

# Curlew Newsletter

Start of Head Season Edition



Fours Head Crew Announcement

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Pictured Dev Men's 8+ @ Docklands Head



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# Introducing Fours Head Crews

## From the Women's Captains Katriona Blomberg and Kamile Matulenaite.

The runup to Fours Head has been strong for the women's squad. Since September we have had a small but committed core of female rowers who have put in the hours and worked hard on their fitness and technique – we've already had a couple of 2k PBs this season! Upper Thames Autumn Head was a solid reintroduction to the racing season, and Docklands Head brought a great confidence boost, with a win (and fastest women's boat of the day) in the W8+, while our Fours Head crew posted the fastest W4- time (sadly not enough competition for a medal, though they also beat a few men's 4s!). Some great sessions have given us high hopes for a good result this weekend, and it is our pleasure to announce the Fours Head 2019 crew:

**Stroke: Anita Jeff**

**3: Kamile Matulenaite**

**2: Emily Wilsher**

**Bow: Katriona Blomberg**

## Men's Captain Marcus Yarwood introducing the two men's crews for this Saturday.

### First 4-

**Stroke: Tom Weekes**

Tom has plenty of experience in the coxless four, racing in the Wyfold Challenge Cup for Curlew RC in the summer.

**3: Ben Holt**

New recruit Ben brings a winning mentality to the crew, having previously rowed for Leander and Newcastle University.

**2: Marcus Yarwood**

Marcus will be making the calls on Saturday, ensuring his crew keep focus and get the legs pumping.

**Bow: Felix Hemsted**

As steersman, Felix will be doing his homework in the run up to the race to ensure the best line on the Tideway course.

## Vets Squad Men's 4- :

**Bow: Chris Hogg**

After a somewhat extended sabbatical from the sport (10 years!) Chris is making a return to rowing in his original club colours and a renewed hunger for some silverware. Chris is also steering the boat.

**3: James Hasler**

'Sparra' - or James as he's also known. The big man in the 2 seat making the vital calls for the boat, will be relying on over 20 years of experience and 'back of his hand' knowledge of the tideway course to get us over the line

**2: Andrew Burton**

Despite being new to bowside and it being only his second full season at Curlew, the former Marlow man will be looking to build on previous success at British Masters and a solid performance in last year's vets fours head

**Stroke: Sean Delaney**

After a foolhardy stint in the senior squad at the end of last season, Sean returns to the vets squad with a renewed appreciation for the one water session and one erg-a-week vets training plan. He'll be trying to set some sort of rhythm too.

## **From Development Women's Captain Claire Postles.**

After the restructure of the Dev Squad earlier in the year, the intermediate women's squad has been transformed. Since their first painful 2k test as a squad in September, they have increasingly trained together and worked to develop their confidence as a racing crew. Out of that squad, our Vets Fours Head crew has been particularly committed; they have demonstrated a readiness to improve as individuals and a determination to work better together as a crew - they've put in more hours on the water and at the gym than almost anyone else. The whole crew have progressed from Curlew's Learn to Row programme and only really started racing this summer. For three of them, this will be their first-time rowing on the Tideway. Despite this, they go into this race much more confident and comfortable than they have ever done before; so confident are they, that no opposition has been brave enough to show up to the start line.

We're very proud to announce the Vets Fours Head 2019 crew:

### **Stroke: Maisie Cottell-Richards**

She is at stroke and is our most experienced crew member. She learned to row with Curlew and joined the Devs in 2018. This is her second time doing Vets Fours Head, so her experience and general sense of calm will keep everyone in the crew collected.

### **3: Christina Tsechlidou**

She learned to row at Curlew in 2017 and joined the Devs in 2018. A late addition to the crew, no one has worked harder to improve and prepare for this race. This will be her first-time rowing on the Tideway, but as the fittest member of the crew, she'll outlast everyone else.

### **2: Darci Dutcher**

Darci is our newest crew member. She learned to row at Curlew this year but very quickly became a valued member of the dev women's racing crew. She'll be flying in from Barcelona to race with the crew.

### **Bow: Charlie Woolley**

Charlie will be steering and making the calls from bow seat. She learned to row at Curlew last year and has already steered the dev women at several races this summer. This will be her first-time steering on the Tideway.

Unfortunately, due to the heavy water flowing down the Thames Fours Head organisers have limited the number of crews on Saturday, the below boats won't be rowing but have worked so hard over the last few months, such a shame, Curlew and Captains wish to thank all rowers for their hard work and commitment.

