



O U R C s

Captains' Meeting Minutes

Thursday 5th Week Hilary Term 2024

7.00pm, 15th February

Doctorow Hall, St Edmund Hall

Chair: Louis Corrigan (OUBC)

Attendance (voting members):

College Clubs: 52

OURCs Committee: 5

Absences: none

1. Welcome

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Available at <https://ourcs.co.uk/organisation/meetings/>

No objections:

Minutes ratified.

3. Matters Arising

No matters arising

4. Ratification of Ordinary Committee Members – Sophia Ungermann to speak

- Georgia Douglas (Pembroke)
- Suzanne Lim (University)
- Zara Watson (Queen's)

No objections, either to the OCMs or their ratification as a slate:

OCMs ratified.

5. Ratification of Webmaster – Sophia Ungermann to speak

- Tobias Bretschneider (Balliol)

No objections:

Webmaster ratified.

6. **Transfers under A1.2.** – Samuel McLoughlin to speak

Under A.1.2.a.:

Objections may only be based on the following:

- *Athlete is not a member of the college they are transferring from.*
 - *Athlete has never been a member of the college they are transferring to.*
-
- Miles Graham, Balliol to Magdalen
 - Leopold von Waldthausen, Regent's Park to Magdalen
 - Jake Rule, Magdalen to New College

No objections:

Transfers stand as announced.

7. **Update to Code of Conduct: Scope** – Samuel McLoughlin to speak

Simple majority to pass

Change:

2.2.b. The rules written below are enforceable in addition to the Environment Agency (EA) regulations, to British Rowing Row Safe 2017 and any other applicable law.

To (changes in red):

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Proposed: Samuel McLoughlin (OURCs)

Seconded: Sophia Ungermann (OURCs)

It was explained that this was simply an update to correct a reference to an evidently very out-of-date version of RowSafe. Removing the mention of a specific year and inserting a link to the RowSafe page of the BR website was intended to remove the need for further updates.

No questions

Votes for: 57

Votes against: 0

Abstentions: 0

Motion passed.

8. **Change to Code of Conduct: Breaches** – Qianyi Sun to speak

Simple majority to pass

Change:

2.11.d.ii. [serious incidents]

1. After any serious incident, a formal OURCs Committee Meeting shall be convened to conduct a Club Safety Review. The purpose of a Club Safety Review is twofold: first, to help the club(s) involved understand how their own systems contributed to the incident and

improve those systems to prevent future incidents; and, second, to foster good relations between the club(s) involved and OURCs committee members who have experience related to the incident and can be resources to the club(s) in the future.

2. The Captains of the club(s) involved shall be notified 24 hours before the meeting and may present a statement either in writing or in person. The Senior Member(s) of the club(s) involved may be notified at the discretion of the OURCs Secretary and Sabbatical Officer.

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~~2. The Captains of the club(s) involved shall be notified 24 hours before the meeting and may present a statement either in writing or in person. The Senior Member(s) of the club(s) involved may be notified at the discretion of the OURCs Secretary and Sabbatical Officer.~~

2. The club(s) involved in the serious incident may be required to attend a Club Safety Review with at least one week's notice provided, or sooner if mutually agreed. Failing to attend a Club Safety Review may be treated as a further serious incident. Should a club not cooperate by making appropriate representatives available and/or not engage with the review meeting then, at the discretion of the OURCs Secretary, the Senior Member or the Bursar of the club concerned may be informed by the Senior Member or Senior Treasurer of OURCs.

Proposed: Qianyi Sun (OURCs)

Seconded: Sophia Ungermann (OURCs)

The purpose of a CSR was reiterated and it was explained that, while the current rules allowed clubs to either attend or submit a written statement, many on the OURCs committee felt that the presence of club representatives at the meeting was necessary for a thorough review of club safety systems. Hence the motion removed the option of submitting a written statement, but considerably lengthened the notice period.

No questions

Votes for: 57

Votes against: 0

Abstentions: 0

Motion passed.

