



**OURCS**

# Captains' Meeting Agenda

6pm Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> week Hilary Term

22<sup>nd</sup> January 2020

Habakkuk Room, Jesus College

Chair: Elsebine Bolier, OUWBC Vice-President

## 1. Welcome

### **Attendance:**

College boat clubs: 48

Squads: 1

Senior Umpires: 1

OURCs Committee: 8

**Total voting body: 58**

## 2. Minutes of the last meeting

- Available at <http://ourcs.co.uk/>

## 3. Matters Arising

### a. **Safety Audits** – Jo Egan to speak

- All clubs completed their Safety Audits and have had them accepted, thank you and well done! Please keep your BR event plans etc. up to date to make it as easy as possible for next year.

## 4. Squad reports

### **OUBC – Augustin Wambersie**

Since our last meeting, the squad participated in the Fuller Fours Head of the River. The club came out with wins in both the coxed and coxless fours over Cambridge, but with narrow margins, indicating squads are closely matched.

The following month saw two eights line up in the yearly trial eights race. This year the eights were named Hurley and Burley, inspired by one of the RNLI life boats that patrol our stretch of tideway. The RNLI are also the charity sponsor of the race this year. The result of the race saw a somewhat unexpected outcome where Hurley won the contest by a significant margin.

After the new year, the squad took 23 of its members to training camp in Temple sur Lot, France. Here a lot of mileage and technical work was covered in order to start fitting together a top eight. No injuries were sustained during camp indicating the quality of this year's support staff.

Due to the recent flooding, we have not been able to row out of our boat house very much, meaning we have had to make use of the national team rowing facilities at Caversham.

Our next big checkpoint will take place on Sunday 26th where we line up against Leander for our first fixture on the tideway.

### **OUWBC – Tina Christmann**

OUWBC had a good season of training and races so far. Our coxed four won fours head, we had a well-fought trial eights race with a 6sec margin and an 11day winter training camp in Wallingford where we did a lot of mileage and work in the eight and fours.

Due to river conditions before Christmas we had to do much of our training in Dorney or London, which was also helpful to get used to the Tideway and to check boat speeds. There have been no major accidents or injuries. The squad is growing together and looking forward to Quintin Head where we'll first meet Cambridge in the 8+ and to the three following fixtures.

### **OULRC – Arthur Arnould**

Following a high turnout in preseason, the squad has been progressively reduced to a more manageable total of 3 coxes and 20 rowers. We have 5 Blue Boat returners and 5 previous Nephthys athletes. The standard is high throughout and erg scores in particular are a step on from previous years, with many athletes already seeing significant improvements in scores in the first term. This season has included a big focus on strength and conditioning which has enabled us to minimise injuries and improve top end power.

Our racing season began at UTAH with wins in multiple categories. Next came a strong performance at Fours' Head where OUL entered 4 fours. Two of our fours beat the top CUL crew in the same category. We were faced with very challenging conditions for Trial Vllls, although this proved to be a good experience for both crews.

2020 began with a 13 day training camp with sessions at Wallingford, Dorney Lake and on the Tideway. We have been able to conduct squad-wide seat racing at Dorney Lake which has established a squad ranking. This was used to set crews as we transitioned from fours to eights at the midpoint of camp. Our next race is Quintin Head at the end of January where we will race with two 8s.

### **OUWLRC – Leah Mitchell**

OUWLRC has had a successful season so far. Our coxed four won Band 2 at Fours Head, and we have been using our training time on the Tideway (boating from Mortlake Anglian and Alpha Boat Club) to adjust to the new stretch of river for our Boat Race. We ended Michaelmas with a competitive Trial Eights race, with Puppets taking the victory over Parrots by 2.5 lengths in challenging conditions. We have begun Hilary with a 9-day winter training camp, beginning at our home in Wallingford with trips to Dorney Lake and London. We are looking forward to a term of races and fixtures to prepare us to face Cambridge – with the first being Quintin Head.

