

# **Cambridge University Karate Club**

## **Meeting Minutes**

September 7, 2020

### **Opening**

The regular meeting of the Committee of the Cambridge University Karate Club (CUKC) was called to order by Alex Russell at 1.00 PM (London time) and took place online via Zoom.

### **Present**

Alex Russell, President

Abby Wheeler, Vice-President

Danielle Ball, Women's Captain

Chris Hamilton, Men's Captain

Maeve Brittle, Social Secretary

Daoyuan Qian, Webmaster

Millie Morgan, Welfare and Safety Officer

Eleanor Lee, Publicity Officer

Christoph Hess, Secretary

Olivia Lavigne, Treasurer

### **Agenda**

The President suggested six topics for discussion, in the following order:

1. Approval of June Committee meeting minutes
2. Miscellaneous updates
3. Venue availability in Michaelmas
4. Membership fees for the coming year
5. Freshers preparation
6. Socials
7. Gradings

The order was approved by the Committee.

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#### **Ad 1) Approval of June Committee meeting minutes**

*Decision:* The minutes were approved.

#### **Ad 2) Miscellaneous updates**

Alex updated the meeting participants on several recent developments:

- Summer training: has been running each Sunday on Coldham's Common in Cambridge, with Richard taking the majority of sessions, and the others being done by Chris and Alex. Online training has now ceased.
- Membership fees: a Google Form regarding this was sent out to the Club; results were discussed later in the meeting.
- Selection Policy: finalised and available on the Club website.
- Data Protection Statement: there is now an updated Data Protection Statement on the Club website as the Club was required to update this for work with the Alumni and Development Office.
- Committee positions: the Committee has recruited a new Non-Student Representative, Hervé Vandekerckhove. There were no applications for the second social secretary position, so the Committee decided to remain with one Social Secretary for the rest of the year.
- Blues: There have been no applications made yet to update the Blues criteria as discussed at the last meeting.
- Annual safety review: the annual safety review took place with Alex, Abby and Millie and relevant issues from this were acted upon.

- **Publicity:** a CUKC publicity video was made, with a large and broadly positive response. A second, more Q&A-style video is currently being produced for Freshers' publicity.
- **Bob Poynton Memorial Fund:** the Bob Poynton Memorial Fund is still doing successfully, having garnered circa £500 since the last Committee meeting. Further work still needs to be done to turn this into a regular income.
- **Long-term planning:** the process of long-term planning has been postponed, as it seems insensible to do this while there is still significant uncertainty surrounding public health.
- **Inventory:** the Sports Centre has required CUKC to remove the majority of the Club's inventory from their storage as they are only allowing equipment to be stored there if it is to be used in actual training sessions. The equipment that has been removed and is currently being stored at the President's house in Cambridge. Relevant equipment that may be sold to Club Members may be moved to the Vice-President's lodgings when she comes into residence in Cambridge again.

### **Ad 3) Venue availability in Michaelmas term**

*Discussion:* Alex opened the discussion by asking the meeting participants about the availability of training space in their respective colleges. On Wednesdays, there might be extra availability of space in the Sports Service-run facilities. In addition, the Club has been looking into renting church halls for training in Michaelmas. With regards to college facilities, Queen's College was discussed as one option (note: shortly after the meeting these facilities turned out to be unavailable to non-members of the college). St Catharine's, Homerton, St John's and Trinity College were suggested as other viable alternatives, and the respective Club members who are affiliated to these colleges will look into venue availability there.

Concerning the alternative of church halls, Alex asked if the Club should already proceed to book training space there for the remaining three weeks before term time starts. Chris pointed out that a minimum number of training participants (4-5) would be necessary to cover the cost of the church hall booking (between slightly under £15, to £20 for the more centrally located halls). As Alex suggested, an unexpected compensation payment of £250 that the Club received from NatWest could be used to cushion potential losses from venue bookings. However, due to the hygiene restrictions imposed by the University and its colleges, the Club might still end up with less available training space and hence a reduced number of weekly training sessions during Michaelmas term and possibly beyond.

