

Water under the Bridge

Walton Rowing Club's newsletter

October 2020



I'm shocked to see that the last club newsletter was two years ago, in what now seems like another age.

The **2018-19 winter season** was marked by a number of very wet events, but at least most events did happen. Some highlights included:

Pairs Head: wins for Alex & Lola in WJ18 2-, Glyn & Neil in Mens MasE 2-, three other top 30 places.



18 wins at **Weybridge Silver Sculls**, including fastest junior singles and doubles (mens and womens), fastest womens senior crew and fastest overall.

Fours Head: no wins, but several well-placed crews, including a first outing for the senior quad of James, Jan, Crispin and Sam. Similarly at the Vet Fours Head, both the MasE and MasF quads had to make do with second place, while the WD quad and D4- came third.

At Kingston SBH, Mike Everington & Richard

Thiemann won Open 2- and Nick Harris, Vince Gillespie, Ian Tarrant and Mike Hamblin MasE/F 4-.

Hampton Small Boats Head: a total of 30 entries produced two wins and four second places. Toby & Gianluca won J16 pairs, Rowan & Pat the J17, while Matt Heywood and Katherine Stenning were only seconds away from winning their J18 classes.

Both the Scullers Head and Walton Small Boats Head were cancelled due to high winds, but at **Weybridge Winter Head** we picked up five wins from eight entries: Senior eight, mens' and womens' Masters Quads, Open double (Ali and Steve) and J14 octo (many of whom were racing in their first open event).

At **Molesey Vets Head** there were second places for the Women's Mas B/C and Mens Mas E/F eights. Our one entry at **Hammersmith Head** (the senior mens eight) won Open Development Eights, and then the same crew came second in its class at **Reading University Head**. The Schools Head and Womens Head ran with reduced numbers because of a poor weather forecast, and none of the Walton entries raced.



At the **Hyne Cup** race, Walton as usual retained the Hyne Cup and the Stebbings Cup.

The **Junior Sculling Head** produced a solid set of results, in particular a silver medal for the J17 quad (Patrick, Aidan, James and Harry), Many of the J14s raced well in their first national-level event.

Kingston Head: 5 wins out of 8 entries! Mens Mas F 80, Mens J18 4x-, Mens J16 4+, Womens J18 4+, WJ18 4x, and a second place for the WJ16 4-.



At the **Head of The River Race**, the junior eight (Rowan O'Neill, Aidan McLennan, Olli Brew, Oscar Roberts, Pat Cleary, Matt Heywood, James McMullan, Henry Punter, c Maddy Jackson) came 79th, ahead of the senior eight (Dave Slattery, James Pickering, Nick George, Sam Bishop, Jan Swedlow, Ben Chrishard, Crispin Knill, Jamie Pine, c Millie Davis).

The **Vets Head of The River** saw a great win for the Mixed Mas D-F eight (Gill Shaw, Emily Kean,

Adrienne Burke, Matt Graywood, Andy Tomalin, Pete Knight, Stephen Heywood and Ali Jackson), as well as 12th place overall for a Walton/Team Keane composite MasA 80, second place for the Mens MasF 80 and fifth for the Womens MasD crew.



WJ16 4x at JSR 2019

The regatta season also started well: at the **Junior Sculling Regatta** at Dorney Walton juniors had an extraordinary day in often very challenging conditions. To start with, we qualified 22 crews for this event, which basically aims to take the top 500 junior sculling crews in the country. Every crew made an A or B final, and the final medal tally included three Gold medals: J17 2x (James C/Patrick), WJ17 2x (Amelia/Tallulah), J14 8x (Finley/Alex R/Bastie/Felix/Cyrus/Toby D/Toby K/Harry c Alex J). There was silver for the J18 4x (Rowan/Matt/James M/Harry), WJ18 2x (Katherine/Amy) and bronze for WJ17 1x (Millie), WJ16 2x (Lola/Elysia), J15 2x (Edmond/Richard), J14 4x (Henry/Ciaran/Filippo/Julius c Bella). The Walton B J18 quad was also the top B crew and the only B crew to reach a final. The J14 8x, with five J13s on board, not only won by two lengths but broke the course record by 8 seconds!

There was another gold medal and course record at the **National Schools Regatta**, this time for Gianlu-



WJ14s at Thames Ditton

ca, Toby R, Richard, Archie c Toby K in J16 4+. Katherine, Alex, Lola, Amy c Millie took silver in WJ18 4+, and Matt and James M in Championship Pairs. Six other A final places helped the older crews to pre-qualify for their events at Henley Royal and Henley Womens'.

