Dear Steering Committee,

This document attached is put in front of you in order to discuss and approve the future proposals of ‘the Australian rowing’ and ‘the Kiwi sculling’ schemes that have been successfully run by experienced rowers, scullers and coxes that are Christ’s College students and have undertaken their work voluntarily for the Christ’s College Boat Club. I am fully aware of the length of this document, but please if you can read it fully, it will help you understand many of the issues that have been raised, and how and why we believe it should continue.

We think that the club should support and further integrate these two schemes into the organization structure of the club because of the profound benefits and advantages that these two schemes have on the development and retention of talented rowers, coxes and scullers and because of the continued improvement of their skills in rowing and sculling at the boat club.

We very much value your consideration of our proposal and we are looking forward to a positive response. Please, see the proposals below.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email me on [rwm41@cam.ac.uk](mailto:rwm41@cam.ac.uk), and I am happy to meet up and discuss any of the points below. If you wish to chat about anything over the phone, please email me to arrange a time, and I will happily call you to discuss.

Yours sincerely,

Miffloat, on behalf of the Australian captains

**Concept of Australian Rowing at Christ’s College Boat club**

1. **Aims of the Australian boat**

Australian Rowing is the vacation rowing system that has operated over the past two years. It is primarily trying to organise rowing for people in Christ’s College that are around during the holidays. It is aimed at people who have rowed for at least two terms (except at Christmas, where people who noviced in the Michaelmas term can join in) so they have a basic/good level of experience of rowing. Therefore, the emphasis is that this is not a novice boat but a boat to give decent rowing to people that stay in Cambridge outside the terms. We want to maintain and improve their rowing skills, and encourage as great a participation as possible, encouraging members of Christ’s community to get back involved with rowing if they haven’t in the past term due to time commitments. It is primarily aimed at the M/W2-M/W3 level - that is where we get all the participation. People who are in M1/W1 tend to enjoy the coaching and coxing aspects if they get involved, with a few appreciating the rowing. The organization and coaching is provided via more experienced rowers and coxes in Christ’s, who do it voluntarily to allow others to enjoy it as it doesn’t take up significant time.

The main goal of the Australian boat is to maintain rowing through the holidays, ensuring that people stay excited by rowing. It allows them to develop new skills, whether that is better rowing, or the ability to coach better. It also allows them to make the most out of any outing, whether they are rowing with better or worse people than themselves. We have also trained good senior rowers into being coxes as well, which has helped Christ’s college hugely.

How it works is that using a google spreadsheet you fill in your availabilities, along with how many outings you are keen to do. Then an Australian captain goes through the spreadsheet and puts up a preliminary outing schedule. People have 24 hours to object to any outings they have been put in. After the 24 hours, it becomes their responsibility to find a sub of their standard or higher to put into the boat. Having a large pool of available people usually makes finding a sub easy.

One of the key aspects of Australian is that every single outing has a bank party. The bank party or coach gives individual feedback to each rower and cox and also the crew is asked to give a feedback to the coach. Thus this allows everyone a chance to improve their rowing/coxing skills and also coaching skills. We also occasionally have more experienced (but still free) coaches taking outings, such as Peter from Selwyn, Twm, and Miffloat, along with senior rowers who have progressed through the boat club (e.g. Sammy). This makes Australian rowing very cheap, and still effective in improving the members of the system.

Furthermore, we have started providing training for coaches/bank parties as well. This past holiday, we ran a “How to Coach” training, a session that the people who attended found incredibly helpful. We are therefore taking development very seriously, and helping people to improve steadily.

We take the safety of the outing very seriously. Each outing has an Australian vice-captain, who is a trusted member of the boat club, who has the experience to make decisions about the weather, along with ensuring the outing is conducted safely with due respect for the equipment.

However, in order for this to run at all, we require rowers from other clubs. With the standard of rowers who this benefits, the best boats to use are eights, as fours are much more difficult to row and so an 8 provides a better baseline upon which the rowers can make improvements during the outing, hence makes the outing much more useful and productive. However, whilst there are a lot of keen rowers, there is not enough availability to get out full eights. Indeed, before the existence of Australian as a system, there was very little vacation rowing. It is therefore instrumental that we keep allowing rowers in from outside Christ’s in order for this system to work well. Every boat will always have at least one college member, and at least one Australian vice-captain. This ensures that every outing is conducted safely, and has a positive impact on Christ’s College Boat Club and the rowers in it.

1. **Advantages of the Australian boat**

*Little organisation from captain*s - do a few hours every 2-3 weeks to organise the outings. This is key, as they need to have time to get on with their own research.

*Every boat has a demonstrable improvement in the rowers* - on the whole, rowers do value their experience in Australian. They really do improve throughout the system, and they start to gain the ability to row in any scratch crew, on any side, and from the off get the maximal benefit from the outing.

