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Picture: © Peter Spurrier/Intersport Images

## Diamonds are forever

*Rachel Quarrell ties up the loose ends at Henley Royal Regatta 2007*

Gales, floods and mud, glorious mud greeted the opening of Henley Royal Regatta this year, with crews struggling through difficult conditions during Friday's qualifiers and spectators hunting out their stoutest wellies. Nine days later the regatta ended in light breezes and balmy sunshine, with a general air of "what was all the fuss about?" So what did we make of Henley 2007?

### GRAND EXCUSES

A week before racing proper began, and suddenly there were a number of high-profile withdrawals, which didn't stop - two more international crews pulled out during the regatta. The Grand was one of the biggest casualties, with Germany getting cold feet, and the British men's eights group splitting into three fours to do their next round of selection seat-racing.

That left Canada, winners of the Linz world cup regatta, against the new Australian combination and the Czech Republic's under-23 eight. Despite having Aussie legend Jimmy Tomkins in the 7-seat, Australia's best had underwhelmed at

Amsterdam, so it was no surprise that the Canadians easily carried off the Grand Challenge Cup in powerhouse style, almost as an afterthought. There was talk of there being some problem with the Australian boat off the start, which was never fully explained.

The Canucks now move on to Lucerne this weekend, where there will be considerably more competition. Meanwhile the GB seat-racing has resulted in Tom Solesbury, injured for most of the spring, coming back into the eight, replacing Hugo Lee. The rest of the line-up was intended to be unchanged from Amsterdam, but Robin Bourne-Taylor has been injured, and will be replaced by James Orme in Switzerland.

### SPRINGBOKS UP FOR THE CUPS

The Silver Goblets was also badly hit by medical withdrawals. First Colin Smith and Matt Langridge pulled out before the draw, because Smith was ill, and needed to recover for Lucerne. Then on the night before the pairs' first day of racing on Thursday, world champion Duncan Free suffered a back twinge.

Not wishing to risk it before the only world cup he and partner Drew Ginn are racing at, the duo withdrew, leaving their side of the draw »

## Voices off

### Bow ballsup

The British men's eight who lost their world cup heat in Amsterdam by a hundredth of a second, so being required to progress through the repêchage, came closer than they think. The jury had to blow up the photograph to giant proportions to determine whether the Poles or the Brits were in front. The Polish bow ball emerged from the gloom first, but only a bit of it. My informant calculates that the difference was close to 0.003 of a second, or half a bow ball.

### Dutch courage fails

Pity the poor Dutch men's four, the crew which has so far come closest to spoiling the unbeaten run of the Brits. Deprived of another attempt on their home water when the Brits turned out in the 'super eight' instead of the four for the Amsterdam world cup, they were caught napping near the finish line by charging Kiwis. Two Dutchmen virtually knocked it on the head before crossing the line, which should give them a sore head.

### Chinese checkers

The devastating results of the Chinese at the world cup in Amsterdam (eight medals, five of them gold) took me back to Holme Pierrepont in 1975, where Chinese characters first appeared on the wall. The flag contractors to the world championship organisers in Nottingham inadvertently supplied a Taiwan ensign instead of a People's Republic one, and there were angry scenes at the opening ceremony at County Hall in West Bridgford. Relations were restored after Martin Brandon-Bravo hastily arranged a dinner for the Communist ambassador and friends at Nottingham's only Pekinese restaurant at that time. The Nottingham & Union boatman was up all night trying to mix the correct shade of red for the oars which his club had kindly lent the Chinese crew.

« wide open. Unsurprisingly Germans Andreas Penkner and Jocham Urban sailed through to the final as a result.

In the other rather unbalanced half of the draw, the quarter-finals matched GB lightweights Matt Beechey and Danny Harte against defending Goblets champion Barney Williams and his new partner Scott Frandsen, rowing as Canada. This year poor steering dogged the Canadians' efforts. Despite that they blew a hole in the lightweights, but could not get past the considerably more polished Ramon Di Clemente and Donovan Cech.

South Africa's answer to Redgrave and Pinsent are two-times winners, and getting quite used to collecting Goblets in Henley. In the final, the Germans made a brave stab at catching the South Africans unaware, but Di Clemente and Cech let them wear themselves out and then just pushed solidly back through at Fawley for a third win inside four years. With luck, all five openweight pairs will be in Lucerne, and back to full fitness.

### THERE BUT FOR THE GRACE

The other big event decimated by illness was the Princess Grace women's quads. With a throat infection laying Debbie Flood low, the British world champions were out of Henley, and illness also kiboshed the Australians, who have been a strong force in this category for several years. They decided to switch Amber Bradley into their 'B' crew, originally a composite of their LW2x and W2x, and the resulting quartet chomped through two UK club composites before eating the Dutch women's quad for breakfast on Sunday.

Meanwhile the GB women's quad borrowed

world lightweight record holder Zac Purchase as their super-sub for training - (quote from Annie Vernon, "he wasn't too bad considering") and now have Debbie back in action for Lucerne.

### STEWARDS' CHALLENGE

It's rare to fill a page of a Henley/GB article without mentioning the boat about which the adjective 'flagship' is most often used. But in the face of the above reshuffles and some extraordinarily good club-level racing, the Stewards' Challenge Cup featuring double world champions Andy Hodge, Steve Williams, Alex Partridge and Pete Reed, was something of an quiet story.

The biggest news broke just before the draw, that Alex Partridge was out with a knee injury, and would be replaced for more than two weeks by Tom James, newly back in training after finishing his Cambridge engineering exams a couple of weeks earlier. The four was seen out doing a few cautious lunchbreak outings in the filthy cross-wind, and finally raced on Saturday, casually slaughtering the Australian heavyweight four.

On the other side of the draw Trident, South Africa's feisty lightweights, disposed of an Australian crew rather unkindly described as "pontoon pickups" by one pundit, and then came up against Canada's heavyweights in the semi-final.

