



OUABC Alumni Newsletter

Hilary
Term 2019

Cambridge win 112th Varsity Boxing Match.

CUABC deservedly won the 112th Varsity match on 9th March by 6 bouts to 3. Oxford's efforts were hamstrung by the absence of their Captain, Sam Luxa, and at least four other boxers who for various reasons dropped out from the squad in the last two months. Before the match, Dave Mace, the OUABC coach, expressed his disappointment at these absences in strong terms. OUABC went into the match without a featherweight and had no returning 'Blues' from last year so winning three bouts was a better outcome than some had feared. After the boxing success of the Woman's match and the financial success of the Town v Gown fixture {see Report at the end of this Newsletter}, the 'boxing year' has ended on a disappointing note and CUABC and OUABC are now tied 54 matches each for the Truelove Trophy.

A further disappointment in the evening was the failure of CUABC and OUABC to agree a modus vivendi to stage a woman's match. My understanding is that one club wanted to agree individual bouts by weight and ability as is normally the case; while the other wanted to specify the weights first and then fill the bouts. Given the brain power available, it is unfortunate that a compromise could not be agreed; such as either the 'home' or the 'away' club deciding. Cambridge did have one good woman boxer in a supporting contest against an army boxer so it is difficult to understand why no female bouts took place.

Nevertheless, there were excellent performances from Alex von Boetticher, Dan Shaw, and especially, Conor Gleeson, which bodes well for the future. Edward Schwarck, the OUABC Heavyweight, was ahead on points but did not have the experience to use his reach to stay out of trouble and succumbed to a devastating right before he got going. Hopefully, Ed can be persuaded to box in 2020. With a little more luck, a captain who boxed, and a winning featherweight, it could have been a different evening. Moreover, those boxers who lost were brave {*perhaps too much so*} and will have gained from the experience. A suggestion may be the appointment of a fixtures secretary to enable

OUABC to find more bouts for boxers to gain experience as inexperience was obvious in a number of bouts which OUABC lost and that is no criticism of the OUABC boxers. A match against Durham University could be considered, for example.

The CUABC featherweight Rafi Mitchell {Christ's} came into the ring after being awarded his bout on a walkover which was good for him but otherwise unsatisfactory to all concerned.

Lightweight.

Athi Chellappa {Churchill} v Mu-Huan Lee {Trinity}

The CUABC boxer had stronger physique and too much experience for southpaw Mu-Huan. Chellappa used both fists to good effect and, as is often the case with Cambridge boxers, was aggressive and fought on the front foot. Mu-Huan kept his right hand away from his face and took unnecessary punishment. If he can learn to stay out of trouble and use his right jab he can improve for next year.

Light Welterweight.

Athanasios Ntelozos {Jesus} v Alex von Boetticher {Merton}

The Cambridge boxer led with his head and by the third round was fortunate not to be disqualified, which would have been unlucky for von Boetticher who boxed extremely well and used guile to inflict punishment and his reach to avoid punishment.



Alex von Boetticher staying out of any trouble from his CUABC opponent

Welterweight.

Matt Elliott {King's} v Kenneth Tan {Teddy Hall}

The aggression of the CUABC boxer was obvious from the off as was Kenneth's inexperience. If Kenneth can learn to jab, move quickly, and protect his face by having his right hand in front of his face {*such a common OUABC fault!*}, he will gain the confidence to enjoy his boxing. Kenneth has potential but if one does not have the physique to mix it in a fight, one has to box rather than fight. OUABC boxers forget the old adage to outbox a fighter and to outfight a boxer. Unfortunately, CUABC boxers are better at the latter than OUABC boxers are at the former.

Light Middleweight.

Alexander Stoilov {Gonville and Caius} v Stanislas Dumas {Keble}

Stoilov came out aggressively using two fists and Stanislas had few answers and on a couple of occasions turned away from his opponent which is neither an effective defence nor a good impression for judges. Stanislas fought gamely but could not avoid taking punishment, partly because he was too square on and had the OUABC habit of not keeping his hands in front of his face. The referee stopped the contest. The best way to learn boxing and build confidence is to have bouts and Stanislas's inexperience showed.

Middleweight. 1

Jovan Tasev {Homerton} v Daniel Shaw {Magdalen}

Dan Shaw dominated the bout from start to finish although his opponent came out aggressively in the third round. The OUABC man out boxed a fighter and avoided punishment. There were a couple of catcalls when Dan was awarded the bout only on a 'split' decision.

