

**British Canoeing Marathon Racing Committee
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at 7 pm on 31 May 2019**

Held at: British Canoeing Offices, NWSC, Nottingham

1. Present

Stan Missen (SM) (Chair) Mick Nadal (MN)
David Enoch (DE) Siobhan Urquhart (SU) Graham Warland (GW) Scott Hynds
(SH) Kat Wilson (KW) Tom Sharpe (TS)

These people are referred to by their initials hereafter in the Minutes.

Apologies for absence were received from:
James Smythe, Brian Chapman, Jim Rossiter, Dyson Pendle, Roland Lawler,

Also not present: Dan Seaford, Richard Ward.

2. Approval of Minutes of Meeting 9 March 2019

The minutes of the meeting of 9th March were approved by the Committee and signed by the Chair, with amendment of the date of the November Meeting. They will now be published as final.

Action: SU/JS/Check Nov venue booking GW

3. Matters Arising

a) The possible sale of the MRC trailer to the military has fallen through as they have funds to buy a new one. New avenues to be explored.

Action: KW/SU to approach school with DW teams. SM to send details to Chairman of BC Polo. SU to ask DP to provide details and photographs. Thought whether due to its size, it might be marketed to Rowing clubs/schools

b) Item 7.d –“JS suggested the idea of moving to a system where first-time racers are required to register into a central database as a one-off advance requirement before entering a race; this would ensure a clean database of racers, safety awareness, registration of emergency contacts, and would be in line with national sprint racing regatta practice.”

Action: JS to bring proposal to next meeting

c) 7.f – MN advised he had circulated information to regional advisors re ensuring adequate facilities at races.

Action: MN to re-circulate to Regional Advisors, and ask them to send it to ALL race organisers.

e) Item 8.f - “The Committee felt that we should explain this pathway crossover with Sprint and Ocean Racing in our Strategic Plan, as isolated medal targets are difficult to set with athletes moving across disciplines. We must also make efforts to schedule assessment races that align with Ocean Racing now, as well as Sprint. It was accepted that in a crowded calendar this would not be easy but is even more necessary going forward.”

Action: JS / Selection Committee – to bring forward to next meeting.

4. Governance

a) Declaration of interest forms
Some still outstanding.

Action: KW offered to chase up all those still outstanding.

b) ACM re-election intentions.

SM advised that Keith Moule has resigned from the MRC.

Andy Daniels, David Enoch, Graham Warland, Dyson Pendle and Stan Missen are all up for re-election this year. GW and DE confirmed they will stand. SM has agreed to do so, but is happy to stand aside if someone else would like the role.

Confirmation of intent needed from DP and AD. It was agreed also to approach those who stood last year but were not elected, as they have already shown an interest.

Action: JS to chase up AD and DP. Committee members to gauge interest from others.

5. Finance

a) DE reported that finances are satisfactory for this time of the year. The levies are coming in promptly from races although the cheque for Watersides C and D was rejected, probably due to a lack of a second signature. DE has sent it back to Newbury CC and will continue to chase up. If nothing happens DE to liaise with SM.

Action: DE to chase with Newbury CC

b) Minibus

British Canoeing now not looking to replace theirs until the end of the season, thus it may be necessary for the MRC to organise their own purchase independently. DE to look into this on return from holiday. It is not causing a problem as the minibus is still in use, and has been financially written-off in the accounts.

Action: DE to research

6. Domestic Racing

a) RACMAN

The committee agreed RACMAN appeared to be generally working so far from a race organisers point of view. There have been issues and the Chair thanked TS for the additional work he had had to put in over the last few months. It is currently taking longer for some of the post-race work to be completed, and the programme may be too flexible in that it doesn't stop some rule-breaking eg a Div 3 paddler racing in an 8 mile race.

TS has a long list of developments still to be made to the current system, and more to enhance it in the future. There is an aspiration that pre- and post- race it will be a web-based application. This will offer many advantages eg ensuring it is using the current ranking list and allowing different users to access it for promotions/demotions and automatically update on the website.

It will also be possible to add an entry process with a pre-payment facility, probably based on the current entry system used by Will Abson at Richmond CC for the Frank Luzmore. Although there was the potential for the levy to be separated at this point and sent direct to the MRC it was felt this could imply a lack of trust with the clubs, and DE confirmed there are no great problems in collecting the levy. The entry system should be in place by 1 Sept for the new Hasler season.

Action: TS to continue with developments and introduce pre-payment entry system plus other enhancements over the coming months.

TS confirmed to KW that a slightly different version would be used for the Nationals and KW asked that it include a method of calculating the points for the women's trophy.

Action: TS to liaise with KW

SM said the MRC must be prepared to put sufficient funding into developing and maintaining the new software. It has been developed voluntarily and for no cost to date, but there will be financial implications for future developments. If payments are done via card (as the Richmond process) there will be card processing charge. It was agreed that this should be absorbed, and not be a separate charge passed on to the paddlers, although it may require a comparable rise in the levy in future.

