

2006 Rowing & Sculling Season News

Beth's Endeavours Rewarded at Christmas Party Saturday 16th December 2006

As 2006 draws to a close the Members of Berwick Amateur Rowing Club celebrated the season with their Annual Christmas party held at the boathouse on Saturday evening. Every club has a member who gives more than they take and on Saturday evening Club President Harry Black was delighted to present the Endeavour Trophy for unrewarded services to Beth Skivington-Jones. Beth is usually seen at Berwick events tirelessly manning the tea stall or supporting the growing number of juniors that she has encouraged to try the sport of rowing. During 2006 members of the Rowing Club have notched up an amazing 38 wins in open competition and have travelled from Strathclyde Park in Scotland to Boston in Lincolnshire and many rivers and waterways in between. All members of Berwick Rowing Club would like to again thank everyone who has very generously supported the club over the last year. Without many local businesses generous support it would be difficult for Berwick to hold their own very popular summer regatta. After the Christmas break winter land training will resume on Tuesday 9th January. Anyone making those ever popular new years resolutions to get active and fit will be very welcome to attend.

Hylton Long Distance Sculling Saturday 4th November 2006

Week five of the Northern Rowing Councils Long Distance Sculling series, which was held on Saturday 4th November, took Berwick club rowers to the River Wear at Hylton, Sunderland. Approximately 100 crews from clubs all over the North East entered the event. The Berwick club had eight entries, a coxless quad scull, four double sculls and three single sculls. A very high tide and strong wind meant fast times were expected for the 5500 metre course. The men's Senior 4 Coxless Quad scull, Gordon Benton, Graham Thompson, Simon Wild and Robin Morrison collided with some floating debris on the way to the start causing some damage to their boat but this didn't stop them completing the course in a respectable time of 17:07 minutes and were third in their category. Next to the finish was Senior 2 Single scull, Chris Eke in an excellent 17:55 minutes and also third in his category. Ian Smith and Alan Robertson in the men's Veteran F Double scull were next to the finish line in 18:04 minutes and giving them another category win. Followed closely behind the veteran double were women's Senior 3 Double scull of Alison Inglis and Hilary Cairns in a time of 18:12 minutes. Not only did Alison and Hilary win their category but they also win the Long Distance Sculling series with four out of six category wins. David Meldrum and Les Eke in men's Senior 1 Double scull was the next Berwick crew to the line in 18:17 minutes followed by David Cairns and Robin Drysdale in Novice Double scull in 18:31 minutes, a creditable achievement for both, having only been their first competitive row together. Veteran C Single scull, Harry Black completed the course in a commendable time of 19:08 minutes. Annette Wilson in Senior 2 Single scull was the final Berwick boat of the day, finishing the course with a personal best of 22:40 minutes.

Tees Long Distance Sculling Saturday 28th October 2006

Week four of the Long Distance Sculling series took Berwick rowers to the River Tees at Stockton. Conditions for the 5000 metre course were not ideal, with a strong wind and fairly rough water. There was a huge entry of over 170 crews, of which Berwick had three, a coxed quad scull, double scull and single scull. The first Berwick crew to tackle the twisty course was the Women's S3 Double scull of Alison Inglis and Hilary Cairns. Hilary made an excellent job steering the course with many obstacles and even after two collisions the women's double still managed to win women's fastest double of the day in a time of 20:07 minutes and beating the Tees double on their home water by just four seconds. Harry Black in the Veteran C Single scull had an excellent race and completed the course in a time of 21:14 minutes and was just beaten into second place by a Tees sculler by 1½ seconds. The last of the Berwick crews to go was the Women's Novice Coxed Quad scull of Estelle McClymont, Sam Seaton, Shirley Grimsdale, Rowena Park and coxed by Roy Trotter. Berwick were the first of the novice crews to the start. They started well and kept their Durham School opposition in their sights but after taking one of the bends too wide they were overtaken by an Aberdeen Schools crew. They completed the course in 22:25 minutes and finished third in their category. Saturday 4th November the fifth round of the series moves to Hylton, Sunderland.

