

Tees rowers shine at Fullere's Fours Head

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TEES Rowing Club dramatically raised the bar in the Fuller's Fours Head.

This is a major event on the rowing calendar which attracts over 450 crews of coxed and coxless fours, and coxless quad sculls, racing as a time trial over the same stretch of water as the University Boat Race.

This year Tees attained its highest-ever position, 14th overall place for Tees 1, the young quad of Alex Leigh, George Caines, Bob Hewitt and Chris Boddy, racing in the Senior 1 category, which is one level below Elite.

All of the crews placed higher were from Thames-based clubs and universities, making this the best performance by a club from the North.

As well as a high overall finishing position, the quad came second in their category to Imperial College, losing out on a pennant by only 22 seconds.

Three of the athletes in the quad are all training full time at Tees Rowing

Club, under the Amateur Rowing Association's World Class Start scheme.

Bob and Chris have been with the scheme at Tees for just over a year and have represented Great Britain at the Youth Olympics in Australia and the World Under 23 Championships.

They are now competing for places in the GB senior squad.

Also racing in the Senior 1 category were David Cooper, Hugh Pelham, Paul Buckworth and Johnny Cooper.

This crew are currently National Veteran Champions in both their age category and the one below, and raced with an average age of 43.

Despite this age disadvantage, they managed 101st place overall and eighth in their category.

In the Senior 2 category, the crew of Michael Wood, Darren Cooper (also on the WCS scheme), Piers Dixon and Chris Black came 47th overall, and tenth out of the 47 crews in their category.

The fourth Tees crew also competed in the senior 2 category, gaining relative newcomer to the sport Lee Fisher some valuable experience.

He and more experienced crew members Rob Cree, Paul Leggott and Andrew Walker returned a respectable 34th in their category, 181st overall.

Some ex-international oarsmen, now veterans, raced the following day over the same stretch of water in the Veteran Fours Head, which attracted 125 entries this year.

The Veteran D crew of Steve Leigh, Paul Stiller, David Cooper and Tony Stocking came 19th overall and third in their event, just 14 seconds behind winners Thames/Upper Thames.

The crew achieved this despite David having raced the previous day in the Fullers Fours Head while Tony had also competed at a North-east event.

Tees RC president John Green was recently awarded by the Northern Rowing Council for having the most individual impact on a club in the region.

He has been instrumental in integrating the World Class Start and Potential scheme within the club, as well as leading successful applications for vital grant funding to commence replacement of an ageing fleet.

Tees RC would be interested in any sponsorship proposals. Interested parties should contact John directly via the club website on [www.](http://www.teesrowingclub.co.uk)

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