

The Scarlet Blade



The
KRC End of Year Dinner

will be held at

The Clubhouse

on

Saturday 14th December

Tickets price: £15 - *must be bought in advance*

Dress: Club Blazer/Lounge Suit

Contact: carol_cornell@hotmail.com or 07767 475881 / 01753 840907

Messages from our Chairman – Guy Lewis

CONGRATULATIONS to James Suenson-Taylor who married Debbie in the summer, our erstwhile captain Graham who married Sara on the 16th of November and a bit further down the line to Karen Relfe who has a splendid ginger haired baby (cos she is married to a ginger haired man!) and Mike Bate who's wife Nicci has given birth to a splendiddark haired baby!

Kingston Small Boats Head. Thank you to everyone who helped put this event together, everything went well and our crews won a lot of the events on offer. Sue and Colin Maddison do the lions share of the work from sending out the entries to hading over the crew numbers on the day. Thanks as well to the safety team, umpires, timekeepers and marshals. No event works without food and beverages so well done to the bar staff and food sellers / preparers!

Results

CONGRATULATIONS to the Club's Womens Open coxless 4 (Rebecca Romero, Sarah Birch, Kate Hewitt and Louisa Rowbotham) which won their Division, beating all but three of the womens' Quads.

Also to Rebecca on retaining her Womens' U23 title in the UK indoor rowing championships, Kate who also won the 30-34 year old Indoor Rowing Title (also retaining her title from last year), and Michelle Dollimore who was third in Lightweights open.

Project Oarsome, The Facts! - *Damain West, Project Co-ordinator*

Hopefully by now most people are aware that Kingston Rowing Club has applied to run a scheme called Project Oarsome. **What is this and what does it mean for us?** Hopefully I can explain all;

Project Oarsome is a scheme run by the ARA and the Lottery to encourage junior rowing throughout the country. In return for £14,000 the Lottery will provide us with £50,000 to spend on junior equipment which will be used by us to partner two local schools and encourage the spread of rowing. Hopefully we can use this to build on the foundations we have already laid through our existing junior group.

What does this mean for the club?

There are some things it definitely does mean and some misconceptions that it definitely does not.

To deal with the facts first:

- Through the scheme we partner two local schools to introduce children who would not otherwise have the opportunity to the sport of rowing. The two schools chosen are Chessington Community College and Beverly School.
- The scheme works over a seven year lifetime, with a new year group being introduced to the scheme each year (thus by the end of seven years you potentially have seven year groups rowing at the club).
- After seven years the equipment that was provided by the Lottery at the start of the scheme becomes ours.
- We have already started planning with the two schools how we will run the scheme. We will launch the scheme at an assembly at each school, hopefully before Christmas. In January the whole year group (year 7's) will be offered the chance to learn rowing technique on ergos (focused on safety and watermanship while still being fun)
- At Easter we invite the children down to KRC to start the water based section of the scheme. We have a choice over which children we invite down, by this stage we would expect 10-15 children from each school to still be interested. This starts with a capsized drill (which can be done in a swimming pool) before they progress to being allowed out on the river. The water based section (wet start) lasts for the summer term (and into the summer holidays if we wish to extend it).
- At the start of the next year the previous year group will hopefully return while we introduce a new year group to rowing.

The Benefits:

- **We receive £50,000 worth of equipment for a £14,000 investment.** WE specify the equipment we feel we need. This must include a safety launch and will probably include some ergos. The remainder of the equipment should be aimed at allowing us to boat and teach the juniors. HOWEVER, the equipment can also be used by the rest of the club. The Project Oarsome launch will be vital to our adult as well as junior members in ensuring their success – we have no coaching launch in working order at the moment. We are also desperately short of sculling blades as a club (we have one club set to share between 50 athletes). The sculling blades we need to buy for Project Oarsome will also prove invaluable to the rest of the club. Finally the rowing boats can be used by the rest of the club if not being used by the juniors. This will in effect increase our fleet of sculling boats and provide us with restricted boats to take beginners out in, something the club desperately needs and currently lacks. They will also in effect provide us with brand new women's boats (as they are similar weight to junior boats). The Project Oarsome equipment will therefore not only benefit the juniors, it will allow us to provide top class equipment for our existing and future adult members. There is even the potential to sell some of the older equipment that will be superseded by the Project Oarsome equipment, thus raising revenue for the club that can be reinvested in further improvements to the club.

