

168TH MEN'S RACE

MARCH 2023

77TH WOMEN'S RACE



THE
BOAT RACE
OXFORD  CAMBRIDGE

ATHLETE PROGRAMME



2023

SEAT ORDER

Oxford *women*

1

Laurel Kaye

2

Claire Aitken

3

Sara Helin

4

Ella Stadler

5

Alison Carrington

6

Freya Willis

7

Sarah Marshall

8

Esther Austin

Cox

Tara Slade

2023

SEAT ORDER

Oxford *men*

1

James Forward

2

Alex Bebb

3

Freddy Orpin

4

Tom Sharrock

5

James Doran

6

Jean-Philippe Dufour

7

Tassilo von Mueller

8

Felix Drinkall

Cox

Anna O'Hanlon

2023

SEAT ORDER

Cambridge *women*

1

Carina Graf

2

Rosa Millard

3

Alex Riddell-Webster

4

Jenna Armstrong

5

Freya Keto

6

Isabelle Bastian

7

Claire Brillon

8

Caoimhe Dempsey

Cox

James Trotman

2023

SEAT ORDER

Cambridge *men*

1

Matt Edge

2

Brett Taylor

3

Noam Moulle

4

Seb Benzecry

5

Thomas Lynch

6

Nick Mayhew

7

Ollie Parish

8

Luca Ferraro

Cox

Jasper Parish



2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Laurel Kaye

Nationality
US

Height
1.69m

School/High School
St Anthony's High School

Club
OUWBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Graduate

Previous University
Duke University, Yale University

Undergraduate course
BS in Physics

Graduate course
DPhil in Astrophysics

What is your Oxford College?
Worcester College

Why are you studying your course?
I've always loved space. From the time I was a young child I wanted to name the stars, look through telescopes, and become an astronaut. Understanding the physics behind what we're seeing and discovering new things about our universe is very motivating.

What is the most interesting part of your course?
In my research I look for new planets around other stars, which is very exciting. And I dream of someday becoming an astronaut, so studying stars and planets as an astrophysicist is right up my alley.

Year you first started rowing?
2013

First rowing club?
St Peters College BC/Yale Grad Crew

Why/How did you get into rowing?
I've done sport all my life – soccer and track/cross-country and had always wanted to try rowing but didn't get the opportunity until undergrad. I was immediately hooked.

Name of first rowing coach?
I honestly don't remember! Mike Genchi at Christ Church was my first important

one though. He really believed in me and pushed me to get to the next level.

How do you balance rowing and academic life?
I block off my time. Four hours between trainings, four hours after training, and extra on the minibus if it's a busy day.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?
I think it would be ideal to get a boat together with Serena Williams, Ruth Bader Ginsberg, Misty Copeland, Becky Hammon, Mae Jemison, Rey Skywalker, and Megan Rapinoe, coxed by Barack Obama. We'd be more or less unstoppable.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

I've always been a long-distance runner, but I started rowing as a third-year undergrad and was made stroke of the novice boat. I continued for a few years rowing at the college level, captaining the Christ Church Boat Club women in 2015-16, when I also first joined the OUWBC development squad. With them, I rowed in Henley Women's, winning the semi-finals in the academic 8s and leaving me inspired to go further in rowing. I then returned to the States for medical school, where I rowed with Yale Grad Crew, honing my sculling, and becoming squad captain in 2017-18. Returning to Oxford for my DPhil, I joined the Oxford lightweight, where I stroked the 2021 Blue Boat before competing in BUCS and Henley Women's later in the year. Last year in 2022 I rowed in Osiris and competed in the 4- at Henley, beating Cambridge in the semi-finals.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?
I rowed at stroke seat in the 2021 Lightweight Boat Race and bow seat in Osiris in 2022.

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
At Yale, on Grad Crew, we had a fair mix of people who had rowed at Oxford or

Cambridge. Boat Race viewing parties were... tense.

Your favourite race so far?
My favourite race that I've been in was the 2016 Henley Women's Academic 8s semi-final where we (OUW) edged out Oxford Brookes by a canvas. It was the closest race I'd ever been in. And Brookes stayed and cheered us on in the final. My favourite Boat Race was 2016, which was the first one I saw in person, where Morgan BW turned an early lead into a decisive victory by boldly steering the Oxford crew out of rough water.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?
South Africa. I went coastal rowing in a most magically beautiful place full of lovely enthusiastic people and also penguins.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?
I feel that rowing can capture so much of a human psyche. There is striving for perfection, the push and pull and testing of physical and mental limits, there is an incredible bonding with teammates, immersion in nature, a rhythmic fluid beauty in the motion, and also incredible peace. It teaches you resilience, patience, humility in victory and courage in defeat.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?
I've had a lot of setbacks in rowing in the last few years – injuries, hospitalisations, and personal life events have thrown me off my game repeatedly. Training through these and most importantly, building the mental strength and resilience to keep coming back, has been my greatest takeaway.

What is your favourite sports quote?
"It is not the critic who counts; not the one who points out how the stronger stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the one who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again,

because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spend themselves in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if they fail, at least fail while daring greatly, so that their place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat." – Teddy Roosevelt

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?
It is like doing ballet on a thin log in perfect synchrony with eight of your very strong best friends to the point of utter exhaustion.

How does being an athlete make you a better person?
It teaches you to be strong in so many ways, but also patient with yourself and with others.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?
Everyone is passionate about something, or multiple somethings – it gives life excitement and meaning.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?
I'm persistent, I do not give up easily and try to find new ways to approach a problem if it doesn't work the first (or second, or third...) time. I'm also positive and optimistic. And I bake delicious snacks.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?
They probably think I'm a bit mad to be honest. But lots of people are mad about something. I make the most of the time I do have with friends. Or I convert my friends into rowers.

Any hobbies, other interests outside rowing?
I write, paint, draw cartoons (@meet.the.planets), run, and play the cello. I'm also very interested in space medicine and my dream is to become an astronaut.

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Claire Aitken



Nationality
GBR

Height
1.74m

School/High School
The Community School of Auchterarder

Club
OUWBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Graduate

Previous University
University of Glasgow

Undergraduate course
BSc Physiology

Graduate course
DPhil Cardiovascular Science

What is your Oxford College?
Oriental

Why are you studying your course?
I've always been completely fascinated by the complex inner workings of the human body, and I have a particular interest in the heart and vascular system, so studying a DPhil in cardiovascular science made perfect sense for me. Being able to carry out research satisfies my natural curiosity, and it's really rewarding to work in the medical field because of the clinical impact of this type of research.

What is the most interesting part of your course?
I really enjoy the day-to-day lab work and the technical aspect of learning new techniques, but my favourite part of my DPhil is getting a new result, because it's exciting to find out something previously undiscovered, knowing that it might add to our current scientific knowledge.

Year you first started rowing?
2012

First rowing club?
University of Glasgow

Why/How did you get into rowing?
I knew I wanted to try a new sport when I went to university, although I wasn't

sure which one to choose. I joined some friends on a rowing taster session and got totally hooked. I loved the teamwork and grit shown by all of the incredible athletes on the team, and it inspired me to keep going back.

Name of first rowing coach?
Calum McBurney/Cormac McMurray/
Allie Macfarlane

Who is your rowing idol?
Helen Glover

How do you balance rowing and academic life?
It's tough to maintain a good balance between academic life and rowing, but you do get very efficient at managing your time and making the most of the free time that you do have. I think rowing also helps you switch off from work, and having another thing to focus on aside from your studies can make you feel more productive.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?
I learned to row at the beginning of my undergraduate degree in 2012, at the University of Glasgow. My biggest achievement has been winning gold in the championship W2- at BUCS regatta.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?
Yes, Osiris, 2022.

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
No

Your favourite race so far?
BUCS Regatta WC2- final in 2015.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?
Lake Iseo in Italy, on training camp with the University of Glasgow.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?
The drive and commitment of each of my very inspiring teammates, and the reward of being able to see my progress as an athlete week-on-week.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?
I think sport teaches you a lot about yourself, and the self-belief that I have developed through rowing is one of the biggest achievements I have gained.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?
Flipping an eight when trying to land the boat in my novice year. I clung on for dear life before flopping out the side of the boat and into the river, and we never lived it down.

What is your favourite sports quote?
"The will to win is not nearly so important as the will to prepare to win."

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?
Rowing is just something I am incredibly passionate about, and I have made lifelong friends through it, and many people will have similar experiences through other sports or activities.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?
I think I am very determined, focused and goal-orientated, which are highly applicable traits to sport and ones which are probably shared by all of my teammates.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?
I'm not sure they always understand why I would want to spend so much of my life rowing, but they are supportive nonetheless. It's sometimes hard to miss out on plans with friends because of training, but I think that you just have to make the most of the time that you do get to spend together.

Any hobbies, other interests outside rowing?
I love to cook, and particularly to bake, which is ideal for creating post-rowing snacks.

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Sara Helin



Nationality
GBR

Height
1.8m

School/High School
Sir William Borlase's Grammar School

Club
OUWBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Undergraduate

Undergraduate course
Engineering Science

What is your Oxford College?
St. Peter's College

Why are you studying your course?
I love problem solving and enjoyed maths at school. The Oxford Engineering Science course is much more maths based than other engineering courses, which I liked.

What is the most interesting part of your course?
Definitely the applications. For example, my fourth-year project is looking at decarbonising shipping and it is exciting to think that it could contribute to our shift towards sustainability.

Year you first started rowing?
Year 9 sculling (2014), Year 10 sweeping (2015)

First rowing club?
Borlase Boat Club

Why/How did you get into rowing?
I remember watching some older kids racing at school and thinking it looked so fun. Something definitely sang to the competitive part of me, so I signed up with a friend.

Name of first rowing coach?
Matthew Tabor

How do you balance rowing and academic life?
I find myself more productive the busier I am. It does take a lot of discipline and organisation, including scheduled down time with friends to make it sustainable. I also like to get ahead of work where I

can, which can mean starting over the holidays.

Who is your rowing idol?
Annie Anezakis – she is a hard worker and wicked fast.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?
It would have to have the Helen Glover and Heather Stanning pair.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?
I was very lucky to go to a state school with a rowing club. I did go through the junior rowing trialling circuit and grabbed an NSR medal before going to uni. In my first year I tried to find a new sport while dabbling in college rowing – this clearly did not work as here I am now. My biggest achievement has to be starting my role as President.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?
No, but I have raced Osiris twice.

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
Emily Farmer was a lightweight spare and rowed at my club a couple years below me.

Your favourite race so far?
Bumps, I have so far only been the bumper and not the bumped with two blades, so that could be why, but it is so much chaotic fun.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?
It was in a fishing boat, but my Grandad would take us rowing across a lake in Hamina (Finland) through the water lilies and I will always cherish those memories.

What is your favourite sports quote?
"Winners never quit and quitters never win."

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?
I could not do it without my teammates pushing me on and making the

experience so much more enjoyable. For them, I can go through anything.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?
Becoming President.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?
Losing my single off the landing stage and needing a rescue mission from the coach.

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?
It is very easy to row but it is very difficult to row well. A great water sport if you like Type 2 fun.

What is your favourite movie about sports? Why?
True Blue. It really shows the drama behind the scenes.

How does being an athlete make you a better person?
It helps you reach your potential, this specific case by sports, academics and social skills with your team.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?
In general, working hard and being rewarded for it – with other spanners in the works like illness and injury which are thrown into everyday life too.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?
I am very determined and headstrong as both an athlete and a person.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?
My closest friends are very understanding and support me. I still have friends from school who come to my races. Naturally, some people have found it difficult and we have drifted apart.

Any hobbies, other interests outside rowing?
Reading and drama/acting.



