

North East Rowing News



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History of the Tyne Head

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Once again, we have a 'Hastie-ly' put together edition of the News.

If you actually receive your copy in the week commencing the 23rd February, I've done well, as I only started putting it together on the 17th!

First of all, let me say that in future only one copy will be sent to clubs, so if you are one of those people who 'nick' one of the club copies, please stop it and take it straight back to the clubhouse so that the other members of your club can read it too. Don't forget that if you find the News interesting, then so will others given the chance! The reason for only sending one copy is that I sat down and worked out how much it costs to put together. When paper, inks, stencils stencil correction fluid, printing of covers, laser type stencils, envelopes, postage etc. are all taken into account, it becomes quite a considerable expenditure to keep going. Many of you will not realise that your copies that are sent to clubs are actually financed by the personal subscribers, although a small revenue is gained from advertising.

Once again my thanks to the many personal subscribers who do keep the News financially afloat, but I would appreciate it if you could send your remittance promptly when renewal notices go out. You could always stop me at a regatta!

In future the club copy will be marked as such, and I'm sure many people would appreciate it staying in the club! Although I haven't given it much thought, additional copies could be bought for the club at a suitable negotiated price.

It's good to know that Sammy Seal is once again paying his annual visit to the upper reaches of the Tyne. He followed our eight for about $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile the other day. For those of you who don't row from Newburn very often, Sammy Seal is a real live seal who returns to this part of the river each winter. He has been returning each year for about 8 years that I can remember.

Tyne RC are a big club, but not everyone realises how much they actually assist other clubs, and help to keep things going. The Captain of Tyne is Alan Ballantyne, who is also a Vice-President of Tynemouth, in recognition of the help he has given this sometimes struggling club. He also helped the Cambois eight to store their boat and train at Newburn recently, along with the Tynemouth four. Assistance has also been given to many other clubs; just ask where RGS boated from after their boathouse fire a couple of years ago. I don't doubt that the comradeship developed in this region is due to the positive and helpful attitude of people such as Alan, and clubs such as his.

Then again, I wonder whether we shall see more of Durham ARC at local regattas this year. Many small regattas have disappeared due to poor entries. A few years ago we had Blyth, South Hylton, Chester-le-St. Ebchester etc. all holding their own regattas. O.K. so we all venture further afield once in a while, but a special plea is this year, could we all help to make our own regattas stronger by making a special effort to avoid the temptation of rowing out of the area. There are none of us would like to see further regattas falling by the wayside. I could be wrong, but I had heard that Durham were deliberately going to other regattas for reasons best known to themselves. Let's pull together this year and make the area's events something to be proud of.

KEN HASTIE

ARA COUNCIL MATTERS

For those of you who don't know, following the Northern Rowing Council's AGM at Durham late last year, when the club's in this region clearly stated their almost unanimous views, a circular has been distributed by the ARA advising of decisions taken at the Council meeting on the 10th December. It is quite apparent that other regions have shared exactly the same views as ourselves, and have instructed their Divisional Representatives to vote accordingly. the following decisions were made and agreed:

- 1) Club affiliation fees are to be increased by 5%
- 2) Regatta levy is to be increased to 90 pence plus VAT
- 3) Regatta Affiliation fees to be increased to £10
- 4) International spending to be reduced by £20,000
- 5) Headquarters services to be reviewed as a matter of urgency.
- 6) A registration scheme to be investigated with a view to introduction on 1st January 1987.
- 7) To review the feasibility of International Rowing becoming a separate administrative operation.
- 8) To review the composition of the ARA Council and it's sub-committees and Commissions.
- 9) To postpone the introduction of the public liability scheme.
- 10) Savings of £24,000 to be made against proposed expenditure in order to balance the budget.

I haven't spoken to Chris Kenyon (our Div. rep) lately, but I am sure he has been instrumental in putting forward our views, which have caused these decisions to be made. It's good to know that the voices of clubs in this area can be well and truly heard in London.

TALL SHIPS REGATTA

Information provided by J. Ringer

The Northern Rowing Council are holding a Tall Ships Regatta in conjunction with Newcastle City Council to herald the start of the Tall Ships race from the Tyne. The event will be held over the Ouseburn to Swing Bridge course in the centre of Newcastle. The event will be for Sprint Eights, and the event will be handicapped by Status. Cash prizes will be awarded to the winning club, I believe around £300.

The last rowing event to be held over this course, or indeed in the City Centre, was the handicap sculling race held to celebrate the 900th year of the founding of the City. Great memories were brought back to many old-timers of the Christmas Handicap sculling event, which used to take place on the Tyne, and which was extremely popular. As I understand it, this great event stopped when a lot of the boats used in the event were destroyed during bombing raids in the war. The Christmas Handicap used to attract the best scullers in the Country, and indeed the world, when vast sums of money used to be raced for, and also won or lost in bets.

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 * SPOTLIGHT ON: N E W C A S T L E R. G. S. B O A T C L U B *
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The first fifty years....

The RGS is not a rowing school. There, strong athletic boys are not channelled into our sport; whatever pressure is applied within the school directs them towards rugby football. However, the major problem in attracting active members to the school boat club is the multitude of alternative sports available within the school which long ago established strong reputations in swimming, water polo, cricket, athletics, gymnastics, tennis and boxing. True, boxing is no longer approved, but it has been replaced by judo, fencing, basketball, volleyball, hockey, table tennis, and orienteering, each club being engaged in competition at a respectably high level, and so diverting potential oarsmen. Add to this the facts that the school has its share of non-physical 'vegetables' and that the school orchestras are active during Saturday morning rowing training, and you will appreciate the difficulties of maintaining an effective boat club. It is against this background that physics teacher Mr. Roger Tarry, since his arrival in the school in 1977, has transformed the RGS club into an outfit which now is at least taken seriously in rowing circles.

In fact RGS rowing goes back much further than 1977. The club was founded in May 1936, with the encouragement and co-operation of Tyne ARC who provided the use of boats and boathouse. Nevertheless, the then Headmaster, Dr. E.R. Thomas, insisted that:

'Members of RGSBC must in no way combine with, or go in a boat with, members of Tyne ARC' !!

The records describe how young recruits to rowing were lectured by languages teacher 'Dickie' Akhurst on the 'finer points of rowing'; all were required to serve substantial apprenticeships on fixed seats before graduating to slides. Membership was initially restricted to sixth-formers until someone realised that coxswains were needed, and so a quota of three younger boys, none weighing more than 7 stone 0 lbs, was allowed.

Three fours entered the Tyne Challenge Cup at Tyne Regatta in 1937, but were defeated in the heats. At York the following week, two crews competed with no greater success. The log records:

'York City RC beat RGS 'B' boat by six lengths, the school boat unfortunately having its progress impeded by a pleasure steamer coming up-river, and forcing it aground so that further rowing had to be discontinued'

In the early days, the regatta log was a chronicle of such excuses; RGS crews appeared always to draw the outside of every bend! Soon the ploy of entering several crews in one event almost succeeded; at Talkin Tarn in 1937 the 'B' crew reached the final by defeating other RGS crews in earlier rounds. In 1938, at the Tarn, the 'B' crew, featuring one J. Nisbet rowing at two, beat a Tynemouth crew, but subsequently yielded to Berwick.