## **5. 8<sup>th</sup> Week Torpids Contingency**

In the event that the usual 6<sup>th</sup> week dates are unfit for racing due to adverse conditions, racing could be held in 8<sup>th</sup> week instead. Racing could take place for a maximum of four days or a minimum of two.

The options to be voted on are, in order, depending on the results of the option above:

- a. Some 8<sup>th</sup> week dates should be kept as contingencies for Torpids

*Votes in favour: 44*

*Opposed: 8*  
*Abstentions: 6*  
***Motion passes***

- b. 4 days of racing, from Wednesday to Saturday

*Votes in favour: 7*  
*Opposed: 43*  
*Abstentions: 8*  
***Motion fails***

- c. 3 days of racing, from Wednesday to Friday

*Votes in favour: 45*  
*Opposed: 6*  
*Abstentions: 7*  
***Motion passes***

*Proposed: Jo Egan (OURCs)*  
*Seconded: Joe Lord (St Benet's/OURCs)*

**Wednesday to Friday of 8<sup>th</sup> week will be held as contingency dates for Torpids**

## **6. Amendment to Rules of Racing**

In **A1.10 Disputes Procedure**,

Change **A1.10b.i**: *Complaints against other crews must be registered with the Event Committee within 10 minutes of the end of the race.*

to

*(additions shown in red)*

Complaints against other crews must be registered with the event committee within 10 minutes of the end of the race, **or according to A3.21.**

And add

### **A3.21 Complaints arising outside the appeals window**

- a. Complaints outside the appeals window can only be brought regarding regattas that have occurred during that academic year, defined to run from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 30<sup>th</sup> September inclusive.
- b. Any complaints brought between the first and last days of the Bumps Regatta shall only be considered after the Bumps Regatta has been concluded.
- c. The Procedure for making and receiving a complaint shall be
  - i. The individual wishing to bring the complaint shall direct it to either
    1. The Race Secretary of the regatta, or;
    2. Any of the Senior Umpires for that regatta, or;
    3. Any member of the OURCs executive committee (Secretary, Sabbatical Officer, Captain of Coxes, Treasurer)
  - ii. The individual who receives the complaint shall, with any of the individuals listed in A3.21c.i. who are deemed to be impartial and including at least one Senior Umpire and at least one member of the OURCs executive committee, decide whether:
    1. The complaint could not be brought during racing, and;
    2. The complaint is factually supported, and;
    3. The alleged breach of the rules ~~is~~ is severe enough as to warrant sanctions being imposed.
  - iii. If all three of the conditions in A3.21c.ii are judged to have been met, a Major Transgression Meeting shall be held under Code of Conduct section 2.12.d.ii to determine the penalties to be applied to the crew. The MTM shall consider, in order, whether the crew has
    1. broken rules, and;
    2. given themselves a significant advantage by doing so, and;
    3. benefited from it.
  - iv. If A3.21c.iii.1 is not met, no penalties shall be applied.
  - v. If all three of the conditions in A3.21c.iii are met, the Major Transgression Meeting will have the power to alter the finish order of the regatta, including applying Penalty bumps.
    1. If this course of action is taken with regard to a crew that has won blades, their college shall be informed of the decision and the outcome through the appropriate channels after the ratification of the Major Transgression Meeting.
    2. If this course of action is taken with regard to a crew that has won Headship, the crew shall be stripped of its Headship and the Headship not reawarded. Their college shall be informed of the decision and the outcome through the appropriate channels after the ratification of the Major Transgression Meeting.

- vi. If either of A3.21c.iii.2 and iii.3 are not met, penalties shall be applied to the Start Order of the next year's regatta, with the Finish Order left unchanged.
  - vii. In all of these cases, the MTM must be ratified by a two-thirds majority at the next Captains' Meeting.
- d. If a complaint is brought with regard to Rowing On, the complaint shall only be considered after the Bumps Regatta has been concluded, with any penalties applied to the results of Bumps Proper. If the crew failed to Row On, no penalties shall be applied.

