



## **Taurus Newsletter**

***"The Bull"***

# Taurus Newsletter

Issue 2, March 2003

*Yes we are still alive, and it's that time of the year again.*

*Welcome back to the adventure ride that is the Taurus Newsletter – a little bit of fiction, a dash of fact, and a lot of top-quality bull. Read on.....*

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*Would you like to help organise a boat club with a spicy social scene and much good pulling? Join the Taurus committee – contact Pete Lowe.*

## Chairman's Report

A belated Happy New Year to all readers, both Taurus and Brookes.

Firstly I must just thank those whom I have been bullying all year to help me out first with the social events and now with articles for this magazine. You know who you are, and myself and Taurus are greatly indebted to you for all your help.

Well, as you are reading this, I, and my handful of trusty helpers, are in our usual panic about organising the dinner.

My wife tells me to cancel it for this year and stop getting so stressed. No! I say, the show will go on, regardless of the usual telephone calls before the event, coaxing possible attendees.

However, as last year's bonanza proved, it is all thoroughly worthwhile in the end. A wonderful evening held was held in 2002 at The **Waldorf Hotel** in London's West End. Great venue and food, and a special thanks to **Fred** for 'acquiring' such amazing prizes for the raffle. Sorry about the rather debatable speeches and DJ Dolly.... Well done the social team for all your hard work. It will be difficult to follow last year's extravaganza, but we are hopeful that the **River and Rowing Museum in Henley** will attract a good number again this year. (NB: tickets limited to 100).

Both other social events were equally successful. May I personally thank Nick Dagg for arriving at the **Henley Barbecue**

armed with an unassembled barbecue kit minutes before the first guests arrived. It was a great success with over 100 attendees turning up to enjoy the now infamous '**Pimms watering can**' and food that somehow fed everyone.

.... it will be difficult to follow last year's extravaganza.....

Racing was hard fought at the **Taurus Regatta** with six eights raised. A final race at the end of the day saw

**Taurus beat Brookes**, the same result as the year before, meaning that the pressure will certainly be on this year to make it three in a row.

A great year of social events, thanks to all involved in organising, and we look forward to seeing as many of you at this year's events as possible.

And what of the rowing?

First, we should congratulate Taurus members **Ali Smee** and **Chris Maret**, for their amazing efforts in completing their epic Atlantic voyage. They rowed the 3000 mile Tenerife to Barbados journey in 66 days; quite mad!



Brookes flew at The Vlls HORR, finishing second

only to Leander. The squad continued through the season, picking up further honours including; **BUSA champions, National Champions, World U23**

**selection, World Student Games selection** as well as **World Championship representation**. Brookes and Taurus had representation in 6 of the 11 sweep-oared finals at Henley. Out of these came superb wins in the **Prince Philip Cup**, the **Visitors** (just slightly controversially – read later) and the inaugural **Remenham Challenge Cup** (the newly renamed Women’s Eights).



But wait for it..... a crack Taurus crew were also spotted earlier in the season having a “comfortable” row in the **Veterans VIII’s HOR** in March. It is rumoured that they will be returning again this year to improve on their 34<sup>th</sup> place, so watch this space.

On to this year then. We are looking forward to more great social events in true Taurus fashion, and will be continuing to follow the fortunes of Brookes rowing.

Thanks to all of you for supporting Taurus and hope to see you on the 5<sup>th</sup> of April at the dinner.

*Pete Lowe*

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## **My First Year as a Brookes Cox.**

On day one of my university career, I was ‘innocently’ waiting to enrol when a hugely tall young man approached me, obviously attracted to the fact that I’m vertically

challenged, and asked me if I wanted to cox for Brookes boat club. I laughed, and, if I remember correctly, my response was “not in a million years”. Little did I know! But the second time I was targeted, feeling flattered if slightly bemused, I decided to give it a go. After all, what did I have to lose?

Starting with the novice squad was such good fun, and at times highly amusing. None of us had a clue. The first time we paddled full crew, our two man got catapulted out of the boat. Looking back it was rather funny, as every time he swam up he got smacked on the head by another stroke side rigger. He wasn’t in too good a state afterwards, but he managed to see the funny side - eventually!