During the 2nd World War, the School was evacuated to Penrith, and rowing was abandoned. Its resurrection did not occur until 1949, when 'Dickie' Akhurst, still pre-occupied with his beloved fixed seats, called a meeting of the club which the following year acquired its first boat: a re-conditioned, second-hand tub pair. To meet the cost (£40), it was decided to raise members annual subscriptions to an astronomical five shillings.

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R.G.S. - The first fifty years (Continued)

In 1950, a crew was entered in the first Tyne Head race, and although was the slowest clinker boat (17 min 33 sec), the schoolboys took comfort in beating the Tyne ARC 'B' crew, who were rowing a fine boat. In the 1951 'Head', the school managed fifth place in the clinker class field of fifteen. By this time, Mr. Joe Liddell had arrived at the school to teach mathematics, and was to be the mainstay of the boat club until his retirement, owing to ill-health, in 1977. Much liked and respected by the boys, Joe spent endless hours 'behind the scenes' repairing, maintaining and even cannibalising the boats which, especially in the early days, were usually geriatric specimens when they were acquired.

The club had it's first win at Tyne regatta in 1953, beating eight competitors in the maiden event. With only one change in personnel, the same crew in the following year took the Junior (old meaning) prize at South Shields regatta. The RGS won the Maiden event (Ladies Plate) at Tyne regatta in 1956 and 1958. This mediocre success rate in open competitive events continued during the sixties and seventies.

The first new boats owned by the club were a pair of clinker fours, bought from Sims of Putney in 1955. They were named 'Jeff' (after an old boy who had rowed in the Oxford crew) and 'Dickie'. In 1962, after many years spent as guests of Tyne ARC, the club moved to it's own present boathouse at Blaydon.

When in 1977 Roger Tarry succeeded Joe Liddell as Schoolmaster in charge of rowing, a gentle man was replaced by a hard man. From the outset the newcomer made it clear that the old competition standards were no longer acceptable. Hitherto, 'colours', an honour cherished by schoolboys as a recognition of the achievement of excellence in a sport, had been virtually guaranteed to any RGS oarsman who had won any open event; indeed on several occasions the award had been made merely for winning a difficult heat at a regatta. The new taskmaster gradually raised the stakes; nowadays Senior B status and winning a Senior B event are needed in order to be considered for 'colours'. None of the present club membership of about 30 boys has yet qualified; what was once a hand-out has now gained it's rightful meaning. Indeed, amongst RGS sports colours are perhaps hardest to achieve in rowing. Over the past decade the schoolboy oarsmen have learned that water training is not enough; every hour in aboat must be matched by at least another in the gym or running around the Town Moor. The hard line has worked; in 1980, the club recorded some fifteen successes and comparable results have been achieved in each subsequent season. Crews are no longer content to compete only parochially; they now make visits to Scotland, the Tideway, the National Championships, the Boston Marathon and suchlike events. Always sparing with praise for his crews, Roger Tarry seldom permits himself jubilation over wins;

'The timekeeper must have made a mistake' is his customary congratulation. Churlish? No. He knows the RGS is not a rowing school, and a good schoolmaster does not encourage his pupils to indulge in self-delusions.

A.N.O.N.

Many thanks to Anon for his excellent contribution to the news. I know who you are as Roger let it slip. More contributions from members of other clubs would be much appreciated. Please send them.

Ken H.

Thanks to Kevin for sending me the full results of the race. The event was a great success with a mammoth entry, and as usual, very well organised. Both the Rutherford and Tyne Head organisers have certainly got their act together. St. Cuthberts Society were awarded a 10 second penalty for causing an obstruction during the race, but Julian tells me no time penalties were awarded for late arrivals on the start, as most crews did their utmost to boat on time, but he warns that time penalties will be awarded if anyone is seen to be deliberately hanging around the landing stages to keep warm before the off.

Most coxes when asking for a crew to move over and give them water do it in a polite manner, but the Stewart Melville cox had a novel approach. The phrase he uses most often was not clearly recognisable, but did include one or two words used by Fisherman on the lower reaches of the Tyne when you accidentally row into their lines. Something along the lines of 'Get out the F***** way you A***** B*****'.

Clearly, this does not give any of the watching public a very good impression at all of the sport. A great shame the crews do not have more influence over the Coxes choice of words.

<u>Position</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Club</u>	<u>Status</u>	
1	14.55	Stirling I	E	Overall winners
2	15.07	DUBC I	SA	Senior A
3	15.08	Stirling II	E	
4	15.10	NUBC I	E	
5	15.28	Tyne RC I	E	
6	15.45	Stewart Melville	SA	
7	15.49	Tees RC II	SB	Senior B
8	15.55	Durham ARC I	E	
9	16.05	Cambois II	E	
10	16.08	Cambois I	E	
11	16.09	DUBC II	SB	
12	16.13	Glasgow UBC	E	
13	16.16	Tyne RC II	SA	
14	16.19	St. Cuthberts	SC	Senior C (Includes
15	16.25	Grey College	SB	10 sec. pen)
16	16.26	Tyne RC III	SA	
17	16.30	NUBC II	SC	
18	16.31	St. Aidans	SC	
19	16.33	RGS I	SC/J	
20	16.38	Glasgow UBC	SB	
21	16.41	St. Andrew	V	
22	16.42	Durham ARC II	SB	
23	16.43	QEHS I	SC	
24	16.48	St. Leonards	J	
25	16.49	Hatfield III	N	Novice winners
26	16.52	Durham ARC III	V	
27	16.53	Ripon & York	SC	
28	16.56	Tyne RC IV	SB	
29	16.57	Hatfield I	SC	
30	16.59	Hild & Bede	SC	
31	17.07	Berwick I	SC	
32	17.08	RGS II	SC/J	
33	17.13	Tees III	SB	
34	17.16	Van Mildert Coll.	N	
35	17.19	Hatfield II	SC	
36	17.21	Tees IV	N	
37	17.23	NUBC III	SC	

Continued over

RUTHERFORD HEAD RESULTS 1985 Continued

<u>Position</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Club</u>	<u>Status</u>
38	17.25	Hexham BC	V
39	17.25	NUBC VII	N
40	17.47	NUBC IV	N
41	18.06	Hatfield IV	N
42	18.11	NUBC VI	N
43	18.56	NUBC V	N
44	19.19	DARC IV	N
45	20.11	QEHS	N
46	20.28	Tyne V	N
47	21.02	Tees V	J

COXLESS FOURS DIVISION

1	15.19	Stirling	E	Winner
2	15.29	NUBC	E	
3	15.31	DUBC	E	
4	15.43	Tyne RC	E	

WOMENS COXED FOURS

1	17.30	DUWBC	E	Winner
2	17.50	George Watsons	SB	Senior B
3	19.37	St. Aidans	N	Novice
4	19.53	Grey College	N	
5	20.28	Collingwood Coll.	SB	
6	23.17	QEHS	N	

WOMENS EIGHTS

1	15.45	DUWBC	E	Winner
2	16.42	Tyne/NUBC	E	
3	16.58	Glasgow UBC	SC	Senior C
4	17.23	St. Leonards	SC	
5	17.24	NUBC I	SC	
6	17.31	DARC	E	
7	17.42	QEHS	SC	
8	19.50	NUBC II	SC	

FLYMO SCULLING BOATS

The Division's Flymo sculling boats are up for grabs again. Candidates for the three available boats should apply to Chris Kenyon ASAP. The available boats are in design weights of 10½ st., 12 st., and 12½ st. Normally the boats are given to youngsters who are showing promise, and who are not in a position to have boats provided for them. Applicants should ask the Captain of their respective club to make the initial application on their behalf.

