



Moments before M1 bump as sandwich boat, securing their place back in Division III.

TORPIDS TRIUMPH, SHCBC FINISH +14

Josiah Shields, Secretary

In an historic Torpids campaign, St Hilda's College Boat Club ended the week up fourteen places - the club's best ever result. Such an outcome was made possible by, and indeed was mostly thanks to, the phenomenal second boats, who not only qualified for racing (thus already besting last year's M2) but then went on to secure eleven of the club's fourteen places gained as well!

W2: Rocketing up six positions on the river, the second women's boat made accomplishing blades look effortless as they quickly and dominantly dispatched competitor after competitor before even reaching The Gut. This achievement is made all the more impressive when one considers that it is only the second time in SHCBC history that a W2 crew has ever achieved blades, and that they

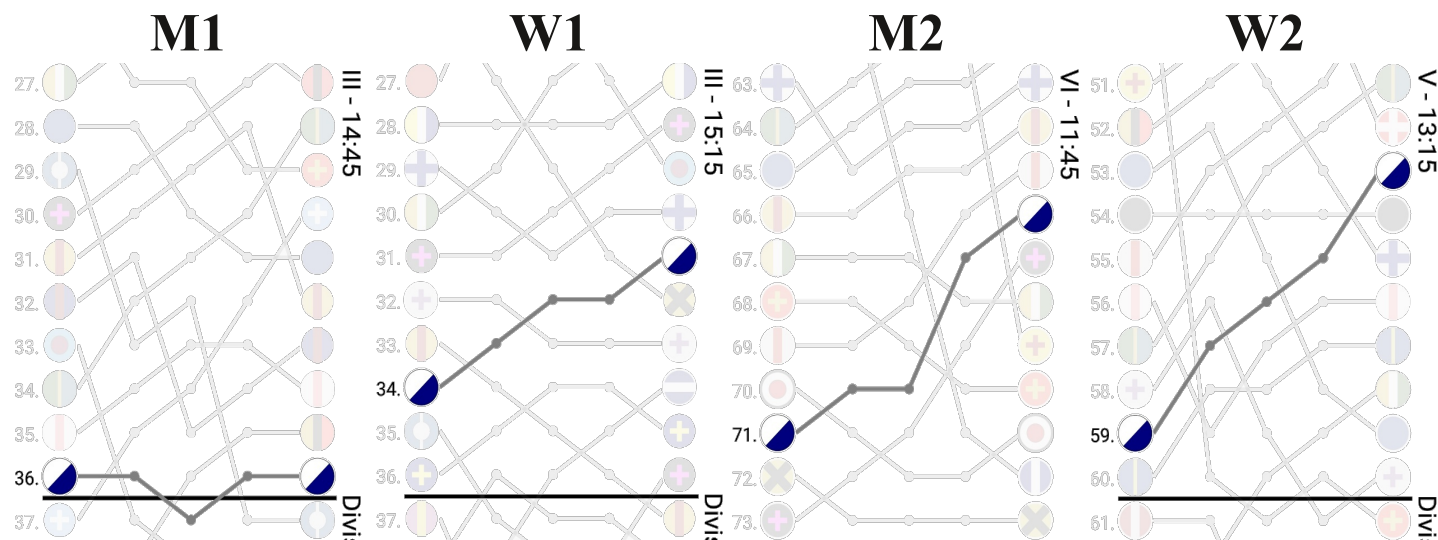
did so in the doughty but dilapidated Mary Bennett.

M2: 'Good crews get bumps, lucky crews get blades'. A formidable performance saw the second men's boat rise five places, but the bump that would have secured them blades was cruelly whipped away from under their noses as their prey (i.e. Keble M3) managed to bump out mere moments before they would have been caught. When one considers that last year's M2 failed to qualify for Torpids and 'won' spoons in Summer VIIIs, the increase in quality this year shows just how much the novices have brought to the club.

W1: In similar circumstances to M2, the first women's boat came devastatingly close to winning blades, missing out by one bump when the crews ahead of them on day three bumped out before they could close the distance. Still, the

three places that they advanced represents a sound reversal in their fortunes compared to the last couple years and sets them solidly on track for a resurgence into Division II in the near future.