*Caroline’s crew, the fourth eight, at the Head*

It was only after about one month that I received the dreaded call from Richard Spratley asking me to come down to Wallingford to cox for the seniors. Now I’m a person who is not easily intimidated, but I can assure you that I felt even smaller than I actually am that first weekend.

The rest of the head season flew by, with good results at Reading and the Eight’s Head, where, to everyone’s amazement, my crew managed to win the BUSA 2<sup>nd</sup> pennant, despite being a scratch crew and dropping about 90 places!

The summer season holds many fond memories for me. A good senior three crew was formed, and the battle commenced against Imperial College, whom, I may add, we beat on numerous occasions, most memorably at the Metropolitan Regatta. Due to our good results, it was decided that we should stick with the same combination for Henley, where we raced against an American crew called Colgate University.

Unfortunately we lost, but it was an amazing experience. I can't wait for next year!

Henley signifies the end of the season for many boat clubs, but not Brookes. I was lucky enough to be involved in a winning women's coxed four plot\* for National Championships and Home Countries over the summer. It was a fantastic opportunity for me to learn from four of the most committed and talented people I've ever had the pleasure to meet, and I'd like to take this opportunity to say thank you to them.

I'm now in my second year of coxing, and things are looking promising for the coming season. Although last year was so successful, I'm determined to make this year bigger and better. The other day, after a bad outing, I asked Nick, a friend of mine at the boat club, "Why do I bother coxing?" His response was "Because you love it", and, however much it pains me to admit it, Nick, I think you're right!

*Caroline O'Connor (a.k.a Boycey)*

*\* [Editor's comment -- It is obvious that innocent young Boycey, despite only a few months exposure, is already infected with the "Spratley vocabulary" virus. Sigh. Poor kid.*

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## Racing Bulls

### *Henley Royal Regatta*

It has been a tough year for Richard Spratley to uphold his strong Henley-winning reputation and it was left to a couple of good old Taurus boys to save the day and snatch a dramatic victory in the Visitors' Cup. Despite

having won some respectable pots in their time, Phil Baker and Dan Marett had never put their wits together at Henley and with the help of Brookes Captain, Tommy Burton and token good oar Dave Gillard (ex-Cambridge, QT and IC), the combination was heart-stopping (at least for many of the ladies in the Stewards enclosure, including Mrs McGarel-Groves, mother of the Cambridge 3 man and author of some great Regatta magazine letters since).

### *The Visitors - again*

The entire essence of the Brookes/Taurus spirit became apparent on the finals day down at Henley, when after a **fatal collision with some unlucky geese**, the Brookes/IC crew were beaten by Cambridge, only to be awarded a re-row for the end of the day, after some rule-book consulting by Richard and the Stewards. It was back home for light refreshments for the crew, while it was controversy and debate down in the Stewards' Enclosure. Tension between the Taurus/Brookes and Cambridge camps was running high even at the bar, where strong words were exchanged in the build up to the re-row as to the validity of Richard's appeal.

### *Remenham here we come*

A more straightforward win came for Brookes' women (featuring several fine Taurus lasses). They walked off with the new **Remenham Challenge Cup** for women's eights, slipping past Tideway Scullers impressively easily. It was the first time nine Brookes women had stood on the Henley Royal podium together: hopefully it won't be the last.



### *Temple denied*

In the meantime, 8 good Brookes lads and cox Rachel Quarrell had their minds firmly fixed on overturning Harvard in the final of the Temple Challenge Cup. Throughout the week Harvard had not looked pretty but were typically big pullers, while Brookes had shown winning top speed although not always with the consistency Richard had wanted - they took a classic telling off after coasting down the course against weak opposition early on, rating 24 (*previous pic*).

The gods seem determined to prevent this cup from making its way back to the sports centre on Gypsy Lane, and for the third year in a row Richard had to watch the silverware slip from his grasp at the last hour. Harsh perhaps, but take your hats off to Ben Lewis, who suffered a bitter 4th loss in a Henley final in so many years.

