

## Hilary News - Splash from the President

**Josiah Shields, President**

SHCBC's Torpids performance this year can be described with a single word: dominant. Not only did we field five boats, but we also gained the second most places on the river, our M1 put on a blades-winning rowing masterclass which took them to the highest ever position for an SHCBC men's crew, and our W1 finished the week +4 and on the cusp of breaking back into Division II.

While our lower boats ended up having their divisions cancelled due to poor stream conditions, their strong rowing-on performances and dedication throughout the term allow me to assert confidently that they too would have achieved similar successes. They are well-worth looking out for come Summer VIIIs.

Alongside Torpids training, Hilary Term saw SHCBC maintaining and expanding its reputation for excellence both on and off the water. Our women's side entered crews for both the WEHoRR and Hammersmith Head regattas, our Social Secretaries continued their streak of blockbuster crew dates, and our Stash Secretary's new unisuit design has indubitably made SHCBC the most stylish club on the Isis. There have also been podcast appearances, wine and cheese nights, plenty of post-erg pub trips, photoshoots, and our captains even managed (just about) to find time to submit their final projects!

The club is also very proud to have had three members train with the Blues squads this term, thereby

following in the footsteps of their SHCBC forebears who were involved in founding the university's women's boat club. Of these, special mention must be made of the Lightweight Women's Captain and Stroke Seat, Olivia Ramsay, who had never rowed before joining St Hilda's in 2022. We look forwards to having Liv, Yannick, and Georgia return to row with us for Summer VIIIs.

Finally, we would love to see you at our Sirens Day Reunion on Saturday the **17th of May** this year! All alumnae are most warmly invited to attend and reminded that the closing date for booking a ticket is the **9th of May**. Details and directions to purchase a ticket can be found here:

<https://tinyurl.com/sirens2025>

Below, the blades-winning men's first Torpid crew looks very proud after their final row

## SHCBC men win BLADES!

**Shea Heaney, Men's Captain**

Hilary Term on the Isis started out in a more turbulent but promising fashion than Michaelmas. A drop to amber flag just in time for 0th week made for a rare opportunity to actually row at the start of Hilary, a first for many of us!

Having bedded in the novices in Michaelmas, sights were set on preparation for the first race of term: IWL C. It was shaping up to be a real test of racing mettle, as we brought a sizeable fleet (5 boats entered!) to get some much-needed race experience. Unfortunately, this wasn't to be, as considerable bad weather and some unlucky launch sinking resulted in the cancellation of the event after only one of our crews could race.

Thankfully, it was but a few days until the river was rowable again and we could have a successful shot at IWL D. Without the white-capped waves of IWL C, we were able to put on a brilliant performance in the first race of the year: on the men's side, a prospective M1 and M2 both put up decent times against solid competition from the other colleges (12th and 26th respectively), but the real



highlight were the women, who managed an incredible 2nd place, only bested by a superstar crew of blues trialists.

Riding on the highs of IWL D, the women's side next braved the Tideway as they competed in Hammersmith Head just before Torpids. In what was a soggy day for KH, they achieved 9th place in their category, bringing some good momentum into Torpids.

Now for the climax of Hilary rowing at Hilda's: Torpids, the

term's bumps race. Foul weather in the days before dampened moods, resulting in the decision to cut racing such that the M2, W2, and W3 (all of whom qualified strongly at Rowing On the previous week) were not to compete. This was terribly disappointing for our rowers new and old in these boats, but we hope this will mean the motivation for Eights is even stronger! On the other hand, the M1 and W1 were high enough in

ranking that they could race under the Pfahl bad weather contingency plan, ultimately resulting in a stellar performance from SHCBC over the four days. The women went +4 overall but narrowly missed out on Blades as they were caught by Merton on the final day; on the other side, the M1 achieved Blades and a remarkable +5 over the week (perhaps because of the priority given to their beauty sleep in the weeks prior?). This meant a total gain on the river of +9 for Hilda's this year, a well-deserved number of places representing the hard work of all the SHCBC members.