9. **Update to Rules of Racing: Visiting Student Eligibility** – Samuel McLoughlin to speak
Two-thirds majority to pass

Change:

A1.1.a. Members of College Boat Clubs are classified either as:

i. Student Members;

[...]

2. Students on the Visiting Student Programme holding a valid University Card stating "Visiting Student Programme";, who are affiliated to that college.

To (changes in red):

A1.1.a. Members of College Boat Clubs are classified either as:

i. Student Members;

[...]

2. Students on the Visiting Student Programme holding a valid University Card stating "Visiting Student Programme";, **or equivalent**, who are affiliated to that college.

Proposed: Samuel McLoughlin (OURCs)

Seconded: Sophia Ungermann (OURCs)

It was explained that there was variation in the precise wording of the University Cards of those on the Visiting Student Programme. By specifically requiring them to state the words "Visiting Student Programme", and in that order, the rule excluded those it was never meant to exclude. The motion was intended to correct this.

No questions

Votes for: 57

Votes against: 0

Abstentions: 0

Motion passed.

10. **Update to Rules of Racing for Bumps: Associate Members** – Samuel McLoughlin to speak
Simple majority to pass

Change:

A3.6.a. Associate Members' of College Boat Clubs may compete in bumps races subject to the following restrictions:

[...]

- iii. If a College Boat Club has no qualified Rowing On crews, not including composites, for a given gender, associate members may only compete in the College Boat Club's lowest crew of that gender provided it is not in a Senior Division, including Sandwich Boats, at the start of the competition.
- iv. If a College Boat Club's lowest crew for a given gender is in a Senior Division at the start of the competition, specific permission to compete as an associate member in that crew must be given by a majority vote at a Captain' meeting. The Associate Member(s) in question must be named in the proposed motion. All other Associate Member rules must still be followed.

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- iv. If a College Boat Club's lowest crew for a given gender is in a Senior Division, **including Sandwich Boats**, at the start of the competition, specific permission to compete as an associate member in that crew must be given by a majority vote at a Captain' meeting. The Associate Member(s) in question must be named in the proposed motion. All other Associate Member rules must still be followed.

Proposed: Samuel McLoughlin (OURCs)

Seconded: Sophia Ungermann (OURCs)

It was explained that A3.6.a.iii. excluded associate members from crews starting the competition in the Senior Divisions – including the Sandwich Boat from Division 4. However, under certain conditions and if agreed at a Captains' Meeting, A3.6.a.iv. in turn allowed associates in the Senior Divs – but still not in the Sandwich Boat from Div 4. The motion thus corrected this omission.

No questions

Votes for: 57

Votes against: 0

Abstentions: 0

Motion passed.

11. **Associate Rowers in Torpids 2024 Senior Divisions under A3.6.a.iv.**– Samuel McLoughlin to speak
Simple majority to pass

- a. **Kirils Bistrovs, St Antony's M1** – Roger Creus Vila to speak

St Antony's College Boat Club would like to ask for the Captains' approval so that our associate member, Kirils Bistrovs (hereafter Cyril as he himself prefers), could compete in our only crew

for the Men's Divisions. St Antony's M1 currently stands at bunline 11 in Div3, as of Saturday's finishing order Torpids 2023. Cyril was a full member of the club 2020-21 during which he only went out on a couple of taster outings, and he joined the club again this academic year as an associate member, learning to row with other novices. He has never raced in an OURCs race at all, and this could be confirmed by the records. On the grounds that we have no other full member alternatives who are able to race every single day this year, and that Cyril is practically similarly trained as other novices who joined this academic year, we hope the captains would vote in favour for us and allow Cyril to race in our M1 as an associate member.

Proposed: Roger Creus Vila (St Antony's)

Seconded: Katharine Taylor (St Antony's)

A question was asked as to whether St Antony's had any full-member alternatives who, between them, would be able to cover every day of racing. The club explained that this was not the case and that they would still be left struggling to fill all seats in the crew on certain days.