The results given below are those given by the organisers of the event, who are adamant that they are correct. Clearly, evidence was put before them to the contrary, but still no adjustments were made. I quote one of the many complaints put to the organisers on the day. St. Cuthberts Sen C four, crew no. 32, started behind Durham ARC SB4, crew no. 31, they then passed this crew and crossed the finish line ahead of DARC, yet we are given results that show the DARC crew to have beaten the St. Cuthberts crew by 17 seconds. We were told that the results must be correct because they use a dual system of timekeeping. I would suggest that it is not the system of timekeeping that is incorrect, so much as the people operating that system. An observer at the finish line stated there was total confusion. The judges could not identify the crews due to the poor quality of numbers provided. No judge seemed to be able to recognise crews by their club colours. There was also confusion as to whether crews had actually finished or were about to finish.

This is a new Head race, and one which could become very popular if held at the right time of year, but the standard of timekeeping must improve if the event is to grow. My strong suggestion would be for the organisers to contact other Regatta/Head Secretaries where good advice can be obtained as to how crew's times can be accurately recorded. Clearly, it is vitally important that an oarsman has confidence in the timekeeping and recording of results.

on the good side, it was indeed refreshing to be given a copy of the results immediately after the race. This makes life much easier when calculating the Page Pennant league results. I hope that this year I will be given event results by the Regatta Secretaries within days of an event being held. The response to last year's plea was only ONE set of results being provided.

POS.	TIME	STATUS	CLUB
1	7.46	SB4	Durham School
2	7.48	E4	Tyne RC (O'Neill)
3	7.51	E4	DARC
4	7.53	E4	Tyne RC (Ringer)
5	7.55	E4	Tyne RC (Wheeler)
6	7.57	E4	Tyne RC (Ball)
7	7.59	SB4	DARC
8	8.05	N4	Grey College
9	8.14	E2-	St. Leonards
10	8.16	SC4	St. Cuthberts
11	8.19	SC4	Durham School
12	8.29	N4	Hatfield I
13	8.35	VB4	Hexham BC
14	8.37	SC4	Grey College
15	8.38	E2-	Hexham BC
16	8.40	SC4	Univ. College
17	8.44	N4	Hatfield II
18	8.47	SC4	QEHS
19	8.53	SB4	Grey College
20	9.01	N4	Durham School
21	9.15	N4	Hatfield III
22	9.32	SC4	Hatfield
23	9.35	WJ16 4	St. Leonards
24	9.36	WSC4	St. Leonards
25	9.38	SC Sc	Hexham
26	9.41	SC Sc	Tyne RC (Routledge)

Continued over

DURHAM HEAD RESULTS (Continued)

<u>Position</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Staus</u>	<u>Crew/Sculler</u>
27=	9.49	VB4	Durham ARC
	9.49	WSC4	Durham ARC
	9.49	WJ16 4+	QEHS
30	9.52	SC Sc	Tyne (Chappell)
31=	10.00	SC2-	Hexham BC
	10.00	N Sc	Durham ARC
33	10.03	WSC4	QEHS
34	10.10	J16 Sc	South Hylton
35=	10.18	N4	St. Aidans
	10.18	SC Sc	St. Leonards
37	10.26	WSC Sc	Durham ARC
38	10.27	WN Sc	Durham ARC
39	10.28	WSC Sc	St. Leonards
40	10.41	N4	Durham ARC
41	11.05	WSC4	St. Aidans
42	11.27	WN Sc	St. Cuthberts Society
43	11.32	WJ16 4	QEHS
44	11.40	WSC 4	St. Mary's Coll
45	11.49	WSC 4	St. Aidans Coll
46	12.04	NSc	Tyne (Tay)
47	12.52	WJ16 4	QEHS

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BRITISH ROWING ALMANACK 1986

The British Rowing Almanack for 1986 will be available from the date of the Thames Head. Kevin Flannery has offered to get copies for anyone wants one, at cost price. Anyone wishing to take advantage of this offer, and therefore save on postage costs, should contact Kevin ASAP at the address below, or by telephoning him on Tyneside 454 5661 x 417.

SAVE ON TRANSPORT COSTS

If your club has any items of equipment, oars etc., that need to be transported from London in March or early April, Kevin may be able to help. Anyone who wants to follow up on this, should make contact with Kevin.

BOAT FOR SALE

12 st Sculling Boat - 4 months old. Made by Burgashell. Replacement boat (Prototype forces sale. £600:00.

Contact Kevin Flannery, 15 Beverley Terrace, Cullercoats, Tyne & Wear. Office telephone number - Tyneside 454 5661 x 417.

THE CREW THAT NEVER WAS

By Clive Hole

It was the allcomers regatta. No previous experience, 3 practice outings, or six hours. Coxes supplied by the club. One expert oarsman, and not having produced a crew for some time, I decided to have a go.

My original victims were the Choral Society, but, even having staged their Summer party at the Rowing Club, they were still coy, and it looked as though arms would have to be twisted. However, up comes this little mite. 6 ft 5 ins and 19 years old - tenor, and explains that he and two of his mates from the Northern Youth Orchestra would have a bash. "Just for a laugh and for the beer" (The intention of the event - nice to have some agreement)

Fred Greenwood's crew and six others were beaten, and the Tetley's tasted good only it didn't seem to go very far. Cavalier talk ensued after the sing-song - One of them could play a piano - and the outcome was a string of 7.00 am outings, including Kingsgate steps, which was intended to result in a win at Novices. Berwick was chosen as the battleground - part of a promise to support this club. This left 5 weeks for a novice win. Cutting it a bit fine. A substitute for the experienced oarsman had to be found. A week later, Jonathon was found, one of the 200 or so Juniors that have been processed by Geoff and Don over the past 5 years, but whose crew fell apart before they raced. The crew was reshuffled so that he could row at 2, and soon they were doing 2.20 for 500 metres. Some improvement was recorded, and the entry placed. Berwick were phoned on the Tuesday to find out who was in the draw. Sorry, it was cancelled. Too late now to get an entry to Stourport. Have to erode the holiday and do Bridgnorth a week later. Super draw. 9 crews from Leicester to Llandaff. The crew had Bridgnorth in the first round. It's a lot further than Northwich, I can tell you. We crossed the Ribble in spate and the Coach was heard to say that the Severn took 3 days to flood...