2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Ella Stadler

Nationality
GBR/USA

Height
1.75m

School/High School
All Hallows School

Club
OUWBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Graduate

Previous University
University of Oxford

Undergraduate course
BA History

Graduate course
MSc History of Science, Medicine and Technology

What is your Oxford College?
Exeter College

Why are you studying your course?
To further the interests stimulated by my undergraduate thesis research on the gendered presentation of female track and field Olympians during the Cold War. Following this course, I hope to pursue a business career within the sporting sector.

What is the most interesting part of your course?
The most interesting part of my course is my thesis research. I am examining the social and political causes behind the introduction of sex testing at the Olympic Games during the Cold War. To complete this, I will analyse the communications between national sporting bodies and the International Olympic Committee between the period 1945-2000.

Year you first started rowing?
2019

First rowing club?
Exeter College Boat Club

Name of first rowing coach?
Beth Dutton

Why/How did you get into rowing?
Before coming to university, I had erged for fitness purposes and trying the sport properly, on the water, seemed like the next natural step.

Who is your rowing idol?
Meghan O'Leary

How do you balance rowing and academic life?
It's tough and in all honesty, it never feels like you're quite hitting that balance, but instead that you could and should be giving more to both. I've definitely found the need to remind myself that I am only human and there are only 24 hours in a day. Ultimately, it's the study sessions with teammates that keep the motivation up and the stresses down.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?
Katherine Grainger, Helen Glover, Zulette Lamb, Lena Polhamus, Agnes Polhamus, Caroline Polhamus, John Opey, Heather Stanning.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?
My rowing history has been limited by floods and Covid over the past few years, but the past 5 months has definitely made up for it. I started 2022 in stroke seat of ECBC's 1st VIII and we surprised even ourselves when we went on to win Blades in Torpids. Since joining OUWBC, success at BUCS and Henley Women's Regatta in the 4+ were both moments I am very proud of.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?
No

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
No but my brother just started at the other place. Ew.

Your favourite race so far?
Henley Women's Regatta in the Development 4+

What is the best place you have ever rowed?
Wörthersee, Austria

Where would be your dream place to row?
Lake Bled, Slovenia

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?
The women I'm surrounded by. There is some incredible talent amongst this group of women. Their dedication is admirable and keeps me going. Ultimately, we are our own little family and support each other like we've known each other for life.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?
I think my greatest achievement is learning to push the limits I thought I had. Whether it be an erg test or blade skills, rowing demands and expects those limits to be broken. It's definitely something I could improve on, but learning to trust your body and not let your mind limit you is something I never knew I could do before rowing.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?
Schlepping a dyno up the M1 on a trailer for summer training and receiving a fair few glances.

What is your favourite sports quote?
"To give anything less than your best is to sacrifice the gift". - Steve Prefontaine

What is your favourite movie about sports? Why?
The Blind Side. I think it epitomises the potential that sport has to bring people together and also reminds us of the way in which sport is a privilege to be grateful for.

How does being an athlete make you a better person?
I think specifically rowing, teaches selflessness and teamwork skills like nothing else in life. 8 individual rowers

will not succeed. Success requires a degree of selflessness and an ability to see the bigger picture outside of your own input.

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?
Tempo, tough hands and tan lines.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?
I think my rowing career is quite relatable because it's a sport I fell into because it was the "thing to do at Oxford". From there I stuck with it because of the friends I made that made training so enjoyable. Most people's hobbies probably fall into these same stages.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?
Probably my ability to initially function on little sleep. It's a skill that's very compatible with early morning training before going back to bed before classes.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?
Everyone at Oxford is incredibly successful in anything they put their mind to, it's a bit of a crazy place like that, but my non-rowing friends definitely cannot get on board with the early mornings and relentless hours of training. It can be tough when you feel that you can't spend as much time with these friends as you would like, but ultimately our friends are supportive because they know how much it means to us. I also don't think you notice what you are missing out on during the season because your life is so packed, and you are having so much fun and get to see your rowing friends multiple times a day.

Any hobbies, other interests outside rowing?
Outside of the season I love open water swimming, playing netball and travelling when I can with family and friends.

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Alison Carrington



Nationality
GBR

Height
1.77m

School/High School
St Albans High School for Girls

Club
OUWBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Undergraduate

Undergraduate course
Medicine

What is your Oxford College?
Hertford

Why are you studying your course?
I really enjoy working in a team to problem solve and help deliver the best care to patients.

What is the most interesting part of your course?
I enjoy the variety of things I see as part of my education. Each rotation is completely different, and I am privileged to meet so many patients with different stories.

Year you first started rowing?
2018

First rowing club?
Hertford College Boat Club

Why/How did you get into rowing?
I got into rowing when I joined university. I hadn't really done much sport before uni but all my college friends were quite sporty, so I wanted to sink my teeth into something new. I tried rowing at my college club and loved it. I enjoyed the structure and discipline but also made some great friends and have been rowing ever since.

Name of first rowing coach?
Andrew Newsom

How do you balance rowing and academic life?
You have to be incredibly good at time management. Getting enough sleep to sustain you through long days in order to fit everything in is key. Balancing both

is much easier when coaches and tutors are understanding and supportive of your commitment to endeavours.

Who is your rowing idol?
Zoe Lee

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?
My Osiris crew from last year were great, it would be amazing to get one last row with them one day.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?
I started rowing with college and competed with them many times in bumps events. I joined OUWBC last year and raced with Osiris during the last season. I really enjoyed the races I did last year in the Osiris crew, in particular placing in the top 5 of university crews at WEHARR and making it to the final in HWR were highlights.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?
No

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
No

Your favourite race so far?
Henley Women's Regatta 2022 in the straight 4.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?
Henley Royal Regatta

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?
I am always looking for ways to go faster – both individually and in the crews I am in. The pursuit for speed inspires me to keep going when the training is tough. I am also inspired by the dedication that my teammates put into the sport.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?
I am proud of the steep learning curve I made last year to go from college level rowing to the Osiris crew. Racing at

Henley Royal Regatta was particularly special, having attended the event last year as a spectator and reflecting on how far I had come in the last year.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?
Driving the minibus through the McDonald's drive-thru after Trial Vllls.

What is your favourite sports quote?
"Better is better."

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?
Pushing your body to the limit fitness-wise whilst being highly skilful with an oar – there is nothing like it.

What is your favourite movie about sports? Why?
Rush. It demonstrates how intense rivalry can drive people to their greatest achievements.

How does being an athlete make you a better person?
Being an athlete requires a certain level of determination and discipline which is definitely carried into how you approach life outside of sport.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?
I hadn't found a sport I enjoyed or was particularly good at until I joined university. I've shown that with hard work I can be competitive amongst athletes who had the opportunity to start the sport earlier in their lives.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?
I'm very level-headed but gritty as an athlete. As a person I'm driven but also compassionate.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?
My friends are highly supportive. I try to make as much time for friends as possible in the off-season to make up for missing things for rowing. Sometimes sacrifices have to be made but thinking about how good a win feels makes it worth it.



2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Freya Willis

Nationality

AUS

Height

1.74m

School/High School

Methodist Ladies' College Kew

Club

OUWBC

Undergraduate/Graduate

Graduate

Previous University

Australian National University

Undergraduate course

Arts/Law

Graduate course

MPhil History

What is your Oxford College?

Magdalen

Why are you studying your course?

The more I learnt about history, and specifically women's history, the more I realised that women today are waging many of the same battles as their historical predecessors. I wanted to understand more about how and why social and economic structures have developed to privilege men, why women still shoulder the disproportionate share of domestic and caring labour, and how change has occurred in the past and may again, so I chose to research the growth of low-paid, feminised caring industries.

What is the most interesting part of your course?

As a part of my Masters dissertation, I have had the privilege of interviewing several carers and care workers about their experiences taking care of older people. I was moved to learn about the bonds of affection, comfort, and trust that develop between carers and the people they look after, but also saddened to learn about the

exploitation and undervaluing of care workers and the difficult working conditions in which they labour.

Year you first started rowing?

2011

First rowing club?

Methodist Ladies' College

Why/How did you get into rowing?

It was the 'it' sport at my high school. I was 14 and all my friends signed up, so I did too.

Who is your rowing idol?

Kim Brennan

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

I find the two very complementary; my time rowing helps me to refresh my academic brain and vice versa. I am genuinely passionate about both my research and my rowing, which helps me to stay motivated. I am fortunate that my course does not have many face-to-face hours, so my schedule is flexible. However, by the same token, I have to be disciplined and work consistently with the free time I do have.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

Kim Brennan, Lucy Stephan, Annabelle McIntyre, Jessica Morrison, Rosemary Popa, James Tomkins, Drew Ginn, Josh Dunkley-Smith.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

High School rowing at Methodist Ladies' College, Kew (2011-2013); competed at Australian National Schools championship, 2013; Magdalen College Boat Club (2021-); City of Oxford Rowing Club (2021-2022); qualified for Henley Women's.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

No

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?

No

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

Derwent Water, Lake District

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

I like the challenge of chasing perfection (even if I know you can never achieve it). There will always be something more to work on, a new problem to solve, or new target to work towards. It is as much an intellectual and mental game as it is physical.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

I am most proud of all the friendships and relationships I have built through rowing.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

The Magdalen College "Australian Eight", which I was part of, sunk the boat in the middle of the freezing waters of Derwent Water in January and had to be towed to shore.

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

I would say that it is a sport of millimetres; the aim is to get all the people in the boat to take a stroke in as closely similar a manner as possible and at as close as the exact same time as possible.

What is your favourite sports quote?

"I've failed over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed." – Michael Jordan

What is your favourite movie about sports? Why?

Bend It Like Beckham. Growing up, it was one of the only movies that featured women playing sport.

How does being an athlete make you a better person?

It teaches you a lot of skills that are broadly applicable to all areas of life: teamwork, discipline, determination, resilience. Sport has helped me to grow my confidence and self-esteem and to challenge myself to do things I would have never thought possible.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

My sporting career is, in many ways, incredibly ordinary. I was never a star athlete; I haven't been doing the same sport since a young age. I just kept working at it and trying new things until I found something I really liked, and anybody can do that.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

I think I am quite emotionally intelligent, which is an asset in a team environment. I care about my teammates and try to be encouraging and empathetic to ensure that everyone can reach their potential. I don't get worried or upset easily and can help to resolve conflict.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

They have stopped trying to understand how and why I live this way, but they are very supportive. It is a balancing act. My friends are very generous and understanding of my rowing commitments, but I also make sure I make time in my week for socialising and for non-rowing related activities. Rowing also brings new opportunities to make friends and some of my closest friends were/are my crew mates, so it is not all sacrifice.

Any hobbies, other interests outside rowing?

Australian Rules Football

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Sarah Marshall



Nationality
GBR

Height
1.77m

School/High School
The Perse School

Club
OUWBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Undergraduate

Undergraduate course
BA History and Economics

What is your Oxford College?
Jesus College

Why are you studying your course?
History and economics are both interesting subjects and studying them is highly relevant to understanding today's world.

What is the most interesting part of your course?
Having the opportunity to see how past actions and current frameworks shape the way we think about our world today.

Year you first started rowing?
2019

First rowing club?
Rob Roy BC

Why/How did you get into rowing?
One of my friends was rowing whilst we were at school together and she got me interested in it.

Name of first rowing coach?
Jo Burch

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?
I learned to row at Rob Roy BC as a junior, competed at British junior

championships in 2021, then rowed with Jesus College BC in my first year at Oxford. I raced at BUCS regatta, Met regatta and Henley qualifiers with OUWBC development squad in summer 2022. I also rowed in Cambridge town bumps with Rob Roy BC in 2021 and 2022. My biggest achievement was probably 2021 Brit junior champs as I didn't have much experience, but I still managed to get in and compete.