### *Re-rows our speciality*

On to the re-row of the Visitors' Cup and Cambridge led again off the start until Remenham, by which time the **top-lock, bottom-lock rocket science came into action**. It was eventually the turquoise blazer that won over the Cambridge blue in a tough battle - a testament to the huge support from the many Taurus members, notably Rowley Douglas, Jonno Devlin and Alex Partridge in fending off Mrs McGarel-Groves' mouth on the landing stage. There has since been much debate on the matter, but surely if Cambridge had been as good as they thought they were, then they would have had the last laugh? The Visitors is undoubtedly becoming a speciality event for the Brookes style and it surely won't be long before the University has enough Henley wins to fill the past decade.

### *National Champions*

Plot b) for the season was to send the 'Temple 8' to the World Student Games and the 'Visitor's 4' to the Commonwealth Regatta, both to be held in Nottingham. In order to avoid the usual beer-crazy après-Henley festivities, the squad entered Henley T&V Regatta and then the National Championships to keep the show on the road.

With the absence of both stroke men of the 8 and 4 to the U23 World Championships, Dave Gillard took to the stroke seat of an 8 (for the first time in quite a while) at the latter of the 2 events. It was the usual suspects on the start line - Leander, Molesey, Notts County etc., but it was bowman Ed Fox from Brookes who went over the line first, by 1 length, in **5:42.88** - one of the fastest times clocked by a Brookes 8 to date.

*"The men's eights final put the icing on the cake. Oxford Brookes edged ahead with an impressive second 500 metres..."*

**The Times, July 22nd 2002**

### *Commonwealth or bust*

Hard racing is where Brookes are in their element and there was no better example of this than at the Commonwealth Regatta, after the Brookes 4- were brought to a halt when the New Zealand boat came into their lane, in the middle of yet another bun-fight for the line. In a re-row for the bronze medal (Aus had won with Canada second) against the Scottish Wyfold-winning crew Aberdeen, the English were as usual losing with 500m to go. The seed of doubt must have been in the minds of the Scots since when Tom Burton decided to skip the traditional "up 2" and went higher, the Bravehearts had to retreat empty handed. **A great end to a close-run season** and congratulations to Phil Baker on passing his random drugs test... he's now looking for a suitable frame for the confirmation letter from David Tanner.

*Tom Burton decided to skip the traditional "up 2" and went higher....*

### *World Student Championships*

Five days later the Temple crew set aside their Brookes vests and took to the water as worthy representatives of British students at the World Student Championships - a relatively new event that places standards at or above the level of the U23 Worlds and includes many Senior Worlds competitors. After the loss of the Temple, the sights had to be set to yet another level to be in the running for a medal and the heats proved a massive challenge, where they were pushed into 3<sup>rd</sup> by the Dutch and forced to the rep. A good performance in response saw the 8 into the final with relative ease, but here they were in top class company and unable to



hold on to the pace for a medal. They sadly had to settle for 5<sup>th</sup>.

This was little consolation for such a determined group, which had been tried, tested and chosen after months of winter training and who then committed to losing their eligibility to compete in the Temple for the future. With such a **fine line between winning and losing**, Richard has the 2002/03 season well underway and this years Freshers are already benefiting from the new

boathouse and facilities provided at Wallingford. Another batch of graduates have become registered Taurus members and the cycle continues to make way for a bigger squad which must rise to the challenge of bigger goals and targets. The crossbar is constantly being raised - nowadays if you're not pulling 6,000 metres, you're nobody.

Dan Marett

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## Back to grass roots

2002 – a good balanced number, and a year when it seemed only fitting to redress the imbalance of ten years ago when I was robbed of the chance to win my first Henley medal with Oxford Poly in the Temple Challenge Cup 1992 .....

I was really excited when Alex Beevor, my fellow Olympian and also Taurus buddy, suggested we form an eight for the Women's HERR in 2002. That's where it all started. It was pretty hit and miss back then, and we never did get to see what we could do over the eights course [*the WeHERR was cancelled in 50-mph winds*] but a seed was sown. We were determined to pull something together for the summer.

