

**Paddle UK Marathon Racing Committee  
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at 9am  
on Saturday 16th November 2024 at Cropredy Village Hall**

**Present:**

Stan Missen (SM) (Chair)	Holly Mobbs (HM)-online
Evan Shephard (ES)	Kat Wilson (KW)
Joe Fitzpatrick (JF)	Dan Seaford (DMS)
Graham Warland (GW)	Brian Chapman (BC)
Bryn Price (BP) - online	Sally Hartland (SH)
Mick Nadal (MN)	Anoushka Freeman (AF)
Lee Bennett (LB)	Roland Lawler (RL)

These people are referred to by their initial's hereafter in the Minutes.

If your initials are down for action, please ensure that you follow up the matter concerned and report the outcome back to the Secretary well before our next meeting.

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from James Hives (JH) and Nanette North (NN).

**2. Approval of minutes September MRC Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of 9th September were approved by the committee with one small comment by GW.

**3. Matters arising from MRC meeting of 09.09.24**

*a. Appointment of National Team Coach*

HM & DMS have not had any further conversations with the possible candidate mentioned in the previous meeting. The idea is still that this candidate would lead and provide ideas/plans and DMS would support with the administration. This is to be re-discussed at the next committee meeting. Another possible candidate was also to be investigated.

**Action: DMS**

*b. Welfare Plan*

HM is meeting with the safeguarding manager at PUK next week and will put together a proposal ahead of the next committee meeting.

**Action: HM**

**4. Allocation of new committee roles**

Allocation of (most) remaining new committee roles were agreed.

a) International logistics, gradual hand over from GW to LB

b) Secretary (from Summer 2025), handed over from AF to SH

c) Trophies, handed over from AF to SH

The committee was unable to find someone to carry out DS's role of travel, hotel booking and planning: handed over from DS. It was decided that a selective, targeted advert would be put out for someone within the paddling community who has experience in the travel industry. GW to draft a brief job description.

**Action: HM to update website & put out request for someone to fill DS's role from paddling community. AF to circulate 'Declaration of Interest' forms to committee members.**

## 5. Finance

### a. *Review of last year's budget*

JF provided an overview of last year's budget and confirmed that the accounts are in order, with the assets remain c £50,000. The cancellation of a handful of late season races meant some lost income through race levies but the French Nationals trip being cancelled represented an unexpected saving. It looks likely that a small loss will be made but it is within the bounds of being acceptable. JF to meet with PUK to discuss some amendments and clarify some points in the coming weeks then the final yearend figures will be circulated to committee members.

**Action: JF**

### b. *Overview of next year's budget + reminder that any budget must be submitted ASAP.*

As it stands, the budget for next year is broadly the same as last year. Costings have been shared between the selection committee and the treasurer. The full draft will be shared with the committee after JF has met with PUK. The finalised budget must be complete by January if not before. Once complete it will be sent to the committee for approval, as well as PUK.

A discussion was had around whether there might be scope to offer a financial contribution for the International Races that are currently identified as self-funded (Super Cup & World Cup) & whether there might be budget and need to send a staff member. This decision will be made closer to the event but in the meantime, invitations will be accepted.

**Action: All – financial submissions to JF please urgently**

## 6. Domestic Racing

### a. *Update on short course nationals.*

4th May confirmed (Bank Holiday Weekend) and the venue, Peterborough, has been booked.

A subcommittee of HM, ES, LB met to start planning.

It was agreed that the original number of 16 boats for a class to have heats and finals was an appropriate number that will be kept going forward.

Communications around the inclusivity of the event (i.e. not just encouraging 'elite' paddlers to participate) are ongoing and at the forefront of the planning.

HM is exploring whether there may be an opportunity to offer a social event in

the evening (e.g. a barbecue or buffet) and to host prize giving within that event to create more of a sense of an event/festival/celebration of paddling. It could also offer an extra source of income.

Discussions regarding using Manvers, as an alternative location, in future years are ongoing. Date to be published asap on MRC website.

**Action: HM & ES & LB**

*b. Update on National Events*

Dates have been confirmed for Short Course Nationals (4<sup>th</sup> May 2025 - Peterborough), Long Course Nationals (26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> July 2025 – Norwich), and Hasler Final (14<sup>th</sup> September 2025 -Worcester). Pangbourne to be contacted to move their proposed September date accordingly.

**Action: HM to publicise. GW to contact PCC.**

*c. Media at national events*

The opportunity to have PaddleDaily cover any or all of Short Course Nationals, Long Course Nationals, Hasler Finals was discussed.

The committee agreed that this coverage would be a welcome addition to continue to raise the profile of the sport and these events but that there may not currently be allocation in the budget. There was a discussion about the possibility of sponsorship being secured on this basis.

