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Contact us at rowing.alumni@ed.ac.uk
Upcoming Events

We are still finalizing our racing calendar, however the following events can be penciled into your diaries:

October 20th/21st 2018: British Rowing Senior Championships, Nottingham
November 10th/11th 2018: GBRT First Assessment, Boston
November 17th 2018: Scottish Rowing Indoor Championships
December 1st: Rutherford Head, Newcastle
February 9th 2019: GBRT Second Assessment
March 16th 2019: WEHORR
March 30th 2019: HORR
Dear friends and alumni of EUBC,

As the new President, I would like to welcome you to another edition of Celeste and the start of what I am sure will be another formidable season for EUBC.

The results of the past year have been incredible! We have had our highest WeHorr (7th) and Horr (10th) finishes to date and a variety of BUCS Regatta Golds (including both Novice 8s). On the international stage, Edinburgh University athletes stepped up to the mark once again, with James Temple and Gavin Horsburgh representing GB at World Cups I and II in the LM2x and Maddie Arlett at World Cup III in the LW4x. At Scottish Boat Race, Edinburgh took the clean sweep in a not overly closely fought contest (sorry Glasgow). At HWR in June, Lucy Glover and Laura McDonald both won their events - Championship 2x and Aspirational L1x, while our Aspirational Academic 4- made the final where they faced a close battle with UL. HRR saw Josh race the final of the Prince of Wales Challenge Cup which was the start to phenomenal international representation over the summer. At World U23s in Poznan we had seven EUBC rowers – our largest contingent to date. Lucy won bronze in the W4x, while Josh’s 4x took the title in a dominant final. Two weeks late at FISU Lydia Currie (W8+), Matthew Curtis (LM2x) and Oli Wilkes (M4-) donned GB vests to compete against some of the best student athletes the world had to offer, with Lydia and Oli both winning gold.

The success this season is thanks to every individual athlete as well as our fantastic coaches, without whom our club would not be able to achieve what it does. We would also like to thank all the alumni who continue to support us in various ways- we hope we can continue to strive on the foundations that you have built.

This year we have had to say goodbye to a few BNOCs (Big Name on Campus) of the club who have helped shape EUBC into the institution it is today – Calum, Maddie and Oli, all of whom learned to row at university and who have all represented EUBC and GB at various levels on numerous occasions. They will leave behind big seats to be filled.

I am greatly looking forward to this season, which will see the building of our own boathouse at Strathclyde Country Park and, I’m sure, many more EUBC successes.

Yours,
Gina
The Coach’s View

Colin Williamson

We passed a little milestone this month. This probably went unnoticed by most, in fact, perhaps all except myself and John.

As we watched Maddie Arlett cross the line in Plovdiv, leading the GB Lightweight Women’s Quad from the stroke seat, her 4th successive year pulling on the red white and blue hoops, we saw the last remaining athlete from the ‘beginning’, as it was to us, move on. No athlete now remained in the club who was there when we started on our journey in our new roles back in August 2013.

Of course, there are many decades of rich club history that precede this, but I hope you don’t mind if I indulge myself a little here and use this short column to thank those who have shaped this latest era of the club over the last five seasons.

Without lapsing into too many clichés, it is fair to say that the most difficult part of any journey is the first few steps. When coming into a coaching role, those first few steps are all the more difficult as you have to persuade a lot of people to take them with you. New ideas, new routines, new expectations: they are all very well, but if the people you are working with don’t buy in, they are meaningless.

Five years ago, and I hope they don’t mind me saying this, the athletes we had didn’t arrive with glittering junior careers behind them, or in most cases, any rowing history at all. Whilst our facilities were ok, they weren’t at the standard we now enjoy, and the past few years of extensive building of the boat fleet was still a pipe dream.

What these students did have though is an appetitive to learn, a (perhaps blind!) faith in the process on which they were being led, a fantastic work ethic and egos unfettered by any sense of entitlement.

This simple mindset of hard work and faith was invaluable to build the foundations on which the modern programme now stands. Without these young men and women carving this path, and achieving results which have been the basis for attracting talented people to the club, we would be in a poorer place, and I’d probably be out of a job!

So, to those who had the faith to follow, and ‘step off the cliff”, without really knowing what lay beneath: Thank you.
Introducing the Committee of 2018/2019

President: Gina Geffers is a 3rd year PhD student in Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences. She hopes that the committee will enjoy being involved in the inner workings of the club, while keeping with the club’s and athletes’ best interests in mind.

