

# LeanderNews



The Leander Club Newsletter

Summer 2009

## Henley 2009 — welcome to our Heroes!



First eight at 2009 Tideway Head

Henley Royal Regatta 2009 promises to be a special occasion for Leander Club, as it will be the first opportunity for most of our members to welcome back our Olympic heroes, racing here on Henley's home water for the first time since 2007. As the attention of the rowing world turns towards London 2012, this season will be a strong pointer to potential Olympic success; we also hope it will be a demonstration of the Leander squad's strength in depth as we build for the future. Our Chairman and Captain look forward to the Regatta, where we hope to see all our members at the club to support our crews.

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Libby Henshilwood



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A true Leander family

## Henley 2009 – welcome to our Heroes!

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### The Regatta

Henley 2009 will see a number of innovations, both in terms of our own Regatta installations and in the racing programme itself. Firstly we have taken note of members' feedback and have increased the extent of the covered areas outside the marquee. Given the variable weather during the past two Regattas, we want to provide additional shelter for members and their guests and also to reduce overcrowding in the clubhouse hallways during the occasional downpour. It may well be that this step merely guarantees continuous sunshine, in which case it will still have been a very worthwhile investment!

A second innovation is the creation of a large, raised glass-fronted 'Riverview Bar' at the front of the marquee. This, together with a surrounding terrace will provide a new vantage point over the river and boating areas and will be the ideal spot to soak up the busy Regatta atmosphere. There will be a wider range of food available in the Bar, particularly for early evening snacks. Meanwhile, our luncheon and afternoon tea arrangements are broadly the same and member bookings are coming in fast; early booking is strongly advised. Please note that Regatta Sunday has a new, earlier timetable. The first race will be at 11.30pm, the lunch interval is from 1pm to 2.30pm and prize giving is at 4.30pm. Thereafter it will be back to Leander, where we will be open for food and drink until mid evening.

Among a number of other details, we have a new Regatta Shop layout. One area will be for members and guests only, selling a

full range of items, including club regalia; meanwhile the public will be able to buy general items via a separate entrance. We have a new range of goods ready for the Regatta, including plenty of Leander Hippos!

The evening of Saturday 4th July sees another innovation – an Independence Day dinner and dance when we hope to be joined by as many as possible of the American competitors and their supporters, as well as our regular Saturday partygoers! At the time of writing it appears there will, after all, be some form of Fireworks this year. Please book your tickets via the Office.

Finally, for those members with business connections, there are still some places for corporate entertaining, these too are filling up. Our corporate hospitality packages are competitively priced and our Olympic connections make Leander a very appropriate venue in these uncertain times. All in all, we believe 2009 will be a special year to enjoy Henley Royal Regatta at Leander – and that is even before we consider the rowing!

Nick Aitchison **Chairman**

### The Rowing

Winning five trophies at the Regatta last year was an outstanding Club performance and this summer's HRR looks set to be just as enthralling for Leander. In the Club events our development group are looking as strong as ever and will focus on defending the Ladies Plate and challenging for the Visitors and Club Quads. Joining forces with them will be our

Internationals, back on duty and raring to go after last summer's enforced absence. Not only will this be the first opportunity for members to see our Olympians race since Beijing but also the first chance to get a feel for the early form as new crews are being shaped for London 2012.

Having missed out on Henley last summer due to Olympic training camps, the Club's International athletes will be relishing the prospect of racing here again. Henley is like no other race we do and in addition to all its unique charm and challenges there is also the added boost for us that we will be racing in Club colours, boating from our own Clubhouse, competing on our home water and all of this backed up by the fantastic support we always get from members.

That support will be savoured even more this year. As most of the country drifts back into Olympic no-man's land the next few years can be a fairly lonely place for



**An impression of the 2009 Regatta at Leander**





International rowers until we come back onto the national radar for the final run in to the next Games. It is especially at these times that the enduring support we get from the Club is so important to us. Henley is one of the best opportunities we get to come into contact with this support and it really gives us a massive lift not just for the Regatta but also for the long journey to the Olympics.

