

Paper to Submit to CSB Meeting on Monday the 19th March 2012
ACC Riding and Polo Budget Appeal

After receiving a cut of almost 20% to its budget this year Riding and Polo felt it had good grounds to appeal this decision. With the real cut being a little under £2000, the largest absolute value cut in the ACC by a significant margin the club felt that it qualified for an appeal based on all of the three grounds for appeal given by the ACC: unfair treatment of the club in comparison to others, cuts that will not allow the achievement of the clubs core aims and objectives and cuts that would mean an unreasonable price to its members for activities.

As required, we first appealed to the ACC and the paper that was submitted here is included in Appendix 1 as required. As you can see from this paper we requested only £453.89 representing a reduction of our cut by just 5% which we feel is fair, we believe the original paper outlines the reasons for this however, here we seek to address the reasons that this paper was rejected by the ACC and highlight some of the parts of it that we feel are important as well as offering small amendments in light of these arguments.

Firstly, the timing of the ACC meeting was unfortunate for us as our regular polo session falls during Tuesday evenings and with the need for a minibus driver one of our committee members that was heavily involved in writing the appeal was not able to attend. As such it was difficult for the remaining members to combat the arguments raised in the ACC meeting as they were not as familiar with the paper. We don't offer this as an excuse or reason for why the paper was rejected, only to explain why some of these points were not dealt with prior to bringing this appeal to CSB.

Our budget was originally cut due to the drop in membership target of 15% proposed by the club. As we point out, we were not advised that this would mean a cut well above the level of the membership reduction by the ACC when we submitted the budget for comments and feel that it is unfair; basing a large cut on the strength of one number despite comments of an otherwise strong budget is unfair especially over an above the level of the cut to that number which we explain in our budget is in response to the information that the ACC would receive an approximate 10% cut (which was actually 7.1% after budgeting) and so we feel that although it would be fair to cut us the 15% of our reduced membership it is not fair to cut us greater than this amount. We wish to point out that we do offer to amend our membership target as it is possible for us to push to gain more members.

This leads on to the main arguments given against our appeal. With a cost per member in the region of £1500 people felt that the ~£450 asked for would not make a significant difference to members being only about £8 per head and suggested that we instead increase our membership costs by £8 as, compared with other clubs with similar levels of funding, our membership fees are quite low. Firstly, there are good reasons why our membership has stayed relatively low over the years, as members have to put in so much money throughout the year we have always felt that it is

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unfair to ask for large membership fees as well, other clubs operate differently with a large upfront fee and much lower costs to play throughout the year but we don't think that this is viable for Riding and Polo.

Further to this, recouping the loss from membership fees may be possible, however we are not asking for our entire cut to be recouped; 15% will still need to be recovered from elsewhere and this would already mean a nearly £25 increase in membership if we were to do it from here. To add the £8 per head from the appeal to this would mean over a 66% increase in membership fees and would lead to more people refusing to join due to costs. On the other hand the lesser amounts we have asked for from other clubs (most of whom gained increases or had only very minor cuts) really do represent only a very small cost to members who already have less yearly costs.

We also believe that the amount we are asking for does make a massive difference in certain areas of the club. For instance the extra money would allow us to retain one of our BUCS teams. This is not only a core aim and objective of the club but it also helps us to retain Sport Imperial funding so is worth a significant amount to the club. Team training throughout the year means that team riders already have to put in more than an average member and their costs have increased further over the last few years to include match fees to help cover our home competition etc as such we do not feel we can ask the team members to pay BUCS entry fees and referees fees on top of all this. In particular we do not think it is fair that this would mean that only the richer members of the club intake would be capable of competing on the team. Withdrawing this team would also mean at least 4 straight years before we could potentially recover. Even if we reapplied for the league next year there is a 3 year waiting list so this would reduce our riding team participation by 50% for the length of most members' degrees.

