



# NOVICE HANDBOOK

DOWNING COLLEGE  
BOAT CLUB  
2024 - 25

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

**02** LBCs' Welcome

---

**03** Meet the Committee

---

**04** What to Expect from  
an Outing

---

**06** Boats & Equipment

---

**10** The Rowing Stroke

---

**11** Land Training

**12** Races

---

**15** Training Camp

---

**16** Maps

---

**18** Events

---

**19** Looking After Yourself

---

**21** FAQs & Glossary

# The Lower Boats' Captains Welcome You

Welcome to Downing College Boat Club! We're very excited to meet you all and help you on the start of your rowing journey at Downing! This handbook has been put together to give you all the info you'll need as a novice rower or cox at Cambridge. If anything is unclear, or if you have any questions after reading this, don't hesitate to reach out to any of us, or any senior. All the best and see you on the river!

## Downing College Boat Club LBCs 2024/25



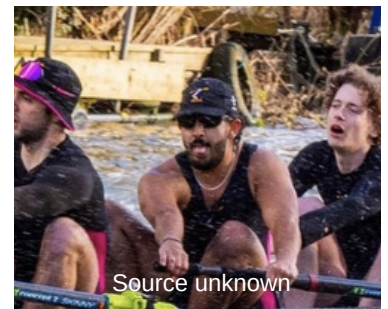
### Sophia Bumsteinaite

Hey, I'm Sophia, a second-year Land Economist and one of your Lower Boat Captains 2024/25. I started rowing last year as a fresher and joined W1 in Lent Term. Rowing has quickly become one of the best parts of my time at Cambridge. It's a great way to stay active and take a break from studying. The club has a lovely community, and I've made some great friends in the boathouse.

Whether you want to compete or just have fun, I'd really encourage you to give rowing a try. I'm excited for the year ahead and hope to see many of you on the river!

### Bilal Mahmood

Hi, I'm Bilal, a second year medic and one of your LBCs this year! I started rowing with DCBC last Michaelmas after playing hockey and lifting through sixth form, and it has become a huge part of my life at Cambridge since. I enjoyed my time racing in the NM1 crew during my novice term before rowing with M2 for my first Bumps campaign in which we secured blades, also sculling in the holidays at Trentham, my town club, trying not to capsize a single! The boat club has given me a much needed break from my degree, allowing me to challenge myself physically, but also has fantastic socials with the Tribe & Camenae, meeting rowers from other clubs on swaps and boat club dinners, to name a few. I do hope you enjoy the social and competitive side of the sport as much as I have and I look forward to meeting many of you next year!

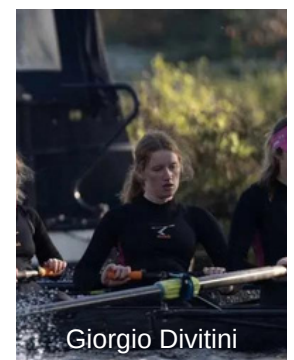


### Isabel Sykes

Hi! I'm Isabel, a 2nd year Classicist and one of your LBCs! I started rowing in 2016 and immediately fell in love with it. I've never been a fan of sports, but strangely enough rowing stuck. I kept up the sport through my school years, and I found it an excellent escape from the stresses of studying and everyday life, especially during GCSEs and A-level exams. I joined DCBC in Lent term of my first year and I rowed in W1 for the rest of the year. If you're even just considering giving rowing a try, go for it! There are different levels of commitment, and there is always a good balance of working hard and having fun. I'm really looking forward to being an LBC this year, and hopefully we can make rowing stick for you too!

### Isobel Thornton

Hi! I'm Isobel, a 3rd year medic. Back in school, I was really into netball and loved the sense of community it brought. When I started uni, I wanted to find a sport that offered the same tight-knit social life, and rowing turned out to be perfect! It's given me friends for life, a way to clear my head, and a place to have fun without worrying about anything else. I'm so excited for next year and can't wait to share this amazing sport with you all!



# THE COMMITTEE

The boat club is run by a committee of students. It might seem like a lot of people to get to know (especially when you're already meeting so many new people around college) so we've picked out some key members of the club to introduce you to first.



**WILL PIZII**

MEN & NB SQUAD CAPTAIN  
MEN@DOWNINGBOATCLUB.CO.UK



**KATY BRADLEY**

CAPTAIN OF BOATS  
CAPTAIN@DOWNINGBOATCLUB.CO.UK



**ROSIE EGELIE**

WOMEN & NB SQUAD CAPTAIN  
WOMEN@DOWNINGBOATCLUB.CO.UK

The Captain of Boats is the head of the Boat Club and is the main contact between the Club, our alumni and the College. They do a lot of the background work that keeps the club going.

The Men's & NB and Women's & NB Captains are in charge of our two squads respectively and make decisions on training and crew selection.