After a good winter's training and a successful trial process there will once again be a large representation of Leander athletes at world level. Steve Rowbotham and Matt Wells are teaming up again in their Olympic medal winning double in now their fourth season together and will

be an exciting prospect for the summer. Matt Langridge, Ric Egington, Alex Partridge and Mark Banks from last summer's silver medal eight have all moved over to the four and this successful formula should go fast again whilst Pete Reed and Andy Hodge (Molesey) take their already lightening quick pair for its international debut.

Elsewhere in the men's team Marcus Bateman has switched to sculling and joins the quad, James Orme is back in the senior team in the eight and it's good to see that Ian Lawson, after a competitive performance at final trials, is back in contention for the sculling team. In the lightweights Paul Mattick steps into the double for Mark Hunter, who has been taking time out and coaching at UCLA, and Chris Bartley is in the four.

Anna Bebbington will be back in the sculling team after her Beijing bronze in either the quad or the double and joined this year by Katie Greves from last summer's eight. Lou Reeve has continued her Beijing momentum and having won her final trials will start by racing both the pair and eight.

Alongside all this continuity of strength Leander has once again proved its credentials to develop athletes to the highest level. It has been great to see Tommy Burton, Tom Wilkinson and Phelan Hill in the eight and Jo Cook in the women's eight all have the years of dedicated training rewarded as they make their breakthrough into the senior team. Meanwhile Will Satch and Jono Clegg between them brought home three Golds and two Silvers from the Australian Youth Olympics in January and the Club is set to have up to ten athletes at this summer's U23s World Championships. Once again strong results at the Eights' Heads confirmed the depth of strength we have at the Club with a solid second place in the Women's Head and in the Men's three boats in the top ten and our Freshers' novice eight finishing 67th. It is hugely frustrating that our Freshers have been barred from competing in the Thames Cup and, while we hope the situation can be resolved soon, this year they will focus on the US National Championships.

All in all it promises to be a fascinating and successful Regatta for Leander. For the first time in a long time I will be cheering the Club on from the bank - hope to see you there!

Steve Williams **OBE Captain**

Jo Cook



Second eight at Tideway Head



## Riding the storm

With the successes of 2008 now behind us, our attention has turned to the four year London Olympiad, culminating in the Olympic Regatta at Dorney Lake, Eton in August 2012. Our rowing strategy is in place and morale and expectations are equally high.

However, as you would expect, your Committee is concerned about the current economic situation and its impact on the Club and its mid term plans. In the last newsletter I wrote of 'rough water ahead' and that prediction is now a reality. The second half of 2008 saw a marked reduction in the level of corporate business that we were able to attract to the Clubhouse, business which is so important to our overall financial health. That downturn, coupled with a precautionary write down of the value of some of our Shop stocks, led to a loss for the 2008 financial year.

We have set ourselves a cautious budget for 2009, and at the time of writing we are performing more or less in line with plan. Nonetheless, if we are to maintain planned levels of financial support to our rowing programme, we anticipate incurring a further loss this year. It is important that members are aware of the situation and the steps we are taking to ride out the current economic difficulties, which we anticipate will continue into 2010.

Firstly we have looked hard at our costs, both on and off the water. As part of this process we have, with great regret, placed a temporary freeze on all staff wages and salaries; additionally we have identified a



number of administrative and operational cost savings, although we were already running a relatively tight ship. We have also managed to trim some items from this year's rowing budget, which had already been set slightly below 2008 levels. We have minimised our capital expenditure, not least to preserve our relatively scarce cash reserves and this means that a number of rowing equipment purchases have been shelved, though thanks to our rolling renewals programme over recent years, our fleet is broadly in good shape. Similarly our Clubhouse is in sound repair, enabling us to place a moratorium on major expenditure, though we do face some significant outlays in the coming years.

Secondly, despite the recession, we have been determined to maintain and improve our Clubhouse standards and service levels for members. I am delighted to report that member usage is on the up this year and I would like to thank all those of you who

make a point of visiting and supporting the Club whenever the opportunity arises. The arrival of Scott McRae, our new chef, together with new menus with a focus on variety and good value, has played its part and there have also been a number of imaginative and well supported member events. Please do all you can to support the Club in this way, not least by using our attractive bedrooms, for which a number of weekend deals are available. The theme of good value is underlined by the fact that the proposed subscription increase for 2010 is really very modest.

