

Christ's College Boat Club

Minutes: Steering Committee Meeting, 18th January 2020

Present:

Karthik Tadinada	Chairman
Simon Martin	Alumnus Member
Bill Aldridge	Blades Representative
Richard Batley	Fellows' Representative
ShenZhen Newman	Captain of Boats & Men's Captain
Elizabeth Guest	Women's Captain
Emily Marr	Secretary
Sam Drury	Junior Treasurer
Kate Hurst	Boathouse Manager and Safety Officer
Sammy Mahdi	Webmaster

Apologies:

Paul Verhaak	Senior Treasurer
Holly Beveridge	Publicity Officer
Catherine Twilley	Development Office Representative

Minutes of the last meeting; Apologies and Actions Arising

Apologies were received from Catherine Twilley who had sent an email to request that we discuss the arrangements of the next Blades Regatta.

Holly Beveridge was not present and nobody had heard from her in relation to the meeting.

Paul Verhaak was not present and nobody had heard from him in relation to the meeting.

*Action: **KT** to speak to Paul about his role on the Steering Committee.*

Chairman's Report

KT was impressed with the great number of people who attended Training Camp in Aiguebelette. He was equally encouraged by the Fairbairns results. **KT** was very happy that everyone on the committee was responsive and took on board his advice from the last Steering Committee meeting.

Sponsorship

HB has not been active in securing and maintaining the sponsorship from Featurespace, although both **KH** and **SD** have nudged her. Although the sponsorship rolled over from last year, CCBC has not

received any money from Featurespace. **SD** is friends with Holly and confirmed that she had a meeting with someone from Featurespace on 3rd February. She has not spoken with either Karthik or Lucy Griffin who are both involved in the relationship between Featurespace and CCBC.

KT comments that February is not a good time to be discussing the sponsorship with Featurespace as this is towards the company “year end” and is when the company's accounting period ends. In the future, sponsorship should be arranged at a more appropriate time.

KH says that Holly must be prepped for the meeting on 3rd February as we are unsure how thorough the handover meeting between Alex Graves and Holly was. Adam Atkinson played a great role in setting up sponsorship with Featurespace and will be able to prepare Holly for the meeting. **KT** suggests that he, Oisín Faust and Lucy Griffin ought to go to the Faye and Holly’s meeting on 3rd February as they work/have worked at Featurespace and know how things work.

*Action: **KT** to speak to Faye about the details of the meeting on 3rd February and arrange for Oisín and Lucy to be present.*

KH suggests that Sam Drury could take on more responsibility in relation to the sponsorship as he is extremely on the ball and has been an excellent treasurer so far.

*Action: If **SD** is happy with this suggestion, he should attend the meeting with Holly and Featurespace. **SD** should also relay to Holly what we discussed in the meeting regarding sponsorship.*

KT stresses that CCBC should demonstrate attempts to engage with students to show Featurespace that we honour the sponsorship. For example, we should organise careers evenings. Oisín, Lucy and Karthik should lead careers evenings to talk to students about working at Featurespace. **SD** is nominated to organise these evenings.

*Action: **SD** to take steps to organise careers evenings.*

Treasurer’s Report

SD provided a report on the CCBC accounts. He explained that the negative balance for kit was because of the purchase of bow ties. This will be paid back as the club purchased a surplus of bow ties which the rowers will buy from the club over time.

SD pointed out that a large amount was spent on the use of the Downing Rowing Tank by the novices at the start of term. This is a new development thanks to the novelty of the Rowing Tank and is one that will continue in future years. It is widely acknowledged that the booking of the Downing Rowing Tank was a valuable expense.

SD explained that to acquire a bank card in Kate Hurst’s (Catherine Hurst) name, he needs to provide HSBC with minutes of a meeting where the Committee approves adding Kate to the mandate and if the secretary signing the form is not listed on the mandate, he must enclose a copy of the minutes showing when they were appointed.

The Committee unanimously approved issuing Kate (Catherine Hurst) with a debit bank card and confirmed that Emily Marr was appointed as Secretary on 9th June 2019.

*Action: **EM** to provide **SD** with these minutes to enable **SD** to acquire a debit card for **KH**.*

SD stated that £104,000 is split between the College account and the Barclays account. He speculated that this was partly for liability. **SD** confirmed that the amount of money in the account is increasing year on year.

BA said that it would be good to get a better feel of the breakdown of donations coming in to have an idea of how many regular donations there are (these are ones we can rely on as income) compared with one-off donations. **SD** replied that subscriptions account for large part of donations. He added that College is very guarded with information about donations and doesn't want to say who donates – this is in line with data protection. **SD** stated that the donations (including gift aid) totalled £13,000 last year. **SD** confirmed that he needs to speak to College soon about collecting subscriptions from last year.

*Action: **SD** to speak to College about collecting subscriptions from last year.*

Although College is guarded about information on donations, **KT** professed confidence that the money donated to the Boat Club via College ultimately ends in the Boat Club account because College would not want to risk a scandal of diverted money.