## **The Other Members of the Committee are:**

**Secretary – Toby Brady**

**Junior Treasurer – Nicola Rice**

**Kit Secretary – Oliver Gaunt**

**Communications Officer – Monty Jackson**

**Social Secretaries – Pawel Lisowski & Gianluca Maffi**

**Sponsorship Officer – Joe Stell**

**Coxing Rep – Ethan Wrightson**

**Tank Officer – Ethan Wrightson**

# WHAT TO EXPECT FROM AN OUTING: COXES

*As the rowers get changed and warm up, it's your job to get some equipment ready ahead of the outing. Each cox will do the following in a different order so it's up to you what you do first.*

- **Get the blades out** - If you're not sure which ones to take out then ask. Carry them out and lay them out in front of the boathouse. The best way to do so is two at a time.
- **Choose a cox box** and check it works.
- **Sign out the boat** - Put the date, boat name, your name and time out in the registration book by the boathouse doors.
- **Put a life jacket on**
- **Speak to the coach and crew** - As a novice, you will never go out without a coach and you'll usually have a short briefing before you head out. Make sure everyone (you included) understands the aims of the outing. If you don't understand what the coach is saying then it's not silly to ask for clarification.
- **Get the boat out** - You'll lead the crew in getting the boat out (someone will show you how to do this). The most important thing here is to make sure that everyone moves at the same time and keeps an eye on the boat's riggers so they don't hit anything.
- **On the water** - Hopefully, you'll have a good outing and work well with the coach to achieve the outing's aims
- **Get the boat in** - Back at the boathouse, you'll get the boat back in and essentially do all of your preparation work in reverse (except crew will return their own blades). Make sure you debrief with the coach and crew to find out what worked and what didn't (this is also a good way of getting your crew to bond).

*Once you've signed the boat back in, taken your lifejacket off and set the cox box onto charge you're good to go and crack on with your day.*



# WHAT TO EXPECT FROM AN OUTING: ROWERS

*Each outing will vary depending on what the aim is, whether we want to work on technique, to get through a longer piece to build up stamina, or to do some sprints and racing starts. However, you will usually start in the same way...*

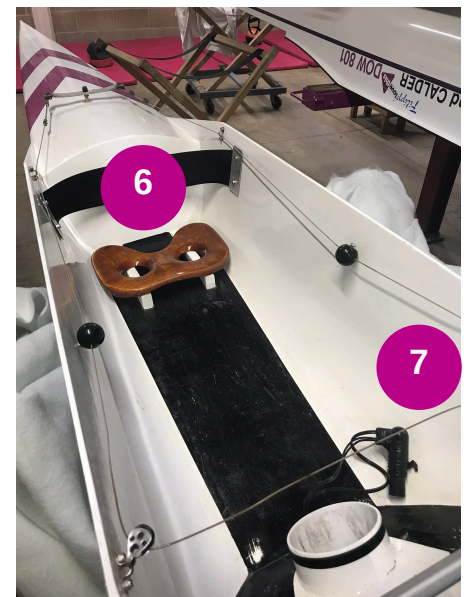
- **Arrive at the boathouse** at least 5 minutes before your OTE (on the erg) time. You should be sitting on the erg and ready to warm up at the time given.
- **Warm up** - We usually warm up on the erg in the same way every outing. You'll probably be led by your coach or cox, but will be able to do it yourselves eventually. The warm-up is normally a progression from arms only erging, through arms and back, quarter slide, half slide and full stroke, usually ending with a few minutes of higher rate rowing.
- **Stretching** - After warming up and filling up our water bottles and getting our kit ready, we go down to the boat bay and do some stretches together as a crew.
- **Get the boat out** - The cox will make the calls for you to get the boat out. All you need to do is listen. You then need to grab the blade for your position (the number for your seat is normally on the loom of the blade) and put it into place. You can then get in the boat with anything you need for the outing, such as a water bottle or shoes, which you can put behind the footplate.
- **The Work** - This is what we normally call whatever we're doing during the outing. If it's technical work, it could involve a lot of exercises and drills while stopping and getting feedback. It could also be a long piece or a short piece (a piece is any given distance or time where we concentrate on some aspect that we want to improve, such as a '500m piece'. It's usually a more intense part of the outing).
- **Get the boat in** - The reverse of getting the boat out. Listen to the cox. This includes putting the blades back in their correct place.
- **Stretching and debrief**- An outing is normally followed by another group stretch and a discussion with the coach and the cox about how the outing went. It often includes feedback or reviewing videos.



Giorgio Divitini

# BOATS & EQUIPMENT

Although each boat can look very different to the next, the basic equipment is usually the same. Some of the terms you may need to know are below:



1 Loom

2 Spoon

3 Handle

4 Button

5 Rudder Fin

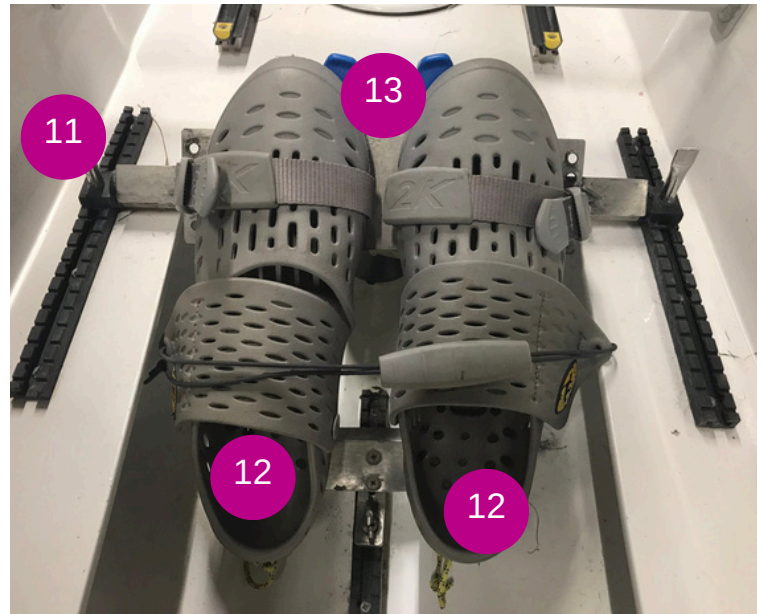
6 Coxing Seat

7 Rudder Wires

8 Bow Ball



# BOATS & EQUIPMENT

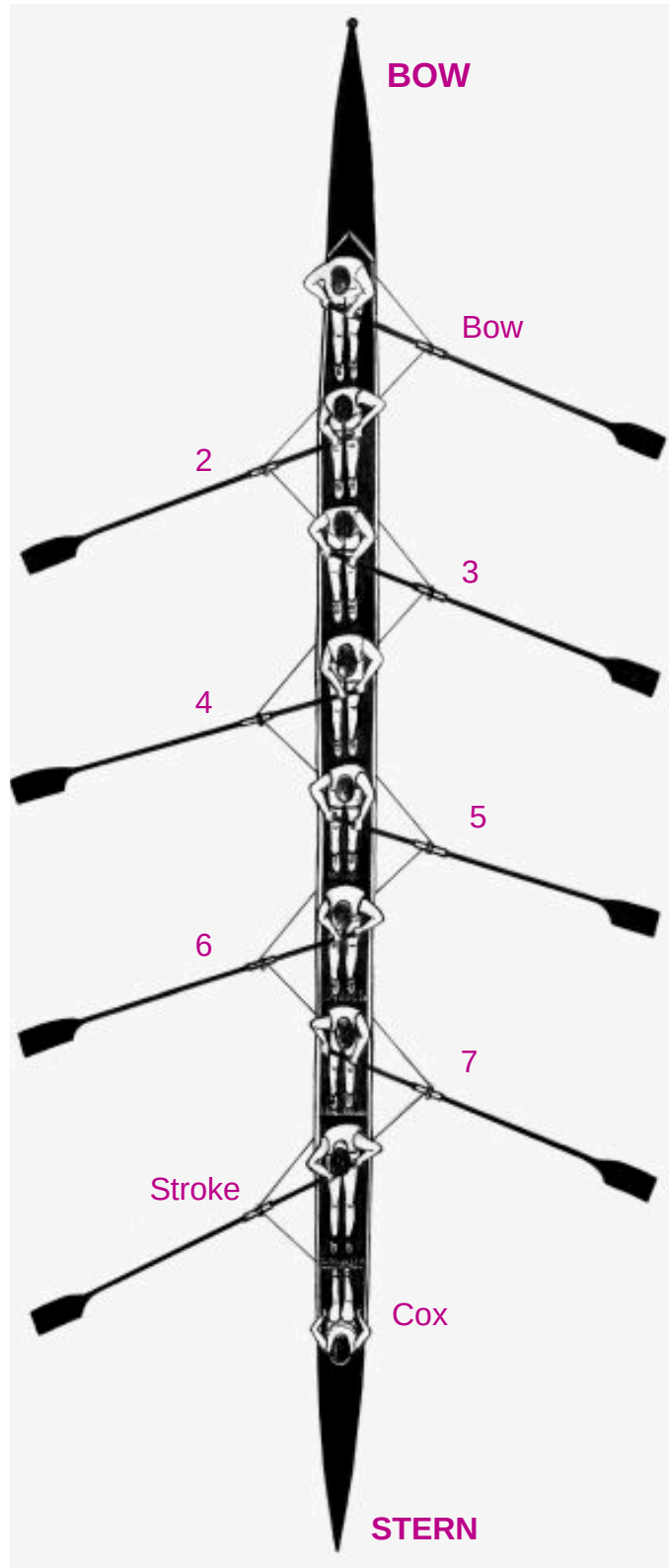


- 9 Seat
- 10 Slides
- 11 Stretcher
- 12 Shoes
- 13 Footplate
- 14 Saxboard
- 15 Rigger
- 16 Gate

# THE BOAT

This is an 8+/VIII:

STROKE SIDE



BOW SIDE

# COXING EQUIPMENT

As a cox it's important to get to know the different parts of the boat and what everything does - it's hard to tell rowers what to do and give feedback when you don't know what it is you're talking about. You'll be supported in getting to grips with the cox box too so your rowers can actually hear you!

There are lots of bits and pieces you'll start to use as a cox but these are the key pieces of equipment to focus on when you start out.



## The Cox Box & Microphone

Arguably the cox box is your most important piece of equipment. When attached to the microphone it will allow you to speak to your crew to provide instructions and motivation. It will also tell you what rate you're going at (how many strokes are being taken per minute) and can be programmed to measure distance and to work as a stop watch. When you return from an outing make sure you plug your cox box in - if the battery goes while you're out on the river you'll have to shout for the rest of the outing!

