



Oxford University Cross Country Club

Alumni Newsletter
November 2024

Dear OUCCC alumnus

Welcome to this month's alumni newsletter, especially to those of you who have signed up to our newsletter in recent weeks. The clocks have gone back and the nights are drawing in, but while winter beckons, the cross country season is only coming into bloom. Racing got underway a couple of weekends ago with Cross Country Cuppers. This year, several alumni took part in what will hopefully become an annual occurrence. There followed the launch of the Anniversary Campaign at Vincent's Club, which was attended by alumni and current members alike. With much taking place both on and off the course, there is a strong sense of momentum within the club at the moment, which will hopefully be conveyed in the remainder of this newsletter. We hope that you enjoy!

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Anniversary Campaign launch



The Anniversary Campaign is officially up and running following a successful launch event at Vincent's Club last Saturday. Attendees gathered for a presentation about the campaign, followed by lunch, at which alumni and current members got to know each other better. An ambitious vision for club development was articulated, focusing on improving performance, participation, outreach, and alumni engagement, as OUCCC approaches 50 years of women's Varsity participation in 2025 and its 150th birthday in 2026.

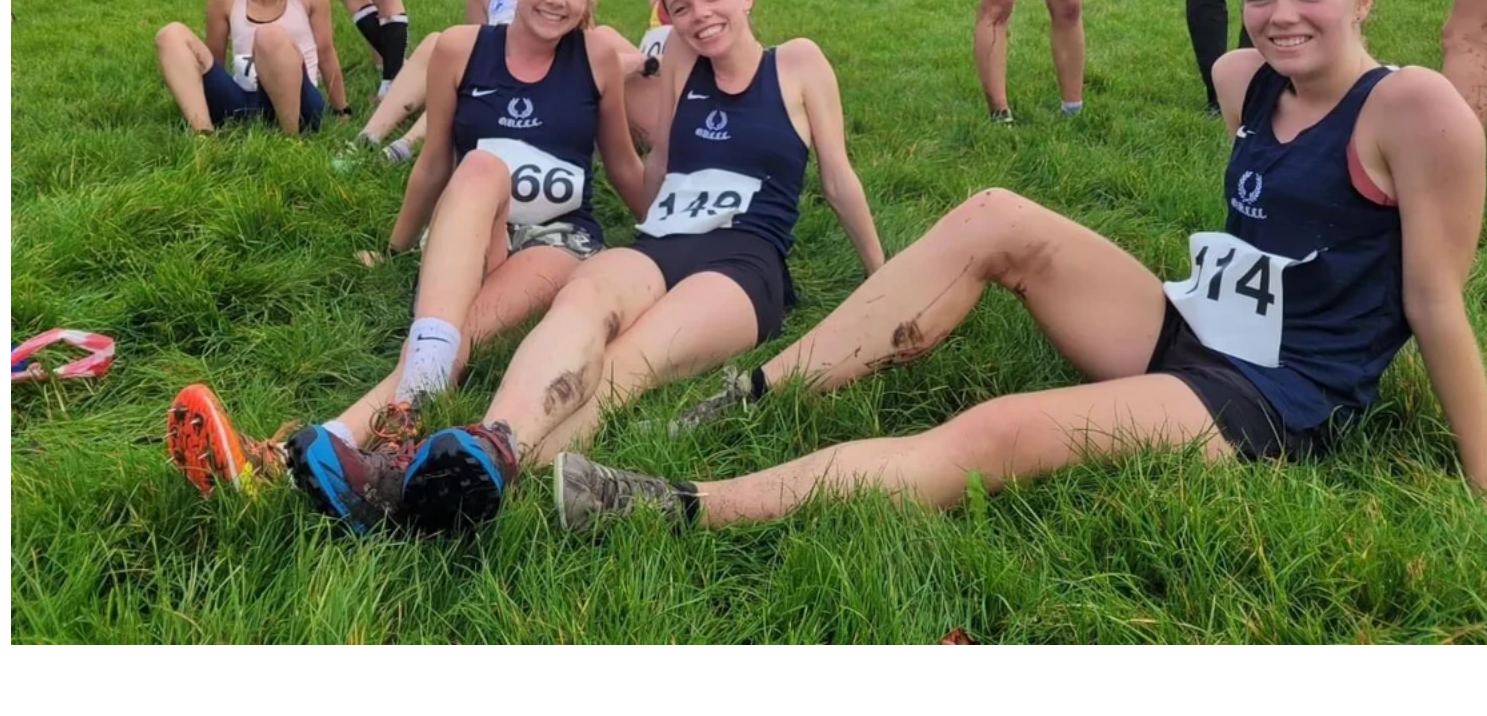
There are several ways to get involved and support the Anniversary Campaign. These include:

- **Donating:** One-off and regular donations, large and small, are welcomed and will make a difference. More information about fundraising objectives can be found [here](#).
- **Encouraging newsletter sign-ups:** Share our mailing list with alumni from your own generation to maximise the impact of our communications. Sign up is [here](#).
- **Attending celebratory events:** We want to celebrate these important anniversaries properly. Details about upcoming events will be posted [here](#).
- **Sharing historical sources:** We want to produce a thorough and accessible historical database for the club by the end of 2026. Photos, minutes, and past results are all welcome by email.

More information about the Anniversary Campaign is available in the power point slides attached below. Please do give these a read when you are able.

[Anniversary Campaign launch PowerPoint](#)

Cross Country Cuppers



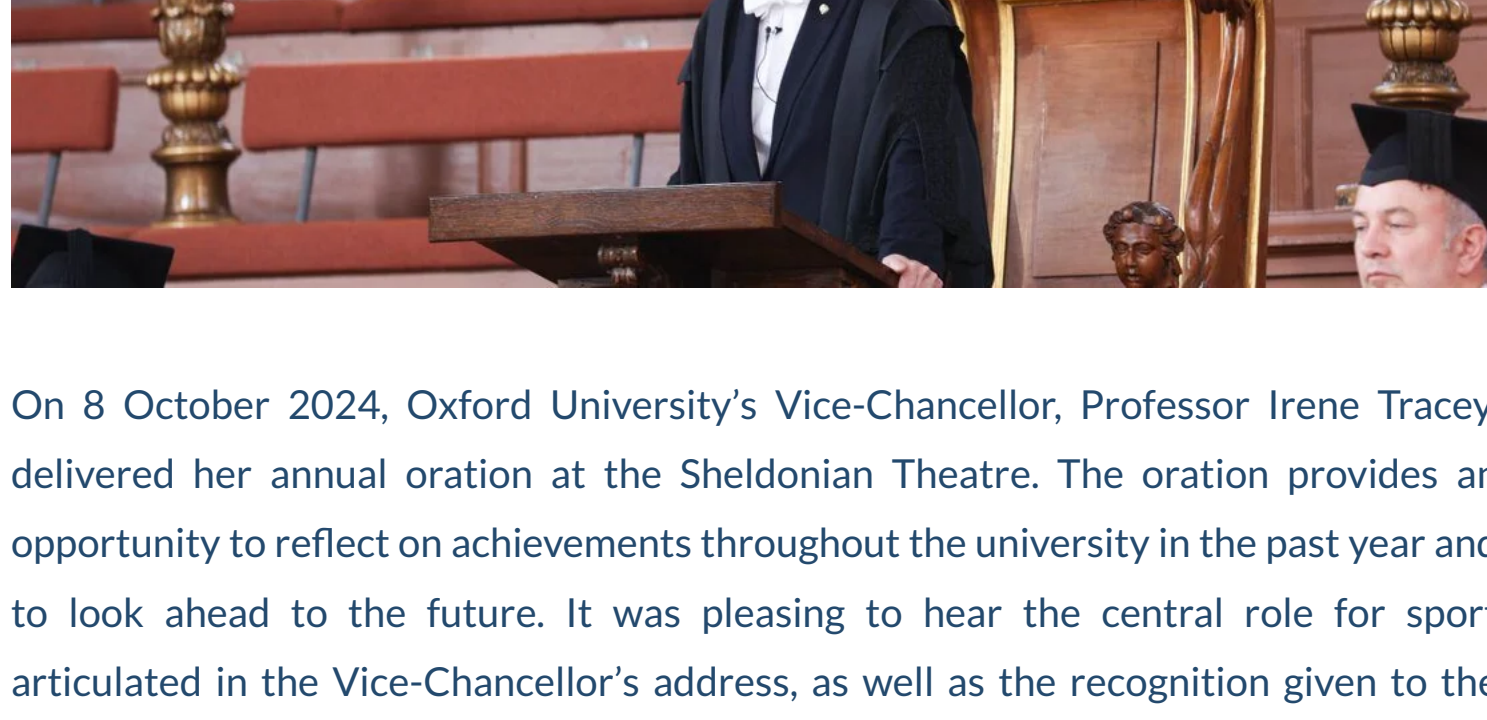
Before the Anniversary Campaign launch, Cross Country Cuppers took place at South Park. Cuppers serves as the first of two selection races used to select teams for the Varsity Match against Cambridge at the end of this term. This year's event was ably organised by Alex Hammond and Rose Sheppard, and the standards were incredibly high. To give an example, the 8th fastest times in 2022 would have only got you 12th and 22nd place in this year's women's and men's races respectively.

