

THE CONSTITUTION

2023/2024

NAME AND OBJECTS

1. The Club is called the Oxford University Polo Club. This is a federal name which incorporates the following teams: the mixed first team is known as the 1st Squad, and the second team as 2nd Squad. The Club's objects are the support, development, improvement and promotion of Polo in the University of Oxford, with a view to mounting strong University teams; and the income and property of the Club shall be applied solely to those objects.

COMPLIANCE

2. (a) The Club shall be administered in accordance with the regulations for University clubs which are published from time to time in the Proctors' and Assessor's Memorandum ("the Proctors' Memorandum"). At the time of the adoption of this Constitution the Club is designated by the Proctors as a recognised sport. If the Club has "Blues" status then in relation to that status and issues surrounding the award of Blues and half Blues, the Club will also abide by the regulations of the Blues Committee of the University's Sports Federation.

(b) The activities of the Club will at all times be conducted in accordance with the following University policies and codes of practice in force from time to time: Integrated Equality Policy, Code of Practice on Harassment and Bullying, and Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech.

(c) If there is a national governing body for the sport with which the Club is eligible to register, the Club shall effect and maintain such registration: purchase any insurance cover which the national body makes available (unless the Insurance Section of the University's Central Administration ("the Insurance Section") agrees to or prescribes other arrangements); and make every effort to comply with all safety procedures which the national body prescribes, or recommends as good practice.

(d) The Club shall ensure that all paid Club administrative and coaching appointments are ratified by the University's Sports Strategy Committee; that all coaches are registered with any relevant national governing body; and that all paid coaches are accredited by such body.

(e) The Club shall observe the Code of Conduct on Safety Matters which is set out in the Schedule to this Constitution, ensure compliance with the Code by the members of the Club, and follow an appropriate procedure for risk assessment. Both the Code of Conduct and the procedure for risk assessment must be acceptable to the Area Safety Officer (Polo) (“The Safety Officer”). If and for so long as the Club is responsible for organising an inter-college competition, the Code of Conduct shall include guidelines and appropriate risk assessments for that competition.

(f) Not less than 21 days before any event or competition which is approved or advertised by the Club as an official event of the Club (other than events already included in the approved Code of Conduct of Safety Matters and procedure for risk assessment) the Club shall submit to the Proctors an event plan and risk assessment, together with documentary evidence of appropriate insurance cover. The Club shall observe such conditions as the Proctors may then attach to the running of the event.

(g) No member of the Club shall participate in any activity overseas organised by the Club, whether during term-time or vacation, unless the plans for such activity have been notified at least one calendar month in advance of the date of departure from the United Kingdom to the Director of Sport. Each member participating in such activities overseas shall observe any conditions imposed by the Proctors on the recommendation of the Director of Sport, e.g. relating to the deposit of contact addresses, fulfilment of health, safety and insurance requirements, and stipulation of coaches, trainers or Senior Members to accompany the trip.

(h) The Club may apply to Oxford University Computing Services (‘OUCS’) to use information technology (‘IT’) facilities in the name of the Club. Where relevant facilities are allocated by OUCS it is the responsibility of the Club:

(i) to designate a member of the Club entitled to a University email account (as defined by OUCS rules) to act as its IT Officer, whose duties shall include liaising with OUCS about the use of facilities allocated and passing on to his or her successor in office all records relating to the use of the facilities allocated;

(ii) to designate one of its members (who may be, but need not necessarily be, the same as its IT Officer) or, exceptionally, a member of Congregation to act as its principal Webmaster, whose duties shall include maintaining an awareness of the University Guidelines for Web Information Providers, and coordinating and regulating access to the

web facilities use by the Club;

(iii) to comply with regulations and guidelines relating to the use of IT facilities published from time to time by OUCS;

(iv) to ensure that everyone responsible under (i)-(iii) is competent to deal with the requirements, where necessary undertaking training under the guidance of OUCS.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

3. (a) There shall be a subscription fee for full year playing membership of £117.19 and for a social membership of £36.00.

(b) The level of subscription fee shall be reviewed yearly by the new Committee.

MEMBERSHIP

4. The members of the Club shall be those who are eligible and apply for membership of the Club, who are admitted to and maintained in membership by the Committee, and who have paid the relevant Club subscription.

5. All student members of the University, and all persons whose names are on the University's Register of Visiting Students, shall be eligible to become members of the Club. A member shall continue to be eligible until he or she is given permission to supplicate for his or her degree, diploma or certificate, regardless of whether or not he or she continues to be liable to pay fees to the University.

