

2020 Fixtures *for the one hundred and thirty first season*

January	25 th	Quintin Head (12.00)
February	16 th	Hammersmith Head (09.30)
March	21 st	HoRR (14.45)
	22 nd	Vets Head (15.00)
April	25 th	Hammersmith Amateur
May	2 nd	Chiswick Amateur
		Wallingford ^{ML}
	9 th	Borne at Chiswick Bridge
	16 th	Putney T
	23 rd	Takenham
June	31 st	Metropolitan ^{ML} , Peterborough Spring ^{ML}
	13 th	Barnes & Mortlake
	20 th	Marlow International ^{ML}
	26 th	HRR Coasters
		Richmond Amateur
July	1 st – 5 th	Henley Royal Regatta
	10 th – 11 th	Henley Masters
	11 th – 12 th	Kingston Amateur
	25 th – 26 th	St. Neots
August	1 st	Henley Town & Visitors
	8 th – 9 th	Peterborough Summer ^{ML}
	15 th – 16 th	Oxford City
October	3 rd	Pairs Head, Rhine Marathon <i>Düsseldorf</i>
	17 th	Weybridge Silver Sculls
November	7 th	Kingston Small Boats Head
	21 st	Veterans Fours Head
	22 nd	Fullers Fours Head of the River (09.45)
December	5 th	Vesta Scullers Head

2020 Club Events

February	12 th	Birthday Drinks, Duke's Head, Putney
	23 rd	Annual General Meeting (12.00)
March		CANCELLED due to weather
	29 th	University Boat Races (from 15.44)
April	12 th – 14 th	Training Camp, Hamhaugh Island
June	7 th – 9 th	Sculling Camp, Hamhaugh Island
	19 th – 21 st	Henley Women's Regatta
July	1 st – 5 th	Henley Royal Regatta
	14 th	O.G.M. & Election of Captaincy (20.15)
August	TBC	Squad End of Season Dinner
September	19 th – 20 th	Autumn Sculling Camp, Hamhaugh Island
October	24 th	Henley Lunch, Leander Club
February 2021	21 st	Annual General Meeting (12.00)

Contacts

www.cygnet-rc.org.uk

Chairman	07753 863430	chairman[at]cygnet-rc.org.uk
Captain	07711 058717	captain[at]cygnet-rc.org.uk
Hon. Secretary	07530 747816	secretary[at]cygnet-rc.org.uk

Cygnets Bungalow *38 Hamhaugh Island, Shepperton*

The bungalow is ideal for a riverside holiday and is available for booking by members and friends between May and the end of October. Other periods and winter bookings may be available, please enquire. **Contact:**

Derek Bush [bungalow\[at\]cygnet-rc.org.uk](mailto:bungalow[at]cygnet-rc.org.uk) 07880 548804

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, the bungalow is, alas, closed to visitors until at least the end of June and probably beyond. Please contact Derek for updates.

Cygnets 300 Club



This is our principal fund raiser which keeps our fleet maintained and up-to-date. Tickets are just £10 each and there are ten annual draws with a top prize of £100 and a bumper £250 Christmas top prize. All members and friends are encouraged to participate and active oarsmen especially are expected to have a 'few' tickets. **Contact:**

Tom Broadhurst [tombroadhurst\[at\]live.co.uk](mailto:tombroadhurst[at]live.co.uk)

Due to the cancellation of all rowing events since March, there are 300 Cub draws outstanding from the 2019/20 season. The matter is in-hand and will be resolved asap.

Subscriptions and Donations

Active members: CSSC £330.00*, non-CSSC £400.00

Club friends: suggested minimum £15.00

For **electronic payment** please email the treasurer for bank details on [treasurer\[at\]cygnet-rc.org.uk](mailto:treasurer[at]cygnet-rc.org.uk)

By **cheque**, along with the tear-off slip below to: Mr M. Byrne, Flat 102 Westfields, Railway Side, Barnes, London SW13 0PL

Enclosed my subscription/donation for £ _____

Your name: _____

Your address: _____

Post Code: _____ Your CSSC no.*: _____

**CSSC members are now required to show their CSSC membership card to a member of the Management Committee*



CYGNET ROWING CLUB

June 2020 Newsletter

From the Captain

Cristobal Cabrera

Dear Cygnet Family and Friends

I hope everyone is doing well and keeping safe. The last few months have been challenging for all of us; as you all are aware of the coronavirus situation, health and safety is our first priority.

With this in mind, first of all a big thank you to everyone during this time; to the people who are on the front line and to those who are staying at home, trying to make the best of the situation.

We started the year 2020 promisingly. In February we celebrated our 130th Birthday. We celebrated with a few pints at Ye White Hart, where they still have one of our oars on the wall. It was fantastic to see different generations of Cygnets celebrating together.

We were looking on to some racing but unfortunately, Hammersmith Head was cancelled due to a storm. In spite of the terrible ongoing weather conditions, we kept up some good training sessions. When we couldn't be on the water there was a strong turn-out on the ergs, giving us a solid platform leading up to Head of the River. But as we all know, in March the COVID-19 situation worsened and we were required to stop all squad activities, moving onto home/land training – and a good chance to improve core and flexibility! Despite the difficulties we have as a club been keeping busy during this time:

We have revamped the club website so please have a look if you haven't already at www.cygnet-rc.org.uk Many thanks to Neil (Hon. Ass. Sec.) and our supplier Simon for all their hard work on this major improvement.

