

a minute, and speed 8-9 kilometres an hour. I felt not the slightest breathlessness and I knew that I could maintain it for fourteen or fifteen hours. To complete this training I did the journey from my house to the boat-house and back on a bicycle which was 22 km. This meant 38 km. of continual exercise, as on arrival at the boat-house, and on return, I took the minimum of time to change.

"In case it interests medical men, my arterial tension during training was 13½ and my pulse 71 at rest. During exercise my pulse varied between 95 and 105 without breathlessness."

Monsieur Adam, who was a heavy smoker, particularly fond of cigars, had given up smoking entirely from August 1949 with a view to his attempt in the following year when he was 69 years of age.

As a young man he had done the crossing Boulogne-Folkestone and back in 1905, but on two separate days. Later and while still at the height of his powers as an athlete, he had done a remarkable row from Boulogne to Ostend unaccompanied in 15 hours 50 minutes without a stop.

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A typical example of the modern coastal club is the story of Worthing who have not only been South Coast Champions. They were the first sea-going club to borrow an eight and compete in the Tideway Head of the River Race. They pay regular visits to Putney and have won on the Serpentine. Their story has been told to me by Carry Brown.

"Worthing Amateur Boat Club was founded in the year 1880 through the generosity of the late Sir Robert Loder. A galvanised iron shed was erected on the ground on which the present Boathouse stands, this shed being solely used for the storage of boats. For many years social activities were severely frowned upon, a close period of about five months in each year being strictly enforced. Nevertheless, a membership of about 120 was maintained until, in 1898, the Club was nearly compelled to close through lack of support. At last permission was obtained from Worthing Corporation to erect a brick structure and place the iron shed on the top for use as a recreation room; whereupon sufficient interest was again aroused to put the club on its feet.

"Up to 1905 there were two clubs in the town, the other being Worthing Britannia. As was to be expected, keen rivalry between the two saw first one, then the other, champions, but unfortunately the Britannia Club had to close and W.A.B.C. were left alone to uphold the rowing traditions of Worthing. This they did to no uncertain degree, becoming South Coast Champions in 1912, no mean feat,

considering the opposition of all the other towns along the coast as far as Herne Bay. These triumphs were short-lived, however, as 1914 saw the outbreak of World War I. Members nearly all joined the Forces, the Boathouse was closed, the furniture sold, and the boats stored away.

"In 1918 the ground was sold to Mr. Edward Knoblock the playwright, and in 1920 it was his generosity that once again opened the Boathouse doors. New members took the place of those who had fallen or become disabled, and in 1922 Worthing were again seen at Regattas along the Coast, from Herne Bay in the East, to Poole in the West. Worthing, in company with Southsea, becoming affiliated to both the C.A.R.A. and the H. & D.A.R.A. Success followed success and they became S.C. Champions for three years in succession, from 1924-26.

"Once again the ground was sold, this time to the late James Denton. He presented it to the Worthing Corporation, with the stipulation that the Club was assured of a permanent home on this site, the Corporation in turn to demolish the old Boathouse and iron shed and erect new premises. The present attractively-built Club has, in addition to a modern boathouse, and dressing rooms, lounge and committee rooms, a sunshine roof on which members may sit and view the sea on which they work so hard.

"1939 saw the outbreak of another war, and the procedure adopted in 1914 had once again to be followed. It was not until 1947 that the Club was re-opened, this time, and the old members set out to gather recruits who would uphold the prestige of Worthing in the Rowing World. By the following year the Club were again competing at Regattas, and the valuable experience gained was to start them on the way to becoming Champions once more. The season 1949 opened and the first day saw the Club beat their immediate rivals, Shoreham and Brighton, in a manner that those who witnessed the race will never forget. The crew that scored that victory went on to win seven more races that season, and consequently formed a nucleus round which the Club were able to build new crews. Steady improvement was maintained in the Club during 1950 both on the rowing side, and socially. By hard work and the businesslike efforts of the older members, the Club, after trying for nearly 20 years, were able to have a licensed bar. It was hoped that this added amenity would be the means of providing the Club with new rowing equipment, but it was obvious that benefit would not be obtained for some little time. It would hardly be fair to pass over this period without acknowledging the tremendous efforts of the officials of the Club in obtaining financial assistance from local businessmen for the purchase of rowing equipment. The 1951 season commenced with the launching of a new craft, the *Jubilee Queen*, so named because it was obtained from public subscriptions,



during the town's Silver Jubilee year; as if inspired by this generous gesture, the oarsmen of the Club gave of their best. Four consecutive wins in as many weeks started the revival of success, absent since 1926 and, by the time the season ended, Worthing had become Champions of the Coast in the Junior-Senior fours.

