

BOATHOUSE CHATTER

Welcome to the next issue of Boathouse Chatter.

A big thank you to all who have contributed to this issue.

In this issue we hear from a couple of our NHS doctors and teachers who have worked through the lockdown and how they have coped with new challenges and changing roles. It's great to hear how people have maintained their motivation to train and compete during a very difficult time and see how returning to old hobbies has opened up new opportunities.

Please send your news to anita@newlandmail.com by Sunday 14th June 2020. Next issue Sunday 21st June 2020

Let's work together to get enough content to issue the newsletter every other Sunday

Robbie Coleman is updating our Twitter account. Follow us on Twitter @PBDRC

DIARY DATES

- ATLANTIC ADVENTURE : AN EVENING WITH SARA AND ANN - SATURDAY 13TH JUNE 7.30PM VIA ZOOM
- SUNDAY 21ST JUNE AT 7.30PM – POPLAR ZOOM QUIZ
- JUNE 20TH 2020 -VIRTUAL REGATTA SERIES C
- 26TH SEPTEMBER 2020 BOATHOUSE 50TH BIRTHDAY
- AGM - TBC



➤ Trustee Update

Thank you all for your continued patience and support during these strange times. The trustees are working hard to get as many people as possible back out on the water, whilst working within the guidelines & rules set out by the government and British Rowing. We are pleased to provide the following update: - With effect from Monday 8th June 2020:

- Green scullers who don't have their own boat, can apply for a club boat to be allocated to them. Allocation will be made at the discretion of the trustees. Applications should be made by email directly to me at danbartlett1@btinternet.com
- Green scullers **from the same household** can apply to be allocated a club double. Allocation will be made at the discretion of the trustees. Applications should be made by email directly to me at danbartlett1@btinternet.com
- Four scullers will be allowed out within the ten minute time slot
- Amber scullers with their own boats can now go out, but only with a green sculler
- We are also looking into opening up the tank for sweep rowers. Details to follow in the next few days.
- The docks will reopen on the 20th June 2020. The same precautions will apply at the Docks as we are applying at the Club e.g. single sculls, buddy system, mobile phones etc. In addition there will be designated pontoons for going out and coming in. The Dock will only open on Saturday & Sunday mornings between 8am and 12 O'clock plus one evening during the week.

I'd like to thank Andrea personally for handling the booking system, which so far has been a success. Please liaise together and organise your own groups before booking with Andrea. Please respect Andrea's time and book before 8pm in the evening.

We have a number of events planned for June starting next Saturday, 13th June, when Sara & Ann will be doing a Q&A session about their Atlantic row. This has already received a lot of interest. There are still places available so please let me know if you would like to join in.

The following Sunday, 21st June, I will be hosting another quiz (no restocking of fridges needed this time). Once again, please email me directly for the Zoom details.

- Fees
- One last thing. The trustees have held back on asking people to pay their racking fees because of the current situation, but the revenue generated by people paying for their boat to be racked, is vital to the running costs of the club.

As privately owned sculls are now able to go afloat, it seems only fair that we now ask you to pay for your racking. Please ensure that payment reaches the club account by the end of June.

Stay safe
Dan

➤ Health & Safety Reminder – Nick Paul

First of all, thank you to everyone who is adhering to the guidance in terms of bookings and hygiene. I want to highlight a few key points from the guidance. Please remember to:

- ✓ Wash hands regularly and use the hand sanitiser provided.
- ✓ Wipe down all handles & door plates using the blue paper towel & disinfectant spray or use the wipes provided.
- ✓ Adhere to social distancing at all times and be mindful of the 2 meter rule. This will become increasingly important as numbers using the boat house increases.
- ✓ Please use your own face mask /face covering and gloves.
- ✓ Wash down all boats and sculls using the soap provided.
- ✓ Remember to have your phone with you at all times.
- ✓ Pull the boathouse doors together if you are the last boat out.

➤ Upcoming Events for June 2020

➤ Atlantic Challenge - An Evening with Sara Brewer and Ann Prestige *Saturday 13th June 2020 7.30pm via Zoom- contact Dan Bartlett*



Join Sara and Ann as they share the highs and lows of their Atlantic Adventure. It's hard to believe that it is almost six months since they left La Gomera on Friday 12th December 2019 and headed into the unknown of the Atlantic Ocean, on their way to Antigua.

We will have an opportunity to ask questions ahead of the event as well as on the night. Please send your questions to Dan by Wednesday 10th June.

