



O U R C S

Captain's Meeting Minutes

7pm, Thursday 5th week Michaelmas Term 2020

12th November 2020

Chair: Alexander Bebb (OUBC President)

1. Register and Welcome

Attendance:

College Clubs: 74 (66 voting)

Squads: 2

OURCs Committee: 7

Total Voting Body: 74

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

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

3. Matters Arising

No matters arising.

4. Ratification of Ordinary Committee Members – Jack Woodward to speak

- Aksel Saukko-Paavola (St Edmund's Hall)

No objections. Ratified.

The secretary also stated that there are still positions available for ordinary committee members, if anyone is interested please contact them at secretary@ourcs.co.uk. Once the national lockdown is over OURCs intends to organise RYA2 training for launch drivers, priority will go to OCMs but if any club members are interested please get in touch.

5. Events Calendar Cancellations – Jack Woodward to speak

- Autumn Fours (8th November)
- Nephys Regatta (13th-14th November)
- Michaelmas Novice Regatta (25th-28th November)
- IWL B (29th November)

All above events are cancelled due to the national lockdown.

6. 7th Week Torpids – James Baker and Sasha Webb to speak

Proposal to move Torpids to 7th Week HT, in spite of the WEHoRR clash.

In light of the four-week lockdown, Michaelmas training has been severely limited for many colleges. This is further compounded by the awful weather throughout last year, and the loss of Trinity term, leaving most college clubs with two year-group's worth of largely novice rowers. The amount of training we will get this Hilary is uncertain, between the Covid situation and the scarcity of senior coxes and rowers, to deal with any poor weather conditions. As such, it would seem more beneficial in terms of safety and preparation to give colleges an extra week of training before Torpids.

Although WEHoRR is a great event, it caters towards more experienced rowers, since it is 6.8km and in tidal conditions. Additionally, for entry, it requires that 6/9 crewmembers have competed in at least one regatta/head race under BR rules. There are at least five or six viable races due to happen next term, before WEHoRR, but none are in any way guaranteed, since colleges may be prevented from attending, depending on how long the university-wide ban on external sporting events lasts. While a few of these things will not be a problem for some, I imagine that these issues are present for the majority of college clubs. Further to this, WEHoRR itself is at risk of being cancelled, or at reduced capacity, while the Hammersmith Bridge works are going on.

I would propose that the college captains should assess how likely it is that they will attend WeHoRR, given the limited training and uncertainty surrounding the event, and decide whether an additional week of training for Torpids would be more beneficial instead.

Proposed: James Baker (Corpus Christi)

Seconded: Sasha Webb (Corpus Christi)

One of the captains stated that WeHoRR is a big event to look forward to for women in their club, therefore they suggest an amendment to the motion which would mean that Torpids would only be moved to 7th week if the university travel ban is still in place, or if other factors mean that college clubs are unable to enter. This amendment is accepted as friendly. It is also pointed out that safety paperwork for Torpids needs to be submitted well in advance of the event, so the decision as to whether Torpids should be moved to 7th week should be taken no later than -1st week of Hilary term.

Voting:

'Vote to move Torpids to 7th week only if WeHoRR is compromised' - **17 votes**

'Vote to move Torpids to 7th week regardless of the circumstances surrounding WeHoRR' -

33 votes

'Vote against moving Torpids to 7th week' - **2 votes**

Abstention – **3 votes**

Torpids will be moved to 7th week.

7. Proctors Closure discussion point – Isla Henderson and Morten Pahun to speak

Dear Captains,

We're writing regarding the significant impact that limited access to boathouses, combined with the existing river restrictions, are having on our club. We imagine many

of you are facing the same problems. Post-lockdown, we imagine these factors will continue to impact us, and so we raise them now hoping that early discussion will help us all work towards resolution for Hilary 2021 and beyond.

