

A word on Christ Church Regatta

New College has a tradition of excellence at Christ Church Regatta, Michaelmas Term's biggest novice rowing event. Each year, our coaches produce a number of rapid crews and this year was no exception.

The first round of the competition proved to be a formality. The Women's B-Boat (WB) saw off Jesus 1st, while WA romped to victory over St. John's. On the men's side, MA scored their first victory after their opponents, Jesus 2nd, hit the bank while MB held off Hertford 2nd. MC gave Lady Margaret Hall 1st an excellent run for their money but were unfortunately headed for the first round repechage.

Things took a turn for the worse on Thursday when a dramatic error from MB's stroke man and a serious coxing misjudgement by St Benet's led to a bow-breaking collision between the two crews. A re-row for the next day was deemed the honourable line to take. MC didn't suffer the same fate as they came through the repechage without incident and made their way back into the main draw. But Thursday proved to be their last day of racing as they fell to a narrow defeat to a strong St. Antony's crew.

Friday kicked off with the much-anticipated re-row. Both our MB and Benet's MA felt they had something to prove after Thursday's controversy, but in the end, Joseph Veal's well drilled MB came out on top with unexpected ease. Four more races soon translated into four more victories for NCBC, who marched into Saturday with four crews in the reckoning.

The last day of racing ended early for the men who had shown so much promise earlier in week. MA lost to Somerville 1st after a seat came off its runner, while MB couldn't find an answer to eventual Regatta-winners Worcester. Everyone stayed behind to cheer on both women's crews, who were risking their fingers in the freezing cold weather. WB's effort at glory came to an unfortunate end in the quarter-finals after Anni Gilbert's oar came out of its gate within seconds of the start. Despite her miraculous recovery, there was little they could do to recover the half-length they had so unfairly lost. And so it was left to WA to carry the NCBC flag. This they did, and in some style. University College never got a look-in as Marjolijn Scherpenhuijzen's crew tore apart the final obstacle in its path to claiming the title for the first time since 2003.

The annual Christ Church Afterparty in College was once again an excellent way to sign off the term's rowing and give the (ex-)novices a chance to unwind after an action-packed week. Congratulations to all crews for making so much progress in such a short space of time, with a special mention to our Women's A, Christ Church Regatta Winners 2010!

James Parry-Crooke

