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Cracknell a surprise stand-in

Thousands of rowers from across the UK and Europe descended on the river Thames last Saturday to compete in the 51st annual Fuller's Head of the River fours, which is raced over the Tideway course from Chiswick to Putney.

The weather was perfect for racing and 510 crews completed the 4.25-mile course in fours and quads.

Olympic rower James Cracknell made a surprise appearance, subbing into the Leander Elite coxed four, after one of the original crew was injured. Cracknell, who is leaving to row across the Atlantic with TV presenter Ben Fogle at the end of the month, has not rowed competitively since the Athens Olympics, but that was not a problem as his crew went on to win their event convincingly.

Leander also won the coxed fours Mark Hunter, Ian Lawson, Matt Langridge, Steve Rowbotham recording the quickest time of the day.

Local winners included Tideway Scullers School VII, who won the pennant for the leading junior coxless crew.

Crew members were ST Walker, DD Bream, T Longergan and S G Robinson and they were coached by Nick Rowett.

Richard Smith, Matthew Wells, Peter Wells, Lucas Dalglish and Christian Cormack of University of London BC IV, also based at Chiswick, were the fastest senior coxed four crew.

For full results see www.hor4s.org.uk

10:41am today

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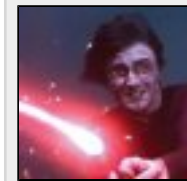
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