Unseen by the race recorder, Trident's stroke-man put his hand up just a couple of strokes after the start (see picture), apparently because he felt his crew had been pushed into the booms by the Canadians. The race continued, the appeal came to nothing, and Canada earned »



Trident (RSA) vs Brentwood & Shawnigan Lake (Canada) in the Stewards' semi-final. Photo courtesy of and copyright to Martin Richardson

« the dubious privilege of being taken to pieces by the British boys during the final. To add insult to injury, Hodge steered the last 250m of the final slap bang in the centre of the course, claiming innocently “I thought it was Boat Race rules here”, *ie* choose your water if you get far enough ahead.

**J**ürgen Grobler was satisfied with the GB performance on Sunday, which suggested that James is as good at fitting in as Ed Coode was three years ago when called up for the Athens Olympic four. Partridge, who has been highly impressive in trialling this year, has a safe place as long as his injury heals, but James must now have a good claim to be considered for the eight once Lucerne is over.

“Tom gives up a lot of power to Alex but he’s really slotted in very well”, said an impressed Peter Reed, valiantly derigging the boat solo while the others fielded congratulations and posed for the cameras. “People underestimate Tom but he’s really a very classy rower, and he’s learnt such a lot so quickly in the last few days, about how to row Hodgey’s way, in double-quick time.”

James, for his part, was clearly relieved that he had done his bit to maintain the four’s unbeaten record, though left slightly bemused by the experience of sitting in a shell powered by three of the strongest oarsmen in Britain. “There’s usually that dip when everyone else in a race catches their breath, after the start”, he explained. “Not in that boat, instead the power just goes on and on.” James stays with them to Lucerne, after which if both the eight and the four do well, the selectors will have some hard decisions to make.

## INTERNATIONALS ON COURSE

The remaining international events were perhaps a little more predictable. In the absence of Neykova, American world medallist Michelle Guerette had no trouble dealing with GB lightweight Jen Goldsack in the Princess Royal women’s singles. And though there was a fantastic charge for the line by Canada in the Queen Mother men’s quads, world champions Poland managed to keep them at bay to follow the form guide and bag their alternative to a Lucerne medal.

Olympic silver medallists Iztok Cop and Luka Spik were beaten to the Double Sculls trophy last year by GB-grown sculling masters Matt Wells and Steve Rowbotham. They have also had the worst of it internationally this year, with Estonia surprising both doubles at the Amsterdam world cup. But a GB-Slovenia rematch was denied when Matt Wells had to have treatment for an injury, and the British double dropped out before the Henley draw. That left the Slovenians the best of a thinner field, and they proved it serenely on Sunday morning, producing a five-length victory over Poles Sloma and Brzezinski.

The Remenham women’s eights was also a bit of a walkover, Germany demolishing Britain, who had won silver at the Linz world cup, by a length and a half. Good effort from the British crew, though, especially as they’ve had no end of trouble with injuries and illness, which are likely to continue to make an impact through Lucerne and possibly to the world championships. Before they reached the final the GB eight stomped all over Oxford Brookes and Nottingham’s composite, which contained several oarswomen on the next rung of the ladder »

## Relief comes to Bullshit Point

Spectators in the grandstand at the world cup regatta in Amsterdam were amazed to see a portalo mounted on a fork lift truck being driven along the opposite bank where the lorry-mounted grandstands usually roam. All was revealed when it was unceremoniously dumped like a sentry box outside the ‘videohouse’, the broadcasting centre, also known as the Bosbaan’s ‘bullshit point’. The non-broadcasting media quickly opened a book on which of the commentators who never run out of pearls of wisdom — the BBC’s Garry Herbert or Eurosport’s David Goldstrom — was inside the box at the time. No-one has owned up.

## And so to Bled...

Among the three contenders for the world championships in 2011 — Bled, Amsterdam and Lucerne — it’s the Slovenian lake that wins the prize for snappiest slogan, at least to western ears. ‘Time for Bled’ has a certain ring to it, especially as 1989 was the last time a championship was held on this stunning flooded crater of a volcano with an island in the middle and a castle on a cliff leering over lane 6.

## Scratch a Dutchman...

Next year’s FISA pleasure tour is in Argentina. A Dutchman down by the Bosbaan told me that some German friends had visited Buenos Aires and been hosted by the Teutonia Rowing Club. ‘If I go to Argentina, I refuse to enter a club with a name like that,’ he said. ‘Besides, there will be no sculling allowed there because you will presumably be required to keep one arm free.’

## Hammer Smith

Tittle and tattle, gossip, news and banter to Hammer Smith via [voice@rowingservice.com](mailto:voice@rowingservice.com).

## Henley Royal Regatta champions 2007

**Grand Challenge Cup:** Shownigan Lake Sch & Victoria City Canada (K Light/B Rutledge/A Byrnes/J Wetzel/M Howard/D Seiterle/A Kreek/K Hamilton/cox B Price) bt Australian Institute of Sport Australia by 1.25 lengths, time 6-24.

**Remenham Challenge Cup:** Dortmund Rowing Center Germany (J Wartenburg/M Sinnig/C Gerling/M Schmude/L Wech/M Derlien/N Zimmermann/E Hipler/cox A Ruppel) bt Thames & Leander by 1.5L, 7-22.

**Ladies’ Challenge Plate:** Harvard Univ USA (S Kotzeff/S Gawlik/J Medioli/H Rummel/W Boston/T Medaris/M McLane/G Kitovitz/cox J Hoy) bt Molesey & New York Athletic by 1L, 6-36.

**Thames Challenge Cup:** Leander (A Dax/E Barry/A Ardron/C Williamson/J Davidson/C Brereton/H Palmer/C Burkitt/cox S Richardson) bt Agecroft by 5L, 6-51.

**Temple Challenge Cup:** University of California Berkeley USA (J Pease/W Potter/N Guregian/B Shald/B Tufnell/N Zunic/W Dean/S Engel/cox Z Vlahos) bt Cornell University USA by 1.25L, 6-45.

**Princess Elizabeth Challenge Cup:** Shrewsbury Sch (E Davies/E Whitehead/J Davenport/L Taylor/T Hammer/P Lapage/S Duncan/R Putnam/cox D Turner) bt Brentwood College Canada by one foot, 6-54.

**Queen Mother Challenge Cup:** AZS Gdansk & AZS Szczecin Poland (K Wasielewski/M Kolbowicz/M Jelinski/A Korol) bt Brentwood College & Univ of Victoria Canada by 0.5L, 6-53.