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

Making the most of every minute of the day. Working when it's time to work, rowing when it's time to row and resting when it's time to rest.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?
No

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at "the other place"?
Brett Taylor (Cambridge men's team) and I were both members of Rob Roy BC.

Your favourite race so far?
Bumps racing is always fun because it is so different to any other race and draws big support.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?
Probably the river we rowed on in training camp – the water was so flat, and the sunsets were amazing.

What is your favourite movie about sports? Why?
Chariots of Fire, because it places sport into the context of real life.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?
My family – they are so supportive and encouraging.

Where would be your dream place to row?
I haven't ever actually rowed on it, but I would love to row on the Caledonian Canal because the scenery is incredible.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?
My greatest achievement through rowing has probably been the perseverance gained through it. Being able to do something tough and to keep doing it.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?
Capsizing on the river Cam in mid-December and taking hours to warm back up to a normal temperature.

What is your favourite sports quote?
"Do or do not. There is no try." - Yoda

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?
Everyone can relate to persevering towards a goal even when it's tough.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?
Learning to see the bright side of situations. There is always a bright side, and generally your efforts will yield better results if you have a realistic positive mental attitude.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?
It just makes the times that you do spend together more valuable.

Any hobbies, other interests outside rowing?
I really enjoy playing piano. I am also learning Chinese.

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Esther Austin


Nationality

NZL

Height

1.73m

School/High School

Wanganui Collegiate School

Club

OUWBC

Undergraduate/Graduate

Graduate

Previous University

University of Canterbury, New Zealand

Undergraduate course

LLB

Graduate course

MBA

What is your Oxford College?

St Anne's College

Why are you studying your course?

I am studying an MBA to further my work career by gaining broader experience and exposure to business management.

What is the most interesting part of your course?

The people and the diversity of the cohort.

Year you first started rowing?

2005

First rowing club

Wanganui Collegiate School

Why/How did you get into rowing?

It was a family affair. I started off coxing my dad's crews and then started rowing when I was in high school.

Name of first rowing coach?

My dad.

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

It's a constant challenge to balance them, time management and hard work are both key.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

Hamish Bond, Eric Murray, Mahé, Nathan Cohen, Rob Waddell, Grace Prendergast, Kerri Gowler, Emma Twigg.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

Bit of a long rowing history with it starting 18 years ago, but I have had a few years off recently. Racing at World Juniors in 2010 for New Zealand was a great experience and being on the NZ Universities team in 2012 and 2013.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

No

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at "the other place"?

Not in this year's squad, but I have from previous/recent Boat Race crews.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

Lake Ruataniwha, Twizel, New Zealand

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

I love a good challenge and competition. When you're working hard and getting fit with a good team that become your friends, it makes it fun and not a chore.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

The general opportunities that have opened up off the back of rowing and the character skills/traits you learn from rowing.

What is your favourite sports quote?

In the words of the famous poet Marshall Mathers III, "You better lose yourself in the music, the moment, you own it, you better never let it go. You only get one shot, do not miss your chance to blow. This opportunity comes once in a lifetime".

What is your favourite movie about sports?
Remember the Titans
How does being an athlete make you a better person?

Being fit and healthy makes me happy.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

Passion?

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

It's good practice for life in general when you'll inevitably have to miss out on many events/activities. I just try to look at it from a different perspective of the opportunities gained from the rowing, rather than what are the things I am missing.

Any hobbies, other interests outside rowing?

In between rowing seasons I find myself training for half and full Ironman – sucker for punishment?

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Tara Slade

Cox


Nationality

GBR

Height

1.67m

School/High School

Lancing College

Club

OUWBC

Undergraduate/Graduate

Graduate

Previous University

University of Cambridge

Undergraduate course

Medical Sciences

Graduate course

Entry Medicine

What is your Oxford College?

St Peter's

Why are you studying your course?

To become a good doctor and accelerate progress in medical science.

What is the most interesting part of your course?

Thinking fast, whilst helping people. Surgery and emergency medicine are my current favourite specialties.

Year you first started rowing?

2015

First rowing club

Caius Boat Club

Why/How did you get into rowing?

The camaraderie and atmosphere were the perfect vibe.

Name of first rowing coach?

Will McDermott

Who is your rowing idol?

Erin Kennedy

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

Prioritisation and a good support network.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

Mays Headship with Caius Boat Club 2019.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

No

Your favourite race so far?

Lightweight women's reserve IV+ 2018, I learned to cox at Cambridge.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

Mays Headship with Caius Boat Club M1 2019.

Where would be your dream place to row?

Banyoles

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

My teammates, and the thrill of racing.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

Building on decades of crews' work to win Caius Boat Club Men's Headship.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

Misjudging a jump onto the landing station in December.

What is your favourite sports quote?

"You can't cancel Quidditch."

What is your favourite movie about sports? Why?
Cool Runnings. It embraces the spirit of teamwork.
How does being an athlete make you a better person?

I value the opinions and experiences of my teammates, which help me make better decisions.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

Everyone has good days and bad days, whether they're an athlete or not.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

High attention to detail, ability to think quickly and make decisions under pressure.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

My non-rowing friends are extremely supportive and provide relief from the rowing bubble. Luckily my rowing friends tend to organise socials at times convenient to the rowing schedule.

Any hobbies, other interests outside rowing?

Medicine, triathlon, music and art.

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Carina Graf



Nationality
GER

Height
1.78m

School/High School
Ev. Heidehofgymnasium

Club
CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Graduate

Previous University
University of British Columbia,
Vancouver

Undergraduate course
Medical Physics

Graduate course
Clinical Neuroscience

What is your Cambridge College?
Emmanuel

Why are you studying your course?
Developing novel techniques for neuroscience research allows me to transfer my physical science training into the medical community.

Year you first started rowing?
2018

First rowing club?
University of British Columbia

Why/How did you get into rowing?
A close friend of mine suggested I try rowing to improve my mental health and work-life balance. I was hooked after one session.

Name of first rowing coach?
Zoe Fettig-Win

How do you balance rowing and academic life?
A very organized schedule.

Who is your rowing idol?
Andrea Proske

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

I noviced at UBC in 2018/19. After a year-long break, I continued with rowing as soon as I joined Cambridge University and started trialling in 2021. My biggest achievement so far has been winning the BUCS Int 4+ in 2022. In a very competitive field of over 50 boats, we strategically made it through the semis and took the win in the final, after narrowly missing out on a medal the previous day in the Int 8+.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?
Yes, Blondie 2022.

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
No

Your favourite race so far?
HWR2022. What a friendly regatta.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?
The Fraser River, Richmond, BC.

Where would be your dream place to row?
Lake Lucerne

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?
Feeling like I truly completed something.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?
Being asked to back it down individually to the stake boats, instead of as a crew.

What is your favourite sports quote?
"Winning is an all the time thing. Not a sometimes thing."

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

It keeps me healthy, both physically and mentally and provides an outlet to PhD life.

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

How to use your body in the best way to make a boat go zoom, zoom.

What is your favourite movie about sports? Why?

Free Solo. I love climbing, and it highlights what impact psychological training has on sports performance.

How does being an athlete make you a better person?

I am more present when meeting friends and family. Because time is very limited on our training schedule, I try to make the most of every minute I have with the people that are most important to me.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

I started late with rowing (24), but with hard work and determination you can still become an athlete at this stage in life.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

I like to actively listen. This is true both for my personal life and as an athlete. In the boat it means really listening to the hull, slides and blades. It can tell you a lot about what might be going on.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

Most of my friends at this point are rowers, too. So they understand and are hugely supportive, because everyone knows how big a deal it is to get to row for Cambridge.

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Rosa Millard


Nationality

GBR

Height

1.72m

School/High School

The Latymer School

Club

CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate

Undergraduate

Undergraduate course

Linguistics

What is your Cambridge College?

Trinity Hall

Why are you studying your course?

A lifelong passion for languages and puzzles. Linguistics is the perfect combination of the two.

Year you first started rowing?

2010

First rowing club?

Lea Rowing Club

Why/How did you get into rowing?

My dad asked me (forced me!) to cox his masters four when I was eight. As time went on he slowly got me into coxing, then rowing, something which at the time I found deeply tedious, but now I am incredibly grateful and nostalgic about my first few years at the Lea.

Name of first rowing coach?

Dick Millard

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

Started going down the Lea at age 8, I coxed until I was 13/14, then started rowing. Rowed there until I was 17. Then moved to Tideway Scullers. Biggest achievements: GB France 2018 HOR4s winner and course record holder two years in a row (2018/2019); Racing

the Saturday of the Diamond Jubilee Challenge Cup 2019; 15-length victory Lightweight Boat Race 2022, 3.5-minute course record; 3 gold medals at BUCS.

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

Early bedtimes, designated down-time away from rowing or academics, and caffeine.

Who is your rowing idol?

Orhan Kephelas, Paul Carter, Dick Millard. All old-time rowers (they will hate me for saying that) who inspire me to keep things simple and speak my mind.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

Orhan Kephelas, Paul Carter, Dick Millard, Chris Drury, Jasper Parish, Grace Prendergast.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

Yes, I stroked the lightweight women to a victory of 15 lengths in the 2022 Lightweight Boat Race.

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?

No

Your favourite race so far?

All of BUCS 2022 was pretty epic, it was great fun showing the rest of the UK the calibre of women's rowing at Cambridge. Especially the lightweight women, who won all the crew lightweight events at BUCS.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

The Tideway is pretty awesome. You never know what you're going to get in terms of conditions, so I think it makes for excellent technical rowers.

Where would be your dream place to row?

The Tideway

What do you feel is your greatest
achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

Making lifelong friends at every club I have been at and making a small change in each of these clubs for the better.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

My friends. The team. My incredibly competitive personality...

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

Getting a 30-second time penalty for swearing at Wallingford 4s and 8s Head when I was age 12 coxing.

What is your favourite sports quote?

"Everyone's hurting, whoever wins is who can hurt for the longest."

What is your favourite movie about sports?
Cool Runnings
How does being an athlete make you a better person?

Time management, dedication, and teamwork that isn't replicable in any other environment, or even many other sports.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

You will always know what I am thinking, I am fairly blunt, be that a good or bad thing, but keep things down to earth and can remove emotion from professionalism in the boat.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

They think it's insanity. If I had the true feeling of 'missing out' they wouldn't be my friends. I know my friends will be my friends no matter what my commitments in rowing.



2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Alexandra Riddell-Webster

Nationality
GBR

Height
1.72m

School/High School
Godolphin and Latymer

Club
CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Undergraduate

Undergraduate course
Computer Science

What is your Cambridge College?
Murray Edwards

Why are you studying your course?
Because it's interesting.

Year you first started rowing?
2013

First rowing club?
Godolphin and Latymer School

Why/How did you get into rowing?
I went for a taster session and got hooked.

Name of first rowing coach?
Daniel (Dan) Safdari

Who is your rowing idol?
Katherine Grainger

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?
I wouldn't want to row with anyone other than the girls in my eight.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

Started rowing at 13, represented GB in 2019 at Munich regatta and Junior World Championships in JW4- and Blondie in 2021, 2022.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?
Blondie 2021, 2022.

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
Have friends at Oxford, all of whom (I'm sure...) will be cheering for me.

Your favourite race so far?
Blondie 2022, purely because of the volume of booze at the finish line.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?
The Thames at sunrise.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?
My friends and teammates.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?
Blondie 2021

What is your favourite sports quote?
"After a while – not long – you will no longer exist, and the woods and rocks and sky will continue, unchanged, for thousands of years after you. What is it that has called you so suddenly out of nothingness to enjoy for a brief while a spectacle which remains quite indifferent to you? The conditions for your existence are almost as old as the rocks. For thousands of years men have striven and suffered and begotten and women have brought forth in pain."

