

## BRITISH CANOE UNION

### FLATWATER NEWSLETTER – JUNE/JULY 2005

The season seems to be well on the way now with two regattas gone and some fine performances. Those paddlers who are intent on making their mark in sprint are already showing their form and the winters careful preparation is beginning to have its effect. This preparation is not only the training but also the planning of the races to enter and the regattas to aim for over the whole season. The rise and fall in fitness over the season is obviously crucial and the coaches are clearly much more conscious and effective as to not only how to do this physically but also to persuade the young guns how important to everyone this planned programme is.

This planning has extended to both marathon and sprint committees getting together at the end of last year to plan the programme of assessment events and training weekends. Not only that but at last the ICF has allocated certain weekends for all the competitive disciplines so that the main events do not clash, The world marathons will now be on the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in September and the world sprints the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in August. Unfortunately the calendar is now so crowded that when you throw in World Cups, European Championships and Under 23 Championships it becomes almost impossible not to have to choose between events. Perhaps its time for a pecking order to be considered or for some more events to be on an “every other year” basis. You could say that against that is the need for the paddlers to hone their competitive skills and show to the various funding bodies what they are made of to be able to keep or get more funding to continue their progress. I would also say that the paddlers would WANT to race. It is their sport and they enjoy it and that is the best reason.

Full marks to Jim Rossiter for his efforts in raising money for the world marathon team to go to Perth. Almost single handed he has produced £6,000 or in paddler terms four more than the team would have had without his efforts.

The winners were Simon Downs from Bath who also made a generous donation to the fund. His ticket number was 50408. Second was Kay Owen from Addlestone, ticket number 52211. Third prize went to G. Baxter from Guildford with ticket number 28708.

You will see an article from two paddlers who entered DW in these pages and it shows the dedication needed for this race and also the pleasure that can be gained from achievement. Another achievement of a different kind is that Tim Joiner, Chairman of the DW committee has been elected Lord Mayor of Westminster. His second official function was the prize giving of this year's race. He told of his first function which was in Westminster Abbey for a service of remembrance for Chilean servicemen and women (Why this was in Westminster Abbey was not made clear). He was the main man as Lord Mayor and was last to walk up the aisle. It seems that no one had briefed him as to what was to happen when he reached the front. However there was a spare seat and he stood in front of it. After a while there was some shuffling and coughing and it became clear there was a hitch in the proceedings. At this time the much braided officer next to him whispered in his ear “ they are all waiting for you to sit down” We wish him well in his year of office and hope that with his influence canoeing can gain ground.

Alan Laws

## **CONSIDERING ENTERING SELLA THIS YEAR?**

DATE – 6th August 2005

Race information is to found on the website [www.descensodelsella.com](http://www.descensodelsella.com)  
The regulations will give you all that you should need to know about the race.

The entry fee has been posted as 5 Euros, a reduction from last year for paddlers entering without the food. We will charge £6 to cover the cost of the entry and the Bank Transfer to Spain (this cost £25.00 last year) and some postage as well.

All British entries (this includes Scotland & Wales) have to come through myself to be endorsed by BCU Headquarters with the headquarters stamp and receive a letter of authority to race in the main race and the following series.

I will need your written confirmation that you wish to enter by the Saturday **26<sup>th</sup> June** at the latest as I will need to complete the process before the closing date of 25th July. The details of what I will need are as follows.

1. Photocopy of current BCU membership card (ensuring this shows an expiry date of August 2005 or after).
2. Which canoe club you belong to.
3. Which class you wish to enter. (Veterans are advised to paddle the Senior race in order to give them a better starting position on the Le Mans type start).
4. Your current Marathon Ranking Division (for this particular event a ranking of Division 6 or above would be recommended).
5. Entry fee of £6.00. Please make cheques payable to A L Laws.

A team leader will be appointed who has had previous experience of the event.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Alan Laws

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## **OTHER RACE NEWS**

Unfortunately these are both Cancellations

Macclesfield Race 12<sup>th</sup> June – due to clash with Conway Ascent and Windsor Vets.

York Marathon 19<sup>th</sup> June 2005 - due to Royal Ascot being at York This Year!

## THE DEVIZES TO WESTMINSTER CANOE RACE

The **DW**. Those two simple letters are enough to strike fear into many a paddlers heart. They correspond to the 'Canoeists Everest'. So when Dave suggested entering it whilst we were in a Nottingham pub, of course I said yes straight away (I never actually thought he was *serious*). Realisation that Dave was serious dawned the next day when he asked me when we were going to go down to the regatta lake to try out a racing boat, with a view to buying one. It was the July regatta, and it was likely there would be one for sale.

