

Annual Dinner & Bob Poynton Award

Every year CUKC gets the opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the year with a fancy and formal dinner, drinks and even better company. This year was no different with 2024's annual dinner taking place on the 14th of June at Selwyn college.

The event started off with a speech from the current president, Callum Reid, who thanked the members of CUKC for their dedication to training, emphasising that the club could not exist without their participation and enthusiasm and highlighting the impressive number of newcomers who joined this year. He further thanked the committee members for their part in organising trainings and socials, helping the club to run smoothly. And finally he thanked Sensei Ken for passing on his knowledge from years of experience on to us. After Callum finished, Sensei Ken, the Club's Chief Instructor, also gave a speech, talking about an old member of CUKC, Steve Mannion. Steve Mannion used to be President and Men's Captain, and was a role model that Sensei Ken admired. He further spoke about how they had recently crossed paths again in Cambridge and Steve told Sensei that he now admires him, and what he is currently doing for CUKC.

Once the speeches had concluded, everyone was seated for the three course meal and drinks, with past and current members sharing stories of how CUKC has changed and developed over the years. Dinner was followed by another speech from our Women's Captain, Elizabeth Li (with additional comments written by the Men's Captain, Jack Doust) who expressed how proud she was of our performance in this year's competitions, congratulating everyone who competed at BUCS and Varsity and of course restating our success at Varsity, being our 18th win in a row. Liz finished off on a humorous note recounting a few funny memories from her time in CUKC and thanking everyone for their hard work.

Sensei Ken then stood up to award the Bob Poynton award to a very deserving member who has done a lot for CUKC.

For those who did not have the chance to know him, Bob Poynton was a remarkable and much loved grade examiner who has supported CUKC over the years. To our great sadness, he passed away unexpectedly at the start of the pandemic. Wishing to honour him, the OKA (alumni of CUKC) funded the Bob Poynton Memorial Trophy. Each year this award is given to an 'unsung hero' of the club, someone whose achievements and contributions to the club has gone somewhat unacknowledged. This year Emma Shen received the award at Annual dinner.

Emma Shen had only started their karate journey in October of 2023 and yet they have made leaps and bounds of progress. They have demonstrated incredible tenacity, regularly training multiple times a week with both CUKC and at Cambridge Karate Dojo. Emma's passion and determined approach to karate has earned the admiration of beginner and higher belts alike. Emma has set a commendable standard with their performance at gradings and competitions and they have kindly been the photographer at many CUKC events, helping to showcase the talent within our club. Congratulations Emma for the well-deserved award!

Finally, there was the much anticipated annual play, written by our Social Secretary, Erin Connelly. The play titled “the Wizard of Hom” (a CUKC parody of the Wizard of Oz) had everyone involved with chaos erupting as people got into their assigned roles. With plenty of intentional and unintentionally comedic moments the play ended in laughter. With that, Annual Dinner was wrapped up and everyone headed off to enjoy the after party!