## **Senior Men's 4-**

**Stroke: Jack Pooley**

**3: Jamie Sunderland**

**2: Rudy Brunel**

**Bow: Fabian Mitchell**

## **Development Men's 4+**

**Stroke: Arya Ruben**

**3: Damien Faget**

**2: Adam White**

**Bow: Joe Crotty**

**Cox: Rosie Fuest**



## Pairs Head

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During the quiet summer months, basking in the post-Henley glow and itching to get out for more racing, entering Pairs Head seemed like a fantastic idea. We would have months to prepare, and a couple of summer regattas to get some race practice in, so our plan was to get on the tideway on the 6th October feeling well-drilled and confident. Of course, weather and poor holiday planning got in the way of our summer regatta plans, and then time did that thing it does (i.e. pass), and suddenly race day was uncomfortably close, and it would be our first time racing together in the pair. No matter: we had practiced together as much as we could and were feeling good and speedy, so after a last-minute seat-switch (in time-honoured Curlew tradition) - we were ready for race day. The week of the race mostly consisted of anxiously checking the weather forecast every hour, but the rowing gods were clearly smiling on London that day: predicted 35mph gusts dropped to rowable conditions for the exact hours of the race. The green light was given. We unloaded our boat from the top of the LYR van (kindly trailered by Maurice). In standard fashion, minor issues started adding to the stress of the morning: the infamous Wintech 'quick release' riggers causing their usual pain, followed by the interesting revelation that the backstays have apparently been the wrong way round for years. Still, all issues were fixed, and we boated on time prior to a long and stressful hour of marshalling (trying to re-attach your back number while sitting a pair and trying to tap against the stream tends to lead to pins in thumbs - would not recommend). Finally, our division started to turn for the start. Steady build up to Chiswick Bridge. 'Crew 257. Curlew. GO!'. We found rate 33 and held onto it. We were flying, comfortably holding our target split. Perfect line through Barnes Bridge. Press out against the crosswind on the first stretch. As we rounded the riverbend I could see Hammersmith Bridge out of the corner of my eye and we pressed on, knowing we could expect some motivating cheers from our kind supporters as we came through it. Wind for the finish and - oh, ok, it's all over. Somehow, we had flown through 4.5km with such focus that the end had come before we knew it. Guess we were fitter than we thought. In the end, we came 7th in the Women's Club Pairs with a time of 16:07.13 - not bad for our first race together. Once off the water, we were both wishing we could go back and do it again - potentially a sign we had paced ourselves a little too much - oops. So, some lessons learned! Now all the more prepared to come back and attack the tideway again next year.

**Words by Katriona Blomber**





# Upper Thames Head

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On Sunday 27th October, we took seven crews from across the Senior and Dev squads to Upper Thames Autumn Head in Henley. This was our first race of the head season, a great opportunity to blow out the cobwebs and lay down a marker for the rest of the season. Conditions on the day were fantastic, sunny but cool.

We had two eights in the morning division (senior men and dev men), as well as a men's and a women's four. All the crews put in a strong effort down the 3000m course, with the eights coming second and third in Band 2 behind a strong Oxford Uni Lightweight crew, and both fours coming third in their bands.

After a short break for lunch, the women's four rowed again in the afternoon division, with the men's squad splitting out into two fours. Doubling up took its toll on the legs, a timely reminder of how much fitness work still needs to be done!

Overall it was a positive day, with new squad members enjoying their first row in the Curlew light blue, and everyone getting some good race experience ahead of Docklands Head and Fours Head in November.

**Words by Jack Pooley**



# Docklands Head

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Sunday the 10<sup>th</sup> of November saw 13 Curlew crews race over two divisions. Crews from the Senior squads and Development squads took on the 3k home turf course. It was a great day with 7 wins:

Senior Men's 2- Band 1

Senior Men's 1x Band 2

Senior Women's 8+ Band 1, winning fastest women's boat

Senior Women's 4- Band 1

Development Men's 8+ Band 2

Development Men's 4- Band 3

Development Men's 4+ Band 2

I don't think anyone can prepare you for how cold it gets when you're a cox in a Head Race. The previous day, during our morning session, I got my first taste of rowing during the winter months. Visibility was poor, and my hands only regained their ability to move 2 hours later. On the morning of Docklands Head, I was ready and clutching the race plan in gloved fingers, I ran through the strategy – the drive, the lengthening and the power 10s. Luckily, the Dev w8+ were 17<sup>th</sup> in Div1 and the m8+ a mere 2<sup>nd</sup> in Div2 reducing the time sitting and ruminating on how the race would play out. As soon as the Marshal said the word 'Go' both crews had their eyes in the boat and were giving it their all. The w8+ averaged a rate of 30 throughout the race and showcased their continually growing confidence as a team. The m8+, spurred on by 'C'mon let's beat the seniors' achieved a cracking time of 11m 28.41s – winning their band. As the first head race of the season, both teams went away from it with a sense of pride but also eager to get back out on the water to build on what they'd learnt. The season's only just begun and I'm excited to see how the squad progresses. More ergs, more weights I hear Nick cry! In the meantime, I will be investing in some furry leggings with a built-in hot water bottle.

