

# Quality of rowing in Cambridge

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## 1 Proposal

It has been proposed by Mark Jacobs, CUCBC Safety Officer, that the quality of rowing in Cambridge has fallen over recent years. As a result of this supposition, it is currently proposed that river restrictions are implemented in the academic year of 2014-15 to enable crews to have outings when there is less congestion, enable such outings to be more productive.

This document investigates the initial supposition, using archived race information, to establish whether available data supports the initial claim.

## 2 Available race data

Race data was found to be available online for The Fairbairn Cup and Champs Head.

## 3 Measuring the quality of rowing

Quality of rowing is inherently difficult to measure, especially when considering a pool of rowing clubs as large as that found in Cambridge. In addition to this it is possible any subjective assessment is biased for a couple of reasons:

- Particular association with a few select clubs could result in any subjective assessment being influenced by the quality of rowing at those clubs
- Memory of past years will inevitably slightly inaccurate

Therefore, in an attempt to consider quality of rowing in an unbiased manner, race data is considered. It is assumed that the speed of the crew is representative of its quality; while this is not perfectly true it is a sufficient measure for the purposes of this investigation.

It is possible to affect the average quality of crews on the river by increasing the number of poor quality crews taking part. As such this document investigates the quality of top crews, as these are the crews subject to most scrutiny come Bumps. It is also reasonable to assume that the quality of lower boats will change in line with the quality of the top crews.

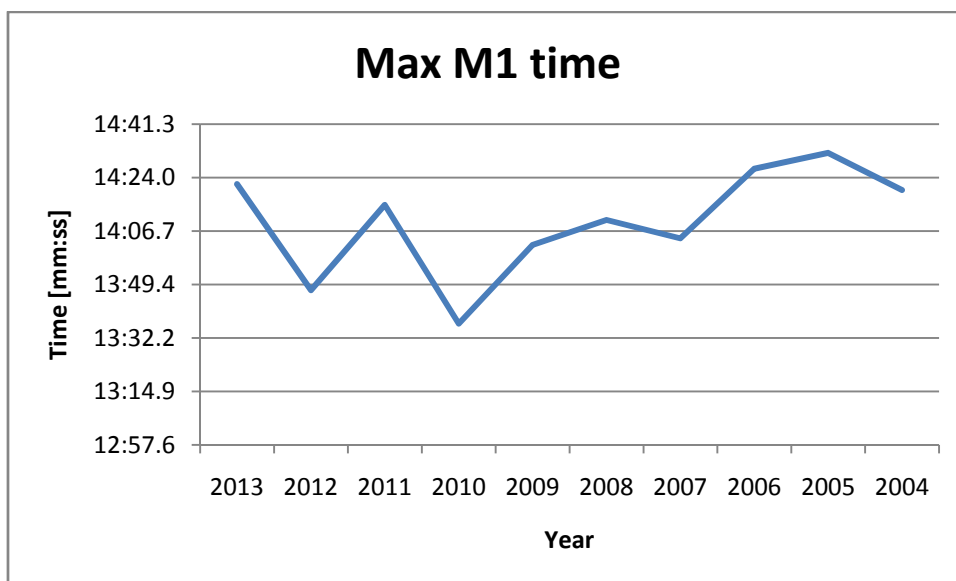
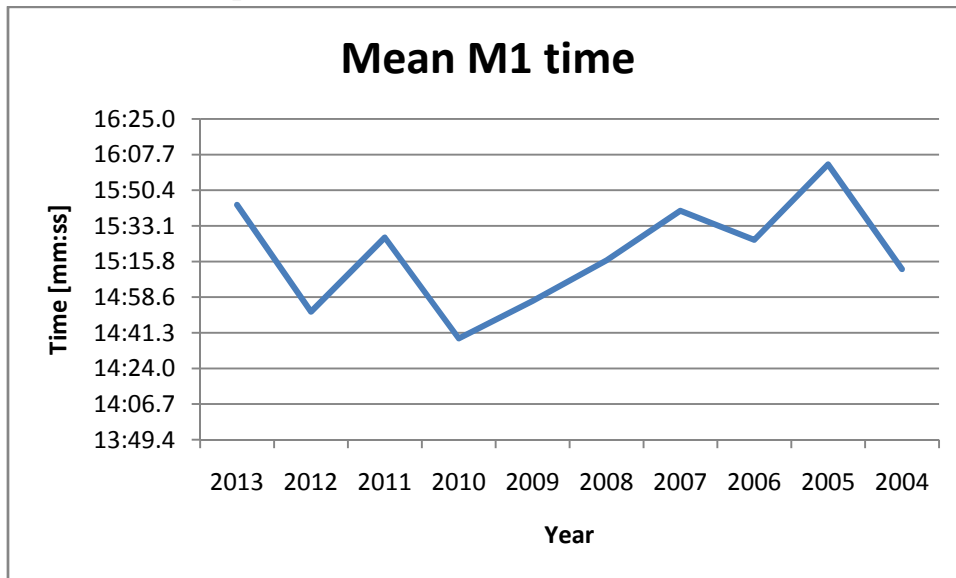
## 4 Crews considered

