College Activities

Trinity College First & Third Boat Club

Savannah Dixon (2017)

Whilst the past year entailed far less rowing than First & Third Trinity Boat Club would have hoped for, the Club adapted to the situation, finding new ways to keep its members involved. The Boat Club community remained strong, training together from afar through numerous lockdowns and keeping in touch via online socials.

We started the year strongly in Michaelmas, going out on the water frequently. There was a huge intake of novice rowers. The November lockdown sadly put a temporary stop to this. Nonetheless, during those four weeks, we set up additional Zoom circuits sessions – thanks to Harry Veysey from Trinity College gym for coaching these – and set up a system by which Boat Club members could arrange



W1 beating Churchill W1 in the June Eights Regatta.

to go cycling or running with other members. At the end of the term, we were able to meet for a socially distanced, post-lockdown celebration in the marquee in Nevile's Court. This event was a roaring success, and, for many, the highlight of Michaelmas term! We had a huge turnout, particularly from freshers, despite having rowed for only four weeks. It was a great opportunity for people to meet some new faces in the Boat Club, in a term during which there had not been many such opportunities.



NM1 overtaking a crew in the Getting-On Race.



NW1 racing.



M1 rowing to the start line.

For those members of the Boat Club around over the Christmas vacation, easing of restrictions meant a return to boating. Several fours outings were organised, and many members took to the Cam in small boats too. Unfortunately, from Boxing Day, Cambridge was placed in tier 3, which put a stop to that. Furthermore, the January lockdown prohibited, not only rowing, but also the return of students to Trinity. Determined to find a way to keep our members motivated and in touch with one another, we set up a competition where people "rowed" in virtual crews of around eight members. The idea was the crew to gain the most points by doing exercise of any variety would win. But also, there was another kick to this competition – it was against our arch-rivals Lady Margaret Boat Club (LMBC, Boat Club of St John's College). So the Boat Club to gain the most points overall (averaged by number of participants, because obviously we had more) won. We beat LMBC, taking the prize, which gave us bragging rights. The competition overall proved a huge success, with 50 members of First & Third, both old and new, taking part.

In the meantime, First & Third also sent more crews than any other boat club to compete in the Virtual Pembroke Regatta. The competition involved a 1.1k run over four days, and crews of four raced against a different boat club each day. The crew with the fastest total time were the winners. The overall fastest crew and winners of the top men's division were from First & Third, so a huge well done (Men's Captain).

Concurrently, we ran three or four circuit sessions per week, including one joint with the Field Club, in which we brought back Carl van Heerden, who ran some sessions for us way back in the 2020 lockdown. These sessions were brutal as ever – Carl did not let us down – though it was great to be able to share this pain with the Field Club and the rest of the College community.

Thankfully, after Easter we were allowed to row again, and, slowly but surely, students returned to Cambridge and took to the river Cam. We were thrilled to welcome back to the Boat Club the vast majority of those who had noviced in Michaelmas term, as well as some brand-new members. At the end of term, First & Third entered a number of crews into CUCBC's races. Unfortunately, Bumps were not allowed to go ahead, so the races took the form of side-by-side regattas over multiple days for boats of all sizes. We entered W1, M1, NM1, and NW1 crews, as well as a women's single scull. The women's single scull won overall, which was fantastic. W1 and NW1 won two out of four races, while NM1 won three. Congratulations to everyone who participated!



Savannah Dixon on her way to winning Fairbairn Junior Sculls.

Overall, despite the challenges we have faced, I am continuously impressed by the cohesion and community of the Boat Club. Even if the rowing itself was scarcer this year than we might have hoped, it has been amazing to see the Club adapt and for everyone to feel like they have a place in First & Third, no matter where in the world they are. I wish the best of luck to the incoming committee and the rest of the Club for the upcoming year and years to come.