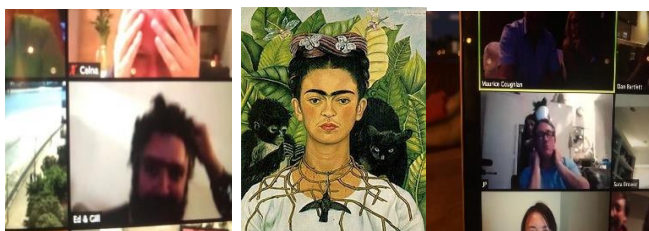
➤ Poplar Quiz via Zoom

Sunday 21st June 7.30pm – contact Dan Bartlett



The inaugural Poplar Zoom quiz was a great success. Who knew that the inside of your fridge could say so much about you! Contestants were challenged to match the fridge to its owner. A test of how well we know our fellow club mates which proved to be very accurate! Who is the owner/designer of this fridge?

The evening culminated in a tie break between JP and Ed & Gill. Ed's speedy impersonation of Freda eventually swung it and Ed & Gill were crowned the winners! JP had breezed past all the other contestants earlier in the evening with his creative impersonation of ET, complete with props. Join us for the next Poplar Zoom quiz on the 21st June.



➤ Get Involved

➤ Share what you are doing to keep fit and sane during the lockdown....

➤ *Circuits*

Monday, Wednesday & Friday from 5.45pm – contact Bev on samjunior135@gmail.com

➤ *Ladies Crew Training*

Tuesday and Thursday at 6.30 pm - Contact Szigyi.szogyi@gmail.com

➤ *Virtual Regatta*

Series C – scheduled 20th June - contact Paddy Boyle

The Virtual Regatta series organized by Bawl Bridge Rowing Club has been a huge success and great fun to take part in. Poplar doubled its entry between Series A and B. Can we do it again between Series B and C? The final 500m regatta is scheduled for Saturday 20th June 2020 so still time to have a go and get involved. Contact Paddy on Patrick.boyle@phonak.com

➤ Domestic news

➤ Men's Squad Update

Thames Challenge Update-by *Chris Scott*

All good races need a bit of controversy, and there was certainly some in the final stages of the Thames Challenge. After the previous update, it was a head to head battle between Boat 1 and Boat 2 for the top spot, almost each day the lead would change from one to the other. During the second weekend of the challenge though, it seemed Boat 2 had lost some steam as Boat 1 picked up a considerable lead and posted the final meters needed to reach the 692km goal on Tuesday 2nd June at 8am to complete the challenge in a remarkable 15 days 8 hours.

You think that would be it all over, but no sooner had the threshold been reached, than did certain members of Boat 2 come back with activities completed on the previous days which had not yet been recorded on the scorecard. Once these distances were added in, it appeared that Boat 2 had actually reached the 692km target the day before on Monday 1st June.

This posed a dilemma as we had not prepared for such an outcome. Which is more important, the fact the distance has been covered, or whether it has been recorded as completed?

In the end, it was decided that holding back scores and backdating them could provide a potentially unfair competitive advantage, and so Boat 1 were named the winners of this round as they indeed recorded their finish prior to Boat 2. Congratulations go to Federico, Dmitry, Gill and Chris EK.

Boat 3 and 4 are still battling their way to the finish. Boat 3 is now into the final 150km, while Boat 4 are almost at the halfway point. Can either team complete the challenge with only 1.5 days remaining?

PBDRC Thames Challenge (updated 06/06/2020 at 12.30pm)								
Team Name	Bike (km/3)	Run (km)	Walk (km/2)	Erg (Km)	Other	Total Km	% Completed	Ranking
Boat 1	182.6	104.9	7.5	448.6	53.1	796.6	115.1	1.0
Boat 2	85.2	176.0	22.5	289.2	174.2	747.1	108.0	2.0
Boat 3	103.7	151.0	29.3	217.6	45.0	546.6	78.9	3.0
Boat 4	158.5	74.4	0.0	13.8	95.4	342.1	49.5	4.0

A particular mention has to be made to the following people who made incredible contributions to their teams:

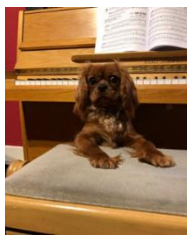
Gill	370 km
Ed	313 km
Eze	207 km

Below we also have the competitors who covered the most distance in each activity:

Name	Activity	Distance	
		Contributed	Actual
Chris EK	Bike	128 km	384 km
Chris S	Run	105 km	105 km
Alexis	Walk	18 km	36 km
Gill	Erg	328 km	328 km
Matt	Circuits	95 km	9.5 hours
Mark	Other	22 km	Various

Overall, a very fun competition providing a good way to keep up the motivation for training. We may run the challenge again in a few weeks' time and it would be great to have others in the club involved in the competition also. If it goes ahead, I will send out details nearer the time on how to sign up.

