



NEWSLETTER

JULY 2003

Editorial

I sense the Club is still damp and glowing in all the right places following the success of the first Upton Regatta (more on this landmark event from Peter and Stewart below). Congratulations to all involved. We've already held a debriefing meeting and have noted several ways in which we can improve our organisation next year.

This Newsletter is packed with items suitable for holiday reading: please support the events laid on in the Social Calendar by your hard-working committee (motto – “let's put the fun back into fund-raising”); regular entries from your Chairman and Captain are followed by news of two co-opted appointments to the committee to ensure that we maintain standards of Health, Safety and Welfare within the club; we also have an intriguing insider's view of the ARA from my predecessor as Secretary.

Near the end you'll spot three vacancies among the positions listed on the committee. We are keen to fill these as soon as possible so please examine your conscience to see whether you could do a stint as Fund-raising Co-ordinator, Newsletter Editor or Minute Secretary (I have a close personal interest in seeing these last two filled!). We are also looking for a practically minded person to help with jobs in the boathouse.

Johnny Birks

Social Calendar

Here are a few crucial dates for what remains of your 2003 entertainments diary. Please keep an eye on the boathouse notice board for final details or changes (regrettably there will be no Summer Ball this year, but there are already plans afoot for one in 2004):

17th August

In the absence of a Summer Row this year, there will be a special Club Row followed by an enormous Brunch on the Upton Village Green. Contact Sandy Barker or Carol Barkley for details.

7th September

An afternoon of Fun and Games (tennis, golf and target shooting) with a BBQ at Brook End Lane, Kempsey (thanks to Penny Stevenson and her parents for hosting this). Children welcome on leads.

15th September

Club AGM in the Sports Club, Upton.

26th September

Club Dinner in the Memorial Hall, Upton.

1st November

A Horns & Haloes Night in the Memorial hall, Upton.

21st November

Race Night (details to be announced later).



Beware! You're never really safe at an Upton RC Social event (Garden Party, June 2003)

Chairman's notes or *Sweepings off the boathouse floor*

This is actually the second time I have written these notes. The first time I was on holiday in the Lake District on the third day of a rather strenuous 125 mile walk. I was asked by Johnny the previous week for my contribution to the newsletter which I immediately failed to do. No problem I thought. I will hand write the notes and get the receptionist of the hotel (not for me camping at my age) to fax them to Johnny. The next morning a tale of woe – the paper I had used jammed her fax machine, parts of my notes had been shredded. Again no problem, I dictated from memory the bits that were lost. She would type them up and fax them from Keswick when she went for her lunch. I trudged off up into the cloud covered hills happy Johnny would not be delayed in getting the Newsletter out. The fax never arrived so on with Mark 2.

The Regatta

The good thing is that the regatta has now taken place so I've something extra to talk about. I shall leave it to others to report on the detail of the day but from my part I was worried that the delay in turning boats around was upsetting the crews and they would never "go to Upton again". Imagine my relief at the very positive feedback we have had from the clubs who attended, both on the day and subsequently by email.

The other point I want to make is how well the new pontoons performed. Again many positive comments were received and if we are to hold a similar event again then more pontoons will be needed to give more boat storage as well as getting crews on and off the water. A big THANKS to Gabby for getting the grant money for the pontoons.

Clubmark

The committee is currently working on getting the Club accredited with 'Clubmark'. This has been set up by Sports England for all sports club – not just rowing.

It is designed primarily to ensure that any juniors involved with the Club are properly cared for so that parents know their children will be safe and their welfare secure when involved in Club activities. The procedures that we are putting in place will also spin off into adult rowing ensuring safe practice for them as well as the youngsters. There is a lot of work to do setting it up initially but hopefully subsequent years will be less intensive as we will have templates to follow. In case we need an incentive, funding from public sources in the future will be impossible without Clubmark!

The Marina Development

As I expect you all will have heard Walton Marine have got outline planning permission for a substantial development of the Marina. As the land on which our boathouse stands is due to be redeveloped we will be involved in moving our facilities. It is not yet clear exactly how and when this will happen but it is likely to be years rather than months in time scale with either a new, or our existing, structure positioned near the top of the slipway. The committee have written to Walton Marine asking for a meeting to discuss all these matters and we will keep you informed of any news.



