

Women's Captain's Report

Trinity term was extremely successful for the women's side, and we are proud to end the season on such a high note. W1 and W2 were able to train almost exclusively at Wallingford during the first month of term and took advantage of the good weather to get a lot of mileage in. W3 also settled into a good rhythm of outings on the Isis with our two new novice coaches.



W1 bumping on the Saturday outside the boat house

During Rowing On, W3 made us all proud by dramatically improving from their Torpids Rowing On performance to beat many crews that were faster than them last term. The squad approached Summer Eights in great spirits, excited to return to a full force summer bumps event with spectators for the first time since 2019.

After a difficult Torpids fending off fast chasing crews, W1 came back stronger to have an incredible Summer Eights campaign. After an early klaxon on day 1, W1 bumped on days 2, 3, and 4 (including spectacular bumps directly in front of the Oriel boathouse on the final two days). History was made with the final bump on Saturday earning the Oriel women their highest ever place on the river in Summer Eights!

W2 followed their Blades winning Torpids performance with three pre-gut bumps during Eights. Although they were disappointed to row over the last day and miss out on a second set of Blades, the spectators appreciated actually being able to watch them race past Boathouse Island for the first time all year. Unfortunately, it was spoons for W3 after an extremely unlucky starting order with all the fastest crews from Rowing On chasing them. They impressed us all with their cheerfulness and humour throughout the whole week, though, and are already looking forward to next year.

This year has been one of the strongest in OCBC history, and such a performance directly following a major disruption from Covid would not have been possible without the support of the Tortoise Club. We are very grateful for everyone who has donated financially and everyone who has given their time and energy to make this boat club the best it can be this year, and we appreciate the continued support as we aim to carry on this phenomenal success next year!

Floreat Oriel!
Cassidy Hoeft (womens-captain@orielrowing.org)



W2's third Summer Eights bump (Regent's W1), making it up eight for the year

Men's Captain's Report

After a very strong Hilary term we came into Trinity determined to continue that success into Summer Eights. We began the term with a training camp starting in minus first week and nine of us had a very fun day out rowing the M1 boat to Wallingford for a bit of a challenge.

Our first event of the term was Bedford Regatta, to which we took our M1 and M2. This was the first external regatta for some of M2, in the Open Eights Band D we went up against Wolfson College M1 and managed to hold level for over half the length of the course. We finished still with overlap after a row that we were very happy with. The M1 dominated each of their races early in the day, making it to the finals of the College Eights and the Open Band B events. In the College Eights they won against Emmanuel College Cambridge 'easily', and they came second in the Open Band B against Phoenix Boat Club. As well as racing there was a lot of excitement with the minibus. After getting out of it in the carpark the driver came over to me and told me that the minibus was 'making a funny noise and driving weirdly'. After several phone calls the minibus was on a truck being driven away and taxis were sent to take us from Bedford. The process was surprisingly stress free until it was realised that the key to Wallingford was not with those going back with the boats, but in one of the taxis heading back to Oxford!

Over the next couple of weeks before Summer Eights crews were still in quite a bit of flux. Some people from Torpids had pulled out due to exams and we had an unfortunate spate of injuries. Thankfully the benefit of our strong Torpids was that we were able to draw a member up from M3 into M2 and a couple of M2 guys who had stopped training for exams went into the stern pair of M3 to provide them with a strong rhythm. My predecessor Jake Swann came back to stroke M2 and we had another set of very strong men's boats just in time for Summer Eights.

Soon it was rowing on, where our M3, M4, and M5 had to qualify. More crews than in many recent years had entered, with almost fifty boats competing for thirty-three spaces. I was worried especially for the guys in the M4, who had put a lot of effort in over the year, but unfortunately been unable to qualify for Torpids.

It turns out that I need not have worried, as each of our crews qualified with room to spare! This year was the first time since 1993 that we have qualified an M5, the crew composed of a range of Tortoises from both the men's and women's side unable to compete in the first two boats, some novices who had only had a couple of sessions between them and a half blue from Regents Park who is a friend of Oriel and so chose to row with us!

Come the first day of eights all crews were excited. The day began with M5, who got the first bump of the campaign on a tree, but then went on to bump the crew ahead anyway. Having scoured rowing on results I was unfortunately convinced that in the next division M4 would be bumped by the crew behind and that Christ Church M3 would catch the crew ahead before our M3 could catch them. How wrong I was. M3 hunted down Christ Church, bumping them outside Univ Boathouse. We never saw M4, as they managed to bump Wolfson M4 well before Donny Bridge, securing their space as the highest fourth boat. After a long wait it was M2's turn, looking to bump back up into Div2 after the division sizes had been changed. We rowed over comfortably ahead of Brasenose M1 in Div3 and bumped Corpus M1 easily getting us back into Div2. This year a lot of talk had been going on about the strength of the Christ Church M1 and how they were confident that they could bump up to Headship. They were starting fourth however, so had to bump on the earlier days before they could reach us. On the Wednesday however they ploughed into the bank coming out of the gut and so Pembroke rowed over.



M1 landing on Saturday to be greeted by a wall of spray



Cooling down after a long week

Our M1 rowed over at Head very comfortably.