*Proposed: Jo Egan (OURCs)*

*Seconded: Rachel Quarrell (Senior Umpire)*

This motion has been written to meet the preference indicated by the captains in the Captains' Meeting in 1<sup>st</sup> week of Michaelmas term 2019 that if it was discovered after a regatta that a crew was found to have broken rules, an MTM would be held with the power to apply penalties either to the Finish order or the next year's Start order depending on the severity of the rule broken.

The previous Captains' Meeting discussed the case where this affected a Headship crew and whether the Headship would be reawarded. The rule has been written that it not be reawarded, but captains were encouraged to bring an amendment if they would prefer otherwise.

*Votes in favour: 47*

*Opposed: 3*

*Abstentions: 8*

***Motion passes***

## **7. Transfers under A1.2**

*Objections may only be made on the grounds that:*

- *Athlete is not a member of the college they are transferring from*
- *Athlete has never been a member of the college they are transferring to*

- a. **Louis Lamont – Keble to Oriel**
- b. **Isabella Clarke – Balliol to Oriel**
- c. **Aoife Ni Chroidheain – St Hugh's to Oriel**
- d. **Thomas Campbell – New College to Lincoln**

*All papers in order*

***No objections***

## **8. Ratification of Ordinary Committee Members**

- Pete Bond (Regent's Park) – reappointment
- Hannah Germain (formerly Corpus Christi) – reappointment
- Tom Stewardson (formerly Brasenose) – reappointment
- Mathilde Soares da Silva (Merton)

***Ratified unanimously***

**9. Extension of Student Status**

*Simple majority to pass*

Eleanor Watts (Wolfson) expects to receive Leave to Supplicate some time in February. She would like her student status extended so that she can race in Torpids as a full member.

*Proposed: Mary Sanford (Wolfson)*

*Seconded: Marcus Tutert (Wolfson)*

Eleanor has submitted and had her viva, with her corrections being submitted that week. She is unsure when leave to supplicate will come through.

*Votes in favour: 51*

*Opposed: 2*

*Abstentions: 5*

***Extension of student status granted***

**10. Oxbump Support Proposal**

As many of you already know, the members of Wolfson College Boat Club have been doing our best over the past years to provide live bumps updates during Torpids and Summer Eights through use of OxBump, a free app created and previously maintained by two of our former members, Susan Graham and John McManigle. Although various appeals have been made over the years to receive sponsorship for this app, or to sell it to OURCs so that they might run it centrally, it has always fallen back to us as a club to run it without external support. We have done so happily, as we are aware that many Oxford colleges and their boat clubs now use and promote this app to check historic bumps charts, flag statuses, river conditions, and of course live bumps feeds; and we feel it is a worthy service to provide.

With the app creators no longer in Oxford and fewer non-racing supporters available to take charge of the live updates, we have taken it upon ourselves to create 'OxBump Marshal' slots within our club, and have begun to train all of our members in how to use and update the app so that we might continue to provide this service to our fellow clubs. However, this puts a strain on our rowers and coxes because we would have to fill these additional marshal slots on top of our regularly assigned marshal and umpire slots. Four years ago, this meant we had a total of 47 marshalling slots to fill for only 54 people. Understandably this was quite difficult to arrange, and many members were asked to take double shifts on top of their rowing, coxing, and academic commitments.

To alleviate this pressure while still providing live info on bumps races, we asked to reduce our allocation of marshalling and umpiring slots with the equivalent of 1 race desk helper per day, and have been granted this ever since. We would like to request to extend this arrangement for the upcoming edition of Torpids, where we will need around 16 OxBump marshals to keep the coverage live.

While we are fully aware that it is our own choice to continue to ensure OxBump is run and kept as close to 'live' as possible, we are also aware that many if not most of your clubs and corresponding colleges have come to enjoy and rely on this app as well; it would therefore be a shame if we were unable to run OxBump to its full potential this Torpids due to a simple lack of manpower. It is for this reason that I beg your consideration and support today.

*Proposed: Mary Sanford (Wolfson)*

*Seconded: Marcus Tutert (Wolfson)*

Questions were raised as to why Wolfson should be given a marshalling discount (which means other colleges would be required to send slightly more marshals to make up for it) for something they chose to run, especially given that it has mistakes in and the website is three years out of date and other live results services (such as Racedesk Live) are available.

