

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY MEN’S BLUES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Lent Term Closed Meeting held via Zoom at 1900, on 7th of May 2021



Attendance

President: Callum Sullivan (Peterhouse)
 Senior Member: Dr Scott Annett (Robinson)
 Hon. Secretary: Matt Watson (Corpus Christi)

Present:

Callum Sullivan	-	<i>President</i>	-
Dr Scott Annett	-	<i>Senior Member</i>	-
Matt Watson	-	<i>Hon. Secretary</i>	-
James Bernard	Jphb2	CUBC	Vice President
Stephen Leonard	Sjl95	CURUFC	Captain
David Roper	dmr53	CUSRC	Captain
Nick Taylor	nt409	CUCC	Captain
Jonathan Parkes	jjp54	CUHC	Captain
Callum Nicolas	cnn26	CUABC	Captain
Samuel Clarke	Sc2101	CUAC	Captain
Henry Silverstein	Hes71	CUH&H	Captain
James Balgamie	Jcb223	CUGC	Captain
Alexander Bull	Ahb38	CUAFC	Captain
Jonas Fukas	Jf618	CUBbC	Captain

Absent:

Michal Kaminski	Mk878	CULTC	No proxy/notification
Alex Lezard	Ajl2015	CUSWPC	Apologies noted
Lucy Hart	Lah67	CUWBC President	Apologies noted

Hon. Sec to follow up with CULTC given their absences from the last 2 meetings.

Minutes

There were no comments about the previous meeting’s minutes, which were passed unanimously.

Constitutional Changes

No changes to note.

Status Applications – Full Blues

CUFC – Fencing

The MBC welcomed an application from CUFC for a Full Blue status review. CUFC have previously only been able to apply for Extraordinary Full Blues and this was the first status update they had submitted in a while.

The MBC discussed the application and noted that the BUCS individual Championships regularly had over 120 individuals competing at this event. The MBC also noted that to be consistent with other Full Blue statuses, individuals should only be granted one opportunity to win their Full Blue in a year; rather than have multiple competitions and events they can enter to fulfil the criteria to win a Full Blue.

The MBC unanimously agreed the BUCS Individuals Championships were a good marker of this and were therefore happy to ratify the following status:

Upon submission of sufficient evidence to the MBC, a Full Blue may be awarded to an athlete who fulfils all of the following criteria in a single academic year:

1. *Competes in the 1st team Varsity Match AND*
2. *Finishes in the top 8 athletes at the BUCS Individual Championships in the same class that they competed in in their Varsity Match (foilist, epeists, sabreurs).*

Upon submission of sufficient evidence to the MBC, a Half Blue may be awarded to an athlete who fulfils all of the following criteria in a single academic year:

1. *Competes in the 1st team Varsity Match.*

Hon. Sec to notify CUFC of the outcome.

CUBC – Lightweight Rowing

The MBC discussed a second application from the Lightweight rowers. It was noted that a status was recently passed in Michaelmas 2020. The MBC discussed the points made by CUBC (Lightweight) to relax their criteria for a Full Blue. This involved changing the status from qualifying and winning the first round at one of 2 cups at the Henley Royal Regatta, to just qualifying for the Henley Royal Regatta.

The reasons CUBC (Lightweight) proposed for loosening their status were discussed. These reasons included: unfairness about the variety of competition that could be faced in the first round of the Cup, the Henley Royal Regatta hosting teams from around the world making it a tough competition and the fact that lightweight crews were competing with heavyweight crews.

All of the above points were discussed. However, the MBC noted that CUBC (Lightweight) had recently been granted a Full Blue status for the first time this year in Michaelmas. It was felt that removing a performance criterion at the Henley Royal Regatta would make the status too relaxed given the number of teams that apply against the number of teams that gain places to race. The uncertainty that CUBC (Lightweight) note surrounding getting through the first round of Henley was said to be within the nature of uncertainty that comes with sports and winning Full Blues. The effect this status change would also have on the wider CUBC Goldie crews was also discussed.