It was strange turning up on May 6<sup>th</sup> at the (not so) new site in Wallingford since back in 1992 we had trained out of Wallingford Rowing Club. There were a few familiar faces but mainly lots of young happy people that at first made me feel very old. However, once out on the river, I soon felt very at home – ah yes the good old S bend, oh and this is where we once lost the fin off the brand new Simms and nearly sank. And of course never to forget the place where Richard and Tim took out a line of fisherman when they disappeared behind the island down by the railway bridge in a desperate attempt to beat us to the corner in a timed piece!!

It was highly evident from day one that Mr Spratley was firmly in charge and running the place as only he could. And what a fantastic

place it is to train. I certainly feel privileged to have been there to see the old shed go, and to be one of the first to walk out of the new boat house - Richard has done a grand job.

Our aim was always to put out a crew to enter HRR in the summer. With the unbeaten 4 of Emma Fonseca, Carla Ashford, Annie MacDonald and Heike Assmuss. Richard knew he had the opportunity to produce something fast. We hoped that by adding to this young and fit crew we could ensure a winning combination. At first we flew along and everyone was really excited, but there were times when the different levels of fitness and the different styles and techniques seemed to be major barriers we were never going to hurdle, especially as I don't think we ever managed more than 1 outing a week with the full crew. Our special thanks must go to Vicki Brierley for regularly subbing in on both stroke and bow side, and also to the few Brookes men who gallantly sat in with us. We even put Tim Levy through a few ugly pieces just one week before Henley.

...we put Tim Levy  
through a few ugly  
pieces...

Our virgin race was at the Metropolitan Regatta, where we were twice beaten by the selected Commonwealth crew. This showed us that we badly need some outside help, so we commandeered Alex Henshilwood and Miriam Luke-Batten, who both did wonders for us in a short space of time. It was hugely disappointing to then lose to the Commonwealth eight again at Women's Henley [*by two feet – Ed*]. This only served to

make us more determined. A longer course and we were sure to have ‘em....

Richard continued to race us off against the Brookes men’s crews (thank you it was the best type of training we could have hoped for) and with some wise words of experience from Ali Gill and Libby Henshilwood, a few more outings under our belts, and some badly needed equipment fixing, we were ready for the big one.

Henley itself was full of eagerness, a few nerves, and the joys that exams were over. Whether the luck of a bird poo landing on Alex’s head as we stood in the boat tent area (listening to the race when Scullers turned over the Commonwealth girls) played any part in the whole experience will always be questioned. It was a shame that this luck meant we never got to meet the Commonwealth crew over the full distance, but we weren’t complaining.

The one thing I will always remember about this crew, apart from the great mix of age, experience, nationality and fitness, and being a part of Oxford Brookes Boat Club, is a point which is so important at any level. That is having fun. We definitely had the last laugh at the prize giving....

Lotty Miller

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## Creating champions

The plot started in February of 2002. Preparing for the Women’s Eights Head, even though we never raced, convinced us we were a good unit. Alison Trickey and I had been in that eight, and managed to convince Ali Gill and Libby Henshilwood (her brother is ex-Poly) to join us. It wasn’t hard to persuade them – they knew it would be a lot of fun.

Defeat at Henley Women’s Regatta to the Commonwealth eight, in the race which should have been the final, was sore. We were a length down with 200 metres to go, and had this huge finish, but just ran out of water. On the plus side, we found out we didn’t have to qualify for men’s Henley,

that very afternoon. I knew we had a good chance of getting through a few rounds of the Remenham Challenge Cup. We found it really easy to row the eight – a great mixture of Brookes’ girls fitness and the experience of the “old birds”. The combination was absolutely right: both groups had huge respect for each other.

I had done Henley Royal Regatta three times before, and lost every time. Before the final I just knew we didn’t need to be frightened of Tideway Scullers. Everything went to plan.

Yes, I’d do it again, with Brookes, definitely. It wasn’t too intense, unlike squad rowing. We all knew when to be serious and when to relax. Rowing at its best.