**Princess Grace Challenge Cup:** South Australian Inst of Sport ‘B’ Australia (M Houston/A Bradley/K Hore/A Halliday) bt Hollandia Roeclub Holland easily, 7-49.

## Missing in action

If you were a rowing photographer covering World Cup events for national federations, you would have a few basics on your work check-list. Camera...check; lenses – the bigger the better...check; waterproof clothes...check; airline ticket...check; freebie banquet invitation(s)...check; passport...XX.

Yes, that was the fate for one of rowing's best-known photographers, Peter Spurrier, as he made final preparations to attend the Linz World Cup earlier this year.

And it is not as if Peter doesn't take care of his passport. He has is the proud owner of one of the rather smart Atlanta Olympics accreditation holders, capable of securely holding a week's supply of t-shirts, as well as various vital documents. In Peter's case, before Linz this included: his previous out-of-date passport (!); 200 Euros; 50 US dollars; probably next week's winning lottery ticket; and his current passport.

Peter's troubles seem to have started when he went off-piste to cover a sport other than rowing. Just before Linz, he had spent some time at Twickenham covering rugby sevens and the final stages of the Churchill Cup. This involved him going through the type of stringent security checks that have become all too familiar for journos and others at major sporting venues. And – allegedly – it would appear that one of the keener security staff members went to the trouble of burrowing through Peter's camera-bag to find the accreditation holder, and leave everything intact, except for Peter's current passport.

However, Peter shouldn't worry, clearly by ignoring the dollars, the Euros and the t-shirts, the proud new owner of Peter's passport has no intention of using it. He or she will probably just want to admire the quality of the passport photograph.

*Jimmy McHaggerty*

« below the senior squad. Several are likely to feature in the Under-23 team when it is announced next week.

## SCHOOLBOYS HIT HEADLINES

The draw for the Princess Elizabeth schoolboy eights felt like one of the toughest for a while, but also the most unpredictable. When Sunday came to a close, it had produced some of the best racing of the regatta.

In the British camps, honours so far this year had been shared between Shrewsbury (Schools' Head winners) and Eton (National Schools champions), with Radley and Abingdon always snapping at their heels. The overseas contingent included the Canadian school champions (Brentwood), US top two (Thomas Jefferson High School and Winter Park), and Australian unknowns St Ignatius College/Riverview, over on something of a jolly.

**T**he first shock for the Stewards came when St Ignatius put out the selected US crew Winter Park. There's no blame for overlooking the Australian schoolboys, whose form had only been in the 2nd/3rd zone this year. But they looked like potential champions, and a strong threat in the top half of the draw. Roll on to Saturday, by which time Shrewsbury had defeated Abingdon, and Eton got rid of the Australian Ignatius crew. The semi-finals were all about power, Brentwood putting Eton firmly on the back foot, and then Shrewsbury doing the same to Radley and making the 3-second margin between them at National Schools look like a mistake.

So, Brits against Canadians in the final. Shrewsbury in the bizarre position of having every single GB school supporter cheering for them, even Etonians, since the job they had to

do was so hard. Brentwood, higher in the draw, had Berks, and had already shown themselves pretty spanking fast. The best you could say was that against similar opposition, Brentwood and Shrewsbury were similar speeds early on. But it was still going to be a tall order for the English eight, with significant stream still flowing.

The race, when it came, was guts personified from both crews. Last race before tea, and the entire crowd was glued to the riverbanks. Brentwood went ahead early, but not by much. At the 3/4 mile, they had a margin of two foot, both crews right on their limits. By the Mile-post Shrewsbury had taken a quarter-length lead during their own advantage point, but the real test was to come.

Brentwood surged back as the station came in their favour, and the two entered the Enclosures pretty evenly matched. Up went the finish sprints, and crossing the line nobody could call it. A pause, the riverbank holding its breath. Finally the verdict, and a very popular one for the crowd. The trophy to Shrewsbury, by an incredible single foot. Given that in close races the stream advantage on Berks in the Enclosures was probably helping by around a length, impressive stuff.

The Fawley junior quads were also highly competitive, as usual some of the best racing coming on the Saturday when their quarterfinals and semifinals top and tail the day. Peterborough City & Star branded themselves the come-back kids, coming from behind for the second and third times in the week - their other race was a 3-foot nailbiter against Yarm & Grange schools. But on the Sunday Henley & Maidenhead, including February trials winner Phil Clapp and three others from the »

**Men's Quadruple Sculls:** Leander & London (S Jones/R Williams/C Bartley/D Currie) bt Tideway Scullers by 0.5L, 6-59.

**Fawley Challenge Cup:** Henley & Maidenhead (A Ford/A Walker/P Clapp/C Clark) bt Peterborough City & Star easily, 7-35.

**Stewards' Challenge Cup:** Leander & Molesey (S Williams/P Reed/T James/A Triggs Hodge) bt Brentwood College & Shawnigan Lake Sch Canada by 2.25L, 7-14.

**Visitors' Challenge Cup:** Leander (D Marett/N Clark/T Wilkinson/T Burton) bt Reading Univ & Agecroft easily, 7-14.

**Wyfold Challenge Cup:** 1829 (A Dunn/D Perkins/B Smith/M Smith) bt London 'A' by 0.3L, 7-24.

**Britannia Challenge Cup:** York City (W Todd/A Wilkinson/T Ransley/D Hefferman/cox

H Smalman-Smith) bt Henley 'A' by 1L, 7-39.

**Prince Albert Challenge Cup:** University of London 'A' (M Neame/R Irving/C Nichol/N Reilly-O'Donnell/cox M Eldridge) bt Goldie by 1.5L, 7-42.

**Double Sculls Challenge Cup:** Veslaski Klub Bled Slovenia (L Spik/I Cop) bt WTW Warszawa & AZS Torun Poland by 5L, 7-33.

**Silver Goblets & Nickalls' Challenge Cup:** Trident South Africa (R Di Clemente & D Cech) bt Krefelder & Undine Germany by 2.75L, 7-44.