Upton Rowing Club Garden Party, 21st June 2003

Captains Log July 2003

Our hard-working Captain Stewart Robinson writes:

We have done it! We have held a regatta at Upton, and it was a great success!

Although not everything went as expected the overwhelming response has been that our visitors enjoyed the racing and that they had a great day.

Thanks to everyone

Your committee are taking care of formal thanks to people outside the club (e.g. SARA, Umpires, Town Council etc.) but Peter and I would like to take this opportunity to give a big thank you to everyone from the club who contributed to the success of the event. Giving individual thanks always means risking missing someone out, so please don't be offended if my dodgy memory lets me down, but special thanks are due to:

Freya - for arranging the tankards, helping with all aspects, and looking after registration on the day.

Alan and Will – for helping throughout the weekend and making up crews on the day, despite Will feeling pretty ropey.

The juniors – for manning the boating pontoon for the first half of the regatta.

Johnny – for picking up the task of marshalling the crews for boating, and making such an excellent job of it.

Ros and Patrick – for looking after communications and keeping an accurate record of results.

Gabby – for his all round help and support, and for sharing his experience with us.

Graham – for taking on the role of Chairman of the Race Committee and being co-ordinating umpire on the day.

Deirdre and Debbie – for their help with registration and other things.

Sandy Elwell – for supporting the start umpires throughout the day.

Wendy and Dave – for supplying the refreshments for the umpires.

Terry – for ensuring that the boating area was available and then working until he, almost literally, dropped.

Pauline – for all of her help and for organising the Upton crews.

Andrea and Karen – for coxing the Upton crews.

Everyone else – for helping with many different tasks on the day, registration, marshalling, boating, scribing etc. etc.

Upton Veterans Regatta 2003

The first Upton Veterans Regatta was held on Sunday 20th July 2003. The racing took place on a 400 metre downstream course from Poolbrook to the site of the old bridge. 39 crews from 8 different clubs came to Upton to race against each other in eights, coxed fours, double and single sculls. There were about 130 'seats' on the day, although a lot of competitors were taking part in more than one event.

In all we presented 65 pots, 56 of them in the main regatta. The 'Victor Lodorum' club was Ross Rowing Club who won 17 pots, Bewdley were in second place with 14 pots and Monmouth third with 12. Upton shared the 'wooden spoon' with Stratford Upon Avon with neither winning any pots in the main regatta, although Upton did pick up a few in the scratch eights. Results are as follows:

Open Vet D/E Eights

This event was won by Bewdley who beat the Upton eight by half a length in the first heat going on to beat Avon County by a length in the final

Mixed Vet B Coxed Fours

Ross were comfortable winners in this event beating their Upton opponents by 2½ lengths

Mixed Vet D Coxed Fours

Ross again triumphed over Upton but this time by just half a length

Open Vet Novice Coxed Fours

In this event Monmouth beat Llandaff by 2 lengths in their heat and went on to beat Bewdley in the final, after Bewdley had taken an excursion into the bushes!

Open Vet B Coxed Fours

This event saw our own Chris Couper rowing for Worcester against one of his former Upton crewmates, Richard Lee. Debbie Thompson also coxed the Worcester boat, so we had some divided loyalties here. Worcester beat Ross by ¾ length in the first round and went on to beat Upton by a length in the final

Open Vet D Coxed Fours

Bewdley against Upton in the final of this event saw the Bewdley crew romp home with a winning margin of 2½ lengths

Open Vet E Coxed Fours

2 crews from Avon County, a crew from Monmouth and a crew from Worcester contested this event. Worcester eliminated Avon County B in the first round whilst Avon County A beat Monmouth. In the final Worcester took the honours beating Avon County A by 1½ lengths

Women's Vet Novice Coxed Fours

This event was raced over 2 legs between Monmouth and Upton. The Upton crew were beaten in the first leg by 2½ lengths, they fought hard in the second leg and reduced the margin but couldn't get ahead of the stronger Monmouth crew.