In the evening light, the organisers were peering into the Severn with long faces. "It doesn't peak until 10 tomorrow. We are going to have to cancel. The Rugby Club is open. More Cavalier talk. With the Secretary's help we would try to get an entry at Oxford. At 7 a.m. we phoned a message to the Oxford Secretary who was out. The novice draw was full, there were no scratchings. Heartless as we were, we deserted the turgid River Severn for the Avon, selecting Evesham RC as our hosts for the afternoon, saying on Radio Shropshire that we would be back for the Bridgnorth Regatta Disco. We meant to, but the problems started when we saw the Dragon Boat. There were connections. Bar talk. The crew rowed 15 miles that afternoon and were invited to a party at Evesham RC, where they were challenged to a race with the Evesham Novice Crew on Sunday morning, if we were unsuccessful in arranging a row at Abingdon Sprint.

Abingdon told the same story as Oxford - no scratchings, no places. So after the Disco and 'Camping' on the grass whilst the stars circled overhead - about once every 15 seconds, two rather bleary eyed crews turned out in the late morning for the best of 3 500 metre races. Durham did in fact win two straight races, and Evesham did own up to being favourites.

Evesham won at Bradford Autumn regatta, and there are still four nippy oarsmen who are still novices - but none of them are at colleges with Rowing Clubs.

P.S. Fred Greenwood's crew competed at the York Small Boats and Rutherford Heads, but he is leaving the area, so regretfully, we shall see less of him.

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Ed's note - Please suggest to Fred that I have the ideal method to keep in touch with rowing in these parts. Anyone got his address ?

BRITISH DRAGON BOAT ASSOCIATION

Latest news from Julian Ringer is that a grant has been awarded to the above named Association to have a Dragon Boat made on the Tyne. The grant has been awarded by Tyne & Wear County Council for £3500:00. The boat is to be made by British Shipbuilders at Hebburn, by the Leisure Employment Project run by the Manpower Services Commission.

Julian informs me that an invitation has been received to race in India at their first ever attempt at staging the Dragon Boat races. It looks as though a free flight is in the offing for competitors. Competitors will be selected from the B.D.B.R.A. and membership is open to all at £10 per annum. There are plans to race at Penang, Macau and Singapore during the year also. The Indian trip is planned for September.

SOUTH HYLTON ARC NEWS

Provided by Gordon Beattie

The proposed re-development scheme for the Riverside area is being delayed. Grants have been applied for to have a new boathouse constructed, but final decisions on this have not been made. Chris Kenyon has been helping to put forward the club's case. It looks certain that Hylton will get a new boathouse, the question is when. Cost of the new clubhouse is £80,000:00, and this is for a single storey building with no great refinements! The Sea Cadets building is up, and in use. The landing stages have still not been installed, but are due to start in April. Assistance with the finance is funded through the Compensation scheme as Hylton are losing the site where the present boathouse stands. Gordon tells me that Hylton will not be well represented at the Tyne Head as there are no appropriate classifications for the Hylton oarsmen. A recent trip to St. Leonards School was a great success, when an 'Ergometer Regatta' was held. 20 people attended and had a good work out.

ST. LEONARDS SCHOOL NEWS

Provided by Bill Parker

A junior event had been planned for the Rother Valley area in Sheffield. The French team are reputed to be finding it difficult to raise finance for their planned overseas ventures. Bill tells me that there is a big push on at the moment to encourage youngsters to scull rather than sweep-oar rowing. The idea is that youngsters develop a better sense of balance. To this end, Bill has converted a coxed four into a quad sculling boat. A new boat has just been made by Browns of Durham. It is a shell sculling boat, cost around £1000:00. £9,000:00 has recently been spent on new equipment by Leonards; a new eight has been built by Brown's, with design help from Bob Janousek. The eight is 6 foot shorter than normal, but has already used successfully by the Leonard's girls crew. Ten Dreiss-gacker oars have been purchased, along with four new pairs of sculls from the same manufacturer.

This year is the School's jubilee year, and special events are being planned, including a naming ceremony for the new boats. Leonards have just completed one of their best seasons, with 34 pots being won in all. At Tyne Sprint, the club won 4 events in one day.

No doubt the coming season will see Leonards as a strong force to be reckoned with in Junior rowing.

THE TYNE HEAD RACE

- A HISTORY

By Russell Kernahan

Prior to 1950, the only 'Head of the River' races were those held on the Thames at Putney, (the original event founded in 1926 by Steve Fairbairn) and at Chester, Reading, Shrewsbury and Nottingham. Thus it was a bold step when in 1950, at the suggestion of Maurice Legg *a member of King's College BC, the Northumberland County ARA decided to instigate a Head Race for fours on the River Tyne.

The first race was organised by the late Peter Thompson, who was the Secretary of the NCARA. The course chosen was Newburn to Scotswood, the Tyne ARC boathouse then being adjacent to Scotswood Bridge. The date selected (27th May) unfortunately clashed with Edinburgh University's annual visit to Durham; nevertheless, 15 entries were received. 5 in the fine division and 10 in the clinker division. The winners were Durham ARC, stroked by Peter Mills, who covered the course in 15 min. 12 secs., almost a minute ahead of their nearest rivals, King's College. Tyne ARC won the clinker division.

In spite of the disappointing entry, the race was judged a success. Mr. J.B. Crabbe who was President of the Association and who had acted as Starter, presented a Cup for the Fine Division, and a second cup was purchased for the Clinker division. In 1951, the race attracted 26 entries, and was rowed in the reverse direction, the winners being Durham University, in 16 min. 8 secs.

Throughout the fifties, the race remained very popular, always attracting between 20 and 30 entries. At first, pennants had been awarded to the winning crews, but in 1953 tankards were introduced. Initially, the starting interval between crews was 30 seconds, the Strater stopping each crew on the line before saying go. This practice continued well into the sixties, although with a shorter interval. Throughout the years, the race was always the opening event of the season, generally taking place in early May.

In 1959, a Scottish crew competed for the first time. This was Clydesdale ARC who created a new record by covering the Scotswood to Newburn course in 14 min 48 secs. This record still stands !

A new division for eights was introduced in 1961, the first winners being Durham Univ. The date was brought forward to Mid-March, and as a result, the race became more attractive to crews from outside the region. Nottingham Univ. won both the eights and fine fours, the race being rowed downstream for only the second time. In 1963, DUBC won again, Berwick ARC taking the fours division, while in 1964 Newcastle recorded their one and only victory. In that year, the Guinness Sprints were introduced, being held on the Sunday morning following the Head. The first winners were Leeds UBC, winners of the Fours Division the previous day, who also won the Grand and City Plate at Durham later in the season.

The Tyne Head was now firmly established and enjoyed good support throughout the sixties. DUBC won the Head three times in succession from 1965, setting up the downstream record of 12 min 26 secs in 1967. In that year, Clydesdale also recorded the fastest downstream time for a four 13 min 49 secs., and it is remarkable that both records should be held by the same club, and be of such long-standing.

