

ROWING CLUB COMMITTEE MEETING

29th November 2021

1930 (Online)

MINUTES

1) PRESENT: Grahame Nash, Mary Heather Bethray, Jeff Bethray, Kathryn Crossley, Georgia Dowdesdell, John Hill, Dai Howells, Howard Jacobs, Christy Job, Charlotte King, Malcolm Mackay, Ruth O'Loughlin, Iolanda Vendrell, Ruth Ward,

CHAIR: Grahame Nash

NON-COMMITTEE PRESENT: Maggie, David Green, Bryan Humphris, Jonathon Crooks, David and Alison, Elisabet, Ian Taylor, Mic Dixon, Tricia Nash, Nick Barnett

2) APOLOGIES: Rich Ellis

3) WELCOME

4) MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Minutes of the last meeting approved.

5) UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM THE LAST MEETING

JB asked that the ergs are serviced as they have been sat in the dust. GN to take this away and report back to the committee on the costs.

This has been completed. JH queried the service as one of ergs was not fully repaired. JB asked for a repair notice to be added to the erg that is broken. One of the ergs is still broken, it needs a lock fitted. JB noted. MM also added that two have displays that don't work. 1 display turns on but doesn't seem to be connected to the fly wheel, the other has fresh batteries but only a few columns turn on. HJ to notify JB of the numbers.

There is a shortage of sculling blades... JB will buy 4 sets.

4 set of new blades are ordered but not yet delivered.

Blades have now been delivered and hung up.

There is a Mini cox box on order but was lost in transit (being replaced). The two minis that we have that aren't currently charging. JB will send them off for repair.

Mini Cox Box on ordered and 2 mini for repair – sent off and repaired and one needs a new headset. The missing cox box has arrived. Club now has 3.

Cox boxes are all up all up and working

CJ is willing to contribute half the cost of Fish Owl in exchange for use of the boat. The committee agreed.

New boat being shared with the Juniors has been delivered.

DH to pick up with MM to add the what3words to the website and the committee email addresses need to be changed to Falcon Boat Club. This change needs to coincide with the website being updated. DH to pick up with David.

Outstanding.

Hannah to support MM with the wording and Hannah to explore Sport England / British Rowing. DH to also look to add to the website to show our inclusivity.

Hannah's wording sorted out. DH to look at the inclusivity on the website.

More liaison with kayakers about the use of the pontoons.

Extension pontoon is helping, still some confusion but continuing to improve.

ROL to refresh the JL order

JL kit to be talked about in the AOB

6) Election of FRC for 2021/22 (GN)

GN began with a breakdown of the proposed changes to the committee with thanks given to the current committee for serving the club well. The changes are:

JaH as touring representative is taking time out due to ill health and we wish him a speedy recovery.

ROL as secretary is stepping down due to work commitments.

JH is stepping down as water safety officer but will maintain his position as coaching.

For the proposed incoming committee members:

Secretary - Kathryn Crossley (KC). KC learnt to row in the States, moving through inter-collegiate rowing before moving to Oxford and joining Falcon.

Interim Touring Representative – Ruth Ward (RW). RW is the Thames Upper Regional Representative on the British Rowing Recreational Committee and part of the Thames Regional Rowing Council.

Water safety – To Be Confirmed. The proposal had originally been for Mic Dixon to take on the role. MD rowed with Emmanuel College and has British Rowing Coaching qualifications. He coached the CORC Tier 2 squad, Worcester Colleague Mens 1st 8s and then coached the adaptive squad at CORC. There was a discussion about what the role would entail, whether this was a position for more than 1 person, and the interaction between this role and the club safety officer role. JH is happy to continue in his duty as a water safety officer whilst this is still worked through. It was agreed by GN that for the time being, the water safety officer role would not be up for election and leave it pending.

GN has been in post for 5 years, and is prepared to serve another year. JB proposed GN as Captain, all in support. The other positions on the committee were elected en-masse.

Vice Captain - Mary Heather Bethray

Secretary - Kathryn Crossley

Treasurer/Boatman - Jeff Bethray

Membership Secretary - Malcolm Mackay

Press Secretary - Dai Howells

Touring Liaison Officer - Ruth Ward

Junior Head Coach - Christy Job

Welfare Officer - Rich Ellis

Ladies Racing - Iolanda Vendrell

Coaches - John Hill and Howard Jacobs

Social secretaries - Charlotte King and Georgia Dowdeswell

Proposed by JB and all supportive

7) Reports

a. Captain's Report (GN)

GN reported a successful year with Falcon, membership as at 1st November is 144, of which 74 are juniors. There has been an increase in membership following the new boat house, and was pleased to share that there will be no change in the fees for the coming next year. The club has developed well over the year with learn to row courses, weekend and evening sessions and touring, as well as race opportunities for those that wish. The Juniors under CJ have achieved well too.