Women's Vet C Coxed Fours

The first heat of this event saw one of the closest races of the day with a Stratford crew beating Upton by just half a length. However a younger and more experienced Ross crew went comfortably through their first race to go on to beat Stratford by 1½ lengths in the final

Mixed Vet Double Sculls

Once again a fairly emphatic win for Ross over their less experienced Stratford rivals

Open Vet D Double Sculls

Two Llandaff crews were competing in this event against opposition from Avon County. The final was an all Llandaff affair with the 'B' crew beating the 'A' crew by 2 lengths

Open Vet Novice Single Sculls

An all Welsh event with A Barnett from Monmouth beating his Llandaff opponent in both legs of the event

Open Vet C/D/E Single Sculls

There was quite a wide age range between the four competitors in this event, and there was clearly some experience on display. Stratford's Robinson beat Sondheimer from Avon County in their heat, whilst Avon County's Brigden beat Llandaff's Matthews. In the final Brigden beat Robinson thereby providing Avon County with their only pot of the day.

Women's Vet Novice Single Sculls

This event provided, for some people, the best entertainment of the day. There were only 2 entries but on the day the sculler from Monmouth, Ms McCarthy, was without an opponent. To avoid disappointing her, Upton's Debbie Thompson was persuaded to take part, she had at least been in a single scull before! She doesn't quite make veteran status however (19 years old), but what the heck. Off they went to the start looking cool and composed. They lined up quite well (after waiting for a bit of traffic), with Thompson on the town side and McCarthy on the meadow side. At the starters instruction they set off down the course with Thompson establishing a slight lead. The crowd were watching expectantly as the race progressed towards the town, but Thompson suddenly went very deep with her bow side oar. She tried desperately to recover from the imbalance that this had given to her boat, and from the town we could see her stroke side spoon flailing higher and higher off the water, and then sploosh!!!!. Debbie was swimming. The SARA safety launch reacted swiftly to retrieve her from the water whilst McCarthy finished the race, the verdict being "not rowed out". But, as one spectator put it, at least Debbie won the wet 'T' shirt competition.

Coaching seminar

We have arranged for some tuition in coaching skills to take place at the beginning of September. The main purpose of this is to improve our general awareness of the technique of rowing and how we can help each other.

Adrian Barsby has kindly agreed to provide the training for us, there will be 2 sessions, the first is an evening 'theory' session on Thursday September 4th, the second session will be practical and will be held on the following Saturday, the 6th. It is unlikely that individuals will need to attend for the whole day on the Saturday. More detailed information will be available nearer the time.

To help us plan for this training we need to know for sure how many people are going to take advantage of it, please let me know as soon as possible if you would like to take part. If you are allocated a place on the course it is most important that you turn up on the day.

Now for some more mundane things:

Care of equipment

We all need to take care of the boats, the boathouse, and all of the rest of the equipment that we have. We are lucky enough to have built up a good stock of quality boats, but they are very easily damaged. Please take great care when handling boats, take them off the rack without lifting too high (avoid scratching the hull on the riggers above). If you are using a trolley be sure to lift the boat high enough to avoid catching the frame of the trolley, it is better to have someone holding the trolley level as you put the boat onto it. The reverse of these things is of course true when boats are being lifted off trolleys or replaced on the rack.

It is also important to handle the oars carefully, they are at greater risk of damage through being dropped or mis-handled than they are whilst they are being rowed. The oars should also be kept in sets, for example for general use in fours and eights there are 2 sets of wooden handled Crokers and 2 sets of lightweight (blue handled) Crokers. The wooden handled sets are identified by one set having a broad green marking near the handle, the other set have a broad red marking just above the sleeve. The wooden handled Crokers for pairs (one pair marked with red and yellow tape) must not be mixed up with the ones for general use.

Use of equipment

We try not to be too prescriptive about who can use what, but there are some rules that must be observed. Some of the boats in the boathouse are privately owned, it is strictly forbidden to use these boats without the owner's permission, if there is any doubt do not use. There are also some sculling oars that are privately owned (even if they are painted in Upton colours), these should also never be used without the owners' permission. The new X-Cell sculls and the collection that Bob Hinds kindly acquired for us (the cleavers with white spoons) are for general use.