Tyne Long Distance Sculling Saturday 21st October 2006

The third round of the Long Distance Sculling series took place on the Tyne on Saturday 21st October. Conditions were near enough perfect for the course distance of 5500 metres. There were many clubs from all over the north east competing and Berwick had 9 entrants in a field of nearly 100. After a lengthy wait at the start for some, veterans Gordon Benton, Graham Thompson, Simon Wild and Robin Morrison were once again moved to Senior 2 category and were the first Berwick boat to start in the Coxless Quad scull and completed the course in 16:54 minutes. Chris Eke followed in the Men's Senior 1 Single scull in 18:26. Next was the turn of Ian Smith and Alan Robertson in the Men's Veteran F Double scull finishing in 18:30 and winning their category. Guy Skivington-Jones teamed up with Ben Robinson from Tyne in Junior 16 Double scull in a time of 18:42, also winning their category. Harry Black in Veteran C Single scull was home in 20:32 closely followed 3 seconds later by Robin Drysdale, competing in his second long distance event as Men's Novice single scull. Next it was the turn of Alison Inglis, winning her category in Women's Novice Single scull and finishing the course in 21:01. Les Eke followed in Veteran D Single scull in 21:26. Shea Grimsdale, also competing in his second long distance event in Junior 15 Single scull finished in 23:05. Next week the Long Distance Sculling series moves to Tees.

Wansbeck Long Distance Sculling Saturday 14th October 2006

Saturday 14th October saw the second round of the Long Distance Sculling Series move to Cambois Rowing Club. Berwick had a big entry with 10 boats taking part in the 4 kilometre race in near perfect conditions on the Wansbeck. The first Berwick boat was the men's coxless quad scull of Gordon Benton, Graham Thompson, David Cairns and Robin Morrison in 12.10 minutes. A very close group of Berwick boats followed led by Chris Eke in Men's senior 2 sculls in 13.04. Then just 1 second later by the fastest ladies boat over the course and winners of ladies Double Sculls Alison Inglis and Hilary Cairns in 13.05. Then the Berwick veteran Double scull of Ian Smith and Alan Robertson followed in 13.06. Dan Law and Guy Skivington-Jones taking part in their first long distance race put in an extremely creditable performance finishing in 13.56. Harry Black in veteran C single sculls was home in 14.21. Simon Wild and William Grimsdale in veteran C double sculls finished in 14.45. Les Eke made the move to veteran D single sculls and came home in 15.09. Shea Grimsdale also competing in his first long distance sculls did well in junior 15 singles to finish in 15.47. Berwick ladies Estelle McClymont, Sam Seaton, Shirley Grimsdale and Rowena Park coxed by Annette Renwick did extremely well in their first long distance race to win novice coxed quad sculls in 15.50. Giving all competing Berwick ladies a win! Next week's round of the sculling series moves to Tyne.

Berwick Long Distance Sculling Saturday 7th October 2006

The first round of the autumn sculling series was held on the Tweed on Saturday. The event held over six consecutive weeks is gaining in popularity every year and 113 boats raced down the Tweed. With a strong wind blowing conditions were far from ideal with single scullers having a very difficult time through the rough water. The fastest boat over the 5000 metre course was a coxless quad scull from Durham School in 17minutes 48seconds. The fastest Berwick boat was also a coxless quad scull with Robin Morrison, Simon Wild, Graham Thompson and Gordon Benton on board in 19.23. Berwick's fastest single scull was Chris Eke in 20.18. Berwick's veteran double scull of Alan Robertson and Ian Smith won their veteran handicap sculls in 20.30. Finishing directly behind the veterans was Berwick's ladies double scull Alison Inglis and Hilary Cairns in their first race together, they used their home water knowledge to take the prize for fastest ladies double of the day in 20.42. Berwick then had a run of single scullers Harry Black in veteran C single finishing in 21.54. Robin Drysdale and David Meldrum in men's novice single finishing in 23.03 and 23.14 respectively and Berwick's only lady single sculler Annette Wilson taking part in her first long distance event finishing in 25.51. Saturday, October 14 sees Berwick's rowers travel to Wansbeck for the next round of the series.