In 2021, the club has bought a new swift single, 8 sets of sculling blades and cox boxes as well as covering additional expenditure on the trailer and erg services etc. The committee will continue to take a prudent approach on expenditure.

b. Vice Captain's Report (MHB)

There was not much to add as it is covered in other reports. The relationship with the other clubs on the Isis is continuing to improve. 1st Heads is back to being complex and big, with an agreement made on how to manage it. It is still a work in progress but all agree on the aim and the relationships are good. It also supports other areas, for example looking at joint trailering. The Isis discussions, led by Caitlin at CORC, offers a good opportunity for all clubs to be talking. JH recently attended the meeting.

c. Junior Head Coach and Cheney Report (CJ)

Cheney have 10 juniors regularly rowing. Falcon Juniors has 74 members. The Juniors raced at Bedford heads and won 3 events, had 3 2nd place and 5 3rd places. During October half-term, CJ ran a beginners' course - 5 of the 6 have joined the club. The course successfully made £228 profit. CJ is planning another beginners' course between Christmas and new year.

d. Treasurer's Report (JB)

JB covered that the rowing fund and the Juniors' fund is kept separate as the Juniors have coaching fees as well as the courses CJ runs.

The Rowing fund started the year at £2,300. The club received a proportion from the general club fund which is split between kayakers and rowers. This added £14,000 for this year. There was £2,600 from JH's Learn to Row course, and Cheney paid £1,000 for their racking (this was discounted because of the low number of students participating). The major cost is new swift single (half is allocated to Juniors and half to the Adults). The end result is £17,000 left for the rest of the year. This has to cover EA and BR fees as well as the major service for one of the 8s which is planned for the next month.

The Juniors have brought forward £10,500, to that has been added £7,000 rowing income (courses / coaching fee etc) and more will be added in the next term. There are still coaching fees that need to be deducted and other expenses (in total £7,800 in expenditure).

e. Membership Secretary's Report (MM)

MM gave a break down of the newest members. Excluding Learn to Row the club has had 6 new members since 4th October. There are now 146 membership including the Learn to Row cohort. No figure for Juniors.

Following on from the last committee meeting, MM had looked at what could be reported from Sage (to gather better insight into our membership), it is possible but would be a longer term project. JB asked if it was necessary, MM highlighted the gaps in the data such as length of membership and drop off points that would be beneficial. David offered to help MM as he has experience with the system.

f. Touring Report (RW)

RW shared with the committee an update on JaH. The committee asked that when RW next spoke to JaH that our thoughts and well wishes were shared with him. RW is keen to see her role as interim.

JaH, with input from across the club had achieved the biggest Falcon participation in the Desborough challenge (National Tour) that we have had. There is also good collaboration with the clubs at Abingdon who are keen to develop their recreational side. JB, JH and MHB were able to continue the whole club event to Port Meadow in JaH's absence.

Through the winter, the tourers have combined the outings with the weekenders, RW has been out a couple of times but not sure how the other 'captains' are getting on. **RW would like to have a follow up chat with MHB and JB** to remind Tourers of the set up. There is the opportunity to row down the Lot which has generated interest in the club.

g. Learn to Row (JH)

Post lock down, JH started with a modest course (13 people) because that allowed to focus on stable boats / sculling. This was the first time JH has used sculling as a base, it was usually rowing because of the 8 and the tank at Iffley being set up for Rowing. However, JH has been using the tank at Radley which can be set for sculling. JH added that this has highlighted how the unique selling point for Falcon can be touring, as it is something that can be enjoyed on a more accessible basis (allows for more ad-hoc rowing that is enjoyable) and that having touring at the W&E supports this.

The second Learn to Row course has just finished with 20 people, 15 of who have passed into the W&E.

JH would now like to see more sculling and Men's development which are his coaching aspirations for the winter.

h. Safety Officer's Report (JH)

The club's Safety audit has recently been finished. It has highlighted the areas where we need to be more proactive - there are things that haven't been written down and prescribed that should be e.g. how far should you be able to

see, when should you have lights, assessing conditions etc. These elements should be monitored and exemplified by the committee.

