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Dear Alumni,

Hello and welcome to our first newsletter of the decade! Below are reports from the Egham competition before Christmas and the Sheffield Social 2010.

CONTENTS:

- (1) Egham
- (2) Sheffield Social

Egham:

OUDT ended the year with another trip to the open competition in Egham. A slightly smaller group than usual went to defend the title but with every couple making multiple finals in each discipline it was still a successful day for the Oxford team.

Every couple made almost every final of the events they entered so rather than list every placing I'll just run through the highlights! In the Ballroom Alex and Annemarie took the bronze in the Amateur and Pre-Champ events, while Amanda and Oli Coward took came 4th in Pre-Champ and 2nd in Intermediate. In the Latin Peter and Reka took first place in the jive and rumba and 2nd in Amateur, and they were joined in all 3 finals by Ivan and Helen who finished 3rd in the two opens and 4th in the Amateur. Alex and Annemarie took 1st place in Pre-Champ Latin, while Melvin and Patricia won the Intermediate Latin event.

No other university has ever won the Team Match at Egham, and that didn't change this year with the Oxford A team finishing in pole position. A joint team of Oxford and Bristol finished second ahead of Imperial who came third.

With the last competition of the year finished, the team travelled back home with more prizes than they could carry to enjoy a well earned Christmas break.



Ivan and Helen



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Charlie and Haibo

Sheffield Social:

With barely enough time to lose the excess Christmas weight and fit back into their Latin trousers, OUDT were off to their first competition of the decade in Sheffield. All bets were off this year as ex-students competed along side current members in both the opens and the team match, leading to a tense and exciting knockout event and team match.

In the Beginner's events only Claire Barnett and Francesca Aquilina made it to a Ballroom final, finishing 6th in the Quickstep. This did not deter our future stars however, who returned with a vengeance in the Latin; 3 couples made the Cha final and 4 made the final of the Jive! Samara Kolli and Colleen Curran made both finals finishing 2nd in Jive and 4th in Cha. Beginner's Captain Rhiannon Evans-Young and partner Rebecca Lees also made both, finishing 4th in Jive and 5th in Cha. They were joined by Annie Ng and Katja Tchekourda in the Cha final (6th) and Helen Clowes and Ysobel Roby (5th) and Mike Gale and Lucie Dearlove (7th) in the Jive.

In the Novice competitions Volker and Vanessa made all four finals finishing 5th in the two ballroom events and 4th in the Latin! In the cha final

they were joined by 3 other Oxford couples; OUDT Treasurer Geoffrey made his first final with partner Lizzy, taking 2nd place, followed by Owen and Joanna in 3rd and Rob Walport, who partnered veteran Charlotte Woolley (AKA Clive), in 7th. Owen and Joanna also made the Jive final, finishing just behind Volker and Vanessa in 5th.

In the Intermediate events Zsolt and May once again deservedly walked away with 1st place in the ballroom. They were joined by Joseph and Ginger and Tom and Wanzhen in the final, who finished 4th and 5th respectively. Zsolt and May and Tom and Wanzhen made it two for two in the afternoon, making the final of the Intermediate Latin and finishing 3rd and 6th. The top prize however was taken by Melvin and Patricia, who finally ended their long wait with an impressive performance in all 3 dances.

As noted above, University Alumni competed against current members in the Advanced categories, raising the standard to an unseen high and providing quite a show to all the spectators! In the ballroom Daniel overcame his illness to finish 4th with Sarah, and they were joined in the final by Oli and Marja who finished 6th. In the Latin Daniel and Sarah once again stepped up to the plate to take the bronze, followed closely by Ivan and Helen in 4th.

In the open competitions Daniel and Sarah continued to impress, taking the top prize in both the Viennese Waltz and the Paso, while Ivan and Helen took the bronze in the latter. Winning the Intermediate Latin wasn't enough for Melvin and Patricia who also took top prize in the open Salsa, followed by Joseph and Ginger in 2nd.



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Once the Opens had concluded we moved onto the Team Match, and Oxford again asserted their dominance. Oxford took the both the B and C team shields, and the Beginner's team drew with Cambridge for the D team cup. The A team suffered the same fate, leaving both teams to literally fight over the coveted A Team trophy, resulting in a massive scrum. An extra special mention should go to Ivan, Daniel, Helen and Sazzle who demonstrated a level of passion and ferociousness one can only expect from the Latin side of the Oxford A team! Congrats to Oli and Marja, Zsolt and May and Charlie and Haibo, who all made the Waltz final, Paul and Becky and Alex and Annemarie who both made the Quickstep final, Daniel and Sarah for making the Cha final and Ivan and Helen and Melvin and Patricia for getting to the final of the Jive.

Finally the day ended with the Knockout event which provided even more drama than usual. This year the dances included Samba and Viennese along side the 4 team dances, and once again Alumni were allowed to compete. Nottingham used this to their advantage and promptly knocked Oxford out of the first round! IC also bowed out to Warwick at the start leaving Cambridge feeling home and dry. However Nottingham's small squad enabled them to re-use their strongest couples by the time they were in the final and they beat the tabs to the prize!

Buoyed by their success, and by the vodka, Oxford got back on the bus a record one hour early (!) with their sights firmly set on their next goal; winning SUDA the following weekend.



Daniel and Sarah

That's all for now! We have SUDA on the 13th February and IVDA on the 27th and confidence is running high in the OUDT camp. If anyone would like more information about either competition please get in touch.

Your exec.

Pictures by Vivien Senior and John Sinclair