➤ *Lockdown Reflections – by Alan Taylor*



During this lockdown I have been thinking that when I and the other ‘footballers’ joined the Club in September 1979, that I would never have believed 4 of us would still be closely associated with the Club today – George Bartlett, Dave Paul, Billy Blunden and me; one Captain, two Secretary’s and a Committee Member (Trustee today). I was also wondering how many people had joined the Club in that period of time, some just passing thru’ after a month or so, some for a few years, some much longer and then those that are still here today. That’s not to forget of course a good many who were already members when we joined and are still around.

Richie has taken up the mantle of acting as a worthy successor to Harry Read as our in-house historian of late, such as identifying past members from old photos, listing the long and diverse list of nationalities that have joined us in more recent times (most of us East Ender’s can just about manage the Queen’ English, let alone any of the other rich languages on offer) and naming a good number of those who met their opposite halves thru’ being a club member. But to remember the many hundreds of people who would have joined, left or stayed in just my time with the club would definitely challenge him. A fairer task might be to list the different occupations our members have had since diversifying from those early days of just watermen and lightermen; we’ve had quite a few, not forgetting being detained at Her Majesty’s pleasure of course!

Before Issue 2 of this excellent Newsletter came out Anita had e-mailed a few of us, asking if we could send a few words on how the 5 O’clock Club were doing and were we still exercising together via a virtual platform? The 5 O’clock Club members rarely exercise together even when we are in the gym doing a circuit. Some will start an exercise thinking they have heard ‘go’, others will join in 5 or even 10 seconds later and some even finish after the minute has passed, normally me because Whispering Gary Whittaker (for those that remember - homage to Bob Harris of The Old Grey Whistle Test fame) had been calling the time and I needed Steve Woolams to shout ‘stop’.

So Steve Sale is still top of the injury’s leader board – good job I say, as I hoped he would get his comeuppance one day. In the old days, before doing a commando circuit round the school or a gym session on every Monday thru’ Thursday, you would do a run around the Queen’s (Tesco express near the Blue Bridge today) or Greenwich Park. I always thought Steve was being a good mate by often asking me to run with him, as although he was always quicker it certainly helped to improve my own running. But it had nothing to do with that, it was Steve’s insurance. We would normally pass a dog or dogs being walked off of their lead and they would invariably latch on to the back of my leg, fortunately never drawing blood, but I would always hear “*He’s never done that before.....*”, being much to Steve’s amusement as he was never targeted. Should we ever embark on another run, admittedly we’ve got more chance of winning the Euro Millions than that happening, I would bring my own ankle-biter with me as I know she doesn’t nip too hard!

➤ *Lockdown allotment times - by Celine Marchbank*



I’ve had an allotment plot for about three years, but ever since taking up rowing again I’ve never really had enough time to use it to its full potential, I’m always too tired after rowing on the weekends or too busy with work on the weekdays. But after the Covid crisis hit and having lost most of my work, I’m a freelance photographer and university lecturer, I suddenly had ample time to get up there. After recovering from having Covid myself in March, I spent much of April planting seeds in my greenhouse in my garden and then taking them across the street to plant in the plot, and watch them grow into lovely tasty food to eat. Growing my own food seemed to have much more importance now too! The allotment has come into full spring bloom now with an array of fruit and vegetables

including Artichokes, Asparagus, Rocket, Chard, Kale, Spinach, Garlic, Peas, Potatoes, Strawberries, Cherries, Plums, Rhubarb, many different herbs, and so much more to come as we move into summer. Working an allotment is tiring; back breaking digging and weeding, lugging never ending bags of soil up the hill, constant watering and worrying your plants are doing to die, but it’s all worth it when you can sit back and look at it, enjoy the birdsong, the spring evening breeze, and of course the taste of your own grown vegetables on your dinner plate! I’d urge anyone to start gardening, even just planting up a few pots of stuff is instantly satisfying, it’s been so therapeutic for me through this stressful time, so give it a go!