*Teaches new skills to all Australians* - It has taught so many new skills, from coaching to coxing, to better rowing. It also teaches people to row in different positions, and teaches people how to stroke a boat. It has hugely enriched all the rowers on this programme.

*Every boat has a demonstrable improvement for someone in Christ’s, as every outing contains at least one Christ’s person, if not more* - every single outing is benefiting Christ’s rowers, improving their rowing and their coaching. The benefit to our club has been absolutely huge, improving rowers such as Miffloat, Robert and Ben Gilding hugely. It has also taught other Christ people other skills, such as Sebastian how to coach, or Manaka how to cox.

*Allows us to find subs for various term time outings at the last minute* - This has saved Christ’s on so many occasions. It allowed us to have a useful number of people in France to fill up the boats nicely. It allowed us to get two novices from FaT on very short notice (less than 24 hours I believe) at Peterborough Training Camp 2016 to come in and allow an eight to go ahead and train. These subs have saved so many outings from failing to go ahead, and have saved so much time for Christ’s captains in term time.

*Encouraging less committed rowers to get involved.* The Australian scheme has been really good at keeping some of the less committed rowers in touch with the boatclub, such as Arianna and medics like Patrick PO and Ming who cannot commit to a term time crew due to hospital placements. By having this effectively zero commitment crew (until you sign up at least), you really do attract a number of people back in a way you cannot do so in a term time crew, and it gets people back into the boat club. It also keeps people who are around in the vacation who have enjoyed rowing through one term interested and committed to rowing.

*Keeping graduate rowers inside the boat club*. Australians have been absolutely key in keeping people like Rachel, Robert, Ben etc… involved with the boat club, and so are key in keeping the boat club going from strength to strength.

*Social side* - during the long holidays, there can be relatively little socialising. It is really nice socialising between different clubs, and so this makes people more positive about rowing. Seeing other college rowers as only competitors is a mistake. By socialising, we make rowing more fun for our members, encouraging them to continue rowing. We create friendships which can help us fix subs for future terms. We get access to opportunities we wouldn’t dream of. Socialising is one of the ways out of term time rowing is fun, and when there is little else going on, it keeps graduate rowers going.

*Extra opportunities from Australian* - From our association with other clubs, our members get chances to scull in a double with King’s, erg with King’s, scull in a double through Xpress, row in Darwin outings, row in Hughes Hall outings etc… There have been numerous extra offers given to our rowers at good benefit to our rowers thanks to the Australian links, forming friendships that have really benefited our crews.

*Huge boost to the image of Christ’s Boat Club* - Christ’s boat club is getting renowned for being one of the best clubs along the river, with one of the most comprehensive vacation rowing schemes of any club. It is envied amongst other clubs, and getting a Christ’s boat out each day has really boosted the club prestige significantly.

1. **Criticisms of Australian boat**

Over the course of the running Australian, there have been some criticisms, and I will attempt to answer them below

*We should not allow any rowers from other colleges in any of our eights, and should have Christ’s people only*. There would then be no vacation rowing whatsoever. This was attempted before Australian came into existence, and it just led to no outings. We do not have the synchronised availabilities to have everyone free at the same time. It just does not happen. It also does not allow for us to even loosely get boats of similar abilities together either. Furthermore it is not appropriate to put M3 standard rowers into fours, as they will not gain much benefit from an outing such as that.

*We should charge other college club rowers a fee for rowing with us, as they shouldn’t be using our boats without paying some fees*. The payment aspect is incredibly tricky, as it is incredibly

hard to quantify. In determining who to select for an outing, I fill it up with all the Christ's people who want an outing and are available, and then use subs from the pool of subs, and generally that works well. I also tend to prioritise subs who have subbed for us before and have been competent, as they lead to better outings, knowing our style. Trying to determine a fair number for each of them would be difficult.

However, if we started charging a sub, then there are various outgoings that will need to be counted for which we currently get for free. The first and most obvious is that most outings have a coach. These coaches are incredibly useful, and some of them are really good at coaching. They have enhanced are outings hugely - compared to King's summer outings last summer the outings run far better and are of much more use. Most of these coaches coach for us because they feel it is their payment of gratitude towards us for giving them the chance to row a bit during the holidays, and so to get the same standard of coaching that we have had, that would be a coaches fee per session

Next, there is the huge problem of coxes - The coxes I have got sometimes from other colleges are either only doing it as a favour to us as they are rowing some outings in return for doing it, or have been found by members of other colleges' boat clubs who are rowing. This has allowed a number of Australian outings to go ahead.

In the vacation, Kate is going on some well-deserved holiday, and the question then comes: what happens if the boat becomes broken in a way that wasn't our fault but that we cannot fix? This eventuality has also been accounted for thanks to our subs - I have had some offers in the past, for example I was in the process of getting permission through a Selwyn rower to use one of their boats as a "Selwyn" outing should we need to.

