



## **Minutes of the Council for Oxford University Rowing**

*14<sup>th</sup> May 2007, Worcester College*

Present:

Paul Azzopardi [Chair] (OURCs Senior Member)	Alice Millest (OUWLRC President)	Henry Sheldon (OULRC President Elect)
Mark Blandford-Baker (ARA Division Representative)	Eleanor Nicholson (OURCs Secretary)	James Stanier (OULRC President)
Tom Cadoux-Hudson (OUBC Representative)	Elizabeth Rowles (OUWBC President Elect)	Rich Stock (Rowing Sabbatical)
Robin Ejsmond-Frey (OUBC President)	Jon Roycroft (Director of Sport)	Katherine Taylor (OUWLRC President Elect)
Judy Gleen (Rowing Sabbatical Elect)	Steve Royle (Director of Rowing)	Barbara Wilson (OUBC Administrator)
Martin McNally (OULRC Senior Member)	Rachel Quarrell (OUWBC Steering Committee)	

### **Apologies**

John Bell (OUBC Senior Member)	Catherine Stoodley (OUWBC/OUWLRC Senior Member)
Richard Dodsworth (University Safety Officer for Sport)	Emma Windham (OUWBC President)

The meeting began with Paul Azzopardi (PA) introducing Judy Gleen as next year's Sabbatical Officer for Rowing.

### **1. Minutes of Last Meeting**

These were approved.

### **2. Matters Arising**

It was confirmed that the ARA still had not formed a working group on GB rowing.

### **3. Squad Reports**

#### OULRC

- After training camp OULRC moved into the OUBC shed, with the help of Pat Lockley.
- At Bedford Head the A boat posted faster times than CULRC.
- Match racing was arranged with LRC, UTRC and Reading University for the Blue Boat, St Pauls School and an Old Boy's crew for Nephthys.
- CULRC did not present a Granta crew to race Nephthys for the first time in history. Instead Nephthys were sent to HoRR which was cancelled.
- Oxford recorded their sixth successive win at Henley, winning by a length. Nephthys successfully weighed in a rowed over.

#### OuwBC

- Crews were finalised 6 weeks before the races.
- Match races were held against Leander, St Paul's School, Thames and Furnivall.
- At WeHoRR, Osiris came 23<sup>rd</sup>, fastest second crew from any club, Blue Boat retained the University pennant for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time in 4 years, finishing 6<sup>th</sup> and broke the University course record, taking it from Cambridge who held it since 1993.
- Osiris beat Blondie at Henley by half a length. The women's blue boat lost by half a length to Cambridge.
- Training started again 10 days later for BUSA where the club picked up 6 medals.
- Summer squad continues hoping to build the foundations for 2008.

#### OuwLRC

- OuwLRC came 11 seconds behind Cambridge at WeHoRR.
- Despite this, and losing the toss, OuwLRC beat Cambridge by a length at Henley.
- At BUSA the lightweight pair won a silver medal.
- At Ghent, the 4- won a silver medal in Openweight.
- Development squad continues working towards the Met, Henley and Nat Champs.

Full reports can be obtained from the rowing sabbatical if requested.

#### **4. Rowing Sabbatical Report**

- Torpids was cancelled.
- Eights preparations were going well.
  - o £10,000 sponsorship with Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer.
  - o Looking into various add ons to the event: big screen, programme (more likely next year), live blog, live images, SMS results service.
- Still running a lot of swim tests,
- Trying to convince the EA to publish their lock statuses on the internet. Possible pilot scheme at Iffley Lock with OURCs funding a laptop and the lock-keeper updating the service.

Steve Royle pointed out that in future we should look to get everything the sponsor wants paid for by them not out of the main sponsorship sum.

#### **5. ARA Div Rep Report**

- ARA Council:
  - o One council meeting since the last COUR meeting.
  - o No timing news on the RoSPA inquiry.
  - o Next meeting 12<sup>th</sup> June, Mark Blandford-Baker (MBB) unable to attend but if anyone wants to go as the representative they are very welcome.
- MBB reminded everyone that there were now no day tickets.
- There's a possibility that the EA may introduce the tideway-style alpha-numeric codes right up the Thames.

#### **6. Discussion Items**

##### **a. Flag Status**

Discussion was had amongst the group about how best to deal with the fact that the EA were no longer happy for the lock-keeper at Iffley to change our flag status. Discussions were taking place with regards putting in a web system but this was looking fairly unlikely. It was suggested that OURCs would just have to constantly call but concerns were raised with regards weekends and the summer. A rota system of OURCs members with a suspension of the flag over the summer was discussed.

b. New boat hire company at Godstow

A new boat hire company is due to open on the Godstow stretch. The safety implications of this were discussed and it was generally agreed that the major concern was with the blind corners on the stretch. It was generally agreed that even if instructions were given to the hirers of the boats they probably wouldn't follow them.

**It was agreed that PA would write to the company to discuss the safety issues.**

c. Development of Oxford Rowing

The Chair asked the group to discuss things they felt COUR could take on to help develop Oxford University rowing. A number of items were suggested which are summarised below:

- A wireless network down the river  
This would allow better communication and assist with the running of events and safety.
- Lock Defence Systems  
Look at ways to see if we can get more rowing on the river by working with the Environment Agency to build lock defences.
- Various Seminars  
A number of seminars were suggested such as: coaching, coxing, physiology and sports psychology seminars. Some concern was raised about continued uptake on these. Perhaps adapting this into Oxford University endorsed courses which aren't necessarily endorsed by the National Governing Body.
- Engaging Senior Members of College Boat Clubs  
Help explain the role of Senior Members/Bursars in the Oxford rowing system. The discussion gradually led to the idea of a handbook for Senior Members of boat clubs which could be put together by the Rowing Sabbatical taking information from a number of people. This could be expanded to help College captains too. There is potential funding of this from the Sports Department.

**It was agreed that next year's Rowing Sabbatical should look into putting together this information for Senior Members/Bursar using various member of COUR as experts.**

- Access to the Boathouse Island  
Briefly the idea of improving access to the boathouse island was discussed. (perhaps with a more wheelchair friendly bridge). It was suggested that this was not really a COUR issue.
- Still Water Rowing Facility  
Some discussion was had as to where discussion about this had previously been left off. Everyone seemed in agreement that this was a good idea in principle. It was suggested that perhaps we should look into trying to get the new Abingdon reservoir row-able.

d. Timing of the meeting

Paul Azzopardi asked whether people felt there was a better time. Suggestions involved either switching so that the COUR meeting was always before a Captains' Meeting or moving the time of the Trust Fund meeting.

**It was agreed that the next COUR meeting will take place before the 1<sup>st</sup> Captain's Meeting of next term (12<sup>th</sup> November). COUR will begin at 6:30pm with the Captains' Meeting at 8pm.**

**7. Any Other Business**

a. Coxing Meeting

Rachel Quarrell expressed her thanks to Robin Ejsmond-Frey for agreeing to move the OUBC election for the coxing meeting.

b. New Committees

Jon Roycroft reminded the new committees that they should book an appointment with Richard Dodsworth to discuss safety arrangements for next year and other Sports Department requirements.

c. Trips Abroad

MBB reminded clubs that the ARA should be notified of trips abroad at least a week in advance.