Oxford University Women's Blues Committee - Constitution

1. Purposes of the Committee

1. The regulation and recording of awards of Blues, Half Blues and 1st and 2nd Team Colours.
2. The regulation of conditions for competing in the Varsity Match (See Appendix 1)
3. The supervision of colours and trimmings worn by OU Sports Clubs.
4. The mediation and arbitration between clubs should a difference of opinion exist.
5. The representation of University Sport as a whole where necessary.
6. The awarding of the annual 'Women's Blues Grant' (see Appendix 3)

2. Membership

1. Attendance to Meetings
   1. The Oxford University Women's Blues Committee shall consist of the captains or presidents of all Full or Half Blue sports and the elected President and Secretary of the Committee itself.
   2. The following shall be invited as observers: the President and Secretary of the Men’s Blues Committee, the Sports Director of Oxford University, and the President of the Sports Federation. Captains or Presidents of clubs who are recognised by the Sports Federation but who do not have a women’s blues or half blues status will also receive an invitation.
   3. The Captain or President of a club on the committee may invite her Hon. Secretary or Senior Treasurer in an advisory capacity or in her stead.
   4. A club captain or her appointee, must attend at least every third meeting of OUWBC and that to continually send apologies is not sufficient. It is not acceptable for clubs to continually send apologies as it means the committee is not representative. Should a club representative not attend three consecutive meetings the blues status of their club will be put on probation and their status review brought forward to the following meeting. Should they then fail to attend this their status will be revoked.

2. Requirements
   1. An annual affiliation fee of ten pounds shall be collected from each club with voting rights by the end of every Michaelmas Term (payable to Oxford University Women’s Blues Committee).
   2. Any club who does not send a representative to a meeting, and fails to apologise to the secretary prior to the meeting will be fined 50% of the annual affiliation fee.
   3. The Secretary is entitled to refuse to order Blues certificates for clubs who have outstanding fees or fines.
   4. The President is entitled to remove the voting rights of any club which has not paid their annual affiliation by the end of Michaelmas Term, with the rights to be immediately reinstated on payment.
   5. All member clubs must be recognised by the proctors in order to be eligible for a status and awards.

3. Management

1. The President shall:
   1. Chair the bi-termly meetings of the committee.
   2. Oversee the general running of the Women’s Blues Committee.
   3. Attend all Sports Executive meetings in a voting capacity.
   4. Attend Sports Federation Captain's Meetings as an observer.
   5. Attend the Joint Blues Committee meetings with Cambridge.
   6. Represent the Women’s Blues Committee at the Men’s Blues Committee meetings.
   7. Produce an annual report.

2. The Secretary shall:
   1. Act as Treasurer for the Women’s Blues Committee Bank Account.
   2. Collect affiliation fees, and any fines.
   3. Organise the venue and timing of the Committee meetings.
   4. Send out notices of meetings two weeks prior to the meeting.
   5. Send out an agenda at least three days before the meeting.
7. Take minutes at all Women’s Blues Committee meetings and be responsible for maintaining a minute book.
8. Produce signed accounts on an annual basis.
9. Maintain OUWBC website

3. OUWBC Account:
   1. Both the President and the Secretary shall be named as signatories on the account.
   2. Any expenditure exceeding thirty pounds (£30) must have been previously approved by a simple majority at a committee meeting.
   3. The Secretary will be responsible for keeping the Committee's financial records.

4. Election Procedure
   1. The Committee shall elect a President and Secretary at the end of every Hilary Term, to take office at the beginning of the following Trinity.
   2. Eligibility to stand for office extends to any woman who has sat on the committee.
   3. The election procedure will start with a short presentation by each candidate in an order chosen at random by the chair. Committee members and observers may then direct questions to the chair to be answered by both candidates. The order in which candidates answer questions shall rotate with each question.
   4. The election for the position of President shall take place first as any unsuccessful candidates may then put themselves forward for the position of Secretary.
   5. Voting members may vote for any candidate or may choose to vote to Re-Open Nominations, but no votes are transferable.
   6. The election of a candidate shall be determined by a simple majority vote.
   7. A motion of no confidence in either officer may be brought provided it has the backing of ten voting members of the committee. To succeed it must have a two-thirds majority.