**Diamond Challenge Sculls:** A Campbell (Tideway Scullers) bt M Drysdale (West End RC New Zealand) by 1.25L, 8-04.

**Princess Royal Challenge Cup:** M Guerette (Radcliffe Crew USA) bt J Goldsack (Wallingford) easily, 9-24.

« top eight scullers, had it all their way. No come-back miracle for Peterborough this time, perhaps due to exhaustion, and an 'easily' verdict for the Thames composite. But it was the first British win in three years, and the event as a whole gave welcome evidence not only that junior sculling is thriving, but also that finding decent crew combinations is becoming easier or at least more expert.

## THRILLS & SPILLS FOR FOURS

1829, the club for ex-Oxford and Cambridge Blues and reserves, had two crews at Henley, serious efforts at winning the coxed and coxless club fours. The Brit Cup crew was knocked out by finalists Henley, but the Wyfold quartet made it through to Sunday, where they faced London 'A'. All sorts of problems dogged the start, from junk on the course which caused a small delay, to a problem with London's rudder or fin.

Repairs forced a rescheduling nearly an hour later, at which point 1829 charged off and led right up the course. Game over? Not quite, because as 1829 wobbled a little coming into the Enclosures, London began a massive sprint to 45 strokes a minute, flying back into contention. 1829 veered a little, getting dangerously close to the booms, and a mishap looked possible. Fantastic steering from stroke Matt Smith kept them clear, and they rallied to hold off London's challenge and take the club's first ever Henley trophy (pictured below).

The Brit Cup was a first too, for York City in the last race of Sunday. York had looked quicker than Henley in their earlier races, but it is always difficult to tell when crews are wisely saving their beans for the weekend. Henley had the tougher semi-final, rowing 1829 down while York had a cushion of more than a length of

clear water over Leander. No surprise then to find Henley unable to make a race of it in the final: "we had no legs left" was the comment from one Henley oarsman. They did have a go in the Stewards, but York easily held them off. A very different experience for the north-eastern crew from the previous year, when four out of five of the York City crew had lost to the Army in the final.

The Visitors' fours pitted the Reading/Agecroft composite which included indoor rowing powerhouse and European erg champion Phil Turnham. The Reading University high performance group has been going from strength to strength, and it was no surprise to see such a crew in the final. Leander, however, had speed and experience on their side, took three lengths by the time they reached the Farm, and could stroll to an 'easily' win by the finish. That capped off a series of three wins in a row for middle pair Tom Wilkinson and Nick Clark, while stroke and bowmen Tommy Burton and Dan Marett have now racked up a staggering 13 Visitors' medals between them.

**T**he Prince Albert student coxed fours is the most recent event to be added to the regatta programme, after the Britannia was split in 2004 to separate clubs and universities. University of London's quintet beat Goldie by a length and a half, putting the bows of the aptly-monikered 'Rusty Williams' (after their perennial coach, and boat-named using cheap Italian fizz to save money on champagne) over the line first.

With 2006 losing finalists Cameron Nichol and Rob Irving were Matt Neame, and junior world and Youth Olympics gold medallist Nathan Reilly O'Donnell, whose former pairs partner Tom Lucy is now busy in the GB »

50 years on at Henley

## The bank that beat the world

The only occasion when a bank won an event at Henley was 50 years ago when National Provincial Bank won the Wyfold, beating Putney Town in the final. The same four — Creighton Redman, Doug Stuart, Keith Shakell and Roger Pope — were also in the bank's eight which lost the final of the Thames Cup to Princeton — the last time that the same crew reached finals of the Wyfold and Thames. The other members of the eight were Keith Coates, Alan Banks, Dave Young, Dick Pressland and cox Anthony Grant (average weight 10 stone 13 lbs).

Both crews were unbeaten by a British crew, and the four went on to represent GB at the European championships in Duisburg where, averaging 11 stone, they came sixth in the final. When the German sculler von Fersen insulted them by decrying the great British nation for having such a poor showing, a young Aussie by the name of Mackenzie came to the rescue. 'Get out ya Kraut,' he told von Fersen, but turned on the Poms in the shower: 'Well, you are little buggers, aren't ya?'

In 1957 the Nat Prov rowed out of the Priory Boathouse in Hammersmith, now the HQ of the ARA. Taught technique by Ernie Arlett, the club's boatman who resigned in 1956 and later gained renown by bringing his upstart Northeastern University of Boston, USA, to Henley and winning the Grand, they engaged the former RAF oarsman Colin Porter, who lived in a houseboat moored to their pontoon, as coach.

Porter was a hard taskmaster, describing himself as a trainer, not a coach, and maintaining that any fool could row well when fresh, so the real work began when the men were exhausted. The eight did 1000 miles in training, and the four an additional 36 racing at regattas. He told »



## PUT YOUR BACKS INTO IT BOYS

*Top to bottom and left to right:*

*Celebrating 1829 Boat Club's first ever Henley Royal Regatta win -*

*Ben Smith, coach Neil Lambert, Andrew Dunn, Matt Smith and Dan Perkins add an extra layer of support to the 160-year-old Wyfold Challenge Cup trophy.*

*Photo courtesy of Neil Lambert.*

« them they could win one or other of the Thames and Wyfold and the British trials. Doug Stuart, who has written a memoir of the goings on for the crew's 50-year reunion at Henley, recalls Porter sending them on a training run from Hammersmith to Turk's boathouse at Kingston and back. 'It's only 17 miles,' Porter said. Stuart and Shakell worked in the same City branch of the bank and were in the habit of trying to beat the elevator from the ground floor to the fourth floor canteen using the staircase, but after this run they had to spend the next week walking up the stairs backwards.

*Doug Stuart*

*1957 and All That — a personal account of the events of that year, by Doug Stuart, available from Way's Bookshop, Friday Street, Henley-on-Thames.*

## BARJees honoured

Mike Rosewell became the 2007 Journalist of the Year at the annual British Association of Rowing Journalists (BARJ) awards at the River & Rowing Museum on Henley eve.

Rosewell, who is also the rowing correspondent of the *Times*, received it for his weekly contributions to the *Oxford Times* and other local paper, and was awarded the Geoffrey Page Memorial Quill.

The Hammer Smith Award for keeping the members amused went to the *Eton Mess*, the unofficial daily of the 2006 world championships. Pens were presented to the joint editors, Rachel Quarrell and Chris Dodd.