The balance of the above means that actually I believe the club is gaining far more than it is spending on the vacation crews, and if we were to start charging. We have no coaching outgoings, and a huge gain for the college members who are here, in a time where traditionally our rowers would not do much training and would regress in rowing ability.

Next, I would like to consider possible ramifications if we were to start charging. Firstly, I believe the vast majority of our subs will say no, and just not row for us at all. This would lead to the cancellation of a significant number of outings, and a huge loss in potential gain for the members of our boat club. Secondly, it would make it far more difficult to find subs in the future - this vacation rowing has allowed us to find subs very last minute (e.g. allowing NM2 to row at Peterborough, or allowing W2 Lents to actually be able to row). Thirdly, there is a chance that it might make it harder for our members to row elsewhere, with tic-for-tac charging.

Finally, I would like to add that this holiday rowing has actually positively impacted the rest of the club as well. Thanks to its running and coaching, we have developed the rowing skills of myself, Ben Gilding, Tomas, Jose, Seb, Arianna, Robert, Jasmin, Sammy, etc... This has been hugely beneficial to the individuals and to the club as a whole, and this charging could damage it significantly.

*Rowers from other colleges are not covered by insurance.* The insurance documents clearly state that the policy holder/holders is:

"Those Insured who are the person(s) and/or Club, School or College stated in the Schedule. Including all members, officials of any parent organisation and/or safety officers, coaches, helpers and those using the boats and equipment with the permission of the person(s) and/or Club, School or College."

As far as Andy Clucas can tell, non-college members would be insured provided we had given permission. We need to make sure they comply with all the usual safety stuff like swim decs though.

*Australian rowing causes injury to rowers taking part in it*. This is always a serious concern, and so I feel I should address this. Firstly, I believe that the injury rate of Australians is significantly under that of any term time crew. In terms of notable injuries, there has only been one in memory, namely Emily Marr. However, given that it was unclear whether Australian caused this injury, or training during the previous term, or one of the other training events she was doing each week during the Christmas holidays which caused this, it is unclear. Apart from that, I cannot really remember any significant injuries to Christ’s people. This is also why we use eights in preference over fours - they are more balanced, and allow for better outings – fours are not appropriate for the weaker rowers in Australian. In addition, the low commitment level and large pool of subs available enables those concerned about injuries or illness to find a sub at short notice in a way which is not possible during term time given the set nature of the term time crews. The Australian captains are also very good at ensuring anyone with an injury or relevant illness does not row until they are suitably recovered.

*We should always ensure there is at least half of the boat filled with Christ’s rowers.* Why? Surely a benefit of at least one member makes it worth running the outing, as it is directly benefiting our club. There is always an Australian vice-captain who ensures that the outing is conducted safely - beyond that, why do we need more?

Secondly, this quota of Christ’s people makes the organisation much harder. The Australian captains are all busy people with only very little time to deal with this organisation. They don’t have the time to spend significant amounts of it organising this. They need to get on with their own research work. Adding extra conditions such as this just puts extra barriers in the way, for superfluous reasons.

Thirdly, this isn’t actually a safe idea. The requirement of a given percentage of Christ’s people in each outing will lead to more fours going out, some of them being completely inappropriate, in many cases this will lead to terrible outings where injury is more likely, and where there is no good benefit. Having three not-that-great Christ’s rowers go out in a four will not lead to a productive outing, whereas going out in an eight with subs from other college will actually be far more beneficial to them.

Next, finding subs will get far more complex for Christ’s students if there is a minimum amount of Christ’s people required. Telling Christ’s students that you can only find subs from Christ’s people, or else the arbitrary ratio will fall underneath the allowed limit. This will make Christ’s students lives needlessly harder, and make them enjoy Australian less, as they will have to commit to outings more fully, without being able to find subs. I already see it to a small extent with the Australian vice-captains, as they can only swap with another if it still leaves a valid vice-captain present. Thankfully they are committed enough to accept that caveat.

There are then questions of whether we are helping other clubs more than ourselves, particularly if we have outings with only a few Christ’s people in them. The answer is clearly no. We are training our rowers as rowers, coxes and coaches. Any benefit to our club should be nurtured, as long as it is done safely. It is true, we are helping the odd few rowers in other clubs, but the benefits we get, from allowing us to run outings at all for these people in vacations, is immeasurable. We, in addition and as a benefit, build up good relationship with these colleges, allowing us to more easily get subs and further opportunities for our rowers. Even if we have only one Christ’s person in the outing, we are still improving our club – to not allow this outing would be shooting ourselves in the foot.

Therefore this creation of a criteria is not a valid criticism – any such minimum criteria beyond having an Australian vice-captain is not justified – whether for safety reasons or for reasons of what is best for our club, and any discussion of such ideas as criterion should be immediately rejected as being logically unsound. Putting in any criteria such as half the boat needs to be Christ’s will lead to the death of Australian rowing.

