

Draft Minutes

Falcon Rowing Committee
Meeting
13th December 2023
19:30

Meeting held at the boathouse

Apologies: Ruth Ward, Olivia (Junior Captain), Seb (men's development)

Attending: Sam Jenks, John Hill, Laura Fortuna, Jon Crooks, Claire Parker, Mary Heather Bethray, Jeff Bethray, Elisabet T, Iolanda Vendrell, Charlotte King, Kathryn Crossley, Tim B (remotely)

Note: Reports received in advance of the meeting are appended to minutes

Welcome (JC)

Minutes of the previous FRC Meeting (JC) Approved with no amendments

Matters Arising from Previous Minutes (JC) Note of clarification that both men's and women's development representatives are expected to attend regular committee meetings, although they only have one vote between them.

Date and time of next meeting (All) – Monday 18th March at 7:30 pm at the boathouse

Reports

- 1. Outreach Coordinator's Report (TB)** – this update was provided remotely, however, TB plans to attend the March committee meeting in person. Good meetings in October, plans to continue with follow-up in January 25th. Visit by Grayfriars academy organized by Oxford University sports, positive followup. Currently working on a proposal to LoveRowing for funding for a pilot project with Greyfriars and the University. Also Youth Rowing, which TB feels is very successful. Not much money available for this though. Possibility for fast tracking into a pilot project which could start as soon as February. Talking to potential sponsors, maybe for an open day in the new year. JB – asked what was happening with the 50% payment from the grant for the refurb? Is it going directly to Marc? TB said he believed it was but would

follow up. JB – Noted that he'd recently had a conversation with Cecily, who's looking for a space to use in January in late mornings. Donnington-based community group. CP – asked about the date limitations about holding outreach events only at certain times of the year. LF & JH Women's development squad is doing a virtual tour of Thames for a financial abuse charity (SEA), 380 km. Collecting funds for 1300 between the 8 of them and finished first in the event.

2. Vice-Captain's Report (MHB)

[see below]

- 3. Boatman's Report (JB)** - Riggers are yet to arrive for new boats. Wooden single to be hung on the rafters needs to be moved for the new 2x. Has also bought some new blades to fill out sets. Crokers also to be repaired and replaced. MHB Noted that people should all turn blades over when they come in. Some spending on 1st aid and training. Expected expenses included £1000 in April for boat registration, BR membership and 3k on junior boat refurb/repair. JC asked whether this is to come out of junior funds. Conversation followed between SJ and JC clarifying what was meant by the 'juniors' coaching fund'. 4k of funds are set aside for refurb and matched with grants. Some of the funds are for coaching and some for boats, noted that the overriding principle is that intent is to be self-funding. 14k in juniors fund with possibly 2.5 coming in Feb - JB said the juniors are basically fully funded for the rest of the year. [After the meeting, JB sent in the following: Following the qualification of junior boat refurbishment costs please adjust figurers supplied Rowers main account should now read £16,494. Junior account should read £15,169]

- 4. Membership Secretary's Report (LF)** – No significant updates, JH asked that in light of the poor weather, that the invoicing for memberships for LTR be delayed for a month or so depending on the red flag maybe to mid January. JB agreed.

In summary, about 148 adult members and 44 juniors. MHB asked whether the club was growing or not. It was decided that this is a question that can only be addressed with some data. LF agreed that she would try to show some historic data for membership figures. Jan and June, 6 monthly. JH - the capsizes had to be coached. Not supervised. CP said that swimming was self certified.

5. **Safety Officer's Report (CP)** - QR code for safety handbook. NKB has done a parent safety handout. LF has added capsize drill info. JC to add to regular mailing, CP said email with dates was effective. SJ asked whether Freddie was exempt? CP agreed that a coach supervising a capsize is good enough. JH - said that Marlow had to do 100m. First aid posters have gone up. JH said thank you to club for organized and funding first aid training. Kayakers have a good spread sheet with training info, which CP added rowing to. CP can all people listed be emailed to confirm their qualifications. NKB has written summer course guidelines which are on the website. CP wants to know why juniors have to do swimming tests and CP also said they need to do the capsize. NKB's cold water immersion was halted by JC. Safety handbook last updated in April, any more changes and updates to be sent to CP by the end of January.