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?
Pull hard on a stick to go backwards.



2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Jenna Armstrong

Nationality
USA

Height
1.78m

School/High School
Hanover Park High School

Club
CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Graduate

Previous University
Bates College (undergraduate); Duke University (graduate medicine)

Undergraduate course
Biological Chemistry and Mathematics

Graduate course
Physiology

What is your Cambridge College?
Jesus College

Why are you studying your course?
As a medical student, I was fascinated by how dysfunction in physiologic processes caused the disease pathology that I saw in my patients. I was particularly interested in metabolism and ways in which alterations in oxygen supply change the metabolic response. I chose to do a PhD in Physiology to further explore this topic and develop the skills needed to bring ground-breaking scientific research from the laboratory bench to the patient's bedside.

Year you first started rowing?
2011

First rowing club?
Bates College

Why/How did you get into rowing?
I was an alpine skier through high school. After a few knee injuries, I was unable to compete in alpine skiing anymore. In my first university class ever, a member of the Bates College

rowing team invited me to give rowing a try. The rest is history.

Name of first rowing coach?
Peter Steenstra

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

Lots of organisation and a giant backpack. When I leave my house at 5:45am I make sure that I have all the clothes/food/work that I need for the day so I can go straight from the morning session to the lab, and to the afternoon session without having to stop.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

Wow, that is almost too big a question for me to answer. I only get to choose eight?

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

I learned to row at Bates College in 2011. I have four appearances at the Div III NCAA national championships, with one third place finish (2014), two second place finishes (2013 and 2012) and one first place finish (2015). I was awarded First-team All-America in 2015. I also won the Collegiate Eights at the Head of the Charles in 2014. My biggest rowing achievement so far was winning the Div III NCAA national championships in 2015.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?
Cambridge reserve (Blondie) in 2022.

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
No

Your favourite race so far?
Our Blondie race in 2022.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?
The Androscoggin River in Maine in

autumn. By far the most beautiful place in the world.

Where would be your dream place to row?
Anywhere warm and sunny.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

I left the sport entirely for five years (2015-2020) while I pursued my medical degree in the US. I now realise how much better my life is with rowing than without it. Even with the early, cold, rainy mornings, I remind myself how lucky I am to return to this amazing sport, and I wouldn't trade this for anything else. Rowing at Cambridge is a huge privilege and I love every minute of it.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

Forget about the awards for a moment. Forget about the trophies and the titles. It is the personal growth and development over my four years rowing at Bates College that is my biggest achievement. I have become a better athlete, teammate, and friend during that experience. The work ethic I have developed at Bates and the friendships that I have made are truly the greatest thing I have achieved in my life.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

I have capsized small boats more times than I would like to admit. It is usually accompanied by a lot of screaming and it has been caught on camera a few times. Please don't ask the Jesus College boatman for the photos he has proudly displayed on the "Wall of Shame". There are many...

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

It is just like exercising on the rowing machine, except it usually happens really early in the morning (often before sunrise), on a slightly more unstable platform (the boat), outside with the

elements (e.g. rain, cold, wind), with some of the most inspiring individuals on campus.

What is your favourite sports quote?
I am not sure I have a good answer for this one...

What is your favourite movie about sports? Why?

With this schedule, who has time to sit down and watch a movie?

How does being an athlete make you a better person?

This sport has taught me how to be a better teammate, a better friend, and a better person. I have learned to communicate more effectively, support others, ask for help when I need it, and work with others to achieve our common goals. It is about the people in this sport, the relationships we build, and the time that we spend together.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

Whether it is athletic, academic, career, hobbies, family, or something else, we are all pursuing something. That is just human nature. I think everybody can relate to the idea of putting your time, effort, and thoughts towards achieving something that is important to you.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

Enthusiasm mixed with a whole lot of energy.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

I am lucky that I have incredibly supportive friends and family who are with me through this journey. They understand the importance of rowing in my life, and they never pressure me to sacrifice rowing/sleep for social events. I make every effort to attend social events and activities with my friends, even if I need to leave early to accommodate my 8:30pm bedtime.

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Freya Keto



Nationality
USA/GB

Height
1.8m

School/High School
Walt Whitman High School

Club
CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Graduate

Previous University
Brown University

Undergraduate course
History

Graduate course
African Studies

What is your Cambridge College?
St. Edmund's

Why are you studying your course?
To improve my understanding of the long-standing impacts of European colonialism.

Year you first started rowing?
2015

First rowing club?
Thompson Boat Club

Why/How did you get into rowing?
It required no experience, and I was looking to try something new.

Name of first rowing coach?
Rachel Gabbay

Who is your rowing idol?
Damir Martin

How do you balance rowing and academic life?
I balance rowing and academics through careful planning, meal

preparation, and a diligent sleep schedule.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

My dream eight would be full of my teammates from the Brown women's crew class of 2022.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

Henley Royal Regatta 2021 and Henley Women's Regatta 2022 finalist in women's champ quads, silver medal in 2v8 at Ivy League championships 2022, tied team points winner at Ivy League championships 2022.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before?
No

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
No

Your favourite race so far?
Racing Cal Berkeley in the quad at Henley Women's.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?
Seekonk River, Providence

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

The continued belief that I can still improve and want to contribute to the group around me.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

Meeting a wonderful array of committed and unique individuals. My closest friends have been made through the sport.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

Falling on my back after trying to do a hang clean in front of the team.

What is your favourite sports quote?
"Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee."

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

Working with other people (and equipment) to make your boat go the fastest.

What is your favourite movie about sports? Why?

Whiplash for the parallels to sport through its depiction of extreme dedication.

How does being an athlete make you a better person?

Sport teaches you resilience and to get back up when it seems all hope is lost. It takes discipline and faith to keep pushing on the difficult days which is necessary in life outside of sport.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

I think people can relate to committing to something even when it seems like the odds aren't in your favour. I feel I have had lots of setbacks and disappointments, but I am still rowing because it is what I want to do.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

I think a strength of mine is to make light of things. Rowing is a hard sport so it's important to laugh. Humour brings people together.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

Many of my best friends were or still are athletes so they definitely understand having to miss out on activities.



2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Isabelle Bastian

Nationality

USA

Height

1.78m

School/High School

The Winsor School

Club

CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate

Graduate

Previous University

Harvard University

Undergraduate course

Social Studies

Graduate course

Health, Medicine and Society

What is your Cambridge College?

Jesus College

Why are you studying your course?

I've been interested in going into medicine for a while, but before I go to medical school, I want to explore health care from a number of different directions. I'm specifically interested in better understanding how to provide effective care to patients with limited English proficiency.

Year you first started rowing?

2013

First rowing club?

The Winsor School

Name of first rowing coach?

Lisa Stone

Who is your rowing idol?

Gevvie Stone. She attended the same high school that I did, so she would come talk to us sometimes and once we even did pieces with her. It was always really cool to get to meet someone after seeing their medals and photos up on the wall of the boathouse. She was one of the first rowers that I learned about and then got to watch and cheer for her from the Charles to the Olympics.

Why/How did you get into rowing?

Being from the Boston area, I watched the Head of the Charles Regatta most years and watched my uncle reunite with his teammates from the 1987 world championship gold medal crew to race. When I began school at The Winsor School in 9th grade, I decided to try rowing since my cousin had raced in HOOCR the year before and because the coach seemed amazing.

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

By really trying to highlight what I value and what's important to me and by using my time and energy on those things.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

I would love to race with my Harvard-Radcliffe heavyweight rowing teammates from the 2019-2020 year. We had put in a lot of work and were so excited to see how we shaped up against our competition during the spring racing season before we were sent home from university two weeks before our first race. It was one of the most fun years of rowing to be a part of because of how much momentum we'd taken from the year before and built on.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

I'm very proud of contributing to my team's return to the NCAA championships in 2019. The older rowers on the team had worked hard to create a change in culture and set higher standards to build the program back after failing to qualify for some years. As a first year at university and on the team, I had a lot to learn, and I'm proud of my class for fully buying into the goals set by our returning teammates and working consistently throughout the year.

Your favourite race so far?

Head of the Charles because it is always so fun to race at home. In 2018, the race was especially special because it was my first race for Radcliffe Crew, and I

had family and friends cheering for me from Weld Boathouse (my university boathouse).

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

No

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?

No

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

The Charles River between Boston and Cambridge, MA, USA is my home water and truly a spectacular place to row. It's so special to see so many rowers of all ages and experiences sharing the water together. The other rowing shells and kayakers also keep your reflexes sharp.

Where would be your dream place to row?

I'd love to row at Henley.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

I love the incredible teammates, and I love the nature of the sport of constantly pushing yourself to improve, no matter what level you are. It teaches you how tough you are and how to take constructive things from challenging or frustrating pieces and workouts.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

Costume regattas around Halloween were always creative affairs.

What is your favourite sports quote?

"Make it Happen."

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

It would definitely take some time. After describing the basics to someone, I'd probably recommend they read *The Boys in the Boat* or go try it out if they have access.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

I think learning how to support others through challenge while also pushing them to be the best they can has been a skill that I've learned a lot about and continue to work on. I think another lesson I've learned is how improvement and change can take a long time and steadfast commitment to something does pay off eventually – to not give up even if something isn't achieved in a day or a week but to see each small improvement and seeing that over time they add up.

What is your favourite movie about sports?

No way could I choose just one. However, one of my favourite series about sports is *Friday Night Lights*.

How does being an athlete make you a better person?

In many ways. It teaches you how to work with others, how to manage balancing multiple pressures, and to know how to commit to the things you care about.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

Anyone who has committed to something for a long time or in different environments can understand to some extent the challenges and joys of committing to a sport like rowing. Also, because my years of rowing were impacted by Covid, that is also relatable to the majority of people who had things they valued in their routines suddenly become impossible to do.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

I am very even keeled and loyal. When I choose to do something, I try to commit to doing it well.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

I have wonderful, supportive friends, rowers and non-rowers alike. I love hearing about the activities they are passionate about and dedicate their time to and vice versa.

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Claire Brillon


Nationality

CAN

Height

1.83m

School/High School

University of British Columbia

Club

CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate

Graduate

Previous University

University of British Columbia

Graduate course

MPhil Music

What is your Cambridge College?

Fitzwilliam

Why are you studying your course?

Because of my interest in music's impact on the brain.

Year you first started rowing?

2015

First rowing club?

University of British Columbia

Why/How did you get into rowing?

I was recruited because of my height.

Name of first rowing coach?

Sheryl Preston

Who is your rowing idol?

Hillary Janssens

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

Will Crothers, Grace Pendergast, Julia Lindsay, Kristen Kit, Avalon Wasteneys, Dan DeGroot, Andrea Proske, Craig Pond, Hillary Janssens, Jessica Sevic.

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

Using all my time efficiently and prioritizing sleep.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

The sport of rowing has carried me through many highs and lows, and it has provided me with a structure that has become an integral part of my life. My biggest accomplishment thus far has been racing at the World Championships in 2022. This was my first time representing Canada at the senior level (coxless four).

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

No

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?

Yes. Julia Lindsay (Oxford Blue Boat 2021 and 2022) and I were best friends throughout her whole University of British Columbia career. We even lived together for 3 years.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

Shawnigan Lake on a calm morning will always take the cake.

Where would be your dream place to row?

Glacier Lake near Whistler.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

I love it. It brings me joy and fulfilment.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

Finding out that I can be world class in something has been an invaluable asset to my life.

Your favourite race so far?

May speed trials 2022

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

We had been doing a stand-up drill (loaded at the catch, standing up) but I did it one extra time and stood up tall to see the rest of the boat taking a normal stroke. Came crashing down on the deck promptly.

What is your favourite sports quote?

"No pain, no gain."

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

Fun and repetitive.

