



## **Beccles Rowing Club – Cambridge Autumn Regatta Report (07/09/2008)**

### **Juniors fly the Flag for Beccles**

The rapidly-growing Junior section of Beccles Rowing Club was very much at the forefront of an incident-packed day's racing at the Cambridge Autumn Regatta on Sunday.

Some impressive maiden performances were the highlight of an extraordinary day in which racing was controversially abandoned before the finals of the day were even raced.

The dramatic late afternoon lightning storms could do nothing to cloud some exciting performances from new club members, who showed considerable promise and ambition throughout an exciting programme for Beccles Rowing Club.

Charley Earl and Will Loftus initiated proceedings for BRC with their first ever race. The duo competed in the Men's Novice Double against an experienced crew from Norwich Union Club. They rowed strongly and steered an excellent course to lose narrowly by just over a length, but showed more than enough to indicate a bright future lies ahead for the crew.

Popular Women's Novice Double Rebecca Banham and Midge Beedham were up next and had an eventful first round. Their opponents Weybridge from Surrey rowed into their lane for much of the race and a re-run was ordered, rather than awarding the victory to Beccles. This was controversial and Weybridge would ironically have likely been disqualified had the BRC duo not taken honest evasive action to avoid a collision during the race. In the re-race Midge and Rebecca missed out by a length after finding their pace in the latter stages of the race.

James Gilbert performed superbly in his inaugural race in the Men's Novice Single despite further start-line controversy. His first round opponent failed to show at the start line and James was duly awarded a row-over to the next round. This was surprisingly over-ruled later in the day and a rushed re-race saw Gilbert row terrifically against a strong rower from Northampton, who eventually scraped home by a length. Gilbert's performance impressed onlookers and he seems sure to have a very bright future.

The last boat to race was the Beccles Mixed Four who rowed up a level at Senior Four. The strong crew consisted of veterans Rebecca Haste, Liz Beedham, Mark Taylor and the freshly-sheared Jake Beale. The determined crew easily saw off



Milton Keynes by almost 3 lengths and showed massive improvement from their previous outing. The crew looked a good bet for Pots until the heavens dramatically opened.

Despite a great improvement in the conditions, and with at least two hours of racing time still available, organisers took the unpopular decision to abandon all racing. This left the Pair of Matt Lawes and Club Captain Jon Benest-Bartram without a race and unable to perform in the Pair Final, much to their disappointment. It also left the Mixed Four unable to continue its powerful march and also marooned Midge Beedham, who was due to cox both a Norwich RC Vet Four and their flagship eight in two further finals.

Great thanks go to Robin De Vere Green for providing invaluable ground crew assistance, and also to the many parents who turned up to support.

The next event for the club will be St Neot's Head on the 5th October, though the whole club sends its best wishes to Matt Lawes in his attempt to win the gruelling 31 mile Boston Marathon on the 21<sup>st</sup> September.

Those interested in joining or supporting Beccles Rowing Club in any way are encouraged to visit [www.becclesrowingclub.co.uk](http://www.becclesrowingclub.co.uk)