

British Canoeing Marathon Racing Committee**Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 17th November 2018****Village Hall, Cropredy****1. Present at the meeting were:**

Stan Missen (SM) (Chair)
Mick Nadal (MN)
David Enoch (DE)
Roland Lawler (RL)
Tom Sharpe (TS)
Siobhan Urquhart (SU)
James Smythe (JS)
Graham Warland (GW)
Keith Moule (KM)
Andrew Daniels (AD)
Scott McEleney (SMc)
Jim Taylor-Ross (JTR)
Richard Ward (RW)
David Sackman (DSa)
Brian Chapman (BCh)
Jim Rossiter (JR)

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

Apologies for absence were received from Dan Seaford, Dyson Pendle and Kat Wilson.

2. Co-options

New co-opted members Scott McEleney and David Sackman were welcomed to the Committee by the Chair. SMc will take on the task of developing single-blade racing, and DS will continue to support the international teams with logistics as he has in recent years.

All were reminded of the importance of our Terms of Reference, and in particular to be clear when communicating with members of the canoeing community whether views represented those of the MRC, or were personal opinions.

3. Approval of minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 25th August 2018, and of the ACM on 21st July 2018 were approved by the Committee and signed by the Chair. They will now be published as final.

Action: JS

4. Matters Arising

The following matters were noted that were not covered by the current meeting agenda:-

- a. The Committee agreed that the Chair should write to Wiki Daniels, thanking her for her past efforts in creating the Hasler Race Management System, on which race management relied for many years. (Action: SM-done and reply received from Wiki)
- b. MN is co-ordinating an online repository of all documents currently in the Handbook, to allow the MRC to move away from the printed version in 2019. As a result, the MRC will not be contributing material to the SRC's 2019 Racing Handbook. Any sections which relate to both disciplines such as club colours will still be published by the SRC, but we will also publish these online. Whilst some members will be sad to see the printed copy go, it will be possible to print out the new electronic version. It is thought that we must go electronic as the majority of the current and future generations of paddlers seek information online first, and the format allows us to amend the Handbook content as needed.

MN doesn't have all the material currently but will collate it from other Committee members and Diane Bates, before forwarding to SU for publication online by mid-January 2019. It is anticipated that thereafter the information will be available even earlier in the year.

Action: MN, SU

- c. KM is collating costs for possible event kits which could be held centrally or regionally, and transported between events. The broad specification would be for a kit set costing in the region of £5k, and including buoys, finish funnel, signage, portage matting and a small trailer for transportation. SM reminded the Committee that BC had said they would consider new on-off capital expenditure items for additional budget on a case-by-case basis. The event kit would only be possible in 2019 if funded via this mechanism as it was not in the normal 2019 budget.

Action: KM to submit spec and quote to Committee

- d. DE reported from Dyson Pendle that the MRC trailer is back at Nottingham. The Canoe Association of Northern Ireland has expressed an interest, and subsequent to the meeting, Devizes CC also. The trailer will be sold this financial year, for £1,500 if at all possible. Outstanding money for boat transport for the Irish team had been collected by Dyson at the World Championships.

Action: DP

- e. The meeting noted the clarification of what constitutes a "Voting Member" at the ACM in our Terms of Reference, i.e. *"Voting Member" means any club or organisation affiliated to BC or other linked National Association who participate in or organise marathon races listed in the Marathon Racing Calendar. Each voting member represented at a Consultative Meeting by a Full Individual Member shall be entitled to one vote."*

5. Governance

- a. The Committee discussed and agreed on the allocation of responsibilities and roles, as outlined in this table:

		Stan	Mick	David E	James	Graham	Kat	Keith	Siobhan	Tom	Dyson	Roland	Andy	Jim T-R	Richard	Dan	David S	Scott
ADMIN	Chair	■																
	Vice-Chair		■															
	Secretary				■													
	Treasurer			■	■													
	Web & Comms					■			■									
	Safeguarding						■											
	Rules		■															
	Coaching													■	■			
DOMESTIC EVENTS	Major Events																■	
	RO liaison					■												
	RMA liaison		■															
	Canoe dev																	■
	Race Records					■												
	Race Management									■								
	Calendar					■												
	Rankings												■					
	Event Safety		■															
	Trophies									■								
	INTL	Athlete Dev (snr)						■	■		■			■				
Athlete Dev (jnr)									■									
Intl Logistics						■											■	
Intl kit								■										
Selection Cttee				■	■	■					■	■						

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Note: dark shaded cell means lead responsibility, lighter shaded means supporting or jointly leading.

Following the discussion around the new Internationals strategy and Selection Policy, members of the Selection Committee were discussed and appointed for 2019. DE, KW, RL and DP were appointed to the Selection Committee, with JS as Chair. TS, AD and KW asked about the possibility of attending meetings as non-voting observers, and the Committee agreed that this would be a good test of how the new Policy is implemented during 2019. Team managers and staff helping with logistics will be also invited as non-voting members as available.

Action: JS to organize Selection Committee activities for 2019

- b. JS presented a brief summary of the MRC's progress against the objectives set in the 2018-21 Strategic Plan. There had been good progress across the majority of areas, especially coaching development. However, race entry numbers were slightly down year-on-year due to poor weather causing race cancellations in the early season.

As the counting of race entries is currently limited to Class A races which pay the Racing Levy, it is difficult to assess the total level of participation in marathon races and time trials. The committee suggested asking BC to provide data on club member participation audits from racing clubs, to assess what proportion of registered racing club members are actively racing.

Action: JS

- c. Following a GDPR concern being raised by a BC member, directly to BC (about the MRC's Ranking List) the MRC acted quickly to restrict access to this list by password protecting it. RW proposed that the MRC has a "lawful basis for processing" the data in the ranking list, as it is fundamental to the organisation of divisional racing; this was agreed by the Committee. The Ranking List has two purposes, enabling the publication of rankings but also as a method for reporting when a member's BC membership is due to expire and what an individual's BC number is. BC membership checking will now be possible with API access to the membership database at BC, so these fields do not need to be published going forward. As a result, the Ranking List will be edited to remove BC membership details, and re-published without password

protection, and including a GDPR statement of the lawful basis for processