

FALCON newsletter

Falcon Rowing and Canoeing Club

Issue 12, May 2015

MAY 2015

THE BOATHOUSE – TIME FOR ACTION!

AT THE FALCON EGM, where we looked at plans for the future of our boathouse, there was overwhelming support for making a further bid for funding to Sport England. Now it's time to turn that support into positive action.

The club committee feels strongly that we need to involve many more club members in the process of reworking our funding application and making Falcon's case even better than last time. This is an appeal to every member to get involved, and help in whatever way you can. We came so close last time. This time let's do even better. *[More inside...]*

FALCON SPRING CLEAN

THANKS AND CONGRATULATIONS to all the many members and members' partners and families from all parts of the club that helped with the great annual boathouse spring clean on **Saturday 18th April**. It was an amazing effort!

By the time I arrived at 10.30 am, most of the work had either been started or completed, including cleaning the shed and clearing the wood and car park of litter and fallen timber.

It's a new world record!

Special thanks are due to the hedge trimmers and the bonfire keepers; to the many junior members who pulled up scaffolding poles and rolled away logs; and to the caterers. And well done whoever arranged the weather!

Peter



FALCON BOATHOUSE BID (cont.)



THE CHALLENGE

IN OUR LAST APPLICATION we fell a little short of what Sport England felt was a proper contribution in cash terms. They asked for 25% match funding but evidently other applicants offered more than 25% so we were piped at that post. This time round we will need more confirmed match funding.

We are working to a budget of £600,000, plus some contingency. We need to find local funding of around 50% of that sum.

Also – Sport England are keen for us to make more use of the new building. We will need to show that more groups will get involved. This can mean groups using the dry side of the site, for example for Tai Chi, Pilates or other exercise, for parent and toddler groups, or local OAP groups.

OPPORTUNITIES

Falcon has a good a chance as anyone else to be awarded Sport England funding. We have great site, on the very best part of the upper Thames, with room for growth. What we stand to gain is a club fit for the next 100 years. Just look at what we have achieved over the last 10 years. We have grown from being a small local club with less than 100 members to a club 5 times as big with members in regional, national and international competition. In April Falcon sent its largest ever team to Abingdon regatta (see the race report on page 00), and some of our junior kayakers have represented the UK overseas (see page 00).

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Every Falcon member has the opportunity to contribute to the boathouse project, either in time, or skills, or in money. Below is a list of some of the jobs that need doing:

- prepare a bid to both our National Governing Bodies
- contact past and potential new funders
- facilitate a local publicity/fundraising event or series of events.
- prepare a crowd-funding website or webpage (with help from GMC)
- outreach to former Falcon members
- write and phone local councillors (City and County)
- suggest other ways for us to raise money.

Alternatively, you could offer a loan or gift to the project.

Loans can be for any amount over £100. They will be called on as and when needed within the context of the progress of the bid. They could be either on a no-interest basis, or at current bank rates.

Gifts can be as little as £10 for naming a brick, £100 to fund a door, £500 for a window, £1000 for a shower – or even more!

For more information, or to get involved, contact The Oxford Community Boat House Project at fbcmailbox2000-falcon@yahoo.co.uk

Peter

STREET PARTY!

ON SATURDAY 11 JULY Falcon will be holding a bring and share "street party" at the boathouse for all members – rowers and kayakers alike. Watch out for more information!

GMC MEETINGS

WE OFTEN REPORT ON THE GMC meetings in the Newsletter, but if you want to really find out about how the club is run, you can receive copies of the minutes from the GMC's monthly meetings. To get your copy, either email the club secretary (Kate Hield), or contact Lorna (lorna.hermes@gmail.com) or Nick (n_barnett@btconnect.com).

TWO JUNIOR KAYAKERS MAKE GB SQUAD

TWO FALCON JUNIORS, Sam Glover and Timo Morris, were recently chosen to represent Great Britain at international events. Sam is one of 10 junior men in the GB team for the International Sprint Regatta at Piestany, Czechoslovakia, 29 to 31 May. Sam and Timo was chosen to represent GB at the Waterlands Marathon in Amsterdam on 18 April (see race reports).

HALF-TERM BEGINNERS' COURSES

We are running courses at Falcon for junior and adult beginners in May half-term. The junior courses are for anybody that hasn't

kayaked before and wants to give it a try, or has been paddling for less than a year. The adult course is for beginners, or for improvers who have begun paddling in the last year or so.

Juniors:

- Course 1: 26th - 29th May, 10 am–12 pm
- Course 2: 26th - 29th May, 1–3 pm

Adults:

- 30 May 1–4 pm and 31 May 10 am–4 pm

All courses cost £80.

If you are interested please contact Callum Staff (callum.staff.10@ucl.ac.uk or 07825 604446) for the junior courses, or Andy Solway (solway3@gmail.com, 07895 246153) for the adult course.

NATIONAL GO CANOEING WEEK

Go Canoeing Week (23–31 May) is an event that anyone can get involved in, from complete beginners to seasoned pros. All forms of paddlesport are celebrated, from stand-up paddleboarding to whitewater kayaking and open canoeing! There are prizes for the top group and individual paddlers, and for five people drawn at random. All you have to do to be in with a chance is to register the miles you paddle during Go Canoeing Week on the website (<http://www.gocanoeingweek.org.uk/register-your-miles>).



Sam has been picked for the junior men's GB squad.



Timo in his GB vest.



NICK'S LOG

HELLO AGAIN EVERYONE!

The Summer training schedule is well under way and we're busier than ever. It's great to see the number of adult and junior paddlers on the water making the most of the warmer days(?) and longer evenings. Now is the time to be setting those goals, whether it's beating your Personal Best time on the time trial, moving into a faster boat, getting promoted to the next highest division, or if you're new to all of this, taking part in your first Hasler race.

As a reminder, we are three races into our series of 9 Hasler races in the Southern region. We're currently top of the table having had excellent results at Pangbourne, Henley and Banbury. We now have to prepare for races at Basingstoke, Reading, Oxford, Wokingham, Southampton and Longridge. Also, remember that the Hasler Finals are going to be in Oxford (Port Meadow) in September so we want to make sure we have our best ever turn out. In order to participate in the Finals you must complete three Hasler races so make sure you check the dates to see which ones you can enter.

Our juniors have been doing exceptionally well over the last few months. This year five Falcon paddlers were invited to join a team of athletes in the GB development squad to race in the Annual Blaarmersen marathon around the historic town of Gent, Belgium. All did well and hopefully the experience will spur them on towards places in the full international team in the future. We also had one of our juniors invited to represent the GB team for the Waterlands marathon in Amsterdam (see more details in this newsletter). There have also been some great results at the Sprints. For more details, and for lots of other stories please have a good read of the Newsletter!

There are plenty of activities going on at the club for those interested in racing, and for those who aren't. We rely on volunteers for everything we do, so more help is always welcome! We are particularly looking for help for two races we are hosting this year. The first is our annual **Midsummer Hasler**, which will be held on 21 June at Falcon. The second event is the **Hasler Finals**, which we are co-hosting with Banbury. This race will be based from Wolvercote/Port Meadow on 20th September. For both of these events we need lots of Falcon paddlers to take part and lots of support for catering and marshalling. Please put the dates in your diaries and let me know if you are able to help.

Thanks!

Nick B

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Summer sessions 2015

Date	Time	Session	Coach/contact
Monday	7:00 AM	Adults paddle (peer-led, divs 7+)	Jeremy
	6:30 PM	Novice adult courses (May, June, July)	Peter
	6:30 PM	Divs 5-9 endurance/race skills	Jo
	6:30 PM	Divs 1-4 endurance/race skills	Dan
Tuesday	7:00 AM	Strength and conditioning	Dan, Jo
	6:00 PM	For 6.15 pm start: adult open canoeing (skills and short journeys).	Mike Tadman
Wednesday	6:30 PM	Junior boys div 1-3 sprint session	Dan
	6:30 PM	Juniors girls div 4-7, boys 4-5 sprint session	Jo
	6:30 PM	Peer-led adults sprint session	(no coach)
	7:00 AM	Adults paddle (peer-led, divs 7+)	Jeremy
	5:30 PM	Time trial: juniors Div 9, Lightnings	Jeremy
	6:30 PM	Time trial: juniors div 1-8, seniors div 1-9	(no coach)
Thursday	7:00 AM	Strength and conditioning	Dan, Jo
	6:30 PM	Junior boys div 1-3, junior girls div 4-5	Cath
	6:30 PM	Teens/improver adults	Nick B, David Waters
Friday	7:00 AM	Adults paddle (peer-led, divs 7+)	Jeremy
	7:30 AM	Divs 1-3 paddle	Abi
	1:00 PM	Divs 1-4 long paddle	George
	6:30 PM	Novice/improver adults	Jen, Andy
Saturday	8:15 AM	Juniors div 4-6	Cath
	9:00 AM	Beginner juniors	Keith, Amie
	9:00 AM	Novice Lightnings	Lucy, Andy
	9:00 AM	Novice/improver Lightnings	Jen
	9:00 AM	Novice adults	Roger
	9:00 AM	Adults Divs 4-8	Jason
	10:00 AM	Juniors Divs 7-8	Cath
	10:00 AM	Divs 1-4 paddle	Abi, Callum
	10:30 AM	Juniors Div 9 & faster Lightnings	Jeremy, Andy, Jen
	10:30 AM	Junior beginners/Improvers	Doug, one other
10:30 AM	Teens	Nick B, Roger	
11:30 AM	Beginner Lightnings	Doug, Nick B	
Sunday	10:00 AM	Endurance session div 1-8 when no race	Jo, Dan

FALCON CHENEY KAYAK CLUB

THIS IS THE SECOND YEAR for the Falcon Cheney kayaking group. The paddlers, along with parents and helpers, made a first wet visit to Falcon on 16 April, after a winter doing erg work at the school. The group will be coming to Falcon every Thursday at 3.30 during term time. They will also be doing Saturday afternoon sessions, along with parents who are interested in kayaking themselves. A new teacher at the school, Canadian Marie-Eve Whitehall, is a former international paddler and will be helping coach the group.



THE CHESHIRE RING

LAST YEAR, A TEAM OF SIX Falcon paddlers completed the Cheshire Ring Race in K2 relay. It's a 96-mile race on canals around Cheshire with lots of portages and it can be done in K1, K2 or even K4, in relay combinations of up to 10 paddlers.

This year we are keen to take at least one, or possibly more Falcon teams to the Cheshire Ring. We had 3 K2s last year and that worked really well - we paddled about 33 miles each, in 10-mile stints, and completed it in 17 hours 51 minutes. So that's the time we want to beat this year!

Dates: 27-28 June 2015

Cost: £18 per paddler

If you are interested in paddling, or perhaps supporting the paddlers with transport/food, contact Jason or Rachel: rachelcreedon@btinternet.com or jasonbennett33@gmail.com.

Rachel and Jason



Portaging at the rollers on the Cherwell (also right and below). Marion Tucker (above) won the Class 4b event.



PHOTOS FROM THE PAST...

The photos opposite were posted on Facebook by Mo Moule. She wrote: "Photos from long ago, 1960s mainly LD races in Bedford & Oxford. These were passed to me by John Marriage's family." The boats and paddles have changed quite a bit (you definitely needed to do weight training for the portages!), but otherwise the racing looks similar to marathon racing today.



A massed start in Oxford, with Long Bridges in the background.

THE HASLER FINALS ARE COMING TO OXFORD!

THE HASLER FINALS are the national inter-club marathon championship, where the best clubs from each region race each other. The trophy is named after Colonel Hasler, the leader of the Cockleshell Heroes in World War II, who paddled up the Gironde estuary in France and mined several German warships.

For the first time ever, the Hasler Finals will be held in Oxford this year. We're organising the Finals with Banbury Canoe Club, and they will be held at the St Edward's School boathouse in Wolvercote on Sunday 20th September. Banbury have already been checking out the course, so we'll organise some training sessions up

there over the summer to make the most of our home advantage!

There will be around 700 paddlers racing, so we'll need plenty of people to help with marshalling, selling and making food and generally being useful. It's a similar event to our Hasler race, just with more people!

If you want to be part of the Team Falcon on the day, don't forget to complete at least three Hasler races this season (Sept 2014 – 31st August 2015). Lightning paddlers compete for a separate trophy and don't have to qualify.

INTERNATIONAL MARATHON RACING

FALCON HAS BEEN REALLY WELL represented in the early season international marathon events. In March, the Marathon Racing Committee took a team of 20 juniors to the Gent marathon in Belgium. Five of the juniors were Falcon paddlers: the most from any club. This was a development trip, aimed at juniors who hope to make the full national team in the next few years. It gives them a great experience of racing abroad, without mum & dad to organise them!

Our juniors did incredibly well, bringing home three medals, and all finishing in the top four. In the U18 boys, David was a very impressive silver medallist, with George not far behind in 4th, despite a swim. In the U18 girls, Kate again had an early swim but recovered to take 4th place. In the U16 girls, Madi and Lucy both finished in the top group, taking silver and bronze respectively.

The Waterlands marathon in the Netherlands was next up for senior and junior paddlers who are close to full national team standard. Timo had a great race in tough conditions at the Thameside 2 race to be selected for this race. At Waterlands, he was in the front group from the start of the race, but this group unfortunately were sent up a dead end by an incorrect sign, and lost time to those behind. Timo recovered well to finish in 9th. These are some great results from our juniors and promise a successful summer of racing.

Jo

BASINGSTOKE HASLER

Well done to Team Falcon at Basingstoke (even if we may need a bit of portage practice!) Special mentions to Robbie and Jacob: in their first ever races they were promoted to Div 6 (Robbie) and div 8 (Jacob). Morgan and Henry won Div 9K2, Harry and Gabriel won U10K2, and George won Div 3K1. Julia/Izzy (9K2), David (2K1) and Harry (U10M) took second places, with Charlie (U12M), Gabriel (U10M), Catherine (U10F), Nick (5K1), Enya (8K1) and Sophie (7K1) getting thirds. Promotions for Sophie, Robbie, Enya, Rob and Jacob. Great work!

Next up is Reading! (details here: <http://reading-canoe.org.uk/reading-hasler-race/>).

SPRINT DISTANCES

You may already have your own markers for sprint distances on the canal at Wolvercote, but if not this might help.

- Start at lock at Wolvercote, going towards Oxford (low wooden post with white paint)
- 300 m - red brick bridge
- 500 m - collapsing shed (very close to the water) with blue plastic roof, on LHS)
- 200 m - start at red brick bridge and paddle to collapsing shed
- 1000 m - start beyond grey metal bridge, paddle to short white wooden signpost on LHS.

Kayak races 2015

Date	Event	Details
May		
Sun 17	Hasler: Basingstoke	
Sun 17	Assessment race	Marathon assessment race, Norwich K2
Sun 24	Hasler: Reading	
Sun 31	Assessment race	Marathon assessment race, Chester K1
June		
6-7	Sprint regatta	National sprint regatta, Nottingham
Sun 14	Assessment race	Marathon assessment race, Burton K1
* Sun 21	Hasler: FALCON	
27-28	Cheshire ring	96-mile ring race on canals in Manchester area
July		
4-5	Sprint regatta	National sprint regatta, Nottingham
Sat 11	Assessment race	Marathon assessment race, Elmbridge K1
Sun 12	Hasler: Wokingham	
Sun 19	Hasler: Southampton	
August		
22-23	MARATHON CHAMPIONSHIPS	National Marathon Championships, Norwich
Sat 29	Hasler: Longridge	
September		
5-6	Sprint regatta	National sprint regatta, Nottingham
Sun 13	Hasler: Pangbourne	
* Sun 20	HASLER FINALS: Wolvercote	Hasler finals, run jointly by Falcon and Banbury
October		
Sun 11	Hasler: Henley	
Sun 25	Hasler: Banbury	

* Please offer to help run these two races!

HASLER RACING FOR BEGINNERS

WHAT IS A HASLER RACE?

Hasler races are local marathon races. Each club in our region (Southern) organises a race each year.

HOW DO THE RACES WORK?

There are 9 divisions: 9 is the slowest, 1 the fastest. Most paddlers start in division 9, though if I think you're too quick for that, you'll start in 7 or 8. If you go quickly enough in the race then you'll be promoted to the next division: the aim is to get to division 1!

CAN I RACE IN K2?

Yes, there are separate races for K2. Many people prefer to race in K2 at their first race. In K2 you race in the average of your K1 divisions (for example, a div 6 and a div 9 paddler would race in div 7 K2).

HOW FAR ARE THE RACES?

Divisions 7, 8 & 9 are around 4 miles, usually without portages. Divisions 4-6 are 8 miles, divisions 1-3 are 12 miles: these divisions usually have portages. Portages are where you have to get out of your boat, carry it around the lock (or sometimes just along a bit of riverbank) and get back in the other side.

WHAT ABOUT LIGHTNINGS?

For children who are under-12 (born in 2003 & 2004) or under-10 (born in 2005 or later) can race in the Lightning boats. These races are 2-4km long. There are also doubles races in the Hody K2s in the same age groups.

WHAT BOAT CAN I USE?

All the club boats are available for races on a first-come-first-served basis. For each race, there will be a set of sign-out sheets in the clubhouse: put your name next to the boat you want to use.

HOW DO I GET MY BOAT THERE?

The club has a trailer which can take around 16 boats. If you want your boat to go on the trailer, please tick the box on the sign-up sheet. Regular racers are asked to buy a set of 'v-bars' which allow you to take your boats on your car's roofrack so the trailer can be used for new paddlers or those without a car. The boats are loaded onto the trailer after training on a Saturday, please be there to help. You should take your paddles and buoyancy aids with you. If you need a lift, there are usually plenty of people with spare places in their cars so just ask around.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Race entries are usually around £7-9, less for the Lightnings. If your boat goes on the trailer, that will cost you £3. Seniors, and juniors in division 1-6, need to be a member of Canoe England to be able to race. This costs £25/42 (juniors/seniors) and there is also family membership available. You can do 1 race without being a member if you buy a 'day ticket' which costs £5. <http://www.canoe-england.org.uk/membership/>

WHEN ARE THE RACES?

17th May: Basingstoke

24th May: Reading

21st June: FALCON

12th July: Wokingham

19th July: Southampton

29th August (Saturday): Longridge

13th September: Pangbourne

20th September: HASLER FINALS, WOLVERCOTE

11th October: Henley

25th October: Banbury

WHAT ARE THE HASLER FINALS?

The Hasler Finals are the national inter-club marathon championship, where the best clubs from each region race each other.

To qualify to race for Falcon at this year's finals, you have to complete three Hasler races by 31 August 2015.

Jo

Nottingham regatta



Timo and Fred with ballooning spraydecks in the K2 1000m.

APRIL REGATTA

THE FIRST NATIONAL SPRINT REGATTA OF THE YEAR took place in Nottingham just after Easter. After a glorious week of summery weather, hopes were high for a good weekend. The Weather Gods had other ideas though, and the lake that was mill-pond flat on Friday had turned into its usual bumpy, windy state by the time racing started on Saturday morning. And worse was to come. By lunchtime on Sunday, the weather was truly appalling. With C1s and K4s sinking, and many capsizes, the organisers decided to call it quits and cancel the rest of the racing.

FALCON RESULTS

Despite the challenging conditions, there were some good results from our paddlers. In Girls B, Ava was 5th and Madi 7th over 500m. In the 200m races, against the girls A paddlers, Ava won Final 2, with Madi 5th and Emma 8th. Madi and Emma were 4th in the K2 500m, with Lucy and Kate 8th. Kate was 4th over 200m in Girls C. The Girls D K4 of Sophie, Jess, Enya and Nina were 5th over 1000m. Jess and Sophie were 2nd in the 200m K2, with Enya and Izzy 5th. Sophie took 5th in Final 2 of the 200m K1.

In the boys races, Sam was 2nd in Final 2 of the Boys A 200m K1, and won Final 2 in the 200m K2 with Timo. David was 6th in the Boys B K1 1000m, and teamed up with Fred to take 3rd in the K2 1000, and 5th in the 500m. George was 3rd in the Boys C 1000m, and 8th in the 200m.

K1 Results		
Sam Glover	Boys A 1000m Boys A/B 200m Boys A 500m	2nd in Final 2 2nd in Final 1 7th
Madi Barnicoat	Girls A/B 500m Girls A/B 200m	5th in Final 2 3rd in Final 2
Lucy Hield	Girls A/B 500m Girls A/B 200m	6th in Final 2 7th in Final 2
Emma Hield	Girls A/B 500m Girls A/B 200m	7th in Final 2 6th in Final 2
Enya Dale	Girls D 200m Girls D 500m	4th in Final 3 7th in Final 2
Jess Long	Girls D 200m Girls D 500m	5th in Final 1 1st in Final 2
Sophie Long	Girls D 200m Girls D 500m	7th in Final 1 5th in Final 2
Dimitriz Bogdanovs	Canoe C1 200m	3rd
K2 Results		
Sam Glover & James Bowley (Anker Valley)	Boys A/B 200m Boys A/B 500m	3rd 4th
Jess Long & Sophie Long	Girls D 200m Girls D 500m	1st 1st

In the seniors, Dmitrij was 6th in the C1 200m. Nick and Dennis Stormont raced for the first time, with Nick 2nd in the Mens D 200m and Dennis 4th in the Masters D 200m.

Fingers crossed for some better conditions at the rest of this year's regattas! If you'd like to take part, you should be Division 5 or higher for men; Division 6 or higher for women, boys & masters men; and Division 7 or higher for girls & masters women. There are K1, K2 and K4 races over 200, 500 & 1000m. Speak to Jo Bates or Sue Glover for more information. The remaining regattas are: 6-7th June, 4-5th July and 5-6th September.

Jo

MAY REGATTA

THE SECOND SPRINT REGATTA of the season was held on Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 May at the National Watersport Centre in Nottingham. Due to exams, and other commitments, there was only a small contingent of paddlers representing the club, but due to some brilliant results and a lot of shouting from the fans on the bank, Falcon made their presence known!

The brilliant K1 and K2 results (see the table below) included two K2 wins for Jess and Sophie Long, a win for Jess in the K1 500m, and two K1 2nd places for Sam.

The weekend finished on a high with two K4 races. The first was over a distance of 500m, with a crew of Jess Long, Sophie Long, Enya Dale and Grace Barkway (Broadlands). The girls had a terrific race and cruised home winners in a time of 2:20:38.

The second event was the Boys A/B over a distance of 1000m. The crew was Sam Glover from Falcon, Ross Orme (Anker Valley), Peter Quittenton (Lincoln) and Nathan Low (SKR). The race was very close all the way down the regatta lake, but in the end Sam and his fellow paddlers took the win, much to their delight!

Sue Glover



Jess, Sophie, Nina and Izzy ready for the Girls D K2.



Four days in April

I WAS INTRODUCED TO KAYAKING a year ago on Loch Torridon in the Scottish Highlands; it was a wonderful experience and one that didn't merely whet my appetite – it drenched it. Having said that, it was a bit of a baptism of fire in terms of weather and wind. Throughout the week the organisers (www.wildernessscotland.com) had to use their considerable local knowledge to seek out sheltered spots amongst the beautiful rugged coastline and landscape.

I was one of the fortunate 20% in our group not to sample the delights of a dip in the Irish Sea at some point during the week, but I knew that if I wanted to go back on some more adventurous expedition I needed to build up some experience.

Once back in Oxford I found Falcon and, after a couple of really helpful email conversations, I attended a pool session run by Nick and enrolled on a 4-day "introduction" course at the beginning of April.

The pool session was extremely beneficial in building my confidence with regards to what to do when it all goes "upside-down". The only challenge it presented was to keep everything

I had learned in mind until I attended the intro course six weeks later.

Turning up at Falcon on the first morning of the course was a little daunting, with what seemed like hundreds of children and a few chauffeuring parents shuffling nervously in attendance; but then, to enormous collective relief, we found that most of the parents were also attendees and that we'd have our own "grown-up" group, coached and cared for by Doug.

It was evident from the start that our safety and collective responsibility were the highest priority, but my fear that the course would be monopolized by Health and Safety were quickly dispelled by the fact that after only an hour we were on (and in!) the water.

Having previously only experienced the relative stability of a sea kayak, jumping onboard what felt like a ruler resting on its thin edge in the water was an unnerving experience – and one that I wasn't prepared for. To everyone in the group's alarm one of our novice colleagues was waist deep within her first couple of seconds of kayaking.

At this point Doug's experience came to the fore. The freshly baptized course member was ready to quit after the shortest of careers, but Doug had her showered, changed and back on the water within 15 minutes. Meanwhile the other seven of us skittered around the boathouse area like nervous and novice ice skaters.

Without exception everyone's confidence grew over the first two days, and the entire group progressed to a level of competence that I would not have believed possible.

Our first swimmer loved it and the rest of the group embraced the whole learning experience, with people happily sharing experiences and techniques. At the end of day two I said "cheerio" to my seven fellow two-day course members and contemplated what was to come over the next two days.

That evening, buoyed by my enthusiasm, my 17 year-old daughter Kate said she would like to "have a go" and, with a couple of hasty (and promptly replied-to) emails, Kate was on a two-day course with Doug starting the next day.

Her experiences were similar to mine, with the notable exception of taking an early swim, but that did not deter her. On day 4 she had the pleasure of seeing her dad tipping spectacularly and dramatically into the Thames for the third time in three days.

Both Kate and I have enrolled as members of Falcon and I hope we will become active and enthusiastic members. If you see two people around the boathouse with big fat grins on our faces, that's probably us.

At this stage I think my first love will still be sea kayaking; Doug didn't conjure up any seals, otters or sea eagles for me to enjoy, but the skills and fitness I will garner from being at Falcon will make sea kayaking even more enjoyable.

This summer I am off to the West Coast of Scotland for another sea kayaking trip. I know I will enjoy it even more after the expert coaching I have received from Doug, Nick, Isaac, Emma and Amy - thank you all for embracing Kate and me into Falcon.

Roger Longshaw



Devizes to Westminster pub crawl...

THE DEVIZES TO WESTMINSTER International Canoe Race isn't much fun. The idea of it is unpleasant, doing it is unpleasant and at the end you are too tired to appreciate your fantastic achievement. Having said that I love it, the fun is in the pain and how it is as much mental as it is a physical race but also how each person has a different aim.

Last time I completed it was as a junior, and I took it all very seriously. We raced it and our aim was to win the under 17's. This Easter our aim was very different. About 4 weeks before that fateful Friday in Devizes I was asked by a friend of mine to paddle it K1 alongside him. I declined this very kind offer as I had done no training further than 1000m for two years and would want to race if I did enter. However soon afterwards, while on a pub crawl at my university I realised that incorporating this extra element into the race would mean that I could enter without having the pressure of wanting to get a good time, since I would not be doing the same race as anybody else. And so the idea of a 125-mile pub crawl in a kayak was born.

Four weeks later on the Friday I was sitting on the start line. Unfortunately my initial partner in crime had been roped in to supporting his mum (also he had only returned from the other side of the world the day before A valid excuse I felt.) So instead I had teamed up with my brother, Callum. This was ideal, because he was just as unfit as me. To give ourselves a bit of an incentive to finish, we were raising money for the Alzheimers Society.

On the first day there were only 6 pubs, along the route, so we started off gently. We made it through the first 29 miles stopping at each of the pubs and buying a drink. At the pubs where we couldn't get a drink (because we were there too early), we took a selfie in front of it. The final pub of Day 1 was at Kintbury, and with only 5 miles to go we decided to have a half pint of cider. Needless to say the last 5 miles were not only excruciating but also slightly wobblier than before. If anyone ever needs a cheap night out, paddle 29 miles before you have a drink...

The second day was equally exhausting. We had more pubs than the day before and the joke of stopping at the pubs got less funny when we were passed by the same, slightly slower crew four times whilst in Reading. However after 13 pubs we had made it through to Marlow - 70 miles paddled and only 55 to go! This fact, along with the money that had been donated - something which was hugely motivating both of us.

Then we had an issue. At 11:30pm, after about 4 hours sleep (yes we go to bed early), I was awoken by the sound of my brother throwing up noisily in the toilet. Diarrhoea and vomiting had been around the DW community, and unfortunately it came to visit Callum at a fairly inconvenient hour. If he had been racing, he admitted he would have retired at this point, but the extreme kindness of others as well as the incredible cause we were doing it for meant stopping was not an option.

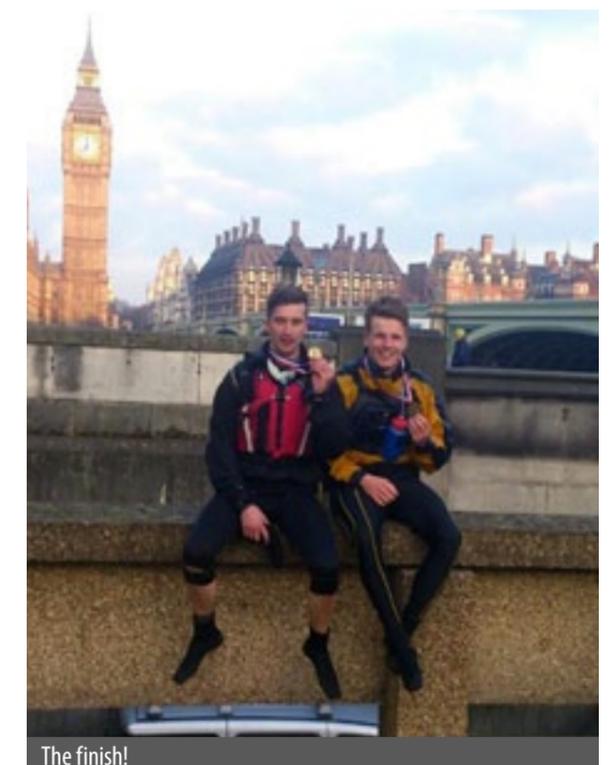


We soldiered on, slower than before but still paddling. Day 3 was a bbig one pub-wise, roughly one pub every 2.2 miles. There couldn't be much faffing around, even at the slower pace. After 8 hours of paddling (and slightly questionable noises as Callum reached new levels of pain), he and I made it to Teddington. It was beautiful! (Well, not Teddington itself, but the feeling of getting out of a boat).

The final day, as always, was just great fun. There were no pubs which we could safely get out at (I must admit I was slightly relieved about this) and this meant we could have a good paddle through the centre of London at 5am in the morning. Just a bit of advice if you ever want some atmospheric paddling - go to Richmond very early in the morning with 100 other kayaks, strap some lights to your boats and cruise down to Westminster.

When we crossed the line, both of us were elated. We had raised £1,600 for the Alzheimers Society, and as far as we know were the first people to make the DW into a pub crawl. So I extend this invitation to all comers: we have set a time, does anyone fancy beating it?

Isaac



LORNA'S LOG



DEAR ALL,

Welcome to this issue of the Falcon newsletter. There are race reports from Abingdon Head, Marlow Spring, the Junior Inter-Regional Regatta and the Junior Sculling Head. There are also introductions to the junior rowing coaches, and a full list of dates to put in your diary. We have a couple of great socials coming up, and we're looking

for someone who might be prepared to help us organise them- just a couple of emails here and there. Please let me know if you might be able to help.

In other news, we will have taken delivery of new blades and a new double recently, whilst we are also putting in a bid that, if successful, would see us receive a further two doubles towards the end of the summer. We are currently making arrangements for new racking to go up in the trailer compound (the trailer will come out of the compound and be kept in the woods, chained to a tree, new racking will go where the trailer was), which should free up a lot more space.

It's also sad to hear the news from Cheney Falcon, where stalwarts John and Zena Forster have stood down after a number of years- their goodbye letter is published here. Cheney Falcon will shortly be making a new start as Cheney School Oxford Rowing Club, which is testament to all the effort that both club and school volunteers have put in to make it such a success.

Turning our attentions back to this summer, as we dive into the racing season, let's hope for great weather, great racing and another wonderful season for the club. Best of luck to all crews!

Much love,

Lorna

KEEP IN TOUCH

Twitter: @Falcon_Rowing

Web: www.falconrcc.co.uk; www.falconjuniors.webs.com

Email: we send regular emails out to all our members, including the minutes of both General Management and Sub-Committee meetings.

Captain: lorna.hermes@gmail.com

Membership: frcc.membership@gmail.com

FROM THE WATER SAFETY OFFICER...

This is for the attention of all athletes and the responsibility of crew leaders

1. The following items must be checked before any outing as a legal requirement:

- The boat has a viable bow ball which is fixed properly to the boat but can deform on impact
- The shoes have heel restraints which do not allow the heel to rise above the horizontal
- The buoyancy sections, where appropriate, (no they're not kit lockers, actually!) are closed and watertight

2. Additional checks for your own and the club's benefit should include:

- The riggers are attached to the boat tightly (10mm spanner)
- The top nut on the apex of the rigger is tight (13mm spanner)
- The backstay (whose length is adjustable) is fixed at the appropriate length (10mm or 17mm spanner according to boat)
- The slide beds aren't loose and the slides are set even
- The shoes are attached firmly and screwed tight to the footplate
- The toothed adjustment strips for the stretchers are screwed in on the sides and floor of the boat
- The speakers are working.

Diary dates

These include races as well as river closures. Remember- crews must reach me (lorna.hermes@gmail.com) at least two weeks before a race AS A MINIMUM. Summer racing often fills up quickly, and events can close early and without notice- the sooner your entries are in, the better.

A reminder: if you wish to submit an entry, please remember to include the boat and blades you would like to use, if you have a preference!!

Date	Time
Sun 10 May	Ball Cup South (Cheney Falcon)
Sat 16 May	Putney Town Regatta
Sun 7 December	Wallingford Fours and Eights Head
Fri 22 to Sun 24 May	National Schools Regatta (juniors only)
Wed 27 to Sat 30 May	Summer Eights (river closures will apply)
Sat 31 May	'A Taste of Touring', a multi-boat, full rowing club trip to Godstow, with lunch at The Trout
Sun 6 June	Blenheim Palace Regatta (younger juniors only)
Sat 13 June	Marlow Town Regatta
Sat 13 to Sun 14 June	Masters Championships
Fri 19 to Sun 21 June	Henley Women's Regatta
Sat 20 June	Marlow Regatta
Sun 28 June	Egham Regatta (Junior only)
Tue 30 June, 8pm	Rowing Sub-Committee Meeting, The Tree @ Iffley
Wed 1 to Sun 5 July	Henley Royal Regatta
Sun 5 July	Junior Picnic @ HRR
Fri 10 to Sat 11 July	Henley Masters
Sat 11 July	WHOLE-CLUB SOCIAL, BRING AND SHARE BBQ/STREET PARTY
Sun 12 July	Bedford Sprint Regatta
Sat 15 to Sun 16 August	City of Oxford Regatta
Sat 18 to Sun 19 August	National Junior Championships, Strathclyde
Sun 30 August	Gloucester Regatta



RACE REPORTS RACE REPORTS RACE REPORTS

JUNIOR INTER-REGIONAL REGATTA

GABE SMITH was selected to represent the region (Thames Upriver) in the J14 single at the Junior Inter-Regional Regatta in Nottingham on Saturday 25 April.

The conditions were horrendous, with a straight headwind causing big waves and white horses. A number of the crews were swamped trying to get attached, with others falling in on the course. Gabe finished a strong second in his heat, and qualified fifth fastest for the 'A' final. Conditions were no better, and it was a real struggle for all the competitors. Gabe got a fantastic start, moving into the lead for the first hundred metres. As the crew settled, Gabe was neck and neck with the sculler next to him, battling for third place, but he couldn't go with the other sculler in the last 250m and finished in fourth position. It was a great race, and a wonderful achievement for Gabe. This was Falcon Juniors' second best national result ever. It really bodes well for the rest of the season.

However, the most pleasing aspect of the day was the competitive nature of all the crews, as well as the emergence of the men's racing crews.

The men's eight finished second in IM3 eights, with the junior eight just behind in third place. In the women's novice eights, Falcon finished second, fourth and fifth. There was a great result for the WJ17 quad racing in WIM3, finishing third and only five seconds off the winning time. The women's four also had a great race to finish third in the Women's IM3 fours.

There were other good junior results as well. The J14 double of Gabe Smith and Harry Bond were second, by just two seconds, and the J15 double of Martin Benfeghoul and Josh Simmons finished second in their event, just a second ahead of their quad crewmates Joel Garden and Rory Pearce. In the quad, they were second, but were the victims of some

poor steering by other crews, losing a lot of time in the process. Emily Tadesse finished a strong second in the WJ14 singles, whilst Ed Podgorski was second of ten in the novice singles.

Overall, it was a wonderful club day out, with everyone pitching in and contributing to the club success.

OARSPORT JUNIOR SCULLING HEAD

THREE CREWS WERE ENTERED for this prestigious event at Dorney Lake on Tuesday 17 March. These were the J15 quad of Joel Garden, Rory Pearce, Martin Benfeghoul and Josh Simmons, coxed by Joe Mullett, the J14 quad of Joe Mullett, Aeneas Chapman, Joe Bowley and Gabe Smith, coxed by Kieran Todd, and the WJ14 quad of Emily Tadesse, Cicely LoBreglio, Molly Chambers and Bonnie Coughlan, coxed by Josh Simmons.

Due to injury, the WJ14 quad was scratched, but with Joe Mullett not well enough to cox and row, Emily Tadesse subbed into the stroke seat of the boys' J14 quad. This last-minute crew still had a great race, finishing 22nd of 50 in the boys' category. The J15 quad also had a solid race, finishing 11th of 40. They had targeted a top five position, but a combination of illness and injury in the lead-up had made this difficult. Nevertheless, their time was only 6 seconds off sixth place, so an excellent result.



Gabe Smith, winner of the J14 singles.



The men's eight celebrating a great day.

ABINGDON HEAD

ABINGDON HEAD ON SUNDAY 12 APRIL was a wonderful celebration of how Falcon rowing has developed in the past few years. In 2012, nine crews competed, with the two junior crews being the first junior crews ever to race for Falcon. In 2015, a mere 3 years later, 39 crews represented the club, including 22 junior crews, and the club came away with a total of 7 wins.

From the adults, there were wins for Susie Holmes Smith, Alison Salvesen, Lil Cochrane and Naomi Sharma in both the Women's IM3 quads and Women's MasD quads. Naomi Sharma also teamed up with Julie Steele to take the win in the Women's MasC/D/E doubles. Rich Ellis and Cath Sage were victorious in the mixed Novice doubles, whilst Jane Burgoyne and Jenny Griffiths picked up the win in the Women's Novice doubles.

In the junior squad, there was a win for Ellie Bowley and Maddie Morrison in the WJ17 doubles, 3 years after their WJ14 double was the first Falcon Junior crew ever to race. Gabe Smith continued his excellent season with a win in the J14 singles.



The men's eight finishing second in the novice event.



The women's quad of Alison Salvesen, Susie Holmes Smith, Naomi Sharma and Lil Cochrane.



The WJ14 quad

MARLOW SPRING REGATTA

ON MONDAY 4 MAY, TWELVE Falcon crews raced at Marlow Spring regatta. An unusually difficult draw for the first regatta of the season meant that expectations were low. In the event, all crews had exceptional races, with two 3rd places overall and numerous crews finishing 2nd in their heats.

The biggest success story of the day was the WJ14 quad of Molly Chambers, Emily Tadesse, Cicely LoBreglio and Bonnie Coughlan, coxed by Joe Mullett, who won their heat against Kingston Grammar School and Sir William Perkins by a number of boat lengths, before finishing 3rd in the final, just behind Henley and Latymer Upper. Both races contained crews from prestigious opposition, and it was wonderful to see the level of success our girls achieved.

There were two major learning points as well. The first was for Tijs van Laer, who arrived as his crew (plus a last-min sub) were crossing the finish line, having confused his final time with his heat time. Thankfully, Marlow kindly agreed to allow a last-minute J14 double to race, so Tijs still got a race.

Second, the J15 quad, upon reaching the start line, noticed that they were several inches lower in the water than their opposition, before opening a hatch cover and discovering half the river inside. The lesson on this occasion was to check the join when re-rigging from coxless to coxed! They still got the best start, even if their lack of buoyancy caught up with them over the rest of the course.



All the juniors racing at Marlow Spring.

BLADES AND EQUIPMENT

The sculling blades have all been set up on three different settings. These are NOT to be changed under any circumstances. There are signs up next to all of the blades, have a read before you take them out.

The stroke coaches have also been reorganised, but we appear to be missing a couple from after Abingdon- have a look in bags/cars/boats, and return them please- each one costs over £150 and it's not good if they keep going walkabout.

We have also taken delivery of a new 70-80 kg Swift double, number 201 and to be called *Bateleur* (in case you're wondering, it's a kind of eagle). Please take care of it!

I have also now tidied up the cox-box and stroke coach cupboard. When you are taking a stroke coach out, please make sure you take the right one, and take the case with it. Stroke coaches are not cheap (£170.00 each – nearly as much as a sculling blade), so please treat them carefully and put them back when you have finished with them. They are club equipment and shouldn't be taken home, held on to, hidden in boats and so on. We are missing a couple of the adult (yellow bumper) ones at the moment, one has been missing since Abingdon and a further two have gone in the last week. If you have one, please bring it back asap!

Lorna

MEET THE JUNIOR COACHES

Over the past few years, Lorna has led the junior weekend sessions. With her job now making it difficult to do the day to day coaching, more junior coaches have come in to the club. They are:

Howard Aiken

A keen rower and rowing coach, Howard holds a current British Rowing coaching qualification and DBS Enhanced Certificate, as well as being a qualified Personal Trainer, Gym Instructor and First Aider with valid CPR certification. He is a long-standing committee member at City of Oxford RC where he is responsible for safety policy as Water Safety Adviser and coaches the Adult Beginners Courses. In addition to coaching at Falcon RCC and City of Oxford RC, Howard is currently Head Coach at Brasenose College.