M1: After a tremendous Torpids campaign last year which saw the first men's boat reach its highest ever position on the river, this year's crew did well to lock in their predecessors' gains and defend their place in Division III. This was no mean feat and required titanic levels of endurance as the crew rowed the entirety of the course (starting at the bottom bungline) on all four days, with a brief dalliance as sandwich boat on day three giving them the opportunity to row a decent chunk of it an extra time too! What M1 lacked in positions-gained or bumps, they more than made up for in kilometres-rowed and Watts-expended.



Bumps charts courtesy of bumps.live/torpids/2023

Captains' Corner

Matti de Beer, Men's Captain

This term has been a busy one for the SHCBC men's squad. It kicked off with an unfortunately red-flagged training camp that consisted of four days of technique sessions in the rowing tank and a lot of intense Erging. It was a privilege to see an enormous turn out and it really got us off on the right foot for the term.

Next was the traditional First Week 2k test. This assisted with boat selection and I must say that I was very pleasantly surprised by the amount of training that had clearly been done over the vac. It definitely paid off in some of the scores that were achieved.

After two subsequent weeks of river closures, water training finally began at the start of Third Week. This consisted of a very Torpids-oriented program, such as drilling starts etc., however before no time at all Torpids itself was upon us!

Day 1 started off well, with M2 bumping Osler House M1, a very impressive feat. M1 were unfortunately bumped by Wadham, but valiantly reeled in Catz, bumping right on the finish line. A very good show of strength considering they had started three bung lines up!

Day 2 saw M2 strike tragedy, with the stroke man's seat fully removing itself. Despite rowing with only seven people they managed to keep Osler well away and ended up a quarter of a length from Keble at one point. M1 were unfortunately bumped by an extremely large St Antony's crew, dropping them down into the sandwich boat position.

Day 3 saw M2 gain three positions on the river thanks to a string of over-bumps. M1 also ended up bumping Oriel, who had started five bung lines ahead of them in that race!



Most of M1 (uppermost) and M2 with Coach Moffatt at SHCBC's post-Torpids dinner.

On the final day M2 bumped Teddy Hall, giving them a total rise of five places for the week. M1 managed to fend off an Oriel boat that had been supercharged with some previous M1 rowers, allowing them to keep the place they had started on - still the highest that M1 has ever been on the river!

The term then ended with a range of parties, social events, and outings in the 4+, all to celebrate the tremendous Torpids performance and the dedication that the men had put into their training this term.

There are great things to look forward to in Summer Eights this year!



Most of W1 (left) and W2 with Coach Peters at SHCBC's post-Torpids dinner.

Siena Hickmore, Women's Captain

This term has been a very strong one for the Hilda's women. It began with a winter training camp which involved many a tank session as the river decided to become flooded, perfect timing as always.

Once term-time began the squad knuckled down, starting team runs in the mornings to replace the water sessions (thanks to the still-flooded river) - this really pushed our fitness forward.

The moment the river opened up again we were on it, utilising every

drop of sunlight that we could. Because of the high number of signups this year we had enough women to fill two boats for Torpids, meaning that training grew to a fever pitch as Torpids loomed. W2 qualified with no problems and so Torpids began; I had the honour, and exhaustion, of coxing and rowing each day.

W1 were an incredibly strong boat and on their first day bumped within twenty strokes. They just missed out on blades on Day 3 when they needed to achieve a

triple over-bump to catch Linacre, almost reaching them at the finish with just a quarter length to go.

It was W2 however who put us all to shame. Placed in Div V, they bumped every single day before Donnington Bridge, rowing no more the 300m.

It is with great pride that I say that the women's squad this term have pushed each other to new limits and come together to form a team that is ready to dominate at Summer Eights!



The 24-hour ergathon in progress. Over the course of the day the boat club rowed a total of 579km and raised £2512.

Mary Bennett revitalised

Kathryn Brooks, President

Hilary Term was a massive success for the boat club both on and off the water. Earlier this term we held a 24hr ergathon in the college's new tower in order to fundraise some of the costs of refurbishing the second women's boat, the Mary Bennett. Thanks to the generous donations of alumni, friends, and supporters of the club, we raised the vital funds needed to fully refurbish the Mary Bennett. This refurbishment is currently underway and will be completed by Trinity Term ready for us to use in Summer Eights.

At the end of the term we celebrated a hugely successful Torpids campaign in which we had entered four crews for the first time since 2018, and for many this was their first experience of Bumps racing. Overall, everyone either held their position or bumped up on the river, and W2 achieved blades in Torpids for only the second time ever (the last time being in 1984*) after finishing +6 positions! M2 and W1 also bumped three out of the four days and M1 maintained their

position in Division 3.

