

Oxford University Cave Club

AGM Michaelmas Term

27/02/2024

Present: Máté Soós, Rocky Yu, Rosa Clements, Jerome Oswald-Jones, Arran Chambers, Thomas Spriggs, Fiona Zhang, Frances Pope

Reports:

President, Librarian, Webmaster (Steve Roberts):

See below

Meet secretary (Fiona Zhang):

The meet secretary should avoid last minute bookings and she should be given a deadline.

Gear (Rocky Yu):

- We lost a pair of size-9 wellies at SWCC. Possibly someone else took them because a pair of non-OUCC wellies were left there. We still have 7 pairs of size-9 wellies.
- We potentially do not have enough belts for everyone in a large trip.
- One short rope was found broken during a pub social and is no longer safe to use.

Safety (Rocky Yu):

- No major incident

Treasurer (Jeremy Welch):

See below

Secretary (Máté Soós):

- Jerome got red card for MPV (unfortunately sports fed still doesn't have minibuses)
- Jerome fixed the light in the hut, we can finally see!
- The annual dinner was postponed to Trinity, because I didn't organise it on time
- Knot night seemed to be popular (or just a coincidence that it was before the SW trip)
- We had 4 climbing socials this term and they went well (could be a good idea to have it on different days)

Meeting:

Rosa volunteered to chair the meeting.

Tom suggests that the pod fund should be easier to find on the website

Seeing the low number of new subscriptions, the idea of not making the membership on first trip free was brought up again. 7 of 8 votes in favour of charging (termly) membership for first trips.

- Termly membership option which costs the third of the annual membership (or potentially a bit more)
- Add an option on the website to buy termly membership and make it clearer what the different options are (would be a good idea to separate membership and insurance instead of listing all the options)
- Maybe we can have insurance by default and only allow people to buy membership without insurance with a discount code or some kind of proof

Trip organisers need to check that everyone has subscription. How?

- the list of members should be available
- I will ask Jeremy about this

In general, how can we increase the number of returning people

- have less day trips?

It's not worth it to rent MPVs for one day anymore (not from sports fed)

- this makes day trips harder

It was noted that hiring a vehicle for 2 days from sports fed costs more than from TVR

- if we know in advance that we have an eligible driver, we should choose TVR

Annual dinner:

- First half of TT
- Would be better in a restaurant (colleges tend to cost more)
- Minimum cost should not be more than 30
- Should be announced before TT begins

Elections:

- Meet Secretary: Fiona Zhang
- Gear Officer: Máté Soós
- Secretary: Arran Chambers
- Chair: Rocky Yu
- Junior Treasurer: Fiona Zhang
- Safety Officer: Frances Pope

Caving trips in Trinity:

- Week 2 Peak
- Week 4 Yorkshire, BPF
- Week 6 SWCC, try Dan yr Ogof
- Maybe one more

Other:

- Week 3 Annual Dinner
- Week 5 or 7 barbecue

President:

I (and Jeremy Welch) have discussed future Sports Club finances with the Sports Federation, following their asking the various clubs for opinions and preferences on ways forward. (None of the proposed options were appropriate either in rationale or in financial impact, JW and I felt, to "Sports" clubs such as ours that don't use sports field facilities, coaching etc.). One thing that did come up in my discussion with Andy Taylor (OUSF) is that they would be open to our applying for funding to assist with operational costs on trips (as well as for equipment). This would of course be very helpful to us. Discussions are continuing.

John Wilcock, one of the earliest OUCC members, died in December 2023. He was on the first OUCC Expedition to Spain in 1961, and caved actively with the club in the early-to-mid 1960s. He came to Spain as a non-caving member on several expeditions in the 1980s and 1990s: the Top Camp shelter that acted as a base for cave explorations there was originally built by him and became known as "Fort Wilcock". John was also active for many years in BCRA committees. Until his health issues prevented it, he was a regular attender of the annual President's Invites, and so became known to many of the younger members of the club. He was a lovely man, always cheerful and helpful. I went to his funeral in Stafford in January, both as a friend and as representing OUCC.

Librarian / archivist:

We have been offered John Wilcock's collection of old OUCC and general caving materials. There is much original material from the early 1960s expeditions, as well as more general stuff. I haven't yet seen it to assess it: I'll report back on this at the next GM.

I'm continuing (slowly) to scan in old logbooks and make them available on the website.

The downsizing of the library collection to core materials is proceeding very slowly: I'm trying to find good homes for surplus old journals that the BCA library and the Bodleian already have copies of.

Website:

Info about termly activities is being kept up, and the archival stuff (see above) gradually being added to.

Oxford University Cave Club

Hilary Term 2024 Annual General Meeting

Treasurer's Report

Balances

The current balance in the OUCC main account is £2351.49 (as at 21st February 2024); there is £1873 (estimated) in the University Stores account, which will be transferred to the main account at the beginning of Trinity Term (unless required sooner), making a total of £4224.49.

At a slightly earlier date in term last year (2023), the total was £2796.05 (2022: £3435.33; 2021:£3106.53; 2020: £5103.90; 2019: £4846.85).

This year, the balances include subscription income, some of which has to be remitted to BCA for membership fees and insurance purposes. Current subscription income in the account represents £458 of the total. It is also likely that there are transport charges working through the system, which will be an expense not yet covered in the accounts.

While there is no immediate concern about liquidity, note should be taken that most of our revenues flow into the club in the first half of the year.

Operations

The finances of the Club are returning to levels more consistent with those seen before the large increases in trip costs, especially including transport costs.

The attention trip organisers have applied to the cost of trips has been helpful; it is by no means easy to manage the transport bookings and demand while there is no proper University-managed minibus scheme in place. Sports Federation continue to explore possibilities. In the meanwhile, it is important that trip organisers ensure that their transport costs are kept to a practical minimum, and ensuring vehicles have a reasonable number of people in them.

Sports Federation has been reviewing the way Clubs are charged for facilities provided by them. Apart from the modest annual grant, the Club does not benefit very much from the facilities provided by Sports Federation (e.g. use of Iffley Road facilities, subsidy of inter-University competitions). However, it is likely the costs to the Club payable to Sports Federation may well rise from next year.

BCA insurance charges and club membership fees will be paid to BCA. We will be registering 15 members for OUCC based on current subscription receipts. Trip organisers should ensure new members who have been on more than two trips pay subscriptions before attending more trips. Subscribing members will be added to the Sports Federation Club membership lists.

Proposed Expenditure

Apart from the routine expenditure mentioned above, there are no plans for any exceptional expenditure at this time.

Jeremy Welch
21st February 2024