Thirdly, I am pleased to report that our membership numbers continue to rise and that we have now topped the 3,400 mark, a rise of well over 10% since 2003. At a time when many other Clubs are facing declining numbers, this is most encouraging. My thanks go to all of you who continue to introduce new members, and particularly to our 'membership scouts'. Credit for this impressive performance must also go to Libby Henshilwood who chairs our Membership Development Group. I am delighted that Libby will be standing for election as Hon Secretary at this year's AGM.

As you will read elsewhere, we have reviewed and revised our Regatta installations this year. The 'double-decker' marquee that has been used for the past three years is undeniably impressive but has high installation costs. Anticipating an inevitable downturn in the level of corporate bookings, we have decided to introduce a new format this year which we believe members will welcome.



The emphasis has been on retaining the general ambience (including air-conditioning) but introducing some innovations that our members will enjoy. These include a raised 'Riverview Bar' which we think has the potential to become a favorite rendezvous, although we will undertake a full review of members' views and operational issues before we settle upon the format for 2010.

We have also taken steps to seek additional external support for our rowing programme and there are some

encouraging discussions in hand with potential sponsors. I would encourage members with connections that might yield further opportunities to contact me at the club. We are also most grateful to those members who have supported our 2012 Appeal and I do ask those of you who have not yet contributed to consider doing so. 2012 represents the most exciting challenge in our 191 year history and we need your help. However, post-2012 there will no doubt be fewer opportunities to gain external support, and so we will be undertaking a further review of our longer term finance needs

during this summer.

Finally, on behalf of all our members, I thank our loyal staff for their exceptional efforts in these testing times. In my role, I am well placed to observe the exceptional commitment to Leander displayed by our staff, crews and membership alike. While that continues, we have nothing to fear!

*Corpus Leandri spes mea*

Nick Aitchison

Chairman

## In Memoriam

We have been saddened in recent months to receive news of the deaths of a number of loyal members, including David Parry, Sid Rand and Jock Fletcher-Campbell.

David Parry rowed with distinction for Walton, Molesey and Tideway Scullers. He was a Great Britain International, a Henley Steward, ARA Selector and a Leander member for more than 40 years. A former member of the Stock Exchange Council, David was a Freeman of the Company of Watermen and Lightermen.

Sid Rand competed in the Double Sculls at the 1956 Melbourne Olympics and also in the Single Sculls at Rome in 1960. A true 'towpath character', Sid remained involved with rowing throughout his life. A stalwart of Upper Thames RC, he was also a successful coach of Leander crews. His son Will won at Henley Royal Regatta, rowing in Leander colours.

Jock Fletcher-Campbell, a well-loved and respected Oxfordshire clergyman, was Leander's oldest and longest-serving member and thus our 'Father of the House'. Educated at Radley and Magdalen College Oxford, he enjoyed considerable success rowing for Magdalene crews in the early 1930s. The mantle of 'Father of the House' has now passed to George Moody.



## Inside the Leander squad ~ as

While the majority of Leander members have rowed at a high level in the past, for many of us that experience was more years back than we care to admit. Over the years there have been many advances in training, technique, equipment and coaching and that trend continues. In the next few issues we will be going behind the scenes to look at the Leander squad today and to explore some of the latest developments that are contributing to our present day success. To start us off, Rob Dauncey, High Performance Coach, looks at the topic of Biomechanics and measuring good technique. The squad has recently taken delivery of new telemetry equipment, made possible by some very generous recent donations to support our rowing efforts as we approach 2012.

**"So, you think you have got great technique?  
Well, now we can tell!"**

Over the years, most rowers have believed they have fantastic rowing technique, equal or better than their crewmates – even though their coaches probably disagreed! Here at Leander we are now finally in a position to answer the question with some authority, thanks to the arrival of new 'state of the art' telemetry equipment, designed to measure and report on an individual's or crew's technique, length of stroke and effective power. Just as with a Formula 1 racing car, where telemetry has long been a vital tool, the new system provides feedback on a number of different aspects of the rowing stroke, using sophisticated telemetry software.

