

Tortoise Club Newsletter: Trinity 2023

Dates for the diary:
HRR Picnic: 1st July, 12:30
Tortoise Dinner: November tbc

Women's Captain



The women's side were excited to get back into training at the beginning of Trinity Term, especially after our Torpids' success which we were looking to match.

W1 welcomed back Claire Aitken from the Blue Boat and had our first racing experience of the term at Bedford Regatta. Unfortunately, our stroke seat was struck down by injury the day before, and the first sub we found dropped out half an hour before we were meant to leave. Luckily, Tortoise Club member Ellie Greaves came to the rescue, and even though we lost both of our races we were glad to have the opportunity to get into the racing mindset before bumps.

We fielded four women's boats in Summer Vllls, including the first Oriel women's beer boat with W4. They came close to bumping the St Peter's-Brasenose composite multiple times before managing to catch up to them on the final day. However, due to an earlier klaxon that no one had heard, the bump didn't officially count, meaning they rowed over every day. W3 had an unlucky starting position with many of the fastest crews from Rowing On chasing them each day, and so ended up earning spoons. They were nonetheless in good spirits and all enjoyed what was for many of them a first bumps campaign. Showing huge improvement from last term after training hard at Wallingford all term, W2 bumped up three places, just missing out on blades by rowing over on the Thursday when the four crews ahead of them bumped out.

W1 sought to equal our Torpids performance of moving up two, and ended up surpassing this by bumping three times, finishing at 4th on the river. Thursday saw us finally bumping long-standing rivals Pembroke with inches to spare before the finish line, a bump on Wolfson on Friday was followed by another spectacular chase along Boathouse Island on Saturday, when we caught up to Wadham, again just before the line. This leaves us in the highest position that Oriel women have ever been in Summer Vllls, and for the first time ever within reach of Vllls Headship.

Many thanks are due to Daniel Brennan and Louis Lamont for all their coaching over the year that has facilitated these results. Next year's Head Coach, Jack Delaney, got a head start by coaching a 4- of Oriel women to race at Reading Regatta and Henley Women's Regatta. This being the first time Oriel has gone to HWR, we were hugely pleased to qualify and move through to side-by-side racing, where we lost to OUWBC.

I would also like to take this opportunity to provide an update on the Women's Captains Board that I wrote about in the last newsletter; thanks to your generosity, we raised enough funds and it is now in production, so will be in 2.1 ahead of next term. I am delighted to end my captaincy on such a positive note, and excited to hand over to Bea Frediani, who I am sure will continue to lead the women's side on to victory next year.

Floreat Oriel!

Amelia Monaghan

Women's Captain of Boats 2022-2023



Men's Captain



The squad returned to Oxford in -1st week, only to be met with the second training camp of the year with an unrowable river; red flag on the Isis, and red boards at Wallingford. Thankfully this was not as persistent as in Hilary, and the river came down before the start of term and we were quickly able to get back on the water.

We were proud to watch so many Oriel athletes in the Boat Races, even if

the Tabs did get the clean sweep. We had one Oriel rower in both the Blue Boat and Lightweight Blue Boat, as well as three in Isis (the smaller margin for the Reserve Boat Race loss likely due to the higher concentration of Oriel rowers). All of our University rowers, and more, came back to Oriel to train and row with us in Summer Vllls.

The M1 raced at Bedford Regatta at the beginning of term. Missing two of our blues and met with a tough draw, we narrowly lost our two races by 6 feet and by 1/3 length. Still a useful race, we got back to training hard for the real one.

As it always does, Summer Vllls came around quickly. Oriel qualified 5 men's boats, and 9 boats overall. This was more crews than any other college, and the only college with a 5th boat entered. M1 started at Head of the River, with Christ Church chasing again. They rowed over comfortably every day, putting multiple lengths into the crews behind and successfully defending the Summer Vllls Headship. M2 started in Division 2. They quickly bumped Mansfield M1 on Wednesday, then rowed over behind Exeter M1 on the remaining days, gaining on them but not quite enough to bump. They finish 22nd on the river, by far the highest 2nd boat.