Wolfson said they are working to make improvements, training their OxBump marshals better, improving the internet etc. They have invested in this and want to be able to run it.

*Votes in favour: 39*

*Opposed: 5*

*Abstentions: 14*

***Motion passes***

## **11. River Closures**

### **a. Isis Winter League**

**IWL C:** Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January (2<sup>nd</sup> Week) – 12:00 until Closing Time or End of Racing

**IWL D:** Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> February (4<sup>th</sup> Week) – 12:00 until Closing Time or End of Racing

*Proposed: Joe Lord (St Benet's/OURCs)*

*Seconded: Jo Egan (OURCs)*

IWL C is expected to be a short event, the river will be open for training afterwards.

IWL C closure:

*Votes in favour: 51*

*Opposed: 2*

*Abstentions: 5*

***Motion passes***

IWL D closure:

*Votes in favour: 52*

*Opposed: 1*

*Abstentions: 5*

***Motion passes***

### **b. Torpids 2020**

**Rowing On:** Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February (5<sup>th</sup> Week) – 08:30 until Closing Time or End of Racing

**Rowing On Contingency:** Sunday 23rd February (6<sup>th</sup> Week) – 08:30 until Closing Time or End of Racing

**Torpids:**

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February (6<sup>th</sup> week) – 11:00 until End of Racing

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February (6<sup>th</sup> week) – 11:00 until End of Racing

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February (6<sup>th</sup> week) – 11:00 until End of Racing

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> February (6<sup>th</sup> week) –Opening Time until End of Racing

**Torpids contingency dates:**

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March (8<sup>th</sup> week) – 11:00 until End of Racing

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March (8<sup>th</sup> week) – 11:00 until End of Racing

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March (8<sup>th</sup> week) – 11:00 until End of Racing

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March (8<sup>th</sup> week) – Opening Time until End of Racing

*Proposed: Joe Lord (St Benet's/OURCs)*

*Seconded: Jo Egan (OURCs)*

Friendly amendment: remove the Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March date to reflect the vote from earlier in the meeting.

**Torpids contingency dates:**

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March (8<sup>th</sup> week) – 11:00 until End of Racing

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March (8<sup>th</sup> week) – 11:00 until End of Racing

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March (8<sup>th</sup> week) – 11:00 until End of Racing

Voting on Torpids as a whole:

*Votes in favour: 54*

*Opposed: 2*

*Abstentions: 2*

***Motion passes***

## 12. Extra Slots

Applications from: Mansfield, St Catherine's, SEH, New College, Merton, Pembroke, Christ Church, Hertford, Somerville, St Peter's, Lincoln, Wolfson, and GTC

|                               |                       |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Monday: Opening-8am</b>    | <b>Lincoln</b>        |
| <b>Tuesday: Opening-8am</b>   | <b>St Peter's</b>     |
| <b>Wednesday: Opening-8am</b> | <b>Hertford</b>       |
| <b>Thursday: Opening-8am</b>  | <b>St Edmund Hall</b> |
| <b>Friday: Opening-8am</b>    | <b>Pembroke</b>       |
| <b>Sunday: 1pm-3pm</b>        | <b>Mansfield</b>      |
| <b>Sunday: 3pm-5pm</b>        | <b>Christ Church</b>  |



Feel free to swap between you, but please let the RowSab know if you do.

There was a request for an explanation of the process for assigning slots. Slots are assigned by weighted ballot, with the weighting taking into account how many boats the clubs have, where those boats train, and whether the club in question is allowed to train during the day (i.e. grad clubs). In most years, the Hilary weighting also takes into account the clubs that had extra slots in Michaelmas, however as people with slots last term didn't get to use them, that has not been taken into account this year.

The biggest factors are number of boats that need to train on the Isis in the morning. For example, a club that has 7 crews, one of which trains elsewhere will still get priority over a club which has 4 training crews that are only on the Isis.

### 13. AOB

#### a. **Torpids** – Jo Egan/Rachel Quarrell to speak

Safety decisions about Torpids will not be made yet. The weather is unknown for the moment.