*Alex Beevor, talking to Rachel Quarrell.*

*Other women’s results - Brookes won open coxless fours at Henley Women’s by a row-over (Kingston didn’t turn up to the straight final). Carla Ashford and Emma Fonseca also went on to row in the World Student Championships, joining two Oxford Blues to finish fourth by two lengths.*

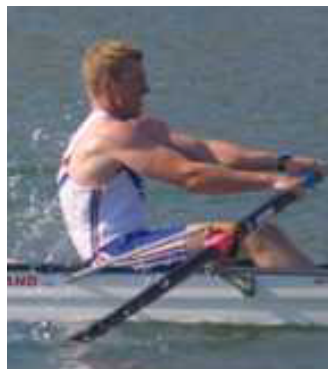
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## On Her Majesty’s Service

Since the first Brookes rowers made the full British team in 1997, a surprising number have followed this route, and we have seen World Championship medals in both lightweight and heavyweight categories. Most prominent of these was when Rowley Douglas, Fred Scarlett and Ben Hunt-Davis won gold in the men’s eight in the Sydney

Olympics – the highest accolade imaginable and so impressive to have come from a club that was only started just over 10 years ago.

This is only the beginning however, and the current British team contains five





Taurus members - Steve Williams, Jo Von-Maltzahn, Jonno Devlin, Alex Partridge and Ben Webb. Despite missing out on a seat for Sydney, Steve now has two gold medals and 1 silver from the past three World Championships and is one of the top members of the British team. Hot on his heels are Jo, Jonno and Alex who are building the core of the new eight, based at Molesey, and finally Ben Webb, who is challenging for a seat in the top LM4-, based at Dorney and Leander.



*Dan Marett*

## **Oxford Brookes and Taurus international representatives 2001-2:**

**GB senior team at the World Cups and Seville World Championships** – Steve Williams (M4-, WCup and WChs both silver), Joe von Maltzahn, Jonno Devlin, Alex Partridge (all M8+), Ben Webb (LM4-).

**GB Under-23 world championships in Genoa** – Tom Burton (M4-), Henry Bailhache-Webb (M4+), Ed Fox (LM4-).

**Commonwealth Regatta, Nottingham** – Tom Burton, Dan Marett, Dave Gillard, Phil Baker (all M4-, bronze), Rachel Quarrell (coxing NZ M4+, bronze), Oli Keech, Mike Reynaud (both M8+, bronze), James Brown (LM2-, silver), Bart Hudson, Danny Harte (both LM8+, gold).

**World Student Rowing Championships, Nottingham** – Carla Ashford, Emma Fonseca (both W4-), Henry Bailhache-Webb, Ben Lewis, Nigel Maynard, John Gelling, Rob Edmondson, Mike Duncombe, Robbie Kennedy, Ed Fox (all M8+).

## **Wine, women, song and more wine**

On the social front it has been a good performance from the club this year, it could be described as our natural strength! We kicked off the year with dinner at the London Waldorf Hotel. All that attended I am sure will confirm that the evening was a resounding success. Some of the highlights (for those who could not make it and those who cannot remember) were the raffle, where we had some tremendous sporting prizes (many thanks Fred), and some people

in their generosity even returned the prizes to be auctioned. Many thanks to those who entered into the spirit of this. I recall Dom Day vigorously bidding to win a glass of wine (which I think he donated???). The evening rounded off with members demonstrating their finest dancing to the sounds of “DJ Dolly”.

Continuing on in the new format, we held the Henley Regatta barbecue again in Lion



Meadow. This got off to a slightly shaky start as the barbecue was built after a rather serious afternoon in the Bridge Bar. An even better turnout: the location works really well as you can't get out without walking past. We had a great turnout with everyone enjoying a burger and a glass of Pimms. We also managed to capture the details of many old members who had lost touch – albeit as emails scribbled on the back of a programme. Again this was even bigger and than the previous year, and we'll soon be challenging the barbecues of some of some of our rival old Boys and Girls Clubs!

