



NEWSLETTER

November 2004

Editorial

With darkening skies over a deepening river, this late autumn newsletter brings you some uplifting snippets to raise the spirits as we hurtle towards the ever-lengthening Christmas season: a newly invigorated committee post-AGM, tempting hints of a packed programme of gripping social events, progress of several members towards their Instructors Awards (for coaching beginners), poetic memories of the Vesta Veterans Head and another successful tour to Amsterdam, plans for the Upton Head, news of the Club Kit Shop and much, much more. Contributions for, and constructive comments on, the Newsletter are always welcome.

Johnny.

Your New Committee (and non-committee posts)

Following the AGM on 27th September 2004 your committee has a fresh, perked-up look. I am hugely grateful to Ros Adams for bravely taking on of the role of Secretary and I wish her well in repairing the damage done by the previous incumbent! We are also fortunate to have filled some posts that have lain vacant for too long: Kath Means has taken on the important role of Fundraising Co-ordinator (see news from Kath later on in this newsletter), thereby lightening the load on our treasurer, Andrea Oliver, who has worked hard with others over the past few years to keep our fundraising going; Bob Hinds now fills the important post of Boatmaster; Penny Stevenson is our new Press Officer and would welcome any items of club news to pass on to the local media; so as to improve representation of junior rowing interests on the committee, Grahame Turner has joined the committee as an ordinary member and his son James has taken on the new non-committee post of Junior Rep; following in the kit-selling footsteps of John Dean (many thanks John), Patrick Adams has taken on the vital role of keeping us properly clothed in the club's kit (see the piece by Patrick later in this newsletter). Kath, Bob, Penny, Grahame, James and Patrick will need your support in their new roles, so please give them all the help you can when requested! Finally, Gabby Tolkien has kindly taken on the role of Safety Adviser in Alan Nesbit's absence abroad. Gabby has not been very well recently so we wish him well with his recovery.

Upton Rowing Club Committee 2004-2005				
Post	Name	Home	Mobile	E Mail
Chairman	Peter Barker	01684 592906	07974 158839	ppb@stratascan.co.uk
Secretary	Ros Adams	01531 636951		ros@riversidetraining.co.uk
Treasurer	Andrea Oliver	01684 593180	07947 806897	andrea.oliver@virgin.net
Captain	Stewart Robinson	01684 567865	07899 978535	srobinson@pilz.co.uk
Women's Vice Captain	Pauline Mason	01684 593194		tmmason@btinternet.com
Men's Vice Captain	Will Dutson	01684 293774	07980 708412	will.dutson@btinternet.com
Membership Secretary	Freya Biggs	01684 592007	07968 919939	
Boatmaster	Bob Hinds	01905 820887		

Junior Organiser	Steve Cox	01684 593849		
Fundraising Co-ordinator	Kath Means	01684 575599	07795 183900	kmeans@pathways-i.co.uk
Welfare Adviser	Jenny Worthington	01905 371225	07971 414834	johnworthington@zoom.co.uk
Ordinary Member and Safety Adviser	Gabby Tolkien	01386 45334		gtolkien@onetel.net.uk
Ordinary Member	Grahame Turner	01684 563289	07711 606680	grahame.n.turner@btinternet.com

Non-committee Posts				
Junior Representative	James Turner	01684 563289	07747 104036	
Kit Sales	Patrick Adams	01531 636951	07973 541724	patrick@riversidetraining.co.uk
Press Liaison	Penny Stevenson	01684 567798	07887 631024	derekstevenson@btconnect.com
Chairman Regatta Committee	Clive Killick	01531 640052	07747 767456	rckillick@hotmail.com
Chairman Head of River Committee	Stewart Robinson	01684 567865	07899 978535	srobinson@pilz.co.uk
Newsletter Editor	Johnny Birks	01684 575876	07974 083763	johnnybirks@vwt.org.uk

2004-2005 Social Calendar

Regrettably Kath has popped down under so was unable to supply a full social calendar for the newsletter. Here are some **provisional** dates for the first few events in 2005. Please support them, have fun and help to raise funds for the club!

Quiz Night – Sports Club January 21st 2005 (Date confirmed!)

Race Night – 18th February 2005

Line Dancing – Date to be announced!



