands into their own pocket too often. In addition people are putting themselves through Coaching courses (that the club benefits from) etc at their own expense as well as putting in coaching time for free. This has now been remedied through the Veteran Fund, which currently finds itself in a position where it is able to contribute towards the cost of these courses. Many thanks!

No3 is that John and Scully are thankfully getting down to harnessing the real future of the club, i.e. Juniors and Novices.

Final extra remark is that while email is a great facility it should not prevent us from communicating and living the real rather than virtual experience - e.g. dirty, untidy changing and training conditions and of course the lack of Soda Water in the bar!!

Best regards and have a lovely day

Farrell - Bog cleaner and Chief coach!

Self Confidence and Successful Racing

Quote from a book

'The first barrier to success that you must knock over is your lack of confidence in yourself.

How do you build self-confidence?

By making sure that you win often enough.

You do that by increasing your preparations and decreasing your challenge until they cross and you start winning regularly.

When you find the level at which you can win frequently, hold yourself down to that level until you're convinced from scalp to sole that you're a winner.

Once you feel that in your bones, start moving up. Prepare heavily for a slightly higher challenge, seek it out, and keep on winning.

You'll do all this best by coming up with an effective understanding of what winning and success are.

For some people, just being able to compete is in itself splendid victory. Others have wonderful reasons for taking considerable pride in simply completing the race. In most contests, anyone in the top two-thirds has done very well, and being in the top half spells success in almost all areas of life.

If you can make it into the top third anywhere, you're outstanding.

Finishing in the top ten per cent is a tremendous achievement.

Even the great ones don't win all the time. - Anon

Thames Ditton Regatta

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the day of wisdom, it was the day of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the day of light, it was the day of darkness, it was the beginning of hope, it was the beginning of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going to win, we were all going to lose - in short, the day was so far like it always is, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.

Thames Ditton Regatta 2000 as always the opener for the season , the disaster we always have and the disaster we always learn from -nothing seems to change - but Claire spiked my drinks (and Steve Chasey's) with Tequila so all looked good by midnight!

Well done to the Novice women and the Veteran men for showing the rest of how to win. - Faz

Ps and thank you Charles Dickens !

Vets on Tour

Copenhagen Spring International Regatta – sounds fun & it was! What do they feed those Danes on (Birgith?)– much of the opposition would have looked equally at home in a warship. Racing was in contrast both days – controlled on Saturday then having been on the receiving end of a comment about rate and aged vets, we had a point to prove on the Sunday! Great fun and great hospitality – oh and new lungs please! – C & B.

One of many messages to RR

Subject - "Da Ali G Show"

Richard,

May I be the first to extend respect due for yo' massive appearance in da Ali G Show innit, an' tellin' 'im dat you don't go wiv men.

Cool man. Live it up!

Membership update – (a very newly married) Craig Elliott

Many thanks to the 40 plus members who have posted updates to their details to me and to the 45 or so of you who have emailed me. I have made the necessary changes to the database. My appeal for notification of any changes in details has also prompted a few members to write encouragingly about the work on the membership database. Thanks for your support and for taking the time to reply.

There have also been some queries about membership fees, so just as a reminder they are as follows;

Full membership (including regattas) is £240 per annum

Casual membership (not including regattas) is £120 per annum

Social membership is £50 per annum (those paying by standing order please note that this may be more than you are currently paying; if so can I ask you to amend as appropriate?).

Coxes pay £40 per annum while Students pay £110 and Juniors also £110.

Racking fees are £90 for an inside rack and £45 for an outside rack. Any queries about rack allocation should be directed to the Captain; obviously some of you with outside racks would prefer an inside rack and its best to talk that through with Mike. Another stipulation for those with racks is that they should pay full membership along with their rack fees.

Remember also that if you are a member of **Remenham Club**, membership of a founding club is also a requirement. Richard Rowland will shortly be making a return to Remenham with a list of the paid-up members. So if you haven't yet paid your social membership then please send it a.s.a.p. to enable you to spend a few afternoons during late June and early July in that island of serenity and calm amongst a sea of chaos that is Remenham Club.

Finally, some members have written of their association with and memories of the club and its members over the years. Extracts from these mini-memoirs follow:

John Sly writes that he joined the club as a student member in 1946 and became a life member in 1969 having spent 12 years in Nigeria somewhere in-between. He neglects to add what rowing opportunities were to be had in Africa in the 1950's.

Reginald Zimmerman predates John's membership by nearly 20 years having joined as a junior in 1928. A life member for over 50 years, his father was a Captain of the club and coached the Offer brothers in their pairs days.

Members of KRC are far-flung these days as I found out when I received an email from Clem Rogers, now a permanent resident in Perth, Western Australia.

Lastly, several members expressed their sadness at the passing of both Stanley West and Colin Ellis.