Regardless of venue availability, kumite sessions, which have usually been held twice a week, are unlikely to go ahead in Michaelmas term, but the Club will review the possibility of holding these sessions as restrictions are lifted. Towards the end of the discussion Millie raised the

question of how bookings for training will be administered during Michaelmas term. Alex answered that no system has been decided on so far, but that the Club will develop a booking system in response to what the concrete requirements eventually turn out to be during term time. As the limits on the number of training participants might impose stringent constraints at certain venues, Eleanor suggested running two successive sessions on certain days to allow a larger number of people to train on those days.

*Decisions:* It was agreed that Alex and Chris would book a suitable church hall for the three weeks before term starts and look into the availability of church halls in term time as well (with Abby). Club members will look into available training venues in their respective colleges.

#### **Ad 4) Membership fees for the coming year**

*Discussion:* Alex raised the issue by informing the meeting participants of the outcome of the membership fee poll which he and the Treasurer, Olivia, had organised in June. The outcome was overwhelmingly in favour of a three-tiered fee structure (e.g. £35/£60/£80) and in favour of an invoicing system, but the detailed results of the poll will be made available to the Committee in the near future. However, with the number of weekly training sessions and training content severely affected by the pandemic, the Club might have to consider a completely different fee structure for Michaelmas term. Olivia suggested to charge a flat rate for unlimited training sessions (e.g. £40-£45). Alex pointed to the difficulty that such a pricing model with a relatively large sum charged upfront might disincentivise freshers and suggested the alternative of charging a flat rate per session instead. Christoph suggested that both of our models might be combined by charging a flat per-session rate which may be capped at a certain level.

*Decisions:* Alex and Olivia will work together to develop a pricing model for Michaelmas term and an efficient way of administering it. Further Committee members might join to relieve the Treasurer of potential extra administrative work. The committee agreed to charge £5 per session up to a cap of £60 (last years termly membership fee) for Michaelmas term and will look into bringing in a three-tier membership fee structure in Lent.

#### **Ad 4) Preparation for freshers' events**

*Discussion:* Alex introduced the topic by reminding the meeting participants of the several platforms to promote the Club at the start of the new academic year, namely the Sports Fair, the virtual Freshers' Fair, the Club-run Freshers' Demo, and general publicity on social media. With regards to the Sports and Freshers' Fairs, which have both moved online, Eleanor has put together a promotional video. The video has been uploaded to the online platform for the Freshers' Fair, and will soon be added to the Club's online stall at the Sports Fair as well. Alex has provided the organisers of the virtual Freshers' Fair with a Zoom link for an online Q&A event that will be held on the day of the Fair. About one week before the event, Abby will send out a Google Form to enquire about people's availability to man the virtual stall at the Freshers' Fair. With regards to the Freshers' Demo, there will have to be a compromise between the number of freshers and the number of Club members attending as the capacity of Fenner's in Kelsey Kerridge is currently 21 due to covid-19 restrictions.

The Club's social media are currently followed mainly by the existing and past membership of CUKC, so the Club will have to make an effort to reach out to new audiences. Suggested methods of reaching out were Instagram account takeovers, individual video portraits of committee members that could be linked to college websites, inserting CUKC into college-based freshers' events, and generally encouraging Club members to share the Club's publicity widely on social media.

*Decisions:* the Freshers' Demo will be held in three successive one-hour sessions. Alex and Abby set up a booking system that freshers can use to book their place for the Demo. Chris and Danielle will liaise with Richard to develop a programme for a socially distanced Freshers' Demo that fits in the 1 hour time-limit.

#### **Ad 5) Socials**

*NB:* the discussion below was had before the announcement by the UK government that social gatherings above 6 people would be illegal from September 14th. This restriction does not apply to organised sports training.