Durham Primary Regatta Saturday 30th September 2006

The 30th September saw Berwick rowers head for Durham with a very full trailer load of boats. The action began at 9.30am with Berwick Double Scull Robin Drysdale and David Wilson the pair sculled well and were leading at halfway but were overhauled in the closing stages and lost out by ½ length. David Wilson then made his debut in a single scull and not only won the new to sport single but also convincingly won the novice single. Next up were the Junior 15 Double Scull of Dan Law and Guy Skivington-Jones despite only being this pairs second race together they showed real promise by taking command from the start and winning by 2 lengths. Guy then changed to a single scull and took the prize in the junior 15 single sculls. The man's veteran D coxed 4 of Gordon Benton, Robin Morrison, Simon Wild and Graham Thompson coxed by Roy Trotter took the lead from their Chester Le Street opponents from the start and held command of the race all the way. Robin Morrison went on to have an extremely close race against Cambois in the single scull only losing out by ½ length in the closing stages. Simon Wild teamed up with William Grimsdale in the veteran C Double Scull. The Berwick double worked very well together to take a safe victory over Hexham. The Ladies coxed quad scull of Estelle McClymont, Sam Seaton, Shirley Grimsdale and Rowena Park coxed by Hilary Cairns sculled very well to take an easy victory over their Chester Le Street opponents. Rowena Park stepped out of the quad scull and into a single where she raced Talkin Tarn. Despite leading at the half way stage Rowena was pipped at the line. The remaining ladies teamed up with Annette Wilson to compete in the novice coxed fours but were beaten by the more practiced Talkin Tarn crew. Another new crew competing for the first time was the men's novice coxed 4 of Roy Trotter, Craig Robertson, David Stott and Brian Robertson coxed and coached by Les Eke. The lads rowed a good race in their first heat beating Tees comfortably. In the final they were just beaten by a more experienced Durham City crew. Alison Inglis made her first appearance in a single scull. Despite terrible nerves she showed great determination to overhaul her more experienced rival from Tees. Alison also teamed up with Simon Wild in the mixed double sculls, their Durham opponents used their home water advantage to take the win by ¼ length. An unusual event held at Durham is the married persons Double Scull. David and Hilary Cairns took on their Chester Le Street opponents and having a good start helped the couple to a 3 length win.

Berwick Round Table Trade 4's Event Saturday 12th August 2006 Report

There has been hectic activity at the boathouse over the last few weeks as crews consisting of 1 club rower and 3 non-rowers practised the sometimes difficult technique of feathering and squaring an oar and then being asked to do it in time with everyone else!! With an entry of 12 crews, the biggest for several years, the racing became very competitive, especially when the girls raced the boys. After a week of blustery conditions on the Tweed the weather came good, the sun shone and the wind calmed enough to allow racing to go ahead. Although at times it was a little rough this just added to the crews enjoyment as more water was flying! There were Bandits, Pirates, Vixens and Mexicans wearing sombrero hats, to name but a few. After lots of close, and some not so close, races The Pirates of the Tweed overhauled The Mutley Crew in the final to take the men's title. In the ladies final Nixon's Vixens and SAGA Express had the closest race of the day with Nixon's vixens just taking the win by 3 feet. At the busiest point of the day there must have been 150 people on the balcony or along the tow path spectating. Quite something for a club the size of Berwick. The idea behind the competition is to allow people to try the sport of rowing while having fun. Berwick have recruited some of their hardest working members through this event in the past. Following a few beers after the regatta it sounds as though a few more new faces may be appearing at Berwick soon. Watch this space !!!

Berwick Round Table Trade 4's Event Saturday 12th August 2006

The club are holding their annual Trade's 4 event and would like to invite anyone who would like to have a try at rowing, has rowed in the past and anyone who rows currently to come and join us for this fun event. We are currently holding practise sessions every Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6.30 pm. To finish off the day we have a live band playing in the clubhouse, so come and join us.

