

## ROWING

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Most years (including this year) we have three women's Vllls and two men's, as well as a IV, shared between the two squads. No leagues as such are in operation at present although the University of London Boat Club are in the process of devising such a setup. Being a London medical college however, we are members of United Hospitals Boat Club (UHBC), which provides both competitive and social opportunities.

Track record: Unfortunately, the major races of the year outside of UHBC fall within the normal EMS periods or exam periods so in previous years, we have been unable to compete. We have however, already set our sights this year on Henley Royal Regatta in late June and early July, (women and men respectively) so everything this year has been geared towards qualifying.

The women's first VIII crew competed last year at BUSA regatta in Nottingham getting through their heat and coming a competitive 25th in the novice category. This was the first time in a number of years the RVCBC has competed at a BUSA event. The womens VIII crew of second and third years are due to compete at the BUSA head race, also in Nottingham, at the end of February this year.

Within UHBC, all crews maintain a competitive position in the 4 annual races, with this years novice crews showing a lot of promise, given the right training.

Fundraising events: Last year, a member of the club managed to secure a 1000 pound donation after helping to launch a novel online networking site. A London to Paris row has been mentioned a few times but rather unrealistic at present...

A row into central london is currently being planned, all the way past parliament, in order to raise funds.

Sponsorship: 150 pounds from intervet + 16 baseball caps. Last year Hill's made a donation towards the cost of getting to BUSA in Nottingham.

## Wishlist

The main problems at the moment are:

- The four is currently having major repair works, costing £300
- Jim Bee is in dire need of restoration, with duct tape covering a hole, and split wood, however when asked for a quote, the unofficial advice was an accidental fire would be preferable!!!!
- Both Laura and Jill have one rigger, which are on their way out. A spanner must be carried at all times.

Lesser, but still important issues:

- Sancte's footplates should be replaced in the near future. (some shoes also need replacing approx. £70 per pair with footplate).
- We desperately need lights for the boats and our launch (must comply with Tideway Code Regulations, 360 degree light for the launch. Boat lights are in the region of £30 per pair). We are in the process of trying to order some currently, as this is also a safety issue and cannot be ignored.
- Once the four has been fixed, we need one more concept blade (£250), so that we can take out the four and eight simultaneously.
- An erg in college would make so much difference to training and fitness. 8 so crews could train and work on timing together, would be amazing, but unlikely
  
- hatch covers in sancte are not complete.
- magnets for the boats so that the rate meters work.
- we need 3 more cuffs for the concepts for the four (as well as a fourth blade)

Finally, our racking fees next year are being increased to £17,000. This is a major problem for us (budget for year ~£5000), and so other options (moving), are being explored. Insurance is also in the thousands and we are constantly having to think about what we have to prioritise, instead of ensuring the club maintains the highest standards. Being able to have an erg, in college, would make so much difference to our crews- some people are just not able to fulfil their potential with the equipment we have. The boat club has a constant stream of expenses, from batteries for lights and the megaphone, to petrol and marine oil (£22 per can) to run the launch- an essential piece of equipment for safety and training purposes.

Our budget for the rest of the year is £1500, minus the amount for the repairs to the four. With ongoing costs, we hope to purchase the blade and lights, but it will leave little in case of emergency repairs.

Years of under funding for such an expensive sport, has allowed the club to become run-down. We cope with what we have, but the opportunity for extra funding would definitely be welcomed with open arms!

Verity Piner  
RVCBC captain.