

Beccles Rowing Club – Cambridge Regatta “Silverware for young Beccles hero”

The burgeoning Beccles Rowing Club Junior section has a new hero! The popular Cambridge City Sprint Regatta saw a good turnout from Beccles crews and a superb performance from new club poster boy Will Loftus. Despite his tender 15 years, Will won his maiden pot in a fiercely contested Novice category, which is a quite superb achievement. The Novice category had a long list of entrants and individuals who race as high as IM2.

Ironically Will was extremely narrowly beaten in his own J16 category, despite a very strong showing, but showed superb control and poise in the theoretically tougher Novice category which saw him claim his first trophy. Following a comfortable win against Hollowell in the first round, Will produced an even more impressive victory against a sculler from Churchill University. Will's quick stroke rate, controlled steering and solid technique impressed all on the bank and his success continued in the Quarter final against Jesus College, where he was once again a good two lengths clear across the line. In the final Will sculled against an accomplished rower, who rows at IM2 and had a rather nice boat to match. Throughout the final the duo were matching each other stroke for stroke. Will's technique outshone his opponent's strength and made for a fascinating race. Will produced a superb controlled burst at the finish and won by the narrowest of margins, much to the delight of the Beccles Contingent.

Whilst Will's performance was the highlight, other Beccles crews also performed in Sterling fashion, with the Men's Senior Double of Mark Adcock and Mark Taylor reaching their Novice final following a strong performance against Peterborough, a club that always produce accomplished crews. In the final against Hollowell, the Beccles were giving away something in years, if not in robustness. An untypically slow start cost the pair however and they gave themselves too much to do to win and felt that they had missed a good opportunity for silverware. The double also had a straight final against St Ives in the Vet B Novice sculls category against St Ives. This time the duo put in a great performance with a bright rate and a strong start, however St Ives also started well and maintained their narrow advantage across the finish line, despite the Beccles crew pressing them every inch of the way. This was an excellent race, and a similar performance next time out would surely see silverware for the red and black of Beccles. .

Other younger BRC members also had good days. Charlie Earl had an early race in the novice sculls against St Neots and despite a spirited effort he lost by a third of a boat length. He also missed out later in the day in the J18 sculls class by only a length. Charlie immediately resolved to put in more training in order to match the success of his friend Will!

University Scholars Ben Halton - Farrow and Mark Banham had a tough draw in the IM3 category and found themselves competing against one of London's largest clubs, Broxbourne. The Beccles crew missed out, but felt a considerable improvement following the coaching from new coach Alan Bright who was credited with making a big difference in a short space of time. Alan and his wife Beryl, newly arrived at BRC from Totnes in Devon, are clearly going to be a major asset to the club.

Anna Bateson and Rebecca Banham were in one of the most exciting and closely fought races of the day in the women's novice sculls against Rob Roy. Unfortunately in the sprint to the line Beccles just missed out by the narrowest of margins, whilst their vanquishers progressed to the final. Anna and Rebecca are improving rapidly and they are expected to make considerable further progress with increased coaching.

Once again Beccles Rowing Club had an excellent competitive day and it is especially pleasing to the Juniors at the club enjoy tangible success and progression. Will's endeavours will naturally inspire others to emulate him! The Club would like to formally thank Ground Crew King Andrew Kershaw, who orchestrated preparations for the event from the early hours. Andrew drove the trailer, helped and offered support all day. Without people like Andrew, clubs cannot effectively function and all competitors thanked him for his support.

Those wishing to get involved with Beccles Rowing Club should drop us a line at www.becclesrowingclub.co.uk