



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY SQUASH RACQUETS CLUB

# ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

MAY 2025



In this issue:

- President's Welcome ..... 2
- Women's Blues Varsity Match Report ..... 4
- Men's Blues Varsity Match Report ..... 8
- The Reserves Varsity Match Report ..... 13
- Alumni Committee Update ..... 21



## PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

I'm Anant, the President of CUSRC. Firstly, thank you for your support as an alumnus! Having been a fully student-run club for only a few years, our alumni base is still growing, and those connections are strong and founded upon many long-lasting friendships. On behalf of the club, I am truly grateful for your help in keeping the CUSRC community vibrant, for both students and alumni. Secondly, apologies for the break in alumni newsletters – it's been a hectic couple of years for the club, but it's seen some massive improvements. Notably, we've seen various successes in BUCS and Varsity, but also greater club accessibility and wider inter-team participation.



On both the men's and women's sides we have secured promotions in the BUCS (inter-university) leagues! This puts both teams into Midlands Division 1, which will provide a much more competitive level of match play for our teams. In the Blues Varsity at the RAC in London, on the historic 100th year anniversary of the matches, our Women's Blues achieved a stellar 3-2 win, whilst the Men's Blues had a narrow 2-3 loss. For 2s/3s Varsity in Cambridge our teams displayed a dominant performance, with a 6-1 victory for the women and a 13-2 victory for the men. Continue reading for the full match report!







Aside from results, CUSRC has experienced great internal improvements. With meticulous effort we have decreased costs wherever possible, from our preseason to 2s/3s Varsity dinner. That being said, the costs of courts and coaching are unavoidable. I firmly believe that no-one should feel excluded from playing squash due to financial limitations; your support directly helps the club stay accessible to all members.

Our integration between teams is better than ever. One of my new introductions is a weekly internal newsletter, updating members about weekly events and match results (laced with various quips and jokes of course). Our socials have also been diversified – now including squash-related pub quizzes, welfare socials and refereeing workshops – whilst maintaining our traditional socials: Christmas dinner, welcome drinks, and so on. Finally, we took the biggest team to date to the annual 'BUCS Squash: Individual Championships' tournament. With so much support displayed for each other's matches, it's no surprise that three of our members reached the final in their respective grades!

At its core, CUSRC is a squash club. But, taking a step back, CUSRC is more than that; it's a community. While I'm proud of our various results-based successes, I'm prouder of the welcoming environment that the club fosters. In a university which prides itself on academics, getting such a fantastic group of students to actively partake in the club is no small feat. I'm looking forward to what comes next for CUSRC!

*Anant Gupta (President 24/25)*



## WOMEN'S BLUES



### #6 Lana Howell:

If there's one person you don't underestimate, it's someone who is never seen without their pre-workout. For the W1 captain, Lana Howell, this match seemed just like that: a pre-workout. While she may not have grown in height over the summer, her obsession with squash has certainly flourished. This infectious passion has translated into a vast improvement from last year, and Lana can frequently be found in action on the court or pushing teammates through fitness sessions.

It was almost a shame that Lana didn't need to unleash her full power to secure a straightforward victory—and that more than one bagel might have interfered with her carefully balanced carb-to-protein ratio. With powerful drives and delicate drops, Lana demonstrated the duality of a player, both cute and terrifying. Let's hope O\*ford never discovers the secret behind her success: 100 daily sets of diamond push-ups.

*Cambridge 3-0: 9-2, 9-0, 9-5*



## #5 Sara Kapoor

The typical metaphor for an American coming to Cambridge is 'crossing the pond.' However, perhaps a more adequate description of Sara's arrival at CUSRC is 'gallivanting through the Bermuda Triangle fashionably late.' Known for her signature Tecnifibre bag, effortlessly stylish game, and persistent 'rails,' the only hurdle in Sara's way was a serious set of nerves complicated by the labyrinthine architecture of the RAC.

After dropping the first game to her heavy-hitting opponent, Sara decided that defeat simply wasn't on the cards. From then on, her shots consistently found perfect length, and she covered the court with elegance and speed, like a bald eagle with luscious hair. The match was over before the markets could adjust their spreads, and it was time for Sara to savour a well-earned bagel—ideally seasoned to perfection.