The Captain oversees the club's fund-raising efforts on Sport Relief day in Upton

URC Coaching Drive – Instructor's Award Course

Eleven members of our club embarked upon an IA course run by Adrian Barsby at Worcester's new Rowing Centre. We are fortunate to have such an experienced coach and such an excellent teacher among our membership (we even found ourselves learning a bit about Tango-dancing – another of Adrian's teaching passions). Completed this month

(November), this training will enable us to offer quality coaching (by qualified coaches) to a greater volume of beginners than we can currently accommodate. Growing our membership through an increased coaching capacity is an essential part of our club's long-term development.

A meeting for Upton coaches, old and new, will be held in the Anchor on Monday 6th December to discuss aspirations and plans for the future. All coaches or those who are interested in coaching are invited to attend. We are intending to formulate a coaching strategy to enable us to increase membership and develop new and existing rowers. We hope to have several members attending a seminar on 'Applying British Rowing Technique' in December.

Chairman's Notes (aka Sweepings off the boathouse floor)

Well - we are off with a start to the new Club year with flooding – not very conducive to getting out on the water and sorting the finer points of rowing technique!

We have had our first meeting of the new committee when we welcomed Kath, Grahame and James as new members. I was especially pleased to see James being our first Junior Representative on the committee.

Kath has got lots of ideas on fund raising but she can't do it all on her own. I know all of you will be willing to help so if you haven't already introduced yourself to Kath don't be shy and get committed. Her details are in the list of contacts above.

Penny has kindly offered to act as Press Officer to liaise with the newspapers and radio (and knowing Penny, TV as well!) So if you have got any news she's the one to tell so she can spread the good news far and wide. Her details are also in the list of contacts.

The new racking was successfully erected on 13th and 14th November and there is a huge improvement in our use of space in the boathouse. Thanks to all who turned up to help.

There is a new boat on the block! Gander – belonging to Molly and John Pringle. They have moved from Weybridge to Worcester and wanted to store their recreational double skiff somewhere where it will get used. Steve and I picked it up last recently. The deal is that if we store the boat at Upton then members can use it. Once details are finalised we will let you know how to book it etc.

All for now.

Peter

Circuit Training

Wednesday nights, 7.30pm at Hanley Castle High School Gym is the time and place to get your blood pumpin'. As Boris Johnson told me recently, "it's the surest way to fitness while keeping your clothes on". Get on down there and hear those arteries knockin' like never

before. Professionally run by Freya Biggs, these training sessions are not just for the finely-sculpted and super-fit. All sizes, shapes and levels of sloth and enthusiasm are catered for. Subsequent rehydration at the Three Kings is strongly advised. Go on, try it – you know it makes sense!

Help out with the Upton Head! Saturday 8th January 2005

With our barking mad climate doubtless plotting beastly new ways of spoiling the fun (the smart meteorological money is on a mini-Ice Age in early January 2005), we plough on undeterred with planning next year's Upton Head of the River. There is great goodwill from other clubs towards us running the event successfully (and we've done enough trial runs now thank you!). Please mark the date in your diary and offer to help a.s.a.p. Just half a day of your time could make all the difference. There are many rewarding jobs to do and we need lowing herds of willing volunteers from the membership PLEASE!

Will Dutson, our kind and charismatic men's 'Captain of Vice' is in charge of dishing out the plum jobs, namely:

- a) Setting up the site on Friday 7th (am and pm) (marquees, pontoons etc)
- b) Marshalls, timekeepers, general dogsbodies on the Saturday (am and pm)
- c) Clearing up on Saturday pm and Sunday am.

Will needs your name names in his little book by the end of November. The earlier you can contact him the more choice you'll get!

Contact:

Will Dutson

uptonhead@willdutson.co.uk

01684 293774

07980 708412

or leave name and number on the form in the boat house.

Will also offers us a round-up of recent **competitive rowing** within the Club:

Ross Regatta

Several entries at Ross, first regatta for Matt Tomkins, Ben Harwood, James Turner.

