



## Record Turnout for Beccles at St Neots Regatta

Beccles Rowing proudly filled its massive trailer full of boats for the ever-popular St Neots Regatta at the weekend. The National event attracted crews from all over the country and provided picnicking bankside fans with some memorable racing in dry, blustery conditions. The event saw a record turnout for boat entries from Beccles, with 13 different class entries from its expanding fleet of boats, emphasising the excellent strides the club has made off the water recently.

The day was great success for Beccles with lots of new members taking to competitive waters for the first time. Great potential was shown by first-timers Will Loftus, Anna Bateson - who sculled in a double scull with Rebecca Banham - and Claire McGregor who teamed up in a double scull with Kelly Holmes.

Tall and committed youngster Will raced in his J16 single heat – despite being only 14 - and was narrowly beaten despite gaining in the late stages of the race on his opponent. Will raced again at J15 single and was again behind from the start, but this time overhauled his opposition in an exciting final 20 strokes, much to the delight of the cheering Beccles fans. His judgment and composure during a well paced race showed a maturity beyond his years and great promise. Will can be thoroughly pleased with his day despite missing out by less than a boat length in his J15 semi-final.

Anna and Rebecca raced at Womens Novice standard against adult opposition, despite both being only 16. Their double scull had a bye through to the semi finals, where they raced well, showing good technique against their older, stronger rivals, despite coming up just short. Importantly both immediately vowed to race again before the end of the sprint season in September.

Claire and Kelly were less fortunate suffering a technical malfunction of their equipment during their heat therefore missed out on an opportunity to genuinely compete. Both were disappointed with the result as they felt they had the potential to win after showing excellent commitment to training recently. Nonetheless the crowd cheered them home as they put their technical problem right and sculled over the remainder of the 500 metre course.

Over the course of the Regatta Beccles manage to get 3 boats to finals thanks to Mark Adcock and Mark Taylor in the Mens Novice doubles, Debbie Harmer and Jon Benest-Batram in the mixed double sculls, and Captain Phil Marler in the Veteran B single sculls. All the Beccles finalists put up good shows against strong opposition, with all coming up slightly short, whilst vowing to put that right at future events with

a bit more training.

Particular thanks go to the large supporting contingent for the Beccles crews, who assembled on the bank in prime position alongside the river at St Neots, and especially to the ever-reliable Ground Crew Coordinator Andrew Kershaw.

Those wishing to race at National Regattas for Beccles should contact Captain Phil Marler via [www.becclesrowingclub.co.uk](http://www.becclesrowingclub.co.uk)