## Life Jacket

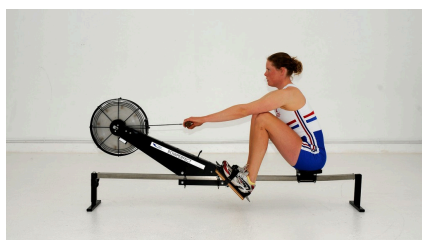


## Sign Out Book

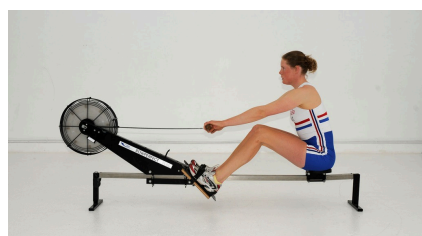
Strutt	23/5	Ruth	14.20	20.00
Quinn	22/5	Olle	8.15	9.15
Quinn	24/5	Olle	8.15	9.00
PJS	24/5	Ruth	7.15	8.15
Strutt	24/5	Ruth	14.15	20.30
Ruth	25/5	Olle	19.20	19.35
Leo	25/5	Olle	19.15	20.20
Ruth	26/5	Olle	19.20	19.50
PJS	26/5	Olle	18.00	18.30
Ruth	27/5	Olle	18.05	18.30
Leo	28/5	Olle	18.00	18.05
Leo	28/5	Olle	18.00	18.05
Leo	28/5	Olle	18.00	18.05
Ruth	28/5	Olle	18.00	18.05
PJS	28/5	Olle	18.00	18.05
Strutt	29/5	Ruth	14.15	15.00
Steph	29/5	Olle	15.15	16.20
Leo	30/5	Olle	17.30	18.00
Ruth	30/5	Olle	19.55	21.00
Quinn	31/5	Ruth	7.20	8.15
Ruth	31/5	Olle	18.25	19.30
Ruth	1/6	Olle	18.20	19.30
Strutt	1/6	Olle	20.00	21.15
Ruth	2/6	Olle	18.20	19.30
Leo	2/6	Olle	18.20	19.30
Ruth	3/6	Olle	18.20	19.30
Strutt	4/6	Olle	18.20	19.30
Leo	4/6	Olle	18.20	19.30
Ruth	5/6	Olle	18.20	19.30
Ruth	6/6	Olle	18.20	19.30
Ruth	7/6	Olle	18.20	19.30
Strutt	7/6	Ruth	18.20	19.30
Childs	7/6	Steph	18.20	19.30
Ruth	8/6	Olle	18.20	19.30
Childs	8/6	Steph	18.20	19.30
Leo	8/6	Olle	18.20	19.30
Leo	9/6	Olle	18.20	19.30
Ruth	9/6	Olle	18.20	19.30
Strutt	9/6	Ruth	18.20	19.30
Quinn	2/6	Ruth	18.20	19.30

# THE ROWING STROKE

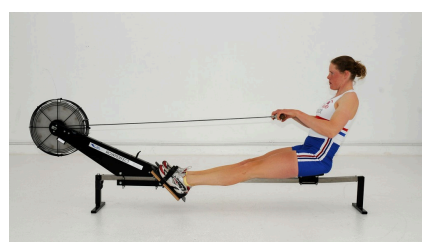
At its core, rowing depends on a very simple, repetitive motion or stroke. However, getting the perfect technique so you can generate the most power efficiently can be a lot more difficult. The stroke can be broken down into the drive (when power is applied) and the recovery (the relaxed phase to get you back to the start).



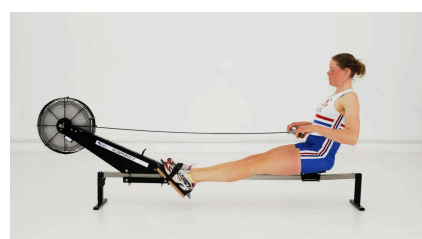
**The Catch** - The stroke starts at front stops, where your arms are straight out in front of you with a relaxed grip on the handle, your body rocked forward to about 11 o'clock, and your legs bent so your shins are vertical.



**Leg Drive** - Ensure your core is engaged, before pushing with your legs, driving your heels down. You should have the feeling of hanging off the handle.



**Rock Over** - Once your legs are flat with your quads engaged, pivot your body about your hips to about 1 o'clock.



**Arms to the Finish** - Draw the arms into about midway up your chest, keeping your elbows in, and keeping everything strong (tight core, locked legs, quads engaged). This position is called the finish or backstops.

The stroke is exactly the same in a boat, although it involves a blade. The first thing to do is to 'sit the boat' (ie. make the boat balanced). To do this, adjust your handle height: raise your hands to tilt the boat away from your rigger and lower to tilt towards it. We usually start off with 'trailing blades', where the spoon is feathered (parallel to the water) and skims the water's surface, reducing instability. At the catch, or the front, the blade should be square (perpendicular to the water) and you should be leaning out into the rigger. Drop the spoon into the water by releasing your hands' weight on the handle, and then continue the stroke as above, ensuring the handle follows a straight, horizontal line. At the finish, put pressure down on the handle so the spoon comes out of the water, then twist the handle so the spoon is feathered. Push the handle away and square the blade again when the handle is passing over the knees. Repeat!



# LAND TRAINING

Land training is any training which we don't do in a boat on the water. Aside from erging, we do a variety of other training which varies from term to term. Of course, it's great to take part in any other type of exercise which you enjoy to help your fitness.

**Erging** - An erg (or ergometer) is what we call a rowing machine. Seniors usually do 2 erg sessions a week to develop stamina and power. Novices tend to do a few sessions in novice term, focusing more on technique and doing more water sessions. We usually do 2 different types of work on the erg:

**UT2** - Stands for utilisation 2. This is aerobic training at a lower intensity for longer periods of time. Find a pace you could stay at for about an hour and stick to it!

**AT** - Stands for anaerobic threshold. This is a high intensity, faster-paced work.

- **Circuits** - This is the only land training novices are really encouraged to take part in. It usually involves a number of stations with a mixture of bodyweight and plyometric exercises such as squats, sit-ups and box jumps. You'll be in groups with both novices and seniors, so someone should know what they're doing! (There's usually an escapade to 'Spoons afterwards).
- **Weights** - We do weights to gain strength and power. We usually use lighter weights with higher reps as part of a weights circuit, including exercises such as bench press, squats and lat pull downs. We'll be running sessions on how to do weights safely when they become part of normal training.