Vice President: Helena Brecht is a 4th year MA International Relations student. She is excited to be organising community outreach events and is looking forward to working with the rest of the committee to ensure the smooth day to day running of the club.

Secretary: Lizzie Dickinson is a 2nd year medical student. In her role as secretary she hopes to keep both the committee and club organised (which at times can be no mean feat!)
Treasurer: Dan Baillache is a 2nd year PhD student in Molecular and Clinical Medicine. His goal for this year is to keep the books balanced and ensure the club remains on a strong financial footing.

Graduate Secretary: I am Sophie Parsons, a 4th year MA French student. After spending a year away from EUBC in France, I am enjoying creating Celeste and am looking forward to further establishing Alexandra boat club and getting to know our fantastic alumni!

Sponsorship Secretary: James Temple is a 1st year History MSc student. As last year’s President, he hopes to help - in his own words - Chancellor Geffers with the smooth running of the club while seeking out all the all-important Sponsorship.
Kit Secretary: Ryan Morrison is a 3rd year BSc Biotechnology student who aims to bring a kit solution that suits every member.

Social Secretary #1: Louise Howat is a 3rd year MA History student. She wants to organise fun socials which bring the club together outside of training.

Social Secretary #2: Immy Greig-Connor is a 4th year MA Religious Studies student. She hopes to integrate all the squads and organise successful events throughout the year.
Ordinary Member: Gavin Horsburgh is a 1st year MA Russian student who hopes to organise “a sick boat race ball”.

Senior Men’s Captain: Josh Armstrong is a 3rd year BSc Sport and Recreation Management. He is hoping to create a strong team environment.

Senior Women’s Captain: Lydia Currie is a 3rd year BSc Biomedical Sciences student. She hopes to captain the best senior women squad in the country!
Novice Women’s Captain: Brianna Siddle is a 4th year MA Social Policy & Law student who hopes to captain another successful beginner squad while providing support, encouragement and an enjoyable atmosphere with integration into EUBC.

Novice Men’s Captain: Maya Doughty is a 3rd year MA Sustainable Development student. She hopes to help build on last years achievements by supporting the development of the Novice Men’s team alongside Meghan and Brianna whilst creating a friendly and welcoming training environment.

Recreational Rowing Captain #1: Lindsay Evans is a 3rd year MA English Literature and History student. She hopes to increase the competitive nature of the rec squad while fostering a positive atmosphere.
Recreational Rowing Captain #2: Victoria MacAskill is a 3rd year Medical student who hopes to build on last year's improvements in the squad.

Photo Credits: Majority provided by committee themselves
James Temple: www.facebook.com/AlCraigiePhotographer
Introducing the Coaches of 2018/2019

Colin Williamson

Rowing has been my life since dreams of Pro Rugby were cut short due to injury. A fortunate injury, it turns out. Rowing has given me some of the highest highs (and maybe lowest lows). It has now given me a career, and I even found a wife. I have come full circle. Born in Edinburgh in the 80's (that's enough detail), I have lived and rowed in Scotland, England and Ireland. I have represented Scotland, Great Britain and Ireland as an athlete (some with success, others less so) before returning to the city of my birth to take on the task that has been my new life for the last 3 years. Rowing is life. Life is Rowing. Wouldn't have it any other way. I also like cats. And dogs, but I'm not allowed one.

John Higson

I rowed at Edinburgh between 2002-2009 and since then have been involved in coaching. Coaching the Novice Men for the full 2012/13 season was the seed that then saw me wish to pursue a career in coaching and so in the 2013/14 season I became a full-time coach at the club and began coaching the Senior Women's Squad. The rest, as they say, is history. The Senior Women's Squad has grown from strength to strength over the past four seasons and as always, the aim is to continue to better the former years’ results. We have our sights set high, but the success is found in the pursuit.
Matt Evans

Matt began coaching at the University of Southampton whilst studying Sports Science. Success with the Novice and Senior Programmes led him to Durham University where he ran the Talent ID Programme. Following a break from rowing, Matt returned to Edinburgh and has been working with the Novice and Senior Programmes since April 2017. Thanks to the Universities support, EUBC is continuing to develop into the top University Programme in the UK. He looks forward to working with an even stronger group of athletes this season.

