

BCU FLATWATER RACING NEWSLETTER

JUNE/JULY 2004

We are right in the International season now and some wonderful results to be really excited about. You will see elsewhere in this newsletter the results in detail from both the European Sprints from Poznan in Poland and the first Marathon World Cup in France.

Congratulations to all those with success, it only comes from hard work from the paddlers, their coaches and the back up they receive from their families and all around them.

For those who have qualified for Athens it must be really exciting and no doubt will stimulate even more their training. We all wish them more success and luck in their endeavours.

For those with success and medals from France there are more races this season and these results bode well. I see the medals from France coming from the juniors and this must put heart into those paddlers and all of us for the future.

My comments in the last issue on the subject of canoes brought the only response from all the items in the last issue. To make it clear I was not expressing an opinion on the future of canoes either one way or the other. The item was merely trying to set out some of the options that might be considered, not only by us here, but by other Federations and the ICF.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS AND HALF YEARLY MEETING

The National Champs are nearly upon us on the 10/11 July at Wokingham. Please support the event as it is the major open event of the year.

As usual the Half Yearly BCU Marathon Committee meeting will be held on the Saturday evening after racing. Your clubs support is essential, so the executive committee know what your views are. Although the agenda is attached to this newsletter, if you receive it by email and you have items for discussion then I am sure the Chairman will be happy for you to air them.

HASLER 2004 AND 2005

The Hasler Final at Nottingham looks good, with the arrangements well under way.

However, we still need a willing applicant to host the 2005 event. Please get your club to consider this carefully. If you need help or advice then please consult any of the MRC executive who will be happy to help.

Alan and Christine Laws

INFORMATION & NEWS

RACE ORGANISERS - Hasler Race Management Program (HRM) and Assessment Race Management Program (ARM) – Before your race, you can download the most up to date BCU list from <http://web.onetel.net.uk/~wiktoriadaniels> but you will need a password which you can get by emailing : wiktoriadaniels@onetel.net.uk

The list can then be imported into the HRM program. You can also find an Assessment Race Program on this website, which can be downloaded and used for assessment races. It is in exactly the same format as HRM so should be easy to use. If you find any bugs or have any requests please email Wiki.

ICF Marathon World Cup One 2004 at Tremolat France

This was the second time the French Federation had organised a World Cup in Marathon and those of us who went to the last one harboured grave misgivings as to their abilities to put on a modern event. All these fears were dramatically allayed when arriving at the course when it became clear that the infrastructure laid on was more akin to a World Championships than a World Cup. Marquees, portakabins, fences, food and beer stands, music playing, it gave a really good atmosphere right from the start.

Just as well really as the paperwork leading up to the teams departure had certainly not lived up to the reality on the ground.

The course was 7km lap, 3 for the juniors and 5 for the seniors. Some like the lap style, others less so but it did give the spectators a good idea as to how the race was progressing. The portage was right in the middle of the race site and so it was very easy and exiting to see the race as it developed and view from first hand the very high quality of the racing. The skill and speed shown through the portage, by the senior K2's especially, has to be seen to be believed.

The river was the Dordogne, almost 200 yards wide and with a slow current. The pace of the current was held by the dams at either end of this section of the river. The start was on a good pontoon although the position caused some comment. The pontoon was angled towards the first bend some 750 yards from the start but the degree of current increased over the Friday night giving some reason to suspect there might be an advantage to the lanes on the left.

The junior race on the Saturday morning gave the GB team real joy in the outstanding success of both boys and girls as you can see from the results below. Four medals was a very good way to start the day!

Worthy of comment was that the boys were putting in similar lap times to the seniors.

The seniors was more difficult as a mysterious malady had affected all three of our men K1 entries which did not improve their results. Their results represented quality races however.

The Sunday doubles events went a similar winning way with the junior boys taking gold and silver although the single girls entry was only slightly less successful with a 4th.

The seniors again had a difficult time.

Overall, the results from the juniors gave us all a real lift with some very exiting and skilful racing. This bodes very well for the future.