With respect to cox and bow steer levels, competence and flag levels, CP drafted a chart. Everyone to review and comment to CP - whether this is helpful. MHB agreed that it was. Boat safety checks have been posted and will be added to the safety hand book.

All life jackets have been serviced. Cox box is to be investigated. If the weather continues to be red, blade painting to be organized. JC - when new boats arrive they will be captains permission and these to be reevaluated. Merlin is being refurbished, another mid-weight quad to be released, possibly a 2x also to be released. Most of the issue is in 4x.

6. **Touring Report** – Ruth Ward was away, but MHB noted that there is a trip to Portugal and a Falcon boat is planning on going. CP thinks there were about 3 local events and then the BR touring event. Will be coming past Falcon, MHB suggested that the club should consider participating.
7. **Learn to Row (JH)** - same as written report. JC and JH to coordinate assessments. Next LTR starts in March on boat race day. JC club thanks JH and Andy for running the course and encourages new members.
8. **Junior Captain's Report** – Most of this information was provided by SJ, who attended to represent the juniors. For clarification, under age 18 juniors have to have supervision, over 18 juniors can row **without** supervision. Happy with land training, 15 kids per session Want to go out, possibly to Dorney. JC suggested that if adults are going to Dorney, juniors should be asked if they can go. JB said that Dorney needs notice, Gloucester is a good stretch of water

on the Sharpness Canal. JB suggested that Swindon also a possibility. BR running club coach course in Feb at the club. Session coach also going into the calendar. 9 juniors want to do this. Also thanks for refurbishing boats quickly SJ asked about fobs. Some have lost or broken can these be replaced. Juniors can have fobs if they pay £10. Juniors' fobs have a different number range. After some discussion conclusion was that Buzzard is probably a lighter weight boat than indicated. Marc Seal to email win tech and also too low in water with weight range. NKB wants to use Cara Cara - JC says NKB needs to submit in writing needs for boats as a formal request. JC says that he has had these conversations before and these need to be done in writing and through the usual channels. More discussion of red flag status and disagreements among rowing and the trustees as to when boats should be allowed out under red flag, no conclusion was reached, still ongoing. Reminder that a clean-up day had been proposed several times, but not scheduled. JC to talk to NKB about a date for this.

9. **(AIR) Adult Independent Racers (IV)** - Sent out email to see what all racing crews want to do, circulating spreadsheet to gauge interest in upcoming racing season.
10. **Social Secretary (CK)** – With the cancellation of the xmas dinner, a dinner in January was proposed – considering something like what the kayakers did, a curry night at the club. £20 per person, 90-95 people here. Enough furniture for 100-115 people. Whether this is an option for rowers and if so when. JC is not in favor of a curry night. CK - curry night is less formal and less expensive. MHB - the curry night that the kayakers held looked pretty good. The point was the get together rather than the venue. A dinner is about coming together as a club. Needs to be an annual regular thing. CK said that the college dinner was expensive and was logistically complicated. Was more universal, etc. Juniors would be invited too. BYO. Kayakers used Tame curry house. CK to find out whether the curry house has any availability in late Jan - Feb. JC anticipated no likely constraints with BR but suggested that CK check with kayakers if they have any commitments. JB noted that the time taken to set up payments for dinner refunds needed to be considered.

Below are the reports received in advance of the meeting:

From Tim Baker

- OUTREACH UPDATE, 13 December 2023

Since the last meeting I have been continuing work on the Outreach strategy I presented during the summer and starting to develop more practical plans, which were discussed at a couple of really productive meetings when I was back in Oxford in October, with the Trust, and a self-selecting group of members interested in supporting our Outreach work. I think we now have a really exciting programme of potential activities and volunteers to help make them happen and I am really looking forward to hitting the ground running when I return to Oxford next month.

I was also involved in helping to organize a visit to the club last month by around 30 kids from Greyfriars Academy as part of a programme delivered by the Oxford University Sports Leadership Lab. Both the University and the School (and the kids!) were extremely happy with the day at Falcon and we are now exploring how we can develop those relationships in future.