*Discussion:* this discussion built on the preceding agenda point concerning the Freshers' Demo. Maeve stressed that it would be difficult to attract freshers who have attended the first time slot of the Freshers' Demo to a social that is held only after the entire Demo is over, i.e. two hours later. A potential remedy suggested by Maeve herself was to have the social start immediately after the first group of freshers has finished, and then to have the later groups join the ongoing social. Alex added that an advantage of having a post-Demo social would be that Club members who were unable to join the Demo itself would be able to join the social afterwards, provided that it is held at an outside venue without strict limitations on the number of participants. Alex added that there was the possibility of organising a Zoom social, with the option of breakout rooms for more individual discussions. Such an online social would have the advantage of the freshers getting to know a larger number of current members of the Club, and might thus even be more engaging than an in-person activity under strict constraints. Chris and Maeve emphasised that an in-person activity would be preferred nevertheless. Handing out CUKC-themed umbrellas to the participants was discussed as a practical and publicity-effective way to attract freshers to join this potentially cold and wet social.

After the discussion of freshers related socials was concluded, Maeve raised the point of organising an activity to make up for Annual Dinner. As social distancing guidelines do currently not allow large social gatherings in a restaurant or pub, the event would have to be held at a venue that allows for socialising in small groups, e.g. bowling (suggested by Alex), an escape room (Maeve), minigolf (Alex), or a Cambridge treasure hunt (Alex). Alex further stressed that future socials should strive to engage postgraduate students, with whom the University and Club has historically had mixed success in engaging.

*Decisions:* Maeve will plan for an in-person activity in Cambridge (likely on Parkers Piece). Depending on the weather and social distancing guidelines, an online social will be retained as a fallback option. Eleanor will look into the option of ordering themed umbrellas. Maeve will try to organize an event to make up for Annual Dinner, for which a suitable venue and an estimate for the number of participants will be needed.

## **Ad 6) Gradings**

*Discussion:* Alex informed the meeting participants that the KUGB was conducting gradings again, with adaptations made to the gradings' kihon kumite component (minimum distance of 2 m between the two fighters, who both must wear a mask); with no jiyu kumite. There would

therefore be the possibility of organizing a Club grading at the end of Michaelmas term, but the question would be how to make this financially viable. Chris wondered if there would be sufficient demand even from freshers alone if kumite was conducted at 2 m distance and wearing masks. On a related point, Alex noted that the Club Competition, which is usually held during Michaelmas term, might not take place this year, since only kata would be allowed. Chris, by contrast, argued that a kata-only Club Competition might well be an engaging event, and that the Competition might well be held later in term than usual to allow incoming white belts enough time to learn and practice their kata beforehand. Chris also pointed out that, with regards to the grading issue, Club members who want to grade could still do so at nearby KUGB clubs in Ipswich and Chelmsford, provided agreement from these clubs was found.

*Decisions:* a judgement on the viability of holding a Michaelmas grading will be based on the number of freshers interested in grading in Michaelmas Term. Otherwise, a large grading will be held at the end of Lent term. Shortly post-meeting Alex and Chris reached agreement that it would be useful to hold a kata-only Club Competition later in the term, particularly if a grading does not go ahead.

#### **Ad 7) Additions to the agenda**

*Discussion:* A procedure to change the Varsity rules has been agreed with the Oxford karate club. Concrete suggestions for changes to the rules can be discussed now. In addition, a triennial review process of the Varsity rules has been included in the new procedure.

*Decisions:* Alex, Danielle, Chris, and Richard will meet during Michaelmas term to discuss whether the Club wants to suggest any changes to the Varsity rules. An agreement on these amendments if these can be agreed with Oxford before the end of Michaelmas term these rules will take effect for the Varsity Match 2021; if changes are not agreed by both sides by this point then the current rules remain in place.

The Committee Meeting was closed at 2.30 PM by the Club President.

Minutes submitted by:

Christoph Hess

CUKC Secretary 2020/2021

Approval: 7 November 2020