JH gave an insight to Marlow who are gold standard for safety. They have simple rules of what applies and when and important that members recognise and comply with e.g. backstays on boats except for singles, rules for poor visibility, the swim test.

JH asked whether there should be some form of formal qualification for steering and that there is inadequate written guidance on when you can go out in a single. Nick Barnett added that the entire club needed to improve, the recent incident in Wales with SUP has highlighted the need for rules and policies to be available to members. Nick thanked JH for his work in this area.

A discussion was then had on backstays. Falcon has 6 quads that don't have a backstay. The BR Row Safe says that they should have backstays, and if you got to events you must conform with the row safe document. However, there is ambiguity if should means must. **Discussion to continue.**

i. Boatman's Report (JB)

Pels Owl has just been returned after £300 worth of damage has been repaired.

JB is sorting things out by the cox boxes such as clips. If other types of spares are needed JB can put them out so members can make immediate repairs.

A discussion was then had after a kind offer of a wooden coxed single being donated to the club. The committee all agreed that this was a very generous offer, however, as storage for boats is limited any new boat needed to be a fit for the club. Wooden boats are heavy and whilst RW added that it could be used for getting touring coxes up to speed there would be limited other uses. JH suggested that the club would invest in the future in some explorers that are flat bottomed and would allow the same skills to be developed.

The suggestion was perhaps Goring would be better placed for such a donation.

j. Publicity Officer's Report (DH)

DH began with an apology as he had missed emails from MHB with results from the Autumn Head race. Whilst this has missed the Oxford Mail, **DH will add to the Falcon website.**

k. Men's Racing Report (MM)

Discussion was had on the Men's racing. JH was able to arrange a 8+ at the IWL (who had not rowed together before the event). There is work ongoing to integrate the new beginners into the existing group. A decision will need to be made as to whether the focus will be on sculling or sweep, and how best to organise e.g. through direct messages or squad lists.

l. Ladies' Racing Report (IV)

IV provided an overview of the racing over the year with 5 events attended. The focus is now on the plan for the next year.

m. Ladies' Development Report (IV)

HJ is happy to share insight into how the Ladies' Development crew have been organizing themselves if that is beneficial to the Men's crew.

The Ladies' crew have been attending regular erg sessions with Caroline Smith (from Brookes) working with the crew and running a good programme, individually assessing and giving targets. For the Saturday mornings, they have been able to get the 8 out (have about 15/16 people to draw from) and will now look to target 2nd heads.

JH has been helping navigational skills which is appreciated.

n. Welfare Officer's Report (RE)

RE was absent for the meeting.

Nick Barnett took the opportunity to offer compliments to the committee for the organisation, acknowledging that it has been a difficult year. The growth of the membership and high levels of activity were also commented on. Nick gave thanks to GN too, who has had to navigate different lock downs. Nick also added that he is in support of the pathways for people to peruse competition and touring.

o. Social Secretaries' Report (GD / CK)

There were changes made to the Christmas Party, from the 4th to 20th as there was not a high enough level of interest. There are currently 31 people signed up to go to the Fishes. There is some cautiousness as to what restrictions might be in place with the new variant (e.g. distancing / opening etc). **CK will check what the booking confirmation / regulations might be in case of cancellations**

8) AOB

a. Falcon Kit

ROL talked to the committee about a proposal to offer AIO made by the Crewroom (in addition to the current Godfrey kit). The original intention had been that JL would be the supplier, however, Crewroom have a very similar offer in terms of the fabric, have quicker lead times, use more recycled materials, are cheaper and would treat racer and standard backs as part of one order (which comes with discounts).

The committee agreed to move to the next stage – putting the sample in the boat house for members to feel.

b. Refuse

JB informed the group that new bins have been delivered to Falcon. Recycling is in the black bin. Green is landfill.

c. Boat Naming

JB asked the committee to make the decision on the name for the new Swift single. Traditionally Singles have been owls. JB provided a list of possible owls, the committee voted for Screech Owl.

d. Erg Room

CJ asked if it was possible to have some lightening in the erg room. The general view was that the lightning strip was no longer working. Jo offered to take a look.

JH asked if it was possible to add erg room booking onto the boat booking. Discussion was had on the best way to achieve this (to allow coaches to book the room for sessions). **IV to add a third tab for the erg room to the Google Sheet.**

e. Google Groups

JH asked what the different google groups mean. MM confirmed that Falcon Rowing is all rowing members, FRC is all committee members, Falcon Membership is the email address for MM.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING WAS CLOSED

DATE OF NEXT MEETING
Monday 7th February 19:30
Location: To Be Confirmed