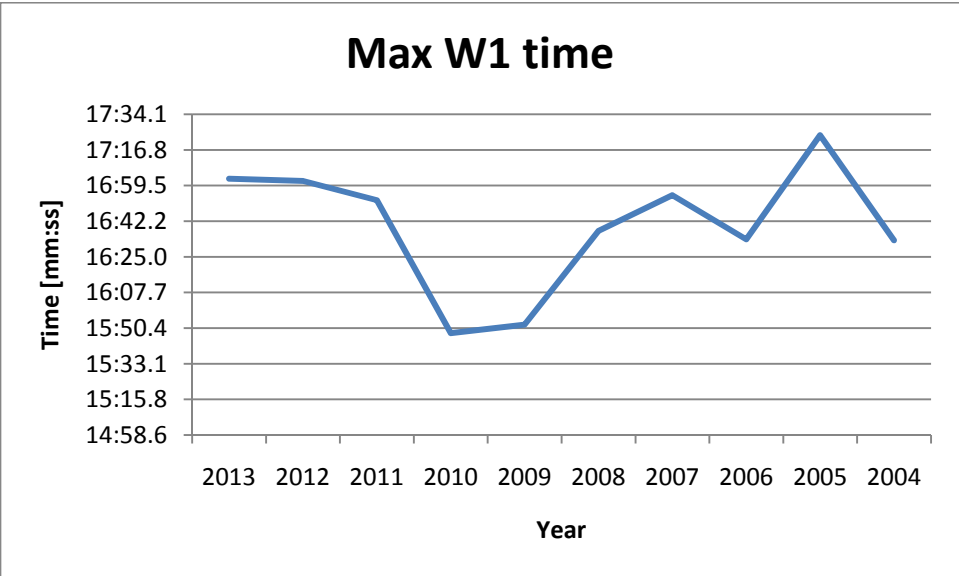
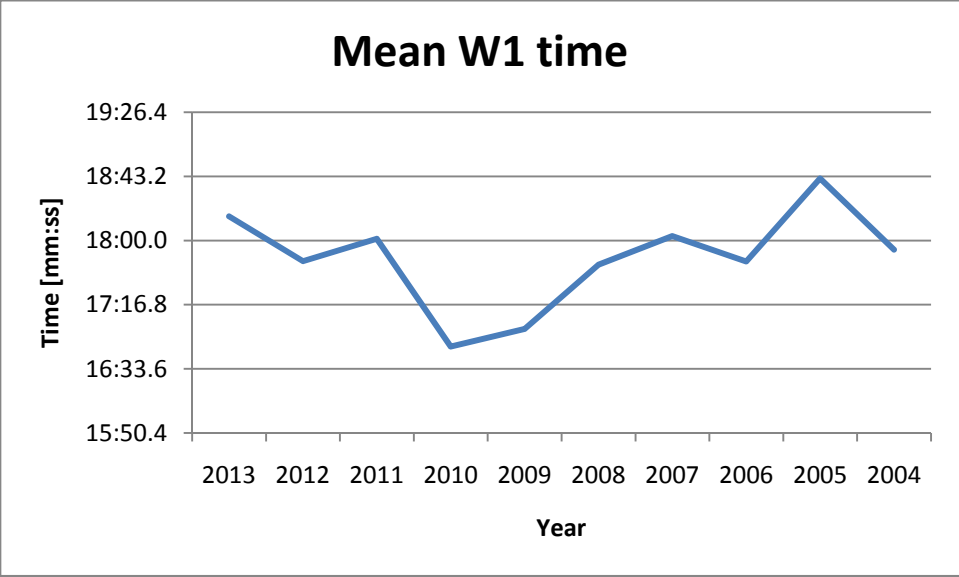
The crews considered in this analysis are given below.

