



Council for Oxford University Rowing

Confirmed report of the meeting held on Tuesday 2nd of February at 6.30 pm in the Old Practice Room, Magdalen College.

Present:

Prof. Ben Davis (OULRC Senior Member and Chair)
Dr. Paul Azzopardi (OURCs Senior Member)
Jon Roycroft (OU Director of Sport)
David White (OU Sports Safety Officer)
Mark Blandford-Baker (BR Regional Representative)
Barbara Wilson (OUBC Administrator)
Dr. Fernanda Piri (Senior Member OUWLRC)
Dr. Lisa Walker (OUWBC Senior Member)
Gary Stephens (Sports Services Manager)
Yosiane White (Rowing Sabbatical)
Madeleine Badcott (OUWBC President)
Jonathan Williams (OURCs Secretary)
Joe Hitchen (OURCs Captain of Coxes)
Jessica Dunham (OURCs Captains' Representative)

No response:

Alec Trigger (OULRC President)
Morgan Gerlak (OUBC President)
Lucy Roberts (OUWLRC President)
Prof. Sir Jon Bell (Senior Member OUBC)

1. Minutes of meeting held on 12 May 2015 and 27 October 2015 [Paper 1]

TT15 Minutes

With regard to the TT15 minutes, PA raised a technical point which is that no vote took place during the discussion about COUR. It is therefore better to use language such as “the view was expressed” instead of “it was agreed” since this suggests that a vote took place. The minutes will be carefully edited accordingly. **[Action: YW]**

A second point is that the attendance list is incomplete and unformatted. This will also be corrected **[Action: YW]**

MT15 Minutes

FP mentions that she requested a “general review” on safety issues on the Isis, instead of a “report”. She further sent an automatic apology for this meeting, however this was not received by the Rowing Sabbatical Officer. Minutes will be edited accordingly. **[Action: YW]**

2. **Matters arising, not covered elsewhere in the agenda**

Action points from the last meeting - none clear enough to be considered.

a) Correct and amend the TT15 minutes : BD, YW and any other contributors

This has been done and is almost complete. The comments from this meeting will be added by YW.

b) Update squad and SU reports : YW

_____ Done.

c) Continue the OURCs and SU reports, with a more elaborate TT report : YW, JH, JW, RQ

_____ Done. There is no SU report this term since there were no bumps events last term.

d) Rowing booklet for freshers : YW

_____ YW is working on this. It will be reviewed at the TT16 meeting. **[Action: YW]**

e) Invite MBB to Captains' meeting : YW

MBB attended our week 6 Captains' Meeting and this was a great success. It was good for the captains, who were still relatively new to the positions due to annual handovers to learn more about their affiliation with BR. It would be good to do this every year at this time.

3. **University Squad Reports [Paper 2]**

No further comments.

4. **OURCs Reports - Rowing Sabbatical Officer, Secretary and Captain of Coxes [Paper 3]**

YW elaborates on the Christ Church incident, as is laid out in the Rowing Sabbatical Officer's report.

JR points out that it is important to be careful regarding the liability of OURCs during other colleges' independently run events. Giving them advice is fine, but helping them too much may cause issues regarding liability. OURCs should not run their event for them. PA will look into the liability issue and suggests that it is perhaps not a good idea for OURCs to turn up and help out. If Christ Church feel they need help from the Rowing Sabbatical Officer, perhaps they should pay for them to be present and to assist them. This is supported by MBB. PA further points out that OURCs organises a number of opportunities to train college captains how to run events. Perhaps it is worth requiring the ChCh regatta organisers to take such a course, or to require them to help out at racedesk during Torpids or Summer VIIIs.

Finally, MBB points out that it is a good idea that someone talks to the Senior Member of Christ Church and ensures that they understand the safety issues that are involved in this event. PA agrees and says that this should be his job. **[Action: PA]**

No further comments on the reports.

5. British Rowing Divisional Representative's Report

British Rowing have completed their restructure at a senior level. They have a new website that is worth exploring, in particular for colleges and OURCs. Many of the old links have changed, thus it is important to check that these are edited on the OURCs and other relevant websites, for example.

6. OU Sports Safety Subcommittee

PA, JR, DW and YW went to the recent meeting.

