

THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

ROWING ARMY IN LONDON

23 Durham boats raced at the Head of the River. No other university came close!

WOMEN'S HOCKEY ONE WIN FROM THE TOP

7-0 win over Wakefield puts promotion within touching distance. A draw next week to reach the Premier League.

DURHAM V EXETER – RIVALRY REIGNITED

Palatinate rugby features old foes Exeter—a fitting moment to look back at 15 years of sporting competition.

PLUS:

WEEKEND COLLEGE CHEER(ING)

PLAQUE MEMORIES: KEITH SARGEANT

READER FEEDBACK

TEAM OF THE WEEK

HOW DID THEY DO? ALL SPORT REVIEW

NAMING OF NEW BOATS



DURHAM SPORT WEEKLY DIGEST

Impressive Turnout From Durham

This weekend saw 23 Durham University and College crews take to the water in London at the Head of the River. As far as I can see, from the 336 boats that finished the course, no other university or club came anywhere near this representation.

Durham's first eight finished in 19th and we were the sixth university home behind Cambridge, London, Oxford Brookes, Edinburgh and Newcastle. The crew finished one minute behind winners Leander and seven seconds behind both Newcastle and Edinburgh. The second eight finished 42, and the third eight 73.



We should be very proud of sport at Durham, as this is yet another example of an achievement that no other university in Britain can even try to match.

Congratulations to **Collingwood College**, who finished 112 ahead of first eights such as York, Lancaster, St Andrews and Liverpool. Trevelyan will have been delighted too, with their 135 placing, also beating university eights, Swansea, Southampton and Heriot Watt. Collingwood B came in 149, beating Manchester 1st eight. Great results!

There were further excellent rows from our colleges, with the final list as follows: University College 201, Hatfield 213, St John's 218, Hild/Bede 224, Van Mildert 230, Butler 232, Grey

245, St Cuthbert's 248, Durham University fourth eight 278, St John's B 282, Collingwood C 289, Trevelyan B 297, Hatfield B 312, St Aidan's 315, Van Mildert B 316, University College B 318 and St Cuthbert's B 319.

Certainly, thanks are due to all those who ensured the boats got there and back safely and to all who helped with accommodation in London. A massive logistical exercise.

We should be very proud of sport at Durham, as this is yet another example of an achievement that no other university in Britain can even try to match.

Finally, huge congratulations to alumni **James Vogel** and **Levin Gaf** who rowed in the winning Leander eight.

Durham Closing in on League Titles

We are very near the end of the season for our hockey, football and rugby and all the hard work looks as though it might pay off.

First to our **women's hockey first team** who travelled to bottom of the table

Wakefield and recorded a very impressive 7-0 win. The result put a hole in Beeston's goal difference lead as we are now just one goal adrift. In actual fact this is not going to make any difference to the league outcome now.

Durham will travel to fourth placed Gloucester City next week knowing a win or a draw will see them promoted to the top league in the country. We wish them every success.

Men's hockey I result last week meant that they had ensured safety in their league, and they have worked very hard for that. They played Deeside at home this weekend and while it was not a crucial game, they would have been a little disappointed to lose out 2-1. **Women's hockey II** earned a 4-4 draw away at Fylde while **men's hockey II** lost out 2-0 in Wakefield.

TEAM OF THE WEEK

22.03 | 15:30
WIS VS WAKEFIELD 1'S (A)

1	MADDIE BOYES (GK)
7	LIZZY POCKNELL
12	AVA WADSWORTH
19	AMELIE HALES
21	HELENA YOUMANS
22	LORNA CRAWFORD
26	EMMIE GILBERT
28	EVELYN WILSON
41	ELENA BAGGETT
53	SCARLETT SPAVIN (C)
57	DARCY LITTLEFIELD
71	MOLLY MORRIS
75	JESS GILBERT
76	EMMIE BOOTH
80	EMMA PAGET
91	LAURA COTTEE

The **men's football** situation is somewhat clearer as they seek promotion to Northern League Two. They won 4-2 away at Anfield Plain and with two games still to play they have 76 points. Second placed Durham Corinthians have seven games to play but their points score of 50 means that Durham cannot be caught.

A long season but worth the effort. Well done all.

Finally, to our rugby Palatinat side, who recorded yet another win, beating North Shields 38-31 at home. Two games to play and Durham sit on 93 points. Gateshead, with only one to play, have 88 points and Houghton are back in third on 76.