Other boats, e.g. Baz, Satsuma etc., are only suitable for lightweight rowers, once again if there is any doubt do not use!

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We cannot, unfortunately, have boats specifically set up for individual crews, the settings (swivel height, pitch, span etc.) should not be altered. If you would like any settings checked out then please inform either Colin, Pauline, Steve or myself, and we will arrange for checks and adjustments to be made.

General care and use

I would also like to ask everyone to take care of the boathouse and equipment in general, if we all make an effort to keep things clean and tidy it is less likely that somebody else will face a big job to sort things out. Thank you Steve for your recent efforts.

If you have to store a set of riggers, for example if you have swapped a boat from sculling to sweep oar or vice versa, then please ensure that the riggers are carefully bundled together and stored tidily.

Even little things like making sure that the handles of the Ergos are left resting against the chain guard, not in the hook, will help to ensure that we enjoy longer life, and trouble free service, from our equipment.

Club Welfare Adviser

Given the importance properly afforded to Child Protection and welfare issues generally within rowing your committee has decided to appoint a Welfare Adviser. We are very pleased that Jenny Worthington has agreed to take on this important role within the club. Although Jenny (whose son Tom is a junior rower) has been co-opted onto the committee, her position is independent and represents a valuable conduit for welfare concerns between the membership and committee. You can contact her in confidence about welfare issues on 01905 371225.

Club Safety Adviser

Our Safety Advisor Paul Macdonald of RAF Innsworth has been posted to the Netherlands. We wish Paul well in his new posting and thank him for so ably filling this important position. We are delighted that one of our newer members, Alan Nesbit, has agreed to take on the role of Safety Adviser.

New ARA Policy Documents

The ARA has produced two new policy documents covering safety and welfare in rowing. The first is titled '*Good Practice in Rowing – Participant Welfare, Good Practice and Child Protection Policy and Procedures*'; the second is the '*Water Safety Code*'. Through the Clubmark process and with the help of our welfare and safety advisers we shall ensure that our club follows the guidance contained in these documents. As members we have a responsibility to be familiar with their contents. I have provided copies of each in the boathouse and have emailed copies to all members who have provided me with functioning email addresses. Further copies can be downloaded from the ARA website www.ara-rowing.org. If you cannot get access to a copy please contact me, Johnny Birks, and I will endeavour to provide one for you.

RAF News

Rowers from RAF Innsworth share our facilities at the boathouse. To improve the links between our two clubs we'd like to include a section on RAF Innsworth's rowing activities in future newsletters. The officer in charge of rowing at RAF Innsworth is Squadron Leader Glyn Allcock. His telephone number is 01452 712612 x5437.

News from The ARA

From our man on the inside **Ron Paterson** (previous secretary of Upton Rowing Club and now Hon. Treasurer of the ARA)

The oldest copy of the ARA's *Rowing Almanack* that I have in my possession is the 1965 edition, and (as it still does today) this includes the ARA's accounts for the previous year, analysed between domestic and international operations. The amount raised to support these two activities in 1964 was just over £3,000 each, of which £600 was from a government grant, and the rest came from the members. Clubs paid their subscriptions on a scale that was denominated in guineas, and had also been subjected to a special levy to support the Olympic Games in Tokyo. The total expenditure on coaching the GB team in 1964 was £14 15/- (that's £14.75 for you youngsters), and it had clearly paid off – the team won its first Olympic medal since 1948, a silver in the coxless fours. Sadly it was to turn out to be the last medal for another 12 years, although since 1976 we have been on the podium every time.

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Today the ARA turns over about £5 million annually, and now nearly 90% of it comes from public funds and the rest from the members, rather than the other way round. As honorary treasurer of the Association, that means I have an awful lot of cheques to sign. I go in to the office in Hammersmith roughly once a week for this purpose, as well as to attend various meetings and deal with other financial matters. A major issue for me over the next three years will be helping to organise the World Championships that we are hosting at Dorney Lake in 2006. This single regatta will cost more than £2 million to run, and again we will be getting a substantial subsidy from public funds.