The women's race was won by Rebecca Flaherty (St. Catherine's) and the men's race by Jared Ward (Keble). Rebecca is the reigning world junior mountain running champion while Jared can count 6th place in the Rio Olympics marathon among his achievements. Meanwhile Matthew Kunov (St Catherine's) and Emma Huepfl (Jesus) were the inaugural winners of our alumni category.

There was great attendance in both races and an excellent atmosphere throughout, with all participants cheered right to the finish line.

[Cuppers Results](#)

Vice-Chancellor's oration



On 8 October 2024, Oxford University's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Irene Tracey, delivered her annual oration at the Sheldonian Theatre. The oration provides an opportunity to reflect on achievements throughout the university in the past year and to look ahead to the future. It was pleasing to hear the central role for sport articulated in the Vice-Chancellor's address, as well as the recognition given to the Bannister Miles event that OUCCC helped deliver earlier this year.

An extract from the Vice-Chancellor's oration is provided below:

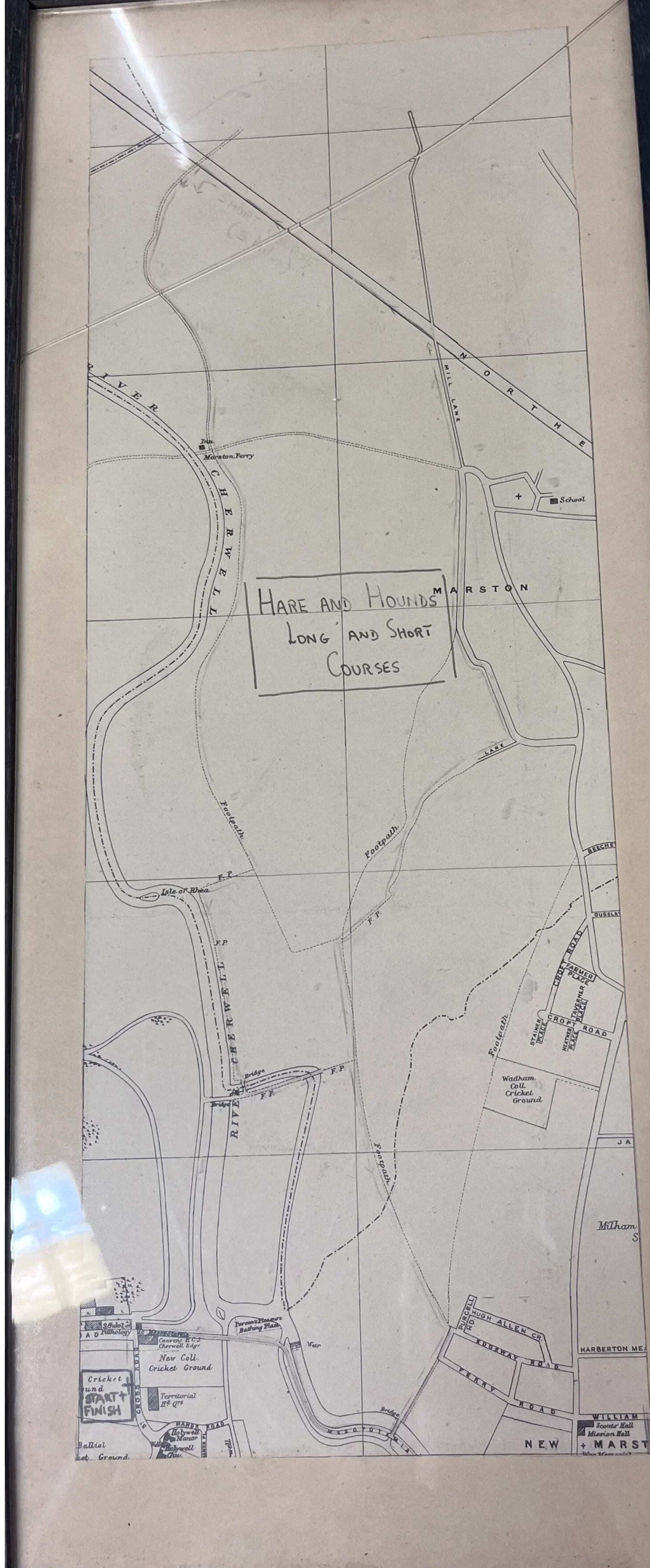
"On 6 May this year, we celebrated the 70th anniversary of Sir Roger Bannister's world record with a fantastic event organised by Oxford University Athletic Club and the University of Oxford, with support from Oxfordshire County Council and the Bannister family. Over 1,000 children and adults alongside elite athletes ran a community mile from St Aldate's to Ifley Road where everyone, including me, received their finisher medals. We had a presentation by World Athletics with a video message from Lord Sebastian Coe to commemorate Sir Roger's achievements and the extraordinary history of Oxford University Athletic Club, while