



## Henry's VIII

*Lent 2024*

### Welcome to the 2024 edition of Henry's VIII!

This past Lent has been another exciting term here at King's College Boat Club. Along with the rest of the Cam, the whole club was forced to navigate persistent flooding, cancelled races, alongside a predominantly new set of seniors. Captains, Tobias Allen, Jasmine Rush, and Olga Krivdina, stepped up to this immense task; in the final section of this edition they give their own account of these changes both in and out of the Boat House. Before we reflect on this term, let's take a look at the beginning of the year.

### Michaelmas

Michaelmas was a challenging but rewarding term for KCBC. With most of the club having graduated in the summer of 2023, the senior crews were looking a little sparse, and a successful King's Novice Programme was needed now more than ever. With the invaluable help of coaches on both sides, the VCs put in a fantastic effort to prepare KCBC's new members for senior rowing. The term was replete with novice successes, including Best Costume at Emma Sprints for NM1 and an impressive 8th in Fairbairns for NW1. The fun wasn't just reserved for current members of the Boat Club, however, with the attendance of many alumni as well as the new Provost at the Michaelmas Boat Club Dinner. Past continued to meet present members in the final race of season when King's entered seven boats into Fairbairns, three of which were alumni crews. These races showcased how hard both seniors and novices had been working, notably W1, who finished 2nd in their division, just eight seconds from the top spot. After an exciting Michaelmas, Lent term was shaping up to be another great term.



## Rowing Week

Before Lent term began, whilst other Boat Clubs chose the exotic waters of Spain or Portugal, KCBC undertook their very own training camp on the beloved Cam. Luckily, the flooding subsided enough for those in Cambridge early to enjoy a near-empty river. A much lighter approach to rowing week than others lucky enough to train abroad, KCBC swapped out UT2 for Cars 2 and enjoyed a whole host of socials, including bowling, crazy golf, and a cinema trip to watch *The Boys in the Boat*. This proved an effective way for many ex-novices to get to know the seniors, establishing some wonderful foundations of friendship which would only grow throughout the term.

## Newnham Head



The first race of the season came on Saturday 3rd February in the form of Newnham Head. This would be W1's first race as a crew, and first as a senior for half of the boat; this would serve as a gauge of their level against other women's crews ahead of Lent Bumps. After a smooth race, W1 emerged with a time of 8:52 which put them in joint seventh position of their division. It was a promising start to the season, but much more work would be needed if they wanted to take advantage of their position at the top of Division Two in the coming Lent Bumps.

## Bumps

Unfortunately, adverse conditions throughout the term, unremitting yellow, and at times, red flags, led CUCBC to take the decision to cancel the Getting On Race. This meant our M2 and W2 would have to wait until Easter to try their hand in the game of Bumps. Whilst our second boats watched from the sidelines - even bank partying at times - the members of our first boats experienced the highs and lows that accompany any Bumps campaign. This year brought an especially mixed bag of results; whilst W1 navigated the exciting but fatiguing position of sandwich boat, M1 fought to keep their spirits high after consecutive bumps.

## W1 Bumps Roundup

With half a boat of ex-novices, day one was uncharted territory for our W1, yet they were keen to show how hard they had been working this term (despite having no coach!) by securing a decisive bump on Darwin within the first two hundred metres. Top of division two now, W1 skipped rest day to undertake their first attempt at "divonship". Unable to catch a speedy St Catherine's crew who bumped out early, W1 set their sights on Queens' for the overbump. Though they managed to halve the gap, an overbump never realised which meant they would be rowing as sandwich boat the next day. The weather turned on



Thursday and W1 readied themselves for a gruelling set of races in the rain. Their rowover in division two - which would allow them a second stab at division one - was not without its challenges: after Homerton's decisive bump on Darwin, a gap opened up for Selwyn to take the overbump. W1's complacency soon caught up with them on the Reach as a determined Selwyn W1 moved swiftly around Ditton and into full sight of the crew. Returning to race pace, W1 turned the engines back on and a dogfight ensued right until the top finish at Green Dragon Bridge. With still another race to row, a fatigued W1 returned to the railway bridge for marshalling, under which they sheltered from the unremitting downpour. In this second excursion into division one, King's would be chasing Peterhouse. After a fast start, W1 soon heard one whistle, but tired legs and cold bodies began to show and Peterhouse slipped from their grasp. Unfortunately, the fourth day brought their first bump and Homerton took up the baton of sandwich boat. Revived after a much shorter row, W1 entered their final day ready for a second battle with their boathouse neighbours, Selwyn W1. A rapid start, surpassing rate 40 saw King's sail ahead of Selwyn, advancing inch by inch on Peterhouse. Almost at three whistles and pushing to their max, the crew started to wane and Peterhouse managed to pull away at Ditton. Soon, a consistent Selwyn had eaten away at King's lead and pushed on to secure a bump at the railway bridge. Despite a somewhat less successful end to their week, W1 were still in high spirits, having put in some of their best rowing and lowest splits of the term on the final day. After six races in five days, they certainly deserved a rest!



