

**For Immediate Release - 19 September 2008**

**Cambridge University Boat Club appoint new Chief Coach**

Chris Nilsson has been appointed Chief Coach of the Cambridge University Boat Club. Chris joins the Club from his previous position as Olympic coach with Rowing New Zealand. He will start in autumn 2008 to lead the CUBC squad in the 2009 Boat Race campaign.

Rob Baker, who has acted as interim Chief Coach since the departure of Duncan Holland in May, will carry on with the CUBC as part of Chris' coaching team. Rob led a very successful summer rowing season in 2008 which saw a CUBC crew represent GB in a World Cup regatta and win the Stewards' Challenge Cup at Henley Royal Regatta.

Highlights of Chris Nilsson's coaching career include:

**2004-2008:** National coach with Rowing New Zealand, coaching the men's coxless four and heavyweight double sculls at the Beijing Olympics

**2001-2004:** Assistant Coach, United States national men's team

**1999-2000:** Men's Head Heavyweight Crew coach, Princeton University, USA

**1997-1999:** Assistant Coach, Oxford University Boat Club

Chris' appointment concludes a thorough search process that has run through the summer of 2008. The selection panel was chaired by Wayne Pommen (President 2004) and coordinated by Will Dawkins (Blue 1978). The panel was assisted by a number of CUBC oarsmen and friends of the Club worldwide. An original list of over 60 potential candidates yielded a very strong final six from several different countries.

Chris Nilsson rowed for New Zealand at the 1972 Munich Olympics, since when he has gained nearly 30 years of coaching experience. Chris has a strong coaching track record at both international and university level, including two world championship gold medals.

Chris is widely respected by the athletes he has coached, as well as his colleagues in the coaching world. Importantly, Chris knows the unique nature of the Boat Race's challenging Championship Course between Putney and Mortlake, having coached both at Thames Rowing Club and at OUBC.

Chris commented, "I am hugely honoured to have been appointed by the CUBC selection panel. I'm really looking forward to meeting the squad next week and I look forward to the challenge of leading the CUBC."

Henry Pelly, incoming CUBC President, commented, "Chris Nilsson's track record speaks for itself. We are all looking forward to working with him in establishing the CUBC as the best rowing club in the world for developing elite athletes. He will have the full confidence of the squad as we get ready to take on Oxford in the 2009 Boat Race."

Ends

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