In conjunction with OURCs' new webmaster YW has created a search function for the OURCs website in which Senior Members can look up whether certain students have passed a swim test. The search function only works with OSSID numbers, and no names are given or used for privacy reasons. Captains all keep a list of these numbers so that they can enter rowers into events, so Senior Members could get the OSSID numbers from the captains should they wish to have an updated list of the rowers at their college, or wish to check whether they have all been swim tested.

7. Rowing Safety

YW reports on a commendable effort by Pembroke. One morning a passer-by (unrelated to the university) fell into the river and Pembroke M1 immediately stopped rowing, and two rowers jumped into the water, swam over to the unmoving person and helped bring him to the riverbank and ashore with help of the Pembroke and Wolfson coaches. The emergency services were swiftly called and arrived within 7 minutes. This is a commendable effort by Pembroke and they were contacted by OURCs with a commendation.

9. OURCs Business

None to report.

10. Any Other Business

a) JR reports that a document is being produced that advises how university clubs can meet charity status and use the OU name, etc. This document is an advice to all clubs, not just rowing, so it is yet to be seen how this affects OURCs. All clubs will be sent this and will be asked to comply. The date of publication is as yet unsure, however when it does the OURCs committee must check carefully which aspects are relevant for the college boatclubs.

b) BW asks YW to remind colleges who are looking to enter crews into HoRR and WEHoRR to check the relevant Tideway Code sections (middle), and to check entry

requirements to these races. There are tighter requirements (in particular regarding having a set location to boat from) this year in comparison to previous years, thus it is important to check these carefully. YW will remind colleges. **[Action: YW]**

c) JR reminds everyone that the Rowing Sabbatical Officer's election process will be starting soon.

11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday the 10th of May 2016 at 5pm.

POINTS FOR ACTION

- Correct TT15 and MT15 minutes: YW
- Rowing booklet for Freshers: YW
- Contact ChCh senior member regarding safety issues at the ChCh regatta: PA
- Remind colleges of Tideway code for (WE)HoRR: YW

[Paper 1]



Council of Oxford University Rowing

Minutes from the meeting of the Council on **Tuesday 12th May 2015 at 8pm at Magdalen College.**

Present: Trigger, Saul, Chitty, Green, Stephens, Louloudis, Pirie, Wilson, Clarke, Roycroft, Stewardson, White, Hitchen, White, Azzopardi, Davis, Walter

1. Report of the meeting held in HT 2015

No particular comments on anything not discussed later in the meeting.

2. Matters arising, not covered elsewhere in the agenda

Shrubs on the Isis were cleared along the Greenbank. Sports safety sub-committee issues from HT all satisfied. The Senior Members list remains incomplete; PA is continuing to work hard to complete this.

3. Squad reports

See filed reports – no matters arising from discussions.

4. Rowing Sabbatical Officer report

See filed report – one of the more concerning aspects was the perceived unpredictability of Salters steamers during the summer months with their increased schedule. It was resolved that ongoing discussion between the RowSab, Captain of Coxes facilitated perhaps by the Senior Umpire and MBB with John Salters should be pursued to put plans in place for Summer 2016.

5. OURCs Secretary report

Further to matters arising it was resolved that the OURCs Sec should complete the compilation of a list of all current senior members; the current list is out of date and some colleges don't have senior member (e.g. Mansfield SJC for > year). The secretary has requested all clubs to submit the name of their senior member and their role in college.

6. OURCs Captain of Coxes report

See filed report. It was agreed that MTMs do not need to be a standing item for COUR since they relate to enforcement rather than policy; should matters arise with implications for safety policy, these will be brought to COUR.

7. OU Sports Safety Sub Committee

A matter had arisen with the university regarding an insurance claim from a member of the public (see Section 9) that had been managed through direct discussion. This had highlighted the potential for communication through existing channels e.g. Chair of COUR and the council

agreed that they would be very pleased to act in this role.

8. Terms of Reference of COUR

A discussion paper was tabled by the Chair of COUR following consultation with the council and Senior Members (SMs) of the clubs. The ensuing discussion highlighted the following key general conclusions:

Background: COUR is primarily an advisory committee to the university and plays a key role in advising on rowing safety. It serves a vital link between the squads, OURCs, British Rowing, the Director of Sport, Safety Office and the proctors on this central matter.