The regatta was held at the end of the summer on the BowBridge site, and was a

great opportunity to see the new Brookes Boathouse. Again we had a great turnout with a total of six eights competing in a regatta over 400 metres. Some stiff competition took place with many of the old guard proving that the magic is still there (it will probably be best to have a doctor present next year). The afternoon's racing rounded off with the traditional Brookes vs Taurus set-to, and I am happy to say that for the second year running victory was ours. There was a suggestion that some of the old boys hadn't been pulling in the races all afternoon in to tire out the students - but I'm sure that would never happen!!

With that all said, we are ready for another year's hard socialising, kicking off with the Dinner on April 5<sup>th</sup>. This will be held in the River and Rowing Museum, Henley-on-Thames. Please mark the date in your diary and we look forward to seeing you there.

Nick Dagg



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## Report from the rockface

October, the worlds over, and another season began for the Poly boys (as they still occasionally call themselves). For sixty-odd rowers it was back to the hard grind of winter training. There was a familiar feel to it: phrases like "*three eight minutes, two on two off, lock to lock and back, twenty-twenty-twenty*" rang regularly through the chilly air. We could slip through a timewarp and you'd barely notice, except that for some reason it's now **Danny Marett** who gets his kit nicked, and 'grown up' **Phil Baker** doesn't

always get drunk on Sunday nights (just most weeks).

The new boathouse is most definitely coming into its own. There's not an outing goes past at the moment when I don't bless those who raised the money, Richard for doing such a cracking building job, and old boys such as **Chris Marett** who lugged bricks and planks up and down ladders all summer. The race back to the boathouse takes on a whole new edge when there are piping hot radiators to sling

your clothes on, proper showers, and a kettle boiling away upstairs. The picture wall is looking pretty good too, with the **Visitors'** and **Remenham** trophy additions this summer: it stirs the motivation to see all the photos every time you go up and down the stairs.

We have a new crop of faces at rollcall. Aussie U23 Ric Tofer has joined for real this year, after flirting with Brookes in 2001-2, and former GB juniors cox **Nick Ford** has come back to the sport after a year learning what student life is really like. Names to look out for in the new intake, who may be gracing the Temple Cup some day, include **Ben Pugh**, **Jack Drea**, **Rob Hollis**, **Alex Cavell** and **Tom Parker**.

The squad seems huge this year: **Richard** and assistant **Kevin MacWilliams** (star boatman and an excellent club coach when he gets time) have their hands full with more than sixty men's names on the senior list. Second year **Charlie Sprake** distinguished himself by raising over £550 for the club from a *Jongleurs* comedy night, and there are plans to do this again at least once a term: we have an enthusiastic and committed bunch both on the water and off.

Although many don't notice, there is a thriving novice programme going once again, and this year I'm delighted to see an experienced coach in charge. **Robin Edwards**, long-time club coach at City of Oxford, and a mean oarsman in his own right once, has been hired by the University. This is a good move away from untrained student "coaches", and one which should pay off in two or three years. The difficulty yet again, however, is women's participation. Robin has only one novice women's crew, and the senior women, although swelled by several handy new recruits, still can't boat a full eight without outside collaboration. I don't know what the solution is, since although it would take a new coach to run a full women's squad, there aren't even enough recruited to justify asking Mark Dodwell for one. I wonder whether it is really possible to cover the field with any club, especially one pushing the top men towards international selection, or whether it's just a matter of effort and resources in the right place.

The 'Bowbridge' concept may have failed, but its origin remains strong, and Brookes seems to be coping well with quite a few ex-students returning to the fold despite real jobs to go to. Whether this will offer the club a few more options in the summer remains to be seen, but in the mean time they are a real asset in terms of experience. [As Treasurer, I also love the fact that even the old rebels now pay their subs on time. Yes, even Mr. D. Marett Esq...!]