All safety planning is done with lots of attention to detail. The Event Plans are created by two of the Co-ordinating Senior Umpires (Rachel Quarrell and David Locke), the Sport Safety Officer for the University (David White), and the Sabbatical Officer (Jo Egan) and are then approved by the Proctors. They are also given to the EA and posted online so that they are publically accessible. Any big changes will be discussed with all of the Senior Umpires and the boatmen. The Regional Rowing Council also pay attention to the event plans. BR doesn't cover bumps racing (either Oxford or Cambridge) but they do look over the event plans.

The Event Plans include Risk Assessments which identify risks, harms, and likelihood, and then mitigate those risks as much as possible. Mitigations that restrict enjoyment (e.g. cutting entries) won't be used unless necessary.

The lack of training last term looks worrying for Eights as a lot of people (Racedesk, marshals, umpires, crews) have no experience of racing and what will be required. Because of that, if any racing can safely run this term, it will.

There are various options available to increase the safety of racing:

1. Move the bunglines upstream, this gives much longer for anyone who ends up in the water to be rescued before they get near the weirs.
2. Coxing status restrictions. If this is done, eligibility criteria are lifted and anyone with a valid licence of the correct status and a valid swimtest can cox any crew (or several).
3. Change division size. The current system allows for switching to half divisions. This is much safer, but it means only approximately half of the normal number of crews can race. A new suggestion is to consider three-quarter divisions. This would be safer than full divisions but allow more people to race than in half divisions. However, the sandwich boat would be harder to predict (in half divisions, it is always bunglines 1 and 7).
  - There was general interest from the captains, SUs and OURCs committee will start looking into feasibility, including discussions with the boatmen.
4. Extra launch cover

Racing can be run on low red flag. If so it will be run with half divisions and Senior coxes only, and only if weather conditions are good enough. For example, it will not run if there are strong winds as that could cause waves and swamping of boats.

After the “Beast From the East” a few years ago, the temperature and towpath conditions are also considered as part of the risk assessment.

In general, the Senior Umpires and Committee will try to give at least one and a half to two days’ notice about decisions (e.g. a decision about Wednesday by Monday lunchtime). If it is clear that the regatta will not run (or that day’s racing at least), the decision will be made earlier. A former SU now works for the Met Office and does dedicated long range forecasts for central Oxford to help make these decisions. In addition, as spring hits and trees start growing again, they may absorb more water, causing faster drops from high stream, but that is impossible to predict ahead of time.

Committee can also declare that crews can withdraw on safety grounds without dropping any places for the next year (withdrawal from Torpids usually results in a 6-place penalty).

If the term is highly disrupted, non-Rowing On crews may be able to choose to Row On (in a non-binding way) to test the crew’s safety and allow them to make their own decision about whether they are safe to race. Reminder: Rowing On is based on the Finish Order, so even if crews ahead withdraw and a boat moves up into fixed divisions for the starting order, if it finished outside Fixed Divisions, it is required to compete in Rowing On.

There is also consideration being given to allowing lower divisions to do Head races instead of Bumps if they have not had enough experience. This would not count for the finishing order.

The 8<sup>th</sup> week contingency dates have been brought in as a replacement for “Dorney Torpids” which was financially and logistically unfeasible as a contingency plan. 8<sup>th</sup> week is a contingency only and 6<sup>th</sup> week will not be scrapped in favour of 8<sup>th</sup> week unless necessary as 8<sup>th</sup> week often has terrible weather as well, so it would run the risk of losing one or two rowable days in 6<sup>th</sup> week and then losing all of 8<sup>th</sup> week too.

The decision has already been made that no Novice-status coxes registered in this academic year will be allowed to race Torpids. Novice coxes registered before then will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Permission for Novice coxes from Trinity term 2019 or before can be applied for by emailing [coxing@ourcs.co.uk](mailto:coxing@ourcs.co.uk) from 3<sup>rd</sup> week onwards.