Keep sending the updates either to me c/o the club or to the return address on the back of the envelope that your copy of the Scarlet Blade arrived in or you can email me at

craig.j.elliott@lineone.net. Best wishes,

Craig – Honorary Membership Secretary

Sponsored Erg – Josh Pert

Some of you may have noticed that several members of the club walking a little uncomfortably and suffering from sleep deprivation a few weeks ago.

This was not as rumour would have it due to excesses participated in at the blues party. I would like to thank these people for sacrificing their time

(and their buttocks) to spend ludicrous amounts of time on the ergo (and behind the bar) at ridiculous times of the morning, during the 24hr erg event.

The collection in the Bentalls centre raised £580 for Sparks, an effort made all the easier by the attentions of a 6ft tall latex baby costume nobly modeled by Vicky.

Many members of the public had their first contact with the rowing club and some of those who weren't scared off by the site of so much lycra have promised to come down and give it a try in the near future.

As far as the club funds go we already collected several hundred pounds to be divided between new equipment purchases and the clubs chosen charities.

There is still a lot more sponsorship money to be collected and handed in which we can be handed to Mike Smyth, Steve Pratley, John Keane or me. The sooner this is collected the sooner you will all see the benefits.

The bad news is that the fund raising does not stop here. There is still a long way to go before we can say that we have enough to permanently unblock all those toilets, (sorry Farrell) and bring the club back to the conditions that we would all like to enjoy. The good news is that the next event is likely to be something rather less strenuous, which will be welcome news for Steve and Richard who I understand still haven't recovered from seeing in the sunrise from the seat of an ergo.- **Josh**

Safety First - Steve Pratley

Summertime is upon us again and with it come hordes of fairweather rowers, ocean-going liners adrift beyond Teddington lock, and about a squillion gallons of water sent down from Hampton by the wash from Molesey launches.

Early casualties and nominations for this year's golden goggles award have included Rory's first 'immersion' into the world of rowing, Messr's Brook and Maison's showing off to the girls at the canoe club with their eskimo rolling, and a Navy pair who bring the truth of the second line of 'Rule Britannia' in to some doubt.

Grunty Fen Polytechnic new-boy Dave Cotton has also been trying to keep the British boat builders in business with a close inspection of Steven's Eyot in full flood, but with less aplomb than the vandals who followed him down two days later.

Demolition Derby antics are all well and good in their place and would be a ratings winner for the new Supersprints. I for one have 3 pots that didn't require the intervention of a finish line in at least one heat, but let's keep it for the 'S' bend at Reading. Kingston has more than enough coaches for the inexperienced, and land training facilities for the enthusiastic in bad weather.

So remember 3 rules...

- 1) If in doubt, don't go out
- 2) Lights, lights, and spare lights
- 3) If you want to row in red and green kit instead of red and white, go and talk to Damian about Welsh selection, don't go for the algae accessory option, it's so last year.

Keep it safe!

Steve 'that's not fat it's a life-ring' Pratley

So Scarlet Bladers, why so serious? - Andy Wilson

Just to liven things up a tad, here follows a well researched quiz of amusing anagrams. **FREE PINT** for the first correct answers. The clue is (sometimes) in the anagram. Enjoy!!

Try Vet Please	Oil Jane With Rum
Visa to Semen	Guts Again
Oral Corn Cell	Prof. Oar Smells, Arse
Crude Bar Bun	Forms Poll, or All Forms
Fast Reverse	Poser)
Aha! Girl Maybe - (or	Coerce More Bra
Hairy Male Bag)	Big Turd Contest
Job worn	Nil Jaw MOT

Any names alluded to herein are purely non-fictitious and any similarity to persons currently members of KRC is intentional and purely non-coincidental. All entries to be made behind the bar. The judges derision is final. Quiz answers will be denied by the management (but you still get the pint).

For all you unlucky losers, you'll just have to BUY a drink. Well, **GO ON THEN..**

....and for those of you who wondered who the crew was camping at the club for the mens head weekend.....a small piece from Hugh Chamberlain (ex coach & long term club member.)

"Thanks very much, for letting us have the use of the club, and indeed an outing in red VIII.

For the race we managed to get Westminster School to let us use an elderly Empacher of theirs, which was fine, though with 2 subs and a chain-smoker on board miracles were not expected (205th !). Didn't see the final results so didn't see how Kingston fared.

Hope you had a good run on Sunday - when the weather seemed a lot more pleasant.

Seeing Kingston on Thursday night was like stepping into a time warp with Lurch haranguing his crew in the boat bay and most of the faces from 20 years before still around. Nice to see also some time and effort going into premises renewal. To my astonishment even Jim Green appeared at Putney while we were outside Westminster School BC.

If you are thinking of a training camp or similar on the Moselle, let me know as it should be possible to do something at either Metz or Trier. All the best - Hugh"

A Veteran Reminder

The next Vet supper is on Friday the 16th of June! - Please respond to Scott by the 12th of June