So what have we been up to? Well the **Four's Head** was a bit of a wake-up call: erg scores have improved massively since then. Brookes didn't go to the **Indoor Champs** this year, and stumbled through a couple of weeks of average-to-annoying floods with patchy training, but the **Marlow SBH** was cancelled, so the only other racing fixture before Christmas was **Wallingford Head**. For the first time in history, Brookes hosted other clubs at an ARA event. It seemed to go pretty well, although I had to stop a giggle when Richard warned us all not to let visitors inside the boathouse "*in case they nick the trestles*"....

**Wallingford** saw us pick up nine pots out of sixteen crews, even though a bit of **Imperial dodgy dealing** gave them the fastest crew title. In the New Year we enjoyed the best water *ever* at **Wimbleball** (mirror-smooth conditions for the last outing), seat-raced the pants off everyone, and came back at last properly fit for the season. Reasonable results at **senior trials** were followed by **Henley Fours and Eights Head**, where we wiped the floor with the locals, won a ridiculous number of pots, and walloped IC's top four into the bargain. We also went to **Trent Head**, and managed a reasonable (25 second) finish behind a flying Cambridge Blue Boat.

In summary? Plenty of potential, a bit unformed but just now starting to come together. You know the score. The plot isn't on, but it isn't off, and we'll see what happens at the **Heads** and **Henleys** when we get there.

*Rachel Quarrell*

## News

*Rachel Quarrell writes* – Thanks to the generosity of Taurus and the Sports Department at Brookes, we recently took delivery of a **brand spanking new set of Concept 2 cleavers**, of their latest design. Not too many changes from the last variety – lighter, a better sleeve and collar arrangement – but it was great to row at Trent with a totally new set, freshly painted by Kev. Thank you to everyone whose subs and donations contributed to the purchase.

**Veteran's Head 2003:** An eight is aiming to win this year, with some very familiar faces on board.. Come down and cheer, at 11 am (Putney to Mortlake) on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> March, the day after the Eight's Head. Hangovers permitting....

**Births & Marriages:** send us your latest news.

**Hunt-Davis joins the blazerati:** One of Taurus' sometimes-forgotten members is **Ben Hunt-Davis**, perhaps because the Poly decided it no longer needed the use of his brain after he spent a year rowing in 1990. Ben went on, of course, to win a gold in the **Sydney Olympic crew** in 2000, and is now helping a business motivation company. In December 2002 he received probably the biggest surprise of his post-Olympic life, when the **Stewards of Henley Royal Regatta** rang to say they had elected him into their committee. Ben will probably be stuck on bog-duty and geese-clearing for the first two years, but at last Brookes gets a real representative amongst the Powers that Be.

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## Taurus Annual Dinner

After the great success of last year's dinner, we are hoping to attract as many of you again to this year's get together. We have booked the Thames Room at the **River and Rowing Museum in Henley**. The Museum is set in a beautiful riverside location (and has a large free car park at the rear).

The return of the dinner to Henley is particularly poignant as it will be the **10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Oxford Poly's first Royal Regatta win**. It was at this point that what is now Oxford Brookes University Boat Club entered the international arena, which subsequently led to the club providing three **Olympic Gold Medallists** and many **Great Britain international oarsmen and oarswomen**. We are attempting to attract all the members from the 1993 crew.

The Thames Room overlooks the river and can accommodate up to 100 people, therefore *tickets are limited*. Tables of ten will be arranged, so feel free to organise your own group. It goes without saying that non Taurus members are welcome, so why not bring a couple of old Poly

friends along for a bit of a reunion, or indeed bring along some of your current rowing friends from another club.

We will be sitting down to a three course dinner with coffee and dancing to live music from (the highly recommended) "Lucky To Be Alive".

*Taurus night on the town,  
April 5<sup>th</sup> 2003 – put the date  
in your diary now*

We have negotiated for the museum to remain open until 6:30pm (usual closing 5pm) for those of you who would like to have a look round before the dinner – it is well worth it.

Finally, why not make a full weekend of it and go on to the Boat Race next day in London?

We look forward to seeing you there.

For a copy of the booking form please contact Nick Dagg <social@taurusboatclub.co.uk> or visit

<http://www.rowingservice.com/taurus/>

Also see <http://www.rrm.co.uk/>