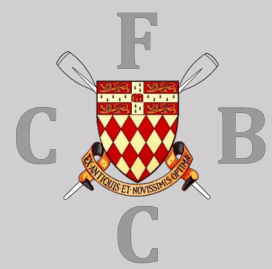


FITZWILLIAM COLLEGE BOAT CLUB



Lent & Easter 2020 Newsletter



**Fitzwilliam College Boat Club, University of Cambridge
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The Men's Side

Men's Captains: André Neto-Bradley, Philip Owen

Coxes: Adam Morland (M1), Leila Fahmy (M2), Vicky Chown (M3)

Coaches: Antony Moule, Alex Markham, Freddie Scott, Joao Moraes, Mike Parrot and Andrew Salkeld

It is an unusual time to say the least, and for FCBC's men's squad the rowing season has been cut unexpectedly short after a term plagued by yellow and red flags. Due to inclement weather several races were cancelled in Lents, including Bedford Head and Pembroke Regatta which our first two Vllls were entered for. To add to the poor weather cancellations, the Head of the River Races were cancelled due to the current pandemic. Nonetheless Lent term was not without its highlights as it saw us welcome a newly trained cohort of novices to our Senior squad and continue our climb up the Lent Bumps table.

Training Camp – Norwich

The Lents 2020 campaign started early in January with our pre-term training camp held over three days in Norwich. Over 40 members of FCBC participated over the three days and it was a chance to welcome many of our novices from Michaelmas. We promoted three novices to our 1st Vlll and five to our 2nd Vlll, with a 3rd Vlll with more of our promoted novices.



The challenge of upskilling our newcomers would have been a problem if not for our excellent coaching team with volunteers Alex Markham, Freddie Scott, Joao Moraes, Mike Parrot, and Andrew Salkeld working alongside our Boatman to put our squad through its paces.

Newnham Head

With Bedford Head cancelled at short notice our 1st and 3rd Vllls, managed to get a late entry in for Newnham Head to test the progress made in the first two weeks of term. The 1.9km upstream course proved a worthy test.

With a substitute in the five seat, M1 clocked a time of 7:07, right in the mix with many of the crews we'd be facing in Bumps, coming in 10th place and narrowly besting Emmanuel and Peterhouse, while 10 seconds off the pace set by Queens'.

Our M3 - with a few familiar faces from M2 in the 5 and 6 seats – showed some gutsy rowing and for many this was their first experience of racing on the Bumps course. A decent first race for the term placing 25th amongst lower boats, although importantly competitive with some other crews who they would be racing in the Getting-On-Race. Their time of 8:57 was within 2 sec of Fitz's own W1.



Getting-on-Race

Our 3rd Vlll was faced with the challenge of qualifying for a spot in Lent Bumps through the Getting-on Race. With a term of red and yellow flags having hampered training, and a last-minute signing, the omens were not good. Despite this on the day our M3 was off to a snappy start as they kept pace with Maggie and Jesus M3 into First Post corner, their cox Vicky steering a tight line, that last minute substitution in the 7-seat seemed to be paying dividends. However, it was not to be as their pace flagged somewhat along the long reach, several members of the crew surprised at just how long 2km really is and regretting having skipped their steady state land training.

Lent Bumps

After a term on inclement weather, the week of Lent Bumps brought with it tolerable conditions and 1st and 2nd Vllls were keen to see some action.

Our 2nd Vlll started the week at station 11 in Division 3, looking to build upon the previous year's climb of three places. On day 1 a flashy Churchill M2 quickly bumped out in front,

before the dreaded siren brought the division to a standstill with no re-row, compliments of Robinson M2. The same Robinson M2 cox would once again fail to understand the meaning of 'hold it up' the following day just as our M2 had 3 whistles on First and Third's M3 resulting in a painful re-row. Finally on day three M2's patience was rewarded as they reeled in First and Third bumping them just past the Plough. The final day offered a chance for revenge on Clare Hall M1 for last Mays, and with a valiant start in the strong stream the game was afoot, but as an M1 Clare Hall reaped the rewards of being able to train under yellow flags and stayed sharp into the headwind to hold us off. A solid week for M2 who finished this Lents up one at 10th in Division 3, the highest finish position for our M2 in Lents for 12 years.



Our 1st VIII picked up where last year's campaign left off, having just broken back into division 1. However, a difficult week was in store with our inexperienced crew being chased by a Churchill M1 with several trialists and chasing a Queens' M1 with former lightweights. Day one was always going to be the toughest with Churchill aiming to capitalise on their rest day as sandwich boat to bump us. Yet they huffed, and they puffed, and they instagrammed away and yet Fitz pulled away inch by inch with Churchill never getting within station after First Post corner.



Queens' M1 ahead had bumped Emmanuel M1 and so day two offered a chance to avenge the duel in the wind from last year when M1 had failed to advance beyond two whistles on Emma while trying to leapfrog them into division 1. A confident Emmanuel sped off the start but Fitz slowly reeled them in to a boat length by the Plough, and on to the Long Reach we turned on the heat to bump them at the Railway Bridge. Further action was in store the following day as Queen's had failed to bump on day two. A rapid start put Fitz within a whistle in the gut, and then two, and then three on Ditton as Queens' took a wide line and their bank party frantically urged them to take it up. But they didn't get the chance as an aggressive bit of coxing from our own Adam Morland saw us bump them out of Ditton corner. However the weather took a turn on the final day with an extremely strong stream where we failed to advance to more than three-quarters of a length on Peterhouse, and with a clever bit of coxing from Queens' to avoid the worst of the stream they closed quickly on us sideways on at the railway bridge to avenge the previous day.