The principle component of the system is a small but sophisticated sensor that is built into the rowing gate; this sensor measures the force and angle applied by the oar to the pin. In addition there is a boat motion sensor which uses a tiny submerged impeller to measure speed,

boat acceleration, plus 'check factor' (the degree to which the run of the boat is curtailed during the stroke cycle) and crew body movement. All the data received is recorded onto a logger which is mounted in the boat. This data is then downloaded onto a PC, which allows the coach and the crew to view and analyse the data and to generate individual reports for each rower. Individuals can then be coached to correct faults and the crew as a whole to achieve better cohesion during the application of power.

Perhaps the most interesting tool in the system is the video synchronisation unit which allows video footage of the athlete to be aligned with the data from the logger. With this tool the coach can show the athlete not only what force and angles are being produced but, with the help of the video, to show exactly how the athlete is making and applying those forces and angles. Because each gate in the boat is being monitored, the system

allows not only the measurement of an individual rower's stroke, but also allows comparisons within the crew as a whole.

Obviously there are many other ways to measure individual effectiveness, including performance in pairs or sculling boats and on ergometers, but finally we have the technology to assess the actual application of power in the boat, on the water. While it does not replace the need for constant observation and attention by coach and athlete alike, the new equipment is an important step forward in searching for those precious couple of extra centimetres per stroke that can make the difference between winning and losing.

An example of what can be viewed is shown in the graphs on page 7, which shows a coxless four where the catches and drive connection are not quite together, the maximum power in the middle of the stroke is, critically, not being delivered at the same time and the finishes are also not together. Overall, not a pretty picture!

As the logger monitors every stroke during an outing it is possible to see the differences in power delivery between low and high rate paddling and power being delivered each stroke. The system gives a host of other information such as stroke length, the angle of the blade at the catch and finish and the boat acceleration and speed each stroke generates.

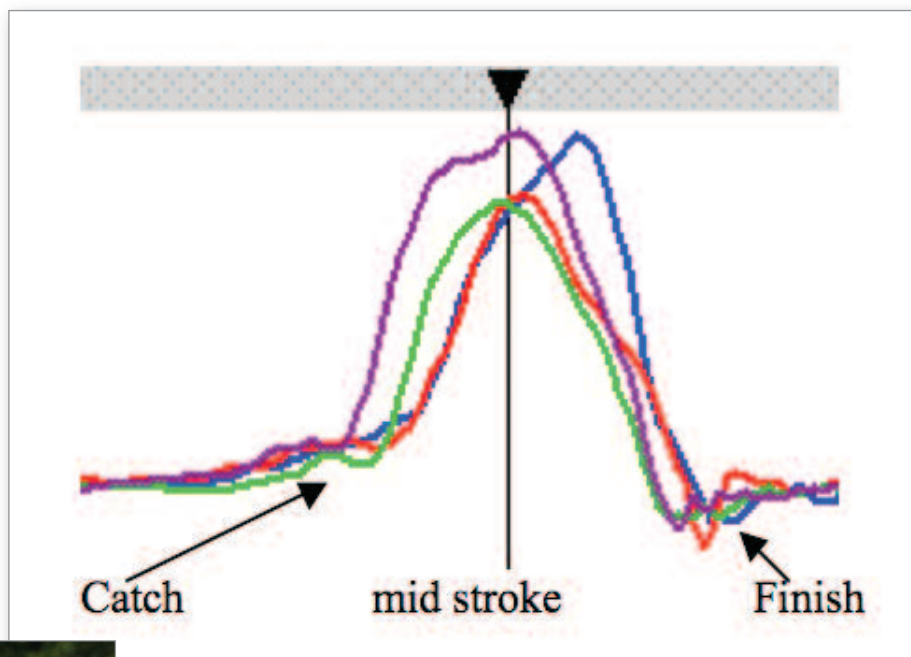
The system has already made a significant impact on rowers and coaches alike. During the club's January training camp