Therefore, the status for CUBC (Lightweight) remains:

Upon submission of sufficient evidence to the MBC, a Full Blue may be awarded to an athlete who fulfils all of the following criteria in a single academic year:

1. *Competes in the Varsity Match against Oxford, AND one of the following:*
 - 2a. *Qualifies and wins in the first round of the Temple Challenge Cup at the Henley Royal Regatta**OR,*
 - 2b. *Qualifies and wins in the first round of the Prince Albert Challenge Cup at the Henley Royal Regatta.*

NB If an athlete is competing in both races, they must specify in a letter to the President of CUBC which race they are designating as their opportunity to win their Full Blue.

Upon submission of sufficient evidence to the MBC, a Half Blue may be awarded to an athlete who fulfils all of the following criteria in a single academic year:

1. *Competes in the Varsity Match against Oxford.*

Hon. Sec to notify CUBC (Lightweight) of the outcome.

CUSSC – Skiing and Snowboarding

The MBC welcomed a status application from CUSSC. The first aspect that was discussed surrounding the application was abolishing the requirement to attend at least 70% of training sessions. The MBC feel this point is impractical and is not relevant if individuals are meeting their performance criteria i.e. if individuals are performing well in their sports, they are assumed to be training an acceptable amount.

The MBC noted the concerns that CUSSC have about needing a top 10% finish in BUCS due to the varying number of competitors. However, the MBC felt that this clause is much fairer than using the top ten finishers at BUCS. Finishing in the top 10% at BUCS is a clause the MBC consistently looks to follow when setting statuses for Full Blues across sports. This clause allows for the varying number of competitors between years and ensures that the top individuals within BUCS are rewarded appropriately. Therefore, the MBC were not comfortable changing this clause.

The MBC also discussed the prospect of using the ‘sub-150 FIS points achieved in race completed between matriculation and graduation’. The MBC agreed that this clause would reward individuals with a Full Blue if they were outstanding at their respective sport consistently; given it is a clause that allows athletes to use races throughout the year to count towards their Full Blue. The MBC noted that should they use this clause alongside a top 10% finish at BUCS, then individuals would be having more than one opportunity throughout a year to win their Full Blues. This is not something the MBC normally advocates when ratifying Full Blue statuses. However, the inconsistent nature of the BUCS competition for skiing and snowboarding was noted given the large variety in the number of individuals being able to attend these events. The MBC also discussed the factor of cost when using just the BUCS status, as this was noted to be a key reason as to whether athletes were able to attend BUCS races in a given year. It is also the reason for the variability of the number of athletes at this competition. Given this, the MBC were comfortable to allow 2 clauses for CUSSC to achieve their Full Blues.

The MBC discussed the last clause proposed by CUSSC: ‘The Varsity Winner overall be awarded a Full Blue’. It was felt that given the MBC want to be consistent with a top 10% BUCS finish and were happy to award Full Blues if an athlete achieves a sub-150 FIS points across 2 races in a single academic year, that this was sufficient enough opportunities for an individual to win a Full Blue in skiing or snowboarding.

Therefore, the MBC were happy to ratify the following status for CUSSC:

*Upon submission of sufficient evidence to the MBC, a Full Blue may be awarded to an athlete who fulfils all of the following criteria **in a single academic year**:*

- 1. Places in the top 2 athletes in the first team Varsity Match, AND one of the following:*
 - 2a. Finishes in the top 10% of any discipline at BUCS, OR*
 - 2b. Achieves a sub-150 FIS points in races in a single academic year.*

Upon submission of sufficient evidence to the MBC, a Half Blue may be awarded to an athlete who fulfils all of the following criteria in a single academic year:

- 1. Places in the top 4 of any discipline at the Varsity Match.*

The Hon. Sec to notify CUSSC of the outcome.

Status Applications - Half Blues

CUARFC – Australian Rules

The MBC reviewed the application from CUARFC, noting that they had previously reviewed a status submitted by CUARFC in Lent. CUARFC felt that one of the clauses (3a) of their new status was not discussed in depth enough at the last meeting.

