

Water under the Bridge



Walton Rowing Club's newsletter

October 2017

It has been a busy summer with plenty of success for the Club, but also a few disappointments and sad moments.

Starting with the domestic regattas: Walton juniors made a huge contribution to the winning Thames London team at the **Junior Inter-Regionals**, with everyone reaching the A final, and a particularly fine team effort from the J15 four (Aidan, Oscar, Rowan, Patrick c Millie D) who won the silver in their event and (with TSS' J16 four) a fourth place in J16 eights.

The junior squad was also out in force at Dorney for the **Junior Sculling Regatta**, helping with the organisation as well as winning two golds, two silvers and a bronze. The J14 quad (Noah, Archie, Seb, Gianluca c Toby) and J15 double (Rowan and Hal) both rowed through in the last 100 metres for two superb wins. Matt and Tom took the silver in J16 doubles and Katherine in WJ16 singles, while Ellie took bronze in WJ17 singles.



J15 double at JSR

The Club's eleven wins at **Walton & Weybridge** ranged from IM1 pairs (Tom J and Ben) to J14 octos, where Noah, Archie, Max, Seb, Gianluca, Cameron, Kaan and Salv c Toby provided the usual stirring finale against St Georges! Great wins too for Ardan & Matt in J18 doubles, Maddy & Alex in WJ16, Rowan & Ethan in J15, and in the singles for Ellie (WJ17) and Katherine (WJ16). J15 fours (Gellert, Aidan, Oscar, Patrick c Millie D), quads



J14 8x winners at Walton & Weybridge

(Ollie KJ, Oscar, Rowan, Patrick c Millie) and WJ15 quads (Amelia, India, Millie F, Eleanor c Molly) completed the set.

At **Weybridge Ladies** the following day Amelia won J15 singles, and Eleanor and Millie the doubles, while Noah and Archie won J14 doubles, Ellen and Lola WJ14 and Gianluca J14 singles. The J13 girls (Bella, Eva, Miranda and Niamh) got through the first round in their first race.

Tom Philpott and Matt Heywood, in the J16 pair, provided our only win at the **National Schools Regatta** at Dorney, although there were also several near-misses and A final places.

We're pretty sure Walton had the only female athlete racing at **Marlow Regatta** (Lola at stroke in the J14 8x).



J14 quad at Nat Schools

Although it made the British Rowing Twitter feed, sadly it didn't make the A final but still a good experience for all.

Holme Pierrepont lived up to its reputation and provided extremely challenging conditions for the **Masters Champs** in June. Nonetheless, the club enjoyed a good measure of success: Neil and Glyn won gold in E2x and Ali both B1x and B2x (with her partner from City of Bristol RC). Nick, Vince, Andy and Michael with their cox Lindsay also battled through to win the non-championship coxed four event.

Egham Regatta the following weekend saw wins for James and Patrick in J16 doubles, Rowan in J15 singles, the J14 quad (Noah, Archie, Kaan, Cameron, Toby) and for Lola in WJ14 1x. There were also many first-time racers among the large Walton contingent at this event, and several very close verdicts.

At **Molesey Regatta**, Tim and Vince had a convincing win in Nov 2x, and Alex her first senior win in WIM3 1x. On the Sunday, despite many of our top crews being away at the junior Brit Champs and others on school trips, there were wins for Maddy and Alex in WJ16 2x, Maddy in WJ16 1x, Olli in J16 1x, Kaan and Christian in J14 2x and Noah in J14 1x.

Some less tried-and-tested combinations also had success during the summer break: at **Henley Town & Visitors** Mike Everington, Jan Swedlow, Richard Lewis and James Pickering won IM2 4x, and at **Maidenhead** a Walton & Weybridge composite eight, including Fiona McAnena, Jo Wilkinson, Hazel Thiemann and Emily Kean won Women's MasD.

And finally there were wins at **Wallingford** Small Boats Head last month for the Masters F quad of Dave Clarke, Michele della Casa, Mike Bishop and Mike Everington; Mike B and Michele then went on to win MasF doubles.



Matt and Tom at GB-France

At the under-16 trials in Nottingham in July Tom Philpott and Matt Heywood comfortably won the pairs event, and so were selected to represent GB at the **GB-France match** in Docklands: we hope this will be the first of many international vests for both of them. The race at Docklands was also a convincing win for them, helping GB to win the event overall.