We anticipate that as current restrictions stand, we will have insufficient time to prepare crews and coxes that are both safe and competitive to race in Torpids. In terms of safety, the combination of existing river restrictions, current boathouse restrictions, and very limited access to racks at St Edward's School, mean we are limited to two morning slots per week for our 70-strong club. This is simply not enough time to prepare crews to be safe to race. A secondary consideration would be whether rushed preparation for Torpids 2021 is in the best interest of new athletes in our club. In terms of competitiveness, we believe the impact of ongoing, unequal access to water time is detrimental to the quality of rowing and racing in Oxford. With only Graduate Colleges allowed to boat eights during the quieter period of 8.30am-1pm, it is increasingly difficult, without this advantage, to prepare crews that are competitive for Torpids and Eights. As far as is possible, we believe river restrictions should seek to create a level playing field.

Thinking towards solutions, we are sure there are many creative ideas out in the rowing community and would welcome them. We suggest that any changes could be subject to a trial period, and subject to a consultation, before being extended. We would not endorse restricting access to water-time. Two initial ideas are

- extending water time for all colleges. A slot-based system could make this possible to ensure city clubs are not adversely affected.

- increased access for 2x/-, 4x/+ during the day, although increasing 8+ time should be prioritised in terms of equality.

We realise that Proctors have an interest in rowing not impinging on academic activities. However, we see no reason that our athletes are not capable of managing their own priorities and workloads. As a club, we will continue to make it imperative

that academic activities are prioritised over outings, and would support any necessary protocols being put in place to manage any potential problems.

We raise this now hoping for productive, solution-oriented conversations. Acting now to level the playing-field would ensure both better, safer rowing and more competitive racing for years to come.

Welcoming your ideas and responses!

Isla Henderson & Morten Pahun
Club Captains, Wadham College Boat Club

No questions.

It is noted that if captains want to follow this up they need to go directly to the proctors (this is beyond the authority of OURCs).

8. Swim-tests – Beth Carter to speak

No swimtests can currently take place due to the national lockdown, as many swimtests as possible will be booked for early Hilary term. There will be a COUR meeting in 1st week and OURCs intend to ask COUR to allow for a 'reset' of the outing allowance before a swimtest

for Hilary term only. If passed, this would mean that all athletes can do another 5 outings before they must be swimtested, even if they have already had some outings previously. It would be great to have a representative for the captains there (COUR rep) to provide some support on this, so please get in touch with any member of the OURCs committee if you are interested.

9. Safety/Reminders – Beth Carter to speak

- COVID
Under current BR guidance and national guidelines, we are unable to access boathouses or landing stages until further notice which means that no rowing can take place (even in single household crews). The sabbatical officer will communicate any updates as soon as they are received.
- BR Safety Audits
Keep completing safety audits, thanks to those who have done so already. The sabbatical officer will send individual reminders to those who have not submitted yet.
- Lifejacket servicing
In the new year OURCs hope to invite the RNLI to service lifejackets. The sabbatical officer will share more information on this closer to the time, but college clubs are encouraged to get involved to ensure that their equipment is in good working order.

10. Ratification of Major Transgression Meetings

- Balliol – No lifejacket, £40
Ratified.

11. AOB

- BR Regional Representative – Scott Houghton to speak
Our region (Thames Upper 1) currently has a vacancy for a representative due to the previous holder hitting their term limit. Scott is running for this position which is contested, and so would like to encourage college clubs to vote. Scott was formerly the OURCs secretary and is still around Oxford, he coaches Linacre and Wadham and rows with the Academicals. He stated that he wants to keep the balance in the region between colleges and local clubs, and also wants to have the opportunity to represent college interests at a national level, especially with respect to representing bumps interests.
- Christ Church Lockdown Regatta – Olly Markeson to speak
The speaker would like to make sure that everyone is fully aware of the Christ Church Lockdown Regatta. This regatta is open to all clubs, it involves competing in teams of up to 12 members, challenges are completed in pairs and pairs submit their workouts on Strava (sometimes with pictures) to obtain points. The eventual winners will receive stash. There are currently 230 sign-ups from 7 colleges, but

people can enter at any time as it is still possible to catch up, and it is a great way to exercise safely with friends.

- There was a question about whether the list of registered coxes this term will be sent out soon. The Captain of Coxes stated that it will be sent out (though is not a priority at the minute given that no one can row). However, if any college captains have any queries in the meantime please contact the CoC at coxing@ourcs.co.uk and they will be happy to provide any information or names of attendees from your college.