

# FORWARD

## NEWSLETTER

Edition 6: Lent and Easter 2020

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Welcome to Edition 6 of Forward, Churchill College Boat Club's termly newsletter. The aim of this newsletter is to keep you up to date with race reports and Boat Club events, as well as providing some stories of rowing interest from students and alumni.



# Lent and Easter Terms 2020 in Review



## W3 making the most of some good Lent term weather conditions for an outing

It seems a bit strange to be writing now after a term in which very little has happened for the boat club. It's even more frustrating given that Lent 2020 was a pretty successful term for Churchill for a number of reasons. Firstly, following on from a strong novice campaign in Michaelmas, we started Lent term with the largest squad we've had for a while, with both an M4 and more impressively a W3. It's also only been two years since Churchill could barely scrape together a W1, so even having a W3 is certainly something to celebrate. Secondly, I don't think it's unreasonable to say that all of our crews were successful in their own right during Lent term.

Our W3 had a quiet, but by no means unproductive Lent term. With a rotating crew of rowers, supported by several of our seniors, they were able to pull a crew together for the getting on race (with the help of Newnham). Despite some fairly major equipment malfunctions (involving the loss of a shoe sized chunk of the bow, complete with bow ball), the crew coped admirably with the wavy conditions and laid down a respectable time. This crew were also hoping to race again in one of the end term races, but unfortunately lecture conflicts and poor weather put a stop to these plans.

The W2 from Lent term this year looked set to be one of the strongest (in terms of erg scores) and the most committed W2 Churchill has seen in a while. With a great mix of previous bumps experience and some enthusiastic novices, there was a great atmosphere in this crew this term (and it certainly made for a lot of fun to coach). Some strong technical improvements in the first half of term saw them through to their first race at Newnham Head and from then until bumps it was just a case of trying to unleash the power. Unfortunately, a number of minor issues on the day of the getting on race led to a race that didn't quite match the normal standard of the boat and frustratingly, the crew narrowly missed out on qualifying for bumps by only 2

seconds. The crew were thankfully given another chance at the bumps experience through competing in the inaugural 'Combined boathouse bumps' against Kings W2 and Selwyn W2 (who had also both failed to get on) and managed to completely annihilate their competition. I'm sure this crew would have gone on to do great things in May Bumps given the chance and I sincerely hope that all of the crew that are here next year keep going!



Left: W2 after racing Newnham Head, Right: M4 racing in Lent Bumps

M4 were probably the worst hit crew by the stormy conditions during Lent term, having to rearrange several outings around the yellow/red flags that were abundant. Yet despite this, they persevered admirably with outings to compete in and qualify in the getting on race as the first Churchill M4 to do so since 2013. Despite lacking experience this term (with only one member of their crew having rowed before this year), they more than made up for it in power and achieved what M3 last year couldn't by moving up out of the footship position with two bumps. Unfortunately, their last start in windy conditions saw a collision with the bank which the crew didn't quite manage to recover from in time; however, this crew should certainly be proud of what they have achieved this year and I have been incredibly impressed by their dedication to rowing.

M3 carried on their reputation this term of being a small but technical crew, bolstered by experience with over half the crew having rowed a set of bumps before. M3 tackled the most races this Lent term starting off with a promising result at Newnham Head as the 4th fastest M3 and 11th fastest Lents lower division crew. More importantly they were also the third fastest crew which had to compete in the getting on race. From there it was onto Pembroke Regatta, and they were the only Churchill crew to battle the conditions before the wind made anything more than surviving the row home possible. M3 won their first round against Pembroke by 2 lengths (who had narrowly beaten them at Newnham), but were knocked out in their second round by half a length to FAT M3 (who were 16s faster at Newnham Head). This experience in the wind set them up well for the getting on race (into a 40mph head wind) and then onto bumps. The first three days saw some fairly rapid bumps, but unfortunately day 4 was not to be. The crew rowed over the course on station with the crew ahead (who had gone up 2), battling some impressive winds and waves in the process.

This Lent term's M2 was probably the most experienced M2 Churchill has seen in recent years (with only one novice in the boat) and this experience combined with a dedicated duo of coaches helped set them up for a successful term. M2 started the term off with Newnham Head in which they placed as the 4th fastest M2 crew and 3rd fastest in the Lents lower boats division. After this (following the cancellation of Pembroke Regatta for their division) it was onto Bumps, starting off 10th in the M3 division. However, it was far from a straightforward Bumps campaign. Day 1 saw them gain a bump on FaT M3 in the Gut just one stroke before the division was stopped due to poor clearing on Grassy corner. The following day saw them having to compete in a re-row for the bump after the division was once again stopped due to poor clearing. Day 3 was slightly easier with the crew deciding to go for the overtake bump on Ditton corner after Trinity Hall M2 took a wide corner. Unfortunately blades were agonisingly close, as in a brilliant race which saw M2 having to hold it up to get round the 2 crews ahead which had bumped, they wound in Robinson M2 all the way to top finish missing out on the over bump by less than a canvas. As most of this crew will be staying at Churchill in the next academic year, I think this Lent's results bode well for the future of the men's side of the boat club.