Another change this year was I started to notice the many flowers growing around the plot, they always got a bit overlooked. Being a photographer, I decided to start taking pictures of the flowers I was picking, so I took an image each day of the lockdown, which has become a body of work of 70 images called Shot in Isolation. I’ve been selling prints from this series as part of an initiative called Artist Support Pledge which was set up to support artist through this time. If anyone would like to see these please check out my Instagram page: <https://www.instagram.com/celinemarchbank/>

➤ *A Teacher during Lockdown* - by *Celna Bekker*



Being a teacher during the lockdown has been an interesting experience. I think Friday, 20th March will be etched in staff, pupils and parents' memories for years to come. Saying good bye to our pupils on that Friday was a sad moment. None of us knew when we would see our school community again. I remember fighting the tears as I locked our school gate as the last family left.

Since then, we have quickly learnt to adapt; as humans usually do.

Our school has remained open for pupils of our wonderful key workers and as a staff, we took on new routines; working from home four days a week whilst going to school on the 5th on a rota basis. At first it felt odd, having to remind our pupils and each other to wash hands, keep social distance, etc. This soon became the norm, although it can be tricky with our younger learners, especially when they are excited to see one another! I have never felt prouder to be part of my school community; everyone has pulled together, checking up on one another and helping where possible. Since my school is situated in one of London's most deprived areas, many families have suffered financially.

My role has changed from teaching to phoning parents and pupils daily, delivering food parcels or nappies to families with new babies, doing home visits and just having chats. Our class teachers provide weekly work to all children and we ensure we provide stationary to those who do not have access to this. Mental health is at the forefront of everything we do nowadays, and just having a chat with parents has been very valuable. I certainly have found that this has helped me equally!

Some of our classrooms are being used as a food distribution hub for the borough, and it is wonderful to see volunteers from our community working together to care for those who need it most.

Moving forward, we have all had staff training (which we had to do in small groups of 10 to adhere to social distancing), set up 'bubbles' of 8 pupils across school, adapted our policies and procedures (including our fire drills) and have had ample staff and governing body meetings via zoom.

When our year one pupils return later this month, we will be ready and will be very happy to see their friendly faces again. Hopefully we can all go back soon to some sort of normality.

➤ *Motivating Young athletes* - by *Maurice Coughlan*

Lockdown came upon us quite swiftly and we didn't have much time to prepare for the isolation and what that would mean to everyone, including coaches, how we would cope with the isolation and, above all, our freedom.

As an organisation, LYR, decided to close down all sessions from March 18th which included all programmes in schools, clubs, youth clubs etc. at the time I was feeling the reaction was too much too soon and wanted to continue in a limited capacity. Hindsight has shown it was the correct thing to do and not only looking after the squads we run but also the coaches and volunteers that help run the clubs.

So to keep the momentum in the training regime we set up Zoom and ran our first session on Mon 23rd March. I adjusted the sessions to accommodate the lack of equipment, set the time to meet as we would have during normal operation to maintain a form of regularity. In the early stages of shutdown, with COVID-19 on the rise, I kept the intensity of sessions lower than normal at this time of year so as not to have athletes fall ill due to depleting their immune systems with training stress. In spite of this 5 members of the squad fell ill from the virus but are happily recovered and are back in training. Some had ergos, most didn't so I ran sessions on gym style activities while replicating rowing as much as possible. For the first week this was received well by those without ergs but those with wanted to maintain the fitness and toughness ergs will give. I started hunting down ergs within the organisation and over the next week managed to secure 19 from storage, clubs and hospital programmes where they were not being used, so equipping all the squad with one per household, siblings sharing. As the ergs were collected I issued each athlete with weights disc 5-10kg, dumbbells and barbell. This gave us more options during training sessions, although some are using juice bottles, ruck sacks full of books, chairs etc. it also gave us the ability to get virtual racing with other clubs and set up our own competitions to compete against each other. Having issued the ergs I was then concerned about the technical aspects of rowing and how unsupervised ergs can develop very poor technical/postural issues leading to injury. This led me to set up double sessions on Tuesday and Thursday so splitting the squad into smaller groups to enable more dedicated supervision during the ergo session. The session would run as follows:

WARM UP 10-15 mins

This warmup targeting hip flexors, glutes and hamstrings while still mobilising all major muscle groups to enable good posture on the ergo

ERGO. I set a limit of 20 min technical

I went back to basic movement for everyone, including the older members, to eliminate the issues they have.

