



July 2009

THE VESTA TIMES

Issue 33

VESTA ROWING CLUB

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Welcome to the July Newsletter

Welcome to the summer edition of the Vesta Times. As the winter edition was not issued this year, this edition will cover both the head and regatta seasons.

Denise has requested just a few words for my end of season message but I'm so chuffed at how well the Club is performing this year that I feel I could fill the entire page! So I must keep it short and, of course, the first and foremost thing is to proffer my hearty congratulations to all our crews at this summer's regattas, in particular the finalists at Henley Women's and Henley Royal. It's no mean feat to get to the finals at those regattas and holding down a job in today's conditions and putting in the many hours of training to achieve such success is a very big ask. Praise and a big thank you are also due to our coaches and guest coaches who gave so freely of their spare time.

The Club is performing so well on every level due to the individual contributions members make to ensure that Vesta is a fun place to row. This doesn't mean only the Rowing and Club committees, who do such a great job, but, in reality, all of us from those staffing the bar, to maintaining the fleet, to the member shouting for Vesta from the bank as our crews race by. This year has made me doubly proud to be your President. What a great Club! Long may it continue.

Don Anderson - President

As the rowing season draws to a close, with just the usual 'relaxed' upriver events and of course our own

Blackstaffe Regatta to go, we can all look back on some truly fantastic results. From a Club working at capacity across the squads we've excelled both at home and abroad to showcase the amazing work done by the crews, their coaches and those behind the scenes to ensure that Vesta is the name on everyone's lips at present! Others will pick out the individual highlights in the rowing results but I'd like to congratulate everyone for a splendid season; a great number of you can rightly be very proud of your achievements.

The work undertaken during the year in keeping the fleet and the clubhouse up to scratch has meant that we perhaps haven't done as much forward planning as we'd intended but that should be remedied over the late summer and into the new season. No doubt we'll be seeing some new faces on Committee and their fresh ideas and renewed enthusiasm will be welcomed.

I'd very much like to thank all those who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes this year, whether that's on Committee, during our two Open Events, behind the bar or serving food to the masses – it's a great team and one I very much enjoy being part of. Here's to an even more successful season in 2009/2010!

Paul Baldwin - Chairman

And so after an immensely exciting end to the season, the squads are moving into a well-deserved rest, broken up with some successful pot hunting over the summer. However there is still a lot going on at the club. Our bar stewards and Rowing committee are starting plans for the Blackstaffe day regatta as well as quizzes and

parties. The Rowing Committee is already looking forward to next season, coaching, boat and engine maintenance, boat buying and most importantly how we can capitalize on this year's results!!

Firstly, go out and enjoy your summer and any pot hunting you do. But please do look after club kit and ensure you ask your coaches or myself before you use any boats on the tideway or at regattas, do not expect to use our top boats for these. Please ensure that all boats are re-rigged immediately after any racing - do not leave them on the trailer or racks with seats and riggers being kicked around on the floor.

The next big event will be our usual boat and clubhouse cleanup. If you have been rowing this year we would really ask you to come down for this day, get our boats cleaned and serviced, ready for next season and the clubhouse cleaned up. This is proposed for 2nd August, the day after HT&V and really makes a big difference in the running of the club each year.

Followed by Blackstaffe day on August 22nd. The regatta will consist of an early, long distance, sculls race, followed by the regular 'love boat' mixed doubles and then scratch 8s. The long distance sculls race is limited to those that are signed off and are very confident in racing back from Chiswick in a reasonable time. And I hope all the couples are practicing hard to try and win that coveted title from Harry and Charlie!

Lastly a quick run down of our plans for next season. While many of our senior squad coaches are only too keen to stay and build on last season's



July 2009

THE VESTA TIMES

Issue 33

results, we are losing a few of our other coaches. Many thanks to Jason Gray, Graham Harvey, Nick Ireland and Nicola Millard for all your time and efforts and playing your part in the great Vesta machine. This does mean we will be having some new coaching talent and that there will probably be some changes in squad structure to make best use of our resources. We will also be seeing some new captains next season, with Barry Clarke and myself stepping down, and I am sure that whomever takes over will only extend Vesta's current upwards trend.