the Bodleian Libraries featured highlights of Roger's never-before-displayed archive. The day concluded with elite races, with the men's setting off at exactly the same time as Bannister's race in 1954. Hundreds of spectators, including elders who witnessed the original, were treated to four sub-4-minute miles, including a course record by Italian international athlete Ossama Meslek. Human flourishing was plain to see. Dinners at Merton, Pembroke and Exeter - all colleges associated with Roger - bookended the events and athletics alumni from around the world returned to celebrate.

Sport is a great democratizer. It builds bridges, so we have used sport to build connections with the local community. Over the past year, we have delivered a new Sport Leaders Programme to more than 60 year 8 students from Greyfriars Secondary School, the Oxford Academy and Oxford Spire. The children spend a day a week here, with elite sports coaching in the morning followed by lunch in a different college, and then an afternoon being taught mathematical modelling for football, law and rules in sport, the anthropology of crowd behaviour, and neuroscience and brain injury by our academics. Hugely successful; I am grateful to our colleagues and student athletes for getting involved. Through additional funded partnerships we will expand this programme, and continue to inspire the next generation. However, it is still a fact that we must offer our students and staff much higher-quality facilities for their sport and wellbeing, as well as build further our research efforts, such as those described above and our newly opened Padium Institute. The scale of our ambition for the Ifley Road site is enormous, as are the funds required, but the opportunity is great too, if anyone is listening...