*Cambridge 3-1: 4-9, 9-2, 9-5, 9-0*



## #4 Florence Gibson

Florence 'The Floast' Gibson, known for her love of regular socials and a fierce game on the court, is a committed teammate and a serious life of the party. Her opponent, Selina Wong, accidentally struck Florence with her racket during the warm-up, perhaps sensing her intimidating aura.

But as someone who relies on the UBus to travel around Cambridge, Florence is no stranger to adversity, and she came back strong in the second after a hard-fought





first game. With the cheers of the Cambridge crowd behind her and the sweltering court temperatures, the court became a dance floor, and Florence was certainly showing off her moves with incredible lunges and tricky boasts, leaving her opponent scrambling. It was not without a valiant effort from Florence that O\*ford clinched their first win of the day, but fear not, for she will return bigger, better, and stronger next year.

*O\*ford 3-1: 9-3, 3-9, 9-5, 9-0*

### **#3 Izzy Sargent**

As evidenced by her legendary Duolingo streak, Izzy Sargent can only be described as consistent, meticulous, and just a touch obsessive—in the best way. Her Varsity debut exemplified these qualities, earning her the 'Player of the Match' award with a performance that gave the spectators a masterclass in squash technique.



Each of her shots fell precisely in the corners of the court, with forehand drops flattening faster than a conspiracy theorist's worldview and lobs that drifted to the back with eerie finality. The match was over in what felt like minutes—barely enough time to boil two eggs consecutively, let alone mount a comeback. When Izzy steps on court, it's clear: you either keep up or get swept aside.

*Cambridge 3-0: 9-0, 9-0, 9-1*

### **#2 Michelle Tang**

With a BUCS Individuals title to protect and the unflinching desire to show CUSRC that Badminton is not an inferior sport, Michelle Tang took to the court with calm intensity. Despite having taken time off the court in pursuit of other hobbies, it was immediately apparent that Michelle's skills had never left her—the instincts were too deeply embedded.

As befitting a medical student, her opening game was clinical. Though the match offered moments of resistance from her opponent, Michelle never looked anything but in control. However, Michelle's diet consists more of vibrantly coloured



juices than bagels, so in the remaining games, she allowed her opponents a few points—proof that even in dominance, there's room for generosity. With that, she secured the Varsity win for Cambridge. Just imagine if Michele untucked her shirt from her shorts and unleashed her true potential.

*Cambridge 3-0: 9-0, 9-1, 9-1*

### **#1 Ellie White**

After taking a game off her opponent in the previous Varsity, Ellie's formidable presence clearly left a lasting impression—so much so that this year, the O\*ford player arrived with a friend of rather a notable calibre: Gina Kennedy. But Ellie came prepared, with another year of high-level training, a refined game, and a tenacious endurance built from running a half-marathon.

The match was packed with exhilarating rallies and relentless energy, with both sides of the battle bringing their peak performance. Despite pushing through long rallies with grit and unending precision, Ellie's opponent's persistence eventually proved too much. Whether Ellie glowed from physical effort or the joy of celebrating with the team, the overall result had been secured: the Women's Varsity title had been won by Cambridge once again.

*O\*ford 3-0: 9-3, 9-2, 9-6*

*Report by Kelly Yip and Lana Howell*





## MEN'S BLUES



### #6 Jai

Kicking off the action was a fateful rematch from 2s/3s Varsity 2024, which saw Jai come back from 8-2 down in the fifth to claim a resounding overall victory for our M2 squad. This year he was faced with a different beast, brandishing a newfound sobriety (to be broken later) and hunger.

Nonetheless, if his opponent was a different beast, Jai remained a beast tamer, with each forehand sounding like a whip snapping. He took an epic first game.

Play really started to heat up in the second. As the game stretched out and the legs started to tire, the blocking strategies discussed at the annual Blues Dinner and Strategy Meeting™ were starting to be displayed. Upon reaching 8-8, for the second time in Varsity history a player chose to play to 9; unfortunately, this play was fruitful for O\*ford, giving them an epic second game.