Junior Boys K1	1 st	Ben Brown	3 rd	Tom Daniels
Junior Girls K1	1 st	Tara Nutt	3 rd	Hayleigh Mason
Senior Men K1	10 th	Steve Baker	11 th	Mike Quaine
Senior Ladies K1	8 th	Claire Hynds		
Junior Boys K2	1 st	Ben Brown and Tom Daniels		
	2 nd	Andrew Daniels and Michael Owen		

Junior Girls K2

4th Harriet Farish and Celia Gilbey

Senior Ladies K2

10th Rosalind Bates and Nicola Taylor.

WORLD CLASS START UPDATE

The winter programme was completed at the end of March. Which took us into the 1st regatta. Disappointingly the weather was very poor. Which did not give a true reflection of any gains made during the winter.

However, we have selected a team for Boulogne and Piestany. The Boulogne regatta has already taken place showing that we have some good young talent coming through which promising.

The Piestany team looks strong this year. In addition to last year we have a Boys K4 which has some promise, and will help develop a couple of younger paddlers.

The programme will nominate a Junior Elite Squad and Talented Junior Group to Sport England this month. Once this has been ratified each of the paddlers will receive a small personal grant, to help them with their racing. All the paddlers will have been notified by now.

We have a full summer programme of racing and training activities planned for this year. The main targets are the Junior European Sprint Championships and the Marathon World Championships. Both take place on consecutive weekends at the end of July.

During June we will return to Bosban Regatta, due to Gent not being on a suitable date this year. We hope the event will provide stiffer competition across the age groups, than Gent, with the view to providing a more realistic check on progress of our age group paddlers.

The programme is currently starting a review of how it operates. This has started with a regional coaches meeting and will continue over the course of the summer. If you wish to have some input into the Junior Programme in particular please contact myself.

Shaun Caven
NJC Racing.

#####

Tour de Gudena 2004

In conjunction with the regional Start Programme, the MRC will be supporting a Development trip to this years Tour de Gudena, in Denmark. This is a 2 day staged event with a 120Km course for Senior and Junior Men and 77Km for Women and U16 classes, over the weekend of 11/12 September.

The bus and trailer will leave Harwich at 17.00 on Tuesday 8th September, returning to Harwich at 11.00 on Wednesday 15th September. Dyson Pendle will lead the trip, and there will be staff and coaches to cover Seniors, Juniors and Women courses.

This is an additional event to those on the availability form already issued. All those wishing to be considered should contact Jim Rossiter in writing, or see him at an event.

The MRC will select 5 paddlers as part of the BCU team, and all these will be required to pay £100 for this additional event. The remainder of the team will be selected by the Regional Start Coaches. Selection will be made after the National Championships on 11/12 July.

Anybody wishing to have more information about this event, should see Dyson Pendle.

Fun, Funding or Fair?
Where's the 'Fun' gone from Marathon racing?

Why has there been a reduction in numbers at marathon races? This brief article attempts to investigate a few reasons brought forward by a number of paddlers.

Reason: Circuit races

There have been an increasing number of circuit races in the calendar, which seem to consist of ever increasing circuits of ever reducing circumference! The reason for this is to increase the entertainment value of the race for spectators. But we're not here to entertain, we're here to race and have fun. We don't like the continuous bumpy water produced by circuits, or the monotony of going round in circles.

Reason: Courses are now 'cleaner'

You used to be able to turn up to a race, and even if you were the slowest, the nature of the courses meant you could still come first. For example, shooting the weir at Worcester, negotiating a tricky portage, turning in a tight spot. Nowadays, portages are virtually carpeted! Races lack variety; bring back the Thames Valley Circuit where we used to race up the Kennet and back. What about shooting the weir again at Worcester? At least there is still the Poole Harbour race and the Bath to Bradford (sorry for the Southern bias). Can we bring back the variety in races? We don't want every weekend race to be the same, where the courses are so clean that you can predict the winner from the start-line.

