

The Scarlet Blade



Kingston Rowing Club's official newsletter
Spring edition February 2006

Chairman's Report & Annual Dinner

Guy Lewis

The year 2008 is our 150th anniversary and the present committee want to make sure we celebrate in style, various plans have been mooted, including a room at Hampton Court Palace, a decent London Hotel, River boat, Summer Ball at Remenham Club etc. We have in place some members willing to drive this forward and in due course we will send out a questionnaire for your input in the meantime if you have any thoughts now, please let me know.

Remenham is limited to 1000 members, and that cut off point is rapidly approaching, if you are eligible to join it is essential that you get the application forms signed now and then sent off direct to the Remenham membership secretary. All applications will be considered at the next Remenham meeting in April and will be elected in order of when they were received by the secretary. Once the limit is reached a waiting list will be drawn up and new members will be elected when spaces become available. Application forms are behind the bar and include the secretary's address. Any queries contact your Remenham club reps, Guy Lewis or Nigel Main.

Dinner

102 members and guests sat down to an excellent meal at the clubhouse on the 10th of February. Everybody made an effort to look the part and local charity shops must have made a fortune re-cycling DJ's it was also good to see and hear a vociferous group in their Club Blazers! All the girls looked great and re-inforced my view that KRC girls are the best looking on the river! It was, however a bit disappointing that we were short of the First V111 crew, they were due to race an allegedly 'Slippy' crew from Molesey BC and decided that a possible chance of food poisoning could not be ignored and so decided to stay away and rely on their usual Friday night repast of Kebab and chips (not Iron Guts Mike Wallace however who decided to risk the watercress soup on offer at the dinner) the upshot was however, that the 'Black Death' phoned the Skip on the night of the dinner and cancelled.....thanks a lot MBC!

The speeches were a little long winded which probably explains the 'black hole' in my life between about 12 midnight and about 1.15 am! But our elder statesman Terry Gostling was clear and to the point (I'm told) although somehow found something nice to say about one of our guests, Jonathon Steel president of Remenham Club and a stalwart of the 'Black Death' up river. Our President Alan Spong gave his first speech in this capacity and paid respect to our past president Dick Offer who was also at the dinner.

The Coveted 'Poupart Cup' was this year presented to Martin Ellis for all his work with the Junior squad which is going from strength to strength. In case you do not know, the cup was presented to the Club by Mrs Joan Poupart in memory of her husband, they used to live in the flats overlooking Canbury Gardens and enjoyed watching all the activity going on at the Club. It is presented by the Captain to the member who has gone the 'extra mile' to help the club in whatever capacity.

Veteran Rowing

2nd ANNIVERSARY LEVIATHAN OUTING & LUNCHEON - Sunday 15 January 2006

L. U. R. Cheston-Porter

Two eights were boated, selected between the specialists, who have spent untold decades perfecting the ability to row on one side perfectly, and the GP's, who can manage on both, or neither, sides.

"AMBIDEXTROUS" *Karlisch* wooden 8+: cox: PATSY Fallon, stroke: GUS Gait, 7: DOC Steer, 6: LARS List, 5: RR Rowland, 4: RAMBO Lewis, 3: DI Gait, 2: JONESEY Jones, Bow: ROSS Perou.

"OMNIDEXTROUS" *Empacher* wooden 8+: cox: SOOTY Biddulph, stroke: ATILLA Ayling, 7: PIGLET Pearce, 6: BARELEAU Barclay, 5: LURCH Ayling, 4: BOOTS Brunt, 3: SKIPPY Ronald, 2: MANGE Godrich, Bow: WEASEL Christie

HORS DE COMBAT: GOZ Gostling, (present but unable to row due to lack of fitness caused by age), STICK West (Ditto), HORATIO Nelson (ditto - except not present and no excuse with age), SHOULDERS Wibberley (PUSS in BOOTS)

OUTING REPORT: 10.30am Sunday 15 January

A pleasant morning saw the bodies gathering downstairs at the club, as the numbers grew. With the added complication of the Remenham Head the following weekend at which the fittest and strongest of the Leviathans are due to compete with the Crooksey 4- combination (Crooks, Tompkins, Sweeney, Merrall), the crew selection was a little longer than the traditional brief but fair Leviathan method.