Three people were made Friends of BARJ for assistance to journalists in the course of their work — Pam Cole, the accommodation wizard of Henley Royal Regatta, Jane White who hosted a BARJ party for the press at the Eton world championships, and Chas Newens, waterman, launch provider and Tideway guru.

« men's eight.

## SERIOUS BIG-BOAT SPEED

The fastest club-level events at Henley are the quads and eights, and as usual their racing thrilled the crowds. Let's get the Temple out of the way first - by Friday evening all illusions that a British university would grab the Cup were shattered, and bets were being placed as to which had more up their sleeves out of Cornell (bulked-up lightweights) and Cal (heavyweight freshmen).

Colgate, who had been forced to qualify, threatened to become that Stewards' embarrassment, a qualifier who wins. But Cornell rowed back through them to deal with that threat on the Saturday, and then went up for the Cup on Sunday, a direct replay of last year's semis, which Cornell had won.

This time it wasn't that much of a contest - while the verdict was only 1.25 lengths, Cal never looked seriously threatened, and were sitting chilled out at rate 33 halfway up the course. Well they do like rating low and have never had to sprint, their coach explained. Before getting too agonised about the admittedly huge resources these US universities throw at their rowing programmes, it's worth pondering that three of the Cal crew were complete novices ('walk-ons') at the start of this academic year, no rowing experience at all.

The Thames Cup was talked about as Leander's for the asking right at the start of the regatta, after their strong showing in the summer racing. But others had alternative plans, including Agecroft, senior 1 winners at the Metropolitan a month earlier. Among their coaching team has been 2006 'secret weapon' and ex-GB lightweight Marysh Chmiel, and Sydney Olympic champion eights coach Martin McElroy.

Seeing off Krefelder, the northern Rhine club who had dumped out London 'A', and then Tideway Scullers, Agecroft entered the final ready for anything. But Leander were indeed too strong, and won by a handy five lengths.

Not so the Ladies' Plate race, where although the verdict went Harvard's way, things were a bit tighter. Molesey and New York Athletic was a collection of highly experienced Henley racers, all of whom have wins or medals at Henley,

the worlds, the Boat Race or the Olympics (and in some cases all four).

The younger and arguably fitter Harvard always had the upper hand in the final, and won by a length, but over the line a hand shot up from the Molesey boat to complain about Harvard's steering washing them down. Classy to have a Steward to make your protest (it was Jonny Searle, who along with his brother Greg is a member of Henley's elite of elites.) No chance, said umpire Fred Smallbone, and Harvard collected their fifth Henley trophy in six years.

Smallbone was also active in the men's quads, during the quarter-final in which University of London & Imperial beat Henley. Annoyed about something, apparently their lack of speedy reactions to his warnings, La Smallbone chased UL/Imperial after the finish line and berated them loudly and publicly from his umpire's launch. Snatches of "if you ever do that again I'll..." were drowned by the PA system, but he was clearly upset, though he did award them the win. It's not obvious how much Smallbone was taking account of the difficulties faced by inexperienced quads steersmen in a fierce cross-win: plenty of crews were overcorrecting and veering around under the testing conditions.

Come the final, the London & Leander lightweights, the GB national lightweight quad, had already beaten UL & Imperial and so went up against Tideway Scullers. Scullers' incorporation of indoor rowing champion Graham Benton into the crew is to be commended, and they had a three-stone advantage which saw them pick up the lead quickly off the start. But some highly accomplished sculling took LRC/Leander into the lead through the second quarter of the race, and the lightweights had a lead of a length by Fawley.

The question was whether they could hold off the big Scullers guns, and as the lead eroded to a canvas by Remenham it was looking doubtful. The lightweights pulled away into the Enclosures though, but just as they got to a 2/3 length lead the Scullers' sprint began and they had to raise again. This they did to win by half a length, with a superb sprint of their own. The lightweight quad is one of the bottom lightweight crews in the GB team, but things look good for them to do well internationally if they can out-race good heavyweights this way.

## Henley Souvenirs

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## Body and soul

*Voice eats out in Henley, the centre of the rowing universe with GB rowers Katie Greves and Tom Solesbury*

### Where to take your partner

Impress your amour by taking a romantic drive out of Henley to Satwell where you will find Anthony Worrall-Thompson's pub, The Lamb. The food is superb and almost everything on the menu is under a tenner – the sausage and mash is top notch! At lunchtime you will be able to take advantage of their 'fodder for a fiver' offer (it does what it says on the tin). There is a different dish each weekday from mixed meat chilli con carne (Wednesday) to fish and chips (Friday). There is a good sized garden so if the weather is good you can soak up the rays while you enjoy your lunch.

### Where to take your coach

If you're not feeling too adventurous, Pizza Express [Market Place] and Caffè Uno [Hart St] offer their standard reasonably priced menus. Caffè Uno has a pleasant garden and offers two main courses for the price of one if you take along a voucher from the back of a car park ticket issued in the Waitrose or Greys Road car parks.

### Where to take your parents

Well, since they will probably be paying, allow them to splash out on some fine fish at Loch Fyne [Market Place]. If you're not a fish-lover, try the Little Angel pub [Remenham Lane/Hill]. It's a bit more expensive than standard pub prices, but the food is very good, the staff are friendly and the atmosphere is relaxing. The menus are different for lunch and dinner. We particularly recommend the Sunday roast, and defy you to find a better burger and chips (lunchtimes) although it is a bit pricey at £10.



*John Beattie, Clive Kennedy-Burns, Sir Steve Redgrave and Ian McNuff win at Henley Veteran's*

## Double-O-Scullers

**W**hat to say about the Diamonds? Stonking racing, worthy of the history books, every stroke gripping from start to finish. The route to the final differed for the two scullers, Alan Campbell served up with Dan Janes (Notts Uni), Peter Hardcastle (Australian ex-international) and Jamie Schroeder (USA's finest, but still slower than Alan), all relatively straightforward.

Mahe by contrast met Germany's idiosyncratic muscleman Marcel Hacker in the semi-final. Drysdale, the world's fastest ever single sculler, usually beats Hacker, but not always, and not easily. They knocked chunks out of one another like prize-fighters for more than a mile before Hacker had a crisis of confidence which lost him precious ground, and gave Drysdale the opportunity to move away.