6. In addition to this, the Committee may, at their discretion, allow members of Cambridge University, Harvard, and Yale Polo Clubs to obtain a 'Reciprocal Membership' or for former University of Oxford students to obtain an 'Alumni Membership'. This allows them to train with other OUPC members, participate in intra-Club tournaments and attend social events, but NOT represent OUPC in external fixtures, or make use of other member benefits (e.g. access to member-price Ball tickets, voting in elections).

7. The Committee may also, at its discretion, admit to membership:-

(a) students registered to read for diplomas and certificates in the University;

(b) student members of Permanent Private Halls who are not student members of

the University;

(c) members of Ruskin College; Ripon College, Cuddesdon and the Oxford Institute of Legal Practice;

(d) members of the Westminster Institute of Oxford Brookes University who are registered to read for degrees or other qualifications validated by the University of Oxford; and

(e) other persons not falling within paragraph 5 or 6 above or paragraphs 7(a) to (d) above, provided that such members shall not constitute more than one-fifth of the total membership.

8. The Committee may remove a person from membership for good cause. The person concerned may appeal against such removal to the Senior Member.

MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERS

9. There shall be an Annual General Meeting for all the members of the Club in Hilary Term, convened by the Secretary on not less than fourteen days' notice.

10. The Annual General Meeting will:

(a) receive the annual report of the Committee for the previous year and the annual accounts of the Club for the previous year, the report and accounts having been approved by the Committee;

(b) receive a report from the Committee on the Club's compliance with paragraph 2 above;

(c) elect Members of the Committee in accordance with paragraph 19 below: the Committee's nominations for the Officers and the Senior Member shall be contained in the notice of the Meeting: any alternative nominations must be seconded and have the Consent of the nominee, and must be received in writing by the Secretary not less than seven days before the date of the Meeting: nominations for the other Committee Members may be taken from the floor of the meeting;

(d) consider any motions of which due notice has been given, and any other

relevant business.

11. An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called in any Full Term; by the Chairman, the Secretary or the Treasurer on not less than seven days' notice; or on a written requisition by [seven] or more members, stating the reason for which the meeting is to be called, and delivered to the Secretary not less than fourteen days before the date of the Meeting. 12. Prior to all General Meetings notice of the agenda shall be sent out with the notice of the Meeting.

13. The quorum for a General Meeting shall be five members present in person or by proxy, of whom three must be members of the Committee. When any financial business is to be transacted there must be present the Treasurer, or a member of the Committee deputed by the Treasurer to represent his or her views to the Meeting (provided that where it is a case of a deputy, the only financial business transacted shall be that which was set out in the agenda accompanying the notice of the Meeting).

MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

14. Meetings must abide by the following rules:

(a) At least two meetings of the committee shall be held each term.

(b) The meeting shall be chaired by the Chairman and in absence by the Secretary, Treasurer, or Captain.

(c) No non-committee member shall attend the meeting without the unanimous consent of the Committee.

(d) When any financial business is to be transacted, there must be present either the Treasurer or a member of the Committee deputed by the Treasurer to represent his or her views to the meeting.

(e) A quorum of the committee shall be four. A majority vote will be passed by a minimum of 75%.

(f) All committee members are to prepare in advance of the meeting including but not limited to:
(i) the sending of any relevant material or changes to the agenda to the Secretary

at least 3 days before the day of the meeting.

(ii) read the Agenda and attached documentation sent out by the secretary in advance of the meeting.

THE COMMITTEE

15. The affairs of the Club shall be administered by a Committee consisting of not more than ten persons, which shall determine the subscriptions payable by the members of the Club, and have ultimate responsibility for the activities of the Club. Members of the University shall at all times make up the majority of the members of the Committee. The Committee shall have control of the funds and property of the Club, and of its administration.

16. All Committee members are expected to complete an extended handover period in the latter half of Hilary term, following the AGM to ensure the adequate preparation of the new committee.

17. The Committee shall be made up of the Chairman, the Secretary, the Treasurer (together, the “Office Holders”; and their offices are referred to as “the Offices”), the Senior Member, the Captain, the Polo Manager, the Social Secretary, the Press and Social Media Officer and the Stash and Sponsorship Officer. The Chairman, the Secretary and the Treasurer shall each be either a member of the Club whose eligibility stems from paragraphs 5, 7(a) or 7(b) above, or (with the approval of the Proctors) a member of Congregation. If his or her eligibility stems from paragraph 7(a) or 7(b) above, on election to office he or she must sign an undertaking to abide by the Proctors’ Memorandum, and to accept the authority of the Proctors on Club matters.