**Action: HM & DMS to speak again to PaddleDaily**

*d. Hasler Final Participation Update*

A number of suggestions to increase participation at the Hasler Final were discussed. It was agreed that ultimately there was no obvious solution and there are natural fluctuations in participation year-on-year. Two major influencing factors being the date and the venue. The committee will keep an open mind to suggestions to increase participation and will monitor entry numbers next year. A suggestion from the racing community to include a new, additional award for the club that gained the most points in proportion to the number of members at the club was discussed. Ultimately it was decided against by the committee for a number of reasons, i) it would be tricky to determine club size since in many clubs not all members are racing members, ii) only the top 12 results for each club are taken into account anyway so 'small but mighty' clubs who can field 12 athletes ought still to do very well, ii) concerns that this would in fact decrease participation as clubs would only send paddlers who could score points to secure a high ratio of points per paddler.

**Action: AF to reply to suggestion from member of racing community**

*e. Including ages on Racman results for GS classes*

ES confirmed that this has (nearly) been finished. There will be a column with age categories (e.g. U14, U12, U10). The committee is mindful of displaying as little information as possible about participants due to data protection issues and hence age categories were chosen rather than dates of birth.

**Action: ES**

*f. U12s racing in Div 9 rather than GS*

RL put forward a proposal to have U12s race in Div 9 rather than in GS classes. The committee decided against the proposal. It was felt that as and when a paddler is ready, they will be promoted out of GS classes in to Div 9 (or indeed could enter Div 9 from the outset!) but for many young paddlers 4 miles would be a deterrent and would stop them racing.

*g. Adding a SUP category in Racman*

ES confirmed that this is in the final stages of testing and will be complete by next season.

It was agreed

**Action: ES**

*h. Re-discussion of assessment races as qualifying races for Hasler Final*

In the interest of participation, the committee agreed to keep assessment race participation open-to-all and to keep assessment races as Hasler Final qualifying races. In order to cater for the possibility that there may be quite a difference in standards, and so that those running the event do not have to stay for a considerable amount of extra time to time the last finisher in, rules will be amended to allow the 'lapping rule' to be used at the discretion of the host club.

**Action: MN**

*i. Dispensation of 8 mile rule for disabled paddlers who average at Div7-9 when paired with a coach/guide paddler.*

It was agreed that a new ranking would be added into Racman - GUI (to represent 'Guide Paddler'). This would enable guide paddlers to re-rank when they are guiding and to maintain their existing ranking for other races. The Guide paddler would not however score points but the disabled paddler would.

**Action: MN to amend rules, ES to update Racman**

*j. Rule to outlaw paddlers from higher divisions waiting and providing a wash to lower division paddlers*

A new rule will be added to state, "It is considered unsporting behaviour to wash hang a paddler who has abandoned their race" This change will make it possible for race organisers to disqualify any paddlers involved in a joint action. The purpose of this rule is to prohibit taking/or offering a wash to another paddler.

**Action: MN to amend rules**

*k. Re-consider the 7-race rule*

Clubs in the South-West region requested a re-consideration of the 7-race rule. The committee felt that the data provided showed a fairly flat line, suggesting that the 7-race rule had little effect in the region. The original rationale for the 7-race rule was discussed, namely the environmental considerations of amending to an 8-race rule or even a 9-race rule. It was decided that as this was initially introduced as a 2-year-long trial, it would be run for another complete year. The SW region is warmly invited to provide figures again in 12 months.

### *l. New medals*

The committee agreed to change to a wooden medal, on the basis of cost and environmental implications.

The committee would like a medal that can be engraved with event specifics (e.g. 'Short Course Nationals - Ladies K1' rather than simply 'Marathon Canoeing' or similar).

The committee would also like to see a sample to see e.g. how thick the medals are and what the ribbons look like.

It was also agreed that the remaining stock of the previous medals should be used next year.

**Action: AF**

## **7. International**

### *a. Masters Round Up*

BP offered a comprehensive summary of the Masters' successes in 2024 and vision for 2025.

It was agreed that Masters communications will be moved to the general MRC section of the website.

Likewise, HM advised that she would of course be happy to share masters' successes on social media/website if the content is sent to her directly.

BP noted that he will ensure communications about boats & equipment on the 'master's trailer' not being insured; are passed on to Masters wishing to have their equipment transported to events in 2025 onwards.

**Action: BP to supply website content to HM**

### *b. Proposal for the 2025 International Season*

KW provided an overview of the proposal for the 2025 International Season. The omission of Waterlands and World Cups were explained in light of Waterlands clashing with April regatta (selection for Junior & Under 23 Athletes) and there being no European World Cup. The German Nationals will instead provide a development opportunity, both for athletes who were selection for French Nationals last year and also for newly selected development athletes.

Furthermore, the European Championship team size has been increased to be able to send development athletes as well as championship athletes.