The following discussion points were put to the meeting for views:

Q: 'Does the process of COUR needs fundamental alteration?' A: rejected unanimously

Q: 'Could SM representation be reconsidered?' A: It was agreed that clubs work differently with varying specifications of the role and that a senior employee of the squads could adequately act as the representative of the SM, noting any potential conflicts of interest. It is taken as read that any such representative of the SM would be in direct, effective communication with the SM concerned. It was noted that SM roles might be split between more than one member of Congregation. After discussion, it was suggested that each SM should notify the Proctors of any such arrangement for clarity if they were unable to attend in person on a regular basis.

Q: 'Should the additional composition of COUR be reconsidered?' A: It was agreed that the status quo composition should be confirmed as appropriate: SMs, OURCs secretariat, University Sports Director, University Safety Officer, Squad Presidents, British Rowing representative.

Q: 'Should the college clubs be more widely included?' A: It was agreed that the presence of the Presidents of the 4 'Head' crew colleges was unnecessary. The Captains' meeting should provide a forum for communication between COUR and the meeting. Colleges' rowers are, in effect, represented through OURCs. The timing of those meetings with respect to COUR might need to be considered appropriately.

What are the practical benefits of representation of the squads through their presidents? Is it ambitious that safety concerns are communicated through presidents? Safety is the main priority, and nothing should be put before it.

Q: 'Should COUR be during working hours?' A: It was agreed that a strong tension existed in trying to accommodate the preferred times of all. It was agreed that a compulsory timing in working hours would not be feasible with the current membership. The council acknowledged the issues that this might create and agreed to explore supportive arrangements with the university.

Q: 'To ensure greater continuity should the term of Chair be extended' A: It was agreed that 6 terms of Chair, coincident with the calendar year would provide longevity of memory and proper staggered tenure with other posts. The current tenure is held by OULRC's SM and so would last until MT 2016; OUBC's SM will take up tenure in HT2017.

Q: 'Do special issues exist for 'off-Isis' crews that are not being dealt with?' A: It was agreed that risks at all locations are covered in annual risk assessments of the college and squad clubs. No special issues not raised in those assessments were perceived but should they arise then the council agreed that OURCs should come to COUR to address them, as now.

9. Rowing Safety

MTMs as tabled.

Torpids incident: On Friday of Torpids, a member of the public was walking downstream, and OURCs cyclists were following the race. Due to a collision between two umpires and the member of the public, the member of the public ended up in the river. A settlement was reached for the replacement of damaged items. OURCs has a clear stance on cyclists: no cyclists are allowed on Saturday of Summer Eights. Safety procedures are to be reexamined to prevent recurrence of such an incident. More warning signs will be used, especially along the towpath. The tannoy will be used to make safety announcements preceding each division. Although the person concerned was constantly in the care of OURCs, it was agreed that a designated incident coordinator will be identified by OURCs prior to racing in the future to allow prompt reporting. DW will liaise further with OURCs on this. The Marshal script has since been revised. Umpire scripts have also been updated. New signs have also been ordered.

Ouwbc Tideway incident: One week before the boat race, one of two 8s was swamped in tricky conditions (wind + against tide). The other 8 rowed home. RNLI were passing and attended the incident. No one was hurt. Although OUW did report the incident to BR, and met with the BR officer the next morning, no paper report was submitted in time. All acknowledged that safety is the primary concern and therefore such a report should be submitted immediately. It was noted that such negligence could create long lasting consequences. DW met with OUW to discuss reporting of incidents and it was subsequently acknowledged in writing by OUWBC's SM that this matter was unfortunate and that new procedures were in place within the club to avoid any such recurrence.

10. British Rowing Representative's Report

It was noted that if colleges fail to pay their affiliation fees they will be disaffiliated and so will not be covered by insurance and hence will not be allowed to row in OURCs events.

It was noted that a reminder should be issued to all clubs that even small incidents should be reported. Safety is about risk, probability and assessment; such reports emphasize that all incidents are taken seriously. To aid colleges in this regard MBB generously offered to assist with the Captains' training day and that these requirements are discussed at the beginning of the MT meeting each year. A 'compliance meeting' could be run by the RowSab.

It was agreed that BR deadlines and requirements should be re-emphasized/re-posted on the OURCs website.

11. Any other business

None.

12. Date of next meeting

Tuesday of 3rd Week MT 2015.