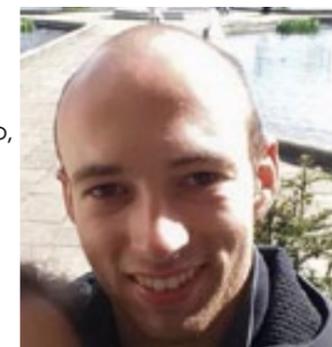
Adam Stancer

Adam learnt to row at Nottingham Rowing Club under the watchful eye of Martin Kay, where he attended GB Junior trials. He was also a member of the Nottingham U23 squad, before moving to Oxford Brookes, where he currently studies Sports Science. He was a member of the Oxford Brookes senior squad, before stopping to pursue a career in coaching. He currently splits his coaching time between Falcon and Hinksey Sculling School.



Tom Creber

Tom grew up on a farm near the town of Woorndoo, approximately three hours west of Melbourne, Australia. From there he went to school at the local primary school, Lake Bolac College before moving off to boarding school aged 12. It was here that Tom's passion for rowing began, a passion that with the help of some great coaching allowed Tom to claim 3 seat in the Ballarat Grammar 1st IV+ and 7 seat in the 1st VIII+. That year Grammar was consistently top 3 in the VIII+, however the IV+ won all of its title events, even claiming the national title for Schoolboy IV+. Since school Tom has spent two years rowing at Mercantile Rowing Club where he has claimed a number of state titles. During that time he studied Science at the University of Melbourne and coached rowing for Xavier College School in Melbourne. Tom hopes he can share with Falcon his knowledge and passion for rowing whilst at the same time learning a few things he can take with him back to Australia. Whilst in the UK, Tom is also coaching at Balliol College.



Chris Widden

Chris learned to row and scull on the Thames Tideway at Chiswick in the 1970s (yes I really am that old) and moved to Cheltenham in the mid 1980s, before rowing at Worcester and then Evesham.

During two years as Captain at Evesham he got junior rowing established, which started his coaching career. In 1994 he took up an opportunity to coach at week-ends at the then very new, and very small, rowing club at The Cheltenham Ladies College, while working a full time day job elsewhere. In 2001 a new day



job with a part-time option meant that he could take up an offer to become a part-time "Head of Rowing" at the Ladies' College, becoming a College PE teacher and Head of a department overnight. From then on he worked half a week for The Law Society investigating complaints about solicitors, and half a week plus week-ends at The Ladies' College. The club grew steadily over the next few years and by the time he retired in 2014 it had grown from a handful of J17/J18 girls to about 60 girls from J15-J18, with a permanent team of 5 professional coaches. He is now very much looking forward to coaching boys again as well as girls. He can coach sweep or sculling from beginner up to NSR standard but has always particularly enjoyed teaching complete beginners and improving novices.

JUNIOR ROWING LEADERS

I'M PLEASED TO CONFIRM that we also now have four qualified Junior Rowing Leaders, who assist with coaching sessions. They are:

Matt Timms

Matt joined Falcon initially through Cheney Falcon four years ago and became part of the High Performance squad the following year. After a successful season on the water, which included winning Falcon Juniors' first ever national medal, he decided to get involved with the coaching side of the sport as well and has really enjoyed getting to know more of the junior squad and seeing them improve over the last nine months.



Ed Podgorski

Ed has been at Falcon since 2011. He has raced at National regattas, been a junior captain and has been part of the high performance squad. He really enjoys on-the-water training and even erg training when he's doing well! He has been doing a bit of coaching for the past year and gained his Rowing Leader's Award in February. He enjoys coaching and encouraging the novice members of the squad to do well. He hopes to find a career which he will be able to combine with rowing in the future.



Paula Fuentes

Paula has been sculling with Falcon for three years, along with her younger sister Lara. She has raced at a number of events, and is one of the top bowsteers/coxes in the junior squad, as well as one of the most experienced girls. She is looking to develop her coaching skills by working with the younger juniors.



Aengus Allen

Aengus is a J17 who has been rowing at Falcon for three years. During his time at the club he has had time to acquire and practice various rowing related skills, as well as achieving national success, and he has now begun to pass them on to younger members of the club. As the current Junior Captain he feels a responsibility to ensure that juniors are able to get the most out of their sessions, both physically and socially, and believes coaching is a great way to do this.



A FOND FAREWELL
From Zena & John Forster





We are so proud to have been in at the start of Cheney Falcon Rowing Club and then helped to develop it for the first four years. We've had great times and enormous fun - not to mention 4680 Wednesday donuts and about ten thousand Monday biscuits!

However change is in the air. Zena's work and John's health issues mean that our continued participation is becoming difficult. So, with the Club now having solid foundations, it is a good time for us to say farewell; and to hand the evolving club over to the professionals at school. We are really excited about the direction the club is taking and know that we leave you all in very capable hands. The Head, Governors and PE Head continue to support the club. Christy is a brilliant Head Coach; and Connie is superb in the new and vital role of Cheney Rowing/Watersport Lead.

We will be leaving Cheney Falcon at the end of this term. Our last coaching session will be Wednesday afternoon March 25th. Happily, you will still see us down at the river, where we shall support you and also our grand/daughter Millie, who is still enjoying the school club together with her keen group of Year 7 friends.

Thank you to Phil Rees and everyone at Cheney School; to Robert Drake and Rachel Rowe and the CFRC Parent Committee; to Peter Travis, Alison Grunewald, Jutta Walcher and everyone at Falcon R.C.C.; and to other outstanding CFRC coaches, especially our founding Head Coach, World Champion Peter Haining. Also a huge thank you to the many, many families, friends, donors and volunteers, who helped the club and made the last four years so enjoyable for us. Our special thank you to our fantastic rowers - old and new.




Good luck to all and thanks for the memories.
See you on the Towpath!
Lots of love
Zena & John

PS We trust that you can conserve the club's 4-year archive. Like the best club activities, fun and achievements: all recorded for posterity, with many photos & newsletters, online on the old website: www.cheneyfalcon.co.uk and on the Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/pages/Cheney-Falcon-Rowing-Club/188915797879539