## SHCBC women in the wild

### Eleanor Prince, Women's Captain

The women's side of SHCBC ventured further downstream of the Isis this term, making two visits to the Tideway to take part in Hammersmith Head and Women's Eights Head of the River Race (WEHoRR). On the 23rd of February, we travelled down to London for the first time, racing the 4.4km Hammersmith Head race from Chiswick Bridge to Hammersmith Bridge, finishing 9th in our category in a time of 13.26.3. We have to give a massive thank you to Hilda's alum Siena Hickmore who made her Tideway coxing debut in fabulous fashion with us. Later, in the post-Torpids haze, we returned to the Tideway to take on one of the largest women's Head races. Taking on the 6.8km long course was always going to be a change for those of us used to the much shorter stretch through Oxford, but the crew dug in deep, putting everything into the race – much to the detriment of the skin on our hands... Finishing with a time of 23.28.9, the crew spent an afternoon in sunny London before taking the trusty Oxtube home. I am hugely proud of all the girls who stepped out of their comfort zone to row on the Tideway and look forward to returning for more next year. I would also like to thank Brasenose rowers Flo & Hattie, and Linacre rower Emily, for being such wonderful subs to our crews and embracing the SHCBC energy. The end of Head race season doesn't mean the end of external racing, keep your eyes peeled on our social media to see where we travel next term!

### Below, SHCBC Women rowing fiercely at Hammersmith Head



To the right, the men's boat shows off the new Hilda's unisuit design



## Stash provides free speed

### Lucy Hamer, Women's Vice Captain & Stash Officer

Not just another crew in wearing the classic white and blue. Having made a name for ourselves by topping IWL league tables, dominating external regattas and forging a reputation for legendary crewdates, it was only right that our kit reflect the same unmistakable identity. As proud Hildabeasts, the unicorn had to feature - a symbol of mystical strength embodied by many of our athletes. After spending a week being admired by the customs employees, the unisuits arrived with a flourish the day before Torpids. But they were well worth the wait, and seeing them on the river for the first time was absolutely magical.



# Rowing rumours, revelations & rambunctiousness

xoxo The Hearsay Hildabeast returns

My dearest readers, I'd like to bid you a warm welcome to this most alliterative of editions: the Hilary Hearsay Hildabeast! In an unprecedented and extraordinary turn of events, only half the club was unable to compete in Torpids this year. Unfortunately, this meant that the half of the club able to compete devoted the majority of their time to actual water sessions, rather than running around Oxford sowing the seeds of rumour in our ever-fertile grounds. Don't be alarmed, however- your most devoted gossip would never leave you hanging!

The aforementioned cancellation of the lower divisions did not stop our eager lower boat members from getting on the water- or, in the case of one unfortunate Hammersmith Head participant, in the water. I'm sure KH will stop reminding everyone of the time she fell into the River Thames (!!!!) at some point before she graduates. Her watery escapade seems not to have deterred any of her fellow women from competing in external regattas, however, as EP managed to drag her squad up to London not once but twice, the second time on International Women's Day! Sorry, that must have been a typo; the 8th of March has no particular significance.

While the men's side may have won blades, their impressive athletic performance was no match for the women's fierce protective instincts. At times, this morphed into what some might call aggression (but what the well-informed would call an interesting choice in the spinning zone). What a shame the women's first Torpid couldn't use that pent up aggression on the last day of



To the left, the women's first VIII after their final row in Torpids

Neither, as it transpires, is Putney Spoons, without mentioning any names!

Speaking of The Boat Race, I do hope that PT and FG have worked out the difference between Putney and Kingston by now. I've also been told that the surplus social budget will be going towards funding navigation lessons for KH- clearly, she thinks postcodes are a British conspiracy theory. Now, if only JD can start remembering which college he goes to... hint: it isn't Jesus or Queen's.

That's all from me this term, ladies and gents. I hope you've had a restful vac and that you're ready to return for Trinifree, guns blazing. Have fun- but not too much! Remember that the Hearsay Hildabeast is always watching....



Torpids. I hope MP's fists have unclenched by now. The Hildabeasts rounded off an impressive term with some well-deserved debauchery at Boatclub Formal. I've run the statistical analysis, and I'm pleased to report that at least 8% of SHCBC members did not end up in the position of JF or EP... surrounded by their friends in JMQ! In fairness, on behalf of the non-drinkers out there: I've been asked to remind all rowers that Shmoon is not a playground, regardless of how friendly some of us might be.



Above, SHCBC celebrating a successful Hilary term at their end of term boat club formal

*Created and Edited by Georgina Summers*