Council for Oxford University Rowing

Confirmed report of the meeting held on Tuesday 27th October 2015 at 6.30 pm in the Oscar Wilde Room, Magdalen College.

Present:

Prof. Ben Davis (OULRC Senior Member and Chair)
Dr. Paul Azzopardi (OURCs Senior Member)
Jon Roycroft (OU Director of Sport)
David White (OU Sports Safety Officer)
Mark Blandford-Baker (BR Regional Representative)
Barbara Wilson (OUBC Administrator)
Gary Stephens (Sports Services Manager)
Yosiane White (Rowing Sabbatical)
Madeleine Badcott (OUWBC President)
Alec Trigger (OULRC President)
Jonathan Williams (OURCs Secretary)
Joe Hitchen (OURCs Captain of Coxes)
Jessica Dunham (OURCs Captains' Representative)

Apologies:

Dr. Lisa Walker (OUWBC Senior Member)

No response:

Morgan Gerlak (OUBC President)
Dr. Fernanda Piri (Senior Member OUWLRC)
Lucy Roberts (OUWLRC President)
Prof. Sir Jon Bell (Senior Member OUBC)

1. Minutes of meeting held on 12 May 2015 [Paper 1]

The minutes were unfortunately not complete or satisfactory. The committee was asked to contribute anything they may remember or be able to improve regarding the minutes via email to the Rowing Sabbatical Officer, or to the Chair (BD). BD and YW will ensure that mechanisms are in place so that this runs more smoothly in the future.

The minutes of both the TT15 meeting and the present MT15 meeting will be circulated within a week, although amendments to those of TT15 will be accepted until the next meeting of this committee.

2. **Matters arising, not covered elsewhere in the agenda**

Action points from the last meeting - none clear enough to be considered.

a) Squad reports

BW asked whether the squad reports could please also list the names of the presidents who wrote the reports, along with the squad title. [**Action : YW**]

b) Dates on minutes

BW asked whether the minutes could be dated clearer in order to be able to find specific points more easily. [**Action: YW**]

c) Addition to TT15 minutes

PA mentioned that although the minutes are tidier than they were, the main thing that is missing is the discussion on what COUR is. It would suffice to add in a line saying that this was discussed at the meeting and is an ongoing discussion. No conclusion was reached at the TT15 meeting. [**Action: YW**]

3. **University Squad Reports [Paper 2]**

Please ensure the squad reports are in at least a week in advance of the next COUR meeting so that we can avoid the late circulation of additional reports.

MBB asked whether the use of the term “returning Half-Blues” refers to Isis rowers. This is confirmed by BW.

No further comments.

4. **OURCs Reports - Rowing Sabbatical Officer, Secretary and Captain of Coxes [Paper 3]**

In the minutes of the TT15 meeting, FP requests an annual report from OURCs regarding safety issues that occur on the Isis. PA argued that this is frankly too much work to compile, and that the termly reports from the Rowsab, Secretary and CoC should suffice. The majority of relevant issues are brought up in these reports anyway. The use of these reports instead of one annual report also allows for a more timely reaction to pressing issues. PA therefore asked the committee to please let OURCs know if there is anything that is missing from the reports that should be in them.

JH was unsure whether a termly Senior Umpire report is also necessary, but PA said that it is, so long as the TT report is more elaborate. The TT reports from not only the SUs, but also the rest of OURCs should be more elaborate and cover more, giving a good overview of how the term but also year went in general. [**Action: YW, JW, JH, RQ**]

Finally, YW explained that the swimming lessons mentioned in the Rowsab report have begun and are going well. 4 out of 15 who took a lesson on Monday 26th of October passed a retest (out of the 9 who were actually retested there and then).

It was agreed that the reports look good and should hopefully remain of such standard.

5. Senior Umpire's Report [Paper 4]

JH noted that only one cox was removed from the Isis during Summer Eights, not two as mentioned in the report. [**Action: YW**]

MBB asked whether Rachel Quarrell can be added to the first line of the report since it now suggests that she was not one of the Senior Umpires of the event. [**Action: YW**]

MBB also strongly suggested that OURCs should look at how appeals are done at Cambridge, since from the report it seems like more trouble than it is worth, and that appeals are more about wording than actual evidence. JH said that the committee has been going to Cambridge for a number of years to see how they do bumps racing, and that the general conclusion has been that the difference in river layout between Oxford and Cambridge means that on the spot appeals are easier in Cambridge than they are here. JW has talked to RQ about tightening the rules on appeals, and there is a general consensus that the appeals system needs improving, however the best way to do this has yet to be discovered.