The MBC discussed the proposition of CUARFC to change their current status from having to win the National University League, to having to win one game within the National University League for them to be awarded Half Blues. The National University League contains 4 teams currently (including Cambridge University). The MBC acknowledged that keeping the clause that CUARFC must win their university league makes their status much more difficult than just having to win one of six games within the league. However, the MBC has consistently applied a top 30% finish for individuals/teams for them to be eligible to win Half Blues. This would therefore mean that winning the league is in line with what the MBC deems eligible for a Half Blue. The MBC noted this would mean CUARFC are finishing within 'the top 25%' of teams within their league. However, the MBC always lean on a tougher status i.e. the toughest status closest to the top 30% is acceptable for athletes to be awarded Half Blues. It was also discussed that having to win one game in the league gives athletes a very large number of opportunities to win their Half Blues in a season, along with the second clause involving the Fitzpatrick Cup. The Senior Member of the MBC also noted that the MBC have the right to align sports with the criteria of a top 30% finish to be awarded Half Blues to ensure fairness across University sport. Given CUARFC have not provided any outstanding reasons that they should be exempt from this clause, apart from historically having a more lenient status, the MBC rejected the changes proposed by CUARFC to their status.

Therefore, the status for CUARFC remains:

There is no Full Blue status for CUARFC. Athletes are invited to apply for Extraordinary Full Blues if they feel they are of this standard.

Upon submission of sufficient evidence to the MBC, a Half Blue may be awarded to an athlete (maximum of 6 Half Blue awards per academic year) who fulfils all of the following criteria in a single academic year:

- 1. Plays in the Varsity Match, AND*
- 2. Plays in the majority of regular fixtures and training, meeting all club codes of conduct and playing in the spirit of the game, AND plays in either:*
 - 3A. A side that wins the National University League OR*
 - 3B. A side that reaches the final (1st/2nd) of the Fitzpatrick Cup.*

Hon. Sec to notify CUARFC of the outcome.

CUAFC – American Football

The MBC welcomed an overdue review of the status for CUAFC. The MBC noted previous reviews that happened under a different executive committee in 2014-15. There seems to be some confusion between the MBC and CUAFC as to whether they have been awarding Half Blues or not. As far as the MBC are concerned, there have been no Half Blues awarded in American Football for the last 3 years since this executive committee has been sitting. The request from CUAFC to retrospectively award Half Blues was also noted. However, the MBC do not make retrospective awards and are not willing to take this any further.

However, the MBC felt it was important to ratify a robust Half Blue status for CUAFC that is in line with the principle that the team finishes within the top 30% of teams in their BUCS/equivalent competition. Therefore, a discussion as to what the status should be commenced.

The MBC discussed the clause proposed by CUAFC to award Half Blues to individuals with ‘former American Football experience OR receives Rookie of the Year’. The MBC were very uncomfortable with passing this clause given that it is highly subjective and is not in line with a top 30% finish in a university league. The clause that involved ‘starting 75% of the team’s games that year’ was also discussed. The MBC felt that this was not a fair and robust clause given the nature of sport and injury.

The BUCS position of CUAFC was noted. CUAFC currently sit in BUCS Division 2 SE. There are currently 7 teams in this league. Above this, there are BUCS Division 1 SE with 5 teams in and BUCS South Premier with 5 teams in. Therefore, a top 30% finish for the CUAFC would involve them finishing within the BUCS South Premier that year. A top 30% finish amongst 17 teams means that CUAFC would have to finish in the top 5 teams to meet this criterion. Given there are 5 teams within BUCS South Premier, it was deemed appropriate for CUAFC to have to finish within BUCS South Premier to meet this top 30% requirement. It was noted that a status involving finishing in BUCS South Premier was a tough status for CUAFC; but would drive standards and ambition within the club to promote through the BUCS leagues.

Therefore, the MBC were happy to ratify the following status:

There is no Full Blue status for CUAFC. Athletes are invited to apply for Extraordinary Full Blues if they feel they are of this standard.

Upon submission of sufficient evidence to the MBC, a Half Blue may be awarded to an athlete (maximum of 6 Half Blue awards per academic year) who fulfils all of the following criteria in a single academic year:

- 1. Starts in the Varsity Match, AND*
- 2. Plays in a team that finishes in BUCS Premier South League (having competed actively in that league in that academic year).*

Hon. Sec to notify CUAFC of the outcome.

Extraordinary Full Blue Applications

No applications.