5. Voting Rights
   1. Committee
      1. The quorum of the Committee shall be fifteen voting members.
      2. Only one representative from each Full or Half Blue Club shall be allowed to vote.
      3. Any observers to the meeting will not have voting rights.
      4. Anyone proposing a motion does not relinquish her voting rights.
      5. Any status change affecting voting rights will take effect in the subsequent meeting.
   2. Officers
      1. The President shall not represent any Full or Half Blue sport in a vote or debate on any motion before the Committee. In the event of the President also holding the post of Captain of a Full or Half Blue sport she shall not exercise the voting right of that sport. She may invite another representative of her club to attend on behalf of her club, or she may make an apology for that sport. Any such representative of the President’s sport shall vote independently of any instruction or advice given by the President at any time.
      2. The President or Secretary shall only have a vote in the following circumstances:
         1. In the event of a tied vote, a second vote shall be taken. If the motion remains tied, the President shall have a casting vote in which she may not abstain.
         2. The Secretary shall only have a vote if she is chairing the debate and the vote on the motion is tied on the second vote. She shall then exercise a casting vote and may not abstain.

6. Purposes of Meetings
   1. Motions and other agenda items
      1. Motions and other agenda items must be submitted in written form (on paper or via email) to the secretary at least a week before the meeting.
      2. The president and secretary may also add motions to the agenda including reviews of clubs.
3. Any motion submitted to the committee shall not be reconsidered in similar form within one calendar year, unless there have been significant changes to its content.

2. Content of Motions
   1. Status Changes:
      1. All motions for change of status must include a written report addressing the General Criteria for the awarding of Blues (see Appendix 2).
      2. Following a status change the club will be on probation for three years. During this time details of potential awards must be submitted to the President.
      3. Failure to produce a review proposal will result in the suspension of that club's ability to make awards. Should there be a Varsity Match before a satisfactory review has been completed all awards resulting from this must be proposed to the committee.
      4. If the committee does not approve the proposed review the club may present an amended review at the following meeting. If this also fails the club must reapply for Status. Should there be a Varsity Match before a satisfactory review has been completed all awards resulting from this must be proposed to the committee.

3. Awarding of Extraordinary Blues:
   1. A report should be included addressing the General Guidelines for the awarding of Extraordinary Blues (see Appendix 2) and include enough detail for the committee to come to an informed decision as to whether the applicant adequately fulfils the criteria.
   2. The motion for an extraordinary award may not been presented by the applicant but by another member of her club.

7. Amendments to this constitution

   1. The above clauses should be reviewed at least every five years and altered accordingly.
   2. Any amendment to this constitution must be carried by a two-thirds majority.

       Date: 6th March 2003
       Proposed by: Lucie Martin
       Seconded by: Libby Payne
       Amended by: Hilary Hamnett

   3. Club representatives must attend at least every third meeting.

       Date: 24th November 2003
       Proposed by: Lucinda Orr
       Seconded by: Katy Stothard
       Amended by: Hilary Hamnett

   3. B. ix. The Secretary shall carry out a contact detail check at the beginning of Michaelmas Term, and obtain details of clubs that have not replied from the Sports Fed Database.

       Date: 4th June 2007
       Proposed by: Camilla Kendrick

       Date: 3rd February 2008
       Proposed by: Frances Smithson
       Seconded by: Victoria Young

   2. B. iv. Clubs must notify the President of any Blues, half Blues, our Team Colours awarded within two weeks of the Varsity Match, or otherwise where arranged.

   2. B. v. The President is entitled to refuse to sign Blues certificates for clubs who have outstanding fees or fines, or have not submitted their awards within the relevant two week period.


5. A. vi. For the granting of Full Blues or change to Full Blue status, a quorum of twelve Full Blue voting members of the Committee shall be required, but such a quorum shall include no more than four representatives. No application for Full Blues or change of Full Blue status shall be granted unless it receives the support of at least two-thirds of the Full Blue members of the Committee or representatives.