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Following a couple of break-ins, Boathouse security has also been upgraded. The Bar exit door is repaired, bars for the all windows will soon be installed, CCTV is in operation and signage added. Big thank you to the Boathouse Exec. team and friends: Jamie, Ali, Ben, Tom, Chris J.

Some Cygnets took part in the Barnes Bridge Ladies' Sportathon – 24hrs divided into half-hour slots – to raise money for Solace Women's Aid, which provides support to women and children affected by domestic abuse (well done Tom, Martin and Rupert).

We also took part in the Lockdown Regatta. This virtual competition was organised by students from De Montfort University and Bath Spa University rowing clubs that wanted to help raise money for the NHS. They were asking people to run 2km (rather than row) but the format was that of national rowing events. We entered an "8+" (Rupert, Charles, Jo, Mustafa, Beth, Vasil, Sam, Chris J) and a Masters "4+" (Martin, Jim, Tom, Jamie). Thank you to Rupert (Social Sec.) for organizing and there are more pics on our [instagram account](#).



As I write this, only outings in singles and doubles (of the same household) are allowed to take place and always within the parameters of social distancing guidelines. This has been the case since Monday the 18th May. A huge thank you to all of those involved in putting together both the Clubs' and Exec. Guidelines – a great cross-committee effort. As we move into the next steps of the relaxation we will be updating Training and Activities accordingly. Hoping for a return back to 'normal' soon, keep safe!

A boathouse to call our own

This year marks the 90th anniversary of the Civil Service Boathouse. At its height, the Civil Service Sports Council was the most extensive and powerful sporting organization in Great Britain and its beating heart was the Chiswick Sports Ground (now King's School House), opened in 1926 at the same time as Duke's Meadows.

One of the incongruities of this state-of-the-art sporting facility located adjacent to the Thames was the absence of a boathouse, the more so as public sector rowing clubs like Cygnet were among the first to affiliate to the CSSC under the umbrella of the Civil Service Rowing Association in 1922. This oversight became increasingly apparent from 1926 when the Civil Service Regatta was moved to Chiswick and boating took place from a riverside site that had been designated for up to four boathouses.

Throughout the late 1920s members of the CSRA, led by 'Old Swans' like 'Wally Wheldal, lobbied long and hard for a boathouse that Cygnet (among others) could call their own. Their efforts were finally rewarded in 1930 when the CSSC leased the plot of land we still occupy today and arranged to build a fully-equipped boathouse for the all-inclusive sum of £2,960 (approx. £195,000 in today's money).

Construction began in February 1930 and was completed in time for an official opening in September. Photographs of the time show the new boathouse standing in a wide open, largely treeless expanse, abutting Duke's Meadows. The accommodation was utilitarian, there being no provision for a bar or clubroom, simply a boathouse above and a changing room below.

A contemporary review in the Civil Service Sports Journal described the structure thus:

"Some wag has not unruly said that it looks like a country pub! It does look thoroughly English, a simple straightforward design with no architectural frills, and though it is outstanding and individual in appearance the design is in keeping with the few buildings near it, and particularly our pavilion. The interior is well laid out, simply and efficiently and quite comfortable. Surely a home where Civil Service rowing can grow to its full stature".

For a cash-strapped CSSC, this was a substantial investment in what many would have regarded as a minority sport. However, the boathouse added a sense of completeness to the Chiswick ground and the investment would prove well-timed. Manned by a full-time boatman, the new boathouse was open for business from 10am until dusk on weekdays and 10am – 1pm on Sundays.

Civil Service rowing at Chiswick thrived: by April 1931 seven clubs had taken up residence and membership had soared to 70 men and 100 women. Access to modern equipment – sixteen boats of various configurations all with swivels, plus a full complement of oars and sculls – and coaching would ultimately allow Cygnet to compete at Henley Royal Regatta in 1938 and women to represent Great Britain at international regattas.

Sadly, all rowing would come to an abrupt halt in September 1939. With the outbreak of WW2, Chiswick Sports Ground was requisitioned by the Army and the boathouse was declared strictly off-limits. Initially earmarked as a mortuary, it was subsequently occupied by the National Training Corps, leaving the boats to gather dust, but little bomb damage, for almost seven years. In contrast to today's 'lockdown', organised rowing at neighbouring boat clubs was still permitted. Social distancing was not an issue, but air raids were: if caught in such a predicament mid-outing, the drill was clear – 'jump'!

Rowing resumed at Chiswick in July 1946, but not before a makeshift wooden rampart had been replaced by a concrete hard. Other improvements would follow, not least a bar, opened in October 1946 in one half of what is now the clubroom. By the early 1950s, life at the boathouse had got into its stride again, Saturday afternoon teas had become an institution and the neatly tended garden was much remarked upon as the best on the Tideway.

However, nature has a habit of levelling the playing field and in early 1953 a tidal wave swept up the Thames drowning the boathouse and the garden under six feet of water and depositing thick mud everywhere, thereby inducing another 'lockdown' of sorts for many weeks. Set against the background of WW2 bombing and 1950s flooding, coronavirus may be an inconvenience, but it poses little threat to the fabric of a structure that has certainly stood the test of time.



The new Civil Service boathouse, circa 1930