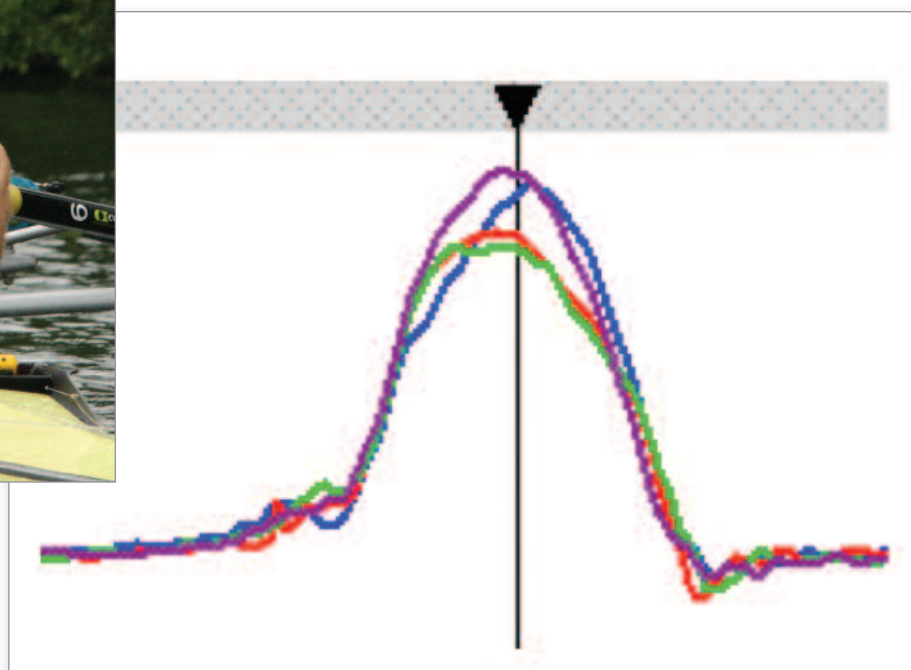


## Assessing rowing technique

in Banyoles, Spain every athlete had the opportunity to train with the system on their boat. It has provided the coaches with another 'string' to the coaching 'bow' and the athletes are very enthusiastic about the system, for its detail, accuracy and simplicity. This year's Henley Royal Regatta crews will enter their respective events having been analysed and dissected by this new and innovative system. It will help to maintain and improve the success of Leander crews for years to come.



Example: crew out of phase



Example: 'getting it right'

## Libby Henshilwood

Should Elizabeth Henshilwood be elected to succeed David Latham OBE as Hon Secretary of Leander Club at the AGM in June, she will become the first woman in Leander's history to serve as an Officer of the Club. Libby has been no stranger to trailblazing over the past fifteen years and already has a number of 'firsts' to her name in the rowing world. Libby's notable progress began in 1993 when she represented Great Britain in the women's pairs event at the World Junior Championships. In winning the bronze medal, Libby and her partner became the first ever British junior women to win a medal at that level, a break-through that had been many years in the making.

Moving into the GB senior team, Libby went a step further in 1997, racing as a member of the British women's coxless four. That crew won the gold medal and thus became Britain's first ever women's senior world rowing champions, a success that also earned the crew the title of Sunday Times Team Sportswomen of the Year. For good measure Libby was also a member of the first British women's eight to win a World Championships medal – a bronze which to this day has not been bettered. Back on home water, Libby was part of the GB crew that competed in the first ever Women's Eights event at Henley Royal Regatta (1998) when they were beaten in the final by the USA by just two feet. Undeterred, Libby achieved her goal of a Henley Royal Regatta medal by winning the Remenham Cup in 2002.



Libby, who lives and works in Henley, has served on the Leander Committee since 2003 and has chaired the Membership Development Group for the past three years. In this role she has successfully encouraged membership proposals from a widening range of men and women who have competed at high level or served the sport with distinction – as well as more local Associate membership candidates. Leander membership is now some 10% higher than in 2003, and continues to grow. We look forward to Libby's continuing contribution to the club.

Di Binley Member

## Pink Hippo Club

The raison d'être for the Pink Hippo Club is to provide funding to assist in the purchase of boats and equipment. At the end of 2008 a sum of £5,700 went towards the purchase of new pair. If you are not a member then please print off a form from the website or call in at the office – only £12 per ticket per annum with two draws a year.