*Outings are not safe.* With the Australian vice-captain in each outing, we ensure that there is always someone responsible there ready to take responsibility for each and every outing. Anyone injured is not allowed to take part in the rowing, and the bank party ensures that the outings are conducted safely too. Therefore I believe these outings to be at least as safe as the ones in term time, if not safer due to the lack of other traffic usually.

*Outings damage Christ’s equipment* - As far as I am aware, Australian hasn’t significantly damaged any Christ’s equipment. We have Australian vice captains to ensure that the equipment is looked after with due care and respect, and anyone not treating it correctly is removed from the Australian system. Nearly all rowers, though, treat it well without any issue, and short of a small amount of normal wear and tear, the equipment is kept in completely acceptable standards.

*Doesn’t improve the M1/W1 rowers of the side.* This has certainly been a problem - with Australian you have to focus the outings at the people who form the bulk of the rowers - and typically this has been the M2/W2 level. The very best rowers do not gain much benefit from rowing in these outings. However, they can learn a huge amount from coaching and coxing these outings, and this has really improved their skills significantly. It is also found that most M1/W1 rowers don’t get involved once they get this good.

For example, Sammy had huge use of it initially as he developed as a rower, but now he is an M1 rower, he no longer rows with Australian, as he is now too good to gain benefit as a rower, and instead goes out in a pair with Michael. As Australian is completely optional, this is completely fine - he is getting the rowing that he values. He also coaches Australians, which improves his analysis of rowing, and so helps his overall understanding of rowing.

1. **Testimonies - from people who have benefited from our rowing**

**Seb Marshall**

"As a third-year undergraduate at Christ's, Australian rowing has benefited me whenever I have stayed for extra weeks at the end of term. Particularly for less experienced rowers, it provides an opportunity to keep up at practicing technique, particularly with the chance to row with more experienced rowers. It is fantastic to have the chance to make use of the great resources at the Boat Club's disposal and keep oneself occupied and fit during the holidays with Australian outings. Staying outside of term can be lonely, and I have been glad of Australians to keep me active, involved with the club, and enjoy others' company over the vacation periods. I also feel it is a good way to get people invested in the club - especially those who perhaps didn't have the fullest experience during term time, but who are given lots of individual coaching attention, with the chance to participate in lots more outings, during the holidays.

Moreover, from my experience as an LBC, valuable contacts made through Australians with members of other clubs who do not have the manpower or resources to run their own holiday rowing programmes have been very helpful as subs. It is certainly a good thing to establish a strong Christ's presence on the river, and build up the Club's reputation as a friendly and professional body which operates throughout the year. There has always been no shortage of Christ's rowers to participate in outings and organise sessions, and if the enthusiasm is there, it makes sense to make use of the facilities and boats which we're so fortunate to possess on the river.

It is also a very useful opportunity for members of the club who want to take up coaching as an LBC or try coxing to have a go when the river is far less busy over the vacation (important given the crucial necessity for the club to recruit and train more coxes). There is the further possibility of recruiting new rowers who missed the boat (pardon the pun...) with the initial Michaelmas recruitment, or else who have rowed a bit before, but slipped through the net. Widening participation is an inevitable repercussion of the programme. Finally, it gives a head-start for all involved for their rowing in the following term. In this sense, it essentially forms an extended, more flexible variant of the 'pre-term' rowing that exists ordinarily for the standard Christ's crews.

As I intend to enter my first year of graduate studies at Christ's next year, I am sure I shall be even more glad of it, when I shall be spending much more time at Cambridge outside of term time. Lots of the Club's most valuable members are from the Christ's graduate community. As long as care is taken over these facilities, and the Australian captains and coaches take care to maintain the standard of the outings towards improving technique, I believe Australians to be a thoroughly worthwhile venture."

**Arianna Rabin**

The system has benefitted me personally in enabling me to continue rowing during the holidays where otherwise I could not, and would just be moping about college feeling lonely. More recently, I've been unable to row W1 during term time due to time commitment, and taking part in the far more casual Australian sessions when I have more free time in the holidays has helped me stay connected to the club, and rowing in general. It's indubitably hugely beneficial to the club as a whole: the number of people who have learnt to row through this system, or massively improved their rowing, or even just come to recognise the community around rowing and decided it's a sport they want to commit further to because of that, is enormous. Recruiting grads in particular through this system has saved a few of the term time boats when we've struggled to recruit undergrads in Michaelmas - if we want grads to be as much a part of the club as undergrads, why on earth /shouldn't/ we have a system available during the holidays, when a lot of them are still around?

**Charlotte**

I joined the college in March as a post-doc and took part in vac rowing as a good way to meet people. I also carried on rowing through the next term (although the grad boat did not successfully get on to row in bumps!). Sadly a running injury has put me out of action since, or I would have continued to sub in to term time rowing.

