

International success for COBRA in 2006



Irish lightweight coxless four

2006 was a year to remember for international sporting success from Coleraine Inst old boys. We had Andrew Trimble playing rugby for Ulster and Ireland, taking part in some brilliant Irish performances in the Six Nations and autumn Internationals. We also can't forget Graeme McDowell, still playing golf professionally all over the world. But to the people who are reading this, I'm guessing you're more interested in one of the minority sports that Britain and Ireland seem to excel at; rowing.

And in the world of rowing the Coleraine boys couldn't have done much better. The international competitions began with the three stage rowing world cup, held at Munich (Germany), Poznan (Poland) and Lucerne (Switzerland), where points are awarded for results at each regatta, and totalled to determine the World Cup winners in each category, who receive the coveted 'yellow jersey'.

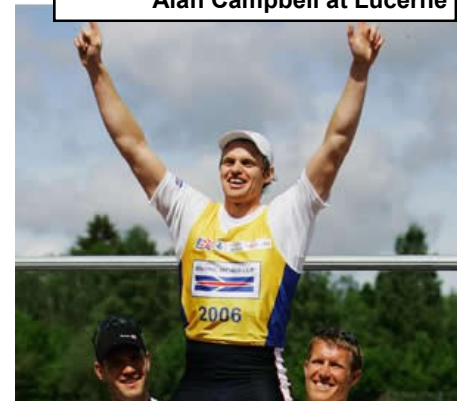
In Munich things began very well with both Richard Archibald in the Irish lightweight coxless four, and Alan Campbell in the GB single scull getting into the final. Archibald was just pushed into silver by half a second to Germany, while Campbell won gold, beating Marcel Hacker and Lassi Karonen into second and third.

Poznan was next, and Richard Chambers began his senior international career, entered as the 'B' GB Lightweight Pair. Maybe Chambers and his partner Chris Bartley felt they had something to prove, as they stormed into gold medal position ahead of the GB 'A' crew (bronze) and Germany (silver). Archibald and Campbell were also in action, with Campbell coming second to Mahe Drysdale, and Archibald beating all the competition and coming home with gold.

At the final world cup regatta in Lucerne, Archibald again came away with the gold, cementing their position as the crew to beat as the Irish Light four won the series overall. Campbell finished fourth, and he had also done enough over the course of the three regattas to take the yellow jersey back to Coleraine.

The next major event was the Under 23 World Championships at Hazewinkel in Belgium. Richard Chambers was again with Bartley, and lead the final from the start, taking the gold medal, with Italy and South Africa coming in behind. Steven Feeney also represented Great Britain, in the lightweight coxless fours (possible competition for Archibald in the future?!), and reached the final, coming sixth overall.

Alan Campbell at Lucerne



The last international race, and most important rowing event in a non-Olympic year, is the Rowing World Championships, this year held at Dorney Lake in England. The last time it was held in England was 1986 at Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham. In front of this home crowd, both Archibald and Campbell reached the final of their events. Unfortunately for Campbell, he suffered equipment failure after 900m, and crossed the line in sixth in one of the fastest single scull races of all time. Archibald after leading off the start and sitting in second to China from halfway was just pipped to silver by a French crew, and finished 2006 third in the world.

We wish our athletes further success for 2007 and after that Beijing 2008, where we hope to have to stay up late to watch them at the Olympic regatta!

Alex Humphrey



International Rowing 2006

Richard Archibald; Ireland Lightweight Coxless Four



Richard in action

Finishing the 2005 season with a silver medal was a fantastic boost for the Irish Team in the first year of the Olympic cycle. We of course knew that to maintain this position in 2006 would still require a considerable increase in the intensity and quality of our training. On top of this we firmly set our sights on bridging the gap between ourselves and the World Champion French four.