## M1 Bumps Roundup

M1's Bumps campaign was a little less eclectic but no less exciting. With half a boat of novices, like W1, but without that preparatory race of Newnhead, many in the boat were entering not only their first Bumps campaign, but their first race. Chasing Queens' on Day One, and followed by a fierce-looking Emmanuel, M1 knew they would need to fight hard from the outset. Unfortunately, Emmanuel caught them before the first-post corner, which meant Robinson would be chasing them the next day. Thursday

brought more dismay as Robinson also managed to bump the crew within the first few hundred metres. On their third day, M1 held out against St Catherine's until the corner. With three bumps now on their chart, Saturday brought the looming prospect of spoons to the forefront; it would be a tough fight, both physical and emotional, but M1 took it like champs. On the final day, Peterhouse was chasing and got the bump on King's. Although this meant spoons, M1 should be immensely proud of the enormous effort they have put in, progressing decidedly each day, and pushing that bit further down the course with each row. Lents being a stepping stone to Mays, we can't wait to see what Easter will bring for this crew. However, for those in the



blading men's crews last year, a purple spoon made for a wonderful addition on the wall next to their purple blades!

## HoRR



On Saturday 23rd March, our M1 made their way down to London for this year's Head of the River Race. Since bad weather throughout Lent term and across the country had caused both Henley Fours and Eights and Women's Eights Head of the River Race to be cancelled, this would be KCBC's first and only off-Cam excursion of the term. The novelty of such a race for the crew cannot be understated: many of the crew had not raced outside of Cambridge, nevermind on the notoriously choppy waters of the Tideway. Arriving at Putney,

they took a brief pre-paddle to get a feel for the windy conditions and the new water. M1 were among 296 crews participating in this year's HoRR. Starting at position 191, they put in a strong performance to finish with a time of 19:30 which would place them above a number of colleges from both Oxford and Cambridge and 190th overall. This event marked the end of Lent term rowing calendar, and was a wonderful opportunity for the men's side to experience the Boat Race course for themselves ahead of Boat Race weekend.

## The 2024 Boat Races

Every year, a portion of KCBC makes their way down to London to support Cambridge in the Boat Races. However, this year would be particularly special with two members of King's participating. On Friday 29th March, Georgia Gollogly put in an incredible performance in the four seat of CUBC's Lightweight Women's Crew to win by 5 lengths against Oxford. Georgia's rowing journey has been remarkable to witness; after completing the novice programme at King's in 2021, she has achieved dizzying heights of success in such a short period of time. We are so proud here in KCBC to have assisted her in this journey. The next day brought more tales of success for our resident GB rower, Luca Ferraro! Sitting in seven seat of the Blue Boat this year, Luca returned to the Tideway for his third consecutive Boat Race. The Men's Crew continued the success of the Lightweights' and Women's crews to secure another victory. It proved a wonderful day for all those who watched in London, it is a well-known fact that King's knows how to celebrate! Let's hope King's can continue to have such success with the CUCB programme.



## Update from the Women's Captains

The Women's side showed fantastic effort all around in Lent term, especially our ex-novices who were trained so diligently by Vice-Captains Abbie and Lara in Michaelmas. There was plenty of enthusiasm among the new seniors who were eager to discover the weird and wonderful world of rowing. Four ex-novices brilliantly stepped up to fill seats in W1, and alongside with W2 both crews trained hard both on and off the water. Often in tough weather conditions, through yellow (and red) flags, and without a coach, both crews persevered towards the goal of Lent bumps. We would like to especially commend W1 cox Martha who showed great leadership in such tricky circumstances in only her 3rd term coxing. However, unfortunately days before racing, the Getting-on Race was cancelled, which meant that sadly our W2 crew could no longer participate in bumps. Despite these disappointments, the previous technical sessions on the ergs and occasional combined outings with the Selwyn women proved to be great experiences. Overall, W2 have learnt a lot about the sport and gained valuable fitness for the upcoming Easter term.



With bumps week looming ahead, W1 were hoping to return to the Catherine Wheel Wetherspoons hotel of Henley-on-Thames (and also race in Henley Fours and Eights Head). However, due to the poor weather conditions across the country, they were regrettably deprived of such a fine opportunity for luxury accommodation and first-class racing. In spite of this W1 did not despair and were ready to tackle bumps head-on and show off a great campaign. Certainly, Tuesday's racing was short but sweet, with a speedy bump on Darwin secured by the crew. Subsequently, they raced at the bottom of Division 1 on Wednesday, where they rowed over very strongly as the crews ahead bumped out. Thursday brought two row-overs: the former at the top of Division 2; the latter at the bottom



of Division 1, yet on Friday they were unfortunately bumped by Homerton. During a fantastic race on Saturday, the crew was caught by Selwyn at the finish. Overall W1 showed a very strong result, going down by only one spot on the bumps table. Both W1 and W2 then deservedly celebrated their Lent term in rowing at the Boat Club Dinner in the Hall alongside with the rest of KCBC.