As the ball became soft as a marshmallow, the rallies finally started to shorten, unfortunately to the detriment of Jai, who'd been working his opponent like a dog for the previous 40 minutes. A mix of fabulous shot-making and devious blocking led the day's opener to tip slightly towards O\*ford, with the enemy claiming the third and fourth and a subtle feeling of excitement coming in from the O\*ford stands.

*O\*ford 3-1: 7-9, 9-8, 9-2, 9-5*





## #5 Isac

Part-time masters vs DPhil, a battle of scum who shouldn't be allowed to play university sport (I hold just a couple of grudges), both players needed to bring out just a touch of that young man's fire that they'd felt in the past. This was accomplished.

I'm going to summarise what it's like to watch Isac using onomatopoeia. Bang, Screech, Bang, Screech, Crash, Roar. The clear strategy was to disorient his opponent with gunshot after gunshot, a strategy that, unfortunately, his American opponent had already adapted to. A ridiculous high pace, and a few stray errors left Isac struggling, down 2-0 but clearly with a leg in the match.

At this point a genius strategy switch up occurred, changing out full-power straight drives for equally full-power cross court nicks. He sent his opponent packing in the third, demoralised and lost with what to do.

It seems he figured out the answer, with all momentum behind Isac pulling a master comeback, his crafty opponent snapped both his momentum and his glasses in two with a serious follow-through. After a "contributed injury" and a change in glasses prescription, Isac had his work cut out and, despite fighting to the very end, came up short in a thrilling match.

*O\*ford* 3-1: 9-2, 9-3, 2-9, 9-5

## #4 Weng Yean

The only Cambridge player to have played his opponent before, Weng Yean came on court with supreme confidence. With his fan club in the audience noting that he was topologically identical to a De Cecco spaghetti noodle, he must have been as relaxed as anything.

Weng Yean stormed through the first game, dancing across the tee and sending his opponent corner to corner (but particularly the backhand back corner) and



wearing him to death. Then after a brief lapse in concentration in the second, followed by a refocus in the third and fourth, he found him up 2-1, 8-1. "Surely it's done", the audience thought, with *O\*ford* looking haggard, and Weng Yean looking ever graceful. "It must be over soon."

However, flashbacks occurred to Weng Yean's conversation with his skipper earlier this



week. “Wouldn’t it be funnier if I made it look like he has a chance, made him work even harder, just to take away everything at the end?” As his captain I can say one thing, that was **not funny**. After gifting away the 4th on a whim and letting the tension rise in the fifth, Weng Yean decided to finally loosen up his wrists to the max (activating his apparent fluid ligaments to the fullest) and sealed the deal.

*Cambridge 3-2: 9-6, 3-9, 9-3, 8-10, 10-8*

### #3 Raphie

Before this match one of our key reporters asked Prithvi what to expect here, to which he said something along the lines of, “Well neither of them are able to hit drop shots, so you can mainly expect spectators

to walk out”. Such may be the fate of most matches between quintessentially English squash players, but not on this occasion. What it lacked in shot-making was made up for in tension.

The club’s resident long match merchant looked to not be wasting any time (by wasting loads of time) and took a tactical drop of the first game 10-9. After starting quickly in the second, and making good progress, the bad habit of maximising court time came in and yet again the game went the distance in favour of the opposition.

The third was frankly much the same - many say that had the umpire been of sufficient physical health (able to see) it too would also have gone the distance. Alas the O\*ford pencil triumphed over the Cambridge spaghetti in one of the longest 3-0 matches in Varsity history.

*O\*ford 3-0: 10-9, 9-8, 9-7*





## #2 Anant

Anant normally takes a SquashLevels detox before his matches so that he doesn't psych himself out before the match starts. His opponent clearly figured this out and targeted Anant on a platform he could never take a day off from, announcing that he was the number 1 squash player at O\*ford on LinkedIn.