Nice and wearing for Kiwi legs, thought the Campbell supporters smugly. But never underestimate Drysdale. He may not sprint as fast as Campbell, but he is double world champion, has superb mid-race pace, and can turn it on when it matters. Internationally, since Campbell began to race the GB single, Drysdale has always had the upper hand. If Alan is ever going to win the Olympic gold he so badly wants, he needed to win this final.

Come Sunday, wind and stream had dropped substantially, and although the difference between the stations was still evident, especially up the Enclosures, it was lower than earlier in the week. "It's to the death", was the prediction of Campbell's coach Bill Barry, before the race. There is no doubting that Campbell had all the advantages he could have asked for. Berkshire station, favouring his fast start and finish, the home crowd right next to him, and an easier

semi-final day. But advantages alone do not win Henley medals: effort does. And Drysdale is scarily good at coming back from being down. One strong move at the right time in mid-race, and Campbell could say goodbye to his second pineapple goblet.

It was all business at the start, neither sculler looking at the other, just adjusting continuously to stay straight in the current. Not much wind, after the gales of Friday, but still a visible stream round the embedded posts holding the start pontoons. A last correction, and they were off. Drysdale knows all about Campbell's fiery start, and produced a stormer of his own - Campbell 47, Drysdale 45 - but it was no surprise given station and natural strengths to find Alan's bow ahead by a smidge at the end of the island. A definitive and rhythmic stride followed, and set Campbell up for a useful early lead. But then the real work began.

**A**ll you could see on the water was two top-of-the-line scullers plugging away, an almost silent poem of rowing motion, churning the water up ahead of the launch bows. Less visible were the blows they were trading, push after push punching into the water. Drysdale, befitting his power and raw speed, was making the moves most of the way, constantly trying to get one in under Campbell's guard and lever himself ahead.

Campbell's job was to match the efforts, minimise their effect, and do his damndest to keep his bows in front, waiting for the last 500m where he has always been able to stay on terms with the Kiwi. I have never seen him exerting so hard for so long. The occasional wobbles betrayed how close to his limit Campbell was, but he controlled what would »

## Where to carb out with the crew

After a tough race you need a good feed and there is nowhere better than Zizzi [Hart St] which specialises in decent size portions of tasty pizza and pasta – so you won't have any trouble getting in those much needed carbs! Our favourite starter is the garlic pizza bread with mozzarella and caramelised onions. It's big enough to share or the perfect dish for one if you're looking to fill up. Or there's the Royal China [Duke St] which offers all you can eat Chinese food – you pick whatever you want from the menu rather than helping yourself from a buffet. At just under £14 per person in the evening it's a fairly expensive option as drinks aren't cheap, but it's worth bearing in mind that the price is reduced to £6 at lunchtime.

### Voice adds

Greek food at the Green Olive [Market Place], Nepalese at the Himalaya [Reading Rd], Thai at the Thai Orchard [Hart St], breakfasts at Field [Station Rd] or Tubbies [station], sandwiches and picnics from Waitrose [Bell St/Kings Rd], Boots [Bell St], Tesco [far out on Reading Rd], the WI [St Mary's Church].

Culture vultures should lunch and shop at the River & Rowing Museum [Mill Meadows, open 10 am to 5.30 pm]. Visit also the best rowing bookshop in the world, Way's [Friday Street].

### Henley events in the next year:

**2007**  
4 Aug Henley Town & Visitors  
28 Oct Upper Thames Fours & Small Boats Head  
17 Nov Henley LD Sculls  
**2008**  
26 Jan Henley Fours Head  
2 Feb Henley Junior Head  
5 Mar National Junior Sculling Head  
23 Mar Henley Boat Races  
20-22 Jun Henley Women's Regatta  
27 Jun HRR qualifying races  
2-6 Jul Henley Royal Regatta  
10-11 Henley Veteran Regatta

« have been a shipwreck for most other scullers, and pushed on.

“He kept going all the way”, said Campbell after the race. “I really had to dig deep in the middle - he wouldn't give up.” But dig Campbell did - possibly deeper than he has ever done in a public race - and may have pushed through a boundary he didn't realise he had. Carefully coached to use every inch of stream, he veered towards Bucks as the bank approached near Fawley, not to wash Drysdale down but to minimise the effect of being the only one mid-stream. Eventually warned by the umpire, Campbell obediently moved back, but it gave him the respite he needed, not having to beat both stream and Kiwi pushes at the same time. As he went, Drysdale took a look, shoved again, and snatched back a few feet, but was still sitting the best part of a length down.

**I**nto the Enclosures, the two were back on their stations, and now was Drysdale's chance to pull off some heroism. But Campbell could feel the line coming nearer, and knew he had the upper hand by a few feet. Roars of “Scullers, Scullers” cheered the two club-mates on their way from Upper Thames onwards. “I couldn't believe the noise”, said Campbell. “There were quite a few strokes taken by other people on the bank there.” The yells lifted both, but it was Campbell who charged towards the line, now sure of victory,

which he clinched by a length and a quarter.

“From racing on both sides, I definitely think that [Berks] is easier”, said Drysdale, magnanimous in defeat, with Campbell jumping about and trying to share the champagne with him. “But I love this one on one stuff. The Diamonds has been a great experience this year.” Meanwhile Campbell was still jumping about, and bear-hugging his coach, former Olympian Bill Barry. “I've got the best sculling coach in the whole world, so I have”, said the new Diamonds champion. “He told me what would happen and it did.” At that point Barry hinted that his protege might have earned a morning off training the next day, with Lucerne looming a week later.

Campbell will be the first to admit that beating Mahe under those conditions in the Diamonds is not the same as beating him during a world or world cup final. The men's singles is brewing up a storm of talent at the moment, and these two are only part of the picture. So far the leading light has been Ondrej Synek, the Czech who emerged from Chalupa's shadow after Athens and won the last two world cups. Olympic champion Olaf Tufte apparently has allergy problems, Swede Lassi Karonen is good but not on fire, and Hacker is great when he gets his head in order. It's getting difficult to know who will finish where when this lot line up together for the final.

## Maiden racing on the Thames

The grey skies cleared, the rain stayed away and the sun shone for the 5th Maidenhead Junior Regatta held on Sunday 21st May 2007.