After Dave had swum a few times and I had introduced him to the concept of wings, we thought we would put on hold the new boat idea and concentrate on staying upright. I couldn't believe I had agreed to paddle 125 miles with a novice! However Dave worked very hard at the exercises I gave him and improved very quickly. Soon after in his second ever race, he made a lot of enemies by rudely winning Div 9 by 10 minutes. Rapid promotion soon followed, as technique and fitness improved.

I got back into a flatwater boat after a couple of years playing at white water and discovered that I was still able to stay upright. After a couple of months training at Nottingham Kayak Club, I entered a couple of divisional races and wasn't disgraced in Div 5. We spent the summer working on technique and getting a base level of fitness. In September I moved down South to start a Masters course, and Dave and I both joined Windsor canoe club. We trained together two or three times each week, and by ourselves on the other days. We ran and did endurance sessions during the week, with longer paddles or races at the weekends. As it got colder our sessions got longer and we got used to paddling in the dark. We bought a shiny new boat and spent a few Saturday afternoons altering it. We had Cancer Research UK stickers, foot pumps, covers on the rudder wires, and pieces of wood inside the cockpit to make it easier to carry.

The Waterside and Thameside series are essential DW preparation races. The Frank Luzmore and local divisional races are also a must. The first few races we did were a disaster. However, as we worked on our portage skills, paddling technique and concentrated on making the boat run better, our results began to improve. We swam less and portaged faster. By the time we had finished Waterside D we were comfortable in the knowledge that we were a fit, confident and strong crew. If you've completed the Waterside series, you'll cope fine with the first 50 miles. However the DW is a very long way and no matter how fit you are its still going to be hard. Completing the race is as much about what goes on inside your head as anything else. We always used small, achievable targets. On the canal we concentrated on catching up the next crew. On the Thames, it was to the next portage. On the Tideway, it was to the next bridge!

Your support crew is really in charge even though you think you are. You've got the easy job – just keep going! Our 3 crews worked in shifts, with at least one driver and navigator. They always had encouraging words and were very supportive. They communicated with radios and made sure everything was ready at the portage before we got there. By the time it gets dark, you've already paddled a very long way, and you're cold, tired and sore. It gets very hard to see and to think straight. We nearly paddled over several weirs, as they are not illuminated and can be difficult to see in the dark. We found it helpful to have a supporter standing at the get out, flashing the torch at us, and then shining it where to get out. They would then run the portage with us and feed us at the end.

Dave and I were going so well on the Thames that we were gradually getting more and more ahead of schedule, and we had to wait for 20 minutes at the Tideway for the tide to turn. Try to avoid this as you just get cold. Be there an hour after high tide. The Tideway is the scariest part of the race! It's very big, very wide and it has sheer concrete sides. Ignore what your brain is telling you and get in the middle!

Dave and I finished first across the line, at 05:50 in 21.32 hours. That put us in 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the mixed class and 16<sup>th</sup> out of everyone in the 24 hour event. What a result! We beat several crews who beat us on the Watersides. It all comes down to your head. Stay positive, train hard and with good advice, and you'll be fine. Keep a steady, strong pace, and never stop moving as you will stiffen up immediately.

After the race, it took us only a couple of days to feel fairly normal and we were both training again within two weeks. I've had a few wrist problems but they're getting better. The feeling of achievement will be with us forever.

We raced for Cancer Research UK and have raised to date near £1500. For more information, to see pictures and to sponsor us, check out: <http://personal.rhul.ac.uk/mpfa/172/thedw>.

The DW is a great race and something everyone should do once. If you train hard, it's not too difficult. I can't wait until next year. I want to win the Women's class...

Bethan Davies & Dave Page

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### **RACE ORGANISERS BEWARE!**

The greater majority of race organisers are now using the Hasler Results Programme designed to make your life easier and to give conformity to the results. However you are now getting too clever with it and producing your results for sending to competitors in variable forms.

The system was also designed to make mine and the Divisions Officers life easier and an automatic update programme was written for us, so press the button and all correct entries (BCU numbers and surname correct) update immediately so only the new paddlers and Event Ticket entries to do manually.

In order for this to work **PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE** send us the results before you alter them for your own purposes. Just use the Export button to save as an excel document then send on to us as an attachment.