Meghan Hunter

Having rowed for many years before coming to university, Meghan has been a part of EUBC since 2012. First (albeit briefly) as a rower, she then volunteered for two years, coaching with both the novice and then senior women’s squads. In 2015 she officially became part of the coaching team, starting as a part-time intern overseeing the novice men while she finished her Applied Sport Science degree, and now as a full-time coach running the beginner programme.
Henley Women’s Regatta 2018

The Senior women’s squad attended Henley Women’s regatta in full force this year, with five Edinburgh boats and three Edinburgh composite crews.

Friday morning saw all crews off to a strong start with the everyone qualifying in their respective categories. A special mention goes to the Development 4+ who were all completely new to rowing this year and yet managed to qualify as one of the top 16 boats out of 42 entered in their category. The Aspirational 8+, which also had two current novices in the crew came up against Rhode Island University BC in the first round. After being slightly behind in the first half of the race, the Edinburgh crew seemed to be coming back on Rhode Island in the final stretch, however they narrowly missed out on winning by ¾ of a length. The aspirational composite 2x consisting of Sophie Parsons and Perri McCluskey (Strathclyde park BC) had an equally tough race against Thames missing out by 1 Length.

On Saturday the Development 4+ lost to Nottingham BC. Edinburgh’s Flora Blake-Parsons was competing in a composite championship 8+ with Molesey BC. However, they met a very good crew from Iowa University BC in the quarterfinals and were knocked out. The championship 4- had a particularly competitive category this year. Having not been seeded, they met Molesey BC in their first round, who were known to be a quick crew. Despite giving them a good race, Edinburgh lost by 1 length; Molesey went on to eventually win the competition.

Laura McDonald (aspirational lightweight 1x) raced an exciting semi-final against Greenbank Falmouth BC. Coming through the enclosure Laura was down by ½ a length, but with a calm and collected look about her she put in a push in the last 400m, rowing through her opposition and moving through to the finals that afternoon. The aspirational academic 4- consisting of Bettie Payne, Lizzie Cooper, Aoife McCarthy and Jane Hardie stormed the semi-final against Exeter BC meaning they too progressed to the finals, becoming the second ever Edinburgh women’s crew boat to reach the finals of HWR. Edinburgh’s Lucy Glover was joined by fellow U23 GB sculler, Charlotte Hodgkins-Byrne, in an Edinburgh/University of London composite championship 2x. Together they breezed through to the final.

An exciting afternoon of finals saw the aspirational 4- face a dramatic race with University of London with a restart after the first 100m. UoL then jumped EUBC off the second start and held their lead down the course, despite an outstanding effort from Edinburgh to pull back. Both Laura McDonald and Lucy Glover had fantastic rows in their finals, both winning by an astounding verdict of ‘easily’. It was undoubtedly the most successful HWR EUBC has had to date.

Lauren Gray

Henley Royal Regatta 2018

Two Edinburgh athletes reached finals day at Henley in their respective composite crews.

Senior Men

In the Prince of Wales Josh Armstrong, racing in a version of the GB U23 quad which would go on to win at the U23 World Championships, lost to a powerful Dutch quad from Skoll. That Skoll had beaten local favourites and course record-holders Leander by over a length is testament to their strength.

Earlier in the week Josh easily dispatched clubmate Dale Flockhart (sorry Dale), who was racing in the GB U23 Lightweight composite. Also racing in the Prince of Wales were myself, Gavin Horsburgh and Matthew Curtis, along with Ben Reeves of Oxford Brookes. We lost to the aforementioned Leander crew, finishing a length behind their record-breaking row. Doubtless an all-Edinburgh crew would have cruised to victory in this event.

In the Ladies Plate, Oli Wilkes joined 17 Brookes athletes in Sunday’s final. The single Celeste one-piece was a real talking point in the Regatta Enclosure, where I proudly explained that Wilkes was faster than any of the
Brookes boys, and was only racing in their Second VIII because he had refused to wear a Brookes one-piece out of loyalty to Edinburgh. The winning Brookes VIII equalled the existing record for the event, held by Head Coach Colin Williamson, who must have been relieved about this selection decision which ultimately saved his place in the record books!

Our Prince Albert 4+, steered by previous winner Rosie Margolis, were unable to progress past the first round, losing to a strong Columbia lightweight crew. They were disappointed with the result, but there is plenty more to come from this group.