Reason: Need for assessment races to be fair

Assessment races have to be fair, otherwise we can't tell who is the fastest. This means the courses need to be on a wide enough river, and the portages should provide enough access to and from the water for all paddlers to have a fair chance. But the assessment races are 'clean' races; the element of chance has been reduced. Us non-important paddlers like the element of chance, we don't need to do the same course as the assessment paddlers.

Reason: Majority of funding now in sprint

The majority of funding is now in sprint racing, which means a lot of the top juniors aren't interested in marathon racing anymore. But does this really matter? There are still a lot of juniors who do enjoy marathon, and to be honest, an awful lot of seniors and veterans! If we are to keep these paddlers and attract new ones, we need to make marathon racing fun and exciting again.

So please can we have more MaraFuns and bring the 'fun' back into racing?

DOGS PADDLE

You may remember an article in the last newsletter about some over 55 veteran paddlers doing the Devizes to Westminster Race as a relay event to raise funds for 'Medicine Sans Frontieres'. Well they all made it and raised in excess of £12,000. The total time taken was 21 hours 35 minutes.

If you would like to view some of the photographs taken on the day log on to the Kirton Kayaks website through www.kirton-kayaks.co.uk/dogs.html.

Topic: Update on the Talent Search Project

From: Mark Hoile (Talent Search Coach, Wey)

Background

Whilst BCU World Class Start programme continues to support the best juniors already participating in sprint racing, in July 2003, it was decided to launch a Talent Search Project. The aim of the new initiative is to identify 13-16 year olds with exceptional physical and mental characteristics who are suited to Sprint canoe/kayak performance at the highest international level.

Phase 1 - Coach Appointments

In December 2003, Talent Development Coaches (TDC) Mark Hoile and Matt Foulger were appointed, based at Guildford and Nottingham respectively. (Both Matt and Mark bring with them international racing experience as well as being graduates in sports science.) The project is managed by Gordon Burton from the World Class Sports Science and Medicine department.

Testing of young people

For this first phase in excess of 6000 young people aged 13 – 16 have undergone preliminary assessments between February and April across schools in Nottingham and Guildford. Over 1200 have then gone on to complete a comprehensive battery of physiological tests. The tests measure strength, endurance, strength endurance and power. Additionally mental tenacity was assessed as the testing staff led the pupils through the tests.

The entry criteria, which were set on the basis of the results of international athletes, are exceptionally high. From the 6000 young people who underwent preliminary assessments 15, who all scored an average of 100% or better, have been invited to join the scheme.

Phase 2

The coaches are in the process of contacting and discussing with the identified young people, starting the sport of canoeing. Our target is that by mid May, 2 coaching groups will have started.

The talent of these young people will be developed by working closely with the TDC's, this activity will be based within the club system (Wey and Nottingham Kayak Clubs) with the athletes representing these clubs on the domestic racing circuit. The programmes they follow are set in conjunction with the World Class Sports Science department. For those lucky enough to be selected the road to being an Olympian will be long and hard but the journey will be exciting, not only for the athletes but also the coaches working with them. Their progress will be keenly followed as these young people join those athletes emanating from the club system.

Profile

As an added benefit, the profile of sprint canoeing has been raised hugely in the schools with the staff from BCU World Class acting as ambassadors for the sport whilst conducting assessments. The TDC's have also presented assemblies and given lectures to A and GCSE level students studying PE and Sports Science). All 1200 young people have been invited by the host clubs to experience canoeing at specially arranged open days and the clubs have also designed 6 week introductory courses, strengthening their membership base

European Championships Poznan 20-23 May 2004

Team Manager: Alan Williams
Coaches: Eric Farrell, Alex Nikonorov, Claudine Le Roux
Physiotherapy: Mike Plush & Kay Murphy
Boat Transport: J Rossiter & P Moule
The National Performance Director also attended this competition.

The team of 17 athletes consisted of: 12 Men's Kayaks, 4 ladies Kayaks and 1 Canoe.
The main focus of the regatta was to qualify more athletes for the 2004 Olympic Games.

