

# The Scarlet Blade



The  
**Annual Club Dinner**  
will be held at  
**The Bank of England Sports Club**  
on  
**Friday 11<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30p.m.**

**Special Guests: Jonny Searle & Chris Hall**

**Ticket Price: £34**

**Dress: Club Blazer / Lounge Suit**

Contact: [carol\\_cornell@hotmail.com](mailto:carol_cornell@hotmail.com) or 07767 475881

Please Note – This is not a profit making event

## Messages from our Chairman – Guy Lewis

LIFE MEMBERS.....thank you !

As you will read elsewhere in Scarlet Blade, we have the go ahead for Project oarsome, apart from putting in place the infrastructure at the club to run the scheme we also needed to raise £14,500, as a ' seed-corn ' amount towards the grant to enable us to buy £52,000 worth of boats and equipment.

This amount had to be raised by the club , not from resources but as a result of fund raising specifically for the project, hence the letter that arrived on the doorsteps of our 53 life members last October ! The result was fantastic, letters started arriving by return of post with donations enclosed , others promised money by the year out ( yes, they were received ) all were highly supportive of the scheme and appreciated how good it will be for the club and by Christmas we had the money we needed.

Many of these members have not been at the club for many years, C.G. Parsons confessed to last having rowed at KRC in 1948! Bob Monier-Williams (captain 1952/3) mused that he had enjoyed a good few years as life member for nothing and realised it was pay-back time! Geoffrey Reay remembered editing the first edition of *Scarlet Blade* in the early '60s with the help of Clive Hallt who suggested the name, if you have still got that first edition Geoffrey, we would love to see it. Bill 'Willy GB' Clarke, captain mid 60s is another rarely seen 'heavy' but still interested in what goes on at KRC.

So thanks once again for your support, please watch this space for news of the project as we get it off the ground.

### **Captains Report – Graham Bailey**

#### **The Rivers "High but we're holding on"**

So what have you missed well for starters the landing stage has tried to escape but the flood water appears to be receding (famous last words) and hopefully it is the last time this year that the club group has to carry the trailer out to the road as the tow path sat under 2 feet of water. But it was worth the trips to Dorney, good to see a club group of 25 at there too.

I couldn't go without a brief mention for the great Christmas party – Nice to hear the bar closed up at 3.30am, unfortunate that it wiped out the Men's Squad for Sunday Morning with a few members lost in action. I'd like to re-iterate my thanks to Carol for organising the event, Andy for organising the Bar and Caroline for sorting out the lights and smoke machine - it made some members look really quite sporty!.

#### **Novice Crews**

The most important part of the club, the success of the Tank training for the novices has really paid off and we had our mixed Novice group putting out an Eight and a Four on Saturday this is totally down to the work of Scully and Steve Chasey. To have three novice men with 6.30 2k times is a real bonus as long as we can teach them to row.

#### **Oarsome.**

We have been accepted on the Project Oarsome Scheme and can now order the £50,000 of kit and boats for Juniors at Kingston. This will be four new sculls, two doubles a coxed quad and a launch. I'd like thank Guy Lewis with respect to how much he has done in leading the fund raising for Project Oarsome with the help of the life members (WELL OVER £13,000) and from the men's squad members who took party in the sponsored triathlon that also contributed and got us a new launch engine. Damian, Kieran and I started the first ergo phase of Oarsome at Beverly School with 70 pupils and this dry phase will run until Easter. This will all help grow the Junior group that Lizzy is driving forward for us. If you want to get involved then please let me know. This brings a Wider Benefit for the Club - we can now sell four of our old junior boats to

raise money to refurbish the top women's pairs and fours and look towards raising money for a men's eight.

### **GB Squad Trials**

A very Big Well done for Michelle, Louisa and Kate for their results at the squad trials. Dan has continued his drive but knows he can and will go faster. The next round of trials is this Saturday the 8th Feb in Boston.