The selection policy will remain very similar to last year's policy, which was considered to be fair and successful. PUK are updating their selection policy which may mean some small amendments to ours. For selection the winner of each category will be selected subject to meeting the minimum standard set out in the policy.

With the Super Cup and World Cup being in China, these will, at the moment, be self-funded events. Athletes who meet the standard can attend and the MRC/PaddleUK will support them in entering. In the meantime, invitations will be accepted to show our interest.

Long course nationals will probably not be the lead selection event for the World Championships due to a clash with Junior/U23 Sprint World Championships.

**Action: KW**

*c. Marathon Selection Committee Composition*

The committee thanks the 6 people who put forward applications to join the selection committee.

The committee agreed that 3 members would be invited to join the selection committee - Fay Lamph, Matt Enoch, and Geoff Lovell.

It was felt that together these candidates offered a varied level of experience, age, and gender contributions. It was agreed that due to personal conflicts Matt Enoch would have to 'sit out' U23 selection decisions and Geoff Lovell would have to 'sit out' Junior selection decisions.

In order not to overrepresent a single club, it was agreed that Paul Dimmock would stand down from the committee so that there would not be two selectors from Wey Kayak Club. The MRC would like to thank Paul Dimmock for his work on the committee for so many years.

Once more, the committee would like to thank everyone who put forward a proposal and encourage other candidates to consider sharing their experience through other roles, such as by helping with Junior Development.

**Action: NN to contact applicants.**

*d. Advanced appointment of team managers for international trips*

GW to approach prospective team managers ASAP and confirm their availability. Once team managers have been confirmed, BC ( Brian C ) to be informed ASAP so that he can add names to ICF and other appropriate WhatsApp groups. It may also be good to have a 'super manager' (Jo Bates?) who sits on the WhatsApp group and add/removes team managers for each event, so that no situation ever arises where a team manager is not on the group and misses critical information. GW/KW/LB to discuss the rest of the staff with selected team managers to put together cohesive teams.

Drivers for the trips must be confirmed ASAP, particularly in light of complications with drivers over the age of 70 and new insurance requirements. Exceptions needing to be written into the insurance policy will be brought up with PUK.

**Action: GW, KW, LB**

*e. Guide for Team Managers*

HM to put together a skeleton guide for team managers to include e.g. making sure you have cash in euros to pay for appeals or to pay the deposit for number boards.

This will become a working document with team managers being invited to add to it as they go. It will be of great help to new, first-time team managers in future.

**Action: HM assisted as needed by GW**

*f. ITO Nominations for the 2025 Season*

BC confirmed that we had two successful candidates become qualified as ITO officials this year - Mags Dilai and Dan Seaford.

HM volunteered to put together an article about the process, in collaboration with Mags & Dan, to raise awareness about the process in case anyone else would like to put themselves forward in future.

Mags Dilai and Dan Seaford had indicated their availability to be nominated as

ITOs for major events in the 2025 season and it was agreed to nominate both for the European Championships and the World Championships (Dan available for Elite only at Worlds) and also to nominate Brian Chapman for the European Championships. Brian will be included in the ICF delegation for the World Championships due to his position on the ICF Committee.

**Action: HM to put together article & BC to communicate to Richard Stacey-Chapman**

*g. PaddleUK partnership with SportsHotels*

The committee was informed of PaddleUK's new partnership with SportsHotels.

**Action: HM to publish on website**

## **8. Any other business**

*a. MRC website content to be merged/hosted on Paddle UK.*

The Committee was made aware of the merge/new hosting and would like to thank Trevor Kirkham for his hard work on this over the past few years.

**Action: AF**

*b. New PaddleUK branding*

The MRC was made aware of the new PUK branding and asked to use it in future documents. It will be added to the MRC Google Drive.

**Action: HM to add to Google Drive.**

*c. Increase Participation at ACM*

Discussions were had about how to increase participation at the ACM. It was agreed that communications would be pushed out sooner and wider. The date has already been set as 16th June 2025 at 8pm. The meeting will take place online. Every club would be encouraged to have a voting representative present in case important decisions or changes were proposed.

**Action: HM to publish date. MN to brief RMA's**

*d. Standards of Deployment*

HM informed the committee that all committee members will need to do a 30 minute introduction to safeguarding (online course).

**Action: HM to share details & All to take course**

*e. Racing Internationally as an Independent*

A new website page will be added to the website to ensure independent paddlers who wish to race internationally understand that they must submit their details to PUK to ensure they have the correct insurance cover for competitive events. Once in place, this will be circulated to clubs via regional advisors. It was noted that a considerable number of individuals compete abroad each year and do their own entries unaware that PUK should have been informed.

**Action: GW to provide copy for website. HM to add to website. BP to circulate to masters.**

## **9. Future Meeting Dates 2024:**

- a. Committee Meeting - 31st March at 7:30pm online
- b. ACM - 16th June at 8pm- online