LURCH & ATILLA Ayling had brought down their "ringer" they thought to help pull them along. LARS List 28-year old former Under 23 International. In deciding to join his chums GUS Gait quickly sought to add LARS to his AMBIDEXTROUS (Row both sides) crew. So the make up of the crews was decided and the OMNIDEXTERS set about hitting the water. PATS Fallon and SOOTY Biddulph were entrusted with the health and welfare of their charges of varying fitness. This had all proved too much for GOZ Gostling and STICK West, who ruefully (or was that smugly?) watched both crews going afloat.

Once the kit inspection was over, our KIT MANAGER the GOZ, donned his other hat, that of Leviathan Chairman and remembering back to that fine January morning in 2004, when he PIGLET, RR and WEASEL set the Leviathan in motion in their 4-, bade farewell to the two eights from the landing stage. The weather was overcast but dry, a strongish wind blowing towards the bridge, good water conditions although reasonably busy river traffic.

Afloat OMNIDEXTROUS took the warm-up initiative, until the Marina, where AMBIDEXTROUS passed them while the former were undertaking a series of quality exercises. A few unscheduled stops on the way upstream allowed the Leviathans to gather breath and composure. In addition some advice on technique was exchanged during these pauses between the two crews. LARS had early realised that his outing with former internationals was a bit wide of the mark, but was enjoying learning some new rowing traditions as well as learning a few new English words to add to his vocabulary.

While waiting at Ditton's Bend, PIGLET regaled the crew with stories of times past, especially relating to our famed Chairman the GOZ and his stern pairing in the past with the Leviathan European representative, Le Baron Beynon. To save embarrassment to the aforementioned senior Leviathanites, we will not repeat the story here - but it was a goodie.

At Hampton Court, just short of the Bridge, the crews turned and after some brief negotiation between GUS, LURCH, SOOTY and (particularly important) the DOC, it was decided to row 20-30-40-30-20 stroke pyramids on the return journey.

In the first set, OMNIDEXTROUS started ahead, then gradually the superior fitness, strength (and power of the 28-year old at 6) began to tell, and the AMBIDEXTROUS crew then dominated proceedings thereafter. In true Leviathan traditions though the faster crew allowed the slower to get back on terms, so that they both were able to follow the work together on the way back. Both coxes steered excellent courses. For PATSY this was a welcome

return, following her last outing with the Leviathan since September, and allowing the side-by-side nature of the two eights did a fine job.

The last piece of the celebration outing was a spirited last 250metres to the Boathouse, which unsurprisingly saw the both siders ahead again. Both crews then returned to the stage, to the welcoming banter our Chairman and other KRC members who by now realised this was a special day.

POST-OUTING CELEBRATIONS -

After the usual showering off, the crews attended the lengthy de-brief before the 2.15 off for the Celebration Luncheon. QUEEN and SYLVIE had been "hard at it" (the cooking I mean - come on !!!) while the Leviathans had been toiling on the water, and the magnificent feast was welcomed by one and all. The £8 cost (including wine) was supplemented with a £2 donation to the KRC boat fund (which amounted to about £80).

Joining the Leviathans was the KRC President Alan (SEA) Spong and total numbers for the meal was about 40. Thanks were given to our President and Events Manager QUEEN and his lady for all their efforts in the kitchen (Culinary or otherwise!!!) and a long enjoyable afternoon was enjoyed by all.

GERMAN SUMMER TRIP IN THE OFFING ?

Following a suggestion from ATILLA, and subsequent discussions between GUS and LARS (our German guest) at the anniversary luncheon, a possible trip for Leviathans in September looks to be a marvellous rowing and cultural opportunity.

Basically, the KOBLENZ Club Regatta takes place on 9th September. The initial concept is that based on low costs outlay, the Leviathans could place an airline booking from Stanstead to Hahn (near Koblenz) for a long weekend of Culture and Fun. For the actives would be the opportunity to imbibe and compete with like minded Jerries - who include I am told some escoffiers and imbibers equal at least to our own QUEEN, GOZ, PIGLET and LURCH ! Cultural evenings are planned to extend the endurance threshold for all. KOBLENZ is placed on the joining of the Moselle and Rhine rivers, so offers the opportunity of either grape. Wine tastings of both could be on offer.