Since Harald Jahrling accepted the Irish head coaches position after the Athens Olympics he has encouraged athletes to spend the winter training in single sculls at their home clubs. The athletes find that having the opportunity to train in a familiar environment causes much less mental strain than constant training camps, so the emphasis was very much on each individual to show that they were following the training programme and making the same steps forward as other squad members around the country. Crew selections would be made in April after three national trials in single sculls, so ultimately there would be no place to hide when the important decisions had to be made by the coaches.

The lightweight four did not survive the trialling process as we had expected. An injury had hindered Tim Harnedy's training after Christmas and this opened up the possibility of a crew change. Filling his shoes was never going to be easy, and although there were a number of up and coming lightweights fighting for the seat, it was a more mature (meant in the nicest possible way) athlete who suc-

ceeded. Gearoid Towey returned to rowing having attempted to cross the Atlantic Ocean only a few months earlier. He joined Paul Griffin, Eugene Coakley and myself for the 3 World

Cup Regattas and the 2006 World Championships.

We finished the World Cup series as champions. A second place followed by two victories was enough to edge out the Germans who looked dangerous all season, but more importantly we beat the French in both the semi and final in Lucerne. A confidence boost yes, but it did not change our opinion that all these crews would be more fired up when we raced at the Worlds.

The Worlds are quite a strange experience. Imagine Bann Regatta, with all the hanging around and eating Jaffa Cakes between the heats and the finals, being dragged out over a week. Lots of time to over-sleep and over-analyse training and the seasons performances. We made a conscious decision to ease into the heat and ensure that we did not peak too soon. We under-estimated someone... the Chinese. We rowed well, accepted the second place and dealt with it. The rep was good and the semi a strong but close race. The Germans who had looked like medal contenders were relegated to the B-final, but we had secured a final slot.

If racing had been more unfair (more cross wind) in the final, the lanes would have been re-drawn and we would have had a mountain to climb. We would have remained in our lane, but the Chinese and French, as semi winners, would have been given the most sheltered

lanes on the other side of the course. You make your own luck, and coming third in a semi means you are not giving yourself the best lane for the final. All you can do is perform to your best with what you have. I am confident that we did just that. Although we made the early running, the Chinese squeezed past and held onto the lead. We have no regrets that we continued to race for gold. Come the Olympics if you are not racing for gold you will not get a medal of any colour. In Eton we paid for that in the closing stages of the race. The French pushed hard in the last 500m and took second by a heartbeat.



Early morning training

I have raced quite a number of International Regattas over recent years, including an Olympic Final, but I had never heard a crowd of supporters like those in Eton. Without the huge support we received in the last 1000 metres of the final I am not sure we would have secured a podium finish. I really appreciated the effort made by those people who travelled to Eton and sincerely thank all of them for this. It was wonderful to see so many COBRA faces in the crowd, and certainly not the last time this will happen. I hope you are all booking flights to Beijing you will be needed!

No Regrets. A bronze medal. Two years to go.

Richard Archibald



Alan Campbell; Great Britain Single Scull

What a year! By the end of 2005 I had won the British Sculling Trials for the first time achieved top results on the 2k and 5k ergos. I had won my first international medal in the form of a Bronze at Lucerne in Switzerland and been part of one of the most successful quads ever produced by Great Britain and Northern Ireland, yet only placed 7th in the world.

This year I look back and I retained my top ranking throughout earning me the rite of passage to the highly revered Single Scull. I won the first Gold Medal for British sculling in a single since the great Jack Beresford back in 1924. I set a new British record in the single of 6.40.6, won the World Cup Series and ranked 6th in the world of single Scullers.