No wins

Evesham Regatta

Will and Alan Win S2 2-

Swindon Splash and Dash

Will and Alan Win in Vet Open 2-

Will and Alan Win in Vet S3 2-

Adrian capsized in Nov 1X

Matt and Ben entered J18 1X

Monmouth Head

Will and Alan 2nd place in VetB - Alan's last race before leaving for Singapore

Worcester Head

Phantoms - Win Vet 4+ (Andrea coxing)

Ron and George Vet 2X (Only crew in class)

Matt Tomkins & James Turner raced singles in Sen4 and J15 respectively

Will single in Sen4, narrowly beating Matt

Stourport Head

Phantoms - Win Vet 4+ (Andrea coxing)

Club Rowing

Sunday rowing at 10 am through the winter. Members always welcome.

Crew Rowing

A small number of crews are getting together regularly. If any members are interested in competitive rowing and would like to find a seat in a crew, please contact Stewart, Pauline or Will. We will be forming crews to prepare for Head events through the winter, leading up to The Head of the River Race on the Thames in March.



Alan Nesbit and Will Dutson outside the boathouse with pots and medals from Regattas at Monmouth, Evesham and Swindon. Following Alan's move to Singapore, this successful coxless pair is now but a happy memory of 2004. Well done Alan and Will!

Windswept (but interesting) Tideway Memories

Our club's poet in residence, Ron Paterson (the thinking rower's answer to Billy Connolly?), has left us with this lasting memory (do we want one?!) of survival against the elements on the Tideway earlier this year. Delivered by Ron at the Club Dinner with theatrical Glaswegian panache, I've since learnt that this poem has caused Andrew Motion to consider his position.

The Vesta Head 2004: a cautionary tale

'Twas in the early Spring of Twenty-oh-four
When two fine eights embarked from the Tideway shore
They'd come to win the Vesta Veterans' event
And to earn renown for Upton was their firm intent
But sadly their bad name had been pre-fixed
Since they were classified as 'VD - Mixed'!

Proud Stewart stroked the first of these fine crews
As training, he'd had two days off the booze
He'd also, in a bid to trim his size
Declined twelve Big Macs and eleven pies
And rumour was, he'd had no sex for weeks
Which meant he looked like one of these ancient Greeks
(Not Hercules or Ulysses was what I meant
But like Achilles, sulking in his tent)
And he had sworn, in language most devout,
That now and then he'd try not to wash out

The other eight was stroked by Johnny Birks
A man who has the most peculiar quirks
He wears strange hats because he thinks they're sexier
But just looks like a skunk with anorexia
'Tis just as well (when you assess his features)
That he gets his kicks by fondling furry creatures
He'd hatched a plan to win the race in style
By rating 17 for the first mile
And after that he'd let the rate diminish
With a burst at 12 to lift it for the finish

These two fine crews were steered by slender lasses
Since no one else could hope to squeeze their asses

Into the coxes' seats. One cox was Karen
As slinky as the Malvern Hills are barren
The second boat was steered by stern Andrea
Who rules her crews more strictly e'en than Freya
The other seats were likewise packed with talent
The pride of Upton, handsome, strong and gallant
But so as to avoid their further shame
I'd better not record them all by name

So going afloat at Barnes, these crews departed
To try to get to where proceedings started
They soon found the barometer was falling
And conditions switched from nasty to appalling
A mighty gale was howling from the East
And all the time the height of waves increased
Their progress to the start was far from quick
Since each crew kept on stopping to be sick
But finally Wandsworth Railway Bridge was reached
And without delay the Upton boats were beached
Time passed, and nothing much occurred
Though Andrea kept repeating a rude word
The waves were getting higher all the while
And nobody was much inclined to smile
They sat there leaning on their rowlocks
While icy water splashed around their laps
At last the crews were all told to turn round
And those who did so badly, soon were drowned
But skilful steering on our coxes' part
Brought the Upton crews, still living, to the start

By this time, though, the wind was even colder
And Karen shrieked 'Blow this for a game of soldiers!
This race is for the dumbest of the dumb

And I'm fed up with a cold douche up my bum
I'd rather go for tea, with jam and chutney.
Forget this farce; let's disembark at Putney'.
On hearing this her crew let out a cheer
(Although they planned to ditch her tea for beer).
They went ashore, and politely didn't laugh
When watching other boats that broke in half.