BW asked whether it would be useful if in future a recommendation for the following year could be put at the bottom of the report.

6. British Rowing Regional Representative's Report

MBB is no longer on the board of British Rowing, but is still our representative at the regional British Rowing Council.

MBB stated that two things are important. Firstly, the distribution of the Tideway Safety Document. A hard-copy was sent to all of the squads, as they frequently use the Tideway, and a digital copy was emailed to all of the college clubs by YW. More importantly, a Tideway coach endorsement form was distributed. This is important for all university squads, but also for colleges who use the Tideway. To clarify, if a coach takes a college crew down to the Tideway just for one race, e.g. Fours Head, then no endorsement form is necessary. However, if a college boatclub wants to run a multiple-day training-camp on the Tideway then it is essential that such a form is completed. If the college is hiring a launch from a Tideway club then they will probably be asked for such a form, but even if they are using their own launch, a form is necessary.

MBB and BW reported that they went to a BR conference recently and picked up a rowing booklet for freshers that includes all kinds of basic but useful information for new rowers. YW was already planning on creating such a booklet over Christmas, so will contact the makers of this Yorkshire version to talk about using the same format. [**Action: YW**]

MBB would like to come to the next captains' meeting to talk about British Rowing affiliation to the captains. YW to invite him. [**Action: YW**]

PA asked whether the title of this report should be changed to “Regional Representative’s Report” instead of “Divisional Representative’s Report”. MBB agrees this would be more suitable.

7. OU Sports Safety Subcommittee

PA, JR, DW and YW went to the recent meeting. With regard to rowing the swim tests were discussed. In particular, the communication of who passed and who failed a swim test. A fail-list is published immediately after the swim tests are done, and a complete pass-list is circulated as soon as it has been completed. This takes a considerable amount of time since the hand processing of 1500 names is time consuming for the Rowsab. The Sports Safety Subcommittee is therefore looking into collaborating with IT to get a bod-card scanner system set up to reduce the time delay in producing a pass-list, and also to reduce errors that naturally occur through a hand-written system. Furthermore, an application is being built for the OURCs website where senior members can look up whether specific students have passed a swim-test and are in the database, or not.

PA also mentioned that the additional precautions that were discussed after the Torpids incident last year were implemented successfully during Summer Eights, and this is now known by the university.

8. Rowing Safety

JW reported on an incident that occurred recently on the Towpath, in which a member of public on a bike had to swerve around a rowing coach with no hi-vis gear or bike-lights, and thereby ended up in a hedge (instead of the river). He was slightly battered and bruised, and had approximately £100 of damage to his bike, but he is ok and is not making any formal complaint. The identity of the coach is unknown, since it was so dark. The victim did ask if we could remind coaches of the essence of lights, which YW did within 24 hours through an email to the rowing captains.

PA asked whether we fine people who do not have lights. There is indeed a rule in the OURCs Code of Conduct that people must use lights if they are bankriding, so if someone is spotted without then they will indeed be fined.

BD suggested reminding captains at the next captains’ meeting that they must use bells as well as lights and hi-vis gear.

DW wondered what would have happened insurance wise in such a situation and therefore spoke to an insurance clerk about what the implications of such an incident may be. It is possible that this falls under the college’s insurance, although since colleges row under rules and regulations set by OURCs this might be more complex, and could possibly need to be done through legal services. PA mentioned that this should not come onto the OURCs tab, and the committee agreed with this.

9. OURCs Business

PA elaborated on a complaint received by the Vice-Chancellor’s Office of the University from a resident of Abingdon regarding noise made by Balliol and St John’s

college boat clubs early in the mornings. After inquiring into the matter, it turned out that the resident in question had bought the house next to the Abingdon Rowing Club over a year ago and has been complaining to many organisations (EA, council, etc.) about noise, but also other matters. He has even bought a barge and moored it so that it deliberately impedes rowing boats landing at the boat club. Abingdon boat club have been made aware of the situation, and have updated their restrictions on the use of megaphones, etc., early in the morning for Balliol and St John's. This is not OURCs' or the university's business really, and Abingdon rowing club will do all they can to prevent noise complaints. If the issue with Balliol and St John's persists then Abingdon boat club can simply deny them use of the boathouse which is an easy fix if this remains an issue.