18. The Chairman shall:

(a) have the right to preside at all meetings of the members of the Club and at all meetings of the Committee. Should the Chairman be absent, or decline to take the chair, the Committee shall elect another member of the Committee to chair the meeting;

(b) with the agreement of the Senior Member, may veto any decision of the Committee, if the working of the Committee is disrupted or if the interests of the Club or its members are jeopardised;

(c) not simultaneously hold any other post on the Committee except in an emergency, until as soon as a replacement can be found;

(d) not hold the post of Chairman for more than two consecutive years;

(e) be able resign at will and recommend another member of the Club to replace them, subject to the unanimous approval of the Committee and with the agreement of the Senior Member;

(f) with the agreement of the Senior Member, be able to suspend or call for a vote of no confidence in any member(s) of the Committee, if the interests of the member(s) are incompatible with the interests of the Club and its membership, and ultimately dismiss the member(s) if the vote of no confidence is carried by the majority of the Committee. The replacement will be elected by unanimous vote of the Committee;

(g) maintain impartiality in disputes among any member(s) of the Committee or the general membership and, with the agreement of the Senior Member, give a decision in the interests of the Club and its entire membership. In extreme and serious circumstances, the Chairman shall consult: the Senior member, the Director and the Secretary of Sports and the Proctors of the University;

(h) have final say over the appointment of additional committee members outside the AGM as well as the Ball Committee and other sub-committees;

(i) keep the senior committee members up to date on matters including but not limited

to: (i) audited annual accounts;

(ii) termly reviews;

(iii) any and all extraordinary matters.

(j) suitably represent the Club as the official face at events and fixtures;

(k) work with the Executive Committee in order to appropriately deal with extraneous circumstances involving members, e.g. temporary suspensions, or banning.

19. The Secretary shall:

(a) be responsible for all the administration, membership and other functions (such as managing the members' Facebook page), as designated by the Committee;

(b) maintain a register of the members and alumni of the Club, which shall be available

for inspection by the Proctors on request;

(i) Alumni information will be collected before the end of Trinity term.

(c) be responsible for collecting membership fees;

(d) give notice of meetings of the members and the Committee;

(e) draw up and distribute the agendae and preparation documents for, and minutes of, those meetings;

(f) send minutes of the first meeting of each term to the President;

(g) notify the Proctors (through the Director of Sport) promptly following the appointment and resignation or removal of Office Holders and other members of the Committee;

(h) advise the Proctors promptly (through the Director of Sport) of any changes in this Constitution;

(i) prepare a weekly mailout for members during term including but not limited to any match results, upcoming social events or matches;

(j) assist the Chairman in sending any emails to Alumni;

(k) work alongside the Chairman, Polo Manager and Social secretary to prepare termly reviews;

(l) provide the Insurance Section with full details of any insurance cover purchased from or through a national governing body pursuant to paragraph 2(b) above;

(m) inform the Proctors if the Club ceases to operate, or is to be dissolved, and in doing so present a final statement of accounts (the format of which the Proctors may prescribe).

20. The Treasurer shall:

(a) keep proper and up-to-date records of the Club's financial transactions in accordance with current accepted accounting rules and practices;

- (b) present updated accounts at Committee meetings, with breakdowns of expenditure to a reasonable degree, allowing the Committee to peruse and review;
- (c) develop and implement control procedures to minimise the risk of financial exposure, such procedures to be reviewed regularly with the University's Internal Audit Section ("Internal Audit");
- (d) be a co-signatory with either the Chairman, or the Captain on all OUPC cheques;
- (e) ensure that bills are paid and cash is banked in accordance with the procedures developed under
- (f) prepare an annual and termly budget for the Club and regularly inform the Committee of progress against that budget, presented at committee meetings;
- (g) track and chase sponsorship payments;
- (h) ensure that all statutory returns are made including VAT, income tax and corporation tax if appropriate;
- (i) seek advice as necessary on tax matters from the University's Finance Division;
- (j) develop and maintain a manual of written procedures for all aspects of the Treasurer's responsibility, under the review of the Chairman;
- (k) make all records, procedures and accounts available on request to the Senior Member, the Proctor and Internal Audit;
- (l) forward to the Proctors (through the Director of Sport) by the end of the second week of each Full Term in the Club's first year of operation (1 August to 31 July) a copy of the accounts for the preceding term (the format of which the Proctors may prescribe) signed
by the Senior Member, for retention on the Proctors' files; and after the first year of operation forward a copy of the signed annual accounts to 31 July as soon as possible after the year end (and in any event no later than the 1 October following the year end);