We will potentially be doing so as part of a pilot project for which we are currently working on a funding proposal to Love Rowing. This opportunity (<https://www.loverowing.org/pages/grants>) came up a few weeks ago and while it's moving things forward a bit faster than intended, if it happens it will be a great opportunity to explore those relationships, as well as working with London Youth Rowing, who we have identified as a key strategic partner in developing our schools programme. The bid is due in next Tuesday, so watch this space!

We have also opened a conversation with a company of solicitors who are potentially interested in sponsoring part of our outreach work. I spoke to them last week and sent a follow-up email, but don't expect to make much progress before the New Year.

From Jon C – Captain's Report

Captains update -

- Searching for a replacement for CWO - one candidate has offered
- Update on assessment of club management app - currently trialing SportEasy

AOB Topics

- **Names for new 2x**

Choices : Coopers, Common, Swainsons, Hawaiian, Rough Legged, Gray, Ferruginous, Roadside, Crane - of these I think the best options are Gray and Crane. Committee to discuss and vote

- **Red flag rules for Rp3 use**

To be fair to everyone who prefers the RP3's when in red flag we will introduce the following guidelines

- These apply only to the peak slot which is to 8am to 10am, during weeks where there is at least one day of red flag
1. Max 3 advance bookings (ie more than 24hr before the session) - last minute bookings (eg. When checking the night before the erg is free in the morning) are ok in addition to the 3 advance bookings.
 2. Max of 60min session

3. When picking an erg please be conscious of position in the case where the other ergs are booked as a group (hopefully indicated in the booking) and pick an erg at one end of the other of the row

- **Junior Rowing during red flag** - Claire Parker and Sam Jenks to provide an update on this
- **Plan for Sliding Glass wall in Upper Hall between Bay1 and Bay2** - Trustees have largely approve the spend, though still some thinking ongoing. Plan is to install in Feb.

From John Hill – Talent Development, Learn to Row and Gym Inductions

Talent Development Coach's Report (JH)

Andy Munro has completed his assessment from BR and is now a fully-fledged L2 Coach. He has also applied for a position as support professional coach at MCS. This post shouldn't impact on his current FBC commitments.

Learn to Row (JH)

We are grateful to Andy (with contributions from Seb and Mel) for managing to run the L2R courses in difficult times recently.

The F23-2 course attendees have completed their three-month membership period, which is included in the course fee. They are therefore, technically, due to be invited to join FBC around this time. Given the circumstances with restricted river access, I would request that this be postponed until Jan 2024, at the earliest.

The current F23-3 course has also suffered markedly. We have delivered 24 sessions of which only 9 have been water based. Course members have attended between just 5 and 14 of these sessions. In order to maintain some momentum and retain interest, an unprecedented number of Tank sessions has been offered – both sculling and sweep. This has been extremely costly. We have yet to determine how many of the 13 remaining attendees wish to continue and complete the course.

A payment to FBC of around £1800 will be made in the next few days, reflecting fees for this year's courses, net of hire costs and coaching fees.

Gym Inductions (JH)

Inductions have been run for 24 people in total. Five more people have indicated an interest in having inductions and submitted their consent forms.

Boatman/Treasurer's Report (Jeff Bethray)

Treasurers Report

We have £13,494 in the rowing account

Expenditure £31.5K on two new boats – paid but not yet arrived

£4.2 k on boat repairs including £3k advance for refurb of junior fleet and purchase of 3 Bow side Concept 2 sculling blades (to make up 3 pairs of blades)

£1.1 K training First Aid and coaching courses

Future expenditure

3 Croaker blades to match Stroke blades

Boat registrations in April £1,000 ??

BR membership in April £1,000 ??

A further £1,000 on junior boat referb

Juniors

£18,169 in hand with potential £2,400 from February coaching charges

Coaching costs paid up to November.

Boat Mans Report

We gave you some Hawk names for the new double at the last meeting, which one do you want? Or do you have another Hawk in mind?

New boats Quad and Double in the UK but riggers still in Portugal

Junior boat refurbishment continues 2 x Doubles complete – 2 X quads about to go off for painting

Tim, when does the repairer receive their money?