Organisation:

As usual the organisation at Poznan was very good. The programme and briefing all happened as scheduled. The transport system worked well and the bus's always arrived and left on time. The days competition programme was available and result and draws were published quickly on the notice board. Team managers could get a copy of the results at the end of each morning or afternoon session.

Competition:

The Senior European Championships was also the second round Olympic qualifying event. This was the last opportunity to qualify for the Olympic Games so the competition was extremely thorough. In addition to the European Nations the ICF had included the African nations, Australia and New Zealand in the European Pool which meant a total of 48 Nations. It was very noticeable that many countries were using athletes who had already qualified boats to boost the strength of their crew boats.

Racing conditions on the first two days of the competition were very difficult. There was a very strong tail wind which resulted in big rolling waves coming straight down the course. This upset a lot of paddlers and many big names had to progress via the semi finals rather than go directly to the finals.

The British team entered 13 of the 27 events with the focus on quality results in the Olympic events. Our Men's U23 K4 and C1 were primarily there to gain high level competition experience.

- Tim Brabants showed that he has regained his top form by taking the Silver medal in the K1 1000 event. Tim has been injury free all season and is now well placed to challenge for an Olympic Medal.
- Tricia Davey raced the Ladies K1 1000 finishing just outside the medals in 4th place.
- Ian Wynne & Paul Darby-Dowman put together a series of excellent races. In the semi finals the pressure to qualify for the final didn't affect their performance. They qualified for the final and went on to take the Bronze medal. This crew has really stepped up a gear and has now qualified for the Olympic Games and is a possible Olympic Medal hope.
- The U23 K4 had a shaky start in the heats of the K4 1000 but as each race progressed, their confidence grew and their racing improved. They qualified for the B final where they finished in a creditable 4th Place beating the crews from: SWE, DEN, UKR, LAT, IRL, LTU, GRE
- Ian Wynne led the team in the 500 metre events. Ian won both his heat and his semi in really fast times. In the final Ian took the Silver medal just half a second behind the winner from Hungary. In doing this Ian qualified another Olympic boat.

- Mat Lawrence raced the C1 500 and the C1 200 in his first major international competition. In difficult conditions Mat raced well equalling his PB in the C1 500. In the 200 metre event Mat came 5th in his semi final in .45.79 which I believe is also a PB.
- Lucy Hardy raced the Ladies K1 500 and was hoping to secure her Olympic place. Lucy qualified for the semi finals but was unlucky and drew a very hard semi. With only 3 places going to the final first and second place went to the eventual silver and bronze medal winners with 3rd place taken by the 5th placed A finalist. Lucy recorded a personal best time of 1.55.72 and went on to finish in 12th place overall. This was not enough to qualify directly for the Athens but we hope that we will get a ladies K1 500 place from our 14th place at the 2003 world championships.
- Abi Cattle and Lucy Hardy also raced in the LK2 500. Again they were hoping to qualify for Athens. After a solid race in the heats they came 4th in the semi final just missing out on the A final. In the B final they came 4th in a time of 1,50.23 this was just 2/10th of a second slower than the Swedish boat that did qualify for Athens in the A final.
- Ross Sabberton and Peter Almasi raced the K2 500 they had three good races finishing 3rd in the heats and 4th in the semi final just missing the A final. Their times for all three races were consistent at 1.33 just 2 seconds behind the gold medal winners. At the end of the competition they finished in 10th place overall which shows how tight this competition was.
- Peter Almasi also raced in the K1 200 where he had two great races. In the heats he finished in 3rd place which qualified him directly to the A final. In the final Peter came 5th a great result.
- Rachel Train had a very difficult race in the heats of her K1 200. The water was very rough and Rachel couldn't master the conditions. By the semi final the conditions were better and Rachel won her Semi to qualify for the A Final. In the final Rachel had a good race but was not quite fast enough to get into the medals. She finished in 4th place overall which will be a disappointment.
- The U23 Crew raced in the K4 500 and K4 200 with Paul Darby-Dowman taking the place of Ed Mckeever who had to fly home early for exams. In the 500 metre event they had reasonable race in the heats finishing in 5th place. In the semi final they basically raced their socks off to finish 3rd and qualify directly for the A final. Their time of 1.25 was a PB for this crew and an excellent result.
- In the K4 200 they had three excellent races. They came 5th in the heat and then won their semi final to qualify for the A final. In the final they had another great race finishing in 5th place. This crew certainly benefited from the experience of racing at a higher level.