CORE

Having a smaller group enabled me to monitor the posture and strength issues for each individual and personalise their session. The whole session would last 60-75- mins

These sessions have proven to have been invaluable. The level of technical advances that have been made is remarkable and as a consequence their scores have improved. I have moved on to another phase now and so continuing the variation, keeping the session interesting and challenging.

Our first competition in the 2nd weekend of lockdown, against Lea RC, was a great opportunity to test everyone. We lost the contest, quite convincingly, but had some very good individual performances from some and an awakening for others. Since then we have joined the Bawl Ergatta on both occasions, have run our own competitions every weekend, we have been joined by athletes in Italy, America. Our past members, who are still training, have joined in our training sessions and virtual races we run. This has boosted spirits of the squad, especially having winners of the Boat Race, Henley Royal, European Junior, World Junior and U23 World champions amongst them mixing up with the squad session. We have had the opportunity to join the GB Adaptive squad in their training session “The Giza Pyramid Challenge” and last Sat the “Ultimate Fight Club” challenge which has been another great motivation for the squad.

As we enter our 11th week of isolation and our “Isolation Programme 4th Edition”, soon to become 5th, I am amazed by the kids and the numbers turning up for sessions. I mentioned earlier about the effects of lockdown on everyone, including coaches. The attitude and enthusiasm that the squad has shown towards continuing attending session and striving to maintain or improve their skills, is my motivation and I know it is for those that help me deliver the sessions.

➤ *NHS Doctor during Lockdown – By Rachel Moores*

It's been great to have hear how club members have been getting on since lockdown, and read how people are adapting and coping....I've carried on working during this time although in an entirely different way. Just like life for everyone, my life as an NHS doctor has changed a lot. Not long ago the hospital I work in offered so many different medical services; we did most things - maternity to cancer care, psychiatry to dermatology. But with dizzying speed, we have turned into something with an entirely singular focus, we are a pared down field service, everything given over to fighting coronavirus. Operating theatres have been turned into wards, corridors that recently buzzed with family are empty, and the hospital chapel turned into a much needed 'wellness room' for staff. Our work has changed too, our usual list of surgical patients have been cancelled for months to come, many of us have been 'redeployed' to the Covid wards, or intensive care. Colleagues from all over the NHS - psychiatrists, medical students, paediatricians, moved from their day jobs to help. Receiving an email with instructions to report for their new duties. I think people sometimes think of the NHS as a bit of dinosaur, slow to change, but watching everything unfold has been humbling, and wonderful to see what can be achieved in a short space of time. People have accepted, adapted, and just got on with it, like all of us.

I am usually an obstetrics and gynaecology doctor, the other end of the patient (as I'm often reminded!). Unlike many NHS workers, I have kept quite a few of my usual duties, women are still having babies. Although not quite in the same way. Their partners are not with them for the whole journey, just ushered in for the delivery and then sent packing. New mothers are then desperate to get themselves and their new bundle of joy home, out of the danger, out of the hospital. Our services are stripped down to the essentials. We meet patients behind many layers of PPE, which I've become an expert of getting into and out of. We start with an apron and then a tight mask fits over your nose, that you need to press firmly down to create a seal, then additional layers, visor, gloves, all sealed with tape. You can finish it all off with your name written across your front, to make it a little more personal. It can be hard to hear each other, its sticky and stifling, even breathing takes some effort, sweat builds up under your clothing seeping into your underwear. I am used to seeing the patient, meeting their family, building up a picture of who they are, but these days we are not able to, we are masked and so are they.

More recently though I've been out of harms way, and I spend a good portion of time talking to patients on the phone, completing phone consultations. We can't meet patients yet so we call them, and do what we can over the phone. People often wish us well, and it has been wonderful to have been so supported by the public. I know plenty of colleagues who have been far more in the front line than me, months spent within what is known as the 'red zone' and public support has kept them going. We've had daily donations of meals, support from local businesses and buckets of good will. Believe me, you'll never see a doctor run faster than when the free lunch shows up.

I've been lucky too in that I have not been unwell, plenty of my colleagues have, luckily all eventually recovered. We have been told now that we are entering the recovery phase, we're past the peak, people are coming through the doors for other reasons rather than a temperature and a cough. We have been told that services should normalise. I think it'll be a gradual and slow process. But there is hope, much like at the club, it's so wonderful to see people beginning to get back out on the river. Things won't be the same for a long time, but it feels like we are starting to turn a corner.