12 rowing clubs and schools, 94 boys, 162 girls, 88 races, 13 finals, 200 burgers, 150 sausages and 500 metres upstream of the beautiful Thames stretch at Maidenhead combined to make a great day of junior racing at a special regatta. Special because, unlike most 'open' regattas, Maidenhead Junior Regatta can only be entered by crews that are beginners, or club-level crews, giving close racing and exciting finishes. All racing was side-by-side in quad sculls, for boys and girls aged 12-15.

Where a club didn't have enough juniors for a full quad, the regatta organisers helped clubs to make up composite scratch crews, to maximise participation for all the juniors. These scratch crews were only able to row together for the first time at the regatta itself, and so needed to perform especially well against more established combinations to make their way through the draw.

'Beginner' crews, many competing for the first time, were enthusiastically supported by proud parents both cheering the races and indulging in

the homemade cakes being sold for club funds. The heaviest task for adult club 'volunteers' was to demonstrate their own fitness by helping competitors lift the boats on and off the water. Maidenhead Junior Regatta is managed successfully by Piers Alington and his team and the club members who join in to make it happen on the day.

After a fabulous day of excitable and determined racing Maidenhead's club room was filled to capacity with chattering winning crews, coaches and parents. Each winner including the ever so important cox was presented with tankards by MRC's very own successful juniors Ally Brooks and Phil Clapp. Both Ally and Phil recently represented Great Britain at Munich Junior Regatta, and are shortly to attend junior final trials

A thank you received from Dragon School in Oxford summed the day up nicely. 'Thank you for a good day. I very much hope that we can become part of the 'regular crowd'. The feedback we have had has been very positive and all enjoyed themselves. I understand that our little ones despite their lack of expertise have been interrupting lessons consistently today with tales from the riverbank!'

# Rhapsody on the Charles

Why me, asked the Reverend Peter Gomes, chaplain to Harvard University, from the pulpit of St Mary's Church Henley at the regatta service on 7th July. Life is full of unsolved problems, and I am one of them. The small rotundish professor was in his element in such an ivory tower, a Black American surveying the almost 100 percent white flock which he held in the palm of his hand for half an hour, a twinkle in his eye. From up here, he said, you look good. You look as good as you think you do.

The Rev Gomes read out in full the letter from the Stewards inviting him to preach on the 400th anniversary of Harvard College, founded by a Southwark butcher called John Harvard. He read it out because he didn't understand a word, but he did remember being taken to Cambridge, Mass, by his mother as a small boy and seeing the boys in the boats. That's what was etched on his young mind.

He remarked that attendance by oarsmen at Harvard's Memorial Church seldom if ever occurs. Oarsmen never attend except to honour dead oarsmen. But he did eventually get to learn the mystery of rowing when one of his students offered to teach him, and he described his outing with the junior freshman crew as a rhapsody on

the Charles - until his oar struck him a blow in the chest. But he was initiated.

Crabbing, he said, was an illustration in search of a sermon. He recalled a famous president of Harvard, Charles Eliot, resisting the introduction of football on the grounds that it is based on deception and is not a game worthy of Harvard men. Mr Eliot said that rowing was the only sport fit for gentlemen, because it is individual talent subjugated to the common good.

He, Gomes, came back to the lesson of St John VI vv 16-21 (read earlier by Mike Sweeney, chairman of the regatta), which is that 'be not afraid' are the most important three words in the English language, because they apply to the fear of winning as well as the fear of losing. Be not afraid, he said, is a text for our times.

Besides, having looked down on the folks who look as good as they think they do, the Rev Professor Gomes was certainly not afraid. He was, he said, going to dine out on the experience for the rest of the days. From now on, every dinner party he was to attend would ring with the phrase 'when I was at Henley...'

*Christopher Dodd*

# Lightning quick at Dorney

**T**hunder storms failed to dampen spirits on Saturday 23 June, day one of the 2007 Marlow Regatta. Despite a short suspension in boating due to nearby thunder and lightning the Saturday regatta managed to start the last race two minutes early. Eton college came out on top with a total of 6 wins (J16, J16B, J15, J15B eights, Junior fours and pairs).

Crews from Australia, South Africa, the USA, Holland and Ireland joined Scottish and Welsh crews journeying to Dorney Lake, for a near-record entry of 439 crews.

A composite crew from Leander/Henley/Bristol University took the Grand Challenge Cup for elite eights from Cambridge University in 5:45.04. In the elite coxless fours Leander took the Senior Fours Challenge Cup ahead of the Royal Dutch Rowing Federation who pipped Reading by 0.31s for second.

The Borgnis Challenge Cup for elite coxed fours was won by Oxford Brookes, York City taking second by 0.33s from 1829 BC. Elite quads were won by a Tideway Scullers/Isis composite, while elite pairs and elite sculls were won by Neptune/St Michaels (Irl) and Peter Hardcastle

from Mosman RC (Aus) respectively.

Day two dawned overcast with intermittent showers, some heavy, but the day stayed generally dry. This was the first year of running a second day at Marlow Regatta. The morning's races were held over 2000m with the afternoon senior sprints over 1000m.

**T**he elite eights event produced a storming race between Cambridge University, two London crews and Eton College's first eight. At halfway Cambridge led London followed by Eton and the second London crew. They just held this lead at the line despite a huge finishing push from the London crew.

In the final of the elite coxless fours Reading University held off a strong challenge from the Royal Dutch Rowing Federation (Ned) to take the title. The elite coxed fours was a slugging match between York City BC and 1829 BC with the lead changing hands several times down the course. 1829 BC edged it at the line, winning it 0.35 seconds ahead. Marlow's Love-day twins beat Tideway Scullers to the elite doubles, and Jonny Logan of Clyde ARC took the lightweight singles.

## Commons trounce Lords

The revival of the Parliamentary Boat Race on Wednesday 23rd June saw four sets of crews take to a frisky Thames outside the Palace of Westminster terrace, cheered on by assorted dignitaries.

First to race were local juniors, the Royal Docks beating the Lea by half a length. Then a coastal race, well suited to the tricky conditions. Bexhill Veterans beat Bexhill Ladies by a length and a quarter.