Full results can be obtained on the Official web site at www.pzkaj.pl/poznan-seniors

Following the competition we have now qualified the following boats for the Olympic Games in Athens:

- Men's K1 1000
- Men's K2 1000
- Men's K1 500
- Ladies K1 500 possible place from our 14th position at the 2003 Worlds.

Alan Williams

Come and Support the River Access Rally

WHEN:- 13TH JUNE 2004

WHERE:- CHESTER

Access is a major issue in England and Wales and one of the Rivers highlighted as having major access problems is the River Dee. Peninsula Canoe Club are organising a River Access Paddle on the 13th June to highlight the access problems in England and Wales and in particular on the River Dee.

There are two starts, so you can paddle as much or as little as you like ... or you can just meet up in Chester for some fun on the water.

All the necessary permissions have been obtained from the Environment Agency.

Come along and support us... We all need greater access to rivers in England and Wales

There will be a competition for who has travelled the furthest and for the canoe club who brings the most paddlers plus other activities.

❖ **Getting to the start and from the finish**

It is **your responsibility** to get yourself, your boat and your kit to the start and from the finish. There are no shuttles, nor indeed any public transport. Our suggestion is that you either bring a driver who can drop you at the start and collect you at the finish or you buddy up with a fellow paddler and leave a vehicle at each end. Alternatively you may wish to paddle the return leg giving a round trip of some 24 miles if you paddle down from Farndon.

❖ **Farndon Start (Starting between 9.00am to 10.30am) (Approximately 12 miles to the finish)**

Put in at the bridge at Farndon, (OS Sheet 117, Grid Reference 412 545) between 9.00am and 10.30am. There will be marshals to collect your entry form and money and help you launch.

❖ **Eccleston Start (Approximately 4 miles to the finish)**

Put in at Eccleston between 12:30 and 2pm (OS Sheet 117, Grid Reference 415 622). There are no facilities of any kind here. Parking is very limited so please arrange to be dropped off and have your driver depart quickly. There will be marshals to collect your entry form and money and help you launch. Eccleston is a good alternative if you are unable to paddle 12 miles or are unable to get to Farndon by 10:30am. We expect youth paddlers to use this starting point.

❖ **Chester**

The paddle ends at The Groves, Chester, (OS Sheet 117, Grid Reference 408 659). Press and media have been offered a photo opportunity below the Iron Bridge at 3:45pm. You will need to time your paddle so you participate in this. Marshals will be on hand to help you get out. Please leave your boats and kit tidily.

Do come along and support this event

Hope to see you there....Information also available at penpads@aol.com





Marathon Racing Committee

**General Meeting to be held at 7.30pm, Saturday 10th July 2004
at Wokingham Canoe Club**

AGENDA

1. Chairman's welcome and opening remarks.
2. Attendance and Apologies.
3. Minutes of General Meeting held 8 November 2003.
4. Matters Arising.
5. Hasler Final 2004 - NWSC Nottingham. Update of arrangements
6. National Championships 2005. To approve venue.
7. Hasler Final 2005. To approve venue.
8. To receive nominations for the National Championships and Hasler Final for 2006.
9. Report from the Race Records Officer.
10. Report from the International Team Manager.
11. Report from the National Development Coach.
12. Items for Discussion :
 - a) That clubs be discouraged from arranging split start times at domestic races.
 - b) Any other matters.
13. Date and venue of Annual Consultative Meeting.