At **Thames Ditton**, there were wins for the J14 double (Harry and Henry) and for the J13 quad, as well as plate wins for the girls' and boys' J14 quads, each of which featured two first-time racers.

The club made its largest-ever entry for the two Henley regattas, with two crews and a single at HWR and five crews and a single at HRR. In the end the J18 4+ who qualified for **Henley Womens'** (Katherine, Hannah, Amy, Alex c Eva) did not make it through the first round. At **Henley Royal** the Fawley Cup quad (James C, James M, Matt, Pat) pre-qualified and won its first round against Tideway Scullers, but lost to a Henley crew on the Thursday. One Walton member did win his event, though: Angus Groom won the Queen Mother quads, racing for Leander.

The junior squad had one of their most successful **National Championships**, winning five medals on the very windy Nottingham course. There were two silver medals, three bronze, two other A final places and two B finals. Silver for the junior 4- (Aidan, James C, Ethan and Harry), who then teamed up with Patrick, James M and two athletes from TSS for a scratch junior eight which also took silver. Bronze for the girls' J16 pair (Lola and Elysia), the boys' coxed four (Gianluca/Archie/Joe/Toby R c Toby K), and Richard in J15 singles.

Meanwhile the younger juniors raced at **Molesey**, where there were all-Walton finals in J14 singles and doubles, as well as a Masters quad from Richard, Mike, Tim and Vince.

At the **Home International**, Katherine represented England to win gold in both the coxed four and the eight—before heading off to University in Tulsa!

Others who left for University in autumn 2019 included Maddy (Exeter), Alex and Olli B (Newcastle), Matt and Amy (Oxford Brookes).

The 2019 heads season started well, with three wins at the **Pairs Head**: J18 intermediate pairs: (Rowan, Patrick), J18 intermediate doubles (Ethan, James C) and J18 club pairs (Gianluca & Toby).



Pairs Head winners

We had our first wins at the **Fours Head** for a long time: Gianluca, Toby R, Ethan and Harry won J18 4- and Rowan, Joe, James C and Patrick the J18 4x. There were also good results from the WJ18 4- and 4x (4th and 8th respectively).

The following day, at the **Vet Fours Head**, Matt, Andy, Pete and Steve came second in D4x and a very respectable 16th overall. Mike, Dave, Roger and Richard were also second in F4-, while the MxE4x (Suzi, Béatrice, Michael and Nick) and WD4x (Jackie, Gill, Lara and Emily) both came fourth in their respective divisions. Another crew failed to make the start!

There were 11 Walton wins at **Weybridge Silver Sculls**, including eight doubles in the top 16! J17 2x Gianluca and Joe B were the second-fastest crew overall; Oscar and Ethan (also juniors) the fastest Senior 2x. Edmond and Richard won J16 2x, and Richard then went on to win J16 singles also. Glyn and Neil won MasE 2x and Richard T the 1x, while Ali again took both WMas B 1x and (with Steve) MxMas 2x. For the girls, Hannah and Typh won WJ17 2x and Typh the single, while Millie won WJ18 1x and Millie/Tallulah WJ18 2x and fastest women's double.

There followed a long and frustrating period of heavy



stream, which prevented us from boating. As well as long ergo challenges and much land training, the coaches organised cycle rides, we made good use of the tank at Molesey Boat Club and had several sessions on the Tideway. James Casemore went to early ID trials but all trials after that were cancelled.

The first event to run on the non-tidal Thames after October was **Hampton Head** in early February: here Rowan, Aidan, James C and Harry came second in J18 4x, Lola, Hannah, India and Elysia c Toby K 3rd in WJ18 4+, and Gianluca and Toby R second in J18 2-.

Then there was another spell of wet weather and bike-rides. It stopped raining on about 10th March and the river started to go down ... then we all know what happened! All events were cancelled from 17th March onwards.

With all the early-season promise we were expecting a vintage year, with probably the highest-calibre entries in national-level events for many years, and a promising Henley campaign beckoning, but we'll never know ...

As we gradually returned to the river, first in singles, then other small boats and finally fours and eights, activity has slowly resumed round the club. But with no squad mixing, no clubroom or bar and no Sunday breakfasts it certainly doesn't feel the same ... British Rowing has allowed some events to start accepting entries; the Silver Sculls on 17th October may be the first event which doesn't require you to get up at 4am, drive to Newcastle, race and return without socialising! Plans for other events are starting too.

By using very small groups and training boats, we were able to run a junior beginners' course in July (postponed from April) and a Young Adults' course in the summer evenings. These have all now fed through into the junior squads.