Because sport is not just about science, physiology, stopwatch and progress, but also about aesthetics, play, friendship, community, laughter, mystery and memory: the attributes of art and the humanities, or what it means to be human. I learnt as much on playing fields or the river as I did in the classroom, and as others do in the theatre, or concert hall. Our students' extracurricular activities are part of their learning and development: college tutors take note. Sport is not for everyone, but it weirdly captivates even the most ardent couch potato. Which of us did not spend 2 weeks this summer a world expert on the keirin, the pommel horse or triple jump? Why? It is deeply human to want to push frontiers and compete, or to be entranced by people who do, whether on the track or mountain, in space, music, art. We cannot help but be inspired by people who strive to achieve excellence - especially when it's despite the odds."

You can watch or read the full address [here](#).

Time capsule



Recently we discovered this map in the Graham Tanner room by the Ifley Road track. It depicts Hare and Hounds long and short courses in Marston, north-east of the city centre. The reference to Hare & Hounds suggests that the map must be over a century old (unfortunately it is undated). As well as showing where members used to run, the map also gives an insight into urban change in Oxford over the last century. Nowadays, the area depicted is considerably more built-up, but thankfully the fields are still there and are still used for OUCCC club runs, though mainly in the summer months when the ground is firmer.

Upcoming events

With the Varsity Match later this term, there are many opportunities to come and support the club and catch up with each other over the next few months. Key dates are listed below. Be sure to note them in your diaries; it would be great to have many of you along to each.

- **Saturday 30 November 2024** - II-Vs Varsity Matches
Shotover Country Park, Oxford; from ~12.30pm
- **Saturday 7 December 2024** - Blues Varsity Matches, Alumni Race & Post-Varsity Dinner
Wimbledon Common, Roehampton; from ~1pm
- **Wednesday 12 March 2025** - Teddy Hall Relays
Ifley Road Sports Centre, Oxford; from ~1pm
- **Wednesday 12 March 2025** - OUCCC Annual Dinner
St Edmund Hall, Oxford; from ~7pm

Our supporters

Heartfelt thanks to those, listed below, whose support over the last year is allowing OUCCC to continue to thrive. We have just reached £10,000 in donations for the year, a significant milestone that we can hopefully build upon over the course of the Anniversary Campaign, helping to fulfil our club endowment fund ambitions.

Andrew Arbour	Alex Gaskell	Ben Moreau
Alice Beverley	Simon Gisby	Joe Morrow
Robert Bowyer	Luke Gribbin	Bethanie Murray
Jonathan Brooke	Matthew Holland	Jamie Parkinson
David Bruce	Bethan Hopewell	Rhiannon Paton
Matthew Bryant	Alex Howard	Colin Phillips
Charlotte Buckley	Jay Howard	Christopher Phillips-Hart
Daniel Bundred	Emma Huepfl	Glen Power
John Coggins	Alun Johns	Thomas Renshaw
Chris Daniels	Daisy Jowers	Phillip Scarr
Jamie Darling	Larry Mathews	Nick Scropton
Anthony Doolittle	Jared Martin	Rachel Skokowski
Harrison France	Ian McAllister	Miles Weatherseed
	Simon Molden	

We hope that you have enjoyed this email. If you have any updates that you would like to share on a future newsletter, or any suggestions about how to improve our communications, please do not hesitate to get in touch by emailing our Alumni & Sponsorship Rep (Jared Martin - jared.martin@stx.ox.ac.uk) or our Club Captain (Anika Schwarze-Chintapatla - anika.schwarze-chintapatla@trinity.ox.ac.uk). We also warmly welcome written submissions, especially those focused on the history of the club.

Yours in Dark Blue

The 1876 Trustees

Anika Schwarze-Chintapatla	Bethan Hopewell
Jared Martin	Emma Huepfl
Thomas Renshaw	Simon Molden
Jamie Darling	Colin Phillips



Oxford University Cross Country Club, Ifley Road Sports Centre, Ifley Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire
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