FROM THE COLLEGES

Some Weekend Cheer For Durham Colleges



Beyond the end of term it might be, but this did not stop large numbers of college students staying back in Durham to take part in the 2025 Intercollegiate Cheerleading Championship. The results were as follows:

Collingwood College students were the overall Grand Champions.

In the individual events:

1. Pom .. Phoenix - Stephenson & John Snow (joint)
2. Co-ed Main Stunt - Collingwood
3. Co-ed Group Stunt - Trevelyan
4. All girl Main Stunt - Trevelyan
5. All girl Main Comets - Grey & South (joint)

Two Major Wednesday Games for Durham

Rugby

First of these was the quarter-final of the BUCS rugby championship with Durham taking on Exeter at Maiden Castle. Given the game was out of term, a relatively large but increasingly stunned crowd watched on as the Durham side were 31-0 down within 30 minutes. Definitely a shock for all of us but make no mistake, this was a very impressive opposition. A penalty try for Durham just before half-time and two excellent run in tries immediately after the break pulled the score back to 31-21.

Durham's attempt to then run the ball on all possible occasions eventually cost them, the final score being Durham 21 Exeter 55. The end of a very long, but in the main, successful season for Durham in this hugely competitive league.

Cricket

Our first cricket match of the season saw Durham take on Durham County, just back from their tour of Zimbabwe, at the County Ground.

The Palatinates will have been delighted with their score of 327 for 9. Durham lost early wickets but 91 from Ekansh Singh (Hild/Bede) and a magnificent 111 from Charlie Whipple (St Cuthbert's), coming in at seven, more than steadied the ship. In a great all round performance Charlie Whipple took 3 for 29 as Durham bowled out the County for 413.

The University started well in the second innings but from a score of 98 for 2 the Palatinates collapsed to 188 all out. The big standout performance came from Wilf Fontaine-Jackson (Collingwood College) who scored a very impressive 105. The first team will have been delighted to score over 500 runs against Durham County. We've not had many century makers against County sides over the years and to get two in one game is a wonderful achievement. It hopefully bodes well for the season ahead.

A lead of just over 100 was never going to be enough despite Durham taking a very early wicket. Overall, the university bowlers will not have been too downhearted with their return in the second innings as the County scored 107 for three to take the win. Great effort guys!

Durham and Exeter - Closest of Rivals

It's quite timely to take a closer look at Durham's long-standing rivalry with Exeter—especially as the Palatinate rugby team faced Exeter University this week.

In recent years, Exeter has emerged as Durham's closest challenger in the BUCS standings and arguably our greatest

sporting threat. Both universities have made significant progress over the past decade or so, but Exeter's rise has been particularly striking—climbing from twelfth place in 2009 to fourth last year.

As the table shows, Durham's progress has also been significant - from sixth in 2009 to second some years later and then back to third. Clearly 2018/19 was a very good year for the Palatinates.

Of course, part of the reason for both universities amassing ever more points over the years is the inclusion of a greater number of sports. However, it also reflects the success of Durham's performance programme, together with the increasing number of teams we field each week.

Playing Exeter in the quarter-final of the Championship is a timely reminder that they are now undoubtedly our nearest challenger - they sit fourth in the BUCS points table, right behind us in third. Finally, and to update the story, the present points table has Durham on 4724 against Exeter's 4222.

Year	Durham		Exeter		Points Difference
	Position	Points	Position	Points	
2009	6	2182.5	12	1676.5	506
2010	6	2417.5	10	1848	569.5
2011	4	2842	8	2200	642
2012	2	3484.5	7	2434.1	1050.4
2013	2	3418	5	2668	750
2014	2	3565.5	6	2815	750.5
2015	2	4092.7	6	3044	1048.7
2016	2	4080.5	5	3548	532.5
2017	2	4815	5	3435	1380
2019	2	5021	6	3454	1567
2020	3	4507	5	3747	760
2021	3	3914.33	5	3327	587.33
2022	3	5097	5	3721.5	1375.5
2023	3	5901.5	4	4996.5	905
2024	3	5717	4	4979	738

Plaque Wall Memories: Keith Sargeant

There are a number of plaques on our wall that are there to mark the untimely death of some of our former students.

This week's plaque singles out a larger-than-life character known by so many former students of Durham, in particular many Bede students and those involved with Durham and College rugby.

