

## NRC Student Rowing Report – 15.11.21.

David Squirrell

It's been fantastic to see all the student clubs getting back on the water and back to a form of normality over the past 12 months. The last two years have been very challenging and as addressed at the last AGM, I had major concerns for the lack of experience at the student boat clubs going into this year, especially amongst the Durham colleges. Thankfully these concerns have been successfully addressed with help from local clubs and the region. I'd like to pass on my thanks to DARC who have been fantastic at helping the Durham colleges through coaching, trailer workshops etc. along with being very accommodating when on the water.

Numbers appear to be strong with lots of new members at the student clubs that I've spoken to which is fantastic and credit should be given to the big recruitment pushes that I know many have undertaken. We have two new clubs, Armitage - Hild Bede Alumni & South College - Durham University in the process of becoming affiliated and hopefully Stephenson College will be getting back on their feet soon after a lot of issues during the transition from Stockton to Durham City.

As part of a concerted effort to improve safety, Durham colleges are aiming to ensure that each club has at least one BR level 2 session coach amongst their members and DCR put on another set of compulsory safety talks at the start of the year with help from Team Durham, to ensure greater awareness at sessions. They also managed to do a huge set of swim tests, catching up after the inability to conduct them last year. Their regulations for rowing at Tyne are currently under review and hopefully this push will help prevent incidents and issues going forward. I'd also like to note that it's been great to see far higher numbers of incident reports from some of the colleges, especially the near misses that historically have not been reported and would encourage all clubs to continue to do so.

### Results

In terms of results, it was great to see the University of Teesside getting a silver medal at a delayed BUCS Regatta with all the universities in the region competing and Newcastle coming 3<sup>rd</sup> overall in the VL. There were 18 wins at Durham Regatta for our student clubs, with Collingwood College taking the college VL thanks to 3 wins and NUBC dominating the championship events. At Henley Women's Regatta NUBC reached the final of Champ 4- and similarly at Henley Royal their PA 4+ also reached the final, both being pipped by UL. DUBC women's 1<sup>st</sup> VIII won the inaugural Island Challenge Cup event at Henley Royal with their 1<sup>st</sup> PA IV losing to eventual winners UL early on. It is also fantastic to see the success of former graduates, with Angus Groom (DUBC Alumni) winning a silver medal and James Rudkin & Tom Ford (NUBC Alumni) winning bronze medals at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics with many more representing GB at the Olympics and gaining their first international vests at World Cup 3.

## **Going forward**

In the next year I am aiming to improve communication and cooperation between the student clubs in the region. It would be great to see the relationships between “local” and student clubs continue to develop through volunteering at events, improving coaching together and more collaborations such as the “Newburn Racing Series” on the Tyne.

I am also going to carry on discussions with British Rowing about membership options for beginner (novice) rowers as the price and length of the current membership options can be a further barrier in a sport that is comparatively inaccessible already. The possibility of more casual beginner events has also been discussed, with the Northern Region being touted as a possible trial location for this, so I will be continuing to push for this now we have regained some normality.

I would like to thank Wade Hall-Craggs for his huge contribution to student rowing during his 20 years as Head coach Durham University Boat Club which saw huge success both nationally and internationally for the university and wish the new Head Coach Rob Dauncey good luck for the future. If anyone has any questions, ideas or just wants a chat about student rowing, feel free to get in touch with me at [D.A.Squirrell@Gmail.com](mailto:D.A.Squirrell@Gmail.com)

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