

Meet the OUSC Blues Team for the 2020/21 Season

Christy Sadler – President

Year: 4

Course: Chemistry

College: St Peter's



Swimming Story: Having taken over a 4 year break from competitive swimming, I decided to trial for OUSC Blues team in my 2nd year. I was nervous about getting back in the pool but the Blues team captains/coaches were so reassuring. I got back to my old speed surprisingly quickly and even managed to PB!

OUSC is so different to age group swimming clubs (in the best possible sense). The captains and coaches have such a good understanding of Oxford life and how busy it can be. There is far more flexibility and the training programme is designed so that you can successfully balance academic work with sport.

The club is full of such positive and driven people and the people are really what makes OUSC such a fantastic club to be a part of.

Top Tip: Stay organised and make sure you're on top of your work. It makes going away to competitions for the weekends or having hungover days off far more relaxed!

Favourite OUSC Moment: A tricky one...it's got to be winning Varsity or post-training trips to Tortilla

Matty Johnson - Men's Captain

Year: 3

Course: Biochemistry

College: Exeter



Swimming Story: Like most I started off as an age group swimmer training with Liverpool, I loved it, all the competitions, training chat and just having a solid group of mates. Went to nationals early doors and wanted to compete more but as we all got older, most of my mates dropped out. As a result I moved to triathlon and competed at British champs for a few years.

In my first year at Oxford I trained with the blues for the swim of tri, it was amazing and brought back all the elements I used to love back in the day. Everyone just wants to be there, get on with it and have a quality time. I decided I wanted to fully commit to this environment so I quit tri and have been swimming with the blues fully ever since, best decision ever. It's like a family.

Top Tip: As stressful as Oxford seems, it's so much easier doing something you love with a quality group of mates around you. Get stuck into everything thrown your way, you won't regret it.

Favourite OUSC Moment: Either first Varsity win or getting slopped by El chopo in the Beer 100 on training camp (you'll have to wait and find out)

Zoe Faure Beaulieu - Women's Captain

Year: 3

Course: Chemistry

College: Pembroke



Swimming Story: I've been swimming since I was 10, did the typical age group swimming path through counties, regionals and eventually nationals. I took a year off when I was 17 (before coming to uni) as I fell out of love with the sport and just needed a break.

When I went to uni I knew I wanted to trial for the team and I have never looked back since. Joining OUSC has been incredible, the team is my second family and I've loved every minute of it. Doing a hard session with everyone supporting and pushing each other is a really great feeling, especially when its followed by a good social. I love how different it is to age group swimming and the amount of control each student has over their season.

Top Tip: Make time for things outside your degree especially in first year!! The uni has so much to offer so just go out there and get involved.

Favourite OUSC Moment: OUSC Christmas dinner or annual secret santa during swim camp (and a varsity win never goes unmentioned)

Max Underwood - Men's Vice Captain

Year: 2

Course: Physics

College: Keble



Swimming Story: I've been swimming since I can remember and started competitively with my local club when I was 8. I swam all the way through school and made nationals the last couple of years but was undecided about continuing at uni because I knew what the work at Oxford would be like and wasn't sure I could balance that with the time commitment of swimming. I turned up to trials anyway and was immediately won over. I joined the blues team and haven't looked back since - competing at Varsity in my first year was an incredible experience but I've also loved the day to day training and social side of OUSC

Top Tip: If you're struggling with work or anything else speak to someone about it - we've all been there before and we're happy to help out :)

Favourite OUSC Moment: Winning Varsity and the celebrations afterwards ;)

Claudia Murray - Women's Vice Captain

Year: 2

Course: Medicine

College: Merton

Swimming Story: Swimming with the uni has been so much fun and such a good way to relieve stress. I was nervous about swimming at uni because I had taken a break from competitive swimming but it really wasn't a problem with everyone being so supportive.

Favourite OUSC Moment: winning varsity!