M1 finished the week up one at 16th in division 1, our highest finish in five years and having kept the positive momentum of the previous year going.

André Neto-Bradley and Philip Owen, Men's Captains

The Women's Side

Women's Captains: Lizzie Knight, Harriet Bradnock

Coxes: Robert Machado, Tom Noden, Lizzie Knight, Vicky Chown, Âriel de Fauconberg

Coaches: Alan Marron, Antony Moule, Mike Taylor, Joanna Lee, Jessica Halliday, Irene Jessel, Anna Rosa Gejlsbjerg

The women's squad started this term with more than twenty of our seniors and newly graduated ex-novices travelling to Norwich for a three-day training camp. We were able to field two mixed boats every day, with senior rowers also taking the opportunity to scull on a wide and empty river! We went into term with a bolstered squad spirit and determination to make the most of the term to come. (However, it must be said that the weather during training camp was also foreshadowing the term ahead...)



Seats in W1 and W2 were hotly contested this term, with seat racing for both crews happening at the beginning of term. Our first race of term was Head to Head, with W1 putting in a solid performance, coming 7th in the division. Whilst it had been our intention to race at Bedford, Storm Ciara unfortunately had other ideas, so we entered Newnham Head instead, which didn't give W1 the kind of result they were hoping for but still provided valuable race experience.

Head to Head was the first testing ground for our fab new W2, who put on a fantastic performance, coming 3rd in their division. However, a spate of injuries and illness befell W2 midway through term, meaning there was some major crew re-shuffling, but the crews soldiered on nonetheless! The next race for W2 was Newnham Head, where they put on another great show, beating many other W2 crews and coming in close behind some W1s!

Thanks to the huge crop of returning novices from Michaelmas term, along with many new Lent term novices, we were delighted to be able to field both a W3 and W4 crew this term. Unfortunately, despite having so many keen rowers, there was a distinct lack of rowing for these crews, owing to the pretty awful weather we had during the last few weeks of term. We're grateful to all our crews for being so patient and putting up with the lack of water time this term!



The first major test of term came in the way of the Getting On Race. With Fitz having not fielded a W2 for Lent Bumps in almost a decade, W2 were determined to show the results of all their hard work. They had a magnificent race, qualifying easily for Lent Bumps and even beating M3's time in the process! W3 also put in a valiant row in disgustingly windy conditions. Despite not getting on to bumps, we were so impressed with their race given the lack of practice they had had together as a crew - and especially as some members of W3 had only taken up rowing a few weeks beforehand!

And so Bumps week arrived, with W1 and W2 eager to show the Cam just how hard the Fitz women had been working all term. With W1 having solidly confirmed their place in division 1 last year, they had the Tuesday off, leaving W2 to defend Fitz's name. Starting at the very foot of the river, the only way was up. Despite rapidly closing the gap on Tit Hall W3 ahead, a spectacular crab several boats ahead meant that W2 were denied what should have been a very straightforward bump, leaving them to put down a really solid row-over. W2 got their revenge on Wednesday, however, bumping Corpus W2 easily before First Post.



Wednesday also brought excitement for W1 in the way of a very speedy bump on Girton and also the first race in the new eight, the Ashton Brown. We thank the Billygoats for their generous contribution towards this fantastic new Stampfli boat.

On Thursday, W2 yet again showed their form and got the bump on Trinity Hall which they had been denied on the first day. Cox Tom Noden also received plenty of admiration for his excellent steering through First Post Corner! W1 were looking to chase down Murray Edwards and despite sitting on one whistle all the way to the reach, we sadly let them drift away from us.

However on Friday we were keen to exact revenge. With a strict game plan, we pushed onto Medwards as soon as the cannon went off. Determined not to be intimidated by a very speedy Queens' crew behind us, we quickly gained whistles on Medwards and bumped them just before First Post, with Queens' only a length behind. Many of us can claim that was probably the most satisfying bump in our rowing careers!



The final day of Lent Bumps arrived, bringing with it some lovely 50mph wind. W2 had a tremendous rowover, chasing down Downing W3 before classic Bumps carnage ahead lead to Downing bumping out quickly ahead. An excellent and spirited week of racing left W2 up 2 places overall. W1 finished the week on a high, catching Christs just before the reach (having sat on 3 whistles for an incredibly painful length of time), ending the week up 3 places and at 12th on the river, the highest position ever achieved by Fitz W1 in the Lent bumps. This result means that W1 have also gone up 9 places in total over their last 3 Bumps campaign.

We would like to thank everyone who has helped the women's squad have what we believe to be one of its most successful terms in recent history: the coaches, coxes, bank parties, supporters, and all of our amazing subs! And of course our success is testament to the hard work put in by every single member of our amazing crews. With Easter Term looking unlikely to contain any rowing, we will optimistically look forward to the next academic year, and we'll hopefully see everyone back at the FCBC boathouse very soon.

Harriet Bradnock and Lizzie Knight, Women's Captains

Easter Term 2020

Whilst we are unable to train and race in Bumps this term, FCBC spirit is still strong! We have been keeping fit and keeping in touch with weekly circuit sessions hosted by André via Zoom. We also have an erg loan scheme, allowing some of our students who remained in Cambridge for the lockdown to take an erg home and continue training for our return to the water.



With Bumps week fast approaching, we are partaking in a "Virtual Bumps", with each boat club fielding teams who will compete by running 800m over the 4 days of bumps to move up the virtual chart!

We hope to be back on the Cam soon!