National Championships - Strathclyde Saturday 16th July 2006

Strathclyde Park hosted the National Championships of Great Britain last week where conditions were unusually calm with no wind blowing, although it was very hot for the competitors. Berwick ARC had Guy Skivington-Jones and Chris Eke competing. Guy was in the Junior 14 Double Sculls with George Watson's College and despite not training together for several weeks and being Guy's first National Championships, put up a good show. With only the first two going straight to the final, they finished in fourth place in the heat which put them into the repechage, where they clocked exactly the same time of 8.49 but again only the first two went through and this gave them fifth place. Guy enjoyed the experience and surely he will contest many more championships in the future. Chris was also in a top quality field in the Open under 23 Single Sculls event. In his heat, only the first two were guaranteed a place in the final and by half way down the 2km course he was about four lengths behind the leaders and decided to wind down, with a place in the repechage assured for fifth place. The repechage was a hotly contested race with all six scullers going for the two places that would give them a place in the final. Itchen won it in 7.35 with Calpe (Gibraltar) second in 7.40, Chris was a further 10 secs behind in fifth place, a personal best time, five seconds ahead of Durham University. The Final was won by Prestige of Burton Leander in 7.19.

Talkin Tarn Saturday 1st July 2006

Saturday saw Berwick rowers make the journey to Talkin Tarn in Cumbria for the final regatta of the summer in the Northern Region. Shea Grimsdale began for Berwick competing in the junior 14B single sculls. Shea sculled well on his first ever visit to the Cumbrian venue and was disappointed not to qualify for the final being beaten by two feet at the line. Simon Wild and William Grimsdale took part in the men's senior four double sculls. After leading from the start the more experienced Chester Le Street crew came through the Berwick pair to take the win. Simon Wild also took part in the veteran C single sculls. Simon was perhaps unlucky to draw the Talkin Tarn sculler in his heat. The Tarn sculler with home water advantage took the win over Simon and went on to win the event. Returning to rowing after a 16 year absence were Graham Thompson and Gordon Benton. The pair have spent several evenings each week on the Tweed blowing off the cobwebs and brushing up the technique of rowing a pair, the most difficult class of boat to race. The duo hoped that all the practice would be worthwhile as they took on a Glasgow crew in the veteran pairs. Berwick steered a perfectly straight course and took the win by two lengths. Guy Skivington-Jones and Dan Law contested the junior 14 double sculls. The Berwick boys made a good start and had an early lead. However the St Leonards School pairing were not going to give up easily and kept the pressure to take the win over the Berwick pair. Guy Skivington-Jones then swapped boats to race in the junior 14 single sculls. This event has been well contested all season and again there was a big entry at Tarn. Guy sculled confidently to win his semi final. The final was a three boat line up between Berwick, Durham City and St Leonards. Guy powered his way off the start and had extended his lead to two lengths as he crossed the line. Chris Eke competed in the men's senior two single sculls. Chris had the most extreme bad luck as after taking only five strokes of the race he suffered an equipment failure and was very lucky not to capsize his boat. The race was then gifted to his Chester Le Street opponent. Hilary Cairns had a very busy day competing in three events. First off was the women's senior two single sculls. After making a good start Hilary had a small lead over her Durham opponent, sculling cleanly and perfectly straight brought Hilary a victory of two lengths at the finish. Next up was the mixed veteran double sculls with partner Simon Wild. The Berwick pair overhauled an unknown crew from York in the semi final, setting up the final between Berwick and Tees. The Berwick pair are fast away from the start but on this occasion had to use all their resources to maintain a small lead winning the event by only half a boat length. After a short rest Hilary then partnered up with Chris Eke in the mixed senior two double sculls. Queen Elizabeth Hexham were the final opponents of the day. Both crews made a quick clean start and by the half way stage it was dead level. Berwick increased their stroke rate over the closing stages which proved to be the deciding factor as it gave Berwick half a length lead as the boats crossed the line and in doing so Hilary took her third victory of the day.

