

The Scarlet Blade



Chairpersons Report – Carol Cornell

OK – so it's the end of the season (nearly) and therefore a brief version of SB. A few very important points to make. The AGM is being held on Thursday the 3rd of August, - official notification and agenda are contained in this mailshot. Come along, support the club and ask Mike those deep and probing questions you have been discussing over numerous pints of beer throughout the year!

Also very importantly please think about what you can do to help over the coming year. The list of "roles" is up adjacent to the telephone, have a look at it and see whether you can either perform in one area on your own or job share with a chum!

Finally can we ask those of you who have sculling blades in the boathouse to make sure they are clearly labelled, we need to do an end of season boat house clean and those sculls without names will be presumed to be for general use and moved accordingly.

So, sign up for the committee, volunteer your services, have a great summer and we will see you next year. - **Carol**

Captains Report – Mike Smyth

The last time I wrote this article I was dreaming about sipping Pimms at Henley. Now Henley has gone (so quickly) and regrettably my dream never came true – how remiss!! Deciding to leave my Pimms dinking to Saturday afternoon I was horrified to discover that the Remenham bar had run out...**at Henley!!** – the wrong type of Lemonade apparently. Sounds a bit like leaves on the line to me. Of course by then the Guinness had gone aswell so I was left to make do with other alcoholic beverages which I am convinced were the sole cause of my hangover next morning – Higgins!!

Three Henley Semi finals for KRC

A lot has happened since that article and a number of racing combinations formed. Starting with the men, our top boat was a coxless four who started the season at senior 2 and notched up two wins at Reading and Walton to finish at Senior 1. They raced at Henley in the Wyfolds and narrowly lost to Lea in what can only be described as an exciting race.

Perhaps not unusually, as Henley approached another coxless four took shape put together by the sunshine boy supreme, Adam Andrews. They beat their opposition on the Wednesday at Henley, having qualified for the event with ease, only to take woodwork lessons on the Thursday whilst racing Queens Tower.

At the lower end of the group we struggled with injury to field a consistent coxed four to enter the Britannia. Things got so bad that the crew had to resort to a fat, unfit "has been" to sit at stroke. Seemingly unperturbed by 2200 metres of excruciating pain, I agreed. Lessons were learnt over the course of the few weeks that followed by all concerned, and everyone, including myself, came out glad of the whole experience despite failing to qualify after promise in training failed to materialise on the day.

Special mention must go to Colin Greenaway who, after a disappointing end to his selection race this year at Munich, bounced back to qualify for the Diamonds, alongside Simon King, and reach the semi finals, losing only to the winner, Mr. Abdullah.

On the women's side Rebecca Romero continues to perform, both Internationally and on the domestic circuit. Not content with being selected as part of the G.B. pair for the Nations Cup, she interrupted her training to compete in the Princess Royal Challenge Cup. There she reached the semi final with ease only to lose to the eventual winner. Asked about Henley she was heard to comment "I hate it – its like sculling on the North Sea". Hopefully, things will be flatter in Copenhagen later this year. We also must not forget our other international Women who continue to represent us on the International circuit, but who we do not see that often, namely, Jo Nitsche, Jane Hall, Tracey Langlands and Sarah Birch. Kirsten McClelland-Brooks, Tracy Langlands, & Nicole Scott. Also congratulations to Kieren West for his performance in the eight.

Another extremely pleasurable sight was seeing the KRC / Upper Thames composite women's eight in the Henley Prize score a comprehensive victory over Molesey to reach the semi finals of that event. Losing finalists at Women's Henley to the Canadians, they just didn't quite have enough fuel in the tank to overcome the same eight two weeks later as they went through the enclosures. Well done also to the Vet women who won at Veteran Henley in a 4x – old but not forgotten!

At the club end, I was very pleased to see a coxed four emerge and race after a somewhat shaky start to the season. Recording wins at Walton and Reading, they were unlucky to be denied the opportunity of a race at Women's Henley. Overall, this group has grown considerably from the start of the season which is all credit to Gerry Hughes and the girls who have stuck at it. Arguably, perhaps the most successful group in the club (both on and off the water) is the novice women, led by Scully. Picking up their novice pot at Thames Ditton, they went on to win at Kingston and narrowly lost at Richmond in an eight. Their enthusiasm is unsurpassed and they are all a credit to the club – although how much of that is to show me up for saying we couldn't cater for novices at the start of the season, I do not know – I eat my words!!

And so the end....

So we come close to the end of yet another season and my second year as captain. Only a few more regattas to go but some excellent racing is in store as KRC climbs the National Rowing league in search of points. Watch out for KRC crews wherever you go.

The A.G.M is on its way and its important that as many of you attend as possible. This is your one chance in the year to give me a good grilling in public about what's happened over the course of the season and I will do my best to answer your questions. I will also be standing for Captain next year so I will also be able to give you an overview of my plans for the forthcoming season – assuming you want me back!!

Nearly... Training will start in earnest again at the beginning of October and whilst the end of season regattas are fun and should be enjoyed, try to make sure you get in a good rest before you come back. An American Football College Coach once said:
"It's a long, long grind. It's either preseason practice, the season itself, post season weight training, or recruiting. The demands to win can also be very stressful. When we were successful, there was pressure and high expectation to be remain successful. When we were losing, there was pressure to start winning real soon. The pressure and schedule can wear you down and make you just want to leave everything behind for awhile."

HAVE A BREAK AND SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!

A message from RR

New Committee

Those who have been on the Committee this past year hope that you will have noticed things happening for the better around the Club. This has not been achieved without a lot of hard work and, as ever, momentum is lost if it is not maintained. People do not have limitless reserves of time, and not everyone can carry on the tasks they have been undertaking. However, administrative help and support are just as important as "downstairs" activity.

Those areas where we know already we will be thin on the ground are sponsorship/fundraising, coordination of social events and parties and arranging vehicle hire for regattas etc. Other jobs are outlined on the 'Nominations' list on the Noticeboard at the Club - broadly management of the Bar; Boathouse matters (including premises and Health & Safety issues), Public Relations / Magazine; and Schools / University Liaison. Much of this work can be done on a flexible time scale provided that whoever is involved is readily contactable, and does not necessarily require attendance at Committee meetings. Therefore please think seriously about what you can do and contact Mike so he has some idea of the prospects and available resources.

Please also make every effort to attend the AGM. Mike is prepared to put his record "on the line" and listen to feed-back. That will be helpful as we move ahead. The AGM is also your best opportunity to have "six penn'orth" in a positive way. Who knows, it might even have some positive effect?

Everyone involved in the Club wants your support and participation - please do what you can.

You can increase the "feelgood" factor of attending by joining the 200 Club if you are not already a member you ought to be) at the AGM and participating in a prize draw on the spot. The subscription is a mere £15 a year and, as well as regurgitating prize money through the year (with rather better odds than the Lottery) substantial contributions are made to KRC's equipment funding.