Left: M3 rowing home after a successful bump, Right: M2 bumping up on Clare Hall M1

M1 started Lent term aware of the challenging situation awaiting them in Lent bumps. A competitive crew selection at the beginning of term combined with an intense training schedule set them up well for their first race of term, the Head of the Nene. M1 battled against a very strong headwind along the 2.5km course to win their division and some well-deserved pots. From here, M1 focused their attention on Bumps in which they started at the head of the M2 division, chased by Maggie M2 and sandwich boat to the M1 division. It was an unenviable position to be in, but M1 held their nerve and Maggie M2 away along the whole course (with both crews edging in and out of station, as moves and counter moves were made) to row again in the M1 division. Unfortunately, bumps ahead of them and the fatigue of an intense race in the M2 division prevented them from gaining beyond a whistle in the M1 division throughout the week, and they finished the week with no bumps, but 8 hard row overs instead. M1 should be incredibly proud of what they have achieved in this set of bumps, and it is a testament to their fitness that they held off their competition despite having to row twice



M1 leading the M2 division of Lent Bumps

the distance through the week. However, bumps did not signal the end of M1's racing term, and they settled the battle against Maggie by winning a side by side race on the reach against a Maggie M1/M2 composite crew in the last week of term.

W1 had a similarly challenging selection process with a few technical seniors and the raw power of some Fairbairn winning novices all competing for a seat. W1's first race of the term was at Newnham Head, with the crew placing a respectable 5th fastest W1 crew and more importantly 3rd fastest in the W1 division of Lent bumps. However, more importantly this was an invaluable experience in how to race ahead of bumps. W1 started off their campaign in position 11 and the first three days were fairly straight forward. With little pressure from behind, they wound in the crew ahead gradually, bumping out around Ditton each day. On the last day the nerves and the stormy conditions combined for a shaky start, but the crew managed to find their rhythm and finish off the week with a bump on Clare W1 to get blades! It's certainly true that good crews go up and lucky crews get blades, but to move up to position 7 in the first division is a testament to both the hard work put in this term by the crew and strength of the women's side over the last few years.

I'm sure that anybody who was there would agree with me that the success of the bumps campaign this year made for a very lively Lent BCD. It was fantastic to see the celebration of a term's hard work and the sense of community in the boat club. It was also great to see CCBC represented off the Cam as well. We had two trialists this year, with James Crossley racing in the 3 seat of the Men's lightweight boat (which unfortunately lost to OULRC on the tideway) and Angela Harper selected to cox Blondie (although this was cancelled).

After this point, the weather and a certain pandemic started to derail our plans for the rest of the year, with the cancellation of WeHorr, Horr and then training camp. This doesn't mean that nothing has been happening this May term though, just more quietly than usual. There have been several individual crew and combined online socials, and the women's side have been keeping the team exercise going with twice weekly video call circuits.



With May bumps cancelled, several alternative Bumps formats were floated around the Cambridge rowing community until the final format, running bumps, stuck. Three teams of 9 Churchill rowers and coxes 'volunteered' to take part by running 800m a day for four days. It was great to see the enthusiasm amongst the runners, all of whom ran several PBs through the course of the week. W1 showed that while they were great at rowing, this didn't transfer naturally to running, finishing the week on -3 bumped by crews that they had bumped on the river just a term before. M2 (with 8/9 of the Lent crew) had a more successful week, finishing up two with bumps on Christ's M2 and Clare M2. M3 gained 'Running Blades' with some very rapid times, bumping Pembroke M3, Selwyn M2, Christ's M2 and Clare M2.

As I write this now (having handed over to Ross as the new Overall Captain), I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to several people. As always, thanks must go to our dedicated team of alumni and friends of the club, who have battled through the wind alongside us on the towpath imparting their coaching wisdom (we certainly wouldn't have done so well this year as a club without you). Most notably to Mike Edge, who has been incredibly helpful in organising our training camp which was unfortunately not to be. To Roly, for sticking our boats back together, often at short notice and with a whole lot of tape. To my committee, who have rolled with whatever has been chucked at them this year, be it storm, illness or death by a thousand spreadsheets. And finally (and most importantly), just a general thank you to everyone reading this for making it a great community to be part of!

Forwards!

Katie Kirk

Overall Captain 2019-2020

# Results



M3 racing Newnham Head

## Head of the Nene:

M1 won their division over the 2.5km course

## Newnham Head:

W1: 5th fastest W1 crew and 3rd fastest in the W1 division of Lent bumps

M2: 4th fastest M2 crew and 3rd fastest in the Lents lower boats division

W2: 11th fastest W2 and Lents lower boats division

M3: 4th fastest M3 and 11th fastest Lents lower division

## Pembroke Regatta:

M3 were the only crew to race before storm Dennis cancelled later divisions

First round: Won by scratch.