After missing out on qualifying for Torpids, M3 had been training hard, which paid off with a bump on LMH M2 on Wednesday. They then entered a battle with Keble M3, rowing over behind them on Thursday, then bumping them off the start on Friday. Unfortunately on Saturday Keble M3 chased them back down, bumping M3 to leave them +1 over the week. It was the first bumps campaign for almost all of M4, and they wowed everyone by putting down a faster time than M3 at Rowing On. They were faced with a difficult starting position (only two bunglines ahead of M5), but still managed to row well, keeping their position as the highest M4 by rowing over on two of the days, only getting bumped by a quick St Hugh's M2, and Oriel M5...

The M5 beer boat were hungry for blades. They bumped Wolfson M4, Mansfield M2, and even Oriel M4. Tragically, these hopes were shattered by a klaxon caused by the boats ahead of them on Saturday, leaving them +3 for the week and bladeless.

Thank you very much once again to the Tortoise Club for all your donations and support. We are grateful for everything you do for OCBC and there is no way that we would be able to achieve these results, or field so many boats, without your support. I handover to the new Men's Captain of Boats for 2023-2024: Theo Briscoe. I am sure he will do a great job leading the club to even more success next year.

Floreat Oriel!

Alex Abel

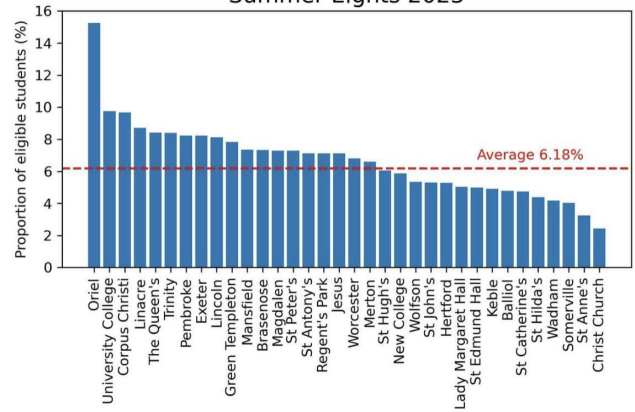
Men's Captain of Boats 2022-2023



The President

It is an unbelievably special thing that Oriël and the Tortoise Club has, only culture like ours can turn out nine qualifying crews and bring back so many alumni with which to pack the boathouse, Oriël Hall and the Bear in turn. I include a graph that I did not make, so cannot confirm its underlying data but it tells a story that we have always known, that while other colleges have a boat club, OCBC has a College. The momentum and the culture of the women's squad in particular makes me very excited for the future. I've never seen an Oriël womens beer boat before and that speaks to a very happy and healthy squad. A key milestone of the Oriël Dream will be when we hold All Four Headships, and with this work ethic and love for The Oriël that day is fast approaching.

Proportion of Eligible Students Rowing in Summer Eights 2023



M1 have extended their lead over Christ Church in total Eights Headships and after W1's sterling work all four first boats are within striking distance of Headship for the first time ever. It is a very exciting time to be a Tortoise. Which was shown by the fantastic turn out at the Eights Dinner, Hall was so full that some Deans kindly gave up their seats so that all the alumni could be seated. We had Richard Hull and Peter Gish, from the crew that regained Headship in 1987. Richard is the father of Chris from this year's M1, and he has three Eights Headships to Chris' one; this is the only Headship family pairing of which I am aware (earning a picture in the newsletter) but would love to learn of others. On the women's side we had Robin Kaiser from the '80s; and Jo Evelyn and Daniela Lloyd-Williams from the 90s W1. Members of the 1993 M1 were there who defended both Torpids and Eights headships, namely Fraser Brown, Roger Hirst, Shahid Khan, Daniel Talbot-Ponsonby, Claire Toogood, Pete Bridge, Justin Hodges, Rory Morrison, Paul Swaddling, and Andrew