**Anon**

"Having been involved with the Australian holiday outings since it began, this scheme has been greatly beneficial to me as a rower, cox and bank party/coach. The scheme has provided me with the opportunity to row over the vacations with a very different atmosphere to term-time rowing. As stroke of many of the outings, this really helped to develop boat feel and communicate with the cox. This has helped me to use the exercises and boat feel from previous coaching to help to improve the boat. During many of the outings the cox and I (or stroke if I was coxing) came up with an outing plan upon assessing the most fundamental issues the crew were having – each outing is a scratch crew. Given each outing is a scratch crew, this really emphasises the need to be flexible with respect to style and to be adaptable to ensure that the crew is rowing well together in the short space of time within an outing. There are, I feel, a large number of positives to rowing, coxing or coaching a scratch crew, in terms of coxing, this has enabled me to develop as a cox, having only coxed for one term and then as a sub since then, it has enabled me to get feedback on what works for a particular crew and how I can improve as a cox, enabled me to become better at identifying issues, developed my coaching ability and has since enabled me to gain more experience coxing other crews and town bumps. The nature of the scheme has enabled me to meet many different people, both from within the club and outside of the club who I otherwise would not have met, this has benefited the club by integrating members of different crews and providing many willing subs, for term time rowing or various trips, from other colleges on the occasions where this has been necessary.

In addition to the benefits mentioned above I believe the scheme has significantly benefited Christ’s boat club as a whole; it enables members of college to row over the vacations, which further encourages the motivation to train on land during this time (eg. Ergs and weights), it integrates members of different crews within the club, it gives more experienced seniors the chance to coach those less experienced and improve their coaching skills, it gives members of lower boats the chance to gain more experience and improve their rowing (and on some occasions have the opportunity to go out in a IV+ which may not happen in term time) and it retains many of the members of the lower boats as it keeps their interest in rowing during the vacation. I believe that without this scheme a number of people, especially graduate students, would not have carried on rowing or come back to rowing.

I believe that the provision of vacation rowing at Christ’s has, over the past few years, had a major positive impact upon the members of the scheme and also upon the whole of Christ’s boat club."

**Anon**

Confidence-building, getting tips from experienced rowers, learning the purpose of different exercises, and then being able to pass on the knowledge to less experienced rowers, keeping the rowing up during the holidays, adapting to different crews and rowing styles, commitment is voluntary. I probably wouldn’t have got back into rowing without this scheme. It’s been fantastic opportunity to integrate into the rowing community and come out of my shell.

**Jose Velazquez Garcia**

I improved my rowing skills through this program, which I also think that created a solid rowing community between Christ's college and all the subs from other colleges. I learned coaching with a large advice from Miffy in every outing. I think that Australian outings are good to improve new skills and to create relation with other colleges when they sub in, which are handy when subs are needed during term times and bumps preparations

**Jessica**

Australians has helped my technique improve by allowing me to row with a number of different crews and have to adapt to them. I've also gotten the chance to be a bigger part of CCBC, from coxing novices during their tasters to attending two training camps, one as a spare cox and one as an extra rower. I feel that the vacation rowing gave me a chance to make connections and new friends, while also being of use when I can. Australians is a great thing for the Christ's rowers who might not otherwise get outings, and for the Cambridge rowing community as a whole.

**Manaka**

Thanks to Australians I've learnt to cox and coach which has been very useful in my role as an LBC. Knowing how to cox, row, and coach meant that I was able to give feedbacks to both novice rowers and coxes, who tend to be neglected by many LBCs.

There have also been many term time outings including the Peterborough training day where we were short on a cox or a rower, and I was able to step in as a cox and call on an Australian rower to allow the outings to go ahead.

Furthermore I've gained a substantial experience in stroking with Australians, which helped me build my confidence in the stroke seat last Mays in W2 and has also helped me give more constructive feedbacks to novice strokesmen.

**Robert**

To be honest, I love the Australian rowing from the time I started in November 2016 until now April 2018. I hope it will continue and I shall take part as a rower/coach and help to organize it until I finish my PhD. The Australian rowing has made me to be a better rower, not only physically and skill-wise but mentally too. I am a more experienced and confident rower now because I could have kept on improving as a bowsider every out of term until now and have learnt how to row on the strokeside too. Also, I have been learning how to coach and realized it is not that easy to be a good coach. I found many friends and soulmates from our college and other colleges so it has been a delight to have an outing in 8s or 4s over holidays (even in early hours of cold mornings). Being part of the community strengthened my passion for rowing and encouraged me to carry on rowing for the future and also it motivated me to give back to the community.

In general, I think Australian rowing is truly needed and shall be integral part of the club so people feel that they have a right support and guidance from the club not only in the term time but also outside the terms.