Felix Gallagher – Treasurer

Year: 2

Course: Economics & Management

College: Teddy Hall



Swimming Story: I did the standard swam at nationals as an age grouper, got injured, hated swimming and quit and then came back at a different club but was going to quit after year 13. My coach told me to give uni swimming a go because it's so different to age group and he reckoned I'd have a good time. The team vibe is so different at uni and it's definitely so much more fun; I'm definitely glad I turned up to trials in freshers week!

Top Tip: Keep your Wednesday evenings free for some rather large socials

Favourite OUSC Moment: Post training scrum with the boys has got to be up there

Sophie Laurence – Secretary

Year: 2

Course: Chemistry

College: LMH



Swimming Story: I've been swimming competitively for nearly as long as I can remember. After taking almost 6 months off swimming to travel before coming to Oxford, I was definitely super keen to get back into the water in some form at university.

I completely underestimated the amount that swimming at university could positively impact my whole first year, but since joining the team I've made a group of friends for life.

Swimming at university is a completely different feel to age-grouper sessions; the team is a family which balances training with uni work, socials and a lot of light-hearted banter.

Being a part of OUSC is not something you want to miss out on!

Top Tip: Make sure you get involved with clubs and societies! The 8-week terms go by very quickly and it's super important to keep a good work-life balance.

Favourite OUSC Moment: Training camp - spending a week swimming in Lanzarote with the team was such a fun and memorable way to start the new year (and get some excellent tans)

Spencer Williams - Social Secretary

Year: 3

Course: Biology

College: Christ Church

Swimming Story: I swam for Brompton SC, a small team in London since I was 7 years old. When I got to uni, I was planning to stop swimming but I changed my mind last minute and I'm so glad I did. Swimming at Oxford is really fun!

Top Tip: Get a bike !

Favourite OUSC Moment: Varsity first year



Owen Lawton - Welfare Officer

Year: 2

Course: Materials Science

College: St Catherine's



Swimming Story: I carried on swimming through my GCSEs and A Levels but had massively fallen out with it and I was just swimming for fitness. Uni swimming has a very different vibe to age group where everyone is there for the team rather than themselves and it brings out the best in the team. This change in attitude really helped me to enjoy it again and enjoy getting down to Iffley on cold rainy nights :))

Top Tip: Meal prep is everything

Favourite OUSC Moment: The crowning of our first El Choppo after the inaugural annual Beer 100 on swim camp (non-drinking option was also available).

Esme Briggs - Sponsorship & Publicity

Year: 2

Course: Law with European Law

College: Worcester



Swimming Story: I swam competitively from the age of 12 and I took a bit of a break when I was doing my A-levels. I wasn't sure whether I wanted to join the Blues team as it was a definite step up from any training that I'd done before, however I'm super glad I did! OUSC has been so helpful in keeping a work life balance as well as a great way of meeting new people.

Top Tip: Make the most of every opportunity you get at uni, you don't know what may happen!

Favourite OUSC Moment: Too difficult, so many of the socials have been very fun, but obviously swim camp & Varsity stand out

Ellie Corby – Webmaster

Year: 3

Course: Physics

College: Wadham



Swimming Story: I started swimming at a small club with an incredible head coach and I have always loved training. I started to enjoy the training more and more when my GCSEs and A-levels came around as it's great to take your mind off of work. My love for training got me into longer races and open water and this summer I started sea swimming which has been a great change during lockdown.

I was so keen to become a part of OUSC as a fresher but I never knew how exciting swimming competitions could be until I experienced The Varsity Match for the first time. This team has totally reignited my love to compete!

Top Tip: Stay organised and enjoy every second!! :))

Favourite OUSC Moment: My first year varsity win!!

Lara Reed – Open Water Captain

Year: 5 Course: Medicine College: Somerville



Swimming Story: Before coming to uni, I'd swum competitively for almost 10 years. I loved swimming, but was hesitant about continuing at uni. I didn't know whether it was time for a change and was also worried about balancing training with the step-up in work load. However, while the hectic Oxford life was a bit of a shock to begin with, I soon settled into a routine and found that it was very possible to find a good balance between the two. I'm so so glad I did decide to join OUSC as it has provided me with so many amazing opportunities from competing with a varsity-winning team, taking part in the unforgettable channel relay and most importantly making some of the most amazing and supportive friends, who I can't imagine my time at Oxford without!

