

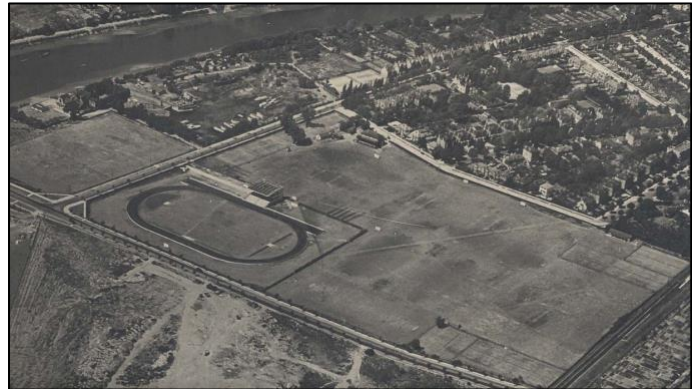
Quintin Hogg Memorial Sports Ground, Chiswick

Quintin Hogg's vision was to provide for the intellectual, social, religious and athletic needs of the young men who attended his Polytechnic. One of the first things he did on purchasing 309 Regent Street was add a gymnasium and swimming pool for the members.



A keen sportsman himself, Hogg also thought it was important to be taking part in outdoor sports. In 1888 he funded and built a boathouse on the River Thames at Chiswick so that there were opportunities for rowing. Hogg also provided a stock of boats. This boathouse is still in use by the University, shared with the Quintin Boat Club. The boathouse marks the finish line for Oxbridge Boat Race each year.

Whilst Hogg was alive, the Polytechnic did not have a permanent sportsground for sports such as athletics, football, rugby and cricket. Instead many of these activities took place at rented grounds such as Merton Hall in Wimbledon and Paddington Sports Ground. When Hogg died unexpectedly in 1903 a public fundraising appeal took place for a suitable memorial. Along with the statue of him, now in Portland Place, the money raised was used to purchase 40 acres of land alongside the boathouse. It became the Quintin Hogg Memorial Sportsground. It was officially opened on 19 May 1906.



During the First World War the sports ground was given over to the use of the Voluntary Training Corps. The Poly suffered heavy casualties during the war and the Polytechnic Rowing Club and Quintin Boat Club wanted to honour those they had lost. A memorial rowing tank was opened next to the boathouse on 11 June 1921.

In 1938 the ground was extended with a further 7.5 acres being added for a new sports arena. This arena featured a ¼ mile 6 lane state-of-the-art cinder running track, and provisions for high jump, long jump, pole vault, shotput and steeplechase. It also included a 24 metre long grandstand with the capacity to hold 658 spectators on two tiers of seating. The stand was a cantilevered design by Joseph Addison, Head of the Polytechnic School of Architecture and provided changing facilities for 260 male and



female competitors along with a restaurant on the first floor for 150 people. That same year, the BBC broadcast their first live transmission of sport and so the stadium was built with broadcasting and telephone facilities.

At the start of the Second World War the ground was requisitioned by Middlesex County Council for use as an emergency mortuary. It was later used by the Army and then the RAF. Consequently, all sport at Chiswick ceased for the duration of the war.

The Chiswick area sustained bomb damage and the sports ground did not remain unscathed. In April 1944 an aerial bombardment resulted in severe damage to the Ladies Pavilion and the boathouse with many of the boats badly burnt. A second hit was taken in July 1944 when the groundsman's flat was bombed and all the windows of the stadium were blown out. The running track and pitches also sustained collateral damage.



After the war the sports ground gradually came back into use. In November 1945 the track was resurfaced. In 1948 the Quintin Boat Club was compensated for the bomb damage and by 1951 the boathouse was back in action. However, it was not until 1960 that Chiswick was fully reopened to its capacity when a new extension pavilion was opened for the ladies. This pavilion, opened on 7 May 1960, featured changing facilities for 180 members, a 2,000ft² lounge on the first floor with a fireplace, picture windows and balcony, a games room and committee room. This pavilion is still in use today.



The Sports Ground is still the home of sport at the University of Westminster. The stadium is no longer in use, but the facilities include sand and water-based AstroTurf pitches, grass football pitches, netball and tennis courts and a grass running track. It is used not only by the various sports clubs of the University of Westminster Students' Union but also by schools and other local groups. In 2011 the University hosted the London Hockey Cup with matches taking place

between the UK, New Zealand, South Korea and Belgium.