**Senior Women**

Our two representatives from the Senior Women’s Squad at this year’s HRR were both racing in the Princess Grace Challenge Cup for Open Women’s Quads. They both reached the semi-finals, an impressive achievement in any Open event.

After a season battling injury, Laura McDonald was rewarded for her perseverance with a late call-up, joining three Australian internationals in need of another sculler. Unusually for the event her crewmates were doubling up (racing the single and double), adding to the challenges faced by the scratch crew. Having beaten a University of Washington crew, the Commonwealth crew lost out to Christiana Roklub from Norway. Lucy Glover stroked the GB U23 quad, which would later win Bronze at the U23 World Championships. They were given the exciting opportunity of racing the GB senior quad. Lucy’s crew were unable to overturn their more experienced opponents but pushed them hard, showing that the future of British women’s sculling is bright.

The annual Henley BBQ was an even bigger success than usual with unlimited Pimm’s, food, and banter. Everyone is welcome, so please reserve the evening of Saturday 6th July now!

*James Temple*
Josh Armstrong added another World Championship Gold medal to his collection in Poznan.

M4x Josh Armstrong
(GOLD)
W4x Lucy Glover
(BRONZE)
W8+ Alex Rankin
(4th)
W4- India Somerside
Coach: John Higson
(6th)
LM2x Gavin Horsburgh, James Temple
Coach: Colin Williamson
(7th)
LM4x Dale Flockhart
(9th)

Things looked promising for Josh’s quad as they progressed through Heats and Semi-Finals in first place, but with Italy on the other side of the draw yet to show their top speed the final would be anything but a progression. Poznan is a notoriously fast course, especially since Robbie Manson set the World Best Time there: 6:30 in a single. The water was warm (and therefore fast) from weeks of sun, but times remained slow thanks to the stiff headwind which slowed crews as they made their way down the course.

By finals day this stiff headwind had switched to a tailwind, setting the stage for some fast racing. The width of the course enabled the waves to pick up more than expected, reminiscent of Sunday mornings at Strathclyde Park.

Once lined up the crews enjoyed or suffered a few nerve-wracking minutes in front of the start tower, too preoccupied to appreciate the moat which surrounded it! As the buzzer sounded Josh powered his quad from the 3-seat, utilising his fast start and his recently improved physicality (he now pulls 5:53 for 2k on the ergo).

They led the whole way.

Half a second at the 500m. Over two seconds by the 1k. Over three seconds by the 1.5k.

Then in signature Josh style they allowed their opponents to close the gap ever so slightly, but never so much that there was any doubt who would win.

Huge congratulations to Josh and his quad for their victory. Well done also to Lucy Glover, who was unable to defend her title as World Champion in the U23 Quad but came away with a bronze medal.

James Temple
Left to right: Alex Rankin, India Somerside, Lucy Glover, Dale Flockhart, James Temple. Gavin Horsburgh, Josh Armstrong, John Higson, Colin Williamson

Josh Armstrong on podium with team mates after winning gold.

Photo Credits: www.twitter.com/edinburghunibc
The Summer Summary…

In addition to representing on the International Stage, EUBC continued to strive and thrive on all platforms throughout the summer season:

- At HIR, EUBC was proudly represented by Jane Hardie, Aoife McCarthy and Elizabeth Cooper, who captained the Senior Women in Cork. Meanwhile, Gregor Maxwell and alumni Tom Duke dazzled in the L2x, beating out opposition less than half his age!
- Gregor Maxwell donned the fetching Scotland one-piece once again in August, to race the Commonwealth’s finest coastal rowers along with Alex Rankin and alumni, Robyn Hart-Winks and Keiran Brown. This couples’ retreat proved most successful, with the quartet scooping up numerous golds across the different disciplines. The ever international EUBC also had two alumni racing for Canada, in the form of Kieran Tierney and Matt Christie.
- The Clyde of Glasgow became Edinburgh’s once again on Saturday 26th May as EUBC dominated The Scottish Boat Race.
- World Cup I saw U23 L2x James Temple and Gavin Horsburgh step up as part of the senior squad. In World Cup II, while Gavin partnered Jamie Copus of Oxford Brookes in the L2x, James took on the formidable L1x. World Cup III hosted EUBC BNOC Maddie Arlett in the LW4x.
- In August, Oli Wilkes, Lydia Currie and Matthew Curtis added another international vest to their stash, flying out to China to represent GB at FISU (World University Games) in the 4-, W8+ and L2x respectively. After two weeks of climatization and a hard weekend of racing, they came out with an amazing set of results: Matt finished 6th in the L2x, Lydia won a fantastic silver medal and Oli became World University Champion.
- At the U23 European Championships, Gavin Horsburgh took on the L1x where he won bronze after a long season of racing.
- To round off the season of international racing, Maddie Arlett rowed to a fantastic fifth place in the LW4x at the World Rowing Championships in Plovdiv. Maddie has now moved down to Reading to continue rowing and will undoubtedly continue to excel in her new environment. On behalf of the whole of EUBC, we would like to thank her for providing constant inspiration to both novices and seniors year after year. A true EUBC legend, we wish her all the luck in the world.
- Finally, Matthew Curtis was awarded Cameron Blue of the Year in recognition of his outstanding sportsmanship.
Alumni News