On the Thursday M5 had a less eventful row and became the highest fifth boat after bumping Christ Church M5. We now hold the positions of highest fifth, fourth, second, and first men's boat in Summer Eights. It was smooth sailing as well for M4 and M3, who both bumped. The first disappointment of the week came from M2, they closed down to half a length on Exeter M1 under Donny Bridge before Exeter bumped out on Worcester M1. After disentangling ourselves we were able to pull away from Brasenose and row over. Oriel M1 once again rowed over at Head, but Christ Church bumped Pembroke, after Pembroke narrowly missed bumping Keble, bringing them a step closer to chasing us.

M5 bumped again on Friday, as did M3, leaving them both on for blades. M4 were chasing Mansfield M2, a crew they had thrashed at rowing on. However after surprising us on the first day with their unexpected bump they surprised us again when one of their rowers snapped the handle off his blade, resulting unfortunately in a row-over. M2 bumped Worcester M1 before the gut and M1 rowed over for the third day, although having bumped Keble, Christ Church would be chasing Oriel on the Saturday.

We came into the final day of eights with three men's crews on for blades, including one Headship to defend. But first we had a row-past of the course by the Eights crew of 1970. They were hoping to do this in 2020, so it was great that they were able to reschedule and see them rowing the course so many years on. The first race of the day, M5 got blades. In the next men's division, M3 got blades. Thinking that without incidents M4 would be able to get the crew ahead easily, they did the unexpected and were bumped. Across thirty-three rows for men's crews in Torpids and Eights this year, this was the only time one got bumped. M2 would once again face ill luck, yet again closing to half a length before the crew ahead bumped out. Finally, it was time for the final men's race of the day. After a term of chat and speculation Christ Church were finally going up against Oriel. Watching our M1 row past the boathouse with a length and a half of clear water will remain one of my most cherished memories. Christ Church gained no length on our crew at all until they pushed at the very end, but by that time it was too little too late.

With the most men's crews entered, more men's blades than any other college and the M5, M4, M2, and M1 Headships it was once again a very successful campaign for Oriel. After a quick swim in the river we paraded our wooden boat through the streets as Christ Church's remained on trestles at the back of their boathouse. My terms as Captain have been the best of my degree, especially in such a great year for Oriel. Although many of us are leaving this year I am sure that OCBC has been left in good hands and I look forward to seeing their success next year.

Floreat Oriel!
William Burrow
(mens-captain@orielrowing.org)



The victorious march home

President's Report

Looking around the Hall at Eights Dinner one could not help but see a Club that was as happy, healthy, and successful as it has ever been. It has been a real pleasure to watch the squads and crews grow in confidence and capability since Torpids, even getting to see it from the launch when I subbed in, to coach M1 the weekend before Eights.

Many alumni made the trip for the first Eights since 2019. Including Laura Spindler and Victoria MacCulloch from the first days of women at Oriel; the 1970s crew, consisting of Guy Mansfield, Mike Chamberlayne, Dudley Hilton, Mike Wright, John Scott, Vernon Sankey, Peter Grove, John Bolt, and Mark Sankey (Vernon's son and a Tab but we can forgive him the latter for the sake of the former), returning for a row past; Alice Bourne manning the gin stand for the 4th year running, not letting having graduated get in the way; and John Stenzel all the way from Lake Tahoe, a real pleasure to meet the man who has taught me the phrase "put your wallet where your world view is".



The 1970s crew after their row past

It has been a term to remember, with Oriel surpassing Christ Church to now hold the most Men's Eights Headships of any college; the W1 rising to their highest ever position in Eights; and many bumps throughout the eight crews that successfully qualified.

To the students I would like to say well done, you have carried the torch with pride and with success. A lot of work goes into these campaigns and into building up the Club that we all love. This year's captains Jake Swann, Will Burrow, and Cassidy Hoefft; the boat club committee; the senior member Rob Wainwright; and everyone else who helped to bring home such success (Phil Grunewald comes to mind but I am sure that there are many more names that I am not aware of). The college butler Asefaye Aberaha and the head porter Samuel Henry, along with all of their respective teams were also incredible at laying on such hospitality. To all of the above, on behalf of the Tortoise Club, I say thank you.

So now we look to the next year, new crews for us to cheer, a new pair of captains in Alex Abel and Amelia Monaghan for us to support, further bunglines to climb and headships to accrue. The Tortoise Club will be looking to put out more racing crews, with particular focus on HRR 2023; and please keep a look out for the Tortoise Club dinner invitations. But before all of that we have the HRR picnic, in spaces J17 & J18 of Lions Meadow, during the lunchtime break (c. 1230) of Saturday 2nd July, all members of the boat club, past and present are warmly welcome to join.

Along with the success on the water and the socializing planned off it; I must draw everyone's attention to the support required to make this happen. Our opposition is not slacking, with the demise of Pembroke, Christ Church are once again the most immediate threat. They have built a boat house on the Radley stretch and are investing heavily in coaching and equipment, the key difference with their previous, similar, attempts seems to be that they are now also training. I urge everyone to support the Boat Club and to get involved however they can. It is a very special institution, at which the students do not need to pay to learn to row and where they are able to be a part of and add to such a storied club. We wish to build up both the OCBC and the Tortoise Club so that they can thrive for many years to come, and I look forward to your help in doing so.

The newly set up Boat Club giving portal can be found [here](#), it should be more user friendly than the previous system of direct debit forms. But should people still prefer that then the link to the online editable direct debit form is [here](#) the completed form should be sent to development.office@oriel.ox.ac.uk.

Floreat Oriel!
Robert Boswall (tortoise-president@orielrowing.org)



Most of the alumni that successfully made it to the end of dinner and the boat burning.