What is your favourite movie about sports? Why?
I'm not really one for movies, but maybe *She's the Man...* a great gender-bender film.
How does being an athlete make you a better person?

Makes me value fairness, hard work and punctuality.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

Because I wasn't an athlete in any capacity until finding my niche.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

I'm very determined and not afraid to fail.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

My friends are all very proud, and those who tease me for being lame or a grandma either love me for it or end up not being in my close circles.



2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Caoimhe Dempsey

Nationality

IRL

Height

1.8m

School/High School

St Joseph of Cluny

Club

CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate

Graduate

Previous University

Trinity College Dublin

Undergraduate course

BA Psychology

Graduate course

PhD Psychology

What is your Cambridge College?

Newnham

Why are you studying your course?

I'm interested in learning about how children develop and what we can do to foster positive early outcomes.

Year you first started rowing?

2015

First rowing club?

Dublin University Ladies Boat Club

Name of first rowing coach?

Andrew Coleman

Why/How did you get into rowing?

One of the many sports I tried in Freshers Week and I loved the people I met there.

Who is your rowing idol?

Grace Prendergast

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

The Big Strong Gorls.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

I learnt to row at Trinity College Dublin during my undergrad, went on to race at the U23 European champs and win an Irish national title in the pair. I spent a year rowing in New Zealand with Otago Uni before coming to Cambridge. I've had three seasons with CUBC, one cancelled race and two wins in the Blue Boat.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

Yes, 2020, 2021, 2022.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

The people.

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?

We have had a few girls come here from Oxford undergrad – always lovely people.

Your favourite race so far?

2022 Boat Race

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

Cromwell to Clyde, NZ.

Where would be your dream place to row?

Ely of course.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

The chance to row with some of the best athletes in the world.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

Watching Rebecca Smith catch an ejector crab in Ely.

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

Not much of a spectator sport!

What is your favourite movie about sports?
The Last Dance



2023

ATHLETE Q&A

James Trotman

Cox

Nationality
GBR

Height
1.73m

School/High School:
St Paul's School

Club
CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Undergraduate

Undergraduate course
BA Economics

What is your Cambridge College?
Sidney Sussex

Why are you studying your course?
Economics provides a grounding in both the quantitative and qualitative skills required to tackle a fundamentally changing world, and engage with issues as complex and impactful as wealth inequality, climate change, and productivity. I particularly enjoy the lively debates that these themes encourage, and the ability to use data to question the assumptions behind them. Ultimately, the course gives me an unparalleled level of insight and interest into current affairs and the workings behind the world's major economies.

Year you first started rowing?
2017

First rowing club?
St Paul's School Boat Club

Why/How did you get into rowing?
When my school offered a week-long taster course for rowing in the summer holiday, I jumped at the chance to try a new sport. I kept rowing for a few months before realising I was more suited to coxing, and after particularly enjoying the thrill of the summer

regatta races in my first season, have continued ever since.

Name of first rowing coach?
Doug Perrin

Who is your rowing idol?
Henry Fieldman

How do you balance rowing and academic life?
Balancing the two requires a high level of organisation, time management, and focus whilst working, and I find that trying to avoid unnecessary distractions when working allows me to use the time I have to study more effectively. Ultimately, coxing and studying is a highly complementary and varied combination, and I almost always have the energy and motivation to undertake both.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?
I have coxed for SPSBC for 5 years, except in the time interrupted by Covid. I also coxed the GBR U19 8+ at the 2022 World Rowing Junior Championships in Varese, Italy, winning a silver medal. However, my greatest rowing achievement is undoubtedly winning the Princess Elizabeth Challenge Cup at Henley Royal Regatta with SPSBC in 2022.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?
No

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
No

Your favourite race so far?
My race with SPSBC on the Wednesday of the Princess Elizabeth Challenge Cup 2022 against Shiplake College. Coming back from almost a length behind to

progress to the next round gave me and the whole crew the belief and confidence that we needed.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

Probably on the Thames at Henley Royal Regatta, the gladiatorial style of racing at the regatta and the atmosphere of the Stewards' Enclosure makes it a truly unique and special place to compete. I also enjoyed the picturesque alpine scenery when rowing in Varese, Italy.

Where would be your dream place to row?

I would love to cox on the Rotsee in Lucerne, it strikes me for its combination of beautiful scenery and tense, channelled atmosphere.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

I am continually inspired by the commitment and dedication of both my coaches and teammates and motivated by the opportunity to earn the right to compete in a Boat Race.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

Aside from the accolades I have earned through rowing, I feel that it has greatly helped me to develop my confidence and become a more outgoing person, especially by getting the opportunity to compete alongside and learn from so many talented and motivated athletes.

What is your favourite sports quote?
"What makes something special is not just what you have to gain, but what you feel there is to lose." – Andre Agassi

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

Coxing is the ultimate form of multitasking – simultaneously observing your opponents, coaching your crew, steering the course, and adapting the

race plan on the fly to produce the best outcome.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

This is undoubtedly when I was 13 years old and, despite having already specialised as a cox, had to substitute into the bow seat of my school's 5th octo at The Scullery race, due to an injury elsewhere on the team. Both 2k laps in the race took well over 9 minutes to complete.

How does being an athlete make you a better person?

Being an athlete has shown me that an achievement is only worth the sum of the effort and dedication that you have invested in working towards it, and that playing the long game is the best way to be satisfied with what you have accomplished.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

My career as a cox shows that even someone as physically unremarkable as me can achieve amazing things through practice and dedication.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

I would say that there is a lot of overlap between my strengths as a person and as a cox, particularly in being fastidious and meticulous in the work that I do.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

Most of my friends are supportive of my athletic success, even when they don't understand the finer points of training or racing. Rather than focus on the times that I miss out on activities, I prefer to make the most of the time that I spend with my friends and enjoy it as much as possible.



2023

ATHLETE Q&A

James Forward

Nationality
GBR

Height
1.88m

School/High School
Nottingham High School

Club
OUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Undergraduate

Undergraduate course
Philosophy, Politics and Economics

What is your Oxford College?
Pembroke

Why are you studying your course?
I enjoyed all three components of the course when I was at school, so it seemed like the natural next step. I have thoroughly enjoyed it so far.

What is the most interesting part of your course?
I really enjoy the variation in my degree; one week I can be discussing whether we can know anything at all in Philosophy, then the next week I can

be discussing the impact on the UK economy of recent policy changes.

Year you first started rowing?
2013

First rowing club?
Nottingham and Union Rowing Club

Why/How did you get into rowing?
I started rowing at the age of 12 at my local rowing club, as I was inspired by my Dad – he erged every night in the garage, and I thought it looked like an exciting challenge.

Name of first rowing coach?
Chris McManus

How do you balance rowing and academic life?
I feel rowing and academics complement each other well – it is quite full on, but I have got used to being busy. If anything, the sport makes me more efficient when I work.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?
I learned to row at Nottingham and Union RC, where I stayed until I came to Oxford. As a junior I represented

GB at Coupe in 2019 where I won 2 bronze medals in the quad. I came to Oxford in September 2020, and rowed in the Boat Race in 2021. I then went on to become U23 European champion in the men's eight that summer. Last year I won the reserve Boat Race and made it to the Saturday of Henley.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?
Yes, in 2021.

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
I did Coupe with Luca Ferraro.

Your favourite race so far?
Winning in Isis last year.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?
It is great fun to be a part of such an outstanding team.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?
Becoming U23 European champion in 2021.



2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Alexander Bebb

Nationality
CAN

Height
1.94m

School/High School
St. George's School Vancouver

Club
OUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Graduate

Previous University
Cornell University

Undergraduate course
BSc in the School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering

Graduate course
DPhil in Engineering Science

What is your Oxford College?
St. Peter's College

Why are you studying your course?
I discovered a passion for fluid mechanics and heat transfer. I was offered a position to research novel turbine technologies through the Oxford Thermofluids Institute and couldn't turn it down.

What is the most interesting part of your course?
The experimental work. The full design, construction, and use of a test facility has been an incredible learning experience for me.

Year you first started rowing?
2011

First rowing club
St. George's Boat Club

Why/How did you get into rowing?
My mum forced me into try-outs. My cousin was a cox with St. John's College, Cambridge and mum figured it would be a good sport to give a go. I didn't make the first cut, the coach citing a "lack of athletic potential".

Made the dev squad the following spring as it was my only option.

Name of first rowing coach?
Greg Szybka

Who is your rowing idol?
Tim Foster

How do you balance rowing and academic life?
Unrelenting organization and coffee. Investing 10 minutes at the end of each day to sort out the following pays dividends.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?
I'd have to say the 2008 Canadian men's eight, although I don't think I'd be able to choose one athlete to replace.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?
I started rowing in the spring of 2011 in the dev squad at my high school. Competed at CSSRA's and won gold in the school's 8+ in 2014. I was recruited to Cornell University where I competed in the 1V 8+ in 2017, 2018, and 2019. Raced at HRH in 2016 (Temple 8+) and 2017 (Visitors 4+). In 2018 I was selected for the Canadian BM8+ and placed 5th at the U23 World Championships in Poznan.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?
Yes, 2021. The pandemic restrictions meant that the team was unable to train and socialize normally. It meant that we were, unfortunately, massively underprepared come race day.

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
Thankfully not.

Your favourite race so far?
Penn fixture in 2017. The race went off beautifully and not only did we execute well, we swept the entire event.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?
The Fraser River in Vancouver, the first place I rowed. 8km of wide, tidal river that sweeps around south of the city. The rough water and tides are similar to the Tideway. When it's flat and the sun rises over the east of the city it's absolutely stunning.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?
Having a highly motivated group around you makes the difference. A 90-minute Z2 session or a 5km test is much easier when you're pulling it for the athletes to your left and right.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?
Rowing has opened far more doors than it's ever closed. It's given me the opportunity to attend my undergrad through recruitment, to represent my country, and to compete in such an incredibly historic race. More than the material, it's proved an incredible teacher.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?
Our "overtake" on the UVIC 2nd 8+ at Head of the Gorge Regatta. There's a narrow tidal rapid all boats must navigate. We were gaining on the 8+ the whole race and caught up to them at the rapids. Their cox went through and graciously pulled over; however, that put them in the slow water and they immediately decelerated. We stuck to the middle and absolutely barrelled into their boat. It was extremely embarrassing at the time.

What is your favourite sports quote?
"I was really quite nervous during today.. I don't think there's anything wrong with being nervous" – Matthew Pinsent in *Gold Fever*.

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?
Physiological challenge after challenge but one of the most rewarding things you could do.

What is your favourite movie about sports? Why?
Gold Fever. I've found it incredibly useful for my own performance to have an understanding that while these men are unbelievable athletes, they're still human. It makes what we do each day and the goals we work towards at OUBC seem more reasonable and attainable.

How does being an athlete make you a better person?
Athletics teaches you to become a more motivated and more determined individual. One thing that may get overlooked is that it gives you an appreciation of the joy of being active. While 20 hours of training per week isn't for everyone, a chance to be outside and exert yourself leaves you much happier.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?
I believe the athletic career is, fundamentally, no different than any other venture or career. All will have ups and downs, triumphs and celebrations.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?
I'd like to think I'm dependable and consistent in the face of adversity. I have a profound care of those on my team around me.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?
I've never been one to broadcast most of this far and wide. My housemates, however, who see me each day are still in shock at the amount of food required to feed me during the peak of the training cycle.

Any hobbies, other interests outside rowing?
Skiing and road cycling. Sketching has also always been something I've enjoyed.



2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Alfred Orpin

Nationality

GBR

Height

2.05m

School/High School

Fulford 6th Form

Club

OUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate

Undergraduate

Undergraduate course

BA Geography

What is your Oxford College?

St. Catherine's

Why are you studying your course?

I love the subject.