Another helpful item is please use the club abbreviation/number for junior section members, ie LIN/001. This is easier and less cumbersome than the full BCU club registration number.

Christine Laws – Race Records Officer  
Mike Head – Divisions Officer

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### **Preliminary Information Only**

#### **NEXT YEAR CAN YOUR CLUB RUN A SPRINT REGATTA?**

How about your club running a small event with as few as 3 clubs?

Or a competition with say half a dozen clubs and 6 to 8 paddlers each?

Or a larger Regional regatta with 10 – 15 clubs?

Whichever it is the Sprint Racing Committee has allocated a budget to assist clubs.

Can you club find a suitable date in next years calendar? hope so.

# BRITISH CANOE UNION RACING COMMITTEE



PIEST'ANY, SLOVAKIA, – INTERNATIONAL JUNIOR REGATTA 13-15 MAY 2005

**Team Manager** Laurence Oliver

**Junior Men Kayak**

Andrew Daniels (RDG), Allen Spencer (HER), Stuart Hastings (NOT).

**U23 Men Kayak**

Ben Brown (ELM), Tom Daniels (RDG), Richard Darby-Dowman (ELM), Michael Owen (ADS).

**Coach Shaun Caven**

**Physiotherapist**

Margie Olds

**Events**

**500m**

**1000m**

**Junior Men**

**K1**

A. Daniels

A. Daniels

**K2**

S. Hastings/A. Spencer

S. Hastings/A. Spencer

**Junior single 3 Km races:** A. Daniels, S. Hastings, A. Spencer.

**Under 23 Men**

**500m**

**1000m**

**K1**

T. Daniels  
M. Owen

B. Brown  
R. Darby-Dowman

**K2**

R. Darby-Dowman/ T. Daniels

R. Darby-Dowman/ M. Owen  
B. Brown/ T. Daniels

**K4**

Brown/Daniels/  
Darby-Dowman/Owen

Brown/Daniels/  
Darby-Dowman/Owen

Performances: The complete results are on [www.canoe.sk](http://www.canoe.sk)

The level of competition was very good. There were 12 nations competing in the Junior events and 7 in the U23s. There were also many Slovakian paddlers racing.

We reached all of the A Finals. In the U23 events the crew boats were straight finals.

Stuart Hastings/ Allen Spencer won the silver medal in the JMK2 500m, beaten by a Romanian crew by only 0.77seconds. They were 4<sup>th</sup> in the 1000m. Andy Daniels did well to come 4<sup>th</sup> in the JMK1 1000m, after an impressive heat which he nearly won to go straight into the final. He was beaten by 0.22 seconds by the Romanian who eventually won the final. Andy was 5<sup>th</sup> in the 500m. He did very well in the 3Km race, winning the silver medal.

In the U23 events Richard Darby-Dowman won the bronze medal in the 1000m. Richard Darby-Dowman/ Tom Daniels won the bronze medal in the U23MK2 500m. The U23MK2 1000m final took place in horrendously windy conditions with neither of our crews recording a result. Only two boats raced in the U23K4s. Our crew was beaten by the Romanians over both distances but by only 2.69 seconds in the 500m.

Two members of the junior team will still be juniors for one more year.

Next event the Junior European Championships, which take place in Plovdiv, Bulgaria from 14<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> July.

**Laurence Oliver. Team Manager.**

## **25<sup>TH</sup> TO 26<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2005, CHESHIRE RING RACE**

The Cheshire Ring race is a 96 mile race or challenge along the 6 canals of the Cheshire Ring. This can be paddled "all the way" in singles or doubles or as a relay. The favourite relay format is for ten paddlers in a double tourer or K2, with each pair being a senior and a lady or junior, but we can accommodate any reasonable relay format. Good times for the tourer relay are around 21 hours with most aiming to finish in less than 24 hours. The K1 all the way record is 18 hours 14 minutes.

As the event is held on canals it is suitable for paddlers with a wide variety of skills and experience. The course starts and finishes north of Macclesfield in rural Cheshire, which is brought into contrast by the very different scenery of the centre of Manchester. The route then passes Manchester United's Old Trafford ground before returning to the countryside. The event is organised by the Macclesfield and District Canoe Club and BROOKBANK Canoes and Kayaks are providing prizes (vouchers) for the fastest K1—all the way, K2-all the way, K1-two person relay and the K2- and tourer-ten person relay.

See <http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/cheshireringrace/> for more details or contact jk\_rjk@hotmail.com or phone 01625 574093 or 07814 367976.