Alumnus Anthony Touareg-Benoit, who coxed at EUBC during the 2015/16 season, was recently part of the team who travelled to Zambia as part of the RowZambezi initiative. Here he shares his experiences:

In July, I was lucky enough to go to a 2 weeks trip to Zambia with the RowZambezi team, a group of 17 rowers from 7 countries. Our goal was to row 900km on the Kafue River to bring awareness about fresh water preservation, in Africa and worldwide. We also rose money to build wells in villages and to help with the construction of the Kafue Rowing and Research Centre, a project organised by both WWF and World Rowing. I joined this expedition as head of media and a photographer. Although I am used to work as a photo-reporter, it was the first time I was “on duty” in Africa, into the wild and non-stop for 14 days. It was an intense experience, I had to be constantly ready to take photos, interesting images or situations could present themselves at any time. When I was not taking photos, I was editing them, selecting which one to send to our partners, trying to find an internet connection to publish, emptying my memory card, making back-ups of my main hard drive, or checking which batteries were charged and which ones had to be plugged in. The only moment I was not working was when I was asleep, from 10 to 5h30. My main challenges there were related to my material: protecting the cameras and lenses from dust and water, cleaning them regularly and being sure that I had enough charged batteries with me to be operational until the next time I would find a source of power. Overall the expedition was highly exciting. I retain to main satisfaction: The diversity of profiles cohabiting all together and the randomness of our journey. Being part of a group of people from 8 or 9 countries - I am not sure anymore - was exciting, but beyond that, it was really enjoyable to live and talk with mechanics, doctors, drivers, students, rowers (of course), cooks and more. It made our team super interesting and different than the other groups of friends I may have here in Europe. Furthermore, everyone was friendly and always keen to help, to chat about anything. We are all still in touch by phone and I plan to visit those who live in the UK soon. The multiplicity of unexpected events or issues we encountered amused me as well.
HRR Receptions

This year’s annual HRR Reception proved a roaring success, with a great turnout from both current members and alumni. Our 50l of Pimm’s, delicious hog roast (bean burgers for the veggies!) and class A banter was the source of much jealousy from other clubs - in fact I think we had a few Pimm’s induced honorary members by the end of the night! Prior to this, a host of EUGC athletes and coaches were very kindly invited to a drinks reception at the house of former Rector, Steve Morrison and his wife Gayle. The house provided a spectacular view of the finish line, and we certainly felt extremely lucky to have bagged the best seats in Henley! It was extremely interesting and gratifying to speak to people so passionate about the University of Edinburgh. We would like to extend our thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Morrison for putting together such a wonderful evening.

Photo Credits: www.facebook.com/AlCraigiePhotographer
Dear alumni…

My name is Sophie Parsons and I am the alumni secretary for the 2018/2019 season. Having joined EUBC as a novice in my first year in 2015, rowed as a senior in 2016/17 and spent last year rowing for Aviron Grenoblois in France, I am certainly very excited to be back living and rowing in Edinburgh this year.

It is wonderful that so many of you are still involved with the club and to see that the friendships formed within EUBC really do seem to stick. This is something I hope to replicate with my own boat club friends in years to come. Many of you set the very foundations on which EUBC builds upon today, so I am really looking forward to working with you over the next year.

To find out more about the Alexandra Boat Club, our new membership scheme, and our new Parents and Supporters Facebook Group and email list please contact me at rowing.alumni@ed.ac.uk or visit our website http://www.edinburghrowing.co.uk/

I hope you have enjoyed this edition of Celeste.

Yours, Sophie