Nonetheless, Anant stepped on court after his standard 45 minute warm up ready to hunt down anything his opponent could throw at him. It was clear from the first game that we were seeing a unique matchup – one player delicately placing every ball with precision and predicting the next,. The other attacking with the ferocity of an anteater on meth. Never moving at less than 100% speed, it was a true cat and mouse matchup. The first game unfortunately went to O\*ford. However, there was hope: in the early stages of the second it was becoming clear who could sustain their level for longer. Anant started to extend the rallies and extend the grunts, putting all the more work into the legs of his opponent. Unfortunately the effects were too little too late for the second game.



Alas we headed into the third, filled with hope as the enemy was panting and our ray of hope (Prithvi was done at this point) was bouncing. The shorts were raised 1 whole inch higher. There were messy moments and frantic shots, as well as some spectacular displays of touch and feel. It reached its climax in a massive dive from Adhish, after which Anant, being a computer scientist, used all of his algorithms courses to decide to boast it back to him. The most crucial rally of the match went O\*ford's way.

From there, the momentum proved too difficult to overturn and the Cambridge men officially couldn't pull off the 4<sup>th</sup> win in a row.

*O\*ford 3-0: 9-4, 9-5, 9-5*





## #1 Prithvi

A man who absolutely cared more than anyone else about the Light Blues, Prithvi had his girlfriend dye his hair so he could entirely embody fighting for the Light Blues. His opponent was a player who never displayed such loyalty, having represented Cambridge the previous year.

The goal for the day was to go out and make a match look like a squash player vs a tennis player, and that was accomplished. After a series of epic confrontations preceding it, we saw a phenomenal display of the brutality of English scoring.

The tensest moment of this one came at 7-0 in the third where, upon slamming a forehand volley nick, Prithvi broke his strings, leaving the man with no racket. The only thing that nearly resulted in a point for O\*ford was an overrun of the mandated equipment change time with our replacement holder Weng Yean disappearing into thin air. Thankfully Prithvi was able to make it back on court with a fresh racket and seal the deal with style, a true clinic and a glass of milk very well earned.

Cambridge 3-0: 9-0, 9-0, 9-0

*Report by Raphie Reeves*





## THE RESERVES



O\*ford is crap at many things. The Boat Race, for one. Having a correct meritocratic playing order determined via transparent and fair means is another. Organisation (the lack of it), however, truly takes the cake as their hamartia.

The impressive Cambridge roster for the 2025 Reserves Varsity Match struck so much fear into the mid-at-best O\*ford team that players from their side kept dropping out like excrement from birds on a serious course of laxatives. This meant that several Cambridge players who had been eagerly looking forward to smoking their opposition were unduly denied the opportunity to do so at the last minute. They say hell hath no fury like a squash player scorned, and there is no enemy like a team seeking vengeance. Although Shakespearean revenge quests usually end in tragedy due to the indecision of their protagonists, the overwhelming victory that Cambridge secured could not have been more decisive, with the overall score being one of the best results in years.

*Live love, laugh, GDBO.*





## MEN'S RESERVES

Cambridge **WIN** 13-2

#1 Natan Wiegenfeld, 3-2  
#2 Tom Wight, 0-3  
#3 Adam Brass, 0-3  
#4 Calum Harvey, 3-0  
#5 Ben Pang, 3-1  
#6 Neil Prabhu, 3-0  
#7 Peter Brealey, 3-0  
#8 Brandon McBride, 3-0

#9 Shash Bhandari, 3-0  
#10 Ollie Norton (*Capt.*), 3-0  
#11 Arjun Rajkumar, 3-0  
#12 Wil Jones, 3-0  
#13 Philip Mousavizadeh, 3-0  
#14 Seb Hickman, 3-0  
#15 Aaron Macwhirter, 3-0

*Friendlies:*  
Damir Kayani,  
Yonghao Zhao,  
James Hanrahan,  
Oli Pitman,  
Shawn Shen



While the Cambridge Men are not particularly known for their seriousness, they are not here to play games when it comes to winning Varsity. And truly, they did not have many games to play, for all 10 members of M3 and M4 won 3-0, easily securing a resounding win early on in the day for Cambridge. There have constantly been suspicions regarding excessive M4 spending at PP3 post-match dinners - just where are all those match fees going? Their performance at Varsity, however, squashed (pun





intended) any doubts against them, as they demonstrated that they are simply a hungry bunch with an insatiable appetite for bagels.

