

BCU FLATWATER NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2004

Well here we are with the latest issue of the Flatwater Newsletter. When Christine and I took over as editors of this publication we saw it as not only the dissemination of information but as a vehicle for opinions and views. Sadly only a few people have taken the opportunity to use it in the latter way. There have been two excellent articles recently on the current format of Marathon racing but nothing on sprint.

The Marathon items reflected two opposite views. One wishing for a return to the rougher more varied courses of yesteryear including such obstacles as weir shoots. The other reflecting that changes had occurred as a result of the development of the divisional system but more particularly that the reason for the deletion of weir shoots was the cost of boats today.

In their own way both styles should and still do exist in harmony. The Exe descent is a prime example of the 'old' style. I suspect it is just that the number of new greatly exceeds the old and perhaps some clubs would like to consider and experiment with their course layouts.

When the divisional system was created it was intended to group paddlers of similar ability to give closer racing and foster the competitive element. With that in mind I feel the intention has largely been achieved but perhaps at the expense of course variety. As ever the Marathon Committee are always willing to consider proposals for change. Changes to the whole system need however to bear in mind the whole picture of racing and not just in a small part. Sadly too many good ideas for a small section have an adverse knock on effect for the system as a whole.

The existing divisions have been in place for quite some time now and the fact that Marathon numbers have grown, albeit slowly speaks quite clearly that it has been a success. Evolution rather than revolution seems to have been the keynote.

There has also been a noticeable thinning of the competitors racing at the top end. Div 1 is often very small or non existent. Is the standard too high? From recent Senior International results it would seem not. Where have the new Div 1 Paddlers gone? We have some really excellent juniors coming through and can only hope their enthusiasm for Marathon continues strongly enough for them to make their mark on the Senior International results.

The contrast is the numbers lower down the division (over 50 paddlers in div 9 at Panbourne Race in September) and here we must take heart and applaud them and the clubs for creating the solid sport we have. It gives a great deal of enjoyment to many.

It is difficult to draw conclusions on all this rambling. What are yours?

The AGMs are nearly upon us and although they are formal meetings I am sure that both Marathon and Sprint Chairmen would be happy to extend the meetings for serious comment and suggestions. If you want to make a point, contact them as soon as you can so they are aware of your wishes.

The World Marathon Championships are in Perth Australia on the 15th/16th October 2005. Team supporters are always welcome so book soon. As usual there will be a Masters Competition. What better way to defer the onset of winter than sunshine and paddling down under.

This is an expensive trip for any team and the MRC are promoting sponsorship from the Spanish Wine Company BAJOZ. You may well see their products in Tesco. They will be providing prizes of a NELO K1 and surprisingly, wine. You will soon see the feature in Canoe Focus telling you how you can support the GB Team and hopefully win excellent prizes. All the expenses are being paid by BAJOZ and so all your money will go directly to the team.

The Marathon calendar is almost complete and will be out soon. Please contact Graham Simpkin, email address marathonsimpkin@tesco.net, for any information or a copy of the calendar by email.

For those planning trips abroad please be aware that most travel insurance policies exclude the racing risk. Cover is available through arrangements made by the BCU.

The Hasler Final seemed to go well and the MRC did an excellent job of organising it. As ever a great deal of help is needed and thanks need to go to Brian Gandy, Andy Rawson and Dave Enoch for their primary roles. The Nottingham Kayak Club should be thanked for all their members help and the arrangements needed beforehand. The centre needs a thank you too as they went out of their way to sort out pontoons etc,

Congratulations to Elmbridge for another resounding win.

Top 5 were: Elmbridge, Reading, Leighton Buzzard, Pangbourne and Norwich.

Good to see Dyson Pendle up near the front of Div 1/2 again. Must have cost someone in oxygen. Ivan Lawler still up there too despite denying training. Congratulations to him and Cara for the birth of their baby girl.