## Words by Daisy Parker

Flashback to 5<sup>th</sup> September

Following election as Men's Development Squad captain, Joe had assembled us with Nick to discuss the way forward. His goal for the squad for the year was to start winning and to do this, there were a few areas we needed to change. He then took us through what was required in commitment and training. It was about twice what I was expecting. But Ken said, "Let's do it!". And no one disagreed.

'This might sound a lot, but if the goal is to win then the price can't be negotiated' – Joe Crotty, September 2019

Fast forward to 30<sup>th</sup> October

I had confirmed to Joe I would be upping my training, but I wasn't yet ready for my first race and would wait for the Spring. But a space became available in the 8 for the Docklands Head and Joe and Nick convinced me it was worth a go. The ergs were going well, and it was on home turf, so the perfect opportunity really.

10<sup>th</sup> November

I was racing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> division, so I was able to be a spectator for the first races before competing late morning. The docks were buzzing and the weather and water perfect. I joined Claire, Mia and Alex on the bridge between the docks and awaited the first boats. The men's senior 8+ came through and looked smooth and powerful. For other boats, it was not as straightforward with some interesting lines taken and desperate cries of "steering!". One cox decided the best strategy was to sacrifice the bow-side rowers under the bridge, but no one was convinced. Curlew looked amazing



though. The dev 4- came through with Giorgio skillfully choosing his line and then the crew buried themselves after the bridge. Next up, the 4+. Perhaps the boat is for sale, but on this form the men are making a good case for keeping it. I cheered on the dev women 8+ and caught Ken and John in the pair, and then it was time to start thinking about racing myself.

Fresh from the first race, Joe took us through the race strategy. I don't remember it exactly, but it seemed to involve going out hard and fast, holding it, going harder, holding again and finishing harder still. We were 2<sup>nd</sup> up so I naively thought it would be all over fairly quickly, but it takes a long time to bring 95 boats through the bridge and that means a lot of maneuvering. Luckily for us, Daisy was on top of this completely and even managed to keep us waiting in the sun for most of it. We eyed up the first boat and it was obvious to us we would not be catching them – strong and young and confident – the antithesis of how I was feeling. The right assessment too, as they ended up being the fastest boat of the day. Our goal was to follow the race plan and not get caught.

After an age of waiting, we were suddenly off on a rolling start and then the call from the umpire was "go!". Marek built us up to rate 30 and we held it there all the way. Daisy took a perfect line through the bridge and we made sure we looked great on camera at the bridge. Then the hard work started with a power of 20 and then lengthening out strokes. I don't remember much beyond that other than finishing and knowing I couldn't have given any more on the day. I'm in awe of all of those who raced the distance twice.

Later, at home I found out we had won our category and there would be medals. My first sporting medal since I was 14 which is a very, very long time ago. In total, 30 medals for Curlew. What a day!

**Words by Jon Cole**





## Quiz night

We had our first Quiz night of the year, it was a hard-fought quiz with all teams being within 5 ½ points of each other. Some of the Senior men clinched that top place, winning Rugby Tickets! Keep an eye out for the next socials.



## Donate A Day

UK Power Networks is a Distribution Network Operator that owns and maintains electricity cables and lines across London, the South East and East of England making sure the lights stay on for more than 18 million people. As part of the vision to be a Respected Corporate Citizen and an Employer of Choice, UK Power Networks is supporting the communities and charities that are important to their employees. The employees support the local communities through participating in Donate a Day scheme.

This year one of UKPN's employees (who is a member of Curlew RC) proposed to support Curlew RC, which is a Community Amateur Sports Club that is run by volunteers and it is eligible for charity days. So UKPN's Network Planning Team donated a day for Curlew RC and Royal Docks Adventure. They helped to do a variety of tasks such as rubbish clearance of the Docks area, gardening and weeding and boat restoration.

**Words by Christina Tsechlidou**



# November

We are half way through November, and Senior Men's Squad members Tom and Stuart are growing out those moustaches for charity! Please donate to <https://mobro.co/14222656?mc=1> & <https://www.sponsorme.co.uk/stuartbe.../mrp-november-2019.aspx>



## Dates for the Diary

CURLEW ROWING CLUB PRESENTS

# CHRISTMAS PARTY

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14TH

Welcome Drink | Three Course Meal | Raffle | Auction | Speeches | Music  
Welcome drink from 6pm at the Clubhouse | 7pm till late at Trafalgar Tavern  
Dress Code: Black Tie or Curlew Blazers

**TRAFALGAR TAVERN**  
Park Row, Greenwich Peninsula, London SE10 9NW

Tickets: £55  
£25 deposit due by 14 Nov  
For further info: [Thomas.james.weekes@gmail.com](mailto:Thomas.james.weekes@gmail.com)

Festive Fancy Dress

# PLUM PUDDING RACES 2019

Saturday  
14th December  
£5

Royal Docks @ 10:30 am  
250m VIII Sprints