Racing at Lucerne

Yet there is more to do and achieve. As far as I'm concerned I have until 16th of August 2008 to beat the world and what ever they throw at me. What does that mean? It means training harder and leaving nothing to chance, controlling the controllables is a common phrase rower's use. Putting it into practice is a little harder should we say because I feel totally out of control getting up at 6 am to go do a 20km ergo followed by endurance circuit weights followed by a 16 km ergo just because the waters too rough to row on, having done something similar the day before and you also have to prepare for pieces the next day. Then there's the eating, trying to find enough space to cram the food and fluid in, plus

time to rest. Not only that you're contending with blisters all over your hands and cuts on your ass (just take my word for it- ergo ass is a common rowing ailment). I rarely feel like I'm physically fit, more just tired and completely knackered with a headache and back problems as well as repetitive strain in my knees. Pain for me is just weakness leaving the body building me up that little bit stronger. Every time I train I'm thinking about my competitors and what I have to do and become to be better. That means everything I do is for that Gold medal, so eating the right things focusing on the right technical points. Producing the big performance when they matter, sleeping etc. etc., the list is endless.

Why do I do it? This can be one of the worst questions anyone ever asks a rower. A common response is, 'I ask myself that question too.' Especially when you're in the middle of a massive work camp and there is no escaping the training, coaches and other rowers. For me it's relatively simple but very awkward to explain to someone. I'm totally addicted to the race and the win, training is just a means to an end, but more than that rowing is like a calling to me, as if everything I have ever done has all been building up to me becoming an Olympic Champion, I feel it is my duty to do everything in my power in order to achieve this goal.

I am rowing, but I can't do it by myself. The single is probably one of the most crowded boats you can row in, not lonely at all. Firstly there are your competitors ever present in your thoughts and motivation, without anyone to race there is no race. Then my coach Bill. Now Bill fulfils a lot of roles not just coaching. He



Tideway Scullers at Four's Head

is a mentor, trainer, psychologist, physio, guidance counsellor, friend, competitor, cook, drinking buddy as well as everything else in between, not only that he's also the one that tells me off when I get it wrong as well as a shoulder to cry on. Mum and Dad, pure inspiration to help me and enable me to follow my dreams. These people do generally live for me; they are my biggest fans having sacrificed the most. Close friends again to generally fulfil some of the coach's jobs. Then there are my supporters of which there are many, and it is to these people it is hard to show to them how much they do for me. I may have lost the final at Worlds this year, but the support and cheers I got from the crowd of supporters was enough to make me feel like the real winner.

There is much to do, and I can only do my best, but in actual fact anyone can achieve their dreams if they can believe in themselves and reach for the stars, it is within all of us.

I would like to extend my most humble thanks to all who support me from COBRA, CAIBC, CAI, Bann Boat Club, Coleraine and Northern Ireland; you are always in my boat helping me move forward.

Alan Campbell

www.COBRARowing.co.uk

The Old Boys return home for Christmas



The three crews afterwards

Picture the scene, it's December, its cold and its wet, but nothing can stop the annual 2k race between the CAI school boys, and the COBRA men. This year COBRA had enough members to race a coxed four as well as the eight, and saw one of the tightest races yet between the two clubs. The four consisted of Richard Archibald, Alan Campbell, Richard Chambers and Chris Black.

All three crews started evenly on the start line at 'The Cutts'. The COBRA eight and school boy eight got off to a rapid start leaving the 'international' four in its wake. With the COBRA eight having led right from the start, there was no stopping them the rest of the course, but a battle did begin between the four and the schoolboy eight which was led from stroke by Peter Calvin. Both crews

fought for second place for the entire length of the course, with the placing changing with every stroke. The school boys fought hard right to the finish line but the power from the 'international' four was just too much to overcome. The cobra eight won with a length lead on the cobra four and the school eight coming in a canvas behind the four.

Alan Campbell commented, 'I was surprised how much the school boy eight dropped us off the start'. Every year the school boys are getting closer and closer to victory over the COBRA boys. I think COBRA boys are going to have to spend more time training for this yearly race or it won't be too long before the school boys succeed.

Before the morning at the boat house was complete, the international oarsmen who were present passed on some of their knowledge of rowing technique while the school boys sat on the dreaded rowing machines. All in all it was a very successful morning but that was not the end of the day for the COBRA men.