As a cox, there is no obligation for you to attend land training sessions. That said, you are more than welcome to come along and join in either with the exercises or as moral support for your crew - they'll love you for it. If you're unsure about what to expect as a cox or what to do then just speak to Mireia or any of your LBCs for more information.

# RACE DAYS

## BEFORE

Before a race, you should get some basic information about it, such as the type of start and the distance. Someone (most likely one of the LBCs) will let you know when to arrive at the boathouse (ATBH) on the day. When you're told to arrive depends on the division time of your boat (i.e. which race your boat is racing in).

*Coxes may also have to attend a coxes meeting the week before the race explaining the rules.*

## ON THE DAY

On race days, we plan to arrive at the boathouse with plenty of time to spare. This gives us time to have a chat about the race plan, warm up on the ergs and pin race numbers on the bow seat and the cox. It also means we can get the boat out in plenty of time and make any final changes and checks to the setup.

Often, we then warm up on the water by rowing toward Jesus Lock before heading to marshalling. Marshalling is when crews which are racing in the next division wait at the car park and pull into the banks while the previous division takes place (so marshals know all crews are present and ready) before rowing up to the start. Crews members often bring a few snacks to eat during the marshalling phase for a pre-race sugar rush. Jelly Babies, Tangfastics and Malt Loaf are always big favourites. Don't worry if it feels like you don't know what you're doing - you'll always have a bank party and/or a coach right there with you!



Giorgio Divitini

As a cox, you should make sure that someone is getting your race numbers (usually a senior, but good to double-check). You can talk through the plan for the race with your crew and check with the coach/bank party where you will need to be marshalling.

# RACING

## TYPES OF RACE

There are three main types of races that you will take part in on the Cam:

- **Head Races:** A timed race over a set distance. Boats are set off about 30 seconds to 1 minute apart, with the aim of achieving the quickest time over the designated course.
- **Side by Side Races (or Regattas):** Fairly self-explanatory. Boats begin alongside one another and race to be the first to cross the finish line. Usually a knockout format.
- **Bumping Races:** Held over four days in Lent and Easter terms. There are several divisions in which boats start one and a half lengths apart. The aim is to catch the boat in front and (crucially!) bump them, to move up a place, before being bumped by the boat behind.

## RACING STARTS

There are two types of racing start:

- **Standing starts:** Crews start from stationary at a start line, at front stops with blades in the water. This start usually begins with short, powerful strokes at a high rate, before lengthening out and eventually settling into a rhythm. This is a start usually used in regattas and in bumps.
- **Rolling starts:** Crews start a race while moving. A crew will begin rowing at a point before the start line, and then usually take the rate up just before the start line, so they're going at their fastest as the timer starts, before eventually settling into a rhythm. This is a start often used for head races.

# NOVICE RACES

## Queen's Ergs ("QErgs")

This is one of the few races which takes place on an erg, or rowing machine. The aim is to get 8 rowers to each row 500m one after another, with 20s to change over, as fast as possible. There are prizes for the fastest team and for the fastest individual. Everyone gets a t-shirt for taking part.

Late Oct-  
TBC

## Winter Head

A predominant senior race of 2500m in a time-trial format with the crew with the fastest time announced at the end of all the races as the winners. We'll be entering senior-novice composites for the men's side and women's side which are great fun!

Nov 9th

## Emma Sprints

A relaxed race for which traditionally crews don some thematic fancy dress. Emma Sprints is a regatta style race, with crews racing side by side along the reach in a knockout format (the winner of each race progresses to the next round), with racing taking place over 500m. The start is a racing start.

Nov 24th

## Clare Novices

Clare Novices is another regatta which takes place in a knockout format over 800m along the reach; so apart from lacking fancy dress and being over a slightly longer course, it is essentially the same as Emma Sprints

Nov 30th

## Fairbairn's Cup

A 2.7km race from Jesus College Boathouse to almost the end of the reach. It takes place in a head race format, so all crews will row over the course for a time. After this race, you officially lose your status as a novice and become seniors! (by Cambridge standards at least).

Dec 5/6th



## TRAINING CAMP

Every year before the start of Lent term DCBC a 1 week training camp runs. These alternate between taking place abroad (usually in sunny Spain) and in Cambridge. Being in Cambridge has the benefits of flexible sessions, full access to boats, ergs, and the rowing tank. Training camp abroad has the benefits of being warmer and being a break from our normal rowing conditions.

This year DCBC's training camp will be on the Cam. The week provides an excellent mix of rowing and socialising, marked with the graduation of the 2023 novices into seniors!

