

# Michaelmas 2013



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Robinson College  
Boat Club  
Old Blades Newsletter



### M1 Mays 2013

(L to R) Matt Hopgood, Harry Edwards, Andrew Shipley, Steve Fuller, Lara Tembey, Sam Troughton, Ed Osborne, Ewan McGregor, John Mulvey



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### W1 Mays 2013

Heather Keenan, Kate Fairhurst/Alex Roberts, Chris McClurg, Maria Farrimond, Jana Wolf, Maddy Yates, Vicky Bates, Jenni Mills, Tom Grimble

# President's Welcome

Since the last of these newsletters went out, it's been a mixed couple of years for RCBC. A set of Blades for M1 in Lents 2012, and M2 in Mays 2011, have been matched by disappointing campaigns. However, the club as a whole is in good shape. The Men's side at the moment has 16 senior rowers going into the Lents campaign, and the Ladies are looking as strong as they have since 2010, with a good crew put together.

Financially and logistically, the club is in a good position. We've been able to make important long-term repairs and refurbishments to boats, and will probably not be looking at purchasing any new VIIIs for a couple of years. Copies of an audit of boats and a financial statement are available on request.

Your continued support remains vital to the success of RCBC both on and off the River Cam. As well as the regular events at the HRR and the Saturday of Mays, we are looking to organise an Old Blades Dinner. We would also like to extend an open invitation to attend termly Boat Club Dinner to all Old Blades who are able. Please do get in contact if you need any help – buying ties/bowties, having blades painted, or are just seeking an update on the club.

I hope you enjoy reading about RCBC in the past year, and hope that you're as excited about the coming year as I am.

Yours,

Andrew Shipley, *RCBC President*



# M1 Season Review 2012-13

M1 started 2012-13 in a precarious position, with no established core and, in the run-up to Fairbairns, only 5 fit senior rowers. The IV that entered Fairbairns as our top boat was not as successful as hoped, but put in a good performance under conditions that were far from ideal.

By Lents, however, we were able to put out an VIII that could at least sensibly be labelled as a 1<sup>st</sup> VIII. With the return of 2011's stern pair, we were unlucky to finish down 2 in Lents, after being bumped by a surging Catz crew in the last 100 metres, and a King's crew that took a set of blades.

Big strides were made in the month that followed, and the crew was eagerly anticipating a trip to the tideway for HERR, when it was cancelled. With luck, 2014 should see Robinson's first race since 2011.



With Sam Troughton returning from CUBC, and another experienced schoolboy rower returning from injury, we were able to cope well with the step up in intensity for Mays. M1 posted fast times all term, with a highlight being our 5<sup>th</sup> place overall finish in Champ 8s, which saw us come out as the top second division crew. Unfortunately, we were chased by a fast Peterhouse boat, led by a double Olympian, on the first day of Mays. Although we gave them their toughest race of the week, we ended Mays down 2, being bumped by Selywn before two row-overs in front of LMBC M2.

While calendar issues meant we were unable to enter a crew into Henley qualifiers, we hope to do so this year.

Finally, I'd like to recognise the service given by Steve Fuller in his many years in the club. He has left an indelible mark on the style and attitude of Robinson Men's rowing that bodes well for the future.



# W1 Season Review 2012-13

Michaelmas 2012 saw the women's side of the club looking very different to the previous Mays. Nevertheless, W1 made a strong start to the year in the Fairbairns Cup, finishing with a respectable time that paved the way for improvement over the term.



During Rowing Week, ahead of Lent Term, the women's side reshuffled due to novices moving up to the senior boat. W1 quickly settled into a weekly six-session training schedule. This led to solid performances in the term's early races: Newnham Short Course and Pembroke Regatta showed that W1 were a strong contender in their Bumps division, with the crew finishing well within the pack of other first boats. Getting spoons in the end-of-term Bumps was a disappointment, but this did not deter W1 from entering the Women's Head of the River Race in London, which was a challenging but rewarding experience for both the cox and the crew.

May Bumps was another tough week for W1, with the crew down 4 at the end of races. But despite the less than ideal result, the crew showed determination and stamina, reaching Ditton Corner on the first three days. Although it was not the outcome the women had aimed for, it leaves the 2013-2014 crew in a very hopeful position. Many thanks go to Maria Farrimond and Jana Wolf for all of their hard work over the last season as Captains, while Jenni Mills and Josh Hoskins look forward to a promising year ahead as they take on the role.