Votes for: 53

Votes against: 0

Abstentions: 4

Motion passed.

b. **Brigid Falvey, Wolfson W3** – Lara Bolte to speak

Wolfson W3 (1st in WDiv4) would like permission for Brigid Falvey to row as an associate in Torpids. Brigid started rowing with us as a novice after Eights 2023 and has since finished her degree without getting to race at all other than one IWL. Due to the red flag, we don't have any other novices who are safe to race in the last seat in W3 - those who would have been W4 have barely been on the water, if at all. Hence, we would like Brigid to be able to race with the crew she has trained in. If the Captains don't grant permission, our alternative is to use a full-member former W1 rower who has not trained with us, which seems less in the spirit of the event. We stress that allowing Brigid Falvey to row with Wolfson W3 is not going to give us an unfair advantage.

Proposed: Lara Bolte (Wolfson)

Seconded: Ben Hardin (Wolfson)

No questions

Votes for: 52

Votes against: 0

Abstentions: 5

Motion passed.

12. **Ratification of Club Safety Review** – Samuel McLoughlin to speak

- LMH [Appendix A]: £50

The Captains were encouraged to read the CSR minutes (attached as an appendix) and consider their own practices when hiring coaches. They were reminded that a key reason for the publishing of CSR minutes was to give all clubs the opportunity to learn from what had been discussed.

No questions

Votes for: 55

Votes against: 0

Abstentions: 2

CSR ratified.

13. **AOB**

- **Torpids update** – Rachel Quarrell to speak

This item of AOB was raised at the start of the meeting due to availability of the speaker.

The Coordinating Senior Umpire explained that, if the current forecast was accurate, it was likely that some form of racing would be able to take place. While, if the flag was Amber, Experienced status coxes would be allowed, on low Red Flag it would be Senior status only and likely half divisions. These contingency plans had been implemented before and refined over the course of many years: any decisions would be communicated to college bursars.

Further, due to the EA boards for the Osney-Iffley stretch having been red all term, it was unlikely that boats moored along the bunglines would be able to move. By using the five extra bunglines for high-stream conditions, plus the top two standard bunglines, half divisions would be possible. However, timing would still only allow for 12 divisions to be run.

It was announced that there was not yet a final decision from the SU team about allowing crews to withdraw without penalty on safety grounds. There were concerns that, in divisions where a significant number of crews withdrew, bumps racing would be unfair since a single bump could result in crews moving many spaces in the finishing order once withdrawn crews were reinserted. In such cases, a head race format might be fairer than bumps and allow more crews to race.

OURCs stressed that they would run as much racing as safely possible, if for no other reason than that Summer Eights would be safer if crews had prior experience.

Clarification was sought on the procedure for withdrawals and it was explained that only those crews that entered on time would be considered for zero-penalty withdrawal. Crews requesting a zero-penalty withdrawal on safety grounds would be withdrawn from racing regardless of the outcome of the request.

Clubs without an affiliated S-status cox raised concerns and asked whether they would be allowed to withdraw without penalties. It was stressed that this was unlikely to be an issue as there were more S-status coxes than generally thought and the relaxation of coxing eligibility rules announced earlier in term allowed coxes to compete for any college, regardless of their affiliation, and to cox multiple crews. Those who had previously passed an OURCs swim test were allowed to renew it with an external instructor for precisely these situations.

There was a question about whether it would be acceptable to have novice rowers in college first boats. In response, it was explained that it depended on the novices in question and the overall experience of the crew. While there were no restrictions on experience, clubs were required to only enter safe crews and those that demonstrated themselves to be unsafe might be removed from racing.

- **OUBC Dev. Squad** – Ella Stadler to speak

This item of AOB was raised at the start of the meeting due to availability of the speaker.

The speaker asked the Captains to advertise the Development Squads to their rowers, explaining that they had themselves been encouraged to sign up as a way of getting more training time and had gone on to participate in the Boat Race. They stressed that it was fun, not a colossal commitment, and that Dev. Squad crews often went on to race at the Metropolitan, Henley Royal & Henley Women's Regattas.

