

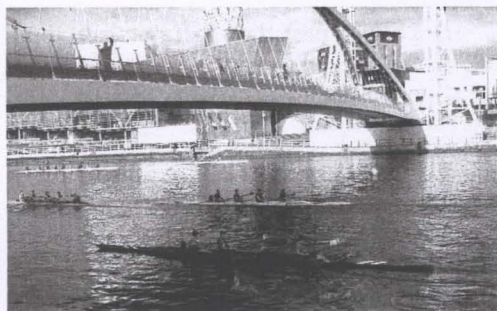
Rowing

The Club has strength in numbers at J16 level and a small but dedicated J15 squad. Parents of these two age groups are particularly supportive and attend events, driving boys around the country and cheering encouragement from the bank, helping with boats and supplying sandwiches and sustenance to the athletes. Many thanks go to the parents for their support. Without them, the boys would never get to the events.

The Club is short of weekend coaching staff. Mr Gray (parent) and Oliver Smalley (Sports Science undergraduate) undertook a British Rowing Association Coaching Course and have been active on the water this season. Mr Gray also bought himself a sculling boat and we hope to see him racing one day. Mr Smalley was a final year Sports Science student at the University of Cumbria and led a successful rowing team representing Lancaster to the Youth Games in Almere. Congratulations go to him on this (and gaining a 1st class degree). We wish him well at the start of his teacher-training year.

It has been another full season with crews attending a range of Head races over the winter months and a few selected events in the Regatta Season. The emphasis has been on continuity with the date for the end of the tenancy agreement (1 April 2011) with John O'Gaunt Rowing Club lurking in the background.

The situation at the time of writing is that in order to keep the Club as it is, capable of owning and using its own fleet of boats and attending events of its choice, the Club will have to move to a new site upstream at Halton Army Training Camp. The alternative is to join John O'Gaunt Rowing Club's Associated Schools Programme with the inherent problems over use of equipment and crew selection. In addition, boys would have to pay £75 per year (rising to £90 in 2011) in membership fees, and the Club would lose its own fleet of boats. LRGSBC have been given the use of a shed at Halton Army Camp and the landing stages and facilities. Work is in progress to set up both inside and outside racking to store boats and equipment with a gradual move planned to be completed by the end of March 2011.



The 2009 Head Race season started with a trip to Salford Quays for Agecroft Head. Two J16 coxed fours were entered. They came within 7 seconds of each other and finished 3rd and 4th behind two very strong crews from Shrewsbury School BC and Kings' School, Chester. The 'B' crew beat the 'A' crew, which was not up to full strength.

J16 4+ 'A' crew: Tom Grey, Vishnu Kammath, Robert Whitley, Luke Hodgson, cox George Highley.

J16 4+ 'B' crew: Oliver Uttley, Harry Baxter, Kyle Wong, Will Grey - cox Peter Bentley.

The next event was Northwich Autumn Head. Again, two J16 coxed fours from LRGSBC entered the race. The day was spent dodging the heavy rain showers, tiptoeing through muddy puddles and rigging boats in the rain. The crews were lucky to get good conditions for the race with other events around the country fairing less well. The Fours Head in London, for example, was cancelled due to poor weather. Spirited performances were given by both crews.

The LRGSBC crew stroked by Robbie Oliver won the J16 coxed fours event (9:08.6) The other LRGSBC crew stroked by Oliver Uttley (9:18.2) came third, and two seconds, behind The Grange School (9:16.7). This win was particularly pleasing as it was the J16's first medal. The first three crews were within 10 seconds of each other. The indications are that the squad is progressing well towards producing an eight next term.

Winning J16 crew: Bow: Robert Whitley, 2: Tom Gray, 3: Vishnu Kammath, Stroke: Robbie Oliver, Cox: George Highley
3rd placed crew: Bow: Luke Hodgson, 2: Kyle Wong, 3: Harry Baxter, Stroke: Oliver Uttley, Cox: Peter Bentley.

After this event, the weather turned for the worse and a particularly wet and miserable few months followed. York Small Boats was postponed from November to January and then cancelled again. The squad didn't manage to race until the Yorkshire Head in February. This time the weather was good with a bright sunny spring day on offer. The water conditions were good with a following stream and a slight tail wind. In the morning Division, Luke Hodgson and Oliver Uttley raced above their age group in J18 coxless pairs. JPJ raced in a handicap time trial race for veteran single scullers.

In the afternoon Division, both J16 4+s raced in the same division as the eights from around the north of England, including the winning eight from



Durham RC which had Harry Shepherd (OL) sitting at No.7. The LRGSBC A crew rowed smoothly, showing good technique and by the time they reached St Peter's Boat House, had opened up a good lead from Queen Elizabeth High School BC. The second crew suffered broken rudder lines in the cox's seat area at the top of the course yet still managed to steer down the twisty course without it being too obvious. Quite a feat, considering the narrow river and notorious double bends by Clifton Bridge.