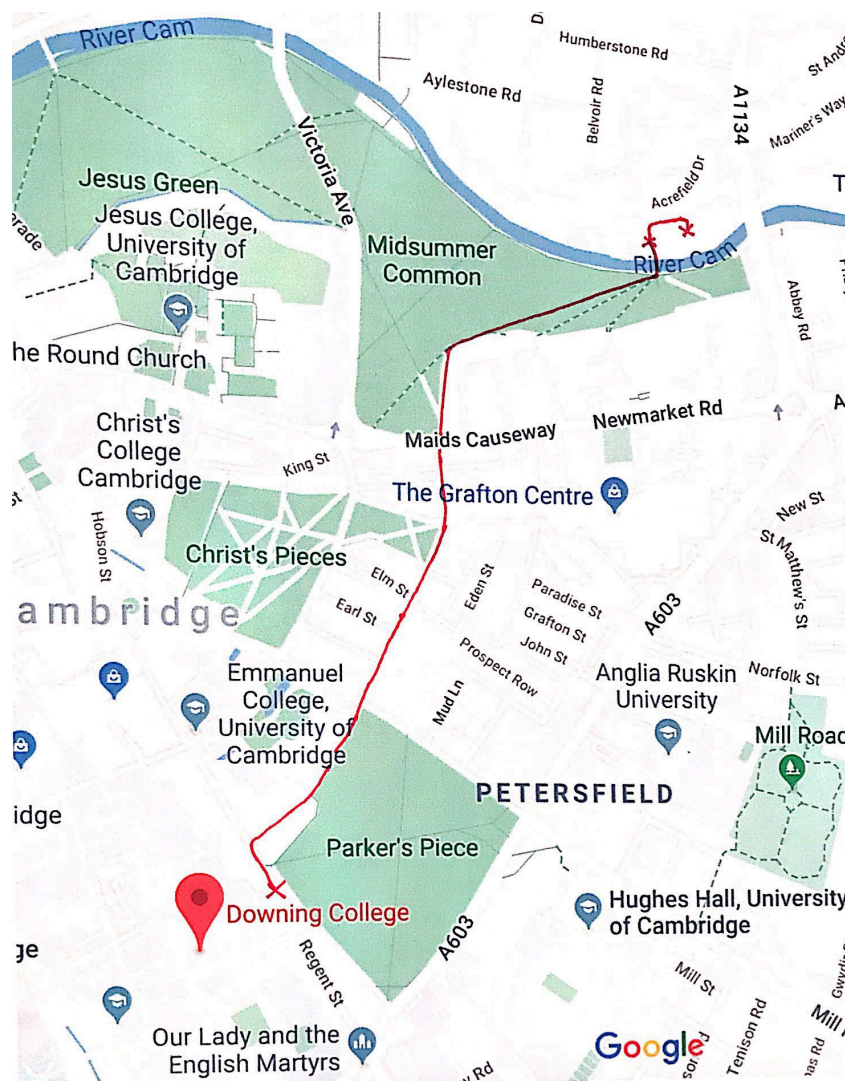
The sessions mix rowers of all abilities and experience to rapidly improve the skills of the newer rowers and keep the more experienced rowers on their toes. What results is a week of fun races and competitions that allow everyone to improve dramatically. Everyone will also get the chance to try out some smaller boats in the safety of knowing everyone else will be watching.

We play hard as well as training hard, so there will be plenty opportunity to socialise. Rowers of DCBC always talk about training camp when describing some of their best experiences at Cambridge so make sure not to miss out. More information about signing up for training camp will be published during term. In the meantime, if there are any questions, contact Katy at [captain@downingboatclub.co.uk](mailto:captain@downingboatclub.co.uk).

# GETTING TO THE BOATHOUSE

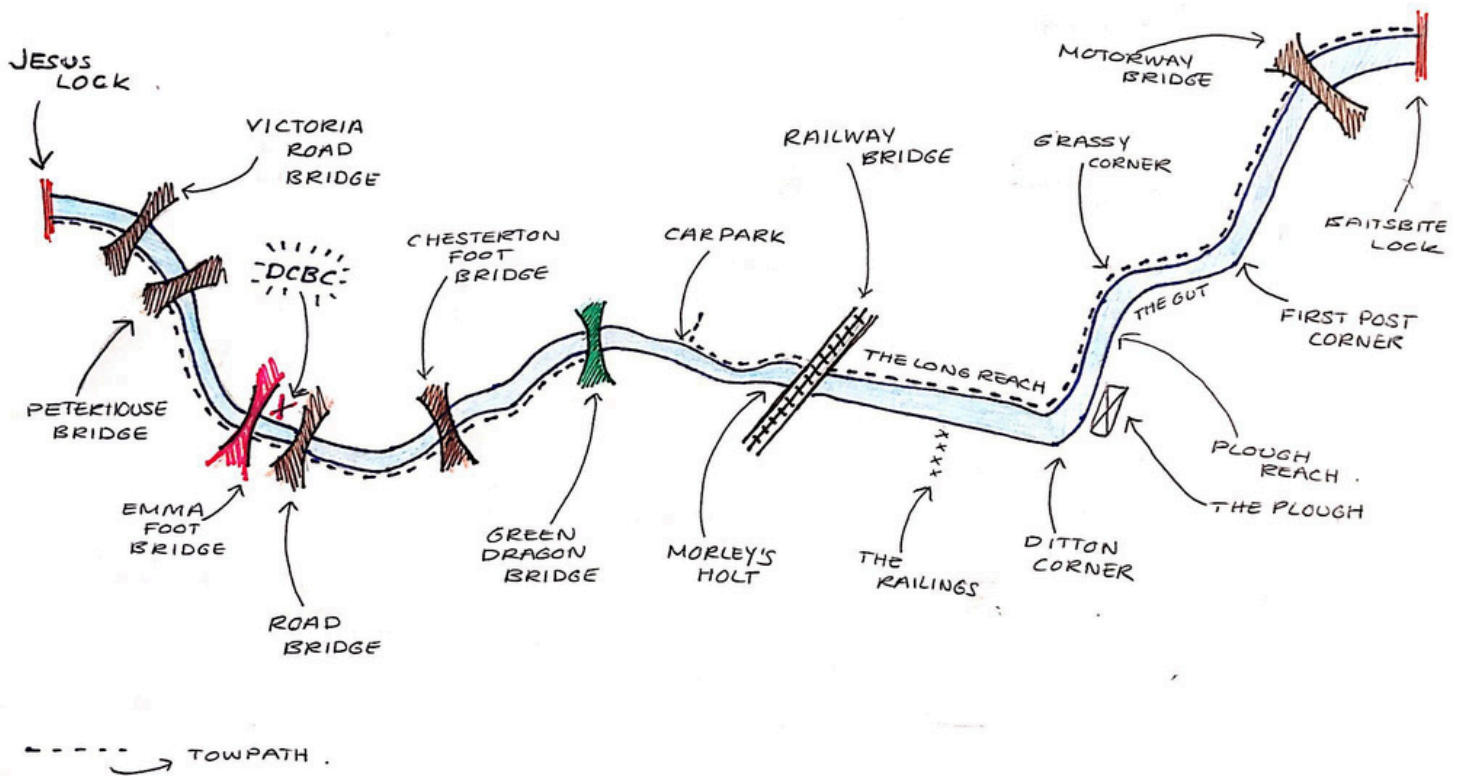
## How to Get There:

From Downing plodge, head towards Sainsbury's Local and turn right past Parker's Piece. Carry on straight along the road, past the Grafton Centre and cross the road at the traffic lights onto Midsummer Common. Keep right on the cycle path and cross the river at the magenta bridge. Turn right and the Boathouse is the first gate, the one with a Cambridge Rowing Tank logo on a black gate. (If there are any doubts, just ask an LBC!)



Most people cycle to the boathouse as it only takes 10 minutes. Walking takes about 20 minutes, but follows the same route. If you have any problems finding or getting into the boathouse then you can contact one of the LBCs. We'll be around to take you there on the taster days and for your first few sessions.

# THE RIVER CAM



This map outlines the key features and landmarks of the River Cam. You won't need to know them off by heart but, hopefully, it gives you some sense of what it will be like when you're out on the water. On most novice outings, you'll row between the boathouse and the top of the long reach although some weekends you'll be lucky enough to get further! Sprint races will mostly happen down the long reach too whilst Fairbairn's starts at Jesus Boathouse (near the Emma footbridge) and finishes at the railings.

*This map will hopefully be particularly helpful to coxes. You'll be taken on a bike tour of the river before your first outing, but might find it useful to refer back to this from time to time. Coaches will often use the bridges and landmarks as markers for starting and finishing exercises. That being said, people occasionally have different names for things so don't be afraid to ask if something sounds unfamiliar. Oh, and be sure to have a look where the finish line is before a race. In the chaos of a race, it's easy to forget where you're actually rowing to. You wouldn't want to make your rowers row more than necessary, or worse yet, less than necessary...*

# SOCIAL EVENTS

---

13th Oct

**Taster Day** - Come and see what DCBC is all about! There will be tours of the boathouse, the chance to get in a boat as well as free Pimms, doughnuts and t-shirts. What more could you want?

Date TBC

**Swap with Clare's novices** - a great chance to meet more novices from another college and have some fun! (A swap is a BYOB event where two groups or societies meet up)

2nd Nov

**Novice Formal** - Your first taste of a classic Boat Club Dinner (or BCD), which is one of the best things about the Boat Club! This one is subsidised for novices.

9th Nov

**Senior/ Novice Swap** - the seniors invite the novices out on a swap... This is a great way to get to know the seniors, and we promise we will look after you!

4th Dec

**Pizza Night** - quite self-explanatory, have some pizza and relax the night before Fairbairn's.

mid Jan

**Novice Graduation** - during the on-Cam training camp, novices graduate to become seniors!

As well as scheduled socials, expect lots of club brunches, Downing Bar nights post-races, crew meals before races, and more! We're a very social bunch so there will be lots of fun planned to keep you busy!



# LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

Life in Cambridge can be chaotic and overwhelming, especially in the first term and when you're getting up early to row. Looking after yourself is really important - there's no point dashing around trying to do everything only to burn yourself out! While it's important to have fun, also listen to your body. You only have so many hours in a day and so much energy, and while we hope you'll be able to fit rowing into that, your health and mental wellbeing is the most important thing. If you ever have any questions about your health, you can talk to us or the college nurse is always available for a chat (01223 334817). There's the Lensfield Road GP surgery if you think it's more serious.

## SLEEP

Make sure you get a sufficient amount of sleep. With early morning outings and lots of work, it's very easy to not get enough. If you're not busy, try and get a few slightly earlier nights, or you may find naps become very useful!



## NUTRITION

Everyone finds it hard to cook cheaply and healthily at uni, and a busy schedule makes it very tempting to keep going for fast food. But try not to make it every night, as it's not the best fuel for your body. Try to cook a few meals a week, fitting in as many vegetables as possible, or replacing a few cookies with fruit. And remember to get some protein to repair the muscles you are building.

## WATER

Drink lots of it! In any circumstance, you should keep hydrated, but this is especially important when doing sport - you should drink around an extra litre for each hour of exercise. Water is one of the most important things to consider for your health. Becoming dehydrated is a serious concern, especially as it gets warmer toward Easter term. A good idea is to always bring a water bottle with you on an outing.

## STRETCHING

Stretching is very important to maintain flexibility and to reduce muscle soreness after exercise. We'd recommend stretching arms, shoulders, hamstrings, quads, glutes and calves especially. If you're not sure about stretches for a certain muscle group then either ask one of us or google often has some good suggestions for stretches. We also stretch as a crew before and after sessions so you can take ideas from this. Dynamic stretches such as leg swings are good for before a session and static stretches for after.