(m) assist the Chairman in preparing copies of the reports for the President and Vice Presidents;

(m) if the Club has a turnover in excess of £40,000 in the preceding year, or if owing to a change in the nature or scale of its activities, it may confidently be expected to have such a turnover in the current year, submit its accounts (the format of which the Proctors may prescribe) for independent professional inspection and report by a reporting accountant approved in advance by the Proctors. Accounts are to be ready for inspection within a month after the year end and the costs of the inspection and report shall be borne by the Club. If requested by the reporting accountant, the Club shall submit accounts and related material as a basis for a review of accounting procedures, the cost likewise to be borne by the Club.

21. The Captain shall:

(a) be elected by unanimous vote of the Chair, Coach, and outgoing Captain;

(b) have demonstrated a good playing ability of the game of polo and show leadership qualities on and off the field;

(c) have full responsibility for conducting trials before the Varsity match, if necessary, and shall have the full responsibility of selecting the team on the basis of their playing ability, and commitment to the club (assistance by professional players is at his/her own discretion);

(d) be responsible for inviting the Old Blues team to play before the Varsity match on behalf of the committee;

(e) be responsible for selecting playing members for the 1st and 2nd Squad of the Club, including by not limited to;

(i) organising and conducting Squad Trials a minimum of twice per academic year (at the start of Michaelmas term, and the start of Trinity term), open and advertised to all members who wish to trial;

(ii) collaborating with the Coach in order to ensure an impartial and fair selection of said Squads, according to a pre-specified set of selection criteria, as

- communicated to all trialing members;
- (iii) tracking commitment and participation of all selected 1st and 2nd squad members.
- (f) communicate with external clubs in order to organise dates and locations of fixtures;
- (f) select teams for all internal and external fixtures, in consultation with the coach;
- (g) liaise with the Polo Manager on a regular basis to ensure a unified club and to organise fixtures;
- (h) be invited, at the discretion of the Chairman, to be an honorary member of the Executive Committee.

22. The Coach shall:

- (a) work alongside the Polo Manager for arranging tuition in polo lessons for all paid-up members of the OUPC interested in the sport, as he/she sees fit;
- (b) be responsible for ensuring that all members have paid up before they play and have signed a copy of both the constitution and indemnity clause;
- (c) be responsible for all dealings with the HPA on behalf of paid up club Members; (d) abide by the terms of engagement.
- (e) work, as an impartial agent, alongside the Captain for squad and match team selections.

23. The Social Secretary shall:

- (a) be responsible for organising social events, including but not limited to termly drinks and dinners;
- (b) work with the Chairman to manage the relationship with Varsity Events.
- (c) support the Polo Manager / Captain in organising rules nights and other social events

to aid player development.

24. The Press and Social Media Officer shall:

(a) take responsibility for the operation and updating of a suitable club web-page displaying (at a minimum) current club contacts, the constitution, and the Code of Conduct on Safety Matters and procedure for risk assessment approved from time to time by the Safety Officer under paragraph 2(d) above;

(b) be responsible for promoting and publicizing the Club and its activities as they see fit;

(c) be responsible for initiating and managing Club relations with respected magazines and publications, involving writing and sending articles for regular publication.

25. The Polo Manager shall:

(a) be responsible for keeping track of any kit, including any property of the Club which may be in the possession of any office holders who have relinquished their appointment, as stated in paragraph 32;

(b) ensure that all Playing Members have completed and submitted (to the Coach) a copy of the Oxford Polo Rider Assessment Form, prior to their first lesson with Oxford Polo;

(c) coordinate with Oxford Polo for organisation of lessons and tasters, and timings of internal or external fixtures;

(d) liaise with the Captain regarding organisation of internal and external fixtures for the upcoming term, including necessary communications within the club;

(i) ensuring that clashes between the two aspects of polo activities are minimised;

(ii) notifying the Proctors (through the Director of Sport) not later than the end of the second week of every Full Term of the programme of fixtures which has been arranged for that term (e.g. by providing them a copy of the fixture card).