Oarsmen's Cross-Country

Old Jogger

The oarsmen's cross-country was held over the traditional course in Windsor Great Park on Saturday 21st January. By coincidence this was the day before the Remenham Head, an excuse eagerly grasped by certain members of the men's and women's senior squads to wimp out. Fortunately the novices and veterans are made of sterner stuff and duly assembled on the wind-swept gallop under a glorious January sky. For the technically minded, the going was good to soft. As usual the start was given by Chris Morrell from Windsor Boys' School who has been organising the event for 29 years but, as far as I know, has never actually taken part in it.

A welcome innovation this year was the presentation of a Mars bar as the exhausted competitors crossed the line together with the presence of a snack stall where additional pick-me ups could be purchased although, sadly, nothing alcoholic. Back at the school, the cakes and sandwiches were up to the expected standard and, when the results were announced, Kingston had won the Women's open individual prize (Sharon Hembrow), Women's open team prize (Sharon, Di Gait, Anne Crooks and Claire Bordeaux) and the Men's veteran plus team prize (Angus Gait, David Ford, Andy Tompkins and Tim Crooks). Full results were: Lee Wheeler - 10, Angus Gait - 30, David Ford - 36, Andy Tompkins - 41, Colin Mercer - 45, Tim Crooks - 50, Dermod Sweeney - 52, Adam White - 68, Ray Merrill - 105, Sharon Hembrow - 113, Di Gait - 115, Anne Crooks - 133, Claire Bordeaux - 136, Jenny Southgate - 137. Oh, and Ray, Dermod, Tim, Colin, Andy and Angus all rowed in the veteran eight in the Remenham Head the following day, with no little success.

Veterans

Angus Gait

The Remenham Head provided the ideal pipe-opener for those older oarsmen whose pipes need to be opened by Dyno-Rod. Hosted this year by Vesta Rowing Club, the course was rowed over (a rather large) part of the Head of

the River course, from Barnes Bridge to the Vesta flag pole. With a range of entries from veteran B (little more than adolescents) to veteran E (gnarled and weathered geriatrics), KRC strategically chose to be as old as possible and put in an E crew. Starting at the back of about a dozen veteran crews, the first target was the Molesey E crew starting in front. Despite Jonathan Steele's urgings, the Molesey crew had no reply to the Kingston length, power and rhythm other than to concentrate on their own shortness, fade and rush and were overhauled by Lep. Disappointingly, this was the only crew KRC overtook, due in no small measure to the intervals at the start. None the less, the results showed that the KRC had emerged victorious in the D/E division without recourse to any handicap and, when the number crunchers had finished their deliberations, were also placed first in the entire event. The KRC crew was Ken Perou, Ray Merrall, Guy Lewis, Colin Mercer, Angus Gait, Tim Crooks, Andy Tompkins and Dermod Sweeney, coxed by Mike Wale. Note that next year Kingston will be hosting the event.

Treasurer's Report

Angus Gait.

Over the next few years, the Club must face up to the decades of neglect of the building and contemporary requirements for health and safety. A survey carried out for Tiffin School had identified major work that needs to be carried out. Over the next two or three years, this could cost a quarter of a million pounds, of which KRC's contribution will be half. In the next few months alone, the cost for what has been identified as essential safety work is likely to be £25,000 and we will have to find half of that sum. Clearly this is a major problem for the Club and one that the committee and officers are addressing. However it is a financial burden that, one way or another, will fall on all members be it by paying increased subs, using the bar more, helping to increase membership by coaching or anything else.

The consequences of being unable to meet our commitments in this respect are not well defined at present but should become clearer in the near future. However, it is highly likely that if we cannot raise the money, the future of the Club will be different from what we hope it will be.

Safety

Just because the evenings are drawing out...