What is the most interesting part of your course?

The diversity of the topics covered.

Year you first started rowing?

2013 (sculling)

First rowing club?

York City Rowing Club

Why/How did you get into rowing?

Was rubbish at everything else.

Name of first rowing coach?

Phil Jones

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

The lads back at York City RC.

Who is your rowing idol?

Tom Ransley

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

Coffee

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

Qualifying for the Prince of Wales at Henley with my mate Aidan and 2 lads from the GB Start centre in Leeds.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

No

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?

No

Your favourite race so far?

Bradford Sprint Regatta

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

The Ouse

Where would be your dream place to row?

Back on the Ouse in York battling it out in single sculls.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

Beating Cambridge

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

Winning the Hamilton Cup in the 2x at Bradford Regatta with my mate Frank.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

Capsizing my single scull in the last 50m of Durham Regatta.

What is your favourite sports quote?

"Ka-Chow"

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

Brutal but rewarding.

What is your favourite movie about sports?

Cars

How does being an athlete make you a better person?

It forces you to be disciplined and effective at time management.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

You don't have to be an athlete to relate to the importance of fortitude, resilience, collapsing and rising again.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

Resilient, very competitive.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

They respect it but the FOMO can be tough.

Any hobbies, other interests outside rowing?

Cycling

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Tom Sharrock



Nationality
GBR

Height
1.97m

School/High School
Comberton Village College

Club
OUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Undergraduate

Undergraduate course
Engineering

What is your Oxford College?
Magdalen

Why are you studying your course?
I want to be able to have an effect on the world with my work and being an engineer is the best way to do it.

What is the most interesting part of your course?
Being able to apply theory to practical situations and develop ideas.

Year you first started rowing?
2016

First rowing club
Cantabrigian Rowing Club

Why/How did you get into rowing?
I joined the indoor rowing club at my secondary school and discovered I enjoyed it, so I joined a local club in Cambridge and gradually grew into it from there.

Name of first rowing coach?
Oli Fraser

How do you balance rowing and academic life?
With difficulty – a lot of social sacrifices and organisation. I don't

really have any free personal time during term time.

Who is your rowing idol?
Tobias Schroder

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?
Oxford Blue Boat 2022

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?
Being part of the victorious 2022 squad.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?
No

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
No, but I did row out of Isle of Ely Rowing Club for 18 months which is opposite the Cambridge boat house, so I would be training on the same water at the same time with them.

Your favourite race so far?
Imperial fixture last year

What is the best place you have ever rowed?
Cleveland Lakes whilst filming *The Boys in the Boat*.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?
I love the challenge, I love being really fit, I love being part of something as prestigious and exciting as the Boat Race.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?
Just being able to row at this volume at this university is a massive achievement for me.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?
At Peterborough regatta 2021 I entered the open men's quad category with 3 other girls my age and we managed to come second out of 14 which was entertaining.

What is your favourite sports quote?
"Always go sub-max" – Jimbo Forward

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?
The most over analysed and complicated horizontal squat jump possible.

How does being an athlete make you a better person?
My efficiency, mood, energy, health, self-discipline, and enjoyment of non-rowing things is greatly increased.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?
Anyone who has to sacrifice a lot and be very organised to achieve something they really want can relate.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?
I think I'm a very sociable and consistent person which helps boats come together as crews. I'm also open to change if someone says what I'm doing is wrong.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?
They are very supportive in the most part, I just have to remind myself why I'm missing stuff in those scenarios and that justifies it for me.

Any hobbies, other interests outside rowing?
I enjoy playing music and used to be in a band.

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

James Doran


Nationality

GBR

Height

2m

School/High School

Dulwich College

Club

OUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate

Graduate

Previous University

Edinburgh University

Undergraduate course

Neuroscience BSc

Graduate course

MRes Neuroscience

What is your Oxford College?

Oriol

Why are you studying your course?

To join a team pioneering research in motor neurone disease.

What is the most interesting part of your course?

I am helping create a living model of the neuromuscular junction grown from stem cells which are taken from patients with motor neurone disease.

Year you first started rowing?

2014

First rowing club?

Dulwich College

Why/How did you get into rowing?

I was rubbish at rugby, and figured I may as well make use of being a 6ft 2", 14-year-old.

Who is your rowing idol?

Matthew Pinsent

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

A regularly updated phone calendar and making sure to enjoy rowing enough to count it as part of my social life.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

Stern 7 of the Kiwi 8+ and myself in the bow seat.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

I won J14 A octuples at National Schools in my first year in the sport and was hooked from then. Won precious little else at school. Did various university Henley Royal campaigns including 2 PA runs and one Temple. Managed to help contribute to Edinburgh University winning the overall and men's Victor Ludorum at BUCS regatta this year. I'm a 2x U23 European Championships medallist. I won the U23 European Championships, 2021 in the M8+ (with James Forward, also from OUBC), and got bronze this year in the M4-.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

No

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?

No

Your favourite race so far?

Men's 8+ final of the U23 European Championships 2021.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

Loch Venachar in the highlands of Scotland.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

Friends, routine, a competitive nature, and aspirations to do the best I can, making the most of the time and physical advantages that I'm fortunate enough to have.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

I capsized a single at Kingston Small Boats Head, was offered tea and biscuits by someone moored on the bank (which I gently refused), managed

to get back in and finish the race, achieving the slowest time of the day by about 10 minutes.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

Representing GB last year after a challenging period of lockdown training.

What is your favourite sports quote?

"I failed over and over again in my life and that's why I succeed." - Micheal Jordan

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

A slightly masochistic, backwards race which rewards hard work and perseverance above all else.

What is your favourite movie about sports? Why?

Gladiator. Russell Crowe's best performance and a phenomenal score.

How does being an athlete make you a better person?

Teaches perseverance, self-control, dedication and rewards hard work. All skills I'm trying to cultivate and carry over to the rest of my life.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

I fail all the time when I row. But I have found in this sport as in the rest of my life that those who consistently work hard always succeed eventually. It's just a matter of time.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

Lots of my friends are also in the sport so if done properly, rowing can help combine social life and training into one.

Any hobbies, other interests outside rowing?

I write songs and play the occasional gig/open mic night. Shoutout to all my fans on SoundCloud.



2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Jean-Philippe Dufour

Nationality

Swiss/Canadian

Height

1.92m

Club

OUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate

Graduate

Previous University

University of Zurich

Undergraduate course

Medicine

Graduate course

DPhil Neuroscience

What is your Oxford College?

Lincoln

Why are you studying your course?

Because neuroscience is interesting and challenging.

What is the most interesting part of your course?

Solving all the problems that come up when doing research by teaching yourself new skills.

Year you first started rowing?

2016

First rowing club

Belvoir Ruderclub

Why/How did you get into rowing?

Because I wanted a new physical challenge and I thought I would be decent at it considering I'm quite tall.

Name of first rowing coach?

Camille Codoni

Who is your rowing idol?

Roman Rösli

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

By trying to not waste time.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

Roman Rösli, me, the rest doesn't matter.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

I don't have a biggest achievement yet as I haven't won the Boat Race.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

2021, 2020 was cancelled.

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at "the other place"?

No

Your favourite race so far?

I don't have a favourite race as I haven't won the Boat Race yet.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

Wallingford

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

Winning the Boat Race and then stopping rowing.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

I don't feel I have achieved much through rowing yet as I haven't won the Boat Race.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

Losing the 2021 Boat Race was exceptionally pathetic.

What is your favourite sports quote?

"It's just a job. Grass grows, birds fly, waves pound the sand. I beat people up."

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

Repetitive

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

Because it's about working hard as a team towards a common goal and encouraging each other.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

I can push myself very hard.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

I don't care about missing out on social activities as long as I end up winning the Boat Race.

Any hobbies, other interests outside rowing?

Music and reading.



2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Tassilo von Mueller

Nationality
GER

Height
1.99m

School/High School
Lycee francais de Duesseldorf

Club
OUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Graduate

Previous University
Princeton

Graduate course
PhD in Engineering

What is your Oxford College?
Hertford

Why are you studying your course?
I enjoy doing research and knowing that I'm working on cutting-edge technology in aerospace.

What is the most interesting part of your course?
The most interesting part is that I keep having to come up with creative ways to solve problems in the lab.

Year you first started rowing?
2011

First rowing club
Ruderklub am Baldeneysee

Name of first rowing coach?
Tobias Kramm

Why/How did you get into rowing?
I lived near a lake and saw people row-

ing every time I was walking or cycling by with my family. Since I wasn't very good at other sports, I started rowing and really enjoyed the rowing family.

How do you balance rowing and academic life?
I'm trying.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?
German eight 2012.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?
Winning pair trials with my friend Floyd Benedikter.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?
Isis race 2022.

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
Seb Benzecry, Tom George, Henry Evans - all at Princeton.

Your favourite race so far?
Winning pairs trials with my friend Floyd Benedikter.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?
Carnegie Lake

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?
Being around guys who are willing to sacrifice everything for one single goal.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

Making the best friends I could have asked for.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?
Sitting at the start line in a single with the oars the wrong way round.

What is your favourite sports quote?
"Giving up is not in the blood."

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?
Very repetitive.

What is your favourite movie about sports? Why?
14 Peaks: Nothing Is Impossible

How does being an athlete make you a better person?
I've learnt to be more organised and to be there for my teammates when they need me.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?
Once you're at the start line, everyone has had the same chance to train as hard as the other one. Whoever wins is hopefully decided by who deserves it. Your background does not matter.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?
Passion for the sport and the people I train with.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?
I don't feel like I'm missing out on activities with friends because I get to row with them every day.

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Felix Drinkall



Nationality
GBR

Height
1.97m

School/High School Club
Eton College Boat Club

Undergraduate/Graduate
Graduate

Previous University
Oxford

Undergraduate course
MEng in Engineering Science

Graduate course
DPhil in Natural Language Processing

What is your Oxford College?
Wolfson College

What is the most interesting part of your course?
Working predominantly with language models, I enjoy working with models that have a tangible relationship with the real-world.

Year you first started rowing?
2014

First rowing club?
Eton College Boat Club

Why/How did you get into rowing?
I started rowing when I was 14.

Name of first rowing coach?
Alex Henshilwood

Who is your rowing idol?
Peter Denton

How do you balance rowing and academic life?
I find that both rowing and academia can complement each other very well so long as you look after yourself, by

which I mean you get enough recovery. I've found that they can both provide a mental break from the other.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

Junior Worlds 2017 gold. U23 Worlds 2019 and 2021 gold. Henley: Princess Elizabeth 2016 and Ladies Plate 2022.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

I rowed in the 2018, 2019 and 2021 Boat Races.

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
No

Your favourite race so far?
2021 U23 World Championships final. We were only in the lead for the last 5 strokes and managed to win by 0.21s.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?
The Henley stretch on a cold winter's morning.

Where would be your dream place to row?
Lake Bled

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

The desire to win big races with people that you've suffered alongside. Having 8 other people's dreams in your hands and vice versa creates a trust that is hard to find in other areas in life. It makes winning feel so much better since you're winning for them as well as yourself.

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

I say it's a terrible life choice, but if they keep asking and seem interested, I'll tell them that there is something truly

special about the team aspect of the sport. The fact that you win and lose together means the intensity of the relationships you create and experiences you encounter are more extreme.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

My greatest achievement is probably being U23 world champion. Although the most valuable thing I've got from the sport is my ability to deal with pressure.

What is your favourite sports quote?
"If you're not enough without it, you'll never be enough with it." - Irv Blitzer

What is your favourite movie about sports?
Cool Runnings

How does being an athlete make you a better person?

