

## Clare Novice Regatta NW3 “Paper” Race Report

NW3 “Paper” went into the Plate as an underdog, set to compete against NW2 crews; however, they rose to the challenge. Rowing up to the start line in limited visibility, due to heavy fog, the crew collected together into a rhythm. Having spun and paused momentarily on Plough reach, they set off again for the first round of the regatta.

The first race was against Lucy Cavendish NW2, with the Pembroke crew on towpath side. The race was subject to technical issues, as the cox box ran out of battery during the start sequence of the race; however, after an impressive start from Paper, and following the opposing crew crashing into the meadowside bank, Lucy Cavendish were left behind in the fog to give Pembroke a decisive first victory in the tournament.



Following their success, and with a replacement cox box to replace the previous one, Paper returned to the start line to face Fitzwilliam NW2, again on towpath side. Racing a much fresher crew, as their opponent had failed to show up to the first round, one could have had reason to worry, but not for Pembroke. Fuelled by the adrenaline of their first win, Paper again pulled away from the opposing crew as the start sequence came to a close, and led them over the finish line by over a length in what can only be described as a perfect race.

To the start line once more, Paper found themselves, this time on meadow side to face Lady Margaret NW3. The third round started with tragedy, as the boat turned sharply to strokeside off the start; to avoid hitting the meadow side bank, the crew had to ease and reset, and rejoin the race with half a boat length between the bow and stern of the two crews. Undeterred by this, Pembroke began to make up the ground, and by the end of the start sequence were back to eight seats down. Each call came with a corresponding move: first they brought the cox the cox, then the seven seat, followed by four, two, bow, and finally the bowball, which they held for the last couple of hundred metres past the railway bridge to win by a boat length. An astounding comeback, and an incredible race!



So Paper at last found themselves in the final, facing off against Caius NW2, and back on towpath side. The initial start resulted with interference between the two boats, resulting in a restart of the race from part way down the reach. Sadly, Caius pulled away off the restart and proceeded to win, but Paper rowed home with their heads held high, all nine proud of how well they had done, the improvements the crew had made, and a second place finish.