The Environment Agency are uncompromising about displaying lights at night. Article 5 of the Thames Navigation Licensing and General Byelaws states that "The Byelaws concerning lights shall be complied with from sunset to sunrise." Article 8(c) states "The master of a manually propelled vessel ... shall cause to be exhibited an all-round white light or two white lights giving the same coverage." These are constant lights not flashing ones.

Think twice before putting your hand down to push off...

This was published in October 2005 by the ARA and is a reminder to rowers with the increased threat of bird Flu arriving in the UK.

Wild birds in this country are not known to be carrying the deadly strain of Bird flu at present so the risk of being infected is currently thought to be very low. However with the outbreak of Bird Flu in the European Union and the waterways used by UK rowers being a haven for wildlife, in particular migrating birds, rowers should take note of the following;

Bird flu is a highly infectious disease affecting many species of birds including migratory wildfowl. It is spread by movement of infected birds or, more relevant to rowers, contact with their secretions, particularly faeces, either directly or through contaminated objects, clothes or vehicles.

What measures should rowers take? Echoing the guidance notes in the ARA Water Safety code (under waterborne diseases) high standards of personal hygiene will help prevent ingestion and inhalation of infective material and reduce the risk of transmission to others. Thorough washing with soap and water is an effective method of decontamination and may usefully be enhanced by the use of anti-viral hand wash/wipes following effective washing.

Rowers should avoid handling obviously sick or diseased birds.

Think twice before you put your hand down to push off...

Vamp Scratch Eights

Bad Loser

Traditionally this event is held on the first Sunday of the New Year but, as this fell on 1st January this year, there was always a chance that the less robust members would not emerge from their comatose state in time to get an entry in. Nevertheless, tradition is tradition and two eights comprising the Club's fittest and finest assembled. Yet again, the crews were stroked by the two old farts (*surely the two distinguished elder oarsmen? – Ed*) who seem to end up racing each other every year but, tradition is tradition. After a titanic struggle, although fortunately there were no icebergs, one crew beat the other one, just. Another tradition that was maintained this year was having one of Vamp's relatives in the winning crew. Brother Tony has won previously and this year nephew Luke kept the family tradition going. The lucky winners were: Ken Perou, Di Gait, Ray Merrall, Lee Wheeler, Luke Ellis, Darren Warbrick, Andy Tompkins, Tim Crooks, Dilip Patel.

Juniors

Luke Ellis

The season has gone well so far with the older juniors having regular training sessions with the seniors and also integrating into senior boats. Fiona Lunney has also got the younger juniors going well with a particularly impressive girls J14 squad. The highlight so far has to be the Remenham Challenge on 22 Jan. In early December we decided to get a MJ8 together and lay down the gauntlet to the other Remenham Clubs. With the help of Matt Evans from the senior group we had a training camp between Xmas and the New Year and honed our sweep oar skills in readiness first for a go at the Vamp Rum Punch Scratch Eights. It must have done the trick for me personally as after 2 previous attempts I was in the winning crew. Back to training in the New year and I knew we were going to put in a reasonable performance as in a session with the first 8 we made them work really hard to catch us. We then learnt that none of the other Clubs would be able to provide any junior opposition so would be racing as novices, which was appropriate as 7 of the crew had only been doing sweep oar for the last 6 weeks. However, with a week to go our boat was sent away for repair to 2 of the shoulders, which hadn't been a problem for us as we had it bow stroke rigged.

So, come the day, we were in a boat we hadn't been in before, had to re-configure the line up and I was still recovering from my 18th birthday, but we did look good in our new kit! It was a great experience to race an 8 on the Tideway even though it is a relatively small head. We overtook 4 crews and although we could have gone much faster if we didn't have to contend with the late changes, we knew we were in with a chance of winning. It was both a great relief and a great delight to hear we had won by 2 seconds from Thames RC – not bad for a crew with an average age of 16yrs 10 months. The older members of the crew are going into senior 8s for the Kingston Head while the J16s are going back to their quad, but it would be great to race the 8 again at some of the regattas.

With the summer regattas in mind, the Club has kindly purchased a new quad to help us qualify for the Fawley, which the MJ16s are about to race in at the Schools Sculling Head together with the WJ14s. I know they were really pleased with the boat in a recent outing, so let's hope that this year we can pay the Club back with some more great results.