* Maurice later joined Thames, and rowed in the England Eight and Coxed Four in the 1954 European Games in Vancouver.

Continued over

HISTORY OF THE TYNE HEAD (Continued)

In 1968, a new longer course from Scotswood to Ryton was introduced. Durham Univ. 1st crew did not enter, and the race was won for the first time by Tyne ARC. Tyne won again in 1970, but apart from these two years, DUBC enjoyed an unbroken reign as 'Head Crew' from 1965 to 1980.

In 1972, the long Ryton course was abandoned - it had never been very popular - and the race reverted to its original distance. A record entry of 49 was received in 1974, consisting of 6 eights and 43 fours, but in 1976 there were only 29 crews. In an effort to increase appeal, sculls and women's fours were introduced in 1978, but this resulted in only a marginal improvement. The first winners of these divisions were St. Hild & St. Bede Coll, and N.N. Totman (Tyne ARC).

Heavy overnight snow on the day of the 1979 race forced its postponement. The only crew to make it to Newburn was Edinburgh Univ. who could not be contacted by the Secretary, as they had already left on their journey. The race was re-arranged some 6 weeks later, on the 28th April, when 25 crews took part and thus prevented a major financial loss. Perhaps because of the reduced land water coming down the river, D.U.B.C. were able on that day to set the present eights record of 14 min 32.2 secs for the Scotswood to Newburn course. In 1980, pennants were re-introduced as prizes. In 1981, the DUBC, first eight was unable to compete, and City of Newcastle RC, a new club founded only the previous year took advantage of their absence to record their first of three successive wins, beating DUBC II by eight seconds. The traditional Fine and Clinker (Restricted) divisions were abandoned this year, and all prizes were offered on a status basis. The sprint eights, which had been losing support, were not held on the traditional Sunday morning after the Head, and have instead been combined with the Tyne Sprint regatta later in the season.

Another new course was tried in 1983. The attractions of the River above Ryton were well known to Tyne and NUBC oarsmen, and it was decided, after prolonged debate at the County AGM, to move the start up to Wylam and now a 3 mile downstream course to Stella could be utilised. This course proved to be very popular with both competitors and Officials, its only drawback being the difficulty experienced by some Coaches of getting from the Start to the finish by road quickly enough to check their crews times. Fifty-five entries were received in 1984, when the winners were once again DUBC, and in 1985 the total was 66, of which 60 actually took part. Stirling ABSC, who had been placed 1st and 2nd in the fours division in 1984, won the eights by 8 seconds from DUBC in this year.

In the early days, the race was timed by enthusiastic amateurs; in fact in 1958, the Association actually bought two stopwatches! However, no account of the Tyne Head would be complete without a tribute to Dr. Lewis Jamieson and Mr. Ken Hall, those two intrepid students of horology who have timed this race, and many others in the region, with unfailing accuracy and scrupulous disinterestedness, for over twenty years. Their skill and dedication, and the marvellous modern equipment they use, have made the organiser's jobs immeasurably easier. Thanks are also due to Tyne RC, who have hosted the event since its inception, and to Newcastle Univ. BC who have likewise opened their doors (and landings) to many visiting crews.

As the years have gone by, the organisation has improved in keeping with the times. Today's oarsmen demand a well-run event, with accurate timekeeping and early publication of the results. The Northumberland County ARA with the support of its member clubs

Continued.....

HISTORY OF THE TYNE HEAD (Continued)

will do all it can to ensure the continued growth and popularity of the Tyne Head, the sixth oldest Head Race in the Country. This year's race is again being held over the Wylam to Stella course. Let us hope that it is favoured with good weather and proves enjoyable to all.

THE TYNE HEAD RECORD OF WINNERS 1950 - 1985

YEAR	COURSE	EIGHTS	FINE FOURS	RESTRICTED FOURS	ENTRIES
1950	N to S	-	Durham ARC	Tyne ARC	15
1951	S to N	-	Durham Univ.	Kings Coll.	26
1952	S to N	-	Durham ARC	Talkin Tarn	21
1953	S to N	-	Durham ARC	Chester-le-St	22
1954	S to N	-	Durham ARC	Blyth RC	28
1955	S to N	-	DUBC	Blyth RC	26
1956	S to N	-	DUBC	Durham ARC	27
1957	S to N	-	Durham ARC	Tynemouth RC	20
1958	S to N	-	Durham ARC	Old Novos BC	23
1959	S to N	-	Clydesdale ARC	Cambois	25
1960	S to N	-	Durham ARC	Talkin Tarn	28
1961	S to N	DUBC	Durham ARC	Cambois	21
1962	N to S	Nottingham UBC	Nottingham UBC	Tyne ARC	24
1963	N to S	DUBC	Berwick ARC	George Watsons	30
1964	S to N	Newcastle UBC	Leeds UBC	George Watsons	35
1965	N to S	DUBC	Aberdeen UBC	Leeds UBC	37
1966	N to S	DUBC	Talkin Tarn	Aberdeen UBC	37
1967	N to S	DUBC	Clydesdale ARC	Durham ARC	31
1968	S to R	Tyne ARC	Edinburgh UBC	George Watsons	31
1969	R to S	DUBC	Durham ARC	Aberdeen Acad.	25
1970	S to R	Tyne ARC	Leeds UBC	Leeds UBC	23
1971	S to R	DUBC	Grey College	Bradford ARC	25
1972	R to S	DUBC	Bradford ARC	Edinburgh UBC	40
1973	N to S	DUBC	Clydesdale ARC	Edinburgh UBC	40
1974	S to N	DUBC	Clydesdale ARC	St Johns Coll.	49
1975	S to N	DUBC	Tyne ARC	Tyne ARC	43
1976	S to N	DUBC	Tyne ARC	Durham ARC	29
1977	S to N	DUBC	Durham ARC	St. Leonards	30
1978	S to N	DUBC	(M) Manchester UBC	Durham ARC	30
			(W) Hild/Bede		
1979	S to N	DUBC	(M) DUBC	Tees RC	25
			(W) No entries		
1980	S to N	DUBC	(M) Durham ARC	Hexham BC	41
			(W) Tyne ARC		
1981	S to N	Newcastle	(M) Durham School	-	47
			(W) Hexham BC		
1982	S to N	Newcastle	(M) Tees RC	-	39
			(W) Queen Elizabeth HS		
1983	W to St	Newcastle	(M) RGS	-	41
			(W) Queen Elizabeth HS		
1984	W to St	DUBC	(M) Stirling ABSC	-	55
			(W) Clydesdale ARC		
1985	W to St	Stirling	(M) NUBC	-	66
			(W) Clydesdale/Glasgow		

Abbreviations:

S
R
W

Scotswood
Ryton
Wylam

N Newburn
St Stella

Continued

TYNE HEAD RACE HISTORY

SCULLS DIVISION WINNERS

Year	Sculler	Club
1978	N.N. Totman	Tyne ARC
1979	F. Thompson	Berwick ARC
1980	D.J. Carter	Tees RC
1981	F. Thompson	Berwick ARC
1982	P. Johnston	Tees RC
1983	A. Wood	Cambois ARC
1984	I. Sommerside	Clydesdale ARC
1985	D. Nolan	Clydesdale

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JUNIOR COACHING DAY

By Bill Parker

over 50 Juniors and their Coaches from 7 clubs took advantage of the 'Improver Day' course at Durham on Sunday November 3rd. By contrast to last year's event, the weather was excellent for the video session on the river during the morning. The St. Leonards girls senior crew under the direction of Mrs. Helen Monroe prepared and served lunch at the school proving that carswomen can also find a place in the home. However, the boys were also very adept at the kitchen sink by completing the washing up in record time - the National Coach was very impressed.