(e) advertise, and communicate information regarding all aspects of lessons and fixtures, both internal and external, which are available to members of the Club via Oxford Polo;

(f) work in collaboration with Captain to ensure that all necessary documentation is completed, with regards to University Sports Federation guidelines;

(g) notify the Proctors (through the Director of Sport) not later than the end of the second week of every Full Term of the programme of fixtures which has been arranged for that term (e.g. by providing them a copy of the fixture card);

26. The Stash and Sponsorship Officer shall:

(a) be responsible for reaching out to potential sponsors, appropriate to the Club's activities;

(b) be encouraged to invite any prospective sponsor or any person(s) he or she thinks fit to any OUPC match(es) or occasion(s) if, with such a gesture, the Club and its membership may benefit as a whole;

(c) organise the annual La Martina (and any other sponsors') Stash sale, involving coordination with La Martina and promoting the items within the Club and to Alumni.

27. Sub-Committees:

(a) The Committee shall approve the formation of any sub-committee, as required from time to time;

(b) Any member or non-member of the Club shall be eligible to participate in a Sub-committee.

28. The Senior Member shall:

(a) hear appeals from removal from membership under paragraph 7 above;

(b) following paragraph 18(i) above, consider the accounts of the Club and sign them if he or she considers them to be in order;

(c) ensure that adequate advice and assistance is available to the Secretary and the Treasurer in the performance of their responsibilities under paragraphs 17 and 18 above; and

(d) be available to represent and speak for the Club in the public forum, and before the Courts of the University and the University authorities.

29. The President and Vice Presidents shall:

(a) be invited to hold the post by the Committee and be well respected people in the world of polo;

(b) be ex-officio members of the Committee.

30. The members of the Committee, other than the Senior Member, shall be elected by the members of the Club annually, and shall be eligible for reelection. The members of the Club shall appoint a member of Congregation as the Senior Member when electing other members of the Committee each year. The Senior Member shall be a member of the Committee ex officio. [recognised sports only: substitute for the last two sentences: “The Director of Sport shall be the Senior Member ex officio”]

31. If during the period between the annual elections to offices any vacancies occur amongst the members of the Committee, the Committee shall have the power of filling the vacancy or vacancies up to the next Annual General Meeting by cooptation.

32. Each Office Holder must, on relinquishing his or her appointment, promptly hand to his or her successor in Office (or to another member of the Club nominated by the Committee) all official documents and records belonging to the Club, together with (on request from the Committee) any other property of the Club which may be in his or her possession; and must complete any requirements to transfer authority relating to control of the Club’s bank accounts, building society accounts, or other financial affairs.

33. The Committee shall have power to make regulations and bylaws in order to implement the paragraphs of this Constitution, and to settle any disputed points not otherwise provided for in this Constitution. Any alteration to this Constitution shall require the unanimous vote of the full Committee, and will be subject to final approval by the Senior Member.

34. No member of the Committee shall be removed from office except by the approving votes of two-thirds of those present in person or by proxy at a General Meeting.

INDEMNITY

35. So far as may be permitted by law, every member of the Committee and every officer of the Club shall be entitled to be indemnified by the Club against all costs, charges, losses, expenses

and liabilities incurred by him or her in the execution or discharge of his or her duties or the exercise of his or her powers, or otherwise properly in relation to or in connection with his or her duties. This indemnity extends to any liability incurred by him or her in defending any proceedings, civil or criminal, which relate to anything done or omitted or alleged to have been done or omitted by him or her as a member of the Committee or officer of the Club and in which judgement is given in his or her favour (or the proceedings are otherwise disposed of without any finding or admission of any material breach of duty on his or her part), or in which he or she is acquitted, or in connection with any application under any statute for relief from liability in respect of any such act or omission in which relief is granted to him or her by the Court.

36. So far as may be permitted by law, the Club may purchase and maintain for any member of the Committee or officer of the Club insurance cover against any liability which by virtue of any rule of law may attach to him or her in respect of any negligence, default, breach of duty or breach of trust of which he or she may be guilty in relation to the Club and against all costs, charges, losses and expenses and liabilities incurred by him or her and for which he or she is entitled to be indemnified by the Club by virtue of paragraph 30.

DISSOLUTION

37. The Club may be dissolved at any time by the approving votes of two-thirds of those present in person or by proxy at a General Meeting. The Club may also be dissolved (without the need for any resolution of the members) by means of not less than thirty days notice from the Proctors to the Secretary of the Club if at any time the Club ceases to be registered with the Proctors.

38. In the event of the Club being dissolved, its assets shall not be distributed amongst the members, but shall be paid to or at the direction of the University for use in support of University Polo, or other sporting activities within the University.

INTERPRETATION

39. Any question about the interpretation of this Constitution shall be settled by the Proctors.