As an incredibly persistent and tenacious College Squash Captain who will not cease with his administrative nagging, Aaron is no stranger to commitment and consistency. This was evidenced in his Varsity debut match, where he wiped the floor so vigorously with his opponent that the court was left gleaming. Seb's time as a former Blues Golfer has left him with perfect control and a delicate touch to all his shots, and every one of his drops always finds their target. Though he constantly likes to remind us that he is 27 years of age, the way he glides around the court resembles that of a highly-coordinated baby giraffe on ice skates.

Philip and Wil continued this winning streak, driving home a solid 4-0 lead with their attacking play and deceptive manoeuvres. Although Arjun typically exhibits a welcoming demeanour as our Welfare Officer, it is essential to remember that his charitable work does not extend to O\*ford. While the state in which Arjun left his opponent panting on the court may not have been conducive to his welfare, it was most certainly benefitting ours. What a fantastic job he does in his role. Our M2 captain, Ollie, was up next, but the moment he stepped on the court, he was struck by an unnerving sentiment he couldn't quite place. I will do the honour of placing it for him - the level at which Ollie outclassed his opponent was somewhat reminiscent of him being forced to coach the weekly 10am Saturday Development Squad.

Two terms worth of suffering was enough for Ollie, and his win set a wonderful example for the rest of the team. Shash, Brandon, Peter, and Neil followed ensuite, emerging triumphant from their own matches and clinching the overall



victory for Cambridge as well. Despite having previously agreed that all matches would count towards the final result, this was probably when the O\*ford captain decided to conspicuously bracket off the M2 scores, claiming that only these would matter. Obviously, we just ignored this utter horsecrap, but there is no fun like rubbing salt in



an open wound, and M2 was saltier than the Dead Sea. Ben exemplified this by winning his match through a body serve - absolute cinema. With a clean win from Calum but hard-fought losses from Adam and Tom, the Cambridge crowd clenched their teeth - we were in for a (fake) decider.

In a match reminiscent of last year's epic, Natan brought us the only five-setter of the day. While the guy you should never tell your parents about in fear of comparison was fighting for his life on the court, the Cambridge crowd was engaging in another battle - that of wit. This was probably the only event of the day in which O\*ford could even be considered competition. Still, sadly for them, the Cambridge crowd is much more well-trained in the art of the mildly dubious nickname and is also not beyond using ChatGPT to assist in their creative endeavours. With one final shot of dying length into the backhand corner, Natan secured yet another accomplishment for his already impressive list of accolades, and the crowd erupted into cheers.

*Report by Kelly Yip*





## WOMEN'S RESERVES

Cambridge **WIN** 6-1

1. Isobel Evans, 3-0
2. Kelly Yip, 3-1
3. Martha Dunsmore, 3-0
4. Shreya Aggarwal (*Captain*), 1-3
5. Anabelle Wells, 3-0
6. Emmie Bailey, 3-1
7. Izzy Heath, 3-1

*Friendlies:*

Alison Dauris,  
Holly Oakley,  
Michelle Siu,  
Emily Lin,  
Lucy Lapworth,  
Fanghua Zheng



After another year of hardcore training (read: excessive sweet treat consumption) under the iron fist of our captain Shreya, the W2s were better and stronger, though not much bigger since our average height remains pretty low. Little did we know that this was all part of her grand scheme to psychologically condition us to hunger after any glucose-containing substance, namely bagels.