Middleweight. 2

Seb Dex {Trinity} v Conor Gleeson {Jesus}



Seb Dex of CUABC on the defensive against Conor Gleeson of Jesus College and OUABC

Conor started as he had finished in the Town v Gown contest with two fist aggression against a brave opponent who boxed too 'square on'. In the programme Conor quoted the Klitschko adage: *"I don't like to get hit, who likes it?"* and he avoided punishment while punching hard and effectively to such effect that the bout was stopped. It was a very good performance which bodes well for the future.

Light Heavyweight

Judah Aiyenuro {St John's & Captain} v Benjamin Spencer {Jesus}

Ben Spencer was unfortunate to come against the competent and experienced CUABC captain who had too much power and aggression for the Oxford man who boxed gamely but without the ability to stay out of trouble so that the bout was stopped in the first round.

Heavyweight

James Lee {Jesus} v Edward Schwarck {Merton}

Edward Schwarck had a good reach advantage over his CUABC opponent and was obviously ahead on points. His 'corner' were shouting for him to move and jab and he managed to do this for nearly all of the first round. The CUABC managed to throw a fortuitous right which landed square on the jaw and the OUABC boxer was clearly in no state to continue. It was a bad way to lose a bout as Ed would have won the match had he been able to stay out of trouble.

NEXT YEAR'S MATCH WILL BE 7TH MARCH 2020 - Oxford Town Hall!

OUABC Outreach Programme

With the support of alumni, Magdalen College and Radley College, OUABC has been running the outreach programme since January 2015. Since the start of the scheme the club has been sponsoring talented young boxers, which has included taking them on their annual Tenerife training camp. This one-week camp involves 6 ½ days of elite level training including 2 high altitude runs on the Mount Teide mountain road.

Sponsored boxers who have been on the trip previously include two local teenagers from Blackbird Leys ABC and decorated boxers Ellie Scotney (Churchill ABC, London) and Ben Whittaker (Firewalker ABC, Wolverhampton) who have since secured spots on Team GB. Both boxers are now training full time with GB and have already secured a number of medals in international competitions. They are currently training in preparation for the next Olympic cycle.

This January OUABC took 15 year old Katie Lane with them on the trip. Katie is the 2018 NABC and English ABC Junior Champ. She boxes out of Berinsfield ABC in Oxfordshire and she is also in the English Junior Development Squad.



From left to right: Katie Lane, Melissa Trudge {Spanish Lightweight Champion} & Dr. Isra Hale

OTHER NEWS

Georgia Walker is stepping down as President of OUABC. She has done an amazing job under difficult circumstances; some of which are alluded to above. The historic and successful woman's boxing match and the organization of the Town v Gown in November are largely down to her. She has also been particularly helpful to the Alumni Association and we are indebted to Georgia for her enthusiasm, commitment and efficiency.

If you wish to keep abreast of OUABC: <http://www.ouabc.com>

Alumni are welcome to write articles of their recollections of OUABC or even fiction but such should be boxing and, ideally, OUABC related.

As notified in the last edition, 2019 is the 50th anniversary of Bob Nairac saving OUABC from oblivion, virtually singlehanded. Anyone winning a blue since owes him a debt of gratitude and it is unlikely that CUABC could have survived if he had not resuscitated our Club. It was heartening to be contacted by the CUABC President, Aiden Cope, that it will be appropriate to mark Bob's contribution. The Alumni Association {Chris Mack and Tim Fell} have the matter under active consideration and funds will be put to good use for the 2020 Varsity Match.

UNIVERSITY BOXING..... A VERY SUCCESSFUL SEASON.

In addition to the excellent boxing showcased at the Inaugural Oxford Women's Boxing Match, the women's squad have had tremendous success at national level.

The season started with a gold medal for Lydia Welham in the Senior Female Class 'A', 'National Development Championship', with decisive victories over boxers from London, the Army including a second-round stoppage in the final.

At the British University Championships [BUCS] in February, the women pursued this winning streak, finishing as the top female team for the third time in the last four years.

At 51kg, Jessica Lee displayed her natural skill against a Cambridge opposition, but lost out on a close split decision.

Representing the club at 60kg, the women's captain Rachel Wheatley added a gold medal to her impressive collection of boxing and judo BUCS medals, with two dominant performances.