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# M2 Season Review 2012-13

M2 2012 – 13: Where best to start? I suppose January is as good a place as any. Fresh from a ‘second’ place finish in Novice Fairbairns, Robinson M2 formed as an eclectic mix of our two LBCs and 6 novices eager to step up to senior status. Initial improvements in an essentially novice boat were rapidly forthcoming and before too long, attention began to swing in the direction of competition.

First up came City Head to Head followed soon after by Newnham Short course. To the disappointment of the coaches and the crew, neither of these early races gave a true representation of the ability of the boat, with some weak performances and a technical issue having major consequences. But getting race experience was imperative and the opportunity to do some long, undisturbed, high rate pieces was invaluable.



Come February and Bumps training was in full swing. Having narrowly escaped the getting on race, M2 lined up for the first day of bumps optimistic of a good week. Sadly this optimism was short lived as a solid performance from Clare Hall M1 immediately erased any whimsical dreams of blades. A rapid reversal of fortunes followed on the second day as Clare Hall crashed at First Post corner, highlighting the importance of a skilled cox in a Bumps race and giving this Robinson crew the accolade of being the “only boat to bump an M1 boat in 2013” – however fortuitous the circumstances. Unfortunately, Clare Hall returned for revenge on day 3 and then an agonizing row over on day 4 concluded the somewhat unsuccessful affair.

With a number of M1 rowers returning to action after the vacation, M2 took on a more solid feel for Easter term. As the mornings grew earlier and the exam season loomed closer, the crew once again approached Bumps with a confident air amongst the boat. Once again these hopes were dashed early on and results quickly slid from bad to worse. A resulting wooden spoon for the cutlery drawer was the unfortunate prize for this remorseful crew.

Much of the ill feeling was forgotten post Boat-Club dinner (only to be replaced by an ill feeling of a different nature) and now under the guidance of the new committee and with a fresh crop of eager novices, M2 is once again looking forward to what should be a very successful season.



# W2 Season Review 2012-13

W2 came together in May term as a fun way for the ladies of college to de-stress during exam term. Branded 'The Sunshine Crew', the promise of neither mornings nor ergs and a vast amount of fun attracted a range of ladies into the boat club with some members of the crew enjoying rowing so much that they have made the step up into W1 this year! Nearly all of the promises were met, and by the time May Bumps arrived (for which we already had a place), we were suitably prepared to put in a decent performance on the river.

Unfortunately on the first day of bumps, we were overbumped before reaching the halfway point. As disappointed as the entire crew was at the result, we were in high spirits going forward to the second day. We had seen the crew we were due to chase the following day and were confident of catching them early for a nice, easy bump. As such, on day 2, we raced off the start and three power tens in quick succession saw us secure the bump. And not only that: this was the *only* bump in RCBC during our Mays 2013 campaign, a record which W2 were very proud of. Sadly, we had to end our bumps campaign on this high. The third day presented injury in the boat, and with no subs available, our only option was to scratch the crew. Given the fact that this crew had only come together 8 weeks earlier, W2 were very happy with their achievements. We managed a bumps race, we achieved the highly-desired bump and we all had a lot of fun. All-in-all, a fun term of rowing, topped off with a nice result at the end. Thanks very much, W2!



# RCBC Committee 2013-14



*Andrew Shipley, Boat Club President*

Noviced at Bedford RC in 2011. Rowed in M1 since arriving at Robinson, winning blades in Lents 2012 and competed briefly but successfully for Granta BC in 2012. Men's Captain last year, and now President.



*Alexander Himsworth,  
Men's Captain*

Noviced way back in Michaelmas 2010 and rowed every term since, possibly spurred on by the hope of repeating the M2 blades won in 1<sup>st</sup> year. Now Men's Captain and looking forward to bringing RCBC back to its former glory.

*Jennifer Mills,  
Women's Captain*

Noviced at RCBC in Michaelmas 2011, rowed for W2 in May Bumps 2012. Moved up to stroking W1 in Michaelmas 2012 and kept that seat for Lents and Mays 2013. Currently excited to be captaining a strong bunch of W1 women.



*Matt Hopgood,  
Men's Captain*

Novice at RCBC in Michaelmas 2012, making it into M1 in the following Lent and May terms. Rowed briefly at Marlow Rowing Club over the summer of 2013. Excited to be Men's Captain and to take the club forward.

*Joshua Hoskins,  
Women's Captain*

Noviced as a rower in his first year in 2009, taking up coxing in his second year. Has coxed the women's side every year since, coxing W2 in May Bumps 2013 before stepping up to cox W1 this year.