All Life Jackets serviced

Possible defective cox box – I need to investigate

Planning a blade painting session (Crockers) in January if river still Red

No rowing so No boat damage the boatman is Happy

Vice-Captain's Report – Mary Heather Bethray

VICE-CAPTAINS REPORT – FRC MEETING 13 December 2023

Membership Enquiries and outcomes since 1 September 2023:

12 enquires about joining Falcon rowing

8 Introductory taster sessions given & 1 in planning

5 joined, 2 pending

Club Sculling Blades – Racking and settings

1) Racking – the club sculling blades have been thoroughly checked and sorted back into pairs and gearing groups. Several broken or single blades were removed and new blades were purchased to make up the pairs again. (the settings of each pair with respect to the indicated gearing were not verified unless there was an obvious mismatch within a pair).

In total Falcon currently has 65 pairs of sculling blades.

The racks have been labelled to indicate “zones” for each of the three gearings (yellow, white, Blue).

2) New setting(s) for the club blades – No further progress has been made on this. A suggestion for a universal setting from the Concept 2 technician was for 288/88.

Once decided the proposal is to permanently mark the blades so that it is immediately visible if the setting has been altered and where it should be returned to.

Adult Independent Racers (Iolanda Vendrell)

I hope you are all well and getting ready for the Christmas break.

Most of you must be itching to get on the water. Let's hope the river calms down soon.

In the meantime, just lets plan some races.

Just let you know that Northampton Head of the Nene is scheduled for **Saturday** 20th January 2024. Entries are now opened.

If you are interested, please email Mary Heather with the following information

- Category
- division
- crew name and contact person
- club equipment needed: boat, blades

Water safety advisor report to Falcon Rowing committee 13 December 2023

Completed (in progress)

1. **Annual BR Safety Audit** completed and passed 3/10/23.
2. **Emergency Action Plan** is available in the club wide safety handbook (QR code posted around club) and on wall by defibrillator so have not made posters.
3. Waterproof A6 pocket emergency junior parent marshal by NKB - 10 **Getting printed**
4. **Capsize drill** – all to complete / confirm have done before end Sept 23. So far 86 adult members and 5 prev members have done, **63 no reply** (plus 10 new members). Uni capsize drills to restart in spring. **Will email non-compliant members only.**
5. **Boat safety checks.** Following Marlow quad collision and capsize (difficulty getting feet out of shoes and rescue) list of pre outing boat checks written, displayed in club and on website rowing safety page and emailed to members 12/10/23. **To be included in new year safety handbook update – see 12 below.**
6. **Winter weather safety update** to members sent 17 October 23 after request from Laura. Further reminder re risks of cold water shock and what to do if capsize in cold conditions sent to club members 8 November 23 including Uni capsize online training/quiz.
7. **1st aid** – club wide **poster** in place around club, mid Nov 2023. 2 new **1st aid boxes** added in hall upstairs and foyer. To join café, gym and rowing bay 1. Amanda, Miles and Claire to check supplies regularly. Accident book for gym only. Other minor incidents email rowing safety advisor. Serious incidents report to BR or BC.
8. **1st Aid training** – 14 rowing coaches / club officials /future coaches completed 4 hour training 20/11/23. Another 6 listed on DBS spreadsheet emailed but no reply. Future courses to be arranged along with kayakers as needed.
9. **Club wide spreadsheet** of training level, DBS, 1st aid, and safeguarding training of all coaches / officials in place (added rowing to existing kayak/canoe spreadsheet). Rowing Captain, welfare and safety advisor have access. **Need rowing coaching qualification to add to spreadsheet – CP to email all.**
10. **Junior course guidelines** written by NKB, added to website (and add to main club hand book in next release). <https://falconboatclub.org.uk/juniorrowing/summercourses>
11. **Junior guidelines for swim, capsize, coldwater immersion** draft written by NK-B Nov 23. **Final version to be uploaded to website and linked to safety handbook.**

12. Clarification red flag after junior outreach event - below. Safety poster and webpage updated 20/11/23– no rowing except in circumstances of very high competence / experience for the whole crew and low river traffic.
13. **Safety handbook update.** Circulated with highlighted changes. **Action: Comments to CP by 15 January please.**

Reported Incidents:

1. 17/10/23. **Brief description of the incident:** I was bow steering our Masters quad scull towards Donington Bridge, close to the bank on the towpath side. An inexperienced Wadham College double, who I had spotted earlier and clocked as not confident steerers, came under the bridge on the towpath side of the river. The bow girl did not see us and I only saw them at the last minute as there is a bush overhanging the river 50m from the bridge. There was no reason for the crew to be on the wrong side of the river so we suspect it was inexperience on their part but the collision could not have been avoided by us. **Measures taken:** I called our crew to hold up. The Wadham College double did not stop rowing until they hit our quad. There was a tangle of oars and our two girl shouted loudly at them to stop as they were on the wrong side of the river. **Were there any consequences?:** We disentangled ourselves. The Wadham crew was clearly shaken and were too inexperienced to get themselves away from our boat so we had to help them. We span and landed immediately at Falcon to check our hull which was undamaged. Our riggers too appear to be alright. No one was injured but it was unnerving as the other crew was so off-line that I hadn't spotted them.
2. 28/10/23 **Brief description of the incident:** Coxless quad with four of the women's development squad rowers ended up under the bridge near Longbridges and were unable to reincorporate into the main bit of the river to row back to Falcon BC **Measures taken:** Some rowers from St Hilda's saw the quad in distress and were able to assist getting the quad out of the area where it got stuck by throwing line ropes

Other safety issues not reported to BR but included for info / discussion:

1. Junior cold water immersion session by boat club on isis 3/11/23. (river under red flag, passing storm). Parent raised concerns to captain and coach re session before and during. Sessions suspended. Following discussion, NKB has written guidelines for junior swim tests, capsize and cold water immersion going forward. – see above.
2. **Email from Captain 19/11/23: Junior event on the water 16/11/23.** We hosted last week Oxford University running an outreach rowing event for one of the local schools and this ended up including some 'on the water' experience, which was noted by various people who expressed concerns that it should happen given the current water conditions - to be clear, no one was harmed, there was no collision or loss of control and no-one got wet. We have conducted an extensive posthumous review of this, looking at the decision making process, provision of care and surrounding processes and will shortly be making a report to the Trustees. Our conclusion is that we made an error of judgement in allowing the juniors to go out on the water, however there were sufficient precautions taken to ensure the juniors were safe (including only two juniors per touring boat with 3 highly competent and fit adult rowers, juniors wearing life jackets, avoidance of potential obstacles and such like). The risk assessments were performed correctly prior to the event but they allowed for an 'in the moment' revision which led to this error of judgement. I take a significant share of the responsibility for this error of judgement and will leave it to the Trustees to determine if any further action is required. We are modifying our processes to ensure we do not repeat the mistakes identified, and have

firmed up the definition of red flag rules to eliminate a grey area - ie that **all members of the crew going out in these conditions must be very experienced and competent**. In terms of external communications to the club we will be advising the regional rep for British Rowing of our conclusions and actions.

Black flag: No rowing under any circumstances,

Subsequent communications:

- With BR regional safety advisor. Invited to come to FBC – will do so in January.
- With trustees re juniors out on red flag or not. See captains update.
- Agreed that outreach events should be carried out in warmer summer months.
- Whatsapp group set up to agree flag changes outside OURCs term /ice/cold etc and confirm event go/no go. (Jon, MH, Jeff, John h, Nick kb, Claire).
- Proposal for cox/bowsteer level and river flag guidelines tables to be included in the safety handbook. **For discussion / agreement.**

		Crew level				
Cox Level		Novice/LTR	Post LTR	post LTR mixed with majority experienced	competent/experienced	V Highly competent /experienced
	Novice	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
	Bronze	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
	Silver	Green	Blue	Amber	Amber	Red
	Gold	Green	Blue	Amber	Amber	Red

		Crew level				
Bow steer Level		Novice/LTR	post LTR	post LTR mixed with majority experienced	competent/experienced	V Highly competent /experienced
	Novice	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
	Bronze	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
	Silver	Green	Blue	Amber	Amber	Red
	Gold	Green	Blue	Amber	Amber	Red

Green flag: all rowers and boat classes with suitable permissions and supervision

Blue flag: all experienced rowers and any crews coxed or bow-steered by experienced persons

Amber flag: no coxless boats without prior permission from a suitable risk assessor - i.e. probably limited to experienced crews of a competitive standard

Red flag: dependent on dynamic risk assessment, no rowing except in circumstances of very high competence / experience **for the whole crew** and low river traffic *and only with prior permission of a suitable risk assessor.*