The numbers were slightly up on last year but still substantially down on 2000. Only 2 regions have increased numbers, London & SE and Southern. Only 7 of the clubs attending this year have the same or higher attendance than the past 4 years RDG, LBZ, HER, NOT, MAD, EXE, LGW

Total competitors	2004	Nottingham	425
	2003	Reading	415
	2002	Dorney	464
	2001	Pangbourne	543
	2000	Nottingham	570

More statistics are available for those interested but an answer as to why the reduction would be helpful if you can figure it out.

It was still a good event however, even the weather was good and certainly much better than forecast. This was no doubt due to Roland Lawlers insistence on the day before that the forecasters had got it wrong. Thanks Ro.

Alan & Christine Laws



Marathon Racing Committee

Notice of Meeting

**An Annual Consultative Meeting of the Marathon Racing Committee of the British Canoe Union will be held at
11.30 a.m. Saturday 6th November 2004
at the National Watersports Centre, Nottingham**

AGENDA

1. Chairman's welcome and opening remarks.
2. Apologies.
3. Minutes of General Meeting held 10 July 2004.
4. Chairman's Report
5. Treasurer's Report.
6. Election of Committee
to re-elect the following committee members retiring by rotation:
 - a) Tamsin Phipps, as Treasurer
 - b) Roland Lawler
 - c) Alan Laws
 - d) Andy Rawson
 - e) Jim Rossiter
f) to elect James Smythe to the Committee
7. Race Records Officer's report
8. International Team Manager's report

MIDLANDS DUATHLON - WINTER SERIES 2004/05

DATES& TIMES

SATURDAY 13th NOVEMBER – FLADBURY

SATURDAY 11th DECEMBER – LEICESTER

SATURDAY 15th JANUARY – WORCESTER

SATURDAY 26th FEBRUARY - HEREFORD

All events check in from 10.00 am racing starts at 11.30 am

THE FORMAT

A continuous Run – Paddle – Run over 3 different courses

4k Run – 6k Paddle – 2k Run (Div 1-3 and Div 4-6 on separate starts)

2k Run – 4k Paddle – 1k Run (Div 7-9 Paddlers)

1k Run – 2k Paddle (Lightning Paddlers)

POINTS

1st place 20 points, 2nd place 19 points etc down to 20th place where everyone after that scores 1 point.

PRIZES

Prizes will be given for the first 3 places in each event. In addition there will be prizes for the first Junior, Lady, Canoe etc.

At the end of the series there will be overall prizes for the first 3 clubs/competitors.

NB: The overall prizes will be based on the best 3 results from the 4 races

ENTRIES

Entries can be made on the day or by email to stevetrain@btinternet.com

There will be an entry fee of £3.50 per person

CONTACT

Steve Train

Tel:01386 861034 or 07941 592110

Email: as above

MORE NEWS AND REMINDERS

THE GREAT OUSE RACE

Saturday 6th November on River Ouse at Bedford.

Six and a quarter mile handicap race for all skills and canoe types.

Organised by Herts Canoe Club

Contact – Chris Wilson, tel: 01727 851773 or email: chriswil42@supanet.com

YEAR BOOK DIVISIONS LIST & HASLER RACE PROGRAMME

The basis for both the above items is the marathon register, kept up to date by the Race Records Officer.

In order to achieve the most up to date information Marathon Team Leaders will have received recently a list of all the paddlers who have raced a marathon in the last three Hasler seasons. They are asked to check the information on these lists, names and BCU numbers in particular and to cross out any person no longer paddling and return the list to the Records Officer.

Paddlers who belong to more than one club must declare their allegiance for Hasler races. They cannot gain points for more than one club, this particularly applies to students who paddle with a different club when they are away from home and Service paddlers who are also members of a club as well as part of the Combined Services Team.

Should your Marathon Team Leader have changed in the last year please check that your clubs list has reached the correct person. **Only half of the lists were returned last year so the published information was not as accurate as it might have been. Please can you ensure a better response this year.**

Christine Laws
Race Records Officer

MARATHON ASSESSMENT RACES FOR 2005

6 th March	Royal K1
15 th April	Elmbridge K2 (An assessment race only)
1 st May	Worcester K1
22 nd May	Nottingham K2

The complete Sprint and Marathon Team training/competition programme has now been fixed and is attached separately with this issue if you receive this newsletter by email.