- **Boat club contacts** – Samuel McLoughlin to speak

Clubs were reminded of the need to provide OURCs with up-to-date details of their points of contact under 1.5.b. In particular, the Captains were asked to double-check that their Senior Member was listed on their committee page on the OURCs website. The need for Senior Members to have the right to be present at the governing body meetings of the relevant college (1.5.c.) was also raised.

- **Torpids tear-down marshals** – Sophia Ungermann to speak

<https://forms.gle/GSg9GbNaWpXckqUE8>

The usefulness of 'tear-down' marshals for the Sunday after bumps racing, as discussed at the previous meeting, was reiterated. Captains were asked to fill out the above form to apply for a tear-down marshalling slot, though warned that the number of slots was limited and a ballot would likely have to be conducted in order to allocate them.

Appendix A

Confirmed Minutes of the Club Safety Review with Lady Margaret Hall BC held on 14th February 2024

Present: Evan Cussans (LMH), Amy Kerr (LMH), Hope O'Brien (LMH), Kevin Shen (LMH), James Hopkinson (OURCs), Samuel McLoughlin (OURCs), Charlotte Rumney (OURCs), Qianyi Sun (OURCs), Sophia Ungermann (OURCs)

What Happened

On the 7th of February, an LMH crew boated with a Novice cox before sunrise on a blue flag.

The club had been struggling to find an Experienced status cox for the outing so, the evening before, asked their coach – whose CV had stated they were X-status – to cox the outing. The coach was consulted regarding the blue flag rules and the specific crew, and confirmed they were happy for the outing to go ahead.

Systems Discussed

Use of coxes from outside the club: the club suggested their captains could have checked the potential cox's status on the OURCs website. This was agreed to be sensible if not generally common practice in the past. Concerns were raised that previously it had sometimes taken a while for coxing status to be updated online, though OURCs said they were endeavouring to do so promptly and that, if there is every any doubt, captains are welcome, and encouraged, to email the Captain of Coxes (coxing@ourcs.co.uk) for confirmation.

With Torpids imminent and coxing restricted to those with Senior status, X-status, or N-status registered before MT23, the topic of clubs relying on coxes from outside their club was further discussed. LMH mentioned that they had been planning coxes for this well in advance. This was felt to be very wise to avoid any last-minute panic and to give time to confirm coxes were indeed eligible for racing.

Hiring of coaches: the club set out their general interview process, starting with advertising for the role and requesting an application and CV, some communication with previous clubs by way of a reference where appropriate, followed by an interview and/or trial outing. This was all felt to be very sensible. In this particular case, there had been a change of captaincy during the recruitment process and, faced with few candidates and the need for a coach, it was concluded that the process had probably been less thorough than normal.

LMH had already considered how they would update their committee handover documents. A few suggestions were made of things worth including when hiring coaches directly as a club:

- Consideration of who should be present at an interview/trial outing – ensure committee members with a range of experience are present.

- Having some planned questions to ask candidates: if clubs have alumni(/ae/a) who are willing, especially those now rowing outside of the Oxford colleges, they may be able to offer helpful advice.
- If a potential coach is already an OURCs-registered cox, check their status on the system and keep a screenshot for your records to avoid having to search for them again.
- It can sometimes be worth delaying recruitment until a couple of weeks into term if there are initially few candidates. Once people are settled into their timetables, they may be more willing to consider a coaching role and, particularly for novices, seniors often make competent coaches.

This was felt to be a fairly long list and it was recommended that a club pick and choose those most appropriate to a situation.

It was pondered what should be done if a similar situation were to arise again with regards to coach recruitment. OURCs pointed out that, unless the Code of Conduct or Rules of Racing had been broken, they are both unable and ill-placed to assist – though clubs were encouraged to keep a good record.

Outcome

£50 fine

A coxing endorsement has been considered separately.