As coxing status restrictions are in place, eligibility is lifted. Associates can cox any crew, coxes can cox multiple crews. However, all athletes must have valid swimtests. Those whose swimtests are more than 6 years old (especially alumni) need to retake their tests, either in Oxford (7-9pm Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> January, 5-7pm Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February, 3-5pm Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February) or at a reputable external place. If they retake externally, that testing centre needs to email details of the test and confirmation that they have passed to [sabbatical@ourcs.co.uk](mailto:sabbatical@ourcs.co.uk) by the end of 5<sup>th</sup> week.

Any bankriders who attended their briefings before 2019 will need to re-attend a briefing this term, which will be held in 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> week.

#### Questions:

- Even the largest clubs are unlikely to have more than one or two Senior coxes, how would they manage to find enough to race?
  - Eligibility is lifted. Associates can cox any boat, or many boats. There is usually a deluge of S status alumni who would love to come back and cox bumps again.
  - For it to be Senior status only, it will also be half-divisions, so most clubs will have a maximum of 2-3 boats racing. One cox can cox as many boats as they like, so it is highly unlikely that more than two coxes would ever be needed per club.
- If the flag comes off red, will there be assessments?
  - Assessments will run as soon as possible, there is even a possibility of running multiple assessments on one morning.
- Can assessments be run on amber flag?
  - If it is busy enough. Amber is sometimes too quiet, but if it can be done, yes. If anyone failed an S assessment on amber flag, they would be required to land immediately.
- If there are no restrictions, how will 1<sup>st</sup> boat rowers be stopped from racing again in 2<sup>nd</sup> boats?
  - Eligibility restrictions are only lifted for coxes, not for rowers.
- Does the 5 outing swimtest rule apply to associate coxes?
  - All athletes need to be swimtested to race, including alumni.
- Will it be safe to run bumps for novices who have had a maximum of four weeks of training? How much training would they need to be safe?
  - There is no way to give an exact figure, but this is why Head racing is being considered for the lower divisions.
- Do you need senior crews for racing on high stream?
  - No, but think carefully about whether the crew is safe and withdraw if needed.
- Could racing be held in 7<sup>th</sup> week instead?
  - Torpids normally takes place in 7<sup>th</sup> week. It is running a week earlier this year to avoid a clash with WEHoRR. 8<sup>th</sup> week was picked as a contingency as it is usable each year.
- What will happen if there are 4 weeks of red flag at the beginning of term, and then a drop to something rowable right before Torpids?
  - Possibilities will be looked into at the time. Enter crews as normal and options can be discussed at the Captains Meeting before Torpids.
- If clubs have lots more novices than seniors, could the number of seniors be limited in some divisions?
  - From a safety point of view, it's unlikely.

#### b. "HBR" Collegiate races – Joe Lord to speak

As the Lightweight boat races are now held on the Tideway, there will be no event at Henley, and so the College races will not be taking place. It is unlikely that something could be organised in time for this year, but arrangements could be begun for next year to hold a college event on the Tideway.

The HBR qualifier was previously held on a weekday morning in 8<sup>th</sup> week. With the Torpids Contingency, that will not be possible, so spaces could be offered to the Headship crews, with the offer being made to each successive crew in the Finish Order if the one above them declines.

There was general interest in the idea of college races.

c. **OURCs Stash** – Viv Leong to speak

Each year, OURCs orders a jacket for each new Committee member using sponsorship money. The cost of the jackets does not come out of anything the clubs have paid. OURCs would like to order jackets this year.

No objections.

d. **Senior Crew definitions** – Joe Lord to speak

Under the definition of a Senior Crew, there must be at least four rowers with at least four full terms of rowing experience, and none with less than a full term of experience (and an S status cox). Last term does not count as “a full term” as there was not enough training time.