I don't think it makes you a better person, but I do think that you get better at dealing with high pressure situations. Both in training and racing there are moments where you need to step up and be a good teammate, even if your natural instinct is to not be.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

I think I'm pretty focused on what I want to achieve, but I also think I maintain a calm state of mind when the pressure builds.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

They're very understanding. I'm aware that I'm not always the most present friend as a result of my schedule; however, I'm blessed to have some amazing and very patient friends.



2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Anna O'Hanlon

Cox

Nationality
AUS

Height
1.68cm

School/High School
Loreto Normanhurst (Australia)

Club
OUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Graduate

Previous University
The University of Sydney

Undergraduate course
Bachelor of Animal and Veterinary Bioscience

Graduate course
MSc Clinical Embryology

What is your Oxford College?
Somerville College

Why are you studying your course?
I like the idea of being able to help couples achieve their goals of starting a family.

What is the most interesting part of your course?
I find all the technological advancements in the fertility field really interesting and amazing as the area constantly evolves to meet the growing demand for services.

Year you first started rowing?
2010

First rowing club
Loreto Normanhurst/UTS Haberfield

Why/How did you get into rowing?
My family has always been involved in rowing, my father was a national

team cox and my mother was a state representative rower. All my siblings have been involved in the sport at some point, with one of my elder sisters representing Australia at a junior level. Going to rowing camps from a young age and spending most of my weekends at regattas, the sport has always been a part of my life, sometimes a little too much!

Name of first rowing coach?
Bill and Leslie Dankbaar

Who is your rowing idol?
I have many idols in the sport for different reasons. My first rowing coach Bill Dankbaar. My father is my coxing role model (closely followed by Alannah Burdess).

How do you balance rowing and academic life?
I find rowing actually helps with the academic workload as I'm normally up early and the time pressure means I have no choice but to get my work done. No matter how much time I'm given I will always leave everything to the last minute.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?
A goal would be to get a family boat with all my older siblings (5), my parents and finish it off with my aunt so that finally the youngest can be in charge and tell everyone what to do.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?
I started coxing when I was at school and have been going for 12 years now, although I've quit a few times and vowed never to return, but here I am. My biggest achievement so far would probably be doing the Head of the Yarra race (8km) twice in one day (=

over an hour of head race coxing and steering). Needed a hot minute to myself and a few drinks after that.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?
No

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
No

Your favourite race so far?
My favourite race is always the men's lightweight 8+ at Australian Nationals. Every year I get to race with, and against, some of my best friends and the vibes are immaculate. The amount of very average chat and banter on the start line is unbelievable.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?
I think I'm obliged to say The Sydney International Regatta Centre as my mother had a hand in the design.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?
I'm honestly not sure... somehow I keep ending up back in a boat. I think I get slightly too much joy out of watching eight men red line themselves.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?
Having Tim McLaren tell me I did well at my first Henley, even if he thought I was going to take the paint off the oars on the booms.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?
Splitting an eight on Sydney Harbour ferry wash with the UTS women's team and having to row back with two of the girls holding the boat together.

What is your favourite sports quote?
"You have to go slow to go fast" - Tim McLaren, at least once a week.

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?
Coxing = shouting and pulling on strings.

What is your favourite movie about sports?
Disney Pixar Cars

How does being an athlete make you a better person?
The sting of the tiny blisters on my fingers from the steering strings really makes me appreciate the little things in life.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?
I think everyone can relate to the hard work and hours of dedication in pursuit of a hard-to-reach goal.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?
I back myself. Both a blessing and a curse, especially when it comes to steering.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?
My non-rowing friends think I'm a little nuts for surrendering sleep and getting up at such an ungodly hour for training. I make a big effort to manage my training and social life and often that means that the time I spend with my friends is of a higher quality.

Any hobbies, other interests outside rowing?
My biggest hobbies are spoiling my puppy and cooking. I also love animals having studied them for 5 years and love travelling to see amazing wildlife.

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Matt Edge


Nationality

GBR

Height

1.9m

School/High School

Durham Johnston Comprehensive

Club

CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate

Graduate

Previous University

University of Cambridge

Undergraduate course

Natural Sciences

Graduate course

PhD in Chemistry

What is your Cambridge College?

St Catharine's

Why are you studying your course?

To gain a research background in chemical informatics.

Year you first started rowing?

2012

First rowing club?

Durham Amateur Rowing Club

Why/How did you get into rowing?

Tried a taster course at DJBC and was hooked.

Name of first rowing coach?

Mike Rowe

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

Hard to say but I'd probably have the best time in an eight mixed with people

I've rowed with personally over the last 3 years at the club.

Who is your rowing idol?

Sir Steve Redgrave

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

With great difficulty.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

Winning the Lightweight Boat Race as President on my third time of trying.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

3 Lightweight Boat Races (20-22).

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?

No

Your favourite race so far?

BUCS Champ Lwt 2- A final – 2 lengths down at the 1k, 1s down at 150, won 9s clear of the field.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

Costa del Ely on a crisp winter's day.

Where would be your dream place to row?

Barnes Bridge approx. 5 lengths up on Oxford.

What is your favourite sports quote?

"It's not about who goes the fastest, it's about who gets there first." – Nick Acock

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

Being part of such an amazing club with storied history and great people.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

Winning U23 GB trials and showing myself that I can in fact compete with the best of them.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

Not noticing the guano that had landed on the back of my kit during an outing.

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

Yeah rowing, like with the oars and boats and stuff.

What is your favourite movie about sports? Why?
The Social Network. It was funny that Harvard lost at Henley.
How does being an athlete make you a better person?

You learn to appreciate the small things like a warm shower or a lie in.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

A good question but honestly, I've no idea.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

I'm very driven and competitive which serves to get the most out of me as an athlete.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

They think it's very sad that I go to bed so early every day.

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Brett Taylor


Nationality

GBR/TPE

Height

1.87m

School/High School

The Perse School Cambridge

Club

CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate

Undergraduate

Undergraduate course

Medical Science Tripos

What is your Cambridge College?

Queens'

Why are you studying your course?

Because I want to be a doctor

Year you first started rowing?

2011

First rowing club?

Rob Roy Boat Club

Why/How did you get into rowing?

My school at the time had just gotten some rowing machines and had started an indoor rowing club that year. The following summer I did a learn to row course with RBBC and have been rowing ever since.

Name of first rowing coach?

Enya Meadows

Who is your rowing idol?

Greg Searle

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

Rowing and study usually happens at different times so it's more a case of getting enough sleep to be able to cope with both.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

After I started sculling with RBBC, I mostly trained in the single as well as a double. In the early days I was

generally racing a year or two up but even at national level we did pretty good. I did my first international event (Asian Juniors) after I turned 15 and competed at the 2018 and 2019 WRJCH in the single for TPE.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

I don't watch enough rowing to make such a team.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

No

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?

Yes, I have rowed with a couple people at 'the other place' whilst a junior.

Your favourite race so far?

Repechage 2 of the JM1x 2019 WRJCH as that was my fastest and hardest fought for race.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

Sun Moon Lake, Taiwan. The water just feels so vastly different to other places I've rowed due to the wash created by big tour cruisers moving about on the other side of the lake resulting in this bouncy feeling that really caught me off guard the first time I rowed there.

Where would be your dream place to row?

As long as I am able to get out on the water with relatively little traffic, that is good enough for me.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

Everyone else in the team and the desire to get faster and fitter with each stroke.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

I feel like being able to compete internationally is something a lot of people aspire to be able to do but

honestly, I feel more pride whenever I'm helping to coach juniors or novices and see them making an immediate change that gives an instant speed boost.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

Falling asleep in a single and capsizing shortly after.

What is your favourite sports quote?

"Something about it doesn't matter if you win or lose, as long as you've given everything you can be proud of that."

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

Long hours and highly repetitive.

What is your favourite movie about sports?

I don't watch enough movies.

How does being an athlete make you a better person?

It's made me realise that if I put my mind to it, I can do anything really.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

I guess having to be really organised so that you get everything that needs doing done. And then the fact everyone gets tired at the end of the day.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

I guess really trying to push myself further as well as using everyone around me as motivation to put in a little more effort even when I probably shouldn't be working so hard.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

My non-rowing friends probably think I'm a little crazy to be rowing in the first place. It does make me a little sad that I can't always hang out with them, but I don't really mind because frankly by the time they want to go out, I am ready for bed.



2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Noam Mouelle

Nationality

FRA

Height

1.91m

School/High School

Lycée Français Jean Monnet

Club

CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate

Graduate

Previous University

Imperial College

Undergraduate course

Physics MSci

Graduate course

Physics PhD

What is your Cambridge college?

Hughes Hall

Why are you studying your course?

Because I want to become a particle physicist.

Year you first started rowing?

2010

First rowing club?

Société Nautiques du Perreux

Name of first rowing coach?

Pedro Sanz Lopez

Why/How did you get into rowing?

I did sailing, but as I was living in Paris I could only do rowing as a water sport.

Who is your rowing idol?

Hamish Bond

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

Organisation

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

Hamish Bond - Eric Murray - Andrew TH - Pete Reed - Me - Olaf Tufte - Pepe Vicino - Jérémie Azou

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

Junior Worlds 2018, U23 Worlds 2022, 4 times French champion (4-,4-,2x,2x)

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

No

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?

No

Your favourite race so far?

HRR

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

Perreux sur Marne

Where is your dream place to row?

Australia

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

Olympics

What is your favourite sports quote?

"Just do it".

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

It is unnatural but requires no coordination.

What is your favourite movie about sports?

Icare. It is interesting.

How does being an athlete make you a better person?

Organisation, competitiveness at work.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

I have failed miserably so many times.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

Assiduous

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

I don't miss out much to be honest. People are usually impressed but I try to keep it low-key.

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Seb Benzecry



Nationality
GBR

Height
1.89m

School/High School
St Paul's School

Club
CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Graduate

Previous University
Princeton University

Undergraduate course
English

Graduate course
Film and Screen Studies

What is your Cambridge College?
Jesus

Why are you studying your course?
I am passionate about the academic study of film, and eventually want to move into the industry.

What is the most interesting part of your course?
Delving into a bank of foreign film from the 20s through the 60s that gives insight into rapidly modernising cultures.

Year you first started rowing?
2011

First rowing club?
St Paul's School

Why/How did you get into rowing?
I always wanted to try it, and an injury prevented me from continuing with rugby.

Name of first rowing coach?
Bobby Thatcher

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

I've been rowing seriously for almost 12 years. At St Paul's, I was part of the winning 2015 Princess Elizabeth Challenge Cup crew at Henley and won

a bronze in the JM8+ at Junior Worlds in 2016. At Princeton, I won a bronze in the IRA National championships in the Varsity 4+ in 2019, and at CUBC I was part of the winning 2021 Blue Boat, and stroked Goldie in 2022.

Who is your rowing idol?
James Cracknell – the ultimate example of resilience, perseverance and dedication.

How do you balance rowing and academic life?
My academic life is now only independent research, so I can very easily fit rowing into my schedule.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?
The 2021 Cambridge Blue Boat. I miss that boat.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?
I rowed in the Blue Boat in 2021, and Goldie in 2022.

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
I was at Princeton with the current Oxford President. We were and are very good friends, but I'm excited by the opportunity to race him again on the Tideway.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?
I am continually inspired by my teammates. Being part of a rowing team, each year for the past 12 years has been such a privilege. I've met so many amazing people and made friends for life.

Your favourite race so far?
The 2021 Boat Race. Winning on home water as the underdogs after such a difficult year was truly a dream come true.

Where would be your dream place to row?
I would love to row in the San Francisco Bay. The conditions would probably be bad, but the views can't be beaten.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

I think my greatest achievement was making the Blue Boat in 2021. My grandpa was a Hockey Blue at Cambridge, and I just know that he would've been so proud to have seen me get my Blue, and go on to win the race.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?
Capsizing several times at the lake in Peterborough on training camp as a J14.