### **Going Forward**

We have the Women's and Men's Eights Head on the 15th and 29th March respectively plus Kingston 8's head on the 22nd March. The Club groups will spend Easter in Tilburg, Southern Holland, preparing for Henley and Oarsome will move to the river. Club circuits continue to grow on Thursday evenings at 7.30. So if you want to get fit get fit at Kingston and support the club (and the bar) come down on Tuesday and Thursday.

Look forward to seeing you,

Thanks - Graham

Lastly "Granddad we Love U...". Steve Chasey become a Granddad just before Christmas so congratulations due there - rumours that the child will be called Stella are however unfounded.

### **Project Oarsome Update – Damian West, Project Co-ordinator**

It's been a few months since my last update on Project Oarsome. At the time we were still trying to raise the remaining funds and grapple with how we were going to introduce the scheme to the two schools we are going to partner. I am happy to report that February finds us having achieved a number of significant milestones:

- We received notification at the end of December from the Lottery that we had been accepted onto the scheme – congratulations to all involved and thanks again to those who donated money so generously to help us raise the funding!
- Just before Christmas Graham, Kieran, Jill Cobbett (from the ARA) and myself launched the scheme at Beverly School to a group of 85 very enthusiastic children. Having watched a video of Kieran winning the Olympics (one kid at the back was frantically miming the rowing action with his arms for most of the race - the kind of enthusiasm we're looking for I feel!) they were divided into groups and given a crash course by the four of us in rowing on the ergometers we had brought along.

➤ Shortly after Christmas we launched at the other school, Chessington Community College. Again the scheme was very well received with over 100 children enthusiastically having their first experience of rowing machines. Thanks to Sarah, Richard and Jill for helping out.

➤ We have received the contract from the ARA and the equipment options list which will be submitted imminently (and possibly before this goes to print). This allows the ARA to combine our contribution (£14,000) with the Lottery money (£ 41,000) and order the equipment on our behalf. We will receive four brand new ergos (these may well be at the club before you read this), a new launch and safety kit, four single sculls, two doubles and a coxed quad (and 16 sets of sculls). Part of the committee meeting last night was spent deciding where we were going to put all this new equipment – a problem I wouldn't mind grappling with on a more regular basis!

➤ Having launched at the two schools we are now finalising the arrangements for the "Dry Start" section of the scheme. This is where the children from both schools are taught on ergos the basics of rowing technique. The rowing "lessons" take place at their schools between now and Easter and are an opportunity for the children to see if they enjoy rowing and for us to decide who we want to invite down to KRC at Easter (when they will start going out on the water for the first time).

As I've said in the past, this is a major scheme for the club to be involved in, partnering as we are the Lottery, ARA, Beverly School and Chessington Community College. It will no doubt transform the junior rowing at the club (we may only be a few years off catching Molesey in this area) and will, if managed properly, have a positive effect on the adult rowing at the club.

To make the most of the scheme we need to involve as many people as possible from the club to help run and most importantly coach for the scheme (though this should not require a large commitment on your part). If you would like to help on the coaching side, either at the schools between now and Easter (when sessions will run once a week during the day) or, more probably, when the children start going out on the water (at weekends and possibly after school) then please contact myself ([damianrwest@hotmail.com](mailto:damianrwest@hotmail.com)) or Graham. A number of people have already said they are interested. The level of commitment we are looking for is probably only one weekend afternoon a month (if that) for most of the water sessions and we can also arrange half price training courses with the ARA (so you get a recognised qualification) for those of you who are interested. This is a great way to start / get back into coaching and I'm sure coaching children who have not rowed before (and but for this scheme would almost certainly never have had the chance) will be enormously rewarding.

I look forward to hearing from you and to welcoming the children to Kingston at Easter!

Damian West

## "Sportsmatch" - How you can fund the club for free

I hope that got your attention! To explain in brief, one of the main driving forces behind Project Oarsome was to provide a stepping stone for KRC to apply for a wider range of funding. I have already applied for £10,000 from the Foundation for Sports and Arts who are considering our application. Graham and myself will also in the next few weeks be talking to the ARA development officer about other avenues of funding. Many of these are only open to us because we have been accepted onto Project Oarsome (though for those of you adult members tearing your hair out at the thought of more junior funding while the adult side of the club is neglected, the funding we are looking into now is for adult rowing, NOT the juniors (who I feel have done rather well in the funding stakes over the last few months!)).

