Oxford University Cross Country Club

Alumni Newsletter

February 2025

Dear OUCCC alumnus

The cross country season is almost at an end, but for many OUCCC members, there remains one final outing. On Saturday 8 March, many members will take part in a resurrected match against Trinity College Dublin. Our Trinity counterparts are very excited about the weekend, and so are we. A reminder that alumni are welcome to participate in this match. Sign-up is below.

Others will travel to Nottingham for UK Intercounties on the same date. But all will come together to celebrate the 2024-5 season at OUCCC's Annual Dinner on Wednesday 12 March. It has been great to see unprecedented numbers of alumni sign-ups. If you are able to join, sign-ups remain open until Monday 3 March. A link to register is below. We hope that you enjoy the rest of this newsletter.

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OUCCC Annual Dinner 2025

A final reminder that sign-ups for the OUCCC Annual Dinner will close on **Monday 3 March**. If you have not yet signed up, it would be great to have you there. The evening will begin with alumni pre-drinks at the King's Arms, followed by dinner at Teddy Hall. Proceeding will be rounded off at Vincent's Club. This year we are also delighted to be joined by guest of honour, **Julian Goater**. As well as an alumnus of the club, Julian had a glittering athletic career, including a famous victory in the English National in 1981. More details are listed below. For anyone that has already signed up, we will send an email containing final arrangements next week.

- **Date:** Wednesday 12 March.
- **Time:** Drinks from 6.30pm; dinner at 7.30pm.
- **Location:** King's Arms for pre-dinner drinks, St Edmund Hall for dinner.
- **Cost:** £55 (non-drinking), £60 (drinking).
- **Dress Code:** Black tie or equivalent (Blues blazers encouraged).

Annual Dinner Tickets

Upcoming Event: Teddy Hall Relays

Entry for Teddy Hall Relays is open! The race follows the usual format, with four legs of seven kilometres around an idyllic Oxford course. A free tea will follow, this year at the rugby club pavilion. If unable to race, we would also really appreciate marshal volunteers, as the number needed to safely deliver the event is huge. More details, including an entry link, are provided below. If keen to volunteer, contact race director Alex Hammond at alexander.hammond@sjc.ox.ac.uk.

- **Date:** Wednesday 12 March.
- **Time:** Registration from 11.30am, race start at 1.30pm.
- **Location:** Iffley Road Sports Centre, Oxford.
- **Cost:** £11 per person, £44 per team.

Teddy Hall Entry

Women's 50th Anniversary Profile - Clare Sylvester

Our next monthly profile in the run-up to our Women's Varsity Anniversary celebration in December focuses on Clare Spacie (née Sylvester). Clare served as Women's Captain in 1983-84, and introduced the inaugural Women's IIs team (The 'Turtles') during her tenure. With an incredible collection of memories, we are delighted to share Clare's OUCCC journey. Her account makes for truly absorbing reading.

'…OUCCC was a great find for me. It enabled me to make the best of the experience that Oxford offers. Having undergraduate and postgraduate friends across the University who were studying a wide range of subjects was great and I loved the friendships and sense of achievement that running for OUCCC brought. Running based friendships and the value of being part of a team have stayed with me ever since…'

Read the full profile by following the link. Thanks very much to Clare for contributing!

Read Clare's Story

Recent Race Results

Since BUCS, it has been a busy few weeks for OUCCC members. There were too many performances to cover everything, but some highlights are listed below.

At the Armagh International Road Races on 13 February, there were PBs galore, a 7th place finish for Richard Slade in the Men's 5k (13.49) and a 5th place finish for alumna Charlotte Dannatt in the Women's 3k (9.17). Post-race, the group had an enjoyable night, availing of the hosts' exceptional hospitality. Full results here.

That weekend, it was the BUCS Athletics Indoor Championship. Highlights included a 5th place finish for Nicholas Whittaker (Wolfson) in the 1500m (3.59.2), a 4th place finish for Laia Casajoana (St John's) in the 3000m (9.21.7) and outstanding gold-silver double for Charlotte Buckley (Oriel) and Annabelle Hedge (Hertford) in the 800m. Charlotte and Annabelle finished in 2.09.97 and 2.10.09 respectively, to the delight of supporters back in Oxford. The following Saturday, Charlotte went onto reach the final of the British Athletics Indoor Championship in Birmingham.