So finally, congratulations again to all those very successful squads and crews and have a good summer.

Paul (Zim) Musgrave – Captain, and Deputy Captains

Bar

Saturday 22nd August brings the final event of the year, Blackstaffe Day, for those of you who are new to Vesta this is our club regatta and is a fun day to be had by all!

In the morning we will have a Club regatta, pots will be awarded! In the evening the Vesta Senior Girls are hosting a party with a 90's Disco theme

Please join us to celebrate the end of the season!

Dick Welch – Hon. Steward

Safety

With our one week of hot weather for this summer having passed, advice about drinking enough fluids and applying lots of sunscreen seems unnecessary!

As we move into the post summer-racing season, please remember that you must be on the approved scullers/steers list and have the permission of the club captain before you use club boats. Remember to sign in/sign out so that we don't send out a search party for you.....or worse....lock up and go home!

For those of you who have reached the appropriate sculling/steering standard (as recommended by coaches), assessments will be happening over the next few weeks.

A gentle reminder....the incident log is on the notice board at the top of the stairs between the two changing rooms - fill in a brief sentence here and then find a full incident form in the office (first cardboard pigeon hole on bottom shelf) and fill it in and email it to Barry or myself. Enjoy the summer season!

Deputy Captain – Barry Clarke

Vice Captain – Sinead Hayes

SQUAD REPORTS

The Vets

The Vets did some quite serious training this winter that paid off when they met their season's objectives with two gold medals at the National Vets at Holme Pierrepont. Medals were won in both the Vet C and Vet D categories.

A Vet F quad entered Henley Veterans Regatta and got through the first round only to meet a crew of German ex-internationals for the second year running with predictable results. Jeremy Burke was

also at Vets Henley in a winning AK composite, continuing his successful season.

The group is always happy to train with other squads and looks forward to sculling with some new vets in the coming season.

Men's Senior

Building on the many positives from the start of the season, Martin Hindshaw and Karl Henderson's senior men's squad headed into mid winter with high expectations for the forthcoming head races. First on the schedule was the Vesta Scullers Head with many of the squad looking to produce strong showings with Jeremy Burke being the pick of the Vesta scullers coming in a highly creditable 60th position overall. In the hotly contested novice category, Mark Williams put all of his early season sculling to good use producing strong finish and coming 6th of the 55 scullers in his category.

After Christmas the focus switched back to larger boats and some strong results were immediately achieved. The 1st VIII mixed it with some top University and Tideway crews placing them the top ten at Quintin Head. The strength of the squad was showcased by both the 1st and 2nd VIII's placing well up the field at the Reading and Kingston Heads.

Come the Head of the River, expectations were high and the competition tougher than ever. The 1st VIII finally got one over on their German friends from Treviris Trier, overtaking them after Hammersmith Bridge and finishing a commendable 50th overall. The 2nd VIII had an exciting, clashes aplenty battle



July 2009

THE VESTA TIMES

Issue 33

with our next door neighbours from Thames finishing strongly 115th overall.

Soon after it was time to head off for the miles of flat water on the Rhine-Rhone canal for training camp. After what seemed like endless seat racing, a 4+ comprised of Dylan Samuel, Nick Neveling, Harry Bond and Mark Williams coxed by Michael Wale was selected as the top boat, a strong VIII as the 2nd and the now infamous "Obama" IV as the 3rd.

The first of many trips to Dorney Lake for Wallingford regatta in early May saw the first races in anger for the newly formed crews. The squad regrouped and returned to Dorney one month later for the Metropolitan Regatta. The performances were much improved with the pick of the results coming from the coxed IV with Josh McInerney subbing in for the absent Dylan coming a close 2nd place in the Sen4+ category, and the composite Vesta/AK/Furnivall quad including Jeremy Burke winning Sen4x. The final trip of the season to Dorney for Marlow regatta saw the strongest showing yet, the VIII finishing a creditable 4th overall in the IM2 category.