We will again be losing several talented competitors as they start their university courses (although of course they will always remain part of the "Walton family"): James C has gone to Yale, Patrick to Southampton, Oscar to Epsom Art College, Harry and Ollie KJ to York, Ethan to Gloucester Hartpury, Tallulah to Exeter and Millie to Newcastle. India will do a gap year before starting at Nottingham, and Rowan before Queens Belfast. James M has now headed off to Nottingham Trent after his gap year.

General Meetings

At the general meeting in March 2019, **Hilary Poole** was elected President, and in July 2019, **Mike Everington** was elected Captain. Mike was last Captain in 1990-91, when the club was much smaller. Hilary's and Mike's calm and steady guidance has been very beneficial, particularly during the difficult last ten months.

Also at the 2019 AGM it was agreed to proceed with incorporating the Club, for the better protection of the Officers and the Club's assets. This should have been confirmed by a vote at the 2020 AGM; we were unable to hold this meeting so sought members' agreement via an online vote. The transaction finally completed on 1st September and the Club is now a Company Limited by Guarantee, **Walton Rowing**



Junior crews of the year 2019



New permeable blockwork forecourt

Club Limited. The Club will continue to operate in much the same way as before and members should notice little or no change. If you did not vote online, please sign the paper form at the club to confirm the transfer of your membership.

At the **Club Dinner Dance** at Burhill Golf Club, Junior Crew of the Year Awards were made to Elysia and Lola for their bronze medal in J16 pairs at the Junior Brit Champs, and to Richard, Gianluca, Toby, Archie and Toby K for their gold medal in coxed fours at Nat Schools Regatta.

Ian Tarrant was awarded the Dick Thompson "Club Member of the Year" trophy for his work on resurfacing the club forecourt, which has made a fantastic difference to the appearance and usefulness of this area (see above). This work was partially financed by a grant from the Tesco "Bags of Help" scheme—thank you to Tesco and to everyone who shopped in Tesco from January to March and dropped their tokens in the WRC slot.

Clubhouse re-opening

With the winter weather approaching, members can now use the clubroom to escape the wind and rain, although the bar, kitchen and changing-rooms remain closed.

Use of the clubroom is subject to a strict "Covid-secure" protocol: you must sanitise your hands and sign in or tap the QR code when you go in. There is a one-way circulation system on the stairs and in the corridor. A maximum of 30 people are allowed in the

clubroom at any one time—if there are already 30 people in there please wait 2m apart and do not form a gaggle at the top of the stairs. Please be considerate to other members and minimise the time you spend in the clubroom.

The upstairs toilets may be used, but the changing-rooms may only be used in case of emergencies. The full list of rules is attached and is also posted on the wall at the entrance to the Clubroom.

The **ergos** in the clubroom may only be used by organised training groups, at times allocated by the Captain. This will normally be for six people at a time, who must form part of the same bubble / yeargroup. A further six may train or use ergos downstairs, in the gym or boat-bay. Please do not move the ergos around without the Captain's agreement.

Barges

Many members will be concerned about the large numbers of barges moored along our reach. Do not worry, these are not blots on the riverscape, but evidence of the Government's Brexit planning: we have learnt that in January, when the EU finally decides that it won't deal with the UK on any terms, Boris will invoke the Dunkirk spirit. Chris Grayling has been appointed to head up a secret taskforce which will requisition large stretches of river as floating lorry-parks. When given the signal, Grayling will lead his plucky convoy across the Channel to break the blockade; on their return the skippers of the barges will be declared national heroes; each will receive a knighthood or an earldom, or possibly a signed replica of Dominic Cummings' beanie hat ... more on this story on April 1st!

Walton Rowing Club Covid-19 Rules for Using Clubroom

General:

Only Club members are allowed in the clubroom.

All members must fill in the signing in book on entering the clubroom.

Members should bring facemasks and wear when moving around the clubroom.

There should be no more than 30 members in total in the clubroom at any one time.

Training time and time spent in the clubroom should be kept to a minimum.

Sanitise hands on entering and leaving.

Maintain 2m social distance at all times.

Follow the circulation system, walk on the right up the stairs, enter the clubroom by the door next to the kitchen, leave by the door at the far end.

Only sit at tables in groups of six within your bubbles, do not mix bubbles.

Do not move tables and chairs from their marked position.

Sanitise tables when you sit down and when you leave.

The changing rooms remain closed and out of bounds except for emergencies

Training:

Members may train in groups of up to six within their bubbles.

Do not move the ergos from their marked positions.

Sanitise ergos and any other training equipment you touch before and after use.

Equipment should not be shared.