1. Crews racing for time only are not considered. This is to ensure that only current students at the university are included, and therefore the crews considered are representative of the current student population.
2. A 'top crew' is defined as:
  - a. The Fairbairn Cup – a college first eight
  - b. Champs Head – a crew competing in the first division of bumps

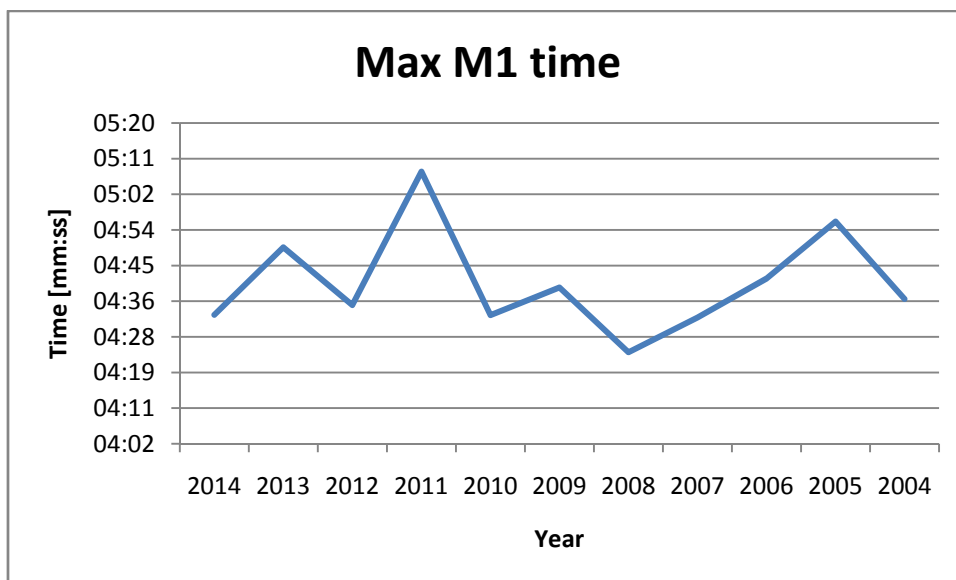
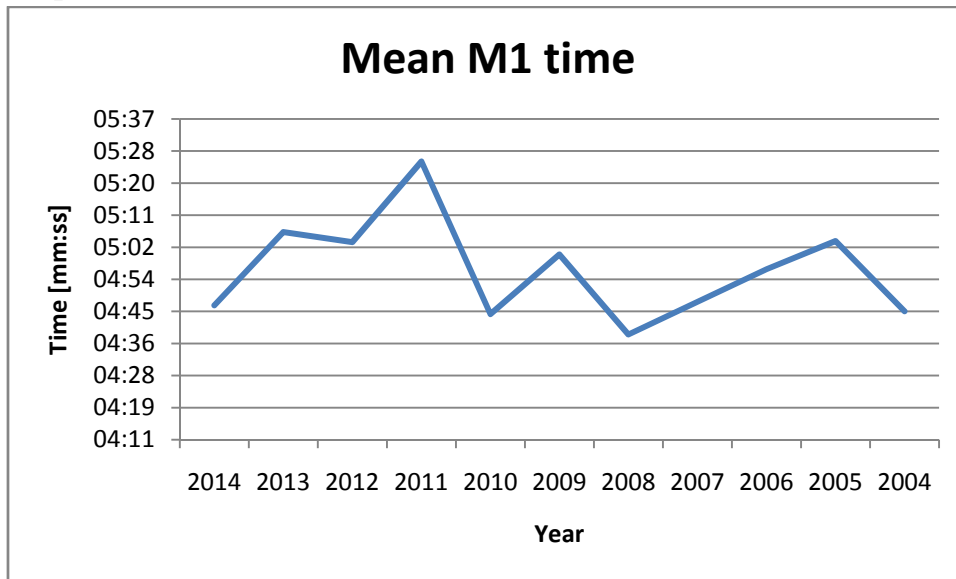
## 5 Race data