The AGM commenced at 5:30pm at the Royal Court Hotel with yearly reports and heated discussions. By 7:30pm, around 30 old boys

met in the sea view room for a welcoming three course meal, where tales and stories of school days gone by were told. Toasts were made to the current coaches of the CAI club, Bobby Platt, William and Andy Wright. Fried mushroom eating challenges were made.....and accepted. The evening provided good craic and a chance for old crews to meet again.

This event is growing every year generating support for COBRA and CAIBC. Thank you to all who organized the day's events and all at COBRA look forward to hearing about another successful year from Coleraine Inst Rowing.

Richard Chambers

CAIBC VIII+ - P Calvin (stk), M McNaul (7), M Reid (6), J Mitchell (5), R Hart (4), D Stafford (3), M McCullough (2), J McBurney (bow), P S t y n e s (c o x) .

COBRA VIII+ - S Archibald (stk), P Braithwaite (7), D Ewart (6), J Heslet (5), S Henry (4), C Stewart (3), A Humphrey (2), L Wasson (bow).

IV+ - R Archibald (stk), Alan Campbell (3), Richard Chambers (2), C Black (bow), C McBurney (cox).

Domestic Rowing '06

COBRA oarsmen competing domestically are generally university students, most of which are based in England. There are some exceptions to that rule, but it appears that until we raise enough money to build the indoor, 2km, multi-lane lake in Coleraine that seems to get mentioned every year when COBRA members get together and have a few drinks, the actual rowing will be for those of us without jobs and too much time on our hands!

One notable exception is Steven Archibald, who, competing for Belfast Rowing Club in lightweight single sculls, came 6th at Strathclyde regatta, 2nd at Queen's Regatta (held at Castlewellan Lake) and 6th overall at the Irish national championships.

For the students on the mainland, there are three main competitions that they all work towards; The Head of the River on the Thames in London, BUSA regatta, and Henley Royal Regatta. The Head of the River is the reverse of the Oxford/Cambridge Boat Race, but strangely both are downstream due to

the tide. It is the biggest Head Race in the UK and over 400 eights are involved in a single time trial style race in which all the boats are sent off in roughly 20 second intervals, truly a sight to behold. Alan Campbell (who I promise not to mention again in this article) came 8th for Tideway Scullers and Iain Giffin 51st for Glasgow University.

BUSA or British Universities Sports Association regatta is the largest rowing event in the UK, with over 4000 oarsmen and women taking part in 2006, that number increasing each year. It is a chance for all the Universities in England, Scotland and Wales to come to the National Water sports Centre, at Holme Pierrepont in Nottingham, and race each other over 2Km. Racing categories are Champ, Junior and Novice, from highest to lowest in status. Philip Braithwaite, at Durham University rowed in the Junior coxed four category and was set for a semi-final place but equipment failure



Philip Braithwaite (bow), St Aidan's College, Durham

prevented them from doing so. David Ewart for Reading, was in also in the Junior 4+ category, and made it into the final without too much trouble. In the final, however, after an awful start and only 500m he was four seconds behind the leader, but managed to claw back the difference over the next kilometre and a half to win the race on the line by just 0.2 seconds and take gold. Iain Giffin, came 5th overall in Senior eights for Glasgow and in a close final, I got silver

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From the archives...

A record of the first rowing broadcast made by the BBC in Ulster, in 1938 by D.B. McNeill, reporting the regatta on the Bann in Coleraine. Collated by Bobby Platt MBE

Thursday 7th July

It was a very dull cold morning up at Coleraine, indeed it was more like an autumn day than a day in midsummer. There was a slight breeze which freshened at times – blowing up the course, and altogether it looked as if slow times would be recorded for today's racing.

The course at Bann is slightly over a mile and a quarter long. The river is practically straight, and the boats row down-stream to finish just above the bridge in Coleraine town. I have said the course was practically straight, but just about four hundred yards after the start there is a slight bend. To compensate for this the start is made a staggered one.

