



### **Bedford Fours and Small Boats Head - 12th October 2008**

Summer-like conditions at Bedford were a welcome relief from the mist and fog that descended on Beccles on 12th October as crews from Beccles Rowing Club competed at the 2km time trial. The day was organised in to divisions throughout the day to cater for the 320 boats that attended, coming from all over the country. The course has a number of bridges throughout which require a high degree of skill to negotiate them when at race speed bearing in mind the rowers are travelling backwards!

The first boats off during the day were the quadruple scull of Mark Adcock, Mark Taylor, John Cowan and Phil Marler and the single scull of Allan Bliss. The quad enjoyed its first outing in a competitive event - the boat is a recent acquisition through the club's fundraising efforts. The crew covered the course in a time of 7m 08s although clipped part of the narrow arches on the old town bridge which cost valuable time. Nevertheless, they recomposed and were duly pleased with their efforts finishing just inside the top 20. Allan had similar bridge problems and posted a time 9m 46s in the Men's Novice single sculls category.

In the next division the new generation of the club were on show. The double scull of Will Loftus and Charley Earl, who were racing for the first time at Bedford, negotiated the course faultlessly and came in, in a time of 8m 28s. Next up was Midge Beedham, who was recently awarded the Amateur Rowing Association's Junior Volunteer of the Year for the Eastern Region. Midge was competing in the single scull for the first time in some months and attacked the course with her usual vigour and came in, in a time of 9m 31s, just over 30 seconds off the winning time.

Finally, the same crew in the quadruple scull along with Allan Bliss in his second outing in the single scull took to the water for Beccles' honour. The quad, were within just a few seconds of their first attempt, demonstrating strong consistency. Having reviewed their performance, they have already identified areas where they can make significant improvement for their next event. As for Allan, with a better course and no bridges making their presence felt, he improved his time by a significant 44 seconds to post a total time of 9m 02s.

Thanks were registered by all of the club's competitors to long-serving club member, Andrew Kershaw, for his selfless devotion to the club's racing efforts by providing the towing facilities despite not taking to the water himself. The club are now looking forward to the time trials season (head races in rowing parlance) and the opportunity for some of its newer members to get involved on the racing scene. The next event takes place at Norwich. To see how the club is preparing and developing, visit the website at [www.becclesrowingclub.co.uk](http://www.becclesrowingclub.co.uk).

The club are also holding their Annual General Meeting on 7th November at the Beccles Town Council Chambers, starting at 7.30pm.