Whilst the food was settling, Doug Parnham gave an illustrated talk on the latest trends in the British rowing technique. A video of the successful Olympic crews underlined the method of propelling a racing boat at speed - it looks ever so easy !

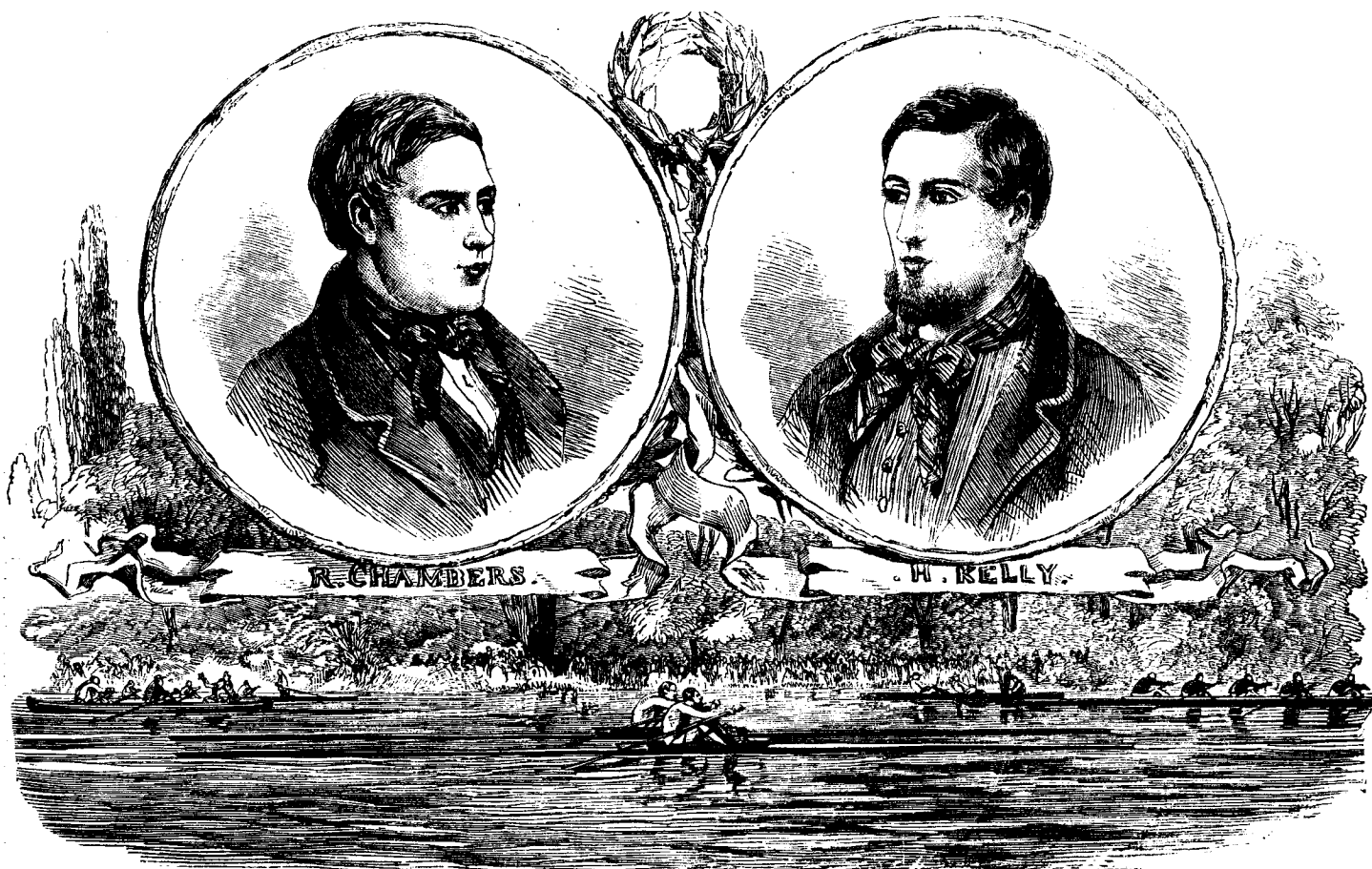
Later in the afternoon, video analysis of the boy's water work took place while the girls were given the outline of a land training programme with a taste of gym and weight training. The two groups changed timetables and finally an ergo regatta was organised. It's a pity that the wind power generated by the eight machines could not have been harnessed in some way. The Coaches of the crews also had the opportunity to exert themselves and I am pleased to report that the National Coach did not have a runaway success. Apparently, the re-row is to take place early in the new year on the Thames.

It is a credit to the boys and girls and their Coaches to read Doug's report on the improved quality as well as the enthusiasm of the Juniors from Div. 1. Let's hope that the new (?) method makes people think, and perhaps if it is as good as they say, our crews will be harder to beat.

Ergo results:

Boys winner:	Royal Grammar School
girl's winner:	St. Leonards School
Winning cox:	Royal Grammar School.

(Ed's note - I saw the results of this ergo test, Roger, together with competitor's weights. Either your weight was incorrect or you desperately need to diet. You weren't that weight when we rowed together..... It was a great pot we won in Edinburgh though, wasn't it ?)



