

ROWING CLUB COMMITTEE MEETING

2nd November 2020

8pm (Online)

MINUTES

PRESENT: Grahame Nash, Jeff Bethray, Mary Heather Bethray, Georgia Dowdeswell, Dai Howells, John Hill, Christy Job, Malcolm Mackay, Ruth O'Loughlin and Iolanda Vendrell

Nick Barnett

CHAIR: Grahame Nash

1) APOLOGIES: Rich Ellis, Jan Holloway, Howard Jacobs, and Charlotte King

2) CAPTAIN'S WELCOME

GN began the meeting by talking of the mixed year Falcon has had with the challenges of complying with government guidance and British Rowing to keep ourselves up and running in the difficult circumstances.

With a lot of gratitude, GN thanked the committee for the support they have given him as the captain:

MHB – MHB has supported with many aspects of running the club. Without the booking system in place led by MHB (and supported by IV), we wouldn't be able to row.

ROL – for the efficiency in reporting back to the committee

EW (Esther) – thanks to EW for picking up the membership and passing it on successfully to MM.

CK & GD – a little short of activity but will have their work cut out in the future. Thanks to them.

CJ – well done for the successes the Juniors have had and for continuing courses whilst maintaining social distancing.

RE – thanks for his important improvement of the welfare side of the club and his coaching with members

JH – ever present coaching and learn to row and as role of water safety which we all appreciate

JH – thanks for keeping the touring side of the club active

DH – thanks as press officer, with more press to follow hopefully

HJ – thank you for his coaching

MM – for his successes with restarting the men's rowing and now as membership officer – good luck and thank you in advance

Left to last as so essential to Falcon – JB - his hard work and dedication, looking after our extensive fleet coupled with the Treasury role deserves a big thank you for the effort.

1) Election (GN)

This was item 6 on the agenda but brought forward at the request of a member.

The proposal was that the existing committee who are willing to stand be elected en block

The proposal would be:

GN - Captain

MHB – Vice captain

ROL - Secretary

MM – Men's rowing and Membership Officer

IV – Women's rowing Officer

HJ – Coach

RE – Welfare Officer and Coach

JH – Safety Officer and Learn to Row

Jan – Touring Officer

Dai – Press Officer

CK & GD – Social Secretaries

Proposed by Trish Nash, seconded by Nick Barnett. Committee appointed for 2020/21

2) MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Minutes of the last meeting approved.

3) UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM THE LAST MEETING

Finally, MHB reported that there have been some experiences of poor steering – particularly from Accies, and asked how best to deal with this without wanting to cause friction. JH suggested responding to a CORC Safety Officer who had previously raised a circular, with a more general message asking to reinforce the role of a bank rider who should be taking note of not just their boat but their surroundings. JH will send a message

JH attended a meeting led by Caitlyn with the rest of the Isis community and it was discussed at that meeting. No further action required.

JH raised an AOB about the pathways to Touring. There have been constructive conversations about how ex-beginners who deliberately learn skills for Red-Kites. This would also help beginners who could learn to single scull with snail kites without having to use the racing singles. JH asked whether the club would be receptive to buying floats. JaH added that this model works well for other clubs too. HJ agrees that floats would be beneficial, particularly for those who are progressing from snail kite to racing shells. Floats can be raised so that they become less and less 'stable'. This is to be rolled forward until the club has money. JH will also contact CORC to see if they can be trialed. JaH also suggested that we try a coastal rowing boat.

Since the last meeting, JH has bought his own floats costing in the region £200. JH wanted to ask the committee on what the next steps should be. JH would like to see this as an intermediary between the snail kite and the fine shells and as there are a number of people want to target touring this could be beneficial. JaH is also keen to draw members in to local touring events. There are others who want to row in a fine boat, as a target, and the floats can be adjusted to support the transition. The practicalities need to be decided.

JB is concerned about the damage that could be done to the fine shells if floats are used with members who haven't mastered the snail kite. Until the snail kite has been mastered, it would also make transition into one off the other kites difficult. JH added that this would still have coach judgement involved.

JB also added that the floats shouldn't be attached to the oars. There are also questions of where they are stored. JH asked for a committee vote on whether this should be investigated.

The general view was that it should be investigated but the progression should be clear. If the member is wanting to target touring, the snail kite is the touring single and floats wouldn't be necessary. CJ raised that the normal progression to a fine shell single would be through touring quads into fine shell quads, doubles and then singles. JH added that with lockdowns this normal route isn't available. Questions were also asked about how the boats would be launched. Committee was happy that this is investigated further.

MM has completed an email for new members. He will send round the committee and asked for feedback.

The email had yet to be circulated, MM to send on shortly. MHB is also exploring whether there are things we can give to new members on joining.

4) Reports - Review of the past year (GN)

GN's report covered in the welcome

a. Vice Captain's Report (MH)

The move to using the on line google documents for boat and erg bookings was one of the greatest changes we made during the year to the way the rowing side operates. MHB would like to record her thanks to IV for creating and producing the weekly forms and follow up support. The system has proved to be adaptable to the changing situation. Compliance with the system has been generally good and it has been straight forward to pick up on problems at an early stage, not too onerous.

It has evolved to be more than just a booking system allowing weekly information updates and reminders including boats out for repair and members can see the overall picture of activity and that helps to foster a sense of being part of a club. Outings can be better planned to meet individual preferences eg to have company on the water when singling, or conversely to avoid busy times. MHB is also able to use the booking for to monitor who has become inactive and consider if this should be followed up.