First to take to the stage were Izzy and Emmie. Despite both narrowly losing out on the first game, when one has a massive horde of blue-face painted Smurf-looking rabid squash fanatics cheering you on, there is simply no option but to win. Well-timed comebacks, featuring Izzy's signature boasts and Emmie's hardcore





smashes, put the women 2-0 up. Next came the iconic tag-team duo of silly and sillier, also known as our former and current W2 captains. Though she likes to proclaim herself 'whimsy,' Anabelle's performance on the court was anything but, with her no-nonsense, hard-hitting, and fast pace securing her a concrete victory. Up against a former CUSRC member, Shreya knew she was in for a challenge, and her opponent eventually triumphed, not without some hard-fought rallies. The foundation that training with CUSRC gives you is clearly just unparalleled. Now, Martha is



well-renowned within CUSRC for her likeness to a perfectly baked cookie: slightly hard on the outside but soft on the inside. To her opposition, however, Martha may as well have been Gordon Ramsay to an undercooked, unseasoned piece of chicken: terrifying, aggressive, and a master of the craft. With a final powerful drive of perfect length, Martha won her match and Varsity for the women.

Finally, it was time for Kelly and Isobel to put the icing on the cake, the cherry on top of the sundae, the swag in the bag. Armed with pages of detailed SquashLevels analysis conducted through perfectly legal means of stalking, a ginormous sign with an awful pun on her CRSid, and a disconcerting ability to write about herself in third person, Kelly was in it to win it. And truly, her performance (despite a minor flounder in the 3rd) was so stellar it was almost worthy of monetary reward equivalent to the hefty dent she put into the Hawks' tab at Welcome Drinks. On the other hand, Isobel



exhibits a much more patient character, having resigned herself to the treacherous walk from Downing to the USC multiple times a week and, unfortunately, bearing the heavy crown of designated away match driver. Clearly, all this had pushed Isobel to



her breaking point, for the speed at which she battered her opponent with absolutely clinical precision truly leads us to question the foundations of theoretical physics.

This day marked the end of an unfortunate multiple-year losing streak for the Women's Reserves, a satisfying taste of retribution for the 7-0 loss suffered last year, and hopefully the start of a dominant winning era for the team. Eyewitness accounts report many O\*ford women caught shedding tears in the hallowed halls of the University Sports Centre.

*Report by Kelly Yip*



On behalf of everyone on the team, I would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude towards Ollie and Shreya for their outstanding captaincy this year. It is no surprise why they were bequeathed captaincy gifts of T-shirts proclaiming, *“They didn’t just touch my heart – they touched my PP2”* and *“#1 worm mum”* respectively. Their joyous personalities, highly efficient administrative skills, and unwavering dedication to CUSRC have made celebrating this monumental win even sweeter - for what better way to spend an evening getting wildly intoxicated after some brilliant squash than in the company of the best club in Cambridge?



Thanks must also go to our President Anant Gupta, without whom many of CUSRC's achievements this year would not have been possible. Although he often regrets giving me a platform (our newly established club newsletter and meme account), I know without a doubt that very, very, very deep down, he secretly enjoys all the nonsense I spew.

To conclude, I would like to wrap up with a haiku:

*C-U-S-R-C,  
There's no better place to be.  
Always bleed light blue 💙.*

Yours truly,

Kelly Yip

~~The biggest name on CUSRC~~

CUSRC Social Secretary 24-25







## ALUMNI COMMITTEE UPDATE

A huge congrats to the students for an amazing, record-breaking year! The year has been filled with development and success on an individual and team level.

On the alumni front, we had a great Winter Alumni Event and a wonderful Centenary Varsity Dinner with over 80 Oxbridge alumni from throughout the decades. It is great to see that the CUSRC alumni community is thriving!

The Alumni Committee met in March 2025, where we mapped the future of alumni relations. Since March, we have made a lot of exciting progress: working with the Sports Service to finalise boards for the Women's Blues teams in the Sports Center (next to the existing Men's Blues boards); confirming the alumni donation structure; and organising the Summer Alumni Event. We will keep you updated on our progress.

I am incredibly grateful to all the members of the Alumni Committee for volunteering their time and expertise to guide the Student Committee and help shape the future of CUSRC. In particular, a huge thank you to Pierson Klein and Adi Varshney for editing and compiling this newsletter!

If you would like to get involved in the Alumni Committee (a low commitment, but high impact role), please email JuJu at [julianasganendra@gmail.com](mailto:julianasganendra@gmail.com)

*JuJu Ganendra*

*(on behalf of the Alumni Committee)*