"History was made in 1952, when Worthing became the first Coast A.R.A. Club to enter the Thames Head of the River race, and on three Sunday mornings prior to the race the Worthing eight were to be seen training on the Tideway in a craft very kindly loaned by Barclays Bank R.C. Immediately they proved their right to participate in this event. Starting number 221, they moved up 97 places, completing the course in 21 mins. 26 secs. Further successes seemed to be forthcoming until there was an unfortunate incident, when the Senior four failed to turn a buoy at the last regatta of the season, a mistake which was to cost them the Championship; still, they finished runners-up. During that season, again through the generosity of the local public, and the Regatta Committee, the Club acquired another new four, christened *Festival Queen*. The Club's most generous and closest friends, the Worthing Sailing and Motor Yacht Club, handed over a cheque for £125 which enabled the Club to purchase a new pair, named *Prince Charles*.

"Once again, in 1953, the Club entered the Head of the River race on the Tideway, and Sunday morning training was introduced as before. The handicap of so little training prevented such a spectacular result as in the previous year, but the crew rowed extremely well and again improved their position by finishing 93rd, so that in two attempts they had risen from the last division into the 2nd. Gradually, along the Coast, the Worthing senior four built up a three-point lead in the Senior Fours Championships; but Folkestone, with their usual tenacity, superb rowing, and the help of that grand old oarsman, George Edwards, who coached them, soon reduced this lead, and it was only at Folkestone Regatta that Worthing were able to beard the lion in his den, and secure the Coast Championship. In addition to this, the Club had been visiting regattas in the D. & D.A.R.A. and performed the exceptional feat of winning that Association's Championship as well, a double never before accomplished in the history of the two Associations. Meanwhile, at the Serpentine Coronation Regatta, organised by the *News of the World*, Worthing put Coast rowing on the London map by winning both the Coastal Senior and Junior Fours in time which compared favourably with those set up by the river crews. The river oarsmen showed much interest in the coastal craft, and noted that they were not only approximately heavier and shorter, but also 6 ins. wider in the beam, with staggered seating to enable them to cope with the rough seas so often encountered in coastal waters. This interest resulted in two crews from Thames R.C. and one

from Merton College, Oxford, entering at Worthing Regatta, thus fostering a cordial relationship between river and coastal rowing men."

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Three Cornish fishermen once challenged Oxford University. They rowed in a ran-dan, a type of craft in which bow and stroke have one oar each, and 2 has two! They were unbeaten for five years round the Cornish coast and once beat the St. Mawes steam ferry over a 2½ mile course, urged on by 150 passengers. The boat, christened *White Wings*, was built by R. Jackett who gained 72 rugby football caps for Cornwall. Stroke was Harry Jago, a rugby fly-half, and member of the Falmouth lifeboat crew. In 1937 when Oxford won the Boat Race these Cornishmen wanted to collect five others, borrow an eight, and, after one week's practice, race Oxford from Putney to Mortlake. The challenge was declined!

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From Brian Collins of Bournemouth comes a story of sea rowing which also deserves its niche. He says that:

"Poole Bay oarsmen talk of Johnnie Mathews as a legendary oarsman. It is said that he never lost a race and that he never bothered to sprint as he was always going too fast for any crew on the coast to catch him.

"He rowed for Poole. The club have named one of their coastal fours after him.

"When he first joined he was told that he could never row in a race, as he was a professional. In fact he was a fisherman, which constituted a professional in those days. Somehow he got over this and became a stroke of a novice crew which was to make coastal rowing history. Today, about 50 years after, he is still thought of as an all-time wonder.

"Training sessions with his crew were hard work," recalls one member of it. "If a weak point cropped up during a race, Johnnie's method was to eliminate it by continuous concentration. If they had a poor start, they would practise starting for the whole session; if they had a bad turn, they would practise turning and nothing else.

"Most widely told of all the tales about this character is that of a regatta in the Isle of Wight. Early in the day a message to Poole warned members that the regatta must be postponed because of bad weather.

"Later, a message arrived to say that it was on after all. Such are the conditions under which coast rowing continues.

"To an ordinary man it would have been impossible to get to the