**Your health and happiness are really important to us as LBCs. If you're worried about anything, big or small, then please don't hesitate to contact us and we'll do our best to help you out or get you in touch with someone who can!**

# FAQs

---

**The only things I know about rowing are from watching the boat race on the TV - will I be able to pick it up from scratch?** Every year a mix of people join DCBC. Some are already sporty while others are looking to try something totally new. The great thing about rowing is that, with so many different aspects to it, most people will have a knack for some part of it – be it power, technique or fitness. A lot of people find themselves totally hooked on the team atmosphere, the getting fit or the being outdoors and away from the books.

**What does a cox do?** A cox (or coxswain) is the only person in the boat facing forwards and is therefore responsible for checking the water is clear. Coxes are also in charge of the boat's steering mechanism, the rudder, and use this to navigate the boat. Using their microphone, which is connected to speakers inside the boat, they are able to communicate with the rowers and explain how they can improve, often relaying messages from a coach on the bank and motivating them to give all they've got!

**I have previous rowing experience, am I still a novice?**

Let us LBCs know and drop the Men's or Women's Captain, Thomas Masding (men@downingboatclub.co.uk) and Holly Thompson (women@downingboatclub.co.uk), respectively, a line. They will help you to decide what the best choice for you is. It's not strange for there be a couple of people each year who join the senior squad straight away.

**What should I wear to row/cox?** All you really need is usual sports kit and some extra layers for when the weather gets colder. A good pair of trainers is also good for erging or for land training. Slides or flip flops can also be useful for slipping in and out of when getting in and out of the boat, and they're easy to put in the bottom of the boat. Coxes will obviously move around a lot less so take plenty of layers (including gloves) in the winter. Waterproof coats are often good idea and in the summer you'll need sunglasses and suncream!

**How much does it cost to row?** Your first term is completely free, and after that it is £15 per term, which goes onto your college bill. This includes use of all our facilities and coaching.

**What does a typical week look like for a novice? How much will I actually have to do?**

Novices usually have 2 outings a week along with 1 tank session. Every week, you'll also alternate between an erg session and a weights session. Some of the top novice boats may have more outings later in term. But if you're really keen to do more, there are often opportunities to sub into other boats too, which is always a great way to improve!



**Not answered your question?** We are happy to answer any questions, no matter how small or silly they seem! Get in touch with us via email at [lbcs@downingboatclub.co.uk](mailto:lbcs@downingboatclub.co.uk)

# GLOSSARY

---

*Rowing can sometimes seem to have a whole different language, but it's simple once you get going.*

**ATBH** "At the boathouse". Accompanied by a time you should arrive at the boathouse.

**Bank Party** The people who coach and support you from the towpath during a race.

**BCD (Boat Club Dinner)** A big dinner, usually at the end of term where we all come together to celebrate. There is a drinks reception, songs, speeches, and general chaos, followed by some of us making our way to Mash!

**Blades** What you are awarded when you make a bump on all 4 days of the bumps competition.

**Boatie** Anyone who rows or coxes.

**Bumps** Races held over four days in Lent and May terms in which each boat attempts to catch and bump the one in front while avoiding being bumped by the boat chasing them

**Bump** The act of hitting the boat in front or being hit by the boat behind in the bumps races

**Catch a Crab** A rowing error where the rower is unable to remove or release the blade from the water. The blade acts as a brake on the boat until it is removed from the water.

**CUBC/CUCBC** Cambridge University Boat Club (puts forward the Boat Race crew)/ Cambridge University Combined Boat Clubs (regulates college rowing)

**Easy There** Stop rowing at the arms away position with blades feathered above the water

## **Green/Yellow/Red flag**

Safety system organised by CUCBC in response to bad weather. Only senior crews can row on a yellow flag. Nobody can row on a red flag.

## **Novice**

Someone who has never rowed before and is in the process of learning to row.

## **Hold it Up**

Call for an emergency stop. Place blades square in the water.

## **OTE**

"On the Ergs", often following a time to indicate when you should be dressed and on the erg ready to warm up before an outing

## **Over Bump**

In Lents/May Bumps. A bump on the boat which started at least three boats in front, occurring after the boats in between have stopped after having bumped or been bumped.

## **Piece**

A training term to indicate a section rowed at full pressure and race rating. The distance for a piece will be indicated by the coach.

## **Rate**

The number of strokes being taken per minute.

## **Segreants/Segs**

The alumni of DCBC. They often come back to coach or for the BCDs. Lots of them attend our annual Segreants Day at the start of Easter term where student and alumni crews race the Head of the Cam, followed by a big BCD. Rumour has it they can be convinced to buy you drinks.

## **Senior**

A rower who has completed novice term and raced in Novice Fairbairns.

## **Scull**

A boat for one person in which an oar is held in each hand

## **Steady State**

Rowing at low rate but high pressure. Often between rates 19 and 22

## Spoons

What you receive when you are bumped on all four opportunities during a set of bumps races

## Sweep

Rowing in which each person has one oar on one side of the boat

## Take the Run

Stops the boat more slowly than holding it up by placing the blades in the water at a 45 degree angle



# GET IN TOUCH & GET INVOLVED

---

**Website:** <https://downingboatclub.co.uk/>

**Facebook:** Downing College Boat Club

**Twitter:** @DowningBoatClub

**Instagram:** @downinglbc & @downingboatclub

**Email:** [lbc@downingboatclub.co.uk](mailto:lbc@downingboatclub.co.uk)