- **Increased membership.** We could be receiving up to 30 new members a year. Junior squads are becoming an increasingly vital aspect of safeguarding a club's future and KRC has been crying out for one for as long as I have been a member (15 years +). Both our nearest rivals as clubs (Molesey and Walbrook) have already set up junior squads and if we are to ensure the future success of our club we must do the same. This is important both to give us visibility (and hopefully success) as a club in junior competitions and also over time to feed our adult membership. Whilst it is true that not all of the Project Oarsome juniors will stay members in the long term, hopefully a number will.

- **Increased revenue.** There are two important sources of funding that Project Oarsome will open up:

- *Firstly*, we will now be able to apply for additional lottery and other funding based on the fact we are now catering for children from a state school background. We can not do this at present.

- *Secondly*, we can charge membership fees to the Project Oarsome juniors, as we do our current squad. Even if we decided not to do this the influx of extra members, accompanied by their parents will certainly bring in extra revenue to the club

- **Improved community relations.** Our relationship with Kingston Borough Council is vital. They have been (an hopefully will continue to be) a source of funding for the club, giving us £5,500 over the last two years to support our women's and junior squads. They are also our landlords. Both roles mean that they will play an important part in the future development of the club, be it through the support of our current members or through the extension of the boathouse (anyone visiting the club will agree we outgrew our current boathouse long ago)

I am also aware that as with all changes, there have been some rumours about possible downsides to Oarsome directly affecting the club, - hopefully I can deal with a few here:

- **“The existing members will be pushed out by the new juniors”.** The children who come to the club will predominantly use the facilities after school (4-6pm)

weekdays) and on one or both weekend afternoons. These are times when the club is under utilised to the point of being shut so it is unlikely that at these times the children will have any direct affect on the current users of the club. An underlying theme of our application has been that we would NOT endanger our current membership, either financially or otherwise, through Project Oarsome.

- **“We have mortgaged our current income and equipment for the future”.** No money from the subs have been diverted from supporting the club’s current members to finance Project Oarsome. When I applied for the scheme last year I was very clear that we would ONLY enter the scheme if we could raise the money in addition to our normal revenue. I am extremely pleased to say that largely through the extremely generous support of a number of older members we have managed to do this. In addition we have not had to sell any equipment to finance the scheme.

What is left to do?

- **December 2002** – Final confirmation that we have been accepted onto the scheme. Launch the scheme at the schools
- **January 2003** – The dry start starts
- **April 2003** – The first juniors come down to KRC

Experience of other clubs on the scheme points to the fact that Project Oarsome is what you make of it. A number of members have already volunteered financially and with their time to help out. Without them (and especially the extremely generous financial donations we have received over the last two months) we wouldn’t be in the position we are in today. If managed well Project Oarsome can be one of the schemes that pushes the club back into the top echelons of British rowing. It is up to us now but I hope you will agree that Project Oarsome makes KRC’s future look that bit brighter!

Project Oarsome Fundraising

90% of the money we have had to raise to get the project of the ground has come from our life members, these are members who by reason of long unbroken membership of KRC have been given life membership status. I wrote to them individually a few weeks ago asking for a donation equivalent to a years subscription, I have been staggered by the response and letters of support I received, some of the donations were considerably in excess of the amount requested!

If you are a life member and have not got round to sending me a donation the door is still open! - GL

Pledge Auction – A large thank you to all those of you who committed pledges of some sort especially Jo Lacknor who prepared food for the day. Unfortunately the event was unable to run due to lack of attendees, therefore we are intending to auction a selection of the items at the Christmas Dinner with the majority being held over until February of the New Year. Those of you wishing to see a full list of items, this can be found on the club web site kingstonrc.co.uk

Regalia

We have (finally) ordered new blazer buttons, delivery expected by early December. Price will be around £2.75 a button (sorry - RR’s brain isn’t up to sorting out large from small). Contact RR (day phone 020 7826 2808 or e-mail richard.rowland@pgen.com) for orders.

Results, thoughts, views and comments for the next edition of SB should be sent to carol_cornell@hotmail.com by Jan 31st 2003.