In the third derby Embankment rivals Thames and London raced fine eights, the crews largely drawn from those able to sneak out of work for the afternoon. Despite having four strong bowsiders which made steering tricky, London beat Thames by a length and a third after much umpire semaphoring.

Finally the good and the great had a go: Lords vs Commons in the 1829 replica gigs. The Lords had Olympic medallist Lord Colin Moynihan promising to cox, as long as he didn't have to organise anything. But his crew's efforts, bolstered by some sneaky training help from Simon McCarthy at the Royal Docks facilities, were wasted at the start, where a crab gave the Commons an instant lead. The MPs capitalised, and romped away to win by two and a third lengths.

Lavishly sponsored by Siemens, the event yielded much free kit for all involved, and £5000 was raised for the Rowing Foundation and the Phillip Henman Foundation.

Di Ellis collected a large cardboard cheque for the charities, which stood almost bigger than her diminutive self. Everyone snacked on House of Commons refreshments (very lavish), and speeches were made promising to do it again next year.

And then it tipped it down.

*Baroness Hammer of Smith*

## HOLIDAY PLANNER

## July

13-15 World Cup, Lucerne  
 13-14 Henley Veteran's Regatta  
 14-15 Kingston Regatta  
 14-15 Burton Regatta CANCELLED  
 14-15 Llandaff Regatta  
 15 Bedford Quarts Sprint  
 16 GB v France J16, Nottingham  
 20-22 National Championships, Nottingham  
 21-22 Molesey Regatta  
 23 GB men + women camps (to August 10)  
 26-29 World U-23 Champs, Strathclyde  
 28 Home International, Cork, Ireland  
 28-29 Bewdley Regatta  
 28-29 St Neots Regatta  
 28 Staines Regatta  
 29 Burway Veteran & Junior Regatta

## August

3-5 Coupe de la Jeunesse, Varese  
 4 Henley Town & Visitors' Regatta  
 4 Sudbury Regatta  
 4 Warrington Regatta  
 5 Appledore & Instow Regatta  
 8-11 Junior World Champs, Beijing  
 11 Maidenhead Regatta  
 11 Tees Primary Adaptive Regatta  
 11 Paignton Regatta  
 11-12 Peterborough Summer Regatta  
 11-12 Stourpot Regatta  
 11-22 GB men+women pre-worlds camps (Aiguebelette & Varese)  
 18 Warwick Primary Regatta  
 18 Inverness Sprint Regatta  
 18-19 Oxford City Royal Regatta  
 25 Gloucester Regatta  
 25 Torbay Royal Regatta  
 26 Bristol Avon Regatta  
 26 Ross Veteran & Junior Regatta  
 26 Port of Bideford Regatta  
 26 Aberdeen Sprint Regatta  
 26-Sep 2 World Champs/Olympic qual, Munich  
 27 Ross Regatta  
 27 Northampton Regatta  
 30 Port of Dartmouth Royal Regatta

## September

6-9 World Masters, Zagreb  
 21-23 European Champs, Poznan

## RANT

## Who is your hero?

How many times have you heard rowers bemoaning the fact that football players get paid too much money, that golf or Formula 1 gets more television coverage than rowing? You may even have said it yourself. Maybe, however, we are the people who have allowed this situation to evolve.

Listen to any football fan and he or she will be able to tell you all about the members of their team, past results, future fixtures and so on, however, many rowers do not know the names of most of the top oarsman in this country never mind who the current world and Olympic champion in the various boat classes are.

Last year, I arranged for Ekaterina Karsten to visit my club - and to my amazement, most people I mentioned it to had no idea who she is (current world champion in single sculls, two-times Olympic champion, as well as many world titles and world cup wins).

Ask around your club - do your juniors competing in quads or doubles know who the current world champions in their boat class are, or which country they come from? Can they name them? Ask the senior members who regularly row in an eight who are the current Olympic champions, or who is in the GB eight?

Unless we who are active in the sport start to value our oarsmen and women, how can we expect the media to value them and give our sport more airtime? By giving recognition to these people, we will encourage bigger and richer sponsors to get involved, and whilst it is unlikely we will ever have million-pound transfers between clubs, we should at least get better funding as well as more interest and a better understanding from the general public. People may even start to realise there is more to rowing than the Boat Race and Henley Royal.

I don't understand how a crew can have real motivation without having another that they admire and aspire to be like. How can a rower really understand what it takes to be successful without knowing in detail what the top people in the sport go through, what their backgrounds are, what their training regimes are? It is only by being hungry for this information that we will see the media coverage increase, instead of the current situation where journalists' articles are being hacked to pieces and demoted to a tiny corner at the bottom of the page. Football supporters will certainly know all there is to know about their heroes, and if we are real fans of our sport, then so should we.

Lets all start to get the ball rolling - get every crew in your club to identify who the current world and Olympic champions are, and then find out who is or was in the crew. Use the web to find out as much as you can about them. Look at the crew selections for the next world cup and world championships. Try and visit some top events - cheap air travel makes it more possible to get to them. You can learn so much by watching top athletes race, and if you can't get there, then watch them on television or DVD. We saw the 'Redgrave' effect - now let's build on that, and find a few more Redgraves in the future.

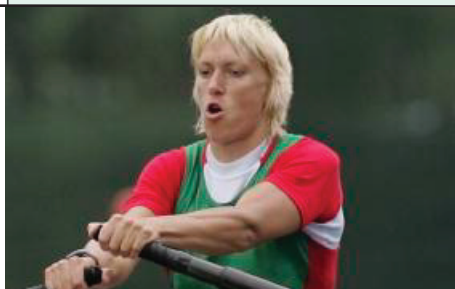
Now excuse me, I want to go and watch the DVD of the women's doubles final at Eton again- what a race! Of course - you know who won and are the current world champions - don't you?

*Karon Phillips contributed this issue's RANT. To have a go yourself, email [voice@rowingservice.com](mailto:voice@rowingservice.com). Kindly keep it short.*

## International identity crisis

Has anyone else noticed the growing resemblance between supreme single sculler Ekaterina Karsten, and Andy Triggs Hodge, double world champion coxless fours strokeman? Twins separated at birth, perhaps?

But both still heroes to the Voice.



Andy Triggs Hodge



Ekaterina Karsten-Khodotovich