

Cambridge University Cruising Club

Commodore's Report for the Year 2019/20

Introduction

The past academic year has certainly been an eventful one. A wide variety of summer sailing and racing led into promising team racing results and plenty of activity in the Dinghy Sailing section during the first half of the season. Sadly, this then gave way to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown, bringing the sailing year to a premature end. Despite this, I believe this year saw many successes which should be celebrated.

Our financial position remains healthy – many thanks to our Trustees for their continued work in managing these investments for us, Patrick Gifford in particular. With fewer events attended this year, £1,200 was made available to provide event entry assistance for the past year. On top of this, the hardship fund saw increased use from last year with several disbursements being made, allowing some sailors the opportunity to participate in more sailing events. Thank you also to all the senior committee - Mike Hayles, Anthony Butler, Frank Tietze, Jeremy Johnson and Michael John Gifford - for their continuing support of the club and its members.

Team Racing

The end of last season saw a lot of CUCrC members graduating, leaving uncertainty about the potential of this year's squad. However, an incredibly successful (and oversubscribed) trials produced a squad with lots of fresh undergraduate and postgraduate faces which will stand us in good stead for the next few years. Our Team Racing Captain, Robbie King, took the decision to only select boat pairings and not whole teams after trials to produce a more integrated squad that was able to diffuse knowledge to the newer members faster.

This approach paid off at BUSA Qualifiers, with all three teams: Blue, Red and Pink, dominating the qualifying podium in 1st, 2nd and 3rd places. What is more impressive is that over a third of the Cambridge squad had never been to a qualifiers event before and one helm, Ewan Gribbin, had never been to a team racing event beforehand. Furthermore, I can't let the opportunity pass to mention that (as a proud member of team Red) we succeeded in beating Blue on the water and overall on points to clinch the top spot in the Midlands – certainly the highlight of my sailing year (apologies Robbie!).

In the build up to Qualifiers, the whole squad was able to attend team racing events around the university circuit. Blue came a respectable 3rd at the Oxford Magnum to RTYC and Cindies Sailing Club - a CUCrC alumni team including last year's captain Paris Thomas. We also sent two teams to the renamed Brummie Boom (previously Brummie Bender) where many of the new members got their first taste of team racing and, of course, a curry social. The Bristol Brew coincided with the end of Michaelmas term, allowing a mixed Red/Pink team to attend. They won the Silver Fleet section but missed out on surfing up into the finals.

Even before COVID-19 hit the UK, the sailing season had been hampered by winter storms that developed a habit of coinciding with training and event weekends. As a result, a number of team racing events were cancelled, including the RYA/BUSA Women's Team Racing Championships and our own Cam Cup at the last minute, leaving a 100 person dinner on the Saturday with no-one to attend. Thankfully, our ever-resourceful organiser - Callum Farnden - managed to persuade almost the entire Athletics team to attend instead, taking home only a very minor financial loss.

Once March arrived, lockdown brought a sad and sudden end to our season and year. UKTRA, BUSA Finals and the Wilson Trophy were all cancelled, with the decision to cancel BUSA Finals hitting particularly hard given the considerable effort we had put into preparing to host it at Grafham.

This year's (costal) Varsity Match, due to take place at Island Sailing Club, also had to be cancelled – the first time this had happened since 1940 (where no match was held due to World War II). However, it proved possible to hold an (inland) Varsity Match at Farmoor in Fireflies on Saturday 19th September. Honours were shared with Cambridge winning the Open Event decisively and Oxford doing the same in the Women's Event.

In my three years sailing with CUCrC, this past one has certainly provided the most challenges to the squad. Therefore I would like to thank both Robbie King and Holly MacAskill for all the hard work they've put in this year as Team Racing and Women's Captains respectively. Although we may not have had the opportunities to achieve the results we deserved this year, they have really shaped the team for some time to come.

Match Racing, Keel Boating, and Beyond

Although the end of the season was curtailed, a huge amount of non-team racing sailing took place over the summer of 2019 all the way to the new year.

In August of last year (2019), four CUCrC members and one CUYC member combined to attend the International Top Universities Regatta in Qingdao. Despite the eye of Typhoon Lekima passing directly over the city during the event, they still got enough sailing in to finish 3rd, beating off tough international competition, and of course, OUYC. Moving into September; ten Cambridge sailors travelled to Southport for the WLYC 24hr race – coming 22nd overall. They won the Manulife Trophy for being the top placed university team and The Hayward Cup for the fastest University Firefly/GP14/Lark.

We have also seen a continuation of last year's widespread keelboat event participation, with current CUCrC and alumni teams competing in the UK Youth Match Racing and British Keelboat League finals as well as the Boysterous Cup, the RYA Women's Match Racing Championship and Women's J70 Championship. Special mentions go to Robbie King for his helming of the winning Cambridge team for the first two of those events, Bethan Matthew and alumnus Jem Lawson for coming second in the WMR event and ex captain and women's captains Cat Wallace, Anna Prescott and Rachel Tilley for winning the J70 Champs. It's been great to see more racing outside of the team racing circuit particularly in the number of women's teams we have been able to put forward for events beyond just RYA/BUSA Women's TR Championships and the Varsity Match.

Windsurfing

Windsurfing remained quiet this year despite a popular taster weekend. A considerable amount of discussion has gone on this year as to how it can be revitalised with new policies being put into place. These include moving more kit to the Grafham store to allow windsurfers to go out more easily closer to Cambridge and covering the travel costs for members to travel to SWA events around the country. We succeeded in sending three windsurfers to the Nottingham Pondlife event in this way which, although a small victory, is a good steppingstone into increasing our engagement again. I'm confident that next year we will see some rejuvenation in windsurfing, especially as it is much less restricted than sailing as a socially distanced water sport. I know a lot of sailors, myself included, have been stepping foot on a windsurf board for the first time this summer in anticipation.

Dinghy Sailing

Torben Sell and Bella Biddle have been a great team this year, working to organise several RYA courses and dinghy sailing trips throughout the season. Plans were in place to move 3 of our Fireflies to Cam SC for the summer term, just a short cycle away from town to facilitate much better access to all members to summer sailing. Although this wasn't possible as a result of the pandemic, I hope this could become a regular club activity in future years.

One of the biggest struggles with organising dinghy sailing trips in the past has been that the Rear Commodore Dinghy Sailing is often preoccupied on the weekend as a member of a team racing team. As a result, suggestions have been made to provide some small financial reimbursement to dinghy instructors to supervise dinghy trips; allowing for their more regular involvement.

Alumni

Alumni activities have continued to the most part as normal with Anthony Butler passing on his role as Alumni Administrator to Richard Guy. The O&CSS Generations event was unfortunately cancelled due to high winds, nevertheless the dinner was a huge success. The annual telephone campaign took place in February and it was fantastic to see newer members of the club chatting to alumni and sharing experiences. Thank you so much to all our alumni who continue to support us – it's as a direct result of your generosity that we can achieve everything that we do.

Conclusion

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as Commodore over the past season. I hope I have been able to give back to the club as it has given to me so many opportunities and cherished memories. Of course, so much of the Club's functioning cannot take place without the help of all the committee. I'd particularly like to thank Hugh Tomkins, Callum Farnden and Bethan Matthew for all their hard work in organising BUSA finals this year. A big thanks to Molly Desorgher and Megan Redhead, who have thrown themselves into the new, joint role of Sustainability Officer; winning the club a bronze award in the BlueGreen sustainability challenge. I'd also like to thank Tom Kosteletos for his work managing the club treasuring this year. I know Tom will do a fantastic job next year as Commodore along with the incoming Vice and Rear Commodores. No doubt 2020 and 2021 will continue to provide challenges, but I've been delighted to see the new committee embrace these over the summer as they plan for the next season.

My final thanks has to go to Anthony, who is relinquishing his role of Senior Secretary to Karl Aeberli at the November AGM - having already passed on his batons of Webmaster, Alumni Administrator and Publicity. It is no exaggeration to say that the club would not be where it is today without his devotion and support. And I've been very grateful for his advice and encouragement during my time as Commodore. I wish him all the best with his plans to move to Ireland, although I have no doubt we will see him at events throughout the years to come. I'm sure the Club will continue to do him proud.

Freddie Scott

Commodore 2019/20

An appendix to this report lists officers, major competition results, and teams for 2019/20.

Officers, Results, and Teams in 2019/20

Officers

President:	Mike Hayles (Churchill)
Commodore:	Freddie Scott (Fitzwilliam)
Senior Treasurer:	Frank Tietze (Wolfson)
Senior Secretary:	Anthony Butler (Clare)
Senior Committee:	Michael John Gifford (Caius)
	Jeremy Johnson (Christ's)
VC Team Racing:	Robbie King (Emmanuel)
VC Windsurfing:	Vacant
RC Dinghy Sailing:	Bella Biddle (Churchill)
Ladies TR Captain:	Holly MacAskill (Queens)
Junior Secretary:	Ollie Jagger (Clare)
Junior Treasurer:	Tom Kosteletos (Pembroke)
Publicity Officer:	Francis Treherne Pollock (St Johns)
Health, Safety, Welfare:	Karen Thomas (Lucy Cavendish)
Alumni Administrator:	Richard Guy (Emmanuel)
Sustainability Officers:	Molly Desorger (Jesus)
	Megan Redhead (Fitzwilliam)
Webmaster:	Mike Dunbar (Downing)
Asst. Senior Secretary:	Karl Aeberli (Pembroke)
Trustees:	Patrick Gifford (Magdalene)
	Julia Gore-Randall (Pembroke)
	Eddie Lister (Caius)
	Jo Sammons (Caius)

General Results and Teams – See later for BUCS/BUSA Results

Team Racing

(SL=Silver League; BL=Bronze League; an entry like 11/13 indicates the team won 11 of their 13 races)

Event	Date	Blue	Red	Pink	Beige	Men
O&CSS Generations Event	29 Sep	Cancelled due to high winds				
Oxford Magnum	9/10 Nov	3 rd		1 st BL		
Brummie Boom	16/17 Nov				7 th	11 th
Bristol Brew	30 Nov / 1 Dec	White - 1 st Silver League				
Loughborough Lemming	30 Nov / 1 Dec	Green – 11 th Overall				
Carmella Cup (2 keelboats)	18/19 Jan	4 th Overall				
Wessex Winter Warmer	25/26 Jan	3 rd				
BUSA Qualifiers	1/2 Feb	Qualified	Qualified	Qualified		
Oxford Top Gun	8 Feb	2 nd				
Nottingham Snakebite	8/9 Feb		5 th	17 th	14 th	
Imperial Icicle	23/24 Feb				N/A	
All remaining BUSA and University events cancelled due to the COVID-19 epidemic.						

Because of team changes and the truncated season resulting from the COVID-19 epidemic, the normal presentation of teams by colour and pairs has not been followed. Instead a list follows, alphabetical on first name, of everyone who sailed in at least one team racing event.

Adam Rathmell, Alex Baxter, Alex Smallwood, Anna Vaughan, Annabel Hitchmough (Not Cambridge), Bella Biddle, Bethan Matthew, Callum Farnden, Charlie Whitaker (Not Cambridge), Danny O'Toole, Emma Greer, Ewan Gribbin, Fergus Fox, Francis Treherne-Pollock, Freddie Scott, Greg Sale (Alumnus), Holly MacAskill, Hugh Tomkins, Jamie Webb, Julija Maldutyte, Juliette Kennedy, Laragh Harvey-Kelly, Lucy Gates (Not a Member), Megan Redhead, Michael Smith (Alumnus), Milo Gill-Taylor, Molly Desorgher, Oliver Jones (Not a member), Olivia Jacklin, Ollie Dennis, Ollie Jagger, Robbie King, Sam Martin, Sitara Bartle, Tom Kosteletos, Torben Sell.

Robbie King sailed on the 2019 BUSA American Tour Team.

Match and Fleet Racing Competitions

- International 2019 Top Universities Regatta, Qingdao, China 10-13 August:** 3rd
Team: Anna Prescott (Helm), Francis Treherne Pollock, Freddie Scott, Holly MacAskill, Katie Prescott.
- UK Youth Match Racing, Portland, Weymouth 31 Aug / 1 Sep:** 1st
Team: Robbie King (Helm), Alex Smallwood, Callum Farnden, Emma Baker (Exeter).
- West Lancs 24 hour race, West Lancashire YC, Southport 14-15 Sep:** 1st University
2nd Firefly and 21st Overall
Team: Adam Rathmell, Alex Smallwood, Bella Biddle, Callum Farnden, Freddie Scott, Holly MacAskill, Hugh Tomkins, Megan Redhead, Michael Smith (Alumnus), Tom Kosteletos.
- UK 2019 Keelboat League Finals, Queen Mary SC 27-29 Sep:** 1st
Team: Robbie King (Helm), Alex Smallwood, Callum Farnden, Ryan Orr (GWSC).
- Boysterous Cup, Royal Southern YC 14/15 Mar:** 6th
Team: Hugh Tomkins (Helm), Ewan Gribbin, Fergus Fox, Nina Luckmann (Alumnus), and Ollie Dennis.

College Competitions

- Team Racing Cuppers (18 June):** Cancelled (COVID-19)
Team Racing Silver Fleet (18 June): Cancelled (COVID-19)
- Windsurfing Cuppers (18 June):** Cancelled (COVID-19)
Windsurfing Silver Fleet (18 June): Cancelled (COVID-19)

Varsity Match Results and Teams

Match Racing (Not sailed due to COVID-19):

1st Strings – Not selected

2nd Strings – Not selected

Team Racing (Oxford SC, Farmoor 19 September in Fireflies):

Open: Cambridge 8-3 (Team listed as 1st Strings and Crew, 2nd Strings & Crew)

1st Strings

Robbie King (Capt - Emmanuel) & Bethan Matthew (St Catharines)

Jamie Webb (Caius) & Olivia Jacklin (St Catharines)

Adam Rathmell (Caius) & Oliver Jagger (Clare)

2nd Strings

Ewan Gribbin (Caius) & Freddie Scott (Fitzwilliam)

Milo Gill-Taylor (St Catharines) & Megan Redhead (Fitzwilliam)

Callum Farnden (Trinity) & Hugh Tomkins (Queens)

Women: Oxford 4-1 (Team listed as Helm & Crew)

Holly MacAskill (Queens) & Molly Desorgher (Jesus)

Bethan Matthew (St Catharines) & Olivia Jacklin (St Catharines)

Juliette Kennedy (Robinson) & Laragh Harvey-Kelly (Christ's)

Awards

(WS = Windsurfing, otherwise Team Racing)

The 2020 Varsity Match (team racing only) was held at Oxford SC, Farmoor on 19th September 2020. The Match Racing and Windsurfing Varsity Matches were not held this year. Blues and Half Blues have been awarded or applied for as shown below (an asterisk indicates an award not yet confirmed).

Full Blues	Half Blues	University Colours
Holly MacAskill (Extraordinary)	Callum Farnden*	
Bethan Matthew (Extraordinary)	Milo Gill-Taylor*	
	Ewan Gribbin*	
	Oliver Jagger*	
	Robbie King*	
	Adam Rathmell*	
	Freddie Scott*	
	Hugh Tomkins*	
	Jamie Webb*	
	Molly Desorgher*	
	Olivia Jacklin*	
	Juliette Kennedy*	
	Megan Redhead*	

All Cambridge BUCS/BUSA/SWA sailing results are listed in this appendix for historical convenience.