For Fairbairns, **BA** has paid £66. **BA** reported that Peter Hobson has promised to pay imminently for Alumni M2 and Paul Barton should pay imminently for the 78 crew. **BA** stressed the importance of alumni paying through college so that the money can be gift-aided as a donation. **BA** agreed to chase Peter and Paul for payment if they do not pay soon.

SD outlined that Training Camp had not yet been fully paid for as he was waiting for the invoices from the Lake and Accommodation. He forecast that it would cost around £7000 in total. This was more than predicted. **EM** suggested that this was because the cost of the lake hire and accommodation was increased due to the greater number of people (they charge per head). Indeed, this fit with calculations she made last year when deciding whether training camp was viable.

KH put forward that it is time to buy Alasdair Dowcra a present because he has coached on Training Camp every year since **KH** has worked for CCBC, takes unpaid leave to come and refuses payment. The budget agreed for Alasdair is £350 as per the cost of a waterproof coat for coaching (in cold weather).

KH also requested the expenditure of a gift for Mike Housden, without whom we could not hold Boat Club Dinner. This year, he will attend his 50th consecutive Boat Club Dinner. Gift suggestions included a tankard or a hipflask. A budget of £150 was agreed.

*Action: **KH** to buy gifts for Al Dowcra and Mike Housden.*

SD brought up the justification of requesting a budget from the JCR. He said he was unsure that the JCR would be happy to continue giving the Boat club so much money (£14,000). **KH** points out that although we're a society, we are also a facility for the college and so wonders why we need to go through the JCR to get money. **SD** suggested that something as big as the boat club shouldn't necessarily be subject to the whim of inexperienced 18-20 year old students. He added that the JCR voting system is not very democratic, as it just needs a minimum of 24 people to pass a motion. Thus, anyone can pass a motion if they get enough of their friends to come along.

The point is made that the MCR does not pay anything, yet they always have surplus money each year. All agree it would be fair to receive money from MCR, proportionally to the number of graduate students in the Boat Club.

SD recounted that City of Cambridge Rowing Club (CCRC) has made payments for the use of ergs but they never paid VAT on that. The College Accountant realised the equipment hire would have been subject to VAT but it was never added on to their payment. Now **SD** does not think we can go back to CCRC to ask for VAT. **BA** recommends that **SD** should ask the College Accountant what to do. For example, could we restructure it in a way that is not eligible for VAT?

*Action: **SD** to ask the College Accountant what to do about the VAT.*

SD ended by checking that the Committee was happy keeping the student cost of Training Camp at £200 each, as he had observed that it had been reduced from £250 to £200 a few years ago. Everyone said they were happy to keep subsidising because it makes a small difference to Boat Club but a big difference for students.

Women's Captain's Report

EG explained that there were very few senior women in Michaelmas Term and they rowed as a IV. After the Peterborough Training Day, the seniors rowed with novices in mixed VIIIs; the focus was on bringing the standard of the novice women up, rather than improving the rowing of the current seniors. The first novice women's VIII has now progressed to form the current W1.

KT asked what could have caused the great increase in novices this year. It was agreed that there are multiple factors. **KH** suggested that CCBC had a good position at the Christ's Freshers Fair this year and it helped that an erg was brought. The Downing Rowing Tank was a good introduction to rowing. However, **EM** pointed out that the Downing Rowing Tank and an erg were present at last year's recruitment. The position of the CCBC stall at the entrance to the Freshers Fair certainly made a huge difference. It has also been seen that other Boat Clubs have had an enhanced intake of women this year and current novice women have a progressive attitude to female strength (e.g. did weight lifting in school which is a phenomenon unseen in previous years).

KH and **EG** concurred that mixed VIIIs with novices was an excellent way to accelerate novice progression and integrate them in the club.

KH stated that she is spreading her coaching across multiple crews (and therefore crews receive coaching from multiple coaches) so as to give attention to lower boats as well as higher boats.

EG stated that this term's W1 contains 6 newly-noviced women who are mainly first-year undergraduates and will be around for a long time. This is the youngest boat there has been for a long time.

KT stressed the importance of racing at every opportunity possible. He also recommended practising sparring, especially between crews of different experiences. He explained that it is important to give lower boats the experience of being under the pressure of being chased by a faster crew in preparation for Bumps. This sort of sparring is possible within the club (W1 vs M1, W1 vs W2 etc).

*Action: **EG** and **SN** to organise sparring.*

Men's Captain's Report

SN announced that the purchase of a coffee machine was a great addition to the Boathouse and that it encouraged rowers to stay behind after outings for a chat. He reported that M1 came 8th out of 22 in Fairbairns. They had tried to row in the Fillipi towards the end of term but found that they coped better with the Stampfli and thus raced in the latter.