Action: DE to make higher allowances in budget for next year

b) BC Support for Race Entry Systems

TS is still trying to meet with Anna Gray and Barry Wade at British Canoeing to discuss access to the BC data to include BC numbers in RACMAN. GW asked that paddlers' year of birth also be included so racing classes could be automatically updated.

Action: TS to liaise with Anna Gray

c) Ensuring Adequate Risk Assessments

GW has started the process of risk assessments for international staff, but more to do.

Action: GW to complete the process

MN reported he had had to return some inadequate race risk assessments with suggestions on how to improve them. He has received permission to send out the Wey and Macclesfield risk assessments to other clubs to use as a guide. It was agreed to put good examples onto the MRC website for clubs to access – clarifying that they are examples only, and clubs must still develop their own, relevant to their event and waters..

Action: MN to get permission from the clubs to display their risk assessments on the website. SU/JS to add to website.

d) Division 10 Progress

MN reported the introduction of Division 10 seems to be reasonably well supported. He has written many emails to Regional Advisors regarding it, and confirming that the aim is for clubs to put younger paddlers into it once they are ready, and they will not be forced into it through a compulsory promotion out of Lightnings. Prior to the meeting there had been some concerns from RL which were discussed. It was agreed that the matter of implementation of Div 10 would be an item for discussion at the ACM, with any necessary amendments implemented from 1st September. 2019 was to be a trial year but generally it was felt that it was achieving its aims.

It was agreed that paddlers should be promoted to Division 9 from Division 10 – it is not a parallel division to Division 9 for juniors.

Action: MN and KW to discuss with a few targeted clubs to review the first year, and report back at the Pangbourne meeting. Further open discussion for ACM.

e) Devizes Test Hasler

SM reported that it went well, and was a traditional marathon race, with plenty of challenges including bends, shallows and a non-straightforward portage. Suggestions fed back to the organisers included adding separation buoys at the narrow area. SM thought that, if Devizes CC are prepared to run this event, it should be added to the Hasler programme for next year: it was well attended in numbers.

f) Prize Money at Marathon Races

The MRC was asked for an opinion of prizes of significant monetary value for Hasler Races. Concerns had been raised that there could be a risk of a paddler ignoring someone in trouble in their desire to win a valuable prize; and that it was unfair if all winners, across Divisions, were not given prizes of equal value.

It was felt that the safety risk was not significant, and the committee agreed that prizes were a matter for the organising clubs. It was considered beyond the ability of the committee to legislate on this matter especially as often sponsors are involved, so the number and extent of 'cash' prizes had to be a matter between them and the organisers.

7. International

a) Reading Assessment Report

KW reported the race had gone well, and the new format had proved successful, as was the early entry and availability deadline. Athletes managed the timings for the three different races, and two juniors voluntarily did the 5k, which was not needed for their selection. For future, it was noted there would be a separate start time for the senior men and the junior boys' short races to avoid clashes as the seniors were on their return leg.

From a selector's point of view, KW felt the additional data produced made it easier to compare athletes and results. Publishing the data, along with athlete availability for selection, increased the transparency of the process, which had been requested, although TS felt there was no published tie-up between the data and the selection.

DE cautioned against just adding up the overall times to make the selections, but KW confirmed that had not happened.

SH relayed RL's concern that being data driven would not allow for unforeseen circumstances eg a broken rudder. KW confirmed this type of event could be allowed for, however not completing a race for no apparent reason (such as total equipment failure) would rule an athlete out of consideration.

b) German Nationals

The team did well, and there is a comprehensive report on the MRC website.

c) International Kit

DE confirmed that Keith Moule had put in an order for kit valued around £2.5K, and DP has now sourced new supplies from Icon Sports (Mark Ressel) value around £3K. This is now over budget for the year.

There was concern that athletes have not been asked for their financial contribution towards their kit, which should be £130/athlete for the complete package.

The Chiar expressed concern that once again kit had caused issues and importantly budgets had been exceeded, despite all endeavours to avoid this happening again.

It is for the particular team Manager for the Trip and Dyson to ensure that stronger control is kept on ordering, handing over and athlete contribution for kit.

Action: GW to ensure that information goes into the selection letters to athletes. Athletes to contact Dyson to order their kit. Supply for items needed rather than offering a new 'full package' must be the rule. Athlete contributions to be kept closely controlled.

DE confirmed that development athletes would not be charged for their kit, but questioned who was now responsible for that. KW agreed to take responsibility.

Action: KW to liaise with DE re procuring development kit, and to supply it to development athletes.

At present, it is not clear if DP has received all the stocks of kit from KM

Action: TS to speak to KM to clarify.

d) BC 'Team Manager Workshop'

SM reported BC plan to hold this in the autumn, as a forum to share best practice across disciplines. GW asked that he and Dave Sackman be invited to attend.