Shaw; and foremost among us was the crew from 1966 (pictured below) whose Eights Headship marks the beginning of Oriël's modern era of victory and for whose captain the Jonathan Close-Brookes is named, at the dinner was Ron Bancroft, David Stokes, Tony Butler, and Jonathan's brother Oliver Close-Brooks. Further it was my honour to have as my guests to the dinner Sarah Senior and Michelle Crorie, the wife and sister of the late great Tim Senior. Roy Bolton a contemporary of Tim's was at the dinner and many others were at the boat house, it was a real pleasure to hear more stories of Tim's time at Oriël, including their famous fly-by of the boat houses on the Saturday of Eights. The Tortoise Council voted to donate to the Senior Cup from Club funds, so it will be escribed with "the Tortoise Club" along with other donors and will be presented at the Veterans' Boat Race.

It is important for the Tortoise Club to have its own funds to draw upon to carry out our constitutional aims. From these we pay for the Tortoise Picnic, facilitate the Tortoise Dinner, and support the OCBC when needed. Currently the Tortoise Club funds are replenished by a number of legacy donations, as all other fundraising (such as the Blades scheme) goes directly to OCBC. The Council and I have decided that we need to maintain the inflows for club funds as these legacy donations diminish over time, and as such will be launching a scheme of "Participating Members". Participating Members will make an annual contribution to the Tortoise Club, in return there will be certain forms of recognition including a member's badge similar to that of HRR. This is a soft launch and we are open to further discussion with Tortoises on this subject, the current plan is to index match the contribution amount to Oriël's Summer Eights Headships, so starting out at £35 a year, symbolic of the investment that this will be to Oriël's future success and celebration of our history. I would like to emphasise that membership of the Tortoise Club will always be on the basis of merit and through due election by the council.



Speaking of due election I am happy to welcome the following new members to our ranks from this past year: James Doran, Harry Amad, Chris Hull, Laurie Yousman, Ben Gilmore, Theo Briscoe, John Gower Isaac, Yicheng Su, Kristof Csaky, Alexander Abel, Jan Langemeyer, Flora Townsend, Grace Jordan, Claudia Amasanti, Jenny Heath, Beatrice Frediani, and Kat Mure.



The Tortoise Club Fouriel have been active, we raced at Met Regatta both days making it to the finale both times, otherwise known as the E Final. Sadly I was taken ill the following weekend but Tom Lister stepped in for the Barnes and Mortlake Regatta at which the crew came away with the silverware. Stevan then could not make Marlow Regatta so Alex Abel stepped up and this time we made it to the D Final, make of that what you will. We will be going to qualifiers this Friday, to race 15 other crews going for two open spots, wish us luck.

We have many Tortoises looking to race in this year's regatta. The Fouriel made up of Angus Forbes, Stevan Boljevic, myself, Zachary Zajchek, and Ellie Jukes will of course looking to qualify for the Britania Challenge Cup; James Doran in the Ladies Challenge Plate for Brookes A; Jan Ernst and Colson Andrews in The Silver Goblets & Nickalls' Challenge Cup for Isis

Boat Club; James Nally and John Gower-Isaac in the Temple Challenge Cup for the Univ-Oriel composite; and James Wadsworth in the Britania Challenge Cup for City of Bristol. We are also very proud of the OCBC 4- made up of Bea Vernon, Bea Frediani, Amelia Monaghan, and Kat Mure that qualified for Henley Women's Regatta; and of Aysha Strachan who qualified in the Championship Pairs for Thames Rowing Club.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the Tortoise Club Henley Picnic, in spaces J17 & J18 of Lions Meadow, during the lunchtime break (c. 1230) of Saturday 1st July, all members of the boat club, past and present are warmly welcomed to join.

Rowing for Oriel is a great privilege, in the words of the wise Stevan Boljevic "we have it so damn good, the torch gets handed to us and we just keep the fire burning". Alex, Amelia, the committee and all of their rowers have carried the torch well this last year, for which they have my respect. But the strength of The Oriel is that we do not stop there. I urge all Tortoises, both new and old to stay involved with OCBC and the Tortoise Club, and pay forward that which you have received. [Donate](#), encourage, and turn up to support.

Floreat Oriel!

Robert Boswall

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