**Alice Jin**

It has helped me retain my technique over long breaks, and allowed me to learn from seniors who are much more skilled than I am :)

**Charlotte Payne**

Lots of benefits - it's been a lot of a fun, a brilliant way to meet like-minded rowers, and a good way to keep fit over the holidays. I re-learnt how to cox, and got a lot of practice rowing on both sides, so now I’m a far more useful sub and have subbed for Christ's and other boat clubs since. I also met other keen scullers which, again, has improved my ability but also been a source of a lot of happiness. the Australian rowers are an unfailingly supportive group of people to row/cox/scull with. thank you and PLEASE keep it going!!!

**Sonja Klingberg**

I first got involved during the Easter holidays of 2017. I had only been rowing for two terms, and the holiday rowing really boosted my learning as there were some excellent coxes and coaches involved. It was also a great experience rowing with different crews every time. I learned a lot and gained confidence as a rower. After that, I have been involved during most holidays, and out of all the colleges I have rowed with (5+) and subbed into, Christ's definitely has the best atmosphere and welcoming spirit. For what it's worth, I have definitely been spreading the word about what a constructive, impressive, and positive boat club CCBC is all around Cambridge! :) The summer of 2017 was a particularly fun rowing period for me, and the Australian rowing was socially very important for us who spend the entire summer (i.e. Australian winter) in Cambridge. I'm extremely grateful for the learning and friends I have gained through this initiative, and I will gladly sub into any Christ's crews (including very last minute requests to jump into an M2 boat, that has happened!), and contribute with coaching/bank partying if that would be useful to you. Thank you so much to everyone from Christ's who has been involved in big and small ways! :)

**Mabel Qiao**

"My experience with Australian Rowing has been very pleasant and benefits me greatly not only because I could have some outings out of term time but also because it gives me the opportunity to meet many rowers/coxes/coaches in Cambridge who enjoy rowing for rowing itself and we help each other to improve without the stress of winning a particular race. I was also given an opportunity to coach an outing which significantly improve my knowledge about how to plan an outing, what exercises there are to tackle certain issues, etc. It has been nothing but a joy to join Australian Rowing.

As in how it benefits Christ's Boat Club, I subbed into senior/novice mixed-boats during Michaelmas term which I think might have helped the LBCs to have more outings for novice rowers to practice."

**Peter Wilkinson**

Gained a range of contacts and friends in Christ's, which lead to the trading of coxing, coaching and subbing favours, to the benefit of all concerned.

**Manja Neumann (HHBC)**

"With only a few students staying in Cambridge over each term break, holiday rowing in a crew of similar abilities is always hard to organise – but Christ’s is known to make it happen! By allowing people from other clubs to join Australian Rowing a high standard of rowing is ensured, which results in very enjoyable and beneficial outings for athletes of all levels.

During the two holidays that I have taken part in Australian Rowing (summer 2017 and winter 2017/2018) this holiday rowing scheme has given me the chance to develop my rowing/coxing abilities and to improve my coaching abilities in a safe and always positive atmosphere. By coxing and coaching several outings, I believe that Christ rowers/coxes have benefited by me being part of the scheme.

Meeting people from different colleges has also led to wonderful friendships and a network among athletes on the river. This has resulted in many clubs having to cancel less and less outings/races during and outside of term time! I am not part of this term’s Australian Rowing, but would always last minute sub in to cox/coach/row if I have the time and believe that I could find a sub for my own club’s holiday rowing among Christ’s Australians.

Furthermore, I believe Australian Rowing is full of all the aspects why rowing is such a great sport:

- It engages people from all backgrounds to contribute in an outdoor activity together

- It keeps people out of the library for some time and combats (exam) stress by providing a physical workout as well as the calming effect of outdoor waters and meeting up with friends

- It boosts teamwork (as almost every outing will be in a scratch crew)

- It leads to lifelong friendships (outside the own college community)

Furthermore, I believe that this scheme has had a massive contribution to CCBC's very positive image among the other college boat clubs!

I very much hope Australian Rowing, as the beautiful inter-college rowing programme that it is, will be able continue in future and keep benefitting its own athletes and that of other (smaller) clubs along the river!"

1. **Proposals for the future and Conclusion**

Overall, the benefits of Australian rowing have been significant, and have hugely contributed to the college’s rowing. In our opinion this scheme supports the Christ’s College Boat club system that runs in the term time by ensuring people stay interested in rowing/coaching within the vacations and allows rowers to improve their rowing skills and coxes to acquire better coxing skills out of term time. I therefore propose the following: Australian rowing to be allowed to continue as it has done for the previous two years, namely Christ’s eights and fours to still be allowed to go out, upon the single condition that there is an Australian vice-captain in every outing as required for safety.

I would also suggest that we integrate the scheme into the current structure of the club and there is a new elected committee position namely ‘the Australian boat captain’ to be set up, to formalise the person responsible to organise it – this would much improve the longevity of the Australians. This person, like Miffloat, just needs to get it going at the start of each holiday – most of the work can be delegated.