We also strongly disagree with the sentiment that riders choose to participate in an expensive sport and therefore should not be bothered by having to pay more. Riders and Polo players already show an extreme amount of financial commitment to the sport and contrary to popular belief not all of them are easily able to afford this. We also face some of the highest prices for riding and polo in the UK; having to ride within London is significantly more expensive than elsewhere and we are unable to take advantage of college facilities like many other clubs do.

A further argument against us was that we were taking too much from specific clubs and that our numbers in relation to those clubs were incorrect. It is mentioned in our appeal that at time of submission eActivities was unavailable and so the values used were an approximation and not necessarily accurate. Also, we made the decision to minimise the number of clubs we asked for money from based on those suggested by the ACC as people with reasonably sized budgets who received either an increase or a cut smaller than the ACC average. We also mention that we would be prepared to see significant alteration to how this is taken from clubs in the original paper. We now wish to strengthen this assertion as a response to those clubs that felt we were asking too much from them in particular: although

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advised by the ACC Treasurer that he would prefer if we did not ask for a blanket cut across the ACC the clubs themselves would appear to prefer this as it represents a very minor cut to all of them (Based on the ACC Treasurers calculation it is approximately 0.3%).

We believe this covers the main points of why we think our appeal should have been approved. We hope you will read the original appeal and particularly the short summary of our reasons for the appeal (some of which have been reiterated here) and invite any further questions you may have in order to justify this appeal either at the meeting or if a more in depth answer is requested then we would be happy to prepare this if requested.

Many thanks,
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Appendix 1:

ACC General Meeting 06/03/2012

Budgeting Appeal for 039 ACC Riding and Polo Club**By Alex Savell, Riding and Polo Secretary**

We believe that ACC Riding and Polo has strong grounds to appeal its budget allocation for 2012-13. Although we respect that cuts were made across the ACC it is our feeling that the level to which Riding and Polo's funding was decreased fulfils several of the criteria for appealing this decision. In particular we feel we will be unable to completely fulfil our core aims and objectives at this level of funding, the decrease will mean that the cost to our members for various activities will become unreasonably high and therefore we feel that this is unfair in comparison to other clubs. We believe a 5% increase in our current budget allocation of £7754.83 is fair and justifiable taking our budget to £8142.57. We have kept this request to a bare minimum, £453.89 is not a particularly large request and, given the cut compared with last year for riding and polo was 19.7% compared with an ACC cut of 7.1%. We also have the biggest real cut of any club with a reduction of almost £2000, about a third larger than the next largest cut.

We respect that we did cut our membership target by approximately 15% from 65 to 55 members and this was the reason given for the cut to our budget. As you can see from above though the 5% increase on appeal we are asking for would take our cut to roughly this level. We are not asking to come into line with the ACC average of 10%, only to have our cut reduced to a level roughly equivalent to the reduction in members we expect. We would also like to point out that this reduction in membership was in response to the knowledge that the ACC would probably receive a cut of approximately 10% and our cost per member has increased year on year, this year up to about £1500 per member, the largest in the ACC. In fact our club costs constitute about 15% of the entire ACC turnover according to the budgeting requests and while we realise that as an expensive sport we are not entitled to an equivalent amount of the ACC subsidy we believe that the 5% of the total pot allotted to us is quite low.

I would also like to mention that we submitted our budget in time to receive feedback on it. However, it was not mentioned that the cut in membership target would likely result in a large cut. Had this been the case we would have set a more conservative cut on our target and pushed for more members, and would be willing to revise this value up slightly as a condition of our appeal. While some clubs have still been given a significant increase due to increased activities or Sport Imperial cuts, Riding has also increased its activities over the past few years and though it does not plan to further this significantly next year it has gone up since the last budget, it is also likely to receive reduced support from Sport Imperial so this seems inconsistent across the ACC to us.

