

We would first like to point out that a survey or straw poll of Captains to determine how many would want some form of Bumps racing to go ahead is somewhat pointless. We all want some form of Bumps racing to go ahead - why else do you think most of the Senior Committee volunteer up to a third of their annual leave, and countless hours of their free time to organise and run the Bumps? However, the continued existence of the Lent and May Bumps relies on them being run safely, and that in turn relies on many risk mitigations being in place to ensure that is the case.

Many of these mitigations are centred around coxes, as the decisions and actions of coxes are almost always the difference between a safe race and a very nasty accident. These mitigations include the coxes' briefings and minimum outing requirements. However, those mitigations build on the context of a normal year. In such a year, the majority of coxes would have spent at least two terms coxing before racing Lents. During those two terms, they would have dealt with all manner of unexpected scenarios, such as piecing around Ditton to find a crew spinning in front of them, or having to hold it up when a novice crew spanners across the river. Additionally, they'd have had plenty of practise squeezing their boat through narrow gaps with crews on either side of the long reach, and have excellent awareness of how wide their boat is and which gaps they can and cannot get through. They would have had plenty of racing experience, and perhaps some side-by-side regatta experience, where they need to balance the demands of coxing calls with the excitement, noise, and distractions of the race.

Of course not every cox is in this situation - there will always be the odd cox who has to drop in at short notice, who hasn't coxed Bumps for a year, and who only has a handful of outings with the crew they will be coxing. However, there's perhaps one of these coxes per division, and whilst the cox and crew in question may not know it, during racing there's likely a very senior or chief umpire nearby, keeping an eye on them. The risk is further mitigated by the coxes ahead and behind behaving relatively predictably when faced with carnage. There is no way to mitigate this risk when every cox is in this situation, no matter how many chief umpires there are (and we don't have that many with sufficient experience anyway!).

Furthermore, arguments for senior coxes being safer are not borne out by the real experiences of the Senior Committee. Often some of the most serious accidents are in the top divisions. This is partly due to the boats in these divisions being a lot faster and thus the time to assess and decide on a course of action a lot shorter, but also due to the overconfidence of more experienced coxes.

The Senior Committee had some advance notice that the majority of students were not likely to return until mid-May, but were also led to believe that there was a possibility that the whole Easter Term may be delayed, which would then have given more time for crews to train together, in eights, on a relatively busy river. Even in these circumstances, we were concerned about the safety of running a (delayed) Mays. However, as soon as the delayed return of all students was confirmed without a delay to Easter Term, the Senior Committee quickly agreed that Mays could not go ahead safely (even for the top divisions), and that this decision should be shared ASAP to allow more time for consideration of alternatives before the Captains meeting. The fact that many boatmen and women, with their extensive experience of college rowing, have reached out to us to express their support of this decision has reassured us that we are not being unreasonable.

Obviously, safety is our principal concern and the largest factor in this decision, but other factors have of course played a part. One of the objectives of CUCBC is "To define and organise races between the College Crews. Such events should be in the best interests of the development of Cambridge College rowing and should take into account the wishes of the College Clubs.", and the Senior Committee do genuinely believe that an alternative

event, which can give *all* crews as much preparation to race Bumps next year, without the dangers of racing Bumps with such little preparation this year, is in the best interests of the development of Cambridge College rowing.

However, if the Captains wish to force a vote to compel CUCBC to run a Bumps race for a minority of crews, against the judgement of the Senior Committee and our safety assessment, you should know that in doing so you are proposing a vote of no confidence in the Senior Committee. We are all volunteers, and we will not invest the significant time and effort required to organise a Bumps race which we deem to be unsafe. To do so would be negligent, and invalidate our event insurance. Without the approval and support of the Senior Committee (and hence the Chief Umpires), it would likely be impossible for a replacement committee to produce a risk assessment with suitable mitigations to obtain the approval of the University and local authorities, as well as replacement event insurance. This would in turn put the entire future of College Bumps at risk.