**Concept of Kiwi Sculling at the Christ’s College Boat club**

1. **Introduction and Aims of Kiwi Sculling**

Before I begin, the first and foremost thing to say is that safety is of absolute importance. All of this sculling training will be done with safety always as first importance. Firstly, every single outing in the Kiwi system will be done with a bank party who will be another Kiwi sculler. In addition, for the first n outings you will have an authorised phase IV Kiwi on the bank in addition to the bank partier until both you the sculler, and a Phase IV chief coach of the Kiwis, is happy with your ability to scull safely down the Cam.

In terms of eligibility to row, in order for this to be safe both for you and the equipment, I need to be happy with two conditions. Firstly, that you can row sweep up to a good standard. Secondly, that you can respond well to coaching from the bank, and listen to commands. As a rough guide, you should have noviced, and then done at least one term of training with at least 2 to 3 water outings a week (e.g. primarily M2/W2 level, though Lents M3 achieved that level this year). If you are at all unsure, or want clarification whether you would be eligible, please email me.

There is an important point in the above - if there is a rower who cannot understand English well enough to be coached, or is just plainly uncoachable as they do not listen or respond to the coaches, then they are banned from taking part in Kiwi sculling for their own safety.

Next, in no particular order, there are two types of membership. Full membership of the Kiwis is open to Christ's Boat Club people ONLY. These people can use Christ's equipment (the two older sculls, along with the double after they are Phase II), with Christ's blades. Any people not in Christ's Boat Club are NOT eligible for this membership - instead you can do associate membership. Here you need to find your own scull from your own college, or find a willing town club who will lend you one. In filling the spreadsheet, you then need to tell me an email address I can contact should any problems arise (Christ's people - copy my entry). You will follow the same programme as the Christ's people, with the same graduation through the different phases, but without Christ’s equipment.

It is now time to explain how the outings will work

Phase 1a - air temperature must be above 10 °C. First two outings - introduction to the scull, and then water time primarily outside Queens'. Half way through the outing, swap with bank party, so that you get half water time, half bank partying. You scull in one direction, and in the other direction you do various exercises.

Phase 1b - air temperature must be above 10 °C. Next few outings - sculling from the boathouses towards Baitsbite. Learn the river well enough to navigate safely. Have one bank party and a Phase IV Kiwi. These outings go all the way to Baitsbite before allowing progression to Phase 2.

Phase 2 - Once both you and a Phase IV Kiwi are happy, this is when you are allowed to scull between Jesus and Baits Bite loch with another approved Kiwi sculler as bank party. Full members - at this point you will be able to book sculls without needing to go through me, subject to booking rules.

Phase 3 - After having done a significant amount of water time, Christ's people then need to seek Kate's permission to row alone. Before doing this, you need to have an outing with a Phase IV Kiwi bank partying to confirm that you are ready.

Phase 4 - Become Miffloat. I am always seeking to train my replacement for next year, and one of you will need to take over my role!!! Some of you have, and will be emailed shortly...

I do have some expectations for anyone joining the Kiwi program. Firstly, safety. You must always act safely, and anyone not will be taken off the program. Secondly, complete honesty. If an accident/incident/boat problems/river rage etc. happens, I expect to be informed of it as soon as possible, and anyone not doing so will be taken off the program. Thirdly, organisation - please turn up to outings you have signed up to.

Next, the Kiwi system only works if we all help each other out. Therefore you should expect that for every 1 outing you scull, you bank party 1.25 outings. This way we can cascade the knowledge of sculling down through the boat club and make this not a one-summer wonder. Bank partying is an incredibly important job - firstly for safety, but also as it teaches you how to coach, and will help the sculler hugely. I will try and invent a spreadsheet of sculling outing plans, from stationary exercises to general outing plans. You also need to be approved by a Phase IV Kiwi to bank party Phase 2 scullers...

In order to keep track who is doing what, in the spreadsheet below, after you fill in the Availability, you can go through and keep up to date what sculling experience you have and what bank partying experience you have. Please keep these fully up to date, just so that I can see what you are up to!

In phase 2, you should try and get your sculling filmed, and then see if you can get people to give you comments - in particular Phase IV Kiwis might be particularly useful

I believed I have talked enough - if you have read through the above and are still interested, please sign up at

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fy18_4b6SxaYbEvurVoNGDpxAUV8uuG6IjEpyWFQK50/edit?usp=sharing>

or,

<http://tinyurl.com/ccbc-kiwi17>

Criteria for progression through the phases (and explanation to Phase IV scullers)

Hoorah!!! You are now allowed to be me, and take out new scullers!!!!! See below for the conditions of the sculling, and if you are able to run any sessions to get people up through Phase IA and IB that would be great.

Here is some advice as to how to move on people

Allowing people into Phase IA - are they coachable? Are they of a reasonable standard? If not, deny them, and I will back you up. If they seek to complain beyond me, I will get the support of Kate. She will back all of us up on this

Phase IA to Phase IB - can they keep to their side of the river? Do you think they will be able to get to the far loch and back in a reasonable time frame (i.e. less than two hours)? If not, don't progress them. Some people do this in one session. Some people don't even achieve this after

three Phase IAs.