What is your favourite sports quote?
"Just try your best and you might be OK." – my Mum

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?
Sometimes fun. Rarely though.

What is your favourite movie about sports? Why?
Warrior. MMA movie with Tom Hardy and Joel Edgerton.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?
I think a career in rowing is characterised by some simple things: hard work, focus, and commitment. One can find those values in so many pursuits in life.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?
I think I am pretty patient and willing to listen and learn. I continue to love the sport, and that keeps me motivated and willing to throw everything I have into it.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?
My non-rowing friends are always really nice and supportive. It's definitely tough to miss out on social stuff with them, but I have such close friends at CUBC that I never really feel like I'm completely missing out on activities with friends.

Tell us one surprising thing about yourself
I'm a big pet guy. At home we have five cats and two dogs, though we once had seven cats all together.

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Tom Lynch


Nationality

CAN/IRE

Height

2m

School/High School

Mulgrave

Club

CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate

Graduate

Previous University

UBC

Undergraduate course

Mechanical Engineering

Graduate course

PhD in Engineering

What is your Cambridge College?

Hughes Hall

Why are you studying your course?

It's a challenging project with exciting clinical and commercial applications.

Year you first started rowing?

2015

First rowing club?

Burnaby Lake

Why/How did you get into rowing?

To do something other than weightlifting, and for the team aspect of the sport.

Name of first rowing coach?

Mike Pearce

Who is your rowing idol?

Tom George

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

Eat Tesco meal deals at my desk.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

Would love to meet the guys from the Canadian men's 8+ from Beijing 2008.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

I started seriously rowing at UBC. Going to Marlow and Henley in my first year was pretty awesome, and then winning Canadian University championships in 2019.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

I raced in Goldie last year.

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?

No

Your favourite race so far?

I really enjoyed racing the Dutch U23 boat last year, as I got to sub into the Blue Boat for that race.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

Sarnen, Switzerland last year. See my Instagram!

Where would be your dream place to row?

Honestly the only thing that could top Sarnen may be Lucerne, but I'm not even sure about that.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

Maybe more 'despite' rowing – but getting the grades to get into Cambridge (and then CUBC) was a pretty big achievement for me.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

My sense of competitiveness, and the team atmospheres that I've been lucky to be a part of.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

Going 6:00.8 and 6:00.1 on two 2k attempts in two weeks.

What is your favourite sports quote?

"Close your eyes and pull like a dog" - O'Donovans

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

I'd describe it as an endurance sport which also requires a level of strength. Also, basically a pain contest.

What is your favourite movie about sports?

Goon (2011) comes to mind.

How does being an athlete make you a better person?

It certainly keeps me healthy.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

I think you can learn something from any endeavour. From rowing, takeaways could be that hard work pays off, and that sometimes you have to go easier in the short-term to go further in the long-term.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

Persistence and consistency.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

My non-rowing friends are often confused as to why I do rowing, and supportive when I achieve something in the sport. Generally, I can attend most social activities, but if I have to miss one they are pretty understanding.



2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Nicholas Mayhew

Nationality
GBR/NZL

Height
1.83m

School/High School
Latymer Upper School

Club
CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Graduate

Previous University
Stanford University

Undergraduate course
Computer Science

Graduate course
MPhil in Management

What is your Cambridge college?
Peterhouse

Why are you studying your course?
To complement my software engineering technical skills with wider appreciation of business and management before I start my working career.

Year you first started rowing?
2013

First rowing club?
Latymer Upper School Rowing Club

Name of first rowing coach?
Niles Garratt

Who is your rowing idol?
Alex Gregory/Pete Reed

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?
Stanford men's rowing captain 2022/23. Latymer Upper School Rowing Club captain 2016/17.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?
No

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?
Yes, my roommate in 2021 season while at Stanford was Chris Hull who is on the Oxford team doing a PhD.

Your favourite race so far?
Grand finale at US collegiate national championships 2021.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?
California

What is your favourite sports quote?
"If you aren't overrating, you aren't trying."

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?
They think I'm a little crazy, but it's been 10 years, so they have gotten over it.

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Oliver Parish



Nationality
GBR/CAN

Height
1.86m

School/High School
St. Paul's School

Club
CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate
Undergraduate

Undergraduate course
Engineering MEng

What is your Cambridge College?
Peterhouse

Why are you studying your course?
I've always been interested in engineering, especially machine learning and information processing and Cambridge is probably the best place in the world to study these things.

Year you first started rowing?
2014

First rowing club?
St. Paul's School Boat Club

Why/How did you get into rowing?
Since I was born, rowing has always been a part of my life. My parents met in a boat and are both still heavily involved in the sport, so it was natural to try it.

Name of first rowing coach?
Douglas Perrin

Who is your rowing idol?
Matthew Parish

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

I started rowing at St Paul's and went on to win Henley and junior worlds when there. Then came to Cambridge and rowed in Goldie for the cancelled race and the Blue Boat for the last two years. Winning the Boat Race at Ely 2021 was

definitely a big highlight of my rowing career so far.

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

Time management is very important. For me, setting time to properly unwind and recover is very useful.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

Rowing in the 2000 Sydney GB eight would have been pretty amazing. They put together a great race and beat the favourites on their home water. An amazing crew.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

I was in Goldie for the cancelled race, and the Blue Boat winning at Ely and losing on the Tideway the following year.

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?

A few of the Oxford 3rd 8 guys were also at St. Paul's, we're still friends, see each other at Henley etc.

Your favourite race so far?

Probably the Boat Race at Ely 2021, to win as underdogs on home water is something I won't forget for a long time.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

Sarnen last year was probably the best spot I've rowed. Beautiful views and beautiful water. Otherwise, Ely on a nice day can be amazing too, long rows with no need to stop and spin with some of the flattest water there is.

Where would be your dream place to row?

Sarnen has got to be the best place in the world to row.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

Capsizing at GB junior trials in the pair. Not our day...

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

Winning the Boat Race, Henley and winning junior worlds are my biggest achievements in the sport and all them represent quite different challenges.

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

I'm strongly motivated by competition and love racing. It's also a great way to make lifelong friends, don't know what I'd do without it.

What is your favourite sports quote?
"Will it make the boat go faster?"

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

Just like kayaking.

What is your favourite movie about sports? Why?

Moneyball. 2021 race week movie.

How does being an athlete make you a better person?

It helps me channel my competitiveness into something productive. I hope to be a good influence on new rowers in the sport. Also helps with staying fit.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

Rowing, like everything, is full of ups and downs. As with every sport, the wins are made sweeter and losses more bitter by being part of such a tight-knit team.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

I'm a leader within the group, and hope to inspire the newer rowers.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

Sacrifices are important to reach the highest levels of anything in life. Close friends understand that and support it.

2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Luca Ferraro


Nationality

GBR

Height

1.96m

School/High School

The Latymer School

Club

CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate

Undergraduate

Undergraduate course

Classics (4 years)

What is your Cambridge College?

King's

Why are you studying your course?

Classical culture has always appealed to me, and having no idea what I wanted to do at school meant that being able to step into the classical world through a mix of the humanities was a logical choice, especially with the 4-year course at Cambridge which offers Classics to students unable to study Latin or Greek before university.

Year you first started rowing?

2017

First rowing club?

Lea RC

Why/How did you get into rowing?

Having demonstrated extreme incompetence at most other sports, rowing was my last chance saloon. Luckily the Lea was reasonably close to home and not immediately sucking meant I began to train pretty regularly.

Name of first rowing coach?

Mark Cushway

Who is your rowing idol?

Steve Simpole

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

Like an incredibly precarious game of Kerplunk, always 2 moves from collapse.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

Not an 8 but would love one last spin out in the Lea quad from my junior days.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

I sculled as a junior, racing the Fawley at Henley twice as a junior. Making the switch to sweep at Cambridge, I raced in the spare pair in Ely in my first year followed by the Blue Boat last year in 2022. That year I also raced in the pair over the summer with Ollie making the A final of the U23 worlds in Varese.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

Raced the 2022 Boat Race, losing to Oxford.

Have you ever been at school/university/on a team with anyone at 'the other place'?

Raced at U23s last summer with Henry Pearson who'd raced in Isis that season.

Your favourite race so far?

Vanquishing future squad mate Oli Bridge by 4 seconds in the J182x at the 2018 Hampton Junior Small Boats Head. What a day!

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

Obviously top spot goes to the scenic plane-watching haven that is the Royal Albert Docks, but Sarnen where we did a camp last year is a close second. Pretty unreal.

Where would be your dream place to row?

Down the canals in Venice.

What is your favourite sports quote?

"Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee!"

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

The team.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

Doing the last five minutes of the first erg test this season covered in my own vomit.

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

My dad rowed at university, and the day I finally beat his 2k erg PB was an oddly emotional one.

How would you describe the sport to a non-rower?

Good rowing is like a swan swimming, looks peaceful with a lot of strain going on under the surface.

What is your favourite movie about sports?

Cars

How does being an athlete make you a better person?

Does it? Probably.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

It rewards hard work; the days often feel like a grind but if you do something you love.

What are your strengths, as a person and as an athlete?

Enjoying the process, finding some meaning in the day to day.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

They mock me mercilessly – it is tough but just means a lot of making up for lost time over summer.

Do you have any connection with anyone in the opposing squad?

My dad rowed in the first crew Sean Bowden ever coached, back at Thames RC.

Tell us one surprising thing about yourself?

I'm not Italian.



2023

ATHLETE Q&A

Jasper Parish

Cox

Nationality

GBR/CAN

Height

1.8m

School/High School

St Paul's School

Club

CUBC

Undergraduate/Graduate

Undergraduate

Undergraduate course

Computer Science

What is your Cambridge College?

Clare

Why are you studying your course?

I am always impressed by the speed of progress in the field and want to be a part of it.

Year you first started rowing?

2016

First rowing club?

St Paul's School BC

Why/How did you get into rowing?

Many members of my family have rowed at a high level in the past and I wanted to give it a go.

Name of first rowing coach?

Bobby Thatcher

Who is your rowing idol?

Orlando Morley

How do you balance rowing and academic life?

I personally think that one without the other would be a hard way to live. The challenge of balancing the two is far more rewarding.

Who would be your dream team eight to row with from everyone in the history of rowing?

I would row with the CUBC legends 8+ which raced the famous Sveti Duje international regatta in 2022.

What's your rowing history, and what has been your biggest achievement so far?

I raced for St Paul's School Boat Club every year from 2016-2021, eventually racing the final of Henley P.E. 2021. I coxed the CUBC women's Blue Boat in 2022.

Have you raced in the Boat Race before? If yes, when?

CUBC women's Blue Boat 2022.

What is the best place you have ever rowed?

Dublin

What do you feel is your greatest achievement through rowing, be it accolades or something more?

2022 women's CUBC Blue Boat crew.

Your favourite race so far?

Women's Boat Race 2022.

Where would be your dream place to row?

Split, Croatia

Obviously, it's long hours and hard work – what inspires you to keep rowing?

The passion for a common goal.

What has been your most embarrassing/funny rowing moment?

Dublin Trinity Regatta 2022.

What is your favourite movie about sports? Why?

Moneyball. Good writing, good cast, good music.

How does being an athlete make you a better person?

It allows me to be more well-rounded.

Why do you think someone outside of the sport can relate to your career as an athlete so far?

It hasn't always been easy, but it's been worth it.

What do your friends think of your athletic success? How do you handle missing out on activities with friends because of your athletic schedule?

I'm sure they respect me for it. I pick my battles and do the best I can with the time I have outside of rowing.



 GEMINI

THE
BOAT RACE

OXFORD  CAMBRIDGE

168TH MEN'S RACE

MARCH 2023

77TH WOMEN'S RACE