



The height above normal of the River Isis in Oxford from the end of October to the start of December 2023 (more or less the whole term). The colour of the bar corresponds with the flag at the time: Red = no rowing at all; Amber = only senior crews with senior (highest status) coxes; Dark Blue = no novice coxes.

Washout weather grounds SHCBC

Josiah Shields, Secretary

The new academic year got off to a flying start for St Hilda's College Boat Club, witnessing what can only be described as a gargantuan turnout for our JCR and MCR freshers' barbecues. Georgia and Jack, this year's captains, could not believe their luck as they watched some of the Watts being put down by the freshers competing in the 100m erg sprint competition - although, in hindsight, it seems likely that a not insignificant portion of the power being generated was due to pure fight or flight adrenaline from having SH bellowing at them like a 1960s Army drill sergeant!

This good luck quickly soured though, as rain and inclement weather caused the river to be red-flagged for most of the term - leading to a complete absence of rowing and the cancellation of the novice regattas. Unsurprisingly, it was difficult to retain some of the previously eager novices with only the promise of erg sessions, but the plus side of this is that those who have remained are commitment personified.

An otherwise disappointing term was largely saved thanks to the efforts of our Social Secretaries, Shea Heaney and Becks Morgan, who put on some fantastic events, as well as our Stash Secretary, Horatio Everett, who created some future classics in the world of boat club fashion. Our captains also did a truly amazing job at organising and running a completely new 'ergatta' in the space of just a week or two - providing novices from all over the river the chance to experience the thrill of racing without the tedium of marshalling briefings - so perhaps, on balance, the rain was for the best!

Longbridges Ergatta, better than rowing?

Jack Davies, Men's Captain

In the absence of time on the water, some Hilda's rowers were (un)fortunate enough to step into the world of indoor racing. Shortly after news of MNR's cancellation (formerly Christchurch Regatta), our intrepid committee set about trying to organise their own alternative event to ensure at least some racing took place this term. Undeterred by the attempts of Univ to establish their own rival event, SHCBC launched the inaugural 'Longbridges Ergatta'. Featuring four events - a Senior and Novice category for both the Men's and the Women's sides - it attracted stiff competition with entries from GTC, Hertford, St Catz, and, in a bit of a twist, LMH.

With over 120 entrants competing across 27 races, Longbridges was

abuzz to an extent never before seen during Michaelmas - filled to the brim with the adoring fans of SHCBC. Unfortunately, despite having organised the event, SHCBC was unable to come away with a trophy in any category, yet still produced a set of very promising results against some tough competition.

An SHCBC crew featured in all finals bar one, and pushed crews from GTC and Hertford, both of whom are considerably above us in the Torpids rankings, to the line - suggesting there are plenty of bumps to come in Torpids!

Thanks must go to everyone who was able to help out on the day, but especially to Georgia Sweeney for her organisational skills, and to Harry Hutchinson and Shea Heaney for their excellent marshalling and umpiring!



A Modest Michaelmas

The Hearsay Hildabeast spills the beans on this term's latest gossip.

Has it really been Michaelmas already? I certainly wouldn't have known from all the rowing we've not been doing – OURC's red flag conspiracy to keep our strong choppers off the water won't hold Hilda's back for long! Alas back again we are, my hunky Hildabeasts hungry for some juicy gossip. Don't worry your sweet little cheeks, dear Ol' Hearsay is here to serve up a dish more substantive than SH's white lies crewdate turnout.

First of all, I must welcome all our novice rowers to the club and thank them for sticking through such a frustrating term. With hopes of racing in the Nephthys and Michaelmas Novice Regattas breaking up faster than a certain captain's escapade with SPCBC, little was left but to relish a gruelling term of land training. While the men were busy comparing what little erg scores they managed to accrue, the women were preoccupied comparing their other attributes. The



culmination of these efforts was the Longbridges Ergathon in which our erg-weary Hildabeasts battled against Hertford, St Catz, and LMH, only to be beaten in every division by GTC – better luck next time folks!