Clubs should be confident in their own crew selections, with two outings a week all term suggested as the expected level of rowing for a full term. If clubs are unsure, talk to the secretary and captain of coxes.

e. **RowSab Applications** – Jo Egan to speak

Details will be coming out soon about the role of RowSab, including a job description and details of how to apply. In the meantime, anyone interested or with any questions, please email [sabbatical@ourcs.co.uk](mailto:sabbatical@ourcs.co.uk).

f. **BUCS** – Jo Egan to speak

There are BUCS competitions in the Beginner (i.e. novice), Intermediate (experienced returners), and Championship (Blues) categories. They are Head races (5000m, Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February for Intermediate and Championship crews; 3000m, Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February for beginner crews) in Newcastle and Gateshead. Get in touch with the Rowsab or SportsFed if you're interested in racing.

g. **Torpids Coxing discussion** – Mary Sanford to speak

Withdrawn

h. **Letter from Judith Packer** – Suzie Murray to speak

St Peter's College boat club have a letter from one of their alumni who will this year be the first Oxford woman to umpire the Women's Boat Race, which she has asked be circulated to the other colleges.

*Dear Marcus*

*As current President of St Peter's Boat Club, I wonder if I could invite you to pass the following message on to the current SPC Boat Club Captains as well as share with other college Presidents and Captains.*

*I have the great privilege on Sunday 29th March 2020 @ 3:44pm to Umpire the Women's Boat Race, the first Oxford woman to do so.*

*<https://www.theboatrace.org/>*

*On reflecting on how on earth I came to this opportunity, I realised that none of this would not have even started without the enthusiasm and passion, skill and patient commitment of our college boat club captains. So this is a brief note of thanks to you via Marcus whom I met last year during a brief visit back to college to celebrate 30 years since it opened its doors to women students.*

*When I first arrived in Oxford back in 1983, an Engineering undergraduate from the North West of England, with absolutely no knowledge of rowing except the black and white TV pictures of the annual event on a big river in London, and not really of athletic pedigree myself, I thought it was something I would just like to have a go! Thanks to the passion of the then Captain at St Peter's, and whomever he could bring in to help coach, we pulled together a Women's 8, went out with whatever boat was available, no real kit and no internet or social media to organise those early morning outings. We boated from what was the University Boat House (now rebuilt since the fire); I still remember first trying to get to grips with blades and breaking the ice on some very frosty cold winter mornings and some beautiful sunrises!*

*Although I did not row for very long at university (the usual challenges of juggling with other commitments and studies) it lit a passion and love of the sport which would re-ignite post university once I started work and a colleague heard that I had rowed at Oxford! After many years of racing in events around the country, I then qualified as a British Rowing Umpire and am now an International Umpire where I now experience some of the wonderful benefits rowing brings to all aspects of life and connecting fellow rowers and officials around the world.*

*I can honestly say now that rowing can change lives for the better; it certainly has transformed mine. So this is my personal thank you for all you do to make rowing accessible to any who wish to give it a try.*

*There are a small number of course of more serious athletes who wish to immerse themselves more deeply into the sport.*

*I would like to invite you to explore ways in which we can better support those men and women students who put themselves on the line and represent both club and university in this unique challenge, irrespective of their background or past experience. Having been on the Umpire's panel since 2012, I have seen the huge commitment these athletes make to represent the University in this very public battle on the River Thames. Inevitably this focus potentially leads to remoteness but as well as representing the University, they also represent their respective colleges; their University family.*

*I appreciate I do not know the current challenges and future vision of the College Boat Club Rowing but wish just to say both Thank You for all you do and to offer an open door for conversation or help if you think I can help to capitalise on this amazing milestone whether for college or Oxford University Rowing.*

*Rowing is an amazing sport, where people seem to have both the courage to reach for things way beyond the vision of others coupled with the hard work and humility to ask for help to succeed. Be ambitious.*

*Judith Packer*

i. **Nephtys** – Jack Ren to speak

Nephtys regatta could not run last term or this term as was hoped. OULRC are considering an erg competition instead if there is interest from the captains.

General consensus that clubs would not be interested in an erg competition.

j. **OURCs webmaster** – Joe Lord to speak

The OURCs webmaster is stepping down for finals. If anyone is interested in the role, please get in touch with the OURCs Secretary.

k. **Launch Use** – Joe Lord to speak

The EA have been in contact to complain about college launches transiting locks on red boards. COUR are aware of this and so a rule change may be imminent.