Speaking of Sport Imperial, one of our main concerns this year is that reduced funding will cause us to lose one of our BUCS teams. Not only is this an inability to fulfil one of the clubs core aims and objectives (an objective that a short number of years ago we were considering expanding to include a third team) it is also irreversible in the short term and will lead to further financial cuts to the club. There is a 3 year waiting list for entry to the BUCS leagues which this team participates in and so this would cause a number of riders to never get the chance to compete throughout their entire degree and would also cause us to lose even more Sport Imperial funding. Although you may expect us to ask our team riders to carry some of this cost they already are required to train once a week and have an additional jumping lesson approximately once a fortnight. Including membership, during the first two terms during which the teams train this comes to a total cost of over £700 per rider and this is including the subsidy we generally give these riders of £10 per lesson, taking the total cost to over £1000 per head. As such we think it is unfair to increase match fees any further,

although riders choose to participate in an expensive sport this does not mean that they are able to or should have to pay even more.

If we look at the important budget lines in our submission for the BUCS teams; BUCS Affiliation, Competitions and Referees, we were awarded a little over £500 to cover both the BUCS Riding competitions and the SUPA Polo competitions. Given these cost us over £6000 as a club excluding travel, accommodation and other things for which we requested little or no subsidy - a value that is minimised as much as possible by taking the cheapest transport and camping at events such as the summer polo nationals - this is a very small amount. The riders and particularly polo players cover a vast portion of this themselves in addition to training and even with help from Sport Imperial without something to cover the cost of BUCS affiliation and entry fees this becomes very difficult for us to maintain. As such we would like to request a further £116.49 in affiliation fees (which is still a reduction of 25% over our original request and a further £106.13 for referees in a similar fashion coming to a total of £222.62 extra to make sure we can maintain our BUCS teams

We have pointed out several reasons already why the cost to our members is already high. However, thus far this has mostly applied to competing members and our greatest week to week expenditure is actually simply regular training that many more people than just the competitive teams participate in. Our lesson subsidy, which comes from Ground Hire, comprised the main portion of our overall cut, a reduction of approximately £1500. This is the equivalent of £150 lessons of subsidy throughout the year meaning we would either have to spend a number of extra weeks (probably about half a term) not subsidising lessons or cut subsidy globally by 15%. This may not seem a lot on a lesson by lesson basis but it pushes the growing prices of lessons ever higher.

It is already a struggle to keep the price of riding lessons comparable to those outside of London, as such we travel to Zone 5 to find a yard further from the centre (where lessons can be more than £50 per hour) and capable of accommodating our volume of lessons. Polo is even more expensive as it stands and we are at a stage of renegotiating our deal that may see a further increase in price. Assuming we chose to reduce the subsidy rather than lose half a term of subsidised lessons this would push the basic price of lessons per week to around £20 for riding and £40 for polo without including the more expensive jumping lessons. As such, we believe the cut does constitute making the price unreasonably high for our members, as this is more than the non-student price at more affordable locations in the UK for riding and at least comparable for polo, and would therefore put the rest of the money from the appeal (£231.27, reducing the cut to a budget heading we feel is the most important to our club by about 15%) towards Ground Hire to mitigate this effect as much as possible.

We believe this is reasonable justification for the appeal and for the amount requested. And therefore agree to let the cuts on our other budget headings stand as they are. However, what remains is to justify where we gain the money from. We understand that many clubs have been cut as well and that many of those that have been cut less than average or even increased have good reasons for this. Particularly a lot of the clubs that have bucked the ACC trend significantly actually have very small budgets where taking from these clubs would cause significant disturbance to their activities. As such, in the areas we have suggested cutting we have tried to justify means by which the money could be recouped as well as taking from clubs where a small change to their budget will not make a significant impact on their activities. Of course if the ACC decide that this should be taken from elsewhere or spread over more or less clubs than here we would have no issue with this, as we do not want to detract from any club if we can avoid it. We should also apologise for any inaccuracies below as activities was down at the time of writing and so much of the information is vague or inaccurate.