Summer 2009 – First Prize £300: C W Crowther

Second Prize £200: R J W Sinnott Third Prize £100: R Treharne-Jones

If you are not a member why not join now? [www.leander.co.uk/hippofprm.htm](http://www.leander.co.uk/hippofprm.htm)





## General Manager's Notes

As you will have read it has been a challenging start to 2009, primarily because of the reduction in the level of corporate trading activity we have previously enjoyed at Leander. We predicted such a situation in the latter part of 2008 and this has given us the planning time to respond with reasonable effect to avert the most pessimistic budget predictions. From my perspective, all sectors of the Club have played their part by reacting positively to this new reality.

The staff have willingly accepted the need to achieve 'more with less' and to examine established practices and find new economies. They have once again confirmed that they are a thoroughly professional and dedicated team. We receive many letters from members following their visits to the Club and I am heartened by the positive comments concerning every aspect of the hospitality they receive. My personal thanks go to the Office team, Front of House staff, the Chef and his team and not forgetting the cleaners who keep the Clubhouse spotless. All these people have a real passion for Leander and what it stands for. We are all indebted to them.

Despite economic woes, I am pleased to see that our Members have been attending in greater numbers. General dining is on the increase, members' bedroom usage is up; most events are well supported and 2009 Regatta member bookings are strong. Support of the 2012 Leander Appeal continues to flow in and new members are being proposed at an impressive rate.

I sit on our various sub-committees and development groups - Finance and Management, Long-Term Finance, Rowing Management, Membership Development and Events. From that vantage point I can tell you that the volunteer members of these Committees do a vital job; indeed they do much of the spadework that drives the Club's main functions. Their passion for Leander Club is impressive.

It is heartening to see how everyone in the Club is responding in such a positive way to the financial challenges that face us. Corpus Leandri spes mea! I think we have every right to put our trust in the body of Leander.



Paul Budd OBE General Manager



## SATURDAY 4th JULY

We will be celebrating Independence Day in style at the Regatta with a Dinner and Dance to which we will welcome members, guests, American crews and their supporters. Dinner and dancing to a Dixie Band, with bar extension to midnight. Tickets (£47.50 per head) may be booked through your Regatta Order book or via the Leander office.

## Our Sporting Life

As part of the build-up to the London 2012 Olympics, a major initiative, entitled 'Our Sporting Life', was launched at Lord's cricket ground in February. Henley's River and Rowing Museum is playing a leading role in this project, which is supported by the British Olympic Association, and which seeks to reveal the sporting memories, heroes, objects, photographs and experiences that have inspired our nation over the years. Paul Mains, CEO of The River and Rowing Museum (and Leander member) has been a driving force behind this initiative.

At the launch, more than thirty sports produced examples of their own heritage, items which will form part of a series of events and exhibitions around the

country, celebrating Britain's contribution to sport. Among the item on display was a blade used by Leander's 1908 Olympic gold medal eight. Nick Aitchison, Chairman, said "I am delighted that our club has been involved at the very start of this exciting project and we look forward to playing our part in the future".

'Our Sporting Life' will culminate in a major exhibition of sporting heritage in London during the Summer of 2012; the project will also be in evidence at this year's Henley Royal Regatta, at the River and Rowing Museum's display near the entrance to the Stewards' Enclosure.

For more information please see

[www.oursportinglife.co.uk](http://www.oursportinglife.co.uk)



Nick Aitchison with the precious 1908 blade

## The Leander 2012 Appeal

The 2012 London Olympics are a once in a lifetime opportunity for everyone connected with Leander Club. Our experience and track record of success at the highest levels means we are very well placed to help ensure British Rowing excels on home water.

However, additional funds are urgently needed to support our athletes with the necessary world-class coaching, equipment and training facilities. We have already had a very encouraging response from many members but do ask those who have yet to donate to consider doing so. The necessary forms and Appeal details can be downloaded from the Leander Club website, or obtained via the Office.



Leander members Lord Moynihhan (Chairman, BOA), Ross Hunter and Richard Goddard at the launch.



