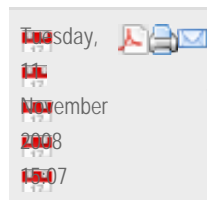




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Coach Steele Debunked at ICBC Annual Dinner



Four's Head of the River 2008; Similar sensations to the headwind felt at this year's Four's Head of the River Race were reported in the early hours of Sunday morning in the aftermath of ICBC's Annual Dinner. Over 500 boats competed in the first main stream race of the season with ICBC contributing 40 rowers and three coxes. ICBC performed well across the board coming in the top five in four of the six entered events. A successful year's racing was celebrated that night at the annual club dinner in Knightsbridge. Beijing Olympic Gold Medallist Andy Triggs-Hodge [GBR Mens Coxless Four] was guest speaker and had the crowd clinging to his every word in a speech that will resonate in the hearts of ICBC members for years to come.



Despite wind, rain and cold conditions the standard of racing was very high in this year's Four's Head of the River Race. The overall winning crew was Tideway Scullers I in the Elite 4x- with a crew packed with Beijing tans. The excess weight in the form of Olympic ego was balanced by head coach Tom Gale

taking the bow seat and steering the crew to victory in 18:35.65. ICBC's top result was in the Elite Lwt 4x-. Adam Freeman-Pask finished second in the event for Collegio Imperiale and 8th overall in the head. In the same category Gordon, Docherty, Gillies and Wedlake came 5th.

In the Sen1 4- Tietz, Goodier, Cadoux-Hudson and Todd came 3rd/11. A shaken Todd recalls the turning point: 'The race was going exceptionally well until Harrods with myself and Ole showing that pair's head winning form. It was then that Cadoux-Hudson caught his second crab of the morning and we realised he was chomping at the bit to take the Golden Bucket. This salted my game slightly and as the headwind set in I thought that Hislop probably had the right idea sitting on the bank.'

Two boats were entered in the Sen2 4-: Imperial VI (Bellion, Brown, Merrick-Cole, Yerrell) and Imperial V (Davey, McLaughlin, Palmer, Lamouroux). Imperial VI came away the fastest of the two coming 17th/44, just over a second ahead of Imperial V (19th/44).

A clash occurred during Imperial VI's race just past Chiswick Eyot when the IC crew were gaining on Curlew II. Two lengths of clear water separated the crews but Curlew refused to give way to the overtaking IC crew, despite polite requests from seat 2. Curlew then thought it best to ease as Imperial came upon them on the overlap and both boats came to a halt. Precious time was lost as the crews disentangled themselves. The IC crew regained form and according to strokeman Bellion 'scythed through crews like a knife through hot butter'. Imperial VI were horrified to later discover they had been issued a 5 second time penalty for 'Fouling another crew while overtaking', bringing untold shame upon the club.

Iain Palmer (not Julien) had the unenviable task of steering Imperial V past incompetent crews. Sargeant Palms later reported numerous points throughout the race where 'evasive action had to be employed' resulting in some last minute hand-brake turns to the tune of bridge marshalls yelling 'STAY OUTSIDE THE BUOY', largely ignored by charging crews.

In the coxed events the mens Sen3 4+ of Seward, Winchester, Bell and Mayall coxed by Henry Fieldman came 3rd/48 surviving early scares of being overtaken by a schoolboy crew. Meanwhile Dick, Zammit, Arnott and Carrington came 14th in the same event.

A series of illnesses and injuries resulted in two women's crews having to race for time only since the substitution limit was reached. This was most disappointing for the coxed four Imperial XI (Hart, Thompson, Graham, Pyke [Molesey]) whose time was fastest and would have won their event if not for the technicality. The ICBC crew overtook Imperial College Medics within the first 100 metres and finished almost 2 ½ minutes before them. In a tribute to George Whittaker and his bulging quads the call of 'Go now on the Whittakers - Push for 10' was employed when side by side on other crews. In the quadruple sculls, Imperial College VIII was stroked by Jenny Forrester making her last appearance racing for ICBC. We are assured it will not be her last appearance in lycra.

With racing over, many crewmembers took to the embankment searching for better success in the pub stretcher run. The only recollection of such an event being the 'I survived the Leprechaun run t-shirts' found the following day. The celebration advanced to formal wear in the evening for the Annual ICBC Dinner held at the Rembrandt Hotel in Knightsbridge. Despite keeping brussel sprouts off the menu, food still became airborne with the odd potato seen flying across the room... for some reason in the general direction of Freeman-Pask. Unfortunately Adam Seward's accuracy in the age-old skill of potato fork slinging has yet to be mastered and our model guest speaker was on the receiving end of the reject veg. Seward felt the full force of the Olympic hand and was swiftly buttered in the face by Triggs-Hodge.

The annual club awards were distributed with Winny coming away with the Golden Boot for his steering skills and Ben Newland collecting the Golden Condom, also for his steering skills. Dan Cadoux-Hudson accepted the Golden Bucket while Tom Sutherland received the Man's Man award. Two new inaugural awards were introduced this year: 'The Silver Surfer' for most wash created by a launch was hotly contested by Nigel Atkins but went to Chicken in the end. 'The Duffy Award' for being as tough as nails was presented to Press Officer Duffy. Not to be biased, but this is clearly the best award. Officer Duffy is particularly appreciative of the free lifetime club membership that accompanies said award.

Triggs-Hodge was allotted 15 minutes to inspire us all to Olympic glory... but we were quickly informed it's fairly unlikely any of us will get to the Olympics. Instead Triggs-Hodge took the opportunity to enlighten us about past Molesey crew mate and new ICBC coach Brian Steele. As a favour to humanity the shocking revelations will not be published. Gasps of horror spread throughout the hall as Steele withdrew under a napkin. We were thankful the meal was over and neither trifle nor pepper had appeared on the menu. Steele failed to report for coaching duties on Tuesday morning, still reeling from the sensational exposé.

The party continued to Zoo Bar in Piccadilly where fortunately crutches were accepted in the cloakroom. Triggs-Hodge was soon spotted waving his medal around the dancefloor before spending the rest of the night discussing environmental issues with Captain Erica Thompson. Thompson had been conveniently seated next to the Olympian for the duration of the meal due to an 'accidental typo' on the seating plan. Email addresses were reportedly exchanged, apparently in the interest of further research. The night passed in a blur of synthesized trance beats and extreme dancing: UT1, with some top squad members complaining of intense thigh pole burn afterwards. There was no training on Sunday and most club members were not seen until late Monday afternoon. This was the most successful Annual Club Dinner ICBC has had under Head Coach Steve Trapmore and many thanks are due to all involved in the organisation, especially to Social Secretary John Davey for a highly enjoyable night.

by Christina Duffy

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