Our saving grace comprised Hilda's many triumphant socials, commencing the term with our JCR and MCR BBQs, the latter of which was the biggest fresher's event the MCR saw! Preserving this momentum, the Sirens vs Sailors Boathouse party united Hilda's and Mansfield for a sea-faring shindig. Exciting as always, the real star of the term was the St Peter's crewdate, renowned for siring many an inter-collegiate romance alongside a rivalry of petty picture pilfering. Our Longbridges bar crawl proved Hilda's to be the true Queen of the boathouse, being the only club to bother attending, leading our valiant revellers to invade Balliol bar

instead! Rumour has it that those who lasted long enough to sneak into Fishies witnessed HH and MDB putting the Co into Co-Presidents...

Last minute additions to our crowded committee introduced Media Rep LH and Captain of Coxes NB, qualified by their passion for graphic design and Brookes rowers respectively. Of course, we cannot forget the new men's coach, whose generous tutelage and opinions have driven our novices far, or up the wall in the case of a certain Vice-Captain – I guess it must be hard to get a word in when you've been absent from most training sessions. The chaos didn't end there, with a prickly pair of emails to round off the term, upsetting a formal's end and a Christmas surprise.

That's it from me, I hope you're all satisfied! This term has been a challenging one for sure, but our united willpower, and mischief, have kept SHCBC rowing strong. Do try attend the odd erg session this Hilary, JD will cry if you don't, and who knows, if you're lucky next term... you may actually set foot on the river!

- *The Hearsay Hildabeast*



SHCBC members cheer on Social Secretary Shea Heaney at the Longbridges Ergatta.

Presidents' Update

Matti de Beer, Co-President

With the lack of rowing this term, my Co-President, Harry, and I have had ample time to orchestrate some exciting developments for SHCBC. Taking inspiration from Green Templeton Boat Club, we have engaged in preliminary talks with both College and Mansfield College Boat Club (with whom we share our clubhouse) to plan a refurbishment of our Longbridges club room.

Once an infrequently-used space, the club room has received a substantial amount of use this year for various social and recruitment events. Due to this, we have deemed it worthwhile to invest in turning the boat house into a more comfortable and pleasant place that we are proud to show off. Budget depending, our plans are to resurface the kitchen space, repaint the walls, and replace some of the most ancient items of furniture.

In conjunction with this, the Long-

bridges Committee has decided that the racking in the VIIIs bay will be upgraded this year. This will consist of replacing all existing racks with sliding ones, and the amount of lengthwise support bars will be reduced from four to three. This will ultimately mean that the days of removing back stays in order to rack our boats will become a distant memory.

A fortunate consequence of the new racking is that another VIIIs rack may become available to SHCBC, opening up the possibility of us getting a fifth shell. With the steady year-on-year growth we have been seeing, even despite this year's lack of water training, there are plans to potentially leverage this extra space to purchase a shared M3/W3 shell - although such a scheme is both temporally and fiscally in its infancy.

Finally, I would like to extend an invitation to all SHCBC alumnae to attend our annual Sirens Day event, which will be taking place on Saturday the 4th

of May. The day will consist of an afternoon at the (hopefully renovated) boat house, wherein there will be the opportunity to row as well as to meet SHCBC members both past and present - all fuelled by snacks, Pimm's, and Prosecco. Then, in the evening, there will be a drinks reception at the St Hilda's Pavilion followed by a three-course dinner.

We will be sending out exact details very soon, so keep your eyes on your inboxes. We would also like to invite everyone to come down and watch Torpids in Hilary. This will take place from the 28th of February to the 2nd of March; W1 will be racing at 2:45 and M1 at 3:15, the lower boat times are yet to be confirmed. If you have any questions about Torpids or Sirens then please do not hesitate to reach out to me and my Co-President at:

shcbc.president@gmail.com
or to contact the St Hilda's Development Office.

We hope to see you all very soon!



Yannick Limmer
DEU | St Hilda's College



Olivia Ramsay
GBR | St Hilda's College

Our Vice-Captains, Yannick and Olivia, have been training with the Blues squad this term.

SHCBC training proven to be top notch

In a testament to the quality of the SHCBC training regime on both the male and female side of the club, this term has seen both our Vice-Captains, Yannick Limmer and Olivia Ramsay, training with the Oxford Blues squad. This is an especially impressive achievement given that neither of them had any rowing experience before joining SHCBC in 2022. We wish them all the best for the coming year and look forwards to taking full advantage of them in Summer VIIIs!



Most of St Hilda's College Boat Club at the Michaelmas end-of-term formal dinner.