It would be good to remind all colleges not to disturb people early in the morning.

10. Any Other Business

Nothing to be considered.

11. Date of next meeting

The next meetings will take place on the 2nd of February and 10th of May 2016. The current time of 6.30pm was good, but we will reassess this closer to the next meeting.

POINTS FOR ACTION

- Correct and amend the TT15 minutes : BD, YW and any other contributors
- Update squad and SU reports : YW
- Continue the OURCs and SU reports, with a more elaborate TT report : YW, JH, JW, RQ
- Rowing booklet for freshers : YW

Invite MBB to Captains' meeting : YW

●

[Paper 2]

University Squad reports

OUBC - Morgan Gerlak (President)

Following a disappointing performance at Fours Head the team hunkered down and had a very successful build up to Trial 8s. This culminated in a very tight race, with Pleasure taking the win over Business by about 1/2 length.

After the winter break we met for training camp in France. Whilst the weather wasn't great the team made massive gains both technically and physiologically. Since returning to camp our focus has been firmly on final selection. Crews will be announced March 1st.

OUBC - Madeline Badcott (President)

A vast amount of progress has been made in this year's team since my last report; we had a successful and very exciting Trial Eights race at the start on December, some solid training sessions in Wallingford on our return from London, and then a ten day break from team training over the Christmas period. On 28th December, the whole team flew out to Sabaudia, Italy, for our annual training camp, which was a fantastic opportunity for us to get experience rowing in different combinations and begin building our two crews for this year's races. Since our return from camp, we have been based at Eton Dorney for all training sessions on the water; last weekend we held a successful racing fixture for both eights against Oxford Brookes' first and second eights, in which both OUBC crews put out dominant performances. With the first external racing opportunity of 2016 now under our belts, both crews are now looking forward to racing in London this Saturday at Quintin Head.

OULRC - Alec Trigger (President)

November saw us welcome our new Head Coach – Mike Hill. With Trial VIIIs so close he let our assistant coaches take the lead so he could sit back and examine the squad.

Trial VIIIs was the first chance for most of the squad to race down the Henley stretch. It was a very close race with Rebellion taking ½ a length off the start, Empire clawed back to almost level before Rebellion sprinted for the finish winning with a final verdict of ½ a length.

After a short break over Christmas we set off for Soustons, France for our training camp. We took 14 rowers and 2 coxes on camp and spent the majority of the 1st week racing in 3 coxed fours. With some of the selection done, the end of camp saw a few trial lineups going out although bad weather meant we missed a few outings in the eight.

Once everyone was back in Oxford training resumed with the last bits of selection. The squad is quite tense at the moment as there is a huge amount of competition for the last few seats in the boat. The final crew will be selected at the end of January.

OULRC - Lucy Roberts (President)

After erg testing and a number of side-by-side pieces on the water, two evenly matched crews, 'Venus' and 'Serena', were put together and went head-to-head at this year's Trial Eights. Unfortunately, the race was not as tight as was expected, with 'Venus' quickly gaining an advantage off the start and going on to win by two lengths. However, both crews believe that Trial Eights was an incredibly valuable experience, which enabled all athletes to experience the boat race course.

The squad took a short break at Christmas, giving athletes a chance to rest and recover from a term of hard work. After this break, OUWLRC flew out to Ourense, Spain for a 10-day training camp, where the squad faced some very challenging conditions. The conditions posed both a mental and physical challenge for all the athletes. However, despite the wind and rain we managed to accomplish a decent amount of training and make some significant technical changes as well as learning a lot about ourselves and how important it is to stay both mentally and physically focused when rowing in such tough conditions. We also took the opportunity to continue seat racing. The reservoir featured a 2k 6-lane buoyed course which was ideal, and we were able to run a number of sessions throughout the camp.

We are currently in a period of erg testing and have a number of match fixtures organised with various clubs over the next few weeks. We are now working towards selecting crews for both the boat race and women's head of the river, which will be based on a combination of results from erg testing and seat racing, as well as overall performance. The squad are extremely excited to start racing.