One scheme that I want to draw your attention to is Sportsmatch. Sportsmatch is the government's grass roots sports sponsorship incentive scheme, funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport through grant aid from Sport England and administered in England by the Institute of Sports Sponsorship. Any non-profit group (such as KRC) can apply and any profit distributing business (such as the one you work for) can sponsor us. The amounts can be between £500 (a few new oars) to £50,000. The scheme will match the money donated by a business, so KRC receive double the initial sponsorship. The criteria are that the sponsor is either a first time sponsor of grass roots sport or is providing additional sponsorship over previous years.

If you want any more information you can find it on the Sportsmatch website [www.sportsmatch.co.uk](http://www.sportsmatch.co.uk) or contact me ([daminrwest@hotmail.com](mailto:daminrwest@hotmail.com)). Graham and myself are looking forward to hearing your sponsorship offers!

P.S. There is of course the good old fashioned type of sponsorship where your company give us money in return for their name on the side of our boat, entertainment at Henley, etc.....?

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### Regalia

RR is pleased to announce - THE BUTTONS HAVE ARRIVED.

Price £2.50 each, - sorry I can't cope with the hassle of dealing with large and small separately). Contact me (day phone 020 7826 2808 or e-mail

[richard.rowland@pgen.com](mailto:richard.rowland@pgen.com) ) for orders.

## **KRCRCRC - the new society – James Masters**

With domination of the British rowing scene no longer presenting enough of a challenge, an elite group of KRC oarsmen past and present have decided to embark on a quest for new sports to conquer. The inaugural Kingston Rowing Club Ryder Cup Replica Challenge (KRCRCRC) was held in November, pitting the silky golf skills of Kingston oarsmen against each other for the first time.

Captains were chosen according to the KRC tradition of who could shout the loudest and had the nicest trolley, and Nigel WD constructed an arcane handicap system guaranteed to cause more upset and constant revision than anything the ARA could ever muster. The draw for the teams was then made followed by detailed strategic discussion on playing orders by the two captains – Richard Haig and Paul Francis. A desperately close competition ensued, finally being decided on the last hole between Nigel and Paul with victory going to the Europeans (of course) – resulting in an electric atmosphere from the crowd - although sadly lacking in an invasion from blonde wives on the final green, something we are looking to resolve before the next match.

The return match is planned for sometime after the 8's head, and entries are invited from anyone who can tip up with something resembling a golf club. Rowers concentration spans and revulsion towards early mornings mean that matches are currently over 9-holes only, held in the afternoon so as not to interrupt waterborne activities.

Currently the teams are formed just from Kingston members, but the aim is to make it a regular competition and challenge other rowing clubs in the area, followed by fund raising and eventually trophy presentation in the bar afterwards.

If you have any suggestions for the competition or wish to take part in the next round, then please get in touch with James Masters – [jamesrichardmasters@hotmail.com](mailto:jamesrichardmasters@hotmail.com)

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### **News from Down Under.....**

#### **Are You Feeling Cold?**

January and February were always the worst months. Returning after the Christmas break to short days, cold weather, fast stream and the regatta season still 5 months away. For some reason those months always seemed to drag and the training just got harder and harder.

Not so on the other side of the world where I and my coaching buddy Ryder are right in the thick of the regatta season anticipating the New Zealand National Championships just 3 weeks away.

#### **It all started with a beer (as usual).....**

That's right. On the viaduct harbour to be precise, at the Loaded Hog, an ale house overlooking all the America's Cup boats (Where Carol Cornell met her husband to be precise!). I thought I'd look Ryder up after I'd heard he was running his own business down under. We met, chewed the fat, reminisced about KRC days, GBR weekends, Guinness and then we discussed Auckland Rowing Club. A row in the veteran eight one week later must have whetted the appetite, because he was to be back....