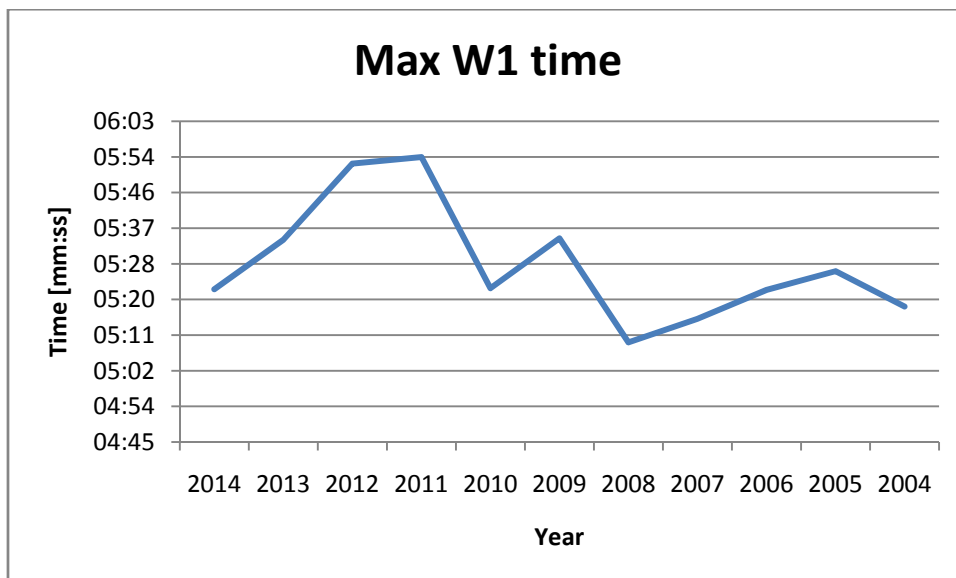
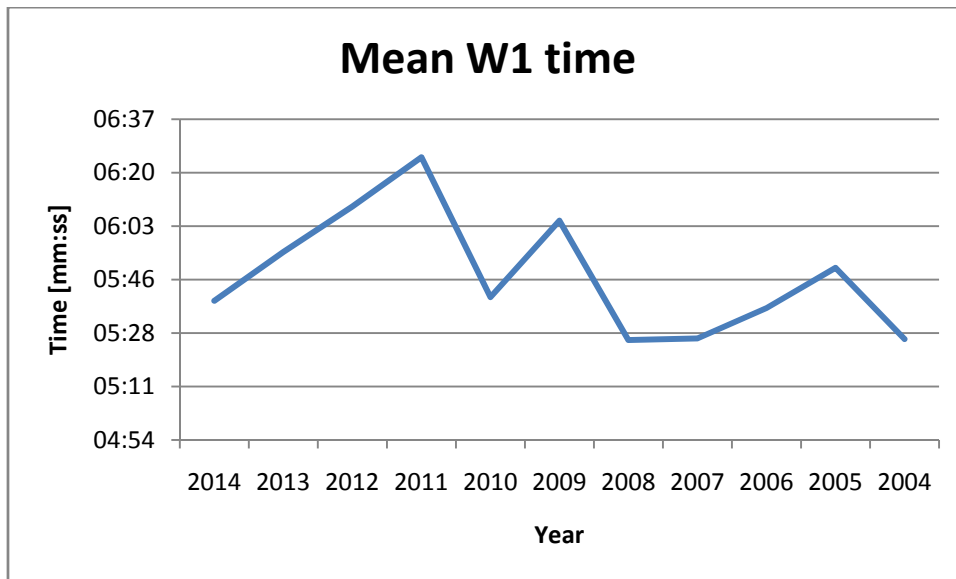
### 5.1 The Fairbairn Cup





## 5.2 Champs Head





## 6 Data analysis

It should be noted that there will be inevitable fluctuation in conditions from year to year and as a result, the times recorded will be dependent on both stream and wind. In general, the maximum time has changed by similar proportions to the mean time, indicating that the primary reason for changes in speed are due to changes in conditions. Furthermore, the mean time for each of the races does not change significantly over the period investigated, so while quality may fluctuate year on year, there does not appear to be significant deterioration. Based on these observations, it appears there is insufficient evidence to indicate that the quality of rowing has significantly changed.

## 7 Conclusion

It can be concluded that the initial proposal from Mark Jacobs that the quality of rowing in Cambridge has fallen over time is unlikely to be true, and therefore intervention is not required.