ACC Women's Rugby this year have gained an increase this year due to their increasing activities. It could be argued that where other clubs and societies who may be increasing activities are getting a significant cut the club could seek to fund their additional activities more through the members that wish to participate in more matches etc. However, at £2,140 women's rugby is not the largest budget and as such should not take a large cut. However, we feel that even split between a relatively small membership of for instance 20 a £100 cut could be swallowed without great difficulty as it would only mean an increased cost of £5 per member per year.

ACC Rugby also got a large increase on their budget this year. This is primarily due to a change in which league they play in. However, with a budget of almost £11,000 they are funded to approximately 25% of their total costs and have the highest budget of any club in the ACC and one of the best funded as a percentage of their cost. As such we do not think it unfair to ask for some money from Rugby as a small cut will be barely noticeable to their activities. £240 from here is less than 2% of their budget and with a strong membership of over 80 people the additional cost per member should be no more than £3.

ACC Board Sailing also gained an increase in funding this year and this appears to be the result of a significantly increased set of costs. However, as we understand it there is no obvious corresponding increase in membership target or cost. Assuming that the increasing costs do correspond to increasing activities, justifying the increase in budget, then it seems sensible that membership costs should also be raised as the club represents better value to its membership. As such we also suggest that £100 from ACC Boardsailing could be covered by an increase of a maximum of £5+VAT to memberships, or less if membership is likely to be significantly higher than 20.

Other clubs that also have reasonably high budgets and suffered either increases in budgets or smaller cuts than the average decrease of 10% ACC wide include American Football, Hockey and Football. With budget allocations of £1,816.08, £8,400.57 and £6,848.85 respectively. Again, we understand that Sport Imperial funding for some of these clubs has been decreased significantly. However with between them £17065.50 we believe that a 1% cut across the three clubs would not cause significant difficulty to activities and could easily be covered by relatively insignificant changes in match fees, training costs or membership. This corresponds to just £18.16, £84 and £68.48 from the three clubs respectively.

As you may have noticed this brings the total cut to £610.64. Which is significantly more than requested. Since we are only asking for £453.89 which is 74.33% of the amount here we would take a proportional amount from each of the clubs suggested: £74.33 from both Women's Rugby and Board Sailing, £178.39 from ACC Rugby, £13.49 from American Football, £62.45 from Hockey and £50.90 from Football, to achieve the required total. I hope you will understand that spread across the 6 clubs suggested the amounts requested are relatively small and could easily be coped with. Potentially, spreading this cost further would make the difference even less however, based on the format of proposing where we would take the money from it is hard to justify alienating further clubs against our claim by suggesting cutting money from them as well and as such we have limited it to a small range of societies that we believe should be able to afford it.

We hope you will give strong consideration to our appeal and we have left a short summary below of what we have requested, where from and the reasons so that it can be taken in more easily at the meeting.

Summary

- Request £453.89
 - £116.49 in Affiliation Fees and £106.13 in Referees to maintain BUCS teams
 - £231.27 in Ground Hire to mitigate our reduction in lesson subsidy
- Gain this money from clubs with a reasonably sized budget that received either an increase or a less than average cut on the basis that these clubs are least affected by this:
 - £178.39 from Rugby
 - £74.33 from Women's Rugby
 - £74.33 from Boardsailing
 - £62.45 from Hockey
 - £50.90 from Football
 - £13.49 from American Football
- Reasoning:
 - Received the biggest cut of any club, nearly £2000
 - Equivalent to 19.7% of our budget
 - Do not believe this a fair response to a good budget whose only fault was a 15% reduction in membership
 - When submitted for comments we were not informed that the membership target would be so harshly judged
 - We would be prepared to raise this target slightly as part of the appeal
 - Current cuts will make it almost impossible to maintain both our BUCS teams
 - This is a core aim and objective of the club
 - There is a 3 year waiting list to add a new team to these leagues at present so once gone it will take a long time to replace
 - The cut would mean reduced SI funding as well
 - The reduction in lesson subsidy would mean either half a term less funding or a significantly reduced amount of funding weekly, we believe this to be an unreasonable cost to our members