

# THE WINGFIELD SCULLS

## BRITISH AMATEUR SCULLING CHAMPIONSHIP AND CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE THAMES

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### 2006 Championship

	Mile Post	Hammersmith Bridge	Chiswick Steps	Barnes Bridge	Finish
Alan Campbell (TSS)	4.40	8.10	13.45	18.36	22.48
Mark Hunter (Leander)	4.50	8.29	14.07	18.58	23.18
Ian Lawson (Leander)	4.41	8.24	14.00	18.56	23.28
Alex Gregory (Reading University)	4.52	8.37	14.24	19.28	23.56
Stephen Rowbotham (Leander)	4.54				
Umpire Chris Baillieu (1980-84 Champion)					

The 166<sup>th</sup> race for Henry C Wingfield's silver sculls and the Championship of the Thames produced an excellent contest from the most competitive field we have seen in a while. Campbell set no records but his robust approach to the conditions and race showed he is fast developing the myriad skills required to be a very successful sculler. Bert Bushnell (1947) presented the trophy to the new champion, described Campbell scull as, "a good professional job" and said "if he could win on the Tideway, he could win anywhere."

A large tide and a lot of land water meant the water was always going to be tricky and five competitive challengers meant the umpire was always going to be busy. Compared to previous years there was a good showing from the committee. Ken Dwan (1968-72,75) steered Hunter, while Bill Barry (1963-66) showed up Campbell, Doug Melvin (1955,58) and Bert Bushnell (1947) joined the secretary (1993), treasurer (1991-2) and umpire (1980-84) in the launch.

Campbell got off well down the boats. Rowbotham's challenge seemed to go awry from the start with him drifting off his Surrey station until he got a blade caught under Gregory's bow, slewing him through 45 degrees just short of the Black Buoy. He restarted heading off to Craven Cottage, this clash allowed Lawson and Hunter to move clear as Campbell's only challengers. Lawson moved well from the Black Buoy and was right back on Campbell's stern as he nearly clipped the new PLA navigation buoy at Harrods. As the water got more awkward after Hammersmith Gregory performed some impressive juggling with his left scull and the lead scullers hugged the Surrey shore. Ken Dwan kept Hunter out in the stream and he closed considerably. It was difficult to choose between Hunter and Lawson as they approached Barnes but Hunter steered and coped with the water better and overhauled Lawson before the line, where Lawson veered off sharply. Subsequently it appeared that Lawson had caught something on his deep fin at Hammersmith and had been struggling to steer after that. Rowbotham had been suffering from food poisoning the night before. However neither of these explanations should detract from the way the new champion set about claiming his title. In Gregory we hope to have inspired a new generation of scullers to rise to the challenge of the Wingfield Sculls.

Both Jurgen Groebler and Mark Earnshaw, the GB sculling coach were present, their support has assisted the event to attract the highest quality scullers. Three newspapers sent reporters and the Times a photographer, the Times chose an atmospheric shot to illustrate the race.