SN described NM1 as “beefy”, featuring strong graduate students, and was very pleased with their performance this term, highlighting their win at Emma Sprints. However, he reported their bad behaviour at the post-race party, Emma Cocktails, where they got very drunk, damaged a toilet and elicited a complaint from Emmanuel College. The main person responsible for the havoc went to the College in person to apologise. **KH** suggested that in the future, captains should accompany freshers to events like these to reign them in.

SN described France as good, with more boats than coaches. **KH** added that the reason for this was that one of the coaches had dropped out at short notice. **SN** commented that the main blip in the trip had been miscommunication about the provision of dinner on the night that the Club planned to go to Chambéry. One of the novices, Lathan, made a video of the trip. Although the quality of the rowing in the videos is very poor, it does include images of the Featurespace logo.

SN moved on to Lent Term, reporting that the men would have three boats, each with a captain. He mentioned that the current JCR president is running M3 and came to the Training Camp in France. It is good to have such an influential person associated with the Boat Club. **SN** remarked that two members of M2 were dragging the crew down as they had not come to the Training Camp. He is therefore considering placing Max Yale in M2, although recognised that Max has not been a team player in the past.

SN affirmed that Oisín Faust has been a good coach for M1 and the rowers look up to him. Oisín will reduce his coaching to twice a week this term due to other commitments.

Based on his own recent experience of a sore back, **SN** announced that he wanted to increase the amount of F&C. **KH** commented that there was no point in getting Milosz for F&C because few people turned up historically. However the M1 cox, Abbie Wright, is an ex-ballet dancer and could run F&C sessions.

Blades Report

BA reported that the alumni had experienced quite a few injuries in the last year. He was very impressed at Tom Swallow's crew whose average age is about 70 yet not the slowest crew on the river.

The 78 crew will be doing Head of the Dart.

BA stressed the importance of starting the Alumni Newsletter again which was produced by Alex Graves and the Captains last year. This should be the job of **HB** but **BA** said that if she did not do it, the Captains should appoint someone else to do it. **BA** testified that it is important to engage with the alumni and get donations flooding in.

*Action: **SN** to email the Alumni with a report on Michaelmas term and Training Camp within a week.*

Alumni Report

RB reported that the alumni were dormant in Michaelmas but they will try to become more active in Lent. The Fellows and Alumni aiming to race in Head of the Cam on 25th April.

Safety Officer's Report

KH was very pleased with how Michaelmas term developed and thought it was a good thing that she got involved with coaching the novices to give them some better quality coaching. **KH** stated that **W1** rowed with the novices, which brought them on very well, and allowed them to make new friends.

KH commended the LBCs for being keener and more organised than some individuals in previous years. It has been good to have different individuals (e.g. Emily and Sammy) coaching. She pursued with the suggestion that captains should avoid using the word "commitment" at the start of term but rather ask people whether they want to row or not and decide on commitment later after crew selection. **KH** noted the good social integration between seniors and novices.

KH would like weekly meetings with captains to keep things organised and in control and improve communication between captains and herself.

Besides purchasing gifts for Alasdair Dowcra and Mike Housden (see section "Treasurer's Report"), **KH** requested the purchase of speed coaches for **M2** and **W2**. Each costs £450 so not cheap but a valuable purchase. This was approved.

*Action: **KH** to buy 2 speed coaches.*

BA proposes that it would be good to have more coaches at Aiguebelette and that the cost (£400 for coaching and free accommodation and travel) is worth it.

Development Office Report

CT wanted to make sure the Blades Regatta would take place on September 19th 2020. Captains need to publicise this in the next newsletter.

BA asked about the format of the day and wondered if we could get hold of some of the captains from previous years to get them to come back with the crews of their time.

Other Actions Arising

KT spoke about stepping down from his role as Chairman and has spoken to Lucy Griffin about chairing Steering Committee. He reported that Lucy would like to be on the committee but feels someone like **BA** would be better suited for the role of Chairman. She is not sure she would be ready to lead the committee. **BA** explained that while he would be perfectly happy to do it, he isn't sure he would be suitable because he is of an older generation and is out of touch with the current student community. He also pointed out that he lives three hours away from Cambridge.

KH proposes Lucy as Senior Treasurer because Paul is very absent. This would give Lucy a role on the Committee without being Chair and she would therefore be able to get onto the committee without being chair. **KH** confirmed that Lucy was a very good treasurer when she was a student.

*Action: **KT** to approach Lucy and **PV** about replacing **PV** with Lucy as Senior Treasurer.*

EM brought up the topic of naming a boat after Manaka Shibuya, an active student in the Boat Club who passed away in October 2019. **KH** put forward two options: naming an unnamed scull which we currently have or waiting until a new boat is bought. **BA** pointed out that donors of new boats often want to name the boat themselves and also the boat probably wouldn't be bought for a while, after which the moment will have passed. It was agreed that we would name the unnamed scull.

*Action: **EM** to get in touch with Manaka's parents and relevant people to organise the event in combination with the scattering of Manaka's ashes.*