Hugh Burton, Men's Lower Boats Captain

Noviced during Michaelmas in 2012. Moved up to M2 to row Lent and May Bumps. Currently approaching his 50<sup>th</sup> coaching session of the year.

Vicky Bates, Alex Roberts, Women's Lower Boats Captains

Noviced together during Michaelmas 2012. Moved up to W1 to race in Lent and May Bumps. Currently enjoying being LBCs and rowing W1.



Laura Bampton, Secretary

Novice coxed late Michaelmas in 2012, coxed M2 in Lent and May Bumps. Currently coxing M2 this term and organising socials and Boat Club Dinners

John Mulvey, Treasurer

Noviced on the Cam before stroking M2 in Mays 2012. Rowed in M1 in both Lent and May Bumps 2013. Just successfully completed the budget claim for 2013-14.



Ed Osborne, Old Blades and Sponsorship Secretary & Robinson Head Co-Ordinator

Rowed at KCS Wimbledon for four years. Went into the senior squad in 2012, coached M2 in Lents due to injury but returned to row M1 in Mays 2013.

Alex Biondini, Website Co-ordinator

Sculled at RGS High Wycombe for four years before arriving at Robinson. Rowed M1 Lents in 2011 and swapped between M1 and M2 crews in following years. Organiser of a successful Robinson Head in 2013.



Robinson College Boat Club Committee 2013-14

# Catz and Robinson Cardinals

To take a break from the more serious side of racing, some members of the Boat Club decided to enter Catz Cardinals, a knockout race in Lent Term involving mixed crews, fancy dress, and bribes of varying moral fortitude. A scratch crew comprised mainly of W1 and M2 took to the river, resplendent in bespoke hand-stitched sheep suits. Under the command of a suspiciously masculine Little Bo Peep in the coxing seat, the crew surprised everyone – including themselves – by finishing in third place, being pipped to the post in the three-boat semi-final by a box of pencils (“Yellow, take a tap.”). Had the final been anything other than a timed spinning race, the crew would have been rightly hopeful of an overall victory. Nevertheless, it was a great result to finish third out of nearly twenty boats, and the crew were happy to concede the Fancy Dress victory to a pair who had decorated their tub with mast, rigging and pirate sail, instead claiming chocolate Easter eggs for the Runner-Up Fancy Dress prize.



Inspired by the recent success of Catz Cardinals, the Boat Club decided to hold a similar event of its own at the end of Easter Term, which is expected to become an annual fixture. Taking advantage of the warm weather and empty river during May Week, two mixed boats took to the Reach, competing in races such as ‘Side Switch Carnage’, ‘Back to Hell’ (a short but highly eventful backing-it-down race) and a regular regatta sprint. The contestants struggled with severe power imbalances, restrictive fancy dress costumes, and, in some cases, a complete lack of rowing experience, which led to one of the eights resoundingly beating

the other. However, all hard feelings were quickly worked out back at the boathouse, where several people took sudden and unexpected swims in the river. It didn’t take long to dry off in the hot sun, and the Boat Club rounded off the year with a lazy afternoon and a barbecue – a perfect break after a long week of Bumps.



# Key Dates and Contacts

As a Boat Club and a Committee, we would be delighted for Old Blades to support the club in any way they can, by bank partying races, coaching and by continuing to sponsor the club. Please feel free to contact us on the email addresses listed below or to support us at any races throughout the year.

## General Enquiries

Ed Osborne, *Old Blades and Sponsorship Secretary*: [eo279@cam.ac.uk](mailto:eo279@cam.ac.uk)

## Coaching (Men's)

Alex Himsworth, *Men's Captain*: [atph2@cam.ac.uk](mailto:atph2@cam.ac.uk)

Matt Hopgood, *Men's Captain*: [mh699@cam.ac.uk](mailto:mh699@cam.ac.uk)

## Coaching (Women's)

Jennifer Mills, *Women's Captain*: [jrm210@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jrm210@cam.ac.uk)

Josh Hoskins, *Women's Captain*: [jh714@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jh714@cam.ac.uk)

## Potential Race Dates

Cambridge Head to Head	25 <sup>th</sup> January 2014
Robinson Head	7 <sup>th</sup> February 2014
Lent Bumps	25 <sup>th</sup> February – 1 <sup>st</sup> March 2014
Head of the River Race	29 <sup>th</sup> March 2014



RCBC's new "aerobic fitness sessions" at Funky Funhouse, an indoor play area



Robinson College Boat Club Committee 2013-14

RCBC Committee would like to thank David Ponting, Cam FM and various members of RCBC for the kind use of their photographs in this newsletter.