The principal event at today's regatta was the holding of the Irish Amateur Rowing Union's Junior Challenge Cup. This is given for Junior Eights racing. Three years ago this cup was rowed for at the Portadown regatta. Today like last Saturday punctuality was the principal feature, and in addition very close races took place. Indeed there was the rare occurrence of a dead heat.

Rowing started before noon when Trinity College Junior Four had a very hard race to win from Bann by half a length. Then came some Maiden Eights heats to be followed by another Junior Four race in which Commercial Boating Club, which won the Ulster Cup last Saturday, won from Derry after a very interesting type of race. After some sculling races and some more Maiden Eights heats, and a race between Coleraine Academical Institution and Belvedere College, we came to the principal event of the day. This was two heats of the IARU Cup.

At the start of the first race between Bann and Dublin University Boat Club, slight rain was falling, and the wind was blowing comparatively hard up the river. Incidentally the race was under the control of an IARU official sent to manage their events at this regatta. Both crews got a good start and at the quarter-mile post Bann were leading. After half a mile crews were just about level, and from

here on a ding-dong battle ensued. First of all Trinity would lead and then Bann would lead. But the Bann stroke Smyth who is still a school-boy, sprinted his crew about two hundred yards from the finish to win a hard race by a bare length.

In heat B of this event University College Dublin met the Commercial Boat Club of Belfast. UCD got a very bad start and Commercial were soon leading by three quarters of a length. Up came UCD however, and at the quarter-mile post had a slight lead which they increased to fully a quarter of a length at the half-mile post. The contrast between the two crews was very striking, UCD rowed a very fast, short stroke, and were hitting 36. The Belfast Club on the other hand were rowing about 31, and keeping their length very well. Indeed you could see the Belfast cox's head go back every stroke. There was tremendous drive in the Belfast boat and although rowing fully five a minute slower than their opponents they held them. When we came to the stone wall University College were about half a length ahead and from then on we were given one of the best finishes Irish rowing has ever seen. University College Dublin quickened their pace - the Commercial stroke did likewise. There was more kick, however, in the Commercial boat, and inch by inch we could see them overhauling their Southern opponents. With fifty yards to go Commercial were three feet behind. Twenty-five yards - barely a foot separated the crews, and when they passed the winning post both crews were level. It was a magnificent pick-up on Belfast's part.

The next race was not so close, but in it we saw the best rowing of the day. It was a senior Fours event which was won by University College, Dublin. Their crew not only reached out for their beginnings, but they also got very hard finishes. You could only tell this by watching their puddles. Indeed to watch this crew from the bank you would think rowing a very lazy, easy, sort of sport. It looked so effortless. You would think the University College crew were running on oil they were moving so smoothly. It was lovely to watch, and I am sorry you were not there to see it.

Another interesting event today occurred when Belfast avenged Portadown for their defeat in the Senior Fours last Saturday, Bel-



CAI 1st IV 1938*

fast coming second in a heat, while Portadown were third.

The final of the Junior Eights was rather disappointing. Bann went ahead from the start and rowing magnificently they won by about a length. They were hard pushed over the whole course by University College Dublin. It was a very sporting action of the Bann Club in agreeing to let both the crews of University College Dublin and Belfast Commercial, who had dead-heated in heat B, row against them in the final. It was the way the Bann held out their stroke that won them the race. In addition I must mention again the magnificent stroking of Smyth.

Before I go any further here are the results: Junior Eights' I.A.R.U. Challenge Cup - Bann Senior Eights - Trinity College Dublin Maiden Eights - University College Dublin

University College, Dublin also won the two Senior Fours events, while the Junior Fours was won by Trinity. Coleraine Academical Institution won the schools race, Bann the under age, and Belfast Commercial won the Maiden Fours.