There has been a steady flow of enquiries about joining Falcon during the year. MHB raised the importance of club colours as people spot us on the river. Approximately half are from people wishing to learn to row, which are

referred to JH, and half are from rowers with previous experience several of whom were seeking racking space. MHB has been dealing with these latter enquiries and overseeing taster sessions and follow up outings for those that join to make sure the new members have a sufficient network of contacts to enable them to feel part of the club and become part of other crews. Thanks to MM who has supported with this. The efforts of all the coaches over the year have been an essential part of this process.

For the coming season and , anticipating the reinstatement of restrictions on crew sizes etc, we will need to make sure newer members continue to be further integrated.

b. Junior Head Coach and Cheney Report (CJ)

Cheney is not operating because the school Head-teacher has said no after school clubs.

Falcon Juniors recently had a training day at Dorney Lake (in place of racing at Weybridge). The Juniors also raced on Isis Winter Sculls on Sunday with 1 win and some good quality second places.

CJ had 6 Juniors participate in the beginning half term course. They have been offered membership but is awaiting a response (which is likely to be influenced by BR decision on whether rowing can continue during the second lockdown).

c. Treasurer's Report (JB)

The end of last year we had £394. The club now has £14,000 added to it (same amount as last year). A further £2,000 coming in from Cheney for the boat storage. CJ asked whether this including a membership fee (corporate membership from 3-6 on Wednesday). JB said this is just for the racking, 2 quads and 1 eight. The invoice has been sent.

£10,235 in the Juniors' account. That amount will increase as we have the coaching fees from the Juniors and the recent addition from the course just completed.

Last year, the club purchased 1 Fillippi quad with a large number of donations from members. The club contributed £950 and the members contribution was gift aided. There is an agreement in place that should the club wish to sell the boat, the contributors would be reimbursed. The usage intention was that it was purchased for the women's 4s head (and used for that purpose) but since then no other races have taken place. There was also an agreement that if the Juniors ever had a crew of good enough standard to compete at National Events they would be able to use the boat.

The club also purchased a Cobra double (£10,800) and 2 swift singles (£6,900).

The club spent £6,800 on boat repairs. That included £3,000 on refurbishments on Seoul and Atlanta. It also includes £1,300 of new blades too.

JB wanted to remind all members that the yellow marker must be placed on broken boats.

The club has also been offered the opportunity to have some of the Junior boats refurbished at a discount. CJ has submitted a grant to cover the remainder of the costs that will be considered by the Rowing Foundation.

Last year it was proposed the club would buy a new set of sculling blades. Committee approved.

d. Membership Secretary's Report (MM)

Currently the club has 93 adult members and 59 junior members.

e. Touring Report (JaH)

JaH was absent from the meeting. JB added that the main British tour in the summer was cancelled. Goring visit was redated and everything is moving to the squad list. It was added that as an inclusive club, touring offers a great way to encourage those who want to row with stability.

f. Learn to Row / Safety Officer's Report (JH)

This year is the first year in 25 years that JH hasn't run a beginners' course. JH has missed the running of this and has been working with existing members in the snail kite. JH is also adding some videos to his YouTube channel to share with those that have expressed an interest in learning to row to keep them attracted. The videos will be some of the early introductions and hopefully will encourage them to sign next year.

From a safety perspective, BR have reminded JH a month ago that the website is open for the safety audit in November. JH would like this to be his last year of completing it. Elements will be best picked up by JB (for example questions about the fleet). JH has been working with some of the kayaking side – documentation is now club wide. If anyone would like to take on the safety audit, please let JH know.

g. Boatman's Report (JB)

Covered within the Treasurer's report.

h. Publicity Officer's Report (DH)

Not much in terms of publicity. DH will be uploading progress pictures to the website. GN thinks that we should be showing off the build. **DH to liaise with Nick to discuss possibilities.** Nick believes that this is something Sports England would probably appreciate.

i. Men's Racing Report (MM)

The men's crew have been lucky to have Suzy as cox, although training is possibly on hold during the next lockdown.

j. Ladies' Racing Report (IV)

IV has little to report, as there has been very few races running (with the poor weather at the start of the year, followed by the pandemic). Where races have been run, there have been a few wins.

k. Welfare Officer's Report (RE)

RE unable to attend the meeting but has notified GN that there are no welfare issues to report. With CJ's coaches, the DBS are all completed or in progress.

l. Social Secretaries' Report (GD / CK)

GD attended as social secretary. The quiz held earlier in the year was successful but COVID has got the best of the summer and Christmas.

5) AOB

Nick added that he was pleased to see the committee has everything covered.

In terms of the boat house, the annual meeting is next week which will go through the plans, pictures and finance in more detail. The build is going well with a good team and monthly site meetings. Nick is still liaising with Sport England about the money they pledged (they require invoices). There will be a loan taken out by Sport Capital for £100,000, Nick has had to demonstrate a plan to show we could repay. Nick is hopeful that we could have enough income for phase 1 and phase 2. It won't be fully kitted, but the plan is by next Summer we will have a good looking boat house. Not too many problems other than the grass is getting a bit muddy and the 8 is a bit tricky to get out.

GN is awaiting the guidance from British Rowing on what the second lockdown might mean for rowing and will let all members know.

CJ asked if there was anything that could be done as the grass bank is very slippery and a few people have fallen. **Nick is going to speak to the builders to see if there is anything that can be done.**

JH spoke to the committee about the membership status of a particular member and whether the club was comfortable with the arrangement (no concerns were raised). JH also added that a possible cox has spoken to JH who could look to join the club as a coach, all were supportive.

JB asked whether we could look at a roller for the touring boat on the landing stage. **GN will look into this.**

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING WAS CLOSED

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 11th January 19:30

Location: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/162393573?pwd=eldQYVBIWTB1NXlBMi92dlhiN05zQT09>

Meeting ID: 162 393 573

Password: 003512