Keith Sargeant played for the University first fifteen in the front row and had the privilege of playing at Twickenham in a UAU final. These were the days when Bede College also played in the British Colleges against the likes of Carnegie and Loughborough Colleges and Keith was very much a part of that too. He was indeed 'a legend in his own lifetime'. His size made him impossible to miss but it was his outgoing personality and his likeability that everyone who knew him would point out. I remember his funeral to this day, where everyone was encouraged to wear a rugby shirt and to sing 'Sweet Chariot'. The latter didn't really work as there wasn't a dry eye in the place and singing proved difficult for all.

Responses To Our Last Report

"Every week there is something to be proud of! The added value that Durham University offers its students, experiencing College or Varsity sport, will last a lifetime in the minds of those who engaged."

"I am always impressed by these reports and how well Durham does. The number of competitions amazes me and having recently refereed some basketball at Newcastle it is always a very high standard."

"The women's fencing looked like an amazing encounter. I gather the final score in the sabre was 45-13 to Durham - what a great effort to try to pull back victory from the jaws of almost certain defeat."

"It is very clear to me that all students who find themselves at Durham University are SO lucky to have the opportunity to partake in virtually every sport known to man and woman and to such an excellent standard."

If you have any feedback, positive or otherwise, alumni news or suggestions for future additions to our plaque wall, please [get in touch](#).



How Did They Do? An All-Sport Review

Over the next eight or ten weeks we will be reviewing how all our university team sports have fared at all levels. In each case we will record the league they played in, their finishing position, whether they were promoted, relegated or survived to fight another day in the same league next year. We will also explore how each team did in their cup competition.

In this first review we will be covering the sports of American Football, badminton and basketball.

American Football

League: Third in Premier National League

Cup: Semi-finalists

A hugely successful year. They play in the National League. There are only four of these leagues across all sports and their results tell us that they were the third best side in Britain in a sport dominated by Nottingham and UWE. An excellent year for them!

Badminton

League: Tier 1 - First (play-off)

Cup: Last 16 National Trophy

Best all-round year for some time. Recent seasons have seen a fall away from the top tier but 2024/25 suggests a reversal of that trend. The men's first team are in a play-off against Glasgow which will hopefully see them return to the Premier League.

The women dropped to North Two some time ago but winning their league means they are back to North One next year. The thirds have gained promotion to North Two. The firsts also recorded a Conference Cup win to round off a great year for them.



Basketball

League: Fourth in Premier North

Cup: Quarter-Final National Championship

A highly successful sport for Durham over the years. Although such dizzy heights have not been reached this season, we will look back on 2024/25 with reasonable satisfaction.

Men's firsts finished fourth in the Premiership and the women achieved a highly creditable second in their Premiership.

The men will have been pleased to reach the quarter-finals of the Championship while the women probably went as far as they possibly could, making it to the last four in Britain. No promotions or relegations here but the men's seconds will have been delighted to make it to the last four in the Conference Cup.

Durham University Boat Club Names Boats After Alumni

As part of the celebrations at the Head of the River in London, four special guests were invited to The Winchester House Club in Putney, to see a new set of Durham University boats - named in their honour.

Although Durham University Boat Club is well supported by its alumni community, funding doesn't allow for the whole fleet to be replaced at once, so it happens in stages. Over the last three years eights have been bought as these are a priority. Once there were enough, attention was turned to other boat classes. The drive is to bring what was an aging fleet four years ago up to a new performance standard. To remain at the pinnacle of university rowing, to compete at the highest level, top quality boats are required.

This increases the size of the men's and women's coxless fleet to four each, so more athletes can train in a technically challenging boat and more people make progress faster. Also, more boats can be entered into different categories and potentially win more points.

Boat namings are held for every new boat. A few years ago it was decided that they would be named after our Olympic alumni, to better represent their legacies to current students. At the same time it was hoped that it would help create a better connection between Durham's older alumni base and the boat club.

No photo captions required - their names are on the boats!

- **Tracy Langlands** - Bronze medal at the 2002 World Rowing Championships
- **James Clarke** - Gold at the 2007 World Rowing Championships and Silver at the 2010 World Rowing Championships
- **Suzie Ellis** - Bronze at the 1997 World Rowing Championships
- **Phillipa Cross** - Fifth in the four and ninth in the women's eight at the 1991 World Rowing Championships