The racing at Bann can be watched from a road which runs just beside the river, and today the traffic on this road was just as heavy as ever. Tommy Glenn who coxed Bann for over fifty consecutive years, told me that the congestion today was not as bad as it used to be. In those days this road used to be thick with side-cars and there used to be at least two accidents per race as the drivers fought with each other for position on the road. This must not lead you to think that was not the same interest in today's regatta as in those old days, because both sides of the river were crammed with spectators today who thoroughly enjoyed the close races and fine rowing which we saw this afternoon at Coleraine.

*Winners of the Wray Challenge Cup. Beaten by 1 length, by DUBC in final of the Metropolitan Grand Challenge Cup (the Blue Riband of Irish rowing). A.J. Clarke (Captain), G.H. Wilson Esq, T.H. Cameron (bow), A.McI. Smyth (stk), A.J. Armstrong (cox), W. Nicholson.



Racing, Food and the Sun

(What else could you ask for?)



The fourth annual Coleraine Old Boys Rowing Association fundraising barbecue was held at the traditional venue on the banks of the River Bann at C.A.I. on Saturday 9th September. It proved to be another success, with COBRA's new fundraising committee relishing their chance to serve the association and the Boat Club by raising the standards to a new level.

The day dawned fresh and bright, with seemingly perfect conditions on both the water for rowing and on the banks for spectating and enjoying the entertainment. Although the wind did blow up later in the day this did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm of either the oarsmen or the spectators.

The first spectacle of the day was an invitational race between a Bann Rowing Club VIII and a Tideway Scullers VIII. The Bann crew featured the COBRA powerhouses of Alan Campbell and Richard Chambers whilst the Tideway oarsmen and women came from Alan's main club in London. The younger Tideway Scullers proved too much for the Bann crew and pulled away to win by less than a length.

The second race was the main event of

the day, the traditional School Boy vs. Old Boy VIII's race. This event not only marks the close of the holiday period for the school boys but it gives them the chance to pit themselves against the older more experienced oarsmen. The school boys put up a valiant fight to hold the old boys at the start but as the race progressed the old boy's technical ability and stamina showed as they pulled through to win by half a length. The third and final VIII's race of the day was between the Tideway and COBRA crews, of which the former were victorious.

Throughout the day refreshments and delicious barbecued food was available to guests, spectators and oarsmen alike. Everyone was kept well informed of what activities were going on by fundraising committee chairman Philip Braithwaite. Activities available included a rowing machine challenge, bouncy castle, sponge throwing event, raffle, as well as a chance to try out rowing for yourself in the Boat House's indoor rowing tank. However the highlight of the activities on land was undoubtedly the question and answer session with COBRA's own four current internationals, Richard Chambers (GB), Stephen Feeney (GB), Alan Campbell (GB) and Richard Archibald (IRL). Alex Humphrey took charge of proceedings and made sure everyone present had the chance to ask any questions.

The day was rounded off in an awesome display of power as our four internation-

als demonstrated just how they have reached the levels they have in a race against the J16 school boy quad. This quad, which had such success last year found this to be by far their toughest race and despite a monumental effort they were beaten by almost 3 lengths.

We would like to thank Philip Braithwaite and his fundraising committee for all the hard work they put into organising this successful event, and those involved in the preparing and cooking of the food. Finally we would like to express our thanks to those who donated prizes for the raffle and most importantly to all those who attended and supported the event.

Andrew Wright



Tideway Scullers VIII

Representing CAI: Jamie McBurney, Aimal Khan, Darren Taggart, Robert Hart, Ryan Dinsmore, Mark Reid, Michael McNaul, Peter Calvin, Callum McBurney (cox).

Representing COBRA: Philip Braithwaite, Connor Campbell, Iain Giffin, Colin Stewart, Alan Campbell, David Ewart, Stephen Feeney, Steven Archibald, Alex Humphrey (cox).

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for Loughborough University, coxing the women's Novice eight.