The ARA has been extraordinarily successful in attracting grants over recent years, both for its international teams and for grass roots development such as Project Oarsome. We have done much better in this regard than most other sports, partly because of our Olympic successes, but also because the Association has earned a reputation as one of the best-run governing bodies in British sport. Back in 1964 virtually all the work was done by amateurs; nowadays it is a very professional organisation with over 50 employees (mostly coaches and development officers). But it is still headed by a Council composed of members elected by the Clubs, and there is plenty of scope for volunteers to get involved at all levels in helping to run the sport. Quite how I ended up as treasurer is a bit of a mystery to me, but it does show just how open the Association is to bringing in anyone who is prepared to help – it is not all an exclusive organisation.

One potential cloud on the financial horizon is the current decline in the National Lottery. Most of the money that we get through the various sports councils is sourced from lottery funds, and is under increasing pressure as ticket sales fall off. (One of my former professional colleagues recently pointed out to me that if you buy a lottery ticket at the beginning of the week, you are statistically more likely to die before the draw takes place than to win the jackpot!) However, we are hoping that our good reputation with the grant-giving bodies will protect our funding more than that of many other sports. Much will depend on continuing our trend of Olympic success – if we don't get enough medals in Athens, our grants may start to fall and the ARA may have to go back to asking the clubs to cough up a few more guineas.

Email Addresses Please!

Thank you to all club members who have supplied me with their email addresses. This makes it much simpler for me to send out important club or ARA information and it saves on postage and paper. If you have an email address that you'd be happy for me to use but you have not yet given me, do please email me at johnnybirks@vwt.org.uk Thanks.

Your Committee:

Position	Officer	Home 'phone	Mobile
Chairman	Peter Barker	01684 592906	07974 158839
Secretary	Johnny Birks	01684 575876	07974 083763
Captain	Stewart Robinson	01684 567865	07899 978535
Womens' Vice-captain	Pauline Mason	01684 593194	
Mens' Vice-captain	Colin Biggs	01684 592246	07767 606171
Treasurer	Andrea Oliver	01684 593180	
Membership Secretary	Freya Biggs	01684 592007	07968 919939
Boatmaster	Bos		07970 337175
Junior Organiser	Steve Cox	01684 593849	
Fundraising co-ordinator	Position vacant		
Ordinary member	Pat Cox	01684 593849	
Ordinary member	Gabby Tolkein	01386 45334	
Safety Adviser	Alan Nesbit	01684 290950	
Welfare Adviser	Jenny Worthington	01905 371225	
Minute Secretary	Position vacant		
Newsletter Editor	Position vacant		

Clothing Orders

John Dean is kindly handling the club's clothing orders. So if you are itching to pull on a new all-in-one or want to obtain a splash-top before the winter weather arrives do contact him on 01684 594221 or j3dee@tiscali.co.uk (apparently John has tested the new splash-tops in the shower and they really are waterproof!).

And finally.....

Congratulations to the Upton crews who have had successes at recent regattas. Our Vet F 4+ have continued their winning ways with a victory at Bridgnorth Regatta on 7th June.

Karen Lanni (cox), Richard Lee, Stewart Robinson, Will Dutson and Alan Nesbit, Men's Veteran C 4+ winners at Stratford Regatta 14th June 2003



Upton members had a great day out at Stratford Regatta on 14th June. We entered several crews as we were keen to support this as the first of the trial Veteran Regattas in our region, we competed in the Invitation Challenge Eights (2 boats), the closest race in this event was the race between the Upton crews. We had a Womens Vet Novice 4 in the committee boat event (1st year of competition) and a Womens Novice 4 in the main event, both raced well but were beaten. Our Mens Vet D crew were beaten in their final by an experienced crew from Avon County. But the highlight of the day was our Mens Vet C crew who beat Falcon in the first round and then had a very close race in the final against Evesham, Upton were awarded the race by half a canvas. The winning Upton crew was Will Dutson, Richard Lee, Alan Nesbit and Stewart Robinson, coxed by Karen Lanni.



*The Women's Vet Novice 4+ (1st year of competition):
Jenny Worthington, Catherine Gearing, Sue Martin and Lisa Belfield,
Coached and coxed by Freya Biggs. Stratford, 14th June 2003.*