Berwick Regatta Report

The annual Tweed Regatta took place at West Ord with the entry of competitors double the size of the usual entry with 104 races taking place. The first Berwick crew to take to the water was the women's coxed four (Annette Wilson, Alison Inglis, Shirley Grimsdale and Sam Seaton). After another close race from the women they were unfortunately beaten by the eventual winners Hexham. The women also contested the novice coxed quad sculls and after a well fought race were beaten by Tyne who again went on to win the event. Simon Wild and William Grimsdale competed in the senior 4 double sculls, after some clashing with their rivals Hexham at the start, the Berwick pair took the lead and went on the win by 2 lengths. Robin Drysdale made his debut in men's novice single sculls but was beaten and his opponent from Tyne went on to win the event. Rowena Park contested junior 18 and novice single sculls. The junior 18 event attracted some strong opponents and was won by George Watsons. The novice race was well contested but Rowena was beaten by the narrowest margin. Guy Skivington-Jones won his way through to the final of the junior 14 single sculls but was beaten by George Watsons. Shea Grimsdale raced well in the junior 14B single sculls to claim a place in the final, but was beaten by Chester Le Street. Shea also took part in the junior 15 tracer sculls where he won his first title. David McClymont and David Meldrum teamed up for the men's novice double sculls. In their first race together they showed great promise of things to come but on this occasion were unable to take the win over the more experienced crew from Tees. David Meldrum partnered up with Chris Eke to compete in the men's novice coxless pairs, in an extremely difficult boat to row the Berwick boy's rowed well but a practiced Tyne crew took the honours. Chris Eke provided the Berwick entry in the premier event of the day, the men's elite single sculls and for the title King of the Tweed. He came up against some very tough opposition from George Watsons and despite being cheered all the way down the course was narrowly beaten by Livy from George Watsons. Simon Wild, Les Eke and Harry Black all took part in the veteran C single sculls. Harry sculled steadily to overturn his opponents early lead and came through to take the win. Hilary Cairns took to the water in the ladies senior 2 single sculls. After a promising first half the sculler from George Watsons took the lead and went on to win by 2 lengths. Hilary the paired up with Simon Wild for the veteran mixed doubles, the Berwick pair made a good start and worked hard to extend their lead over rivals Hexham to 3 lengths at the finish. Annette Wilson made her debut in the womens novice single sculls and went on to win her first sculls tace over Hexham. Ian Smith and Alan Robertson raced in the veteran D double sculls, the very experienced Berwick pair did not have too much trouble taking the win over Hexham. Ian then competed in veteran handicap sculls, this was the closest race of the day with Ian just managing to hang on to take the win from the Cambois sculler by 3 feet. Dan Law and Ben Black competed for the first time in junior 14B double sculls, both boys did well to keep the pressure on their Chester Le Street opponents. David Munroe and Michael Brennan also competed for the first time in the junior 16 double sculls, again both boys sculled well but were beaten by a very experienced George Watsons pair.

Berwick Regatta Saturday 24th June 2006

Berwick Amateur Rowing Club will hold their annual Regatta on the River Tweed at West Ord on Saturday 24th June. There is a very large entry this year with over 100 races taking place, ranging from Elite Single Sculls to Junior 12 Quads and attracting clubs from as far as Tees and Edinburgh. Berwick also has its largest entry for many years with 22 entries, many of which are new members competing in their first season. Racing starts at 11.00 am through to 5.00 pm.

Tees Regatta

The first race of the day for the club was the Vet C single sculls, club captain Simon Wild and club president Harry Black competed but narrowly missed out going through to the final. Mixed Vet double, Hilary Cairns and Simon Wild performed exceedingly well to win the event over a Tees crew on their home water. Rowena Park took part in the Women's Novice single sculls and won her heat which took her through to the final. Rowena also took part in the Junior 18 single sculls but lost out by a quarter of a length. Mixed Senior 2 double sculls, Hilary Carins and Chris Eke had a good start and were in command of the race from the start, beating the crew from St John's College, York by 3 lengths. Women's Senior 2 single sculls, Hillary Cairns had a good start but was beaten by City of Sunderland. Women's Vet Novice coxed quad sculls,

Annette Wilson, Alison Inglis, Shirley Grimsdale, Sam Seaton and coxed by Chris Eke won their first sculling event beating Chester Le Street and York. The same crew with Hilary Cairns as cox as took part in the Women's Novice coxed four. Senior 2 single sculls, Chris Eke was beaten to line by two scullers from Yarm School.

Paddlers, Plodders and Peddlers Thursday 18th May 2006

This fun event, which included participants from Berwick Rowing Club, Auchencrow Thistle Cycling Club and Wooler Running Club started at Chain Bridge, near Horncliffe and finished at the Boathouse in Berwick. After 30 minutes of strenuous exercise saw the victors of the second year running were Auchencrow Thistle who peddled their way to victory just 20 seconds ahead of the Rowing Clubs Coxless quad scull and to be followed shortly by the runners from Wooler Running Club.