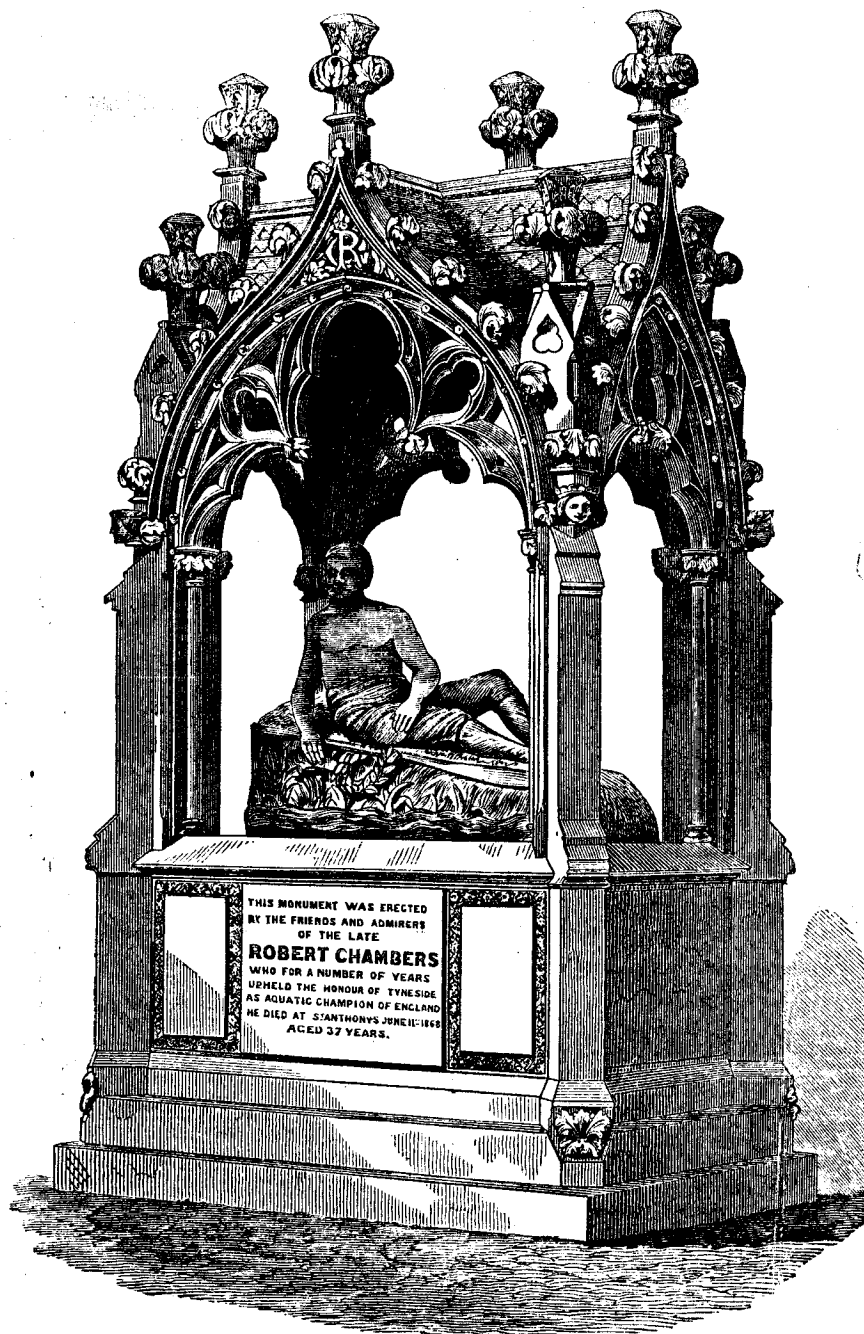
STRUGGLE FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE THAMES BETWEEN HENRY KELLY, OF FULHAM, AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, OF NEWCASTLE.

THE RACE FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE THAMES

Seldom has a race created more interest or excitement than that of Thursday week between Robert Chambers, the champion of the Tyne, and Henry Kelly, the champion of the Thames. The contest was for £400 and the championship, it may be said, of both rivers. Kelly first came into notice as a sculler in 1852 by winning the Apprentices' Race at the Thames Regatta; two years afterwards he carried off the Picked Scullers' Prize at the same meeting, and renewed his conquest the following year, but was disqualified, owing to a foul, defeating on each occasion well-known and well-tried men. After some other races he acquired the proud distinction of "Champion of the Thames" in May 1857, by beating James Messenger, the then possessor of it, from which time he has not been engaged in a sculler's match until Thursday week. Robert Chambers, of Newcastle, first distinguished himself as a sculler in 1853 in a contest with Shaftoe, a famous man of the north; and in 1856, to the surprise of all the Londoners, carried off the Scullers' Prize at the Thames Regatta. In 1857 he again won the same prize, has been repeatedly successful at provincial aquatic meetings, and has, in four-oared crews, won, we believe, no less than four races for the champion prize of that class in London. The present race originated in a recent gallant contest on the Tyne, wherein Chambers defeated White, of Bermondsey, who was considered nearly as good as Kelly; that victory was considered by Chambers' friends but as the stepping-stone to the championship, and they forthwith backed him for £200 some months ago, during which interval both men have been in active training.

The course was from Putney to Mortlake, and thousands of persons, equestrian and pedestrian, lined the shores and towing-path; there were fourteen steam-boats engaged to accompany the race, some of which were so crowded that they toppled under their burden upon deck; and there were hundreds of small boats' crews, unmindful of the peril in which they were placed by the moving mass of steamers. The umpires were Harry Clasper for Chambers, and Stephen Salter for Kelly; Mr E Searle being referee. The start did not take place until Kelly had been at the station above a quarter of an hour, and when Chambers appeared there was a delay on the part of the other man. Both looked very confident. Chambers is the same age as his opponent (twenty-eight), is 5' 9½" in height and weighs 11st.; he rowed without a guernsey. Kelly is 5' 8½" high, and weighed half a stone less than his opponent. The men were not long in preparation, nor did they make any false start. Betting at that moment was 6 to 4 on Kelly, although more or less odds had been previously given by those anxious to get money on the event.

They started at a quarter-past four at the same instant, and as level as men could be, Chambers with the inside station, on the Middlesex shore. They rowed scull and scull to opposite the Star and Garter, where they began to decrease the distance at which they had started apart, and, Chambers having to pull his left hand strongly to escape a barge a little in his way, they became much closer abeam, and it was feared that there would be a foul. Having passed the barge, Chambers used his right hand too strongly, and hugged the Middlesex shore very closely, and, Kelly keeping close to his man, they were so near each other that the blades of their sculls intersected. Chambers then began to draw a slight lead, and in the next minute it was marked and decisive, for, before they reached Craven, Chambers had drawn himself clear, and presently took his opponent's water. Six to one was freely offered upon Chambers at this point of the race, and no takers. At every stroke, Chambers went further away from his man. He was four lengths ahead at Hammersmith-bridge, and easing occasionally through the heavy water in Carney Reach, ultimately won by twenty lengths, doing the distance, with a bad tide, in twenty-five minutes twenty-five seconds. Large sums of money changed owners upon the event.



MONUMENT TO THE LATE ROBERT CHAMBERS, THE CHAMPION WATERMAN,
AT NEWCASTLE.

THE TYNESIDE CHAMPION WATERMAN

A monument has been erected over the tomb of the late Robert Chambers, the renowned Tyneside waterman, who held the championship of England for aquatic skill and prowess. It stands in the Walker churchyard at Newcastle where the ceremony of unveiling the monument was performed, some weeks ago, in the presence of many spectators, after a suitable address by the Rev R. Thompson, incumbent of the church in that suburb. The monument is well placed, on a slightly-elevated piece of ground. It is composed entirely of Prudham stone of the best quality; it is 18 ft. high, 9ft. long, 6ft. wide at the base and consists of three divisions. The first part is a pedestal, with buttresses on the angles, 6ft. 6in. from the ground, on which is placed a statue of Chambers. Reclining from each angle of the pedestal are four jambs, with columns, and capitals, foliated, 4 ft. from the top of the pedestal, and on which rests the canopy covering the statue. The canopy is constructed in five parts - viz., four springers springing from each column forming four arches, and surmounted with a large block forming the four keystones, with roof and gablets, enriched with spandrels, with monogram of "R.C." and some foliage; the gablets ornamented with crockets and finials, and the roof of the monument is carved with ornamental slates to give variety of effect. It required the weight of 36 tons of stone to execute the whole design.