Top Tip: There are so many amazing opportunities to get involved with. Be organised and find a routine that works for you and you'll be surprised how much you can squeeze in.

Favourite OUSC Moment: There's too many to decide: winning varsity, channel relay, training camp!!

Cameron Manley

Year: 4 Course: French and Russian College: Christ Church



Swimming Story: I started swimming competitively when I was about 10 and competed at Regionals and Nationals. When I was about 15 I started to lose interest and started rock climbing but came back to swimming whilst doing alevels. At first I found swimming at uni quite hard to balance with work and was very tempted to quit in the first few weeks of Michaelmas of my first year, but as I got used to it the team became a huge support network and a great place to take my mind off work and chill out.

Top Tip: Opening a box of pringles is a very slippery slope

Favourite OUSC Moment: Any social that involves pizza

Dom McLoughlin

Year: 8 Course: Astrophysics College: Oriel

Swimming Story: I just love being in water

Top Tip: Ask for help when things are going well, ask for care when things aren't. It's much easier to take on help when you're still feeling good, and can really help prevent things going bad. Trust the programme, trust the team, we are here for you

Favourite OUSC Moment: Lunchtime chat and winning Varsity matches



Luiza FT

Year: 4 Course: Medicine College: Magdalen



Swimming Story: Growing up, swimming was a huge part of my life and I struggle to think of a weekend that wasn't spent at a gala. I was completely swimming obsessed- even moving away from home to advance my swimming career. But, as the years went by, I began to enjoy the sport less and less. Then, when GCSEs/ A levels approached, I took a step back from the pool and focused more on my academics.

When I came to Oxford, I was really reluctant to swim again. It had been 2-and-a-half years and I honestly thought I would drown if I attempted more than 50m. However, my experience as an Oxford swimmer has really surprised me- I was able to complete that first 50m, start competing again and even PB! I really believe that the reason behind this re-kindled love for the sport lies in the fact

that I am surrounded by positive and motivating team mates. It may sound cheesy, but OUSC has enriched my university experience more than I can put into words.

Top Tip: Oxford may seem really overwhelming when you start as a fresher but I would really recommend taking up a sport/ hobby (such as swimming). Weirdly enough, I have found that being busier and taking part in a sport has made me better at organising my time!

Favourite OUSC Moment: Winning Varsity (x 3)

Tobermory Mackay-Champion

Year: 1 Course: DPhil Geology College: University



Swimming Story: Before university, I trained at Perth City Swimming Club in Scotland. Since coming to Oxford for my undergraduate degree four years ago, I have split my time between City of Oxford Swimming Club (COSC) and Oxford University Swimming Club (OUSC). Through a lot of hard work, I have managed to become a multiple British Open medallist and the 2020 BUCS Men's Champion at the 200m LC breaststroke.

OUSC has been an amazing club to be a part of: we have worked hard, spurred each other on to be undefeated in the Oxbridge Varsity match for the last four years, and had a lot of fun. Competing at Varsity and BUCS competitions alongside OUSC teammates was a real highlight of my undergraduate. There is something incredibly special about Varsity.

Top Tip: Get involved with sport. It's great for meeting friends and looking after your physical and mental wellbeing

Favourite OUSC Moment: Winning Varsity and my first Oxford Blue in 2016.

Jamie Towner

Year: 6

Course: Medicine

College: Worcester



Swimming Story: Before coming to Oxford, I swam for Bath and competed nationally until the age of 14/15. I fell out of love with training every day and being one of the oldest in the group, so I decided to pack the swimming in.

Coming to Oxford I knew I wanted to join swimming for the social, but I didn't think about taking it too seriously. 5 years later and joining OUSC was the best uni decision I made. The socials are great, the people are lovely, the training is fun and the standard of swimming is incredible. Varsity against Cambridge is the best sporting event you will ever be part of!