5. A.vii. For the granting of Half Blues, or a change of Half Blues status, a quorum of twenty Full Blue and Half Blue voting members of the Committee shall be required. No application for Half Blues or change of Half Blues status shall be granted unless it receives the support of at least a two-thirds majority of all voting members present.
Appendix 1 – Rules Regarding Varsity Match Eligibility

These rules were drafted and approved by the Joint Blues Committee on 28 February 1983 and have since been altered based on the timings below:

- Alterations approved on 13 November 1997 which came into force from 1 October 1998
- Alterations approved on 12 March 2001 to come into force 1 October 2001
- Alterations approved in May 2013 to come into force 1 October 2013
- Alterations approved in June 2014 took place to come into force 1 October 2014

A resident bona fide student member of the University is eligible to compete in a Blues Status Oxford versus Cambridge sporting contest, subject to the stipulations that he or she is:

a. A matriculated and fully registered member of both a College and of the University for the current year according to both College and University academic registers; and

b. Registered for, and actively studying for, a recognised degree, diploma or certificate of the University where matriculation for all members of said course is compulsory* and;

c. In residence for at least the undergraduate (8 week) term in which the Varsity match falls, or the preceding one (if the match occurs in the ‘holiday’ period following the term in question), fulfilling University residence requirements as applied to all undergraduates; the undergraduate University residence requirements therefore would apply to all graduates ; and

d. Not already the holder of 8 Blues, having previously competed in 8 Blues status Varsity Matches in any one sport.

And either

e. Is an undergraduate, in which case his or her eligibility continues until 30 September in the year in which he or she completes his or her undergraduate course;

Or

i. Is already the holder of a degree from a recognised University and is therefore reading for a further degree or for a diploma, certificate or higher degree of the University, in which case his or her eligibility is limited to four (4) further appearances. These four years need not be consecutive.

ii. The eligibility of such a graduate student is limited until his or her results are published in the Reporter (Cambridge) or the Examination Schools (Oxford). However, should extra work be required after a viva to complete academic requirements, then Varsity eligibility is extended until these requirements have been met but shall not extend beyond the academic year in which the original viva takes place. See Note: 2 below

Notes:

1. For all other non Blue status Oxford vs. Cambridge matches i.e. second team competitions, the current British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS) eligibility criteria shall apply. This allows any current student on a recognised course of study within the University, irrespective of matriculation or number of years of previous participation, the right to play.**

2. For the avoidance of doubt, the academic register or equivalent must have the student status shown as ‘active’ for at the very minimum the term in which the Varsity Match falls, not withstanding all other eligibility requirements.

* Sentence underlined in section b) came into force from September 2015.

**Currently the ISIS/Goldie crews (Second teams) are eligible for a Half Blues.

If you have any further queries please visit www.sport.ox.ac.uk/varsity for the contact details of members of the Joint Blues Committee.
Appendix 2 - Status of Full and Half Blue Sports

Awards made at the captain's discretion should be to those she feels worthy of such an award. In making this award, she must have regard to six Blues Sport criteria: the ability, excellence, effort and determination of the individual(s) concerned, the result against Cambridge and the overall contribution of the individual(s).

Extraordinary awards are considered for achievement at national or junior international level and above, after the individual case has been represented to and approved by the committee. Extraordinary Half Blue awards are considered in exceptional circumstances, and cases must also be presented to and approved by the committee.

Discretionary Full Blues are upgrades of Half Blues and may be awarded when certain additional criteria is achieved. Such awards must be presented in writing to the President who will approve or disapprove them, in the case of the latter the awards may be proposed before the committee.

First Team Colours can be awarded by any Captain of a Full or Half Blue sport, to first team members (who played in the Varsity match) but who did not reach the standard required for the award. The total number of awards given must not exceed the number of awards granted by the Blues Committee.

Second Team Colours may be awarded to members of the Varsity Second Team.

To change the status of a sport a request must be made to the Committee one week before the meeting. Details are required about the results and training of the club.

There must have been three Varsity matches before a club is considered for a status change; and after such a status change, the club is subject to three years' probation.

Post applications for individuals are only allowed if they were not made at the correct time due to administration errors. They must be submitted within one year of the individual concerned leaving the university. Also, the application must be considered under the criteria for such awards as they were at the time when the application should have been made.

Criteria for Full Blue Sports

1. There must be an annual match against Cambridge.
2. The sport must be a major one within the University
3. The Club must have a high standard compared with other amateur Clubs.
4. There must be Considerable College organisation, with recognised Colleges playing each other.
5. There must be a substantial degree of athletic ability required.
6. There must be an inveterate organisation and tradition of participation within the U.K. and the University.