[Paper 3]

OURCs reports

Rowing Sabbatical Officer - Yosiane White

Since our last meeting there are three issues and projects I am working on.

1. Christ Church Regatta

Every Michelmas Term Chrisch Church College holds a 4-day novice regatta with side-by-side knock out racing. As is standard practice I read their event plans, which looked good, and was at the river to assist them with any safety issues. Unfortunately on the first day of racing an incident occurred: a rower caught an ejector crab. This happened opposite the top end of boathouse island, and as soon as he went in he somehow came up, swam to the side and was helped from the water by his coach and a group of passers by. As soon as he hit the water I was anticipating klaxons, however this did not happen. There was a lack of klaxoning and much confusion on the radio, leading to the next race being set off despite there being someone in the water and two crews stationary on the course. Eventually (far too late) klaxons were fired and the racing crews saw the halted crews ahead and stopped their boats, by which point first aid had reached the wet rower.

After the event had been resolved I talked to the ChCh organisers and discovered major flaws in their briefing of the marshals, choice of marshals (mainly novices), positioning and lack of marshals in the safety plan, and lack of support for the SU. For day 2 of the regatta we helped them improve their marshalling system, and continued to improve the system over the course of the regatta. No other major incidents occurred. After the regatta David White and I sat down with the organisers and went through their safety plan with a fine-toothed comb, picking out all the parts that they had simply not implemented on the first day, and suggesting improvements. This was a very good and rewarding meeting, and the organisers have agreed to revise their safety plan now, so that it is all ready to go for the next organisers (because knowledge and memory of these meetings gets lost during handovers). In addition to this meeting, under request from numerous worried captains, I organised a ChCh regatta review meeting in which the captains could voice their concerns about the regatta and many good ideas were suggested to aid the running of next year's regatta. I am confident that with the reviewed event plan ChCh will run a much safer regatta, and that should another ejector crab occur, the response will be more than sufficient.

2. Lights

It is unsurprising that this year, as per usual, we have been fining colleges left and right for insufficient lighting during dark training hours. Colleges usually duct-tape bike lights or mini-torches to their boats. These lights are often one-directional, not bright at all or blindingly so, they fall off, get forgotten and the batteries are often near dead. British Rowing, and OURCs require boats to have two white lights that are visible from a 360 degree angle (180 at bow and 180 at stern). I have received numerous queries from colleges regarding what type of lights to buy. St Catherine's College Boatclub have by far the best lights on the river: they are especially made for rowing boats and are LED lights that are visible for up to a mile, not blinding, USB rechargeable, they float, and they are attached using a strong suction cup (with

safety cord). I contacted the company that makes them (Rowkraft Light Beacons) and made a deal with them for a bulk discount. The captains have placed orders (76 total) and we therefore hope to see a beautifully well lit river near the end of this term, or otherwise next Michelmas (when training once again happens in the dark).

3. Swim tests Hilary Term

The Hilary term swim tests took place on the 24th of January. 99 people attended, with 6 failures. A good result. We are still looking into a digital system for signing in people who attend the test. Jon Roycroft and Ruedi Baumann of the Sports Safety Panel are looking into the possibilities.

Secretary - Jonathan Williams

Since the previous meeting, OURCs have run IWL A and B and Autumn 4s. IWL A ran well under good racing conditions. IWL B fell on an extremely windy day and a full refund was offered for all crews that withdrew, an offer which a good number of crews took up. Autumn fours ran successfully in good conditions. Entries for IWL C and Torpids are open, currently 65 crews have entered IWL C, but more are anticipated.

Captain of Coxes

Over 200 new coxes were registered at the start of MT 15. The term went smoothly with uninterrupted green flag and except for the occasional strong wind, conditions remained surprisingly good. Autumn Fours and IWL B ran with restrictions on novice coxes but Christ Church regatta did not so this year's novice coxes should be better prepared for Torpids than in previous years.

This term has started with the first high stream since last February and the conditions have taken many recently upgraded coxes by surprise. Advice on dealing with the conditions has been sent out to the mailing lists and discussing with individual coxes where they have had specific questions. The forecast suggests that the flag will remain blue or close to blue until the weekend but there is nothing to suggest yet that Torpids may be in danger. Approximately 50 new coxes have registered this term, but most will not be able start coxing until the flag returns to green.