Quarter final: Beat Pembroke by 2 lengths!

Semi Final: Knocked out by First and Third by half a length. The race was neck-a-neck for nearly the entire course!

## Bumps:

Both W2 and W3 competed in the getting on race, but unfortunately missed out on qualifying for bumps (W2 only by a couple of seconds).

W1: Bumped Christ's, Trinity Hall, First and Third, and Clare to achieve blades and finish 7<sup>th</sup> on the river!

M1: Rowed over eight times, holding their position as sandwich boat

M2: Bumped First and Third M3, Clare Hall M1 and Trinity Hall M2, and rowed over on day four to finish 7<sup>th</sup> in the third division

M3: Bumped Magdalene M3, Darwin M2 and Selwyn M2 and rowed over on day four to finish 5<sup>th</sup> in the fourth division

M4: Bumped Queen's M4 and Homerton M2, and were revenge-bumped by Homerton M2 to finish 11<sup>th</sup> in the fourth division

W1	😊	😊	😊	😊
M1	😏	😏	😏	😏
M2	😊	😊	😊	😏
M3	😊	😊	😊	😏
M4	😏	😊	😊	😞



Left: Churchill's Lent Bumps results. Right: M2 celebrate a successful day of bumping.

# Prizes

## The Pinchin Prize

The Pinchin Prize is awarded to the Committee member who has gone above and beyond their role to give the most to the boat club. This prize is voted on by the entire boat club. It was awarded this year to Katie Kirk, the outgoing Overall Captain.

## The Coxing Prize

The Coxing Prize for Michaelmas term was awarded to Hei Li, who coxed W2 that term as a novice and went on to cox M1 in Lent. The Coxing Prize for Lent term was awarded to Kerry Legg, who coxed M4 that term after novice-coxing NM2 in Michaelmas. Both of them made outstanding progress over the two terms, from complete beginners to safe and skilled coxswains, and are assets to their respective crews and to the boat club as a whole.

## The Cameron-Lloyd Trophy

The Cameron-Lloyd Trophy usually goes to the CCBC crew with the best May Bumps performance. With May Bumps not having gone ahead, it has been awarded instead to W1 following their amazing Lent Bumps campaign, achieving blades and climbing to 7<sup>th</sup> on the river.



W1 racing past the Plough on the final day of Lent Bumps.

# Alumni

## Head of the Nene

Following news of M1's victory at Head of the Nene this year, Professor Marcel Jaspars got in touch. It appears that Churchill men have a tradition of victory there amidst terrible weather:

*I remember winning this race in 1987. As far as I remember it was snowing heavily and we had to chisel the Bowman of his seat as he was covered in about 6 inches of snow. Luckily it was not too windy and his selflessness protected the rest of us from the snow.*

## Long Rows

Dr Roderick Galbraith recalls his rowing adventures before joining Churchill College Boat Club:

*I stroked the First eight in 1974/5. I was already an oarsman from Greenock on the Firth of Clyde and rowed both sea and racing boats.*

*It is 51 years since the Royal West of Scotland Boat Club started their 'LONG ROWS'. The first was from Greenock to Coll and back. I was on the second that was from Greenock to Portrush in Ireland then to Iona and back via the Crinan canal. My second was from Greenock via the Crinan canal and through the Corryvreckan Maelstrom and back.*

For their voyage to Portrush, he was part of a crew of six, rowing a four-oared seaworthy boat presented to their club on the proviso that it be used for a long distance trip at least once a year. They set off on 4<sup>th</sup> July 1969. In total, they rowed for 90 hours, covering a hugely impressive distance of approximately 350 miles. On top of the distance alone, there were further challenges to face, including following a compass bearing through thick fog, a delay of two days in Portrush as they waited out gale force winds, and an unplanned mooring at Islay to avoid waves of 30 to 40 feet high due to a tide race.



Pictured in the newspaper: the crew are welcomed home by their club president on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1969

## Contact us:

- Website: [www.churchillboatclub.org.uk](http://www.churchillboatclub.org.uk)
- Facebook: @churchillcollegeboatclub, [www.facebook.com/churchillcollegeboatclub](http://www.facebook.com/churchillcollegeboatclub)
- Twitter: @CHU\_BC
- Instagram: @churchill.boatclub
- General Boat Club information:  
Ross Tooley, Overall Captain: [rjt80@cam.ac.uk](mailto:rjt80@cam.ac.uk)
- About the Newsletter:  
Katie Kirk, Website and Communications Officer: [kjk40@cam.ac.uk](mailto:kjk40@cam.ac.uk)