They then had 24 hours to recover before racing at the **Junior Brit Champs** in Nottingham, where they also won gold! At the same event there were bronze medals in J16 fours from Ardan, James M, Ethan, Patrick c Millie D and in J16 quads for Tom, James M, Ardan and Matt. There were several other very strong results from other crews, despite remaining outside the medals.

University rowing: news from our alumni

Nottingham University rowing has thrived this year under Adam Giambrone's captaincy: at the universities' championship BUCS his lightweight four won silver, while sister Nina's lightweight quad and coxless four won gold and set new records. Nina and Adam also represented their university at the European Universities Champs in Serbia, where Adam won the gold in lightweight pairs.

There is also a group of Walton alumni at Reading University, including Ross Jones, Bryn Hassan and Rory Harris, and another at Bristol, where Navid Mohamadzade and Michael Cleary have recently followed Callum Gathercole's footsteps. Anna Gray has started at Durham, which worked pretty well for Angus Groom—let's hope it does

the same for her—and Alice Jefferies has started at IC after taking a year off.

Rohin Johal is Men's Captain at Portsmouth University; he tried to persuade Joe Hamblin to return to rowing but he's sticking with swimming!

GB U23s

Ali Douglass and Morgan Bolding were both in the eight which won bronze at the World U23 Championships in Plovdiv. Ali and Morgan were also in opposing eights in the final of the Ladies Plate at Henley; Morgan's Brookes crew won by almost a length to give him his second Henley medal in two years. YouTube has footage of the race with the Brookes' cox's recording over it - Google "Ladies Plate 2017 Cox recording" (please ignore the swearing—it's very good otherwise!)

GB senior squad

Annie Withers is the first Walton girl to reach the GB senior squad. She was in the U23 squad in 2015, and this year has raced in the women's eight in the European Championships and two World Cups, winning bronze in Lucerne and silver in Poznan. She travelled to Sarasota for the World Champs as a reserve.

Also in the GB team for the Worlds were Angus Groom, Mat Tarrant and Oli Stanhope. Oli started his rowing as a J13 at Walton in 2011; this was his first international since being classified PR3 earlier this year, and also the first World Champs where the Para Rowing categories were fully integrated into the championships. Oli's mixed four set a new world record and won the gold comfortably.

Mat's four had an unsettled regatta, changing stroke-men for the semi-final. The final was remarkable for high ratings: neither the Australian

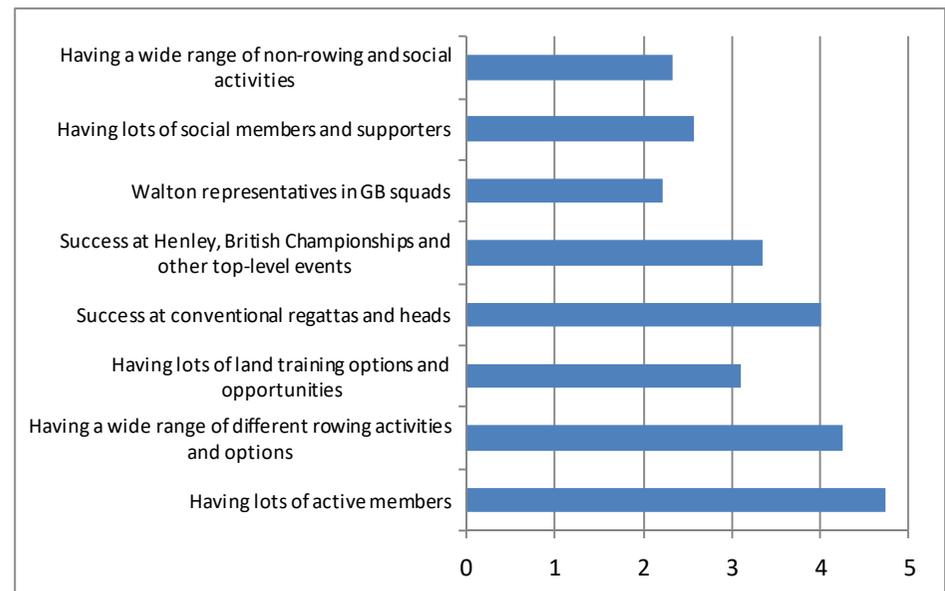
nor the Italian crews dropped below 42 in the whole race and the Italians finished at 46 to take the silver, leaving GB in third place in what was nonetheless a very good result. Angus also missed part of the season owing to injury so winning the B final in his double was also a very satisfactory result for them.

