



November 2009

THE VESTA TIMES

Issue 34

VESTA ROWING CLUB

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Welcome to the November Newsletter

The 09/10 season has commenced, bringing with it a massive influx of new members, to whom I extend a very warm welcome. I am sure that our newcomers will soon find that they have made an excellent choice of club and will enjoy their rowing and our social activities. It is also good to see so many familiar faces around the clubhouse, providing much appreciated continuity and experience, not only in racing but also in club management and coaching and to help assimilate the new intake. Last season was a triumph and I look forward to even better results this year. Already we have had category wins in the Pairs Head and the Boston Marathon, so we are off to a wonderful start. Good luck everyone.

Don Anderson - President

As I start my fifth year in the Chair, it's great to see another season get off to a flying start with lots of new faces, a distinct buzz around the Club, and even some early wins to set the tone! I'd like to extend a very warm welcome to those new members joining us, and an equally sincere thank you to the existing members – our Club is what it is because of all of you; its members!

Looking back just for a moment, the late summer once again brought with it successful pot-hunting together with some well deserved relaxation before the onslaught of winter training. Somehow the work needed around the Club didn't seem to recognize the need for summer down time, and a lot of pre-season preparatory work was undertaken, as well as the smooth handover of a number of key positions

on Committee. Once again, I'm astonished and delighted by the amount of time and energy so many people pour into running the Club for the benefit of us all.

Now looking forward, I know that buoyed by the fantastic results of last season, our coaches rightly have high hopes for our squads. It's the role of Committee to ensure that what is needed for that potential to be realized is put in place for you as best we can. That work was started straight after Henley and will continue throughout the season. Please contact any member of Committee if you have any queries or suggestions (contact details, along with descriptions of each of our individual roles, are on the website). I can often be found propping up the corner of the bar so please don't hesitate to find me there!

Very best wishes for the season ahead and I look forward to meeting and sharing a drink with you over the coming year.

Paul Baldwin - Chairman

A new season, and yet another bumper intake of new members to Vesta across our squads. We extend a warm welcome to you all. Welcome back to all our existing members, rowers, coaches and coxswains. I hope you are all enjoying the new season, and the training and racing the Autumn months bring!

This season I am delighted by the commitment once again demonstrated by our volunteer coaches. We welcome two new additions to the coaching squad: Alan Manning with the Senior Men, and Alex Brown with the Novice Men. Along with our great team of

volunteer coaches, I'm certain Alan and Alex we will continue to help Vesta achieve ever greater success on and off the water. Jessica Essex, our British Rowing sponsored coach, has recently departed for Durham University to take up a full time coaching role; please join me in wishing her every success for the future (and I expect Jess to be visiting Vesta and its legendary parties whenever she can!).

Though the season is still young, we have already clocked up two wins: Gianni Galavotti won the novice men's single category at the 31-mile Boston Marathon in September, and more recently Charlie Dempster and Kitty Lowings took a IM2 2x win. Well done!

With Vesta Scullers' HERR (28 Nov) and smaller upstream events fast approaching I hope we continue to extend our recent form. It would be great to see as many Vesta scullers as possible out on the water on the 28 November. Good luck to all those competing! If you are keeping your powder dry on the day, please come down to the Club and support our crews as they push for home, and enjoy the post-racing socials.

With the change in season, the recent rainfalls, the Tideway is quite filthy at the moment. Please remember to wash the boats down after the outings, and report any damage via repairs@vestarowing.co.uk and/or safety@vestarowing.co.uk. This helps us ensure our fleet remains in best of health. If you suspect something is not quite right, please let us know and we will aim to get it fixed as soon as practical. To quote a saying, "a place for everything and everything in its place" - if you use Club kit whether



November 2009

THE VESTA TIMES

Issue 34

boats, trestles, or weights for example, please put them back where they belong - this reduces damage and ensures our equipment is available for the next person to use it. Robin Purkiss, a fine, long standing member and our recently acquired Club Boatman, has done a great job in fixing and maintaining our fleet - he and I would like to keep it that way!

Our thanks go to Trevor Williams for yet another generous donation of a launch to the Club, launch "VRC 699". A good launch is a gift to our coaches braving the chilling headwinds of the winter months.

Finally many thanks to the recently ex-Captains, Paul "Zim" Musgrave, Sinead Hayes and Barry Clarke. They have done a great job in leading the Club to where it is, and I hope as their successors we one day hand over the Club in the same fashion.

Please feel free to contact myself, Ally Campbell (Captain of Vice) or Kitty Lowings (Deputy Captain and Chief of Organized Fun) about any questions, concerns or suggestions you have.

Best wishes

Andrew MacMillan – Captain

for and behalf of the Captain, Deputy and Vice Captain

Bar

Mark your calendars. The bar will be open at midnight following the Annual Dinner; don't forget to bring your dancing shoes! Our Christmas Party will be held on Sat, Dec 19th. Looking ahead on the calendar, Burns Night will be celebrated with a Supper at the club on Monday January 25th, and

there will be the standard parties for WEHARR, HARR, and the Annual Boat Race. As usual, volunteers will be needed. Stay tuned for details!

We would like to extend our thanks to Charlotte Lamping for doing a great job in her short role as Assistant Honorary Stewart, and to Sinead Hayes for stepping in to cover the role until it can be filled permanently.

Dick Welch – Hon. Steward

Vesta Scullers' Head 2009

The Scullers' Head is the largest single division race for single sculls in the world. Since 1954 the race has been fought for annually (with one cancellation for bad weather) and has seen Olympic and World champions, Henley winners, the great, the good, the young, the old and countless Vesta legends. This year's race will be contested on Saturday November 28th and will see, we hope, over 500 singles thrash their way from Chiswick to Putney.

Whilst we hope that we'll have another strong home field, we do need the assistance of every last one of the membership to help out. We're proud that Vesta is one of the few clubs that attempts to single-handedly organize Head races of this size, but we can't do it without a large number of volunteers. Behind the scenes a good number of hardy souls have been getting things sorted, but on the day itself we will need your help - no matter who you are, if you're not racing, you're needed.

If you're new to the club this year, you'll be very welcome when you volunteer, if you've helped before, feel free to request a job and to highlight the people you'd like to work with!

There will be an email to the all-vesta list very soon, but in the meantime feel free to email Sinead Hayes and me at scullers.head@vrc.org.uk (and follow the race on twitter - @scullershead) to find out what you can do.

Entries Secretary and Chairman of the Organizing Committee – Chris Harrison
chris@vrc.org.uk

Safety

Winter is now upon us so please remember to wrap up warm when you go out rowing, lots of layers mean you can peel them off gradually as the outing progresses, and be able to put them back on while the coach stops you to explain something in great detail. Please also remember it is everyone's responsibility to check the boat before an outing; bow ball (secure and not falling off), heel restraints (properly attached, each foot separately, the heel shouldn't come higher than 90 degrees), cubby hole hatches (these are your buoyancy tanks so hatch covers should fit properly and not be missing) hull (no holes), etc. Please also remember the golden rule of capsizing – STAY WITH THE BOAT!

Safety Officer – Tash Henderson-Ross

Membership Fees

The membership lists are still very healthy with a large number of returning and new members. I would also like to thank the growing number of honorary members for the longstanding support of the club. Many honorary members have now been members of the club since before many of this year's new members were born!



November 2009

THE VESTA TIMES

Issue 34

I am pleased to confirm that the following were elected members of the club at the October meeting of the Executive Committee: David Blows, Karin Bosoni, Martin Benfell (Novice Men), Lara Brock, S Brown (Senior Women) and James Oddy (Senior Men).

The following are to be proposed at the November meeting: Martin Graham, Michalis Koroneos (Novice Men), Anna Van Den Berg, Helen Sherry, Irene Calis, Janet Kinder, Jennifer Florido, Rachael Ede, Sabine Schloesser, Susan Rhodes, Sybille Schorm, Widade De Guerre (Novice Womens), Alexandra Johnson, Athene McGergor-Macdonald, Deborah Croshaw, Laura Goulding, Vicky Brock (Senior Women) and Mirren Postlewaite (Veteran Women).

Please could new members who are not mentioned above make sure that they let me or their coach have an application form and payment as soon as possible so they can be elected in December.

Membership Secretary – Janet Simpson

Entry Fees

Reminder to everyone to keep your race fees account in the black ahead of entries. Senior squad member may also wish to consider setting up a standing order now to get them well in credit before the expensive regatta season. The club's policy is No Dough, No Row.

Entries Secretary – Tash Henderson-Ross

For Sale!

As you well know Vesta Rowing Club was founded in 1870. To celebrate this, on its centenary in 1970 a history of the club was written by H.B. Wells.

A number (approx. 50) of these hardback books have been uncovered in the vaults of the club and which the Committee would like to find a home for.

For the grand 1970 price of £0 9s 9d (that's £5 to you and me!) a copy of this interesting read can be yours! All monies (new and old) raised by the sale of these books will go to the Club's boat (repair...) fund.

So come on boys and girls, who's first to have one of these distinguished looking books for your library. One hardback to complement all of those paperbacks will add that touch of class to your book collection...

Highlights include...

- Who the person in that picture beside the telly actually is!
- The great fire of '36!
- *"At various times the club bar has given anxiety to the Committee..."* (no change there then...)
- Off the water activities back in the good old days (apparently lots of running, boxing and swimming!)
- Pictures of coaches, and
- (for all you stato's out there) lists of the winning Vesta Rowing Club crews and scullers at open regattas from 1876 to 1969!

Who wouldn't want a copy!?! Copies will be on sale behind the bar.

SQUAD REPORTS

Men's Vets

The Vets wrapped up the summer with the help of Paul (Zim) Musgrave at HT&V; the day was shaping up well until sadly some ex-internationals were too strong and put an end to the day. However that did not deter the squad as they are back in the saddle and training for the head season.

The first win of the season was enjoyed by a Vesta/Auriol Kensington with Jeremy Burke representing Vesta with a win in the VetB.4x-category at the Vets Fours Head, coming second overall.

The Vets continue to welcome scullers who would like to join them for outings or racing and look forward to doing pieces against other club crews in the coming weeks. The Vets would also like to congratulate Paul Mew on his 60th birthday, which was in October!

Men's Senior

This season has started well in training for the Men's Senior Squad. Many of last year's crew have returned, no doubt inspired and keen to build upon recent summer successes. New members of the squad comprising of last years's novice/intermediate rowers and some new faces have been heartily welcomed to the squad. They are committed in training and are showing good potential early on in the season.

Joining Karl Henderson at the helm, we are also pleased to welcome Alan Manning. Alan is a familiar face to many at Vesta and on the tideway. We hope



November 2009

THE VESTA TIMES

Issue 34

his winning history as a rower and coach will benefit us greatly. So far under their direction we are experiencing some new coaching techniques, which have highlighted specific areas we need to work on. This fresh approach can only make us stronger.

The crews are now in preparation for the head season. A good portion of the squad will be competing in the Scullers' Head at the end of November.

Late in the summer season our relentless Gianni Galavotti completed the gruelling Boston Marathon. 31 miles of constant single sculling and 4 hours and 11 minutes later he was rewarded with the Novice Pot. Well done to him!

Men's Novice

The new season has started with a change of policy for the novice men, the development squad has been dropped and the new chaps have been told that they have one year to make it to the senior squad. Some have dropped out, but the majority have risen to the challenge and are training hard and putting good miles down out on the river. Many of last year's novices have also decided to give it another go and their injection of technique is helping the new chaps move on swiftly. The eight seats available for the head racing season are being hotly contested and I am hopeful that we will do justice to our initial potential.

Land training is also going well - although I am still trying to convince some of the chaps that beach weights are best saved for the summer, not 5k tests. Thursday night circuits are well attended (despite the interminable squats) and those who

thought themselves athletes are finding that the demands of rowing are rather specialised. I am also happy to say that the members of the squad can already be found propping up the bar like old lags. Bearing in mind that this is usually after Thursday circuits, perhaps the bar is propping them up?

Our first race of the season will be at the Remenham Challenge on the 24th of January - I plan to show TRC and the others the effects of an old-school training regime.

Women's Senior

Led by Matt Gilliver and Paul Fitzwilliam, Vesta's Senior Women's squad is one of the largest on the tideway with the majority of last year's squad returning for another year and the addition of some new faces who have quickly settled in to the squad ethos of hard work and play. The success of last year has brought in an influx of young enthusiastic rowers from all over the country each with their goals set on competing at the highest level.

The season has kicked off with an explosive start as Kitty Lowings and Charlie Dempster brought home the WIM2 pennant from the Pairs Head, with Kat Hedges and Lara Brock hot on their heels in second place.

The squad is looking forward to competing in various head races over the winter season. There are a number of the squad entering The Vesta Scullers' Head in November, with the ultimate goal of the winter culminating at the Women's Head. Matt and Paul's leadership has injected the team with an overdose of enthusiasm and motivation, with

the end game already set on that ever elusive Henley Medal!

Women's Novice

The last of the raw recruits have been drafted, and this year's novice women are picking up the pace. Under the watchful guidance of Paul Lorenzato and Jane Osborne, the squad has been putting in the miles on the Thames and hope to someday make it past Barnes Bridge! Sessions on the water have been going well and while there may have been a few crabs caught; the coaches are pleased to report that none of them have resulted in squad members getting up close and personal with the river. They have survived their first 5k test, with results to be proud of, and are enthusiastically comparing shredded hands and testing different types of tape. Many have also begun to understand that three changes of kit are not too many for a wet and windy weekend morning.

Tank sessions on Wednesdays are proving vital for honing technique and with the introduction of weights sessions to build up all important power, the squad is gearing up for a good head season. The women are settling into the social side of Vesta as well and are already becoming familiar faces in the bar; some of them have even been seen practicing their pint-pouring skills behind it recently.

Look out for us at Remenham head in January - we'll be the ones leaving the competition in our puddles.



November 2009

THE VESTA TIMES

Issue 34

Dates for your diary

November 2009

28 – Vesta Scullers' Head

December

04 – Vesta Annual Dinner

06 – Wallingford Head

12 – Walton Small Boats Head

19 – Vesta Christmas Party

31 – Club open for New Years

January 2010

16-17 – Senior Squad Seat Trials

30 – Quentin Eights Head

24 – Remenham Challenge

25 – Burns Night Supper

February

28 – Hammersmith Women's & Junior's Head

March

06 – Reading Uni Head

13 – Women's Head of River

14 – Hammersmith Head

20 – Kingston Head

27 – Head of River Race

28 – Vesta International Veterans Head of River

April

03 – The Boat Race 16:30

May

02 – Wallingford Regatta

08 - 09 - Ghent Regatta (Belgium)

29 - 30 - Metropolitan

June

12 – Reading Amateur Regatta

18 - 20 – Henley Women's Regatta

July

June 30- July 4– Henley Royal Regatta

16 - 18 – National Rowing Championships

October

23 - 24 – Head of the Charles (Boston)

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: laurence@vestarowing.co.uk and get your e-mail address added to the Vesta Times mailing list.

Printed copies will only be posted around inside the club.