Action: SM to advise GW of dates when known.

8. Coaching & Development

a) Representation on BC Technical Group

It was noted that there was currently no representation from the MRC on the BC Technical Group for marathon racing, following Jim Ross' move to Ocean Racing.

Action: SH to remind Lee Pooley/Anna Gray to be included

SH reported that there have been no applications for MRC funding for Performance Coach Awards this year so far. There is a significant number who did the course last year, but have not yet come forward for *assessment*. There is £3K in the budget for this, which last year was matched by the SRC. It is not known what the SRC plans are for this year. It has been suggested that the funding is put towards the assessment if it is not needed for the lead up courses.

Action: SU/JS to ask for requests for course funding via the MRC website to gauge level of interest and possible financial commitment. Once known, then SH to liaise with SRC re their funding plans for the year, and then investigate option of using funding allocated towards assessment costs.

SH reported a disparity between the numbers known to have done the Racing Coach course, and the numbers who appear to have qualified, and there is no information on who ran the courses and where. It was speculated that people who needed the qualifications for specific roles had been put through the course post-appointment as for some reason the figures do not seem to tie up.

SM reported he had had a meeting with BC staff, Alan Laws (SRC) and others months ago regarding the matter of funded Talent clubs pursuing MRC/SRC funding for race coach courses. Additional information was to be sought post meeting and fed back but nothing has been forthcoming to date.

b) Junior Development Squad update & plans

SU reported the April camp at Longridge had been a great success, with over 40 paddlers, 30+ of whom were residential. She thanked SH and the other coaches for their time and for organising the programme. The feedback from parents and paddlers continues to be very positive, and there are new paddlers joining as they reach the minimum standards having been promoted. A few juniors have also taken note of the advice to compete at certain targeted races and, in some cases, to race up a division, resulting in promotion.

The camp, as well as the training day, returned a small profit to the MRC (against the £5k in the budget for a potential international trip).

Regional training days are planned for July, with a further national day in September. KW thought this process had highlighted opportunities for the top juniors and seniors. The Chair thanked those involved for their hard work.

Action: GW, SU and KW to review progress and plan for 2020.

9. Major Events

a) National Marathon Championships 2019 – update DP not present to report.

Action: SU/JS to ask DP to provide a written update and circulate around the committee asap

b) Hasler Final 2019 – update

Action: JS/SU to put information on the new venue, and reminder of the date change and venue on website.

c) 2020 venues

Richmond have provisionally offered to host the 2020 Hasler Finals

Action: TS to confirm possible dates/plans asap

KW reported that Reading CC might want to host the 2020 National Championships

Action: KW to confirm with Reading CC and report back - date suggested?

TS reported he had spoke to Gemma Wiggs re hosting an international event in the UK. As a non-Olympic discipline and due to other

commitments, the most that BC can put in would be £10-15K. SM said a previously discussed sub-committee headed by TS would be needed to investigate feasibility of running an international event, but BC will need to approve to allow for ICF permission. Venues in Wales and Scotland may mean that additional funding in those regions is available for international events.

10. Communications

a) Newsletter

SU asked that all the committee contribute to the newsletter. SU had asked KM for possible access to the GB Marathon Paddlers social media sites to raise the communication levels particularly during international events. TS said he would provide the Instagram details. The 1st edition produced was useful and full of good content.

Action: All to provide information/articles to SU or JS for the monthly newsletter

b) Comms about C-boat racing

Nothing to report at SMC not present.

11. Any other business

GW is asking for more race information (details of conditions/course etc) to be added to the calendar.

World Championships – SM reported that JS has spoken to Ivan Lawler re boats. GW confirmed it would be 8 paddlers and 2 members of staff.

Action: To clarify with Ivan what level of boat fittings will be provided, and what can be done to the boats in China – eg fitting pumps etc. Post meeting SM spoke to Ivan and this will be actioned by JS and Melvin Swallow.

SM reported the investigation into the tragic death at the DW is on-going. He has been talking to Guin Batten – there is still little information regarding the death of the OC1 paddler last summer. SM asked that sufficient information be released so the sport can learn for the future.

Action: SM to continue to liaise with Guin Batten over safety matters, with specific help from MN relating to marathon safety learning outcomes.

12. Meeting Dates 2019

1. 10th August Norwich ACM – Saturday evening 6pm
2. 8th September – Pangbourne (8.30am start)
3. **16th** November 2019 all day meeting, Cropredy
4. 7 or 14th March 2020 (at BC AGM)

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

BRITISH CANOEING, NATIONAL WATER SPORTS CENTRE

Adbolton Lane, Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham, NG12 2LU

T 08453 709500 F 08453 709501 E info@britishcanoeing.org.uk W www.britishcanoeing.org.uk

British Canoeing is the trading name of the British Canoe Union. Registered in England as a company limited by guarantee without a share capital. Reg. No. 152 5484