Top Tip: Don't miss out on sport and other fun for the sake of work (save that for your finals)

Favourite OUSC Moment: First varsity win

Miles Clark

Year: 3

Course: Engineering

College: Hertford

Swimming Story: Best thing about swimming at Oxford: Team spirit!

Something you wish you knew before applying: Being part of the team is not just about the training, there are social events to look forward to. Ya dig



Louisa Zolkiewski

Year: 3

Course: DPhil Genetics

College: Trinity



Swimming Story: I started swimming in my local club in Manchester when I was 11 and after my first competition I was instantly hooked. Before uni I swam to a regional level but took some time out when doing my undergrad degree in Newcastle as I didn't enjoy the team vibe. Since joining OUSC I've enjoyed training and competing again and can honestly say they are the best team I've ever been a part of!

Top Tip: Don't be afraid to talk to the coaches/captains about any worries you might have!

Favourite OUSC Moment: Being part of one big family! Oh and winning varsity of course ;)

Nicholas Lim

Year: 2 Course: DPhil Paediatrics College: Exeter

Swimming Story: I started swimming at the end of high school and after a brief hiatus, competed for the University of Rochester in the US. I've really enjoyed the support from our team and the flexibility provided by the sessions we ave. Our sets are quality

Top Tip: Beet juice.

Favourite OUSC Moment: Either varsity, or the birth of El Chopo.



Declan Pang

Year: 5 Course: Medicine (MD PhD) College: Queen's



Swimming Story: Was a bit unsure about whether to dip back to swimming after taking some time out for A levels with my home team, Tynemouth ASC, but can safely say there's been no regrets. OUSC's become a big part of my life in the best way possible and would recommend to anyone who's keen on being part of a quality group of people and beer.

Top Tip: Oxford's hard but it's even harder if you don't make time to do the things you enjoy.

Favourite OUSC Moment: Leading the squad to a Varsity victory and tucking into the Club's 4 x 50m freestyle relay record with some top lads.

O.U.S.C.

Blues Coaches

Zichen Liu – Head Coach

Year: Graduated

Course: Sport and Exercises Science

College: Loughborough University



Swimming Story: 6th in the Asian games, Ex international swimmer and have been coaching at Oxford University as their head coach for the past 3 years

Top Tip: As your head coach this year, I would like to remind all swimmers to take care of your health, relaxation is the key when you are training and don't give yourself too much pressure.

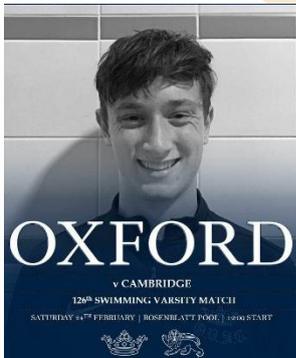
Favourite OUSC moment: Winning Varsity

Jacob Marchbank

Year: 4th year (eek)

Course: Physics

College: Magdalen



Swimming Story: Before coming to Oxford I swam in Scotland at Perth City Swim Club (with Toby!). Sadly, despite enjoying the great atmosphere on poolside, I became very frustrated and despondent with swimming due to a run of really poor form towards the end of my time at school. Joining OUSC really rekindled my enthusiasm for the sport. The close, warm and sociable team was unlike anything I'd experienced before and made the start of Uni a whole lot more fun! (I even managed to crack out some PBs in my first term). Unfortunately, despite this enthusiasm, I had to stop swimming during my first year and have coached the blues squad alongside Zichen ever since! While it's not the same as being in the pool with the team - it's been great to stay involved with the squad (serving up hard sets and not having to do them was also a welcome change...).

Top Tip: Take your time adjusting to life in Oxford - there's far too much going on to fit into one degree - there's no need to rush to do everything at once!

Favourite OUSC moment: Spencer's stellar freestyle relay split to win varsity 2k19. The stuff of legends.