CLIVE HOLE'S POSER (Perhaps I should have re-phrased that !)

You remember Clive Hole asked a question or two in the last issue over what should be the procedure when three crews are rowing, and two of them dead-heat on the line. Obviously, something happened at a regatta late last year, and questions were being asked as to whether the right decisions were made by the Umpires. (Stout fellows - I'm one too!)

Our local expert on such matters, Jim Nisbet, is delighted to see so much interest being shown in the rules and regulations lately, and has himself promised to provide a real humdinger poser for the next issue. It is a good thing that the oarsmen themselves are aware as to why certain decisions are made when an incident occurs. Umpires too, will benefit from real-life and hypothetical cases being openly debated.

In respect of Clive's poser, Jim says:

- 1) The judge's responsibility is to decide the order in which crews or scullers pass the finish line, and to state if two crews finished together. i.e. A dead-heat.
- 2) When the judge reports a dead-heat, the Umpire in charge of the race will order a re-row if the race has been in order, and no protest has been lodged. The regatta committee will then decide if the re-row will take place immediately or at a specified time.
- 3) The purpose of the re-row is to determine which of the 2 crews should be awarded the race. It is not possible to have them race again under 'exactly the same conditions', nor is there any need to do so. The third crew has been eliminated from the event.
- 4) The use of multilane racing and events with repechage, in which losing crews can have another crack at reaching the final, may have led to some misunderstanding. However, it should be noted that, whether the event is with or without repechage, whether 2 lane or multilane, after a dead heat, only the two competitors who dead-heated will re-row. This because the point that must be established is the relative abilities of these 2 competitors.

Notes for judges:

In multilane events with repechage, judges should do their best to avoid giving decisions of dead-heats in any race between those finishing 2nd and 3rd, 3rd and 4th, etc. They may determine the relative finishing positions by the smallest distance that can be judged.

Comment:

I like Clive's comment re. Bar talk - 'Well at least we got a 2nd race for our money' - Good reasons for events with repechage !

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CAMBOIS ARC

Cambois ARC are this year celebrating their 75th anniversary. Events planned are a special regatta on the Wansbeck, and a Dinner Dance at Eshby Hall in September. Look out for special 75th Anniversary club pullovers !

TYNE RC

Tyne RC are known to be guinea pigs for a set of oars. The oars are a new venture for Bill Burgass of Burgashell in Cambridge. I remember he told me about 18 months ago he was thinking of going into production. Kevin Flannery is also reported to be using new sculls by Burgashell. Both oars and sculls are made from GRP with wooden handles.

PAGE PENNANT - CURRENT STANDINGS

(Up to and including the Rutherford Head race)

1.	TYNE RC	435 points
2.	TEES RC	223
3.	NEWCASTLE UNIV	212
4.	BERWICK ARC	166
5.	HATFIELD COLLEGE	121
6.	DURHAM UNIV W.B.C.	120
7.	DURHAM ARC	104
8.	CAMBOIS ARC	96
9.	DURHAM UNIV B.C.	85
10.	GREY COLLEGE	50
11.	ST. AIDANS COLLEGE	50
12.	TALKIN TARN	50
13.	ST. HILD & ST. BEDE COLL	48
14.	SOUTH HYLTON	46
15.	ST. LEONARDS	46
16.	ST. CUTHBERTS SOCIETY	45
17.	QUEEN ELIZ. HIGH SCHOOL	35
18.	ROYAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL	35
19.	VAN MILDERT COLLEGE	33
20.	COLLINGWOOD COLLEGE	25
21.	HEXHAM B.C.	22
22.	TYNEMOUTH RC	5
23.	UNIVERSITY COLLEGE	5
24.	ST. CHADS COLLEGE	5
25.	DURHAM SCHOOL	2

All other clubs are still to score.

This table compiled by Kevin Flannery. Take your disputes to him, not me !

NATIONAL COACHING FOUNDATION

Brian Dalkin has told me about a series of coaching seminars being organised shortly. I believe they are the same seminars that Clive Hole reported on in an earlier edition of the news. Seminars to be held, and subjects to be covered are:

April 16th & 23rd	Structure of the body
April 30th/May 7th	Prevention & Rehabilitation of injury.
May 14th & 21st	Developing endurance.
June 4th & 11th	Nutrition & Sports performance.
June 18th & 25th	Development of strength & speed.
Sept. 17th & 24th	Introduction to Sports Mechanics.
October 1st & 8th	Use of video in coaching
October 15th & 29th	How skills are learned.
November 2nd	Factors affecting performance.
November 12th & 19th	Mental preparation for Competition.
November 26th/Dec 3rd	How to plan your programme.
May 11th	Effective coaching.

All these courses are held in Newcastle, and the attendance fee is £5:00. More details can be provided by contacting Brian Dalkin on tyneside 285 1774 or 489 9932.

EXCERPTS FROM NORTH EAST ROWING NEWS ISSUE 5 - JANUARY 1974

Ebchester regatta was held on 6th Oct. 1973 on the River Merwent for sculls and pairs. In a closely fought coxed pairs final, John Wishart & John Hedley of Bede Coll. were narrowly beaten by Kenyon and Potts of DARC. Prizes were presented by Mrs F. Bell.

At the Tyne Eights event, DARC arrived with 7 out of 8 riggers. It rained all day. Hatfield College won the event beating DARC and Cambois.

Durham County ARA won the County Eights Championship, beating Northumberland who were represented by Blyth Rowing Club. The Durham crew consisted of Balfour, Jones, (DARC, Lund (setset Oarsmen), Smythe (S. Hylton) Wanless, McQuattie, Snowden and Moir (All DARC).

First five crews home in the Rutherford Head were Hatfield, Grey, Thames Tradesmen, DARC & NUBC

At the ARA Division 1 AGM, Commander D.A. Bickmore was succeeded by Ross Graham as Chairman. Vice Chairman was Eric Halliday, Hon Sec/Treas was Jim Nisbet and C. Kenyon was elected Press Officer.

The regatta levy was increased from 10p to 20p, a 100% increase !
The club registration fee per oarsman was increased from 40p to 55p.

St. Leonards have a new shell four which was christened 'Obelisk' after the well known landmark near the school.

Ebchester ARC are to hold an extraordinary meeting to discuss the future of the club. Uncertainty is due to lack of members.

Tynemouth RC had an open day with an unsuccessful treasure hunt ! The treasure is still to be found !

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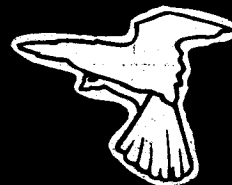
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