Captain's Meeting

At the general meeting in July Graham Pointer was re-elected, a small increase in subs was agreed (£372 for seniors, £288 for juniors from January 2018), as well as a rule-change to limit most officers and committee members to three-year terms with effect from the next AGM.

Survey and strategy development

During August many members completed a survey, the aim of which was to help guide the Club's strategy over the coming years. The results indicated that most members were relatively happy with most aspects of the Club, in particular the friendliness and mutual support available. Most of those points raised as "least good" were praised by others in "best aspects", while as many people asked for "more heavyweight boats" as "more lightweight boats"! We found (see chart below) that most members continue to want an inclusive rather than an elitist club.



Nevertheless there were several helpful suggestions and help offered, which are being followed up by the committee. In particular:

- There are now regular “roll up” coaching sessions on Sunday mornings
- More video and analysis during time-trials etc
- A new “member to member” Forum is being set up to allow those not in formally organised squads to propose or set up crews and outings.

The results will also be used as input to a club strategy development process, which will look at all aspects of Club activity. A summary of the results has been posted on the Club Stuff Forum.



In April we said good-bye to **Lionel Everington**, who had been a member for over 50 years, and a former Captain and President. Many members have their own memories of Lionel, whether as a competitor, veteran ergo champion, coach or general rowing pundit, and this was reflected in the very good attendance at his funeral.

In May **Gordon Sandifer** was killed in a road accident in Weybridge, while cycling home from the Club. Gordon was a very popular member and coach, and there was a very large contingent of Walton juniors at his well-attended funeral; part of the eulogy was given by Ardan Suphi (J16) and by Rowan O’Neill (J15), who had both been coached by Gordon.



In September over 30 J14s and J15s did a **sponsored row** in Gordon’s memory from Runnymede (Wraysbury SPC) to Walton, in quads, singles and even a skiff! They raised over £4000, which is being used to buy a lightweight double scull.



In Bell Weir Lock

A second double is also on order, as well as a set of eight oars and four pairs of sculls. And the committee has also agreed to purchase a further four second-hand ergos, bringing the Club’s complement up to 20 Model Ds with PM3 or PM4 monitors.

In July the traditional end-of-season **Club Regatta** was extended to include a range of skills events, including relay races, backing-down races, changing places, standing up and capsize drills. The Club record for getting back into a sculling-boat from upside-down is now 25 seconds! For some reason most senior members were unable to attend the latter part of the event and left the juniors to scoop the prizes ☺



Most of the J14 squad also enjoyed a day at Liquid Leisure Aqua Park in Datchet at the beginning of the summer holidays, organised by Debs Keary and Kate Goldfinch.

Weybridge Silver Sculls is (at the time of writing) still considering a change of course for its race—it would finish at the Red Lion instead of going up the Desborough Cut. However this will not affect plans for Walton Rowing Club’s traditional **Beer Festival**, which will start on the previous Thursday (19th October) and run until all ten barrels are sold!

The **Club Dinner** will be held at Burhill Golf Club on Friday 17th November. As usual, this will include the presentation of awards, both serious and less serious, for service to the Club; junior members and their parents are particularly welcome. There are sign-up sheets at the Club or you can sign up via your squad Forum or Agree-A-Date.

In November (date still to be finalised) we will be naming the new Janousek eight, with a star guest recently returned from his working holiday in Florida!

We finish with the usual appeal for **volunteers**. Graham Pointer recently held a meeting for parents and explained the many ways in which parents can help around the Club and at the events we run—please don’t hold back if you are able to give a few hours as there are many people who can show you the ropes, and many tasks which are best done by a small team—it should be a social activity too!

On Saturday 9th December we run the **Walton Small Boats Head**; this event alone needs 80 or more volunteers, up and down the river, in teams at the start and finish and at the Club itself. It is one of the biggest events on the river and a major source of income for the Club; please put the date in your diary and let us know if you are able to help.