Andrea's crew, meanwhile, was not so clever
Cos they were charging madly up the river
They'd row this bloody race if it took all day
So they thrashed on blindly in a cloud of spray.
After an hour or so they ploughed up to the finish
By which time their esprit was wearing thinnish

The wisdom of the enterprise was doubted
And 'Whose idea was that?' was widely shouted.
But later, after downing several jars
They agreed that they were really superstars
The moral of this tale deserves a note
There are days when it isn't wise to boat
And if you plan to live to be an old fart
It's sometimes best to quit before you start
So if you want renown for feats of glory
Just go round claiming exploits like this story
Regardless if they're true, let rumours spread
And make sure they're repeated till you're dead
That *you* rowed in that Upton crew, that's said
To have braved the storms and *won* the Vesta Head!

AMSTERDAM MASTERS 2004

Many highlights and lowlights of the club's autumn tour to Amsterdam remain coyly shrouded in a haze of secrecy and intrigue. Some details have been leaked, however, including news of strained Anglo-Netherlands relations when a Dutch women's VIII clashed with Upton's men's Vet 4+ on the Amstel (the river that is, not the beer). Once again Ron Paterson was well placed to report on language that made two Glaswegians blush. Whilst I admire his fabulous rhyming couplets, I'm troubled by the realisation that, from now on, I can never uncouple Catriona from 'obscener' (so sorry Catriona – you'll always be truly blameless in my eyes!):

Blue lips from Amsterdam

The Dutch girls who clashed with Catriona
Called us names that could not be obscener
Though these words were distressing
They're just right for addressing
The cruisers from Upton Marina



Another hard night for our women in Amsterdam.

A Rallying Call from our Fundraising Co-ordinator, Kath Means

At the September AGM I was voted in as the URC Fundraising & Social Functions Coordinator. This is a new posting for me and the Club, with a mixed job description. Basically the intent is to

provide some coordination for a range of fundraising and social activities and to ensure that our members have good fun out of the boats as well as in!

The first task with fundraising has been to set some financial targets. Work on this began at the October Committee meeting and we are now fine-tuning those targets. At the meeting we agreed that the URC will need to identify ways to widen its funding base in order to reach our targets. This means we need to find new ways of raising funds instead of relying mostly on memberships and member events (and extracting just more money from members.) An important part of this 'diversification' will be to gain more local business and corporate sponsorship within the wider catchment of the club. We also hope to tap into various sporting grants and Peter Barker has outlined a number of opportunities here. The Juniors will also be volunteered for involvement, with a number of fundraising events planned to raise monies that will enhance young people's participation in rowing.

Please everyone note that the position is that of 'Coordinator'! Although I may take the lead in some fundraising activities, real success in meeting our targets (NEW BOATS!) is reliant on member innovation and support. So here it comes...This is a call to ask members to think 'outside the box' and ring me or other URC Committee members with your ideas. This can include suggestions on social functions (in addition to the traditional URC activities) that you believe members might enjoy. For example, a number of female members have already taken the initiative to put on their cowboy hats and squeeze into their tightest jeans to organise a line-dancing night in early 2005. Yeehaw! Similarly, if you have experience or ideas on effective ways to engage with local business or community-inspired multinationals I want to hear from you! The phones are ready...

Kath.

CLUB KIT SHOP

Patrick Adams is now running the Kit Shop and will bring stock items to the boathouse most Sunday mornings. Patrick will contact you individually when special orders arrive so please include your contact details when your order.

Here is the full range of Club Kit.

Special Order Items	Price
New Style Splash Top - with hood	£72.00
All in One	£36.00
Zephyr	£26.00
Elite Cagoule	£50.00
Stock Items	
Old Style Splash Top - without hood Stock of size medium	£65.00
Sweatshirts	£20.00

Stock of sizes Small, Medium, Large and XX Large	
Woolly Hats	£8.00
Baseball Caps	£10.00
Club Tie	£6.50
Bow Tie (out of stock)	£10.00
Seat squabs	£10.00

If you would like to order anything please contact Patrick and he will be pleased to relieve you of your money!

Tel: 01531 636951

E-mail: patrick@riversidetraining.co.uk



Upton Rowing Club's Women's Vet 4+ Racing at The Amsterdam Masters Regatta in October 2004