

CUAC Annual Dinner

Following a Covid-induced hiatus last year, the 163rd Annual Dinner at Clare Hall was a welcome return to the celebration of sporting success among our athletes, coaches and alumni. On the evening of the 5th of March, we arrived at the quaint, postgraduate college for a drink's reception in the common room. It's great to see how well people scrub up – Marley looked like James Bond!



Three courses of delectable cuisine were laid out on chrysanthemum-decorated, candlelit tables, while CUAC members, old and new, caught up with each other. After dessert, we looked forward to speeches and awards from our guest speaker and captains.



Sprezzatura!

It was a pleasure to be in the company of one of our most esteemed alumni and ex-CUAC president, Michael Parker. Michael's athletics career saw him race in the high hurdles event at the 1964 and 1968 Olympic Games and win silver at the 1966 Commonwealth Games; it was on this global stage that he observed the phenomenon he describes as "*sprezzatura*". Michael delivered to us an awe-inspiring speech about the effortless, elegant perfection achieved by athletes at the top of their game.



It was unfortunate that our current club president, Sam Clarke, was experiencing a distinct lack of *sprezzatura* after being struck down by Covid in the days before the dinner. Sam was unable to give his own speech but did manage to listen in via the wonders of video call.

Awards

Our men's and women's captains, Angus and Martha, then gave awards to celebrate the successes of individuals across the club before training groups split off to hand out further awards to their athletes.



Hawks' and beyond

Following dinner, festivities continued on in the Hawks' Club – where we struggled for space among a horde of other sports clubs. Oh well, mustn't cry over spilt Tomahawk.

The third and (for most of us) final venue of the night was Jesus College MCR. Hard fought games of table football went on long into the night. There were winners and there were losers, but I'd like to think we all went home looking for our own little moment for *sprezzatura*.