That Saturday proved one of dizzying success for OUCCC at the English National Cross Country Championship. There was a bronze medal for Rebecca Flaherty (St Catherine's) in the Women's U20 event, 6th and 7th place finishes for Alex Poulston (Merton) and Chris Parker (Corpus Christi) in the Men's U20s, and in the Senior Women a team bronze for Thames Hare & Hounds, whose scorers included three OUCCC alumni: Lizzy Apsley, Bethanie Murray, and Lauren Major.

Capping things off, Richard Slade ran an expert race to WIN the English National Senior Men's title, a frankly incredible achievement. Joe Morrow and alumnus Jack Millar also helped Bristol & West to the team title, while further afield, Jared Martin (St Cross) finished 6th in the Northern Ireland Senior Cross Country Championship.
BUCS Indoor Results
English National Results
Northern Irish Cross Country Results

Member Profile: Richard Slade

Richard Slade joined OUCCC in 2022 as a community member, having arrived in Oxford for work. He became an integral member of our training group, where he has helped push other members to new heights. A regular at Saturday lunches, he has thrived within the coaching set-up provided by Matt Seddon. We knew something special was in the works this year, as Richard knocked out session after quality session. Unassuming and humble, he was nevertheless confident about his form. There were England call-ups earlier this year, and he was the lead English finisher at races in Portugal and Belgium. There was also an outstanding 13.49 5k at Armagh. Nonetheless, it was mind-blowing to see him progress from 29th in the English National in 2023, to 21st last year, and champion last weekend. The result was testament to his diligence and drive, but also the fantastic training environment that we have established in Oxford, open to university and community members alike. We aim to become the key performance training hub for this region of English, giving more people opportunities to thrive like Richard.

OUCCC Alumni at the English National

Pic credit: Dave Bunce

Richard was not the first OUCCC-connected athlete to win the prestigious English national. Julian Goater was victorious at Parliament Hill in 1981, taking a commanding lead after half a mile and winning by almost two minutes in the end. Richard Nerurkar then won three titles in four years between 1990 and 1993. His third title came at Parliament Hill, breaking the field with a mile to go. Finally, at Leeds in 1998, ex-captain Mara Yamauchi (née Myers) won by a margin of eight seconds.

Dates for your diary

Date	Event	Location
Saturday 8 March	OUCCC vs TCD Match	South Park, Oxford
Wednesday 12 March	Teddy Hall Relays	Iffley Road, Oxford
Wednesday 12 March	OUCCC Annual Dinner	Teddy Hall, Oxford
Monday 5 May	Bannister Miles	Iffley Road, Oxford
Sunday 11 May	Town & Gown 10k	University Parks
Saturday 25 October	Cuppers & alumni lunch	South Park, Oxford
Friday 5 December	**Women's Varsity 50th Celebration**	TBC – central London
Saturday 6 December	Blues & Alumni Varsity	Wimbledon Common

Thanking our supporters

We remain deeply grateful for the generous alumni support for the club. We are now up to well over 30 regular supporters, with many other one-off supporters. They are listed below. As part of the Anniversary Campaign, we aim to grow our base of regular supporters to over 50 by year-end, which we will use, alongside larger one-off donations, to deliver targeted improvements to club services, while building up club reserves and improving OUCCC's long-term financial position amidst rising costs. You may have also noticed 1876 Club members in recent newsletters. This recognises individuals who have contributed £1876 or more to the club overtime.

1876 Club Supporters

Andrew Arbour	Larry Mathews	Christopher Phillips-Hart
John Coggins	Simon Molden	

Alumni Supporters

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Donate Here

Thank you for making it to the bottom of this newsletter. We hope that you have found it enjoyable and informative. If you have any suggestions or contributions, please get in touch with 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).

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, Iffley Road Sports Centre, Iffley Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire
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