



Beccles Rowing Club were in competitive action again at the weekend, this time on the River Yare at Norwich, for the 4.5km Norfolk Long Distance Sculling race. The event is split in to 2 divisions across the day and Beccles had four crews entered. The icing on a very enjoyable day being a convincing win for Phil Marler in the single scull in the afternoon division. The day being won through Marler's usual game plan of languid and powerful strokes that pushed his fellow competitors back so that they finished over a minute behind his winning time of 19m 10s. This is the second year in succession that Marler has won at this event on a course where he started his rowing career.

In the morning division, the newly formed senior men's quadruple scull of John Cowan, Mark Adcock, Mark Taylor and Phil Marler were the only Beccles crew to set off - racing in the boat provided by funding from the Broads Authority's Sustainable Development Fund. Whilst without any direct competition in the race itself they were looking to beat the 16 minute threshold they had set for themselves and to see how they fared against higher ranked boats that were racing in the second division in the afternoon. The crew's long distance training pieces paid dividends as they set off with absolute synchronicity, allowing the boat to do the work for them. As they were first off in their division, the crews following on behind were steadily pushed away and the crew could sense that they were moving well. Leg muscles burning through the effort, the final push in the last 750 metres was akin to a regatta sprint as the 16 minute barrier approached, finally crossing the line in the fastest recorded time of the day (across both divisions) in an excellent time of 15m 48s.

In the afternoon's second division, 2 of the crew from the quad (Mark Adcock and John Cowan) paired up in a double scull. As the two had not sculled together before, they struggled to combine their efforts as effectively as they had done in the quad and finished off the pace and down the standings, highlighting the need for preparation and leaving the pair resolving to put that right for future events. Another double scull from Beccles was the junior pairing of Will Loftus and Charley Earl - these two having made rapid technical improvements since their last competitive outing in Bedford a month earlier. Sculling against older and more established competition, the pair finished 4th in their field, just over a minute off the winning time - both feeling duly pleased with their steps forward in the last few weeks. These two will undoubtedly be a force to be reckoned with in the future as they continue at their current rate of improvement.

The shouts and cheers from the Beccles supporters on the bank were much appreciated by those competing as was their assistance with some of the "ground crew" activities.

For more information about Beccles Rowing Club, including how you can get involved, visit the club's website at [www.becclesrowingclub.co.uk](http://www.becclesrowingclub.co.uk).