With bumps over, W1 wanted to dip their toes in another waterway besides the Cam for the second time, this time being the famous Tideway for WEHoRR. On the cards for the women was an exciting chance to race the iconic Championship Course backwards alongside the greatest women's crews in the country. Alas, yet again the weather conditions did not permit, and all the Cambridge colleges were scratched from racing. However, the Tideway did not go completely unconquered by KCBC women, as our own Georgia was racing in the lightweight Blue Boat against Oxford. Georgia herself noviced at KCBC and was the stroke of our W1 last year, and as such we were all incredibly excited to support her racing either virtually or in

person. Cambridge not only had a fantastic row, but also won, and we are so proud of Georgia for this incredible achievement.

With Easter term just around the corner, we are excited to see what it will bring. Longer days and warm sun will definitely be motivating factors for all. We hope for a term of fun and fulfilling training for both W1 and W2, with coaching and better weather and flags of no other colour but green. We cannot wait to train hard, progress, and race together as one squad in the lead-up to the Easter bumps.

## Update from the Men's Captain

This term, KCBC have experienced the full effects of climate change and its effect on rowing in Cambridge. After the success that we experienced last year at Henley IVs and VIIIs, we decided that we would once again lay down some watts on the Henley course however our plans were thwarted by severe flooding that left only Leander boating for outings. We would have no problem showing Leander what speed is, however, with the Royal Regatta car park under water the race was cancelled.

Back in Cambridge, the story was much the same with yellow flag after yellow flag that left M2 struggling to get outings in and even multiple days of red flag. The wellies usually reserved for HoRR were being used daily and provided an extra incentive to be in the first few to get in in the morning as a few are less watertight than they used to be. Logan's way has been repeatedly flooding well over a foot deep so has left our rowers rolling up their trousers and putting their shoes in their bags to get to the ergs. Whilst everybody complained, the dedication shown by the men has been amazing with high erg attendance and consistent improvements across the squad, especially from our new novices. The commitment to going through the freezing flood water may have something to do with the alternative option being to erg in the King's Bunker with the many stories the current squad have been told about that.



This year we have said goodbye to a large proportion of our senior rowers which has left the club full of new novices eager to learn and yet to experience the joys of a 5:53 AM meet time. Our M1 contained 4 novices which, whilst high, means we will have many more rowers with experience rowing in the first division for the next few years. With a boat full of novices and a lack of racing under our belts due to the weather, we made the best of our preparation for Lent bumps. UT2 ergs extended each week and the mileage added up consistently despite the adverse weather so that by the time we were at the end of the chain on day 1, we felt somewhat prepared to try and get Queen's and hold off Emmanuel behind us. Despite our best efforts, it did not go our way as we proceeded to get bumped by Emmanuel,

Robinson, St. Catherine's and Peterhouse resulting in spoons. This result has left M1 with a hunger to turn this result around in May's as well as Lent next year. Luckily we are losing only a few people from the club

next year so we have a great opportunity to really embed these new members into the KCBC program and climb back up the bumps chart.

Our M2 worked hard in the last few weeks before bumps to meet the 12 outings requirement for the getting on race, however they were left disappointed after CUCBC decided to cancel the race. After the work that M2 has put in this term, we were looking forward to watching them fight for a permanent position on the bumps chart once again and gutted that they did not even get a chance.



After the dismay of the bumps results, M1 set off with new resolve to have a good result at HoRR. With a later race than last year, we went down early to go for a prepaddle and make the most of our time on the tideway. With wind against stream, this was a very different experience to the conditions that we are accustomed to on the Cam, however everyone took it in their stride and we settled into the new crew order and conditions. Despite the best efforts of one of the Durham colleges on our way to marshalling, we made it in one piece to the start and did our last bits of prep before the race. With the fast stream, the boat was moving well however that didn't make the 6.8km feel short and by the end everyone was absolutely exhausted. We beat a number of Cambridge colleges including Queen's who we had failed to bump just a few weeks before. This showed just how much the crew had stepped up in the weeks after bumps and hopefully we will continue on this trajectory as we welcome our returners for May bumps.



For the third year now, KCBC flocked to the tideway to watch Luca Ferraro in the men's blue boat take on Oxford. With good weather, a healthy amount of KCBC present and Cambridge delivering an outstanding result against Oxford, it was a great day out for all who attended. This year being Luca's third men's blue boat means that he has the most men's rowing blues in the history of the club! On top of this, Luca was also in the GB u23 8+ which won gold at the u23 world championships last summer!

May bumps should be quite the spectacle as we try our best to defend fourth on the river and crack the top three! With a few returners (including Luca) we have the potential to really put down a set of results that the club can be proud of and try to emulate the success of last year.

Up the Kings!



*King's College Lent Boat Club Dinner 2024*

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