N.B. For HALF BLUE sports, criteria 2, 4 and 6 are not so important.

Extra Points

No award (Full/Half Blue or First/Second Team Colours) can be awarded to someone who does not compete in the Varsity Match, thus:

1. Non-playing reserves cannot be awarded Blues etc.
2. People who fall ill or are injured before the Varsity Match are not eligible for Blues.

Extraordinary Full Blues

These are awarded to sportswomen who are deemed by the Blues Committee to have achieved an extraordinarily high standard in their sport.

Such awards are obviously rarely given. The following are some guidelines for Captains/Presidents regarding the presentation of their case to the Blues Committee:
a) The person who is applying for the award must not attempt to present herself; a fellow team-mate or the Coach should do it (usually the Captain is the obvious choice);
b) The evidence of the superlative performance should be readily available to all the Committee. It is the duty of the applicant’s representative to PROVE without doubt the applicant’s merit;

Thus

c) It should not be expected that the Blues Committee know details of the sport regarding the rules of competition, methods of scoring, meaning of the results etc. Such things should be suitably explained to allow the Committee to judge fairly the individual case.
d) Therefore written-evidence is much appreciated (with independent corroboration, i.e. from the Coach, National team or the like) showing comparison to previous Varsity Matches, County, National and/or International rankings etc.

Thus it must be realised that the awarding of Extraordinary Full Blues is a great accolade and must be taken seriously lest the value of the Blues be reduced (and efforts of others in achieving Blues status).

Sport is by its very nature competitive and the awarding of colours is meaningless without rigorous high standards that are applied in a uniform and comparative manner.

Extraordinary Half Blues

Guidance for the standards required to apply for Extraordinary Half Blues is provided here, for cases where an individual has performed to a high standard but would not merit an Extraordinary Full Blue.

It is possible to apply for Extraordinary Half Blue status if:

a) The individual is a member of an established Oxford University Club and plays a recognised sport which does not currently hold Blue or Half Blue status.
b) The individual plays a sport which holds Half Blue status but is not able to award Half Blues to the entire team. In this case the individual must have been deemed by the Captain and Coach to have made a contribution to the Varsity match equal to that of the other members of the team who were awarded Half Blues. She must also have fulfilled the standards described in the Status of her sport.

The ability of an individual who is proposed for an Extraordinary Half Blue should be commensurate with performance at County or Regional level in sports in which there is a regular and well defined competition structure. Written evidence of this is much appreciated.
Appendix 3 - Women's Blues Grant

The annual Women's Blues Grant is open to all sportswomen in the University who have received a Blue, Half Blue or Colours from the Women's Blues Committee. The grant should be awarded to an individual who has shown excellent sporting performance for use towards future personal development (e.g. new personal equipment, training camp, travel with national team, etc.).

Applications should be no more than 300 words and countersigned by two people willing to recommend the applicant (e.g. club president, coach, etc.). Applicants should include details of funding received from other sources (e.g. from colleges, other sports grants and scholarships). Applications must be received by the President at least a week before the first meeting of Hilary Term.

The President and Secretary will shortlist up to four applicants that the Committee will vote on at the first meeting of Hilary Term by secret ballot. If the committee are agreed, the grant may be split equally between two individuals. The recipient(s) of the Women's Blues Grant will receive up to £300 from the Committee on production of receipts.
The man who began the Varsity match tradition was Charles Wordsworth of Christ Church College Oxford, who arranged a two-day cricket match against Cambridge at Lords in June 1827.

The first Boat Race between the two universities was in 1829, and was rowed over 2 and a quarter miles between Hambleden Lock and Henley Bridge.

The second Boat Race was not until 1836 which was rowed over more than double the distance, from Westminster Bridge upstream to Putney Bridge. It was in this race that one of the Cambridge oarsmen tied a light blue ribbon to the bows of the Cambridge boat (the colours of his school, Eton College). The colour dark blue was then ascribed to Oxford because it is the colour of Christchurch College, and the Oxford crew sported white jerseys with dark blue stripes during the race.

These colours have remained over the years, and now anyone who has represented Oxford in a Varsity match against Cambridge in a Full Blue sport is entitled to wear a dark blue "Blues Blazer". These blazers typically have embroidery on the breast pocket indicating which sport it was earned for.