Henley Regatta is the premier amateur regatta in the UK, and many would argue the world, and is the most important event for any serious university rowing club. In the inaugural Prince Albert Challenge Cup, for student coxed fours, two COBRA members were entered; Philip Braithwaite for St. Ai-

dan's College, Durham and David Ewart, again for Reading. Philip unfortunately did not qualify for one of the sixteen places, after the Friday time trials, but David was seeded due to good results earlier in the season. He beat G S R Aegir, Holland in the first round, and drew Goldie Boat Club, Cambridge University's boat race reserves in the second round. In a close race he lost by 2/3 of a length. In

the other student event, the Temple Challenge Cup, for eights, I also failed to qualify in Loughborough University 'B' but Iain Giffin, Glasgow, for the third year running, got to 'the Friday', or third round, by beating Jesus College, Cambridge and Newcastle (this year without COBRA members due to trials), but lost to a rapid University of California eight.

Alex Humphrey

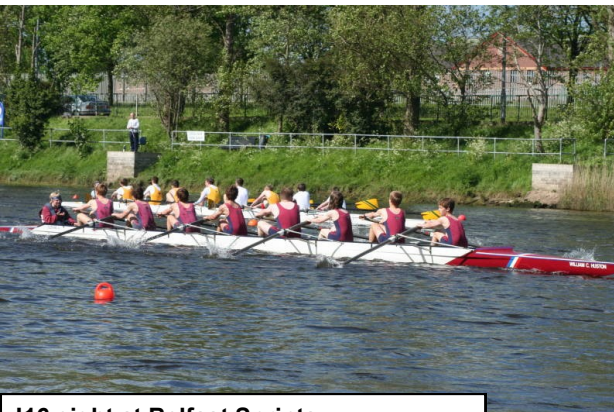


CAIBC 2005-06

Racing in the 2005/06 season began with the annual trip to Lagan Head of the River. The J18 8+ had a good race, despite being held up by a Commercial Crew whilst the J16 4x+ had a well deserved victory, winning their class by *over 40 seconds*, ahead of old rivals RBAI and Methody.

Next was Erne Head of the River, which only the J18 8+ participated in. The crew had an amazing row over the 6km course but unfortunately came second to Neptune.

Regatta season began with a trip to Neptune Regatta at Islandbridge, Dublin, where the J18 4+ was striving to show their worth in *the South*, and came a close second to Commercial in a nail-biting final. The J16 4x+ was desperate to overcome their bad luck in the Republic, and came through beating Waterford and Portora comfortably.



J16 eight at Belfast Sprints

One of the most hotly-anticipated events, Queen's Regatta held at Castlewellan Forest Park, caused a stir in the club over the desperately early morning, but all of the boys were up to the challenge. The J18 4+ came third in an exciting race which involved the usual suspects, Methody and RBAI. The J18 8+ had a disappointing result, (which was mostly due to the fact that half of the crew was racing a mere 20 minutes earlier), coming third to RBAI and Methody. The J16 4+ had an unexpected, but well de-

served, victory over Portadown and Methody. Yet again, the J16 4x+ won, despite being a length behind Portora after 200 metres.

The next weekend, the club went to Portadown to compete in the annual regatta there. The J18 4+ lost out in an exciting semi final to Methody, which was our first race of the day. The J16 4+ were eager to carry on winning but lost by half a length to Portadown in an eagerly anticipated final. The J16 8+ won their category, beating RBAI and Portadown in a close final, winning the Gibson Cup for their victory. The Novice 8+ lost out on medals in a final against Portadown, after sitting at the start waiting for the other crew to arrive for a staggering 40 minutes. The J18 8+ were defeated after a rudder failure causing them to bow out of the race. The J16 4x+, again, won convincingly in good style after beating Methody and RBAI. And of course, Mark Reid, rowing a novice single scull lost out to RBAI in a tough semi-final.

There was another win for the J16 4x+, this time at the Portora Sprint Regatta. They had very tough opposition in the form of Carlow, undefeated south of the border. A very close final saw the Coleraine crew pull through to win by 6 feet over the 500m course.