### **...and we had great plans...**

Have you ever noticed how you tend to go 10 seconds quicker after a beer or two? That the distance between you and your opposition in that winning race increases from two feet to two lengths in the bar? In fact, since this theory never fails perhaps we should do all our training in the bar.

So it was born that two retired oarsmen from KRC thought they would take on the might of New Zealand rowing in a double scull (after we'd finished that pint of Speights).

### **...but there are always distractions**

Its odd, but whenever you set yourself an ambitious target, and the alcohol wears off, and the hangover kicks in, there are always distractions from preventing you fulfilling your dream.

Well in October last year I was appointed coach to the Women's group at Auckland Rowing Club. Initially, nothing to get too excited about since there were only two athletes, but after a few weeks they were joined by two more, one left and I had three. Then two youngish veteran ladies decided to chance their arm at senior rowing and we were five. Today we stand at nine, including two New Zealand full internationals and one junior international.

The coaching became a full time job, our own outings diminished and now we are back in the bar with our other coaches talking of what could have been, had we carried on rowing!

### **Its all for the best**

However, we don't begrudge that decision to abandon our own rowing plans to concentrate on our coaching. We are very fortunate to have a very committed and enjoyable squad of girls under our wing.

To boot, they are also very successful. Several early wins in the pre Christmas regattas set us up nicely for the season and now our sights are fixed firmly on the New Zealand Nationals held this year at Twizel on a crystal blue glacial lake – I'm told the scenery is awesome!!

### **Its all upside down**

Coaching on the other side of the world can offer its challenges. The regatta calendar is structured in a very different way with Christmas bang in the middle of the season. This means all the old training programmes have to be adjusted. For those who go onto international selection, they get an overseas

regatta season right in the middle of winter training – I still haven't got my head round how I'm going to cope with that one yet. It's a bit like being at full regatta fitness at the Eights Head and then doing it all over again for Henley!

### **The secret of success – Mango!**

The other difference is that we have our training camp in January, half way through the season and just 7 weeks away from the Nationals. Forget Ghent, forget Nancy, and that place in Holland we went to – you need Mango!! Or, Mangakino to be precise.

Set on the edge of the Kinleith forest in the deepest darkest depths of the North Island lies a small township which I can only describe as resembling a Wild West town. The Sheriff and Deputy Dog turned up on the first night to tell us to keep ourselves to ourselves as the locals could be hostile. Still, reports of a shooting prior to Christmas had not deterred us – a 10k stretch of flat water was ideal for our regatta training even though a few dodgy people were seen lurking around:

### **Mad dogs of Englishmen**

We like to think we have introduced some whacky English coaching styles to New Zealand during our the last year. For example, if you want to go fast, just fly.....

And we've even composed our own haka!

### **Disaster strikes**

Unfortunately, despite all the preparation our squad has been hit by illness and injury this week which has created a few challenges for us so near to our main event. In particular, our top athlete has been struck with a viral infection which the doctors say will keep her out for between 2-4 weeks.

What seemed like certain medals a week ago are now looking a little shakey. Fingers are crossed for a recovery and we'll let you know how we get on.

### **A successful year for ARC**

Despite what happens in 3 weeks time, Ryder and I feel we have made a huge impact at ARC. Nobody at the club expected to have a women's squad this year and we have been told that we are already a year ahead of schedule.

Of great satisfaction to the club is the fact that for the first time since 1973, we have been able to race a Premier Women's Eight for the club. Although we haven't won this prestigious event we have always made the final. Below is our women's eight training at Mangakino (with Ryder coxing!!)

We have exchanged the Thames for the Tamaki, Hampton Court for Rangitoto, gin palaces for dolphins, the cold for the warm, Nottingham for Karapiro, and Henley for Twizel. But at the end of it all, rowing is the same the world over, especially the people you meet along the way.

Ryder has been a great support to me over the last few months and it makes me very proud to think that we both come from good Kingston stock. We both miss the old place and hope to see you all very soon.... Keep your fingers crossed for Twizel and the best of luck to you all for the coming season.

Take care,

The Auckland branch of KRC