Novices

Jonathan Shepherd

The 2005 regatta season brought some good results for the novice group. The women's four reached the final at their first regatta. Eleven of the men's group lost their novice status, eight of whom progressed to senior three level, coached by Matt Evans and Joe Lackner. Of that group, Adam White and Lee Wheeler were particularly successful in that they only started rowing in April, four months before reaching senior three.

Last year beginners were taken on about once every three months. A few in January, probably far too many in April, and a more manageable number in July. Some have progressed into the senior squad, others are in the novice group, but unfortunately some are no longer with us for one reason or another. Since the July intake, numbers have been

limited and only those who are prepared to train to race have been accepted. On the eve of the eights' heads, it looks like we have the basis of a decent crew from both the women's and the men's novice squad. Noticeable among the crews are those who started in the July group, who have had the good fortune to row with the more experienced novices left over from last winter. The July group got off to a good start, by doing a 40 km marathon in the octo after only twelve weeks, and have continued a good training level since then. After the marathon in the octo, the previously mixed group was split into separate men's and women's groups. The women's group is now progressing well under the coaching of Steve Chasey.

Around the same time, some of the ex-novices raced in the Boston Marathon, coming second in senior three fours by a very narrow margin.

In the autumn we put crews into Tiffin and KSBH, but the gods of rowing (or chronology) did not favour us. However, with a few extra months of training, we are hoping for better results from Burway, Kingston and the Eights Heads.

Off the water, the novice group hosted a party at KRC on the Saturday of Kingston Regatta that raised some funds for the club. A couple of second hand boats have been added to the fleet; a wooden Empacher eight, and more recently an Aylings coxed four.

There is still space for a couple of extra rowers in the men's and women's group. If anyone knows of any suitable interested parties, send them our way.

Obituary

Simon Mepham OBE

It is with regret that I have to inform Members of the death of a fellow Member.

Simon Mepham (Walton Rowing Club, TVSC & Kingston Rowing Club) collapsed and died while competing on Saturday, 18th February, in the Molesey Veterans Head of the River Race.

Our sympathy goes out to his Partner, Sarah Birch, members of his family and his many friends.

Simon represented KRC in the Thames Challenge Cup at Henley between 1988 -1992.

Dates for the Diary

Saturday 12th March '06

Women's Head of the River

Saturday 19th March '06

Kingston Head of the River

All help and support is welcome and much needed

Saturday 26th March '06

Head of the River

Email updates will also be sent out from time to time about upcoming events and club news. This is a good way of keeping up to date with the activities at the club. If you wish to receive these emails please send your email address to: info@kingstonrc.co.uk

Social

The Club bar is open for business on Tuesday and Thursday evening as well as Sunday lunch time.

Food is generally available on a Tuesday & Thursday evening. This is a voluntary service and anyone can offer to help / cook. All profits from the bar and food go straight back into the Club.

If anyone would like to volunteer to organize Club fundraising events, such as a quiz evening, please feel free to do so. All you need to do is speak to a committee member and agree a date, easy!

SUPPORT YOUR CLUB!!!

Who's Who

Committee

The principal appointees for 2005-6 are:

President

Alan Spong

Captain	Nigel Wilson-Dykes
Treasurer	Angus Gait
Secretary	Richard Rowland
Chairman	Guy Lewis

Other useful contacts

Safety & Hall Hire	Andrew Martin
Welfare Officer	Melanie Court-Smith
Bar	Andy Hall
Kit Secretary	Emily Possnicker
P.R	Helen Green
Grants	Tony Gordon
Membership	Brendan Togher

Useful Contacts

KRC & website: www.kingstonrc.co.uk (0208 546 8592)

**200 Club
Bryan Jones**

Recent winners of the 200 Club are:

£500 Damian West

£250 Paul Vye, Tim Bramfitt

£50 Jill Thorpe, The Leviathan, Tim Bramfitt, Craig Elliot

I have some vacancies so please contact me at KRC if you would like a number.
Each number is £15 paid immediately then once a year on the 1st January.