Most importantly, everybody had fun and there was a great team spirit along the bank amongst fellow Hildabeasts, friends, family, and supporters. Thank you to those who came down to the river to cheer us on!

Finally, if you are a boat club alumnus or alumna, I hope you can join us for our annual Sirens event where we will be unveiling the newly refurbished Mary Bennett. Invites were sent out a few weeks ago but if you haven't yet booked a ticket then you can do so here:

<https://tinyurl.com/sirens23>

On the day, it would be lovely to share any stories and fond memories you may have rowing in the Mary Bennett (original or current) during your time at Hilda's. If you have any moments you are happy for us to share then please email these to our Secretary, Josiah: shcbc.secretary@gmail.com

We are looking forwards to the warmer weather and lighter evenings Trinity Term will bring, and building on the success of Torpids in Summer Eights.

**This is according to the Oxford Bumps Charts, please let me know if this in fact not the case.*

An Historic Hilary

The latest from the Hearsay Hildabeast

Welcome back fellow Hildabeasts, I hope you have all found Hilary as thrilling as I did! From crushes on coxes to captains going AWOL, this term's tantalising gossip has been coming and going faster than a certain medic's lightweight blues career!

Starting off the year was the winter training camp, during which no rowing actually took place! Instead our most dedicated rowers were blessed with a gruelling week of tank sessions and ergs, emphasising how much more there is to rowing than owning a fresh pair of Oakley's. This prepared the club well for our 24-hour ergathon, although most of the rowers were shown up by the Watts put down by the Principal and her Olympian wife. Smashing our financial goals, the women's team received a fully refurbished Mary Bennett and a hotly-contested set of blades, much to the men's envy.

New College and Corpus Christi



were put to shame by SHCBC at the two crewdates of the term, impressing with our sconces of love and hate, shopping trolley surfing, and unwashed unisuits. The only thing stronger than our turnout at these socials was the punch at the post-Torpids party, rounding off the term alongside speeches and awards at the 'Torpdis' dinner.

Speaking of Torpids celebrations, another congratulations must be made to W2 for once again outshining the rest of the club and achieving blades in less than fifty strokes. W1 were painfully close to joining them and might have done so if they'd spent as much time training as they do making TikToks. M2 were also a bump off blades but were too busy catching crabs to keep up, no matter from how far they were shouting

"CONCEDE!". Last year's champions M1 proved that ergs really do not float, losing all momentum this Torpids and holding an unremarkable steady place in the division – better luck next time boys!

Now get some rest while you can my hardy Hildabeasts, I look forward to hearing all about the triumphs and tribulations you find yourselves in come Trinity term.

- The Hearsay Hildabeast

Blazers Bonanza

Exciting news! We are reviving the club's blazers. They will have a slightly refreshed design but are keeping true to the classic SHCBC look.

Our Stash Officer, Horatio, is currently shopping around for a supplier so if you are interested in a blazer then please contact him as the more we order, the cheaper each individual unit is. He can also answer any questions you may have and will soon possess an image of the design.

horatio.everett@st-hildas.ox.ac.uk

Blades of Glory

After a baptism by fire in Torpids, our new blades have proved their mettle! If you would like to support the boat club then we still have a few available to sponsor for £100 each. In return, your name will be printed onto *your* blade as a thank

you. If you are interested or would like further information then please contact our President, Kathryn: shcboatclub@gmail.com

Our thanks in advance and we hope to be able to offer you *your* blade at the Sirens rowing session!

Torpids Gallery 2023

The rowing photos both below and throughout the rest of this newsletter are thanks to Al Craigie (Instagram/Facebook: [@sportfocussed](https://www.instagram.com/sportfocussed)) and Gareth Ardron (Facebook: [@garethardronphotos](https://www.facebook.com/garethardronphotos)). Following are some of the defining moment of our 2023 Torpids campaign!



Above W2 ferociously closing down on their final bump for blades.

Below W1 calmly reeling Merton in on day two for their second bump.



M1 rowing, rowing. Endlessly rowing...





Above Fish slipping the net, Keble M3 managed to escape M2's grasp by bumping Mansfield. As M2's faces show, it wasn't for lack of effort that they missed out!

Below W2 storming it as they secure a bump onto Christ Church.



Thank you for reading! Created and edited by Josiah Shields.