At 69kg, there were successful semi-final results for both OUABC women at the weight; Katya Marks and Amy Hodgkin. This meant that there was an all Oxford final with Katya winning a gold medal and Amy the silver medal. A 'win win' for OUABC if not for the unfortunate Amy.

The club looks forward to pursuing this success in both championships and seeing the team continue to thrive in the year to come. Well done to all who took part.

It is worth noting that the woman boxers have boxed in other bouts so are gaining experience, notwithstanding the cancellation of the woman's Varsity match.

WEBSITE BUILDER.

Following the appeal in the last newsletter, thanks go to Hugo Morgan (Middle 1986, 1987) who has kindly volunteered to help. More news on this in future editions.

SPONSORSHIP.

Everyone associated with OUABC appreciated the support given by London and Oxford Group who sponsored the 2018 Varsity match but the Club is keen to expand the number of sponsors it has and is looking for sponsorship for the 2020 match. The Club also needs financial assistance for its training camp; and for sporting apparel, or stash}.

For either corporate or individual sponsorship please contact the OUABC President, Georgia Walker, at georgia.walker@sjc.ox.ac.uk.

Town vs Gown: Blood, Sweat & Respect at the Oxford Union

High levels of anticipation led to this year's Town v Gown boxing match selling out in record time. It was held at the prestigious and historic Oxford Union and was, of course, hosted by Oxford University Amateur Boxing Club (OUABC). In an eleven bout evening, Oxford's boxers competed against challengers from across the country and each other with, in the latter case, probable places in the team to box against Cambridge up for grabs.

Isra Hale and Ella Penny came into the ring to host the evening before the first bout which was between two OUABC boxers, Malindi Haggett in the blue corner and Gina Liu in the red. Gina boxed well on the front foot and in the second round things became more aggressive, with some nice clean right hands being thrown but Malindi caused problems by her ability to use the whole ring and the judges duly awarded her the contest.

Next up, all the way from New York *{for the avoidance of doubt, the one in the USA as opposed to the former pit village in Northumberland}* and now representing OUABC was Matt Chun in the Blue corner against Ali from UCL ABC. There was aggression and movement from both boxers from the off. Although Ali was caught slapping he managed a few big rights and despite the encouragement from vociferous home support, the UCL boxer won the bout.

The night's third fight was the heavily anticipated Pauly Sapper vs Sam Luxa - OUABC's Men's Captain from New College. The first round got off to a quick start, with lots of movement and probing jabs as both are quick and clever fighters and were aware of each other's experience. In the second round Sam began to be more aggressive while Pauly kept his guard high and looked for the opportunity to throw combinations which landed nicely in the final seconds of the second round. In the final round intensity increased and the crowd reacted to every punch that landed. The boxing was tidy, especially from Sam, and he won against a worthy opponent.

The second women's bout of the night was Georgia Walker in the blue corner vs V.C. Carters in the red from Hook and Jab ABC in Warrington. The challenger threw flurries of punches from the early seconds in each round while Georgia kept her hands high, throwing good counter punches and she worked especially hard in the final round; but it was not enough..

Ken 'KO Ken' Tan then went up against Alexander Boe; both from OUABC. Alex kept a tight guard, throwing well chosen jabs while Ken moved in quickly and with agility, skillfully ducking many of

Alex's punches. In the second round Alex began to dominate the ring, and although Ken showed serious determination and skill, the ref stopped the contest in favour of Alex. These fighters show a promising future for OUABC, demonstrating the heart and discipline expected of Oxford's boxers.

Katya Marks in the Blue corner and Amy Hodgkin in the red were both from OUABC. The fighters often caught each other simultaneously. In the third round Katya landed a succession of hard punches to good effect. The fighters stayed in close, giving and taking punishment. For the last ten, Amy came back with several solid combinations and at the final bell the two friends shared a hug after a hard fought bout. The judges returned a split decision, giving the win the Katya.

After the interval, the night resumed with Stan Dumas against Rory Fisk, both from OUABC. The start was extremely even, with both boys keeping it slow and keeping their distance, waiting for opportunities to counter and yet finding it hard to score. As the rounds progressed, the crowd responded by cheering them both on; especially in the third round. After a very close fought match, which none of the audience would have been able to call, the win was given to Rory in the blue corner.