Just to add personal news to this, my risk exposure has been reduced at work, because I am pregnant. I think more than once before it's been commented that I have poor timing (usually talking about my rowing) - having a baby in the middle of a global pandemic is not ideal, but a new member of the Poplar family will arrive in September!

➤ *NHS Doctor during Lockdown – by Jennifer Watt*



When I'm not rowing, I spend my life as a surgical registrar working at the Royal London Hospital. I have been asked to give a little insight into hospital life and my experiences during COVID times. Whilst there have been dark times there has also been much to learn, much to improve upon and an outpouring of kindness and support from the public that I have never experienced before. The situation in China and then Italy had been a cause for concern throughout January. By February we fitted for masks and shown to put on and take off PPE safely. Protocols were circulated on how to reform procedures on patients that could be COVID positive. The information from Italy and China told us ICU was going to be crucial in managing COVID patients and that ventilation was an important part of treatment. Gradually our planned surgery stopped, emergencies slowed down, people even stopped stabbing each other for a while! No one knew what to expect but preparations for huge numbers of very unwell people began in earnest. The feeling in the hospital was of confusion and apprehension. Focus was moving from day to day care of routine surgical patients to managing the needs of COVID patients. Staff were being redeployed to areas of greatest need and non-urgent services either stopped or were carried out over the telephone.

As we began to receive more and more COVID patients Staff from the surgical department went to help in intensive care where the sickest patients were being looked after. We spent long shifts in full PPE, (mask, gown, visor) working in teams of 10 people to turn ventilated, unconscious patients onto their fronts in a last attempt to improve their breathing. This process requires manpower, good team communication, and time; a real challenge in a busy ICU when you can't see people's faces or hear well. Teams worked in 12-hour shifts round the clock turning around 20 patients per shift. At one stage we had over 200 ventilated patients across the hospital so with a bit of maths you can see the numbers of people required to manage just this one task was huge. My experience working in the Major Trauma team helped in what was otherwise an alien situation, I was used to being in a large team working in a chaotic environment and dealing with the death of patients. I only spent 3 weeks on ICU, we were quickly returned to the emergency surgical rota however our juniors remained there for over 3 months. On return to surgery we were on call intensively to ensure safe round the clock emergency cover, some military colleagues had been sent to NHS Nightingale others were shielding at home. No one regardless of experience had dealt with deaths on this scale before and the help and public support we received was both needed and appreciated.

As lockdown started there was an influx of donations from local businesses who found themselves unable to serve their regular customers. Food donations for staff arrived daily and brought such joy and relief. The time needed to get out of PPE, shower and change made leaving the ICU, getting food and getting back almost impossible in 30 minutes, having food available in the unit was fantastic. After a brief social media campaign, we also received a freezer to store left over food such that nothing was wasted. There is no better way of making someone feel appreciated and cared for than providing them with a meal.



For the first time in my NHS career there was support provided for staff dealing with the emotional toll of their job. With much of the paediatric department closed the children's play areas were given over to staff as relaxation areas to rest and talk with colleagues. Having this ability to be around other people away from the chaos of the wards was invaluable particularly for those of us living alone. Indeed, my surgical team spent a 'team building' night shift helping each other to scale the giant furniture!

The artistic projects were also fantastic for staff morale. Andy Leek's Notes to NHS Staff project, a spin-off of the long-standing Notes to Strangers began in January and is one of many bringing comfort and inspiration. Just distributing the notes around the hospital gave some of us a little bit of light relief from the day to day. My current boss, Professor Charles Knowles, consultant colorectal surgeon and country singer has written and released a song to raise money. His talent and work ethic are an inspiration to many of us.

Things are getting better, we have junior staff returning from ICU and patients seem to slowly be coming back to A&E with surgical problems of all types, even trauma is getting busy again. I am delighted to be back operating even if that is in full PPE and at a private hospital it feels like the light at the end of the tunnel. The greatest lesson I have learned is that our NHS staff are resilient and capable, with the right support there is hope we can build something much better for the future.



➤ Injuries League



Other sports can be very dangerous or are we accident prone.... Share your fun stories of the injuries you sustain trying to keep fit in lockdown. Who will be top of the league?

With no new entries ... Steve Sale remains top of the league!