Phase IB to Phase II - they MUST have sculled down to the loch and back again once, and you now believe they will be safe enough to stay on their side. They MUST also have stood up in their scull whilst on the water for at least five seconds. Ideally, they would have done standing rigger dips (once or twice really nervously is also fine).

To all these outings, please take a throwline, and ideally that first aid kit if you can find it!!! Please ask me for any advice, or for any lessons into how to make bad puns so you can turn even more into me!!!

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Some notes about Kiwi - all associate members tend to get to Phase III after about 3-4 Phase II outings, but no Christ’s sculler has yet dared to ask Kate for permission to go out on their own, despite being competent to!!! Secondly, you can be Phase IV without being Phase III - and currently I am only allowing Christ’s scullers to be Phase IV. It is an interesting question as to whether to allow non-Christ’s scullers to be Phase IV - I don’t see a safety reason as to why not, but I am open to thoughts on this.

1. **Advantages of Kiwi Sculling**

It is a really good way of training up new scullers, and getting much more of the boat club sculling. It teaches people how to coach as well, and so helps them improve their understanding of the boat. It really feeds back into their sweep rowing, and is improving the standard of rowing at Christ’s a lot. It is a very effective way of getting more people using sculls effectively at Christ’s, and has been hugely beneficial to the club. It is a great way of keeping people connected to the club who are weary of eights sweep rowing, such as Tomas.

1. **Disadvantages of Kiwi Sculling**

None I can think of really. It is safer, in my view, than the Lightweights way of training new novice scullers, and whilst it would be wonderful if Kate or another paid trained coach could train all new novice scullers, this is impractical and a waste of their time. I therefore think it hugely benefits the club.

1. **Testimonies**

**Seb Marshall**

Without the Kiwi system, I would never have had the chance to go out in a single. My only other experience of sculling was a couple of outings in a quad on the France trip. Reasonably enough, term-time training with professional coaches is devoted to rowing in eights, but the holidays are a fantastic opportunity to make the most of the experience of older members of the club and try sculling. Besides being an enjoyable and useful skill to have in its own right, sculling can complement sweep rowing by getting members of the club to think carefully about balance and posture. Since the club has so many boats rigged for sculling which are used far less than the eights, I think it a fantastic idea to teach more people how to take advantage of these with a thorough and safety-conscious training programme. Having a formal system in place is important to maintain standards and keep track of who has what experience. I have found the Kiwi system very useful for organising bank-parties and getting in touch with people willing to coach you through the early stages. I would certainly like to get more people at Christ's involved with sculling, and thus am strongly in favour of Kiwi Sculling.

**George**

Kiwi Sculling enables Boat Club members to extend their skill set on the water, understand bank party and/or coaching duties, and contribute further to the rowing culture at Cambridge's very best college.

**Emily**

Without being brought into the Kiwi Sculling scheme, I would not have learned to scull or been in a position where I am comfortable taking a scull to the lock and back with ease. I take so much pleasure in sculling and I find it is a beneficial change to sweep stroke (which is what I do most of the time). Furthermore, I was useful when we needed to move the sculls from the temporary boat shed to the boathouse given that only a minority of the club can scull (and are confident scullers). Kiwi sculling gives people the flexibility to decide how much they want to do and how good they want to become. I am really glad I've been taught to scull and the structured programme has worked well in my experience. Kiwi sculling has increased my connection with CCBC. I would also like to add that were it not for Australian rowing, there’s a chance I may not have returned to rowing. I’m grateful for the encouragement I received from Miffy to join the Australians and from Jasmin to get me back into rowing. Rowing with the Australians benefited me initially and while I do not row with them anymore, I do benefit from coaching experience.

**Robert**

Thanks to Miffy, I have had a privilege to learn to scull and I am very grateful for that. Sculling is a beautiful sport and it requires a proper training and time to acquire the skills. I started with the sculling last year in June 2017 and have been improving steadily since then. I am hoping I can get better and better but I can say the Kiwi sculling scheme has allowed me to do so. Again, the community of people within the Christ’s college and outside the college gave me a courage to keep going and keep improving because I had a right support in form of having a bank party/coach or another sculler (in a double) to train with. I very much hope this schooling tradition is a norm and will become a regular scheme within the club that can raise talent and can strengthen self-discipline and self-motivation in people interested in sculling.

**Jose Velazquez Garcia**

I learned the basics of sculling and improve my skills through the program. Now that I'm the representative of small boats of X-press, I'm planning to apply this program in the policy of small boats my town club

1. **Proposal for the future and conclusion**

I do not believe there is anything controversial about the Kiwi sculling - it is a very clear and good way of teaching people how to scull. I think that potentially having a committee member to ensure it carries on and that the spreadsheet is maintained is useful, though the webmaster might be an appropriate person to do this.