Belfast Sprint Regatta saw yet another win for the J16 4x+ as well as a win for Johnny Mitchell in the J15 1x, a win for the J16 8+ and a win for the J18 4x-. At Athlone Regatta the J16 4x kept their clean sheet by just 2 feet over Offaly.

The Craig Cup (Ulster J16 8+ champion-



J16 quad at Neptune Regatta

ships) were hosted by the holders of the Cup (CAI of course!) and rowed between the New bridge and Bann boathouse in Coleraine. Five crews entered the race which saw a win for Portora by half a canvas from Coleraine Inst. Methody finished third in the final, while Belfast Inst and Portadown were eliminated in the semis.

In the warm weather of July, four crews from the club travelled down to the Irish Championships at Inscarra. The J18 8+ had a good row but unfortunately did not get through their heat. The under-age J18 4x (which was the undefeated J16 4x+ earlier in the season) had a tough heat, but were only one place away from the final in a top class event. The First Four (J18) had a strong row, but they were drawn against stiff opposition and did not manage to get into the final. The major success at the Champs was when J15 sculler, Jonny Mitchell, won his heat and was one of the winners of this category.

With only one member of the senior squad leaving to join COBRA, the club has a very good chance of going far in the 2007 season.

Callum McBurney (CAI)



Sporting Memorabilia at the School Museum

“What are you going to do when you retire?” was a common question from my students towards the end of last year. When I told them that, among other things, I was going to start a School Museum, I think some of them visualised a big glass case with me (and some of my colleagues) inside it.

With a bit of work, and a lot of help and encouragement from the Bursar and the maintenance staff, it has now come together. And I'd have to admit that when it was opened to the public for the first time after Prize Day, I was quite pleased with the result.

The basic layout recreates part of a classroom and a Science Lab, a corner of the old boarding school - complete with dorm locker and bed - and part of the Headmaster's Study as it would have looked in the 1960s. So a visitor to the museum can see how teachers worked in the days before digital projectors and the Internet, how Science Labs operated in the days of Leclanche Cells and beam balances, and how boarders lived in big dormitories with all their worldly goods



in a wooden locker. A small war memorial room contains photographs of former pupils killed in the two World Wars, and a uniform of the wartime CAI squadron of the Air Training Corps is also on display.

The sporting history of the school is well covered, and there is a small section relevant to former oarsmen. A set of framed photographs of crews going back to the 1930s is temporarily housed in the Museum, and Mr R.A.Eyre has kindly presented us with some items of rowing interest going back to the 1940s. We have also begun to assemble a “Hall of Fame” commemorating former pupils who have achieved conspicuous success, and already we have pictures of Stephen

Feeney, Richard Chambers, Richard Archibald and Alan Campbell on display. Some rowing pennants and other trophies are currently displayed in the main foyer of the school, and I would hope in the future that these too might find their way across to the museum! I would appeal to any Old Boys who have material they would be prepared to donate or loan to the museum to contact me via the School Office.

We have a very large number of photographs covering just about every decade of the twentieth century – boys, teachers, ancillary staff and day-to-day life around the school. And there is a good selection of the things which often get thrown away – programmes, notes to parents, form lists and rollbooks.

At present it is not possible to have the museum open at regular times, but former pupils or friends of the school are most welcome to view the collection by prior appointment through the school office.

Joe Cassells
Curator.

Coming up in 2007:

COBRA events

Table Quiz	6th April
Flower Arrangement Demonstration	9th October
Annual family BBQ	September

Major Races

British Universities Regatta (Nottingham)	5-7 May
Henley Royal Regatta	4-8 July
Irish Championships (Inniscarra, Cork)	13,14 July
British Championships (Nottingham)	20-22 July

For more information on COBRA or rowing past or present at CAI, visit the website at www.cobrarowing.co.uk or contact William Wright:

Dr W.T.Wright - C.O.B.R.A. chairman
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If you have any comments or would like to contribute to the next newsletter, please email me.
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Thank you everyone who has contributed to this edition.