Honorary Full and Half Blue Applications

Honorary Half Blues

Cambridge University Water Polo

Silas Bonestroo
Kit Gallagher
Finn Heraghty
Alastair Horn
Henry Stuart-Turner
Jack Durand
Charlie Smith
Saul Blankstone
Jurgis Reinotas
Dan Gilbey

Honorary Full Blues

Cambridge University Water Polo

Gellert Peresztégi-Nagy
Thomas Adams
Andrew te Water Naude

Discretionary Full and Half Blue Awards

Half Blues

No applications.

Full Blues

No applications.

Notification of Full and Half Blue awards to Individuals of Clubs with Full Blue Status

Cambridge University Boat Club – Full Blues

Theo Weinberger
Benjamin Dyer
Sebastian Benzecry
Quinten Richardson
Garth Holden
Oliver Parish
Walter Taylor IV
Charlie Marcus

Reports of meetings with CUWBC, USC, JBCOCU

The Hon. Sec presented a case that the CUWBC are currently dealing with. It was noted that the CUHC women's team are currently in discussion with the WBC surrounding whether they will be awarded Full Blues. This is because the CUHC women are due to play in a Varsity Match, fulfilling this aspect of their criteria. However, the other aspect of their criteria involves 'remaining in the BUCS Premier League'. Given the BUCS premier league has not happened this year due to COVID-19, it remains debatable as to whether this aspect of the criteria has been met. It should be noted that the MBC will not be dealing with this issue and that it is solely for the WBC to decide the outcome of this case.

However, the Hon. Sec noted that the MBC will find themselves in this scenario in the near future. Sports that the MBC are responsible for will be playing Varsity Matches, but unable to meet other aspects of their performance criteria given the COVID-19 pandemic has not allowed sport to go ahead for the majority of this academic year. Therefore, the Hon. Sec and Senior Member proposed the MBC discuss what they *would* do should this scenario arise.

The first debate ensued about whether the MBC would be comfortable awarding Full Blues to individuals who had not met all of their status – including performance criteria that would have been impossible to meet due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Arguments were made for both awarding and not awarding Full Blues in this scenario. The MBC acknowledged the efforts of all athletes over a tough lockdown period and felt that there should be some recognition of this unique situation. However, the MBC also noted that the Honorary award systems were produced to avoid changing or ignoring the criteria an individual needs to meet in order to win a Full Blue. Historically, the MBC have always followed the status criteria when awarding Full Blues to allow for consistency and to avoid subjective decisions. The MBC noted that should the committee start awarding Full Blues to individuals that have not met their set out criteria, there would have to be subjective decisions as to how lenient the committee were in individual circumstances. This would cause the MBC to have to decide when it is acceptable to omit certain

performance criteria from certain statuses. The MBC unanimously acknowledged that this would lead to inconsistencies and unfairness in the awarding of Full Blues. However, the MBC were keen to be as generous as possible at what is a tough time for University sport.

Therefore, the MBC agreed on a general clause that:

'If it is possible to argue that a team/individual has met the criteria to be awarded a Full/Half Blue, a Full/Half Blue should be awarded. If it is impossible to argue that an individual has met the criteria for a Full/Half Blue, they should apply for Honorary Blues or Half Blues with supporting evidence to the committee demonstrating that the athletes in question would have met the criteria had COVID-19 not occurred'.

This statement from the MBC will now be discussed at the Joint Blues Committee and will be used as a basis to stimulate further discussion as to what should occur should these scenarios arise in the future. This is not a concrete statement and may be changed at a later date subject to discussion at the next Joint Blues Committee meeting.

Any Other Business

Further to the discussions surrounding the above, the Hon. Sec noted that many clubs will have their Varsities this term. This will prompt many discussions which should not be left until the next closed meeting, which would normally be in Michaelmas term. Therefore, the Hon. Sec proposed that the MBC meet again at the end of June/July to discuss the above proposition further; as well as to also deal with other applications that are anticipated to arise over the coming months. The MBC unanimously agreed this was a good idea. A second closed meeting will take place during the Summer.

With no other business to discuss, the meeting closed at 2145.

FOR APPROVAL