Connor Gleeson representing OUABC from Jesus College; whose students were vociferous in his support, came up against M. Zucker from UCL ABC. The home crowd encouraged an aggressive fight, and they got it. Connor threw good punches, with many finding their mark as he displayed a lethal combination of skill and strength. In the second round, chants of 'Jesus' 'Jesus' 'Jesus' must have sounded strange to the audience. Connor kept his head down, only occasionally being caught off balance and the most entertaining bout of the night resulted in a win to OUABC's Connor - announced to ecstatic celebrations from supporters after a hard fought bout.

Another OUABC fighter, Ben Spencer, also from Jesus College, fought against Sean Yearwood from Blackbird Leys ABC. The first two rounds were tough, with Sean being very aggressive. Ben kept his confidence and responded well. The coach wiped the blood off Ben's face and he went into the third round undeterred, the fight staying evenly matched. Ben kept his guard up and led the challenger around the ring but the win went to Blackbird Leys in the red corner for his aggression. Jesus College students are clearly proud of their boys, and they have every reason to be.

The ominous sound of the Lord of The Rings theme played through the speakers as George Powell from OUABC came up against. H. Kacawl from Oxford ABC in the red corner. George slipped early on but was unaffected and used his left to deliver rapid jabs. His opponent came out fast and aggressive, but getting tired, George managed to trap him in a corner and throw a couple of good shots to the body. Going into the third round with renewed determination, George kept his opponent at distance with his jab and made a big effort in the last minute but it was not enough and the win went to Oxford ABC.

OUABC's heavyweight of the night, Horatio Sykes went up against Joshua Payne from Blackbird Leys ABC in the red corner. Both fighters fought hard, and Horatio came off better in the first round, giving the crowd hope of an OUABC win against a town club. Sykes came back stronger in the second round, and by the last round it was hard to say who was on top. In the end the decision was a win for Blackbird Leys ABC.

After the bouts, Sam Luxa, Men's Captain, said: "The atmosphere was up a notch from last year. Everyone put in creditable performances and we learn whether we win or lose. Many have stepped in the ring for the first time, and I am proud of the OUABC performances. The team will reflect on the night, analyse the footage, and improve aiming to deliver a team win in Cambridge in March."

Although there were no wins against the 'town', it was an incredibly enjoyable night with real atmosphere in the historic Oxford Union. OUABC thank all the clubs that came down to put on this event with us on a Friday night. Boxers, coaches and spectators will be looking forward to Varsity now, where many fighters can be confident that they've been tested and gained valuable experience against some of the town's best. No one can doubt that OUABC are hungry for the Varsity match on March 9th.

Alex Brindle.

Financial Support and Gift Aid.

Alumni support OUABC in many ways, financially and by giving their time and thank you to everyone who donates to the Club directly or by standing order to the Alumni Association. The GLD gym would not have been installed without the efforts of Chris Mack and so many alumni, and the Outreach programme is going from strength to strength. If anyone wishes to donate by standing order to the Alumni Association please contact the Treasurer, Tim Fell: tim@fell.net. The Alumni Association distributes funds to the Club over time as and when needed and has helped the Club survive on occasion. For those who wish to donate to the Club directly, it is possible to do so via the University using the following link and such donations attract Gift Aid and are uplifted by 25%.

<https://www.campaign.ox.ac.uk/make-a-gift?id=4a9455e7-b5c0-4b89-8629-a3a814c8e725>

Sporting Apparel or 'Stash' if you prefer.

For those alumni with svelte figures, OUABC has 'stash' for sale; viz:

Rain Jacket, £50. Mid-Layer training top, £45. Men's & Womens' trackies, £40. Men's & women's shorts £22.50. Beanies, £18. Hoody, £25. Sweatshirts, £22.50. Men's & Women's t-shirts, £17.50.

Sizes are XS to XL and normally come with the OUABC logo and the buyer's initials. A great present! Contact caleb-daniel.oyekanmi@mansfield.ox.ac.uk for more information.

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In line with data privacy laws, we have drafted a Privacy Policy <http://www.ouabc.com/> that tells you what we do with and why we hold your personal data - things like your name, email address, educational history and information related to your boxing career - as well as how you can amend, see or remove your data from our systems.

We have your details on our system because you have previously provided it to us to keep you abreast of OUABC-related events and developments. Therefore, we shall continue to provide you with such updates over email unless you email us to tell us to stop.