# The Graves – a true Leander family!

Leander Club is proud that close to ten percent of its membership are Overseas Members, the largest grouping being our American members. One of them is Harry Graves, a member of the victorious Trinity Hartford crew that won the Ladies Plate at Henley Royal Regatta in 1976, breaking the course record. Since then Harry has been absolutely sure about two things: that Rowing is his sport and that Henley is the most famous rowing venue in the world. A Life Member of Leander Club and member of the Steward's Enclosure, Harry has made regular Henley trips over the years. He has retained strong links with the sport, including serving as President of the Minneapolis Rowing Club, coaching and as a Board member of the USA Rowing Foundation.

The Graves family link with Leander has deepened further over the years. In the early 1990s, Harry came to the UK on assignment, bringing with him his wife and young sons. On arrival, their accommodation was not yet ready and so the family moved into Leander Club for a period of six weeks. The boys attended an American school at nearby Egham and Harry took the opportunity to scull regularly on the Henley reach. The Leander staff enjoyed having three little boys racing around the club and when the time came for them to depart, told them "we will see you back in ten years, racing at the Regatta".

That prediction came true when all three boys first competed at Henley, with Thomas in the Britannia Cup and Peter and John, still schoolboys, in the Princess Elizabeth. Since then the Graves family has competed at Henley each year. 2005 saw

Thomas and Peter, at bow and stroke respectively, win the Temple Challenge Cup for Trinity Hartford, twenty nine years after their father had won the Ladies Plate for the same college. This feat was the first instance of overseas winners from the same family spanning two generations. And in 2008, the Graves boys all reached their Henley finals - John in the Temple and Thomas and Peter in the Double Sculls.

The boys have now joined their father as members of Leander. However they are not the only family members to carry the family banner – Harry's wife Lynne, formerly an expert skier, became a successful sculler with a top ten Head of the Charles placing to her credit and is now a volunteer coach and rowing administrator. Thus, the Graves love affair with the sport, with Henley and with Leander Club continues yet more strongly.



The First Day of School in England: John, Peter, and Thomas Graves



Pre-Regatta Dinner at Leander 2008: Peter, Thomas, Harry and John Graves



## Young Leander

Despite the current focus on London 2012, Leander also has its eyes firmly on the longer term. We have been delighted by the successes of our younger athletes so far this year, including gold medals for Will Satch and Jonno Clegg at the Australian Youth Olympics in Sydney in January. There was also a very strong showing by our men and women athletes within the GB Under 23 team at Essen Regatta in May. There, Ray Poulter, Tom Clark and Dave Bell (all members of the



Luke Moon

young Leander eight that won the 2008 Thames Challenge Cup) took gold in the Under 23 eights, underlining our ongoing contribution to the future of men's heavyweight rowing in this country.

One of our youngest ever squad members is Luke Moon, who shows exceptional promise as a sculler. Despite living in Kent, Luke spends as much time as possible at Leander or at the GB training centre at Caversham, where he trains with the national junior squad. His sister Hannah also trains at Leander. Luke recently won the Under-16 sculling title at the National Schools Regatta by an impressive seven second margin. Not content with one medal, he also won silver at Under-17 level at the same event.

Luke now hopes to emulate the success of other national junior title winners, who have gone on to greater glory. These include Leander athletes Mark Hunter (2008 Olympic gold), who won the National Schools Under-16 sculls in 1994 as well as Matt Langridge and Matt Wells, both former World Junior sculling Champions who also won medals in Beijing.

## Annual Subscription for 2010

The proposed Leander Club subscriptions for 2010 will be as follows:

Ordinary & Associate Members £230 Overseas Members £115

Ordinary Members under 30 £50 (*including Overseas Ordinary members under 30*)

*The ARA's annual levy (£5.20 in 2009) will be added.*

A joining fee equal to one year's subscription for that category is applied but is waived for Ordinary Members under 30.

There is no subsequent joining fee payable by existing Members on reaching the age of 30.

Spouse Membership is available at half the full subscription rate (with no joining fee).

Subscriptions are payable by Direct Debit on 1st January each year.

Pictures Courtesy Robert Treharne Jones