Winners of J16 4+ 'A' (Robbie Oliver Stroke, Vishnu Kammath, Tom Gray, Robert Whitley, Michael Browne cox) time: 19 mins.37.1

J16 4+ 'B' (James Helliwell stroke, Will Gray, Kyle Wong, Peter Bentley, Luke Hodgson cox) came third (20mins. 53 secs.) behind Queen Elizabeth School BC, Hexham.

Winner Vet B/C 1x J P Jago 21 mins. 51.8

J16 2- Luke Hodgson and Oliver Uttley rowing above their status as J18 22mins.20.4 came sixth.



To end the Head Race season, the squad entered the North of England Head on the river Dee in Chester. This is not an event that the Club does often, as it doesn't often have enough boys to put out an eight. The two J16 coxed fours that raced at the Yorkshire Head combined to form an eight. A boat had to be borrowed from Lancaster University Boat Club as ours had gone for repair again after breaking a shoulder. We arrived in Chester on a damp, cold Saturday to pick up the boat from the University's women's crew and had to do some quick re-adjustments to our blades and the order of our crew as the boat was unconventionally rigged with a bow side stroke. The women's oars were measured to be 3cm shorter than ours. Luckily, the length of our blades could be altered and we gambled on shortening them by 1cm and changing the inboard length by a similar amount to keep the leverage roughly the same. We only had time for a quick test on the river before the boating for the race began.

An attitude of 'You can't win it unless you are in it' was the order of the day. A scratch crew with a change in order of the stern pair and, therefore, a new stroke man, and with guessed oar length and gearing in an unfamiliar boat is not usually a recipe for a successful race! So it was with some trepidation that JPJ watched the crew set off upstream. The crew rowed well in the race considering the changes although the strong opposition from The Grange School, Cheshire containing some large looking J16s in the 'engine room' proved too much by the time the fleet of eights rowed past the spectators and the final 1500 metre bend to the finish line at Royal Chester Rowing Club. The LRGSBC crew had held Grange off for the first 2250 metres before they were overtaken. The J16 eights were won by The Grange School with LRGSBC (19min.56 secs.), coming 2nd behind them and 39th out of 58 mens and boys (senior men to J15) that took part in the afternoon Division.

Crew: V Kammath (str), R Oliver, T Gray, H Baxter, O Uttley, L Hodgson, K Wong, R Whitley, G Highley (cox).

LRGSBC started the Regatta season with a trip to Scotland in April. A group of twenty boys from the J16 and J15 squads ventured north to Strathclyde Park, the home of the Scottish Rowing Centre on Sunday for the annual Strathclyde Regatta. The event is run over 1000 and 2000 metres on a multilane course. The day started early for JPJ and some of the parents, getting up at 4am and being on the empty motorway by 4.30am. The first wave of races was scheduled for 8.50am and a lot of the J16 boys had to be there by 8.00am.

In the first two heats of the J16 double sculls, LRGSBC had four crews in the event and the commentator had to distinguish between LRGS crews 'A' to 'D' across the lanes. LRGS 'A' (Robbie Oliver and Robert Whitley) and LRGS 'B' (Vishnu Kammath and Tom Gray) progressed to the final where they came 3rd and 4th respectively. In the final, they lost out to specialist scullers from George Watson's College, Aberdeen Schools and Glasgow Rowing Schools.



Later on in the morning, all the J16 scullers were joined by eight other oarsmen and switched to sweep oar rowing in J16 coxed fours. LRGS had three crews in a straight final, coming 3rd, 4th and 5th behind George Watson's College BC and Aberdeen Schools. With the J16 boys tired out after up to 6km of racing each and finished for the day, JPJ had time for a 'power nap' whilst waiting for the J15s to arrive for their J15 coxed four final at 4.25pm.

For the J15 crew of James Helliwell (Stroke), David Hoyle, Charlie Robb, Tom Welshman and Michael Browne (cox), it was the first time at a regatta. They were filled with a mixture of excitement and trepidation.

They acquitted themselves very well coming 2nd and not far behind Aberdeen Schools in a respectable time of 4 min 08 sec. over the 1000 metre course. This time would have seen them in second or third place at the halfway point of last year's J15

4+ final at National Schools Regatta (2000m) and is a promising result. Both parents and boys were very happy and enthused.

The next event on the agenda was the National Schools Regatta at the National Water Sports Centre in Nottingham. Two J16 coxed fours were entered into the event. It was a first experience for the boys and the event proved to be a 'bridge too far' for the LRGSCB crews. Out of the twenty entries for the J16 4+ ARUNDEL CUP, only 12 were allowed to proceed to the knock out stages after a time trial. LRGSCB 'A' missed out by 4 seconds coming 4th out of 20 and LRGSCB 'B' came 18th and 23 seconds off the qualifying time.



Athletics

Junior Athletics