The much-improved late season saw the Thames cup 8+ joining the Britannia cup 4+ as pre-qualified Henley crews. The 4+ were handed the tough task of facing the seeded Mosman RC crew from Australia in the first round on Wednesday; the VIII was drawn against Combined Services RC. The coxed 4 set the tone for the day, building up a commanding lead by Fawley and managed to soak up a final desperate sprint for the line by the seeded crew winning by a comfortable ½ length in the fastest time of the day. The VIII lined up in the heat

of the afternoon sun and powered away from the start, opening up an early lead, which they extended to 1½ lengths by the finish line.

Thursday saw the Brit 4+ having a day off, so all eyes were on the VIII as they took on Tideway Scullers. The fancied Scullers crew opened up a 1 length by the halfway point but Vesta were suddenly back in the race. In the end, after a hard fought battle, TSS took the heat by 1½ lengths.

On Friday the Brit 4+ made light work of a useful Henley RC crew, rowing a controlled race, they managed to beat their opponents comfortably by 2¾ lengths and set up a mouth-watering semi-final race on Saturday against City of Bristol.

In what many people have described as the best race of the entire regatta, cox Michael, Dylan, Nick, Harry and Mark rowed the race of their lives. Barely a canvas separated either crew all the way down the course and as the crews neared the Remenham club, City of Bristol held a slender 2 feet lead. The Remenham roar that followed was incredible and Vesta used the partisan support to their advantage, they edged ahead coming towards the enclosures, and gradually opened the lead, winning by a ½ length margin in an epic encounter.

Their opponents in the final were to be their old adversaries Agecroft. Although they were giving away more than 1 stone per man the Vesta crew rowing long and smoothly pushed Agecroft hard down the course. Stroke for stroke they battled and gave everything they had. Unfortunately the power of the Agecroft crew finally showed as they squeezed out a narrow victory by ¾ of a length. For

the 4 rowers, cox and coaches, the disappointment was obvious, but in what they achieved this year they have given all in the squad an enormous amount to be proud, and what greater incentive to come back next year and grab that medal for themselves.



Finalists, Britannia Challenge Cup, Henley Royal Regatta 2009

Men's Novice & Development

The novice and development men have been rowing as a single squad since early in the year. Our eight at the Head of the River overtook six crews down the track to climb 128 places, finishing 290th and beating Vesta III. The 2nd VIII also put in a strong performance at the Vets Head.

At Easter the squad headed off to Chester with the Novice Women for a six-day training camp, hosted by Grosvenor RC. With a trailer full of kit, this was the first experience of many of those in the squad in singles, doubles and pairs. Credit has to go to Christian Germadnik for not only towing the boats, but particularly for flipping the single on the first stroke, and to Nick Rodgers, who fell in three times in one outing! The camp also provided some inter-squad bonding (on and off the water!).



July 2009

THE VESTA TIMES

Issue 33

Moving into the summer, the squad performed well in both eights and fours at Hammersmith and Putney Town Regattas. An IM3 four made the final at Hammersmith Regatta. With Louise Fellingham, Chris Joynes, Mano Pedrini, Andy Sheehan and Will Laffan on board, they went onto win at Putney Town in the 4+, and the Senior crew a run for their money in the 4-. A scratch novice four of Katy Hinks, Dermot Flynn, Nick Rogers, Chris Murazko and Ollie Fifoot also did well to made the final at Putney Town. The squad then trooped off to Peterborough Spring Regatta to get some multi-lane experience, coming back with one win in IM3 pairs as well as good finals places in the Novice eight and four.

From Putney Town through to Henley, Andy, Mano, Chris and Will have worked together in a coxless four. The crew raced against some tough competition at Met and Marlow, and stepped up to produce a strong performance at Henley Qualifiers coming 18th out of 46 crews but missing out by three spots - a good result particularly as two guys started in the novice program last August.

Onto the summer regattas, Christian Germadnik and Karim Awad, Jeremy Rose and Ryan Kane both raced doubles at Kingston Regatta. A novice eight and four both lost to Granta at Moseley, the eight having successfully overcome Twickenham in the heat. Further racing includes crews in Staines and Henley T&V aiming to claim their novice pots.

Women's Senior

It has been quite the rollercoaster of a season for the Vesta Senior Women's squad. 2008-2009 saw the returning of many familiar faces to the team (despite threats of retirement) along with many

talented new recruits, creating a strong squad with high aspirations. The team knuckled down to a gruelling winter training programme under the direction of new coach, Matt Gilliver, aided by Jess Essex and Paul Fitzwilliam. Eager to impress and maintain our reputation as one of the top women's Tideway women's crews, the weight sessions got progressively longer and harder and some very impressive 5K ergo scores were achieved. Although we had success in both the four's and veteran's head, and sterling efforts were braved in the Vesta Scullers Head, the head season was not quite what we had hoped for.

Onwards and upwards to the summer season. With guest coach Rusty Williams on board, we were set for a sizzling training camp in sunny France to kick-start our assault on the regattas. With so many boat options to choose from, we set off for a weekend of magical mystery racing in Ghent, Belgium. It was here that a super 4X of Gaby Turner, Anna Barkensjo, Kitty Lowings and Charlie Dempster beat strong opposition to take home the first win of the season.

Back in England, Wallingford also proved successful for an intermediate 8+ crew and opened possibilities of racing a competitive 4-. By the Met, Henley crews were finalized and the intermediate 8+ put up a good fight against crews who would potentially be racing at Henley, and the 4- and 4+ gained valuable race experience in their set crews. In the run up to Women's Henley, the elite 4- of Anna Storrs, Kat Hedges, Mary Donovan and Becki Helson beat Molesey in a close encounter at Reading, providing much needed confidence racing at this level.

It goes without saying that the performance of the Vesta Senior Women's squad at HWR 2009 was something for everyone to be proud of. The intermediate 4+ of Vics Mcleod, Aga Siemignowska, Emily Druce and Tash Henderson-Ross came together on the day to provide a fine example of rowing, despite losing to a strong City of Oxford crew on Saturday. The elite 4- took advantage of a steering mistake by Yale University to make the final, only to lose out to a four of U23 squad members. The intermediate 8+ of Kitty Lowings, Emily Trant, Rahma Barclay, Gaby Turner, Charlie Dempster, Anna Barkensjo, Sarah Wood and Verity Ansell coxed by Ross Martin excited and wowed the crowds and many supporters, who we thank a great deal for shouting and cheering us on all the way to the finish, with race after race of close, nail-biting wins only to lose to York City in the final by a heartbreaking 1/2 a length.

As we begin to look towards next year we will sadly say cheerio to a few, gladly welcome others and look forward to stepping up to the next level aiming for that ever elusive Henley win.



Finalists, Intermediate 8, Women's Henley Regatta 2009



July 2009

THE VESTA TIMES

Issue 33

Women's Intermediate

The Intermediate squad experienced a challenging year concluding with mixed results. The 2008-2009 season saw the return of the novice crew from the prior year as well as some experienced faces. The squad was newly created this year to provide a bridge between the novice and the senior squads.

The gruelling training program outlined by Paul Lorenzato and Jason Gray proved successful as the squad achieved positive results throughout the head season. Drastic improvements were realized race over race, finishing ahead of the senior's 2nd boat at Reading. Their continued improvement led to a well earned finish at WeHARR, where they overtook 4 crews finishing 12th out of 63 in the S4 category, 116th overall, just 8 seconds behind the senior's 2nd eight.

The squad packed up and headed off to Henley for training camp at the start of the regatta season with the goal of participating in HWR. This year marked the first time in Vesta's history that two eights were entered into Women's Henley qualifiers.

With the implementation of the new points system, the regatta season proved to be a more challenging task than anticipated and there were some disappointing results. The squad worked hard and showed big improvements at each regatta, however; the gap between the experience of the crew and other crews in the field proved too wide. Although they embraced PMA and gave it everything they had, they missed Henley qualifiers by just a few spots. Considering the fact that the crew of 8 included 6 Vesta-grown rowers, most of which had

been rowing for just a handful of years, the result is still one to be proud of.

After a well rested summer break, the squad will return with hopes that some will move up into the senior squad.

The crew would like to thank Jason, Paul and Fred for their continued leadership and support and wish Jason the best in his life without rowing!

Women's Novice

March marked the beginning of the racing season for this year's Women's Novice Squad, the majority of whom made their debut at the annual WeHARR race. Both Vesta boats D & E achieved impressive results with Vesta E finishing 4th in their category and 199th overall. Vesta D showed the rowing world exactly what Vesta girls are made of when, after an unfortunate collision in the marshalling area, they managed to row the entire course 4 times and still cross the line in a respectable 278th place, a feat that earned them a special mention in Rowing and Regatta magazine.

The arrival of the regatta season saw the girls continue to train hard on both land and water, with many feeling the shock as the "easy" looking 6x500m ergo sprints that appeared on the training schedule turned out to hurt rather more than anticipated. Following some closely fought finals at Chiswick and Putney Town Regattas, the Women's Novice 8+ got their first taste of victory at Richmond where they pulled away from a strong Twickenham crew to win their first pot. The coxes too have had a successful season, with Celeste coxing at regattas a mere 4 months after first setting foot in a boat, a

very impressive effort and certainly a sign of a rising talent within the club!

Now well-known faces in the bar, gym and clubhouse, the novices continue to do their share of bar work and volunteering at events and are fully enjoying the "non-rowing" side of Vesta life. Their "Bling" themed party back in April raised over £1000 towards the boat fund and recent squad barbecue added generously to that figure. A number of the girl's also got their first ever experience of Henley this year, each thoroughly enjoying themselves in the Remenham enclosure where they all got the opportunity to watch and cheer for the Vesta 4+ as they whizzed past to victory in the semi finals!

With the season drawing to a close, they are looking forward to a well-deserved break before returning to the Tideway in September. They have hugely enjoyed this past season and would like to thank everyone for making them feel so welcome when they joined. Particular thanks goes to Nicola Millard and Jane Osborne for all of their time and patience in transforming them from novices into rowers, and also Janet Simpson who has supported them all season coxing a number of their races including WeHARR and Richmond.

Dates for your diary

Aug 01 – HTV Regatta
Aug 02 – Club Clean Up
Aug 22 – Blackstaffe Day
Sept 03 – Senior Men's Pre-Season Meeting
Sept 10 – Senior Women's Pre-Season Meeting
Sept 10 – VRC AGM meeting
Sept 30 – Quiz Night



July 2009

THE VESTA TIMES

Issue 33

The traditional summer cycling time trails started on Tuesday 21st July in Richmond Park. Organised by Gordon Barnes in association with our friends at Pearson they are open to all club members regardless of experience or type of bike. You can come on a race bike, fixie, hybrid, mountain bike or shopper with basket, the only rule is that you must wear a helmet.

The dates and courses are:

Tue 04/08/09 - Roehampton Gate to Richmond Gate and back, 3.27 miles (meet at Roehampton Gate)

Tue 11/08/09 - one lap anti-clockwise, 6.78 miles (meet at Roehampton Gate)

Tue 18/08/09 - Kingston Gate to Robin Hood Gate and back, 3.31 miles (meet at Kingston Gate)

Tue 25/08/09 - one lap anti-clockwise, 6.78 miles (meet at Roehampton Gate)

Tue 01/09/09 - Robin Hood Gate to top of hill (pure hill climb) 0.50 miles, (meet at Robin Hood Gate)

Meet at the start point at 7:45pm

Helmet compulsory – no helmet, no race!

The Vesta Times is expensive to print and post. We would prefer it if we could simply e-mail the majority of the members the latest news.

PLEASE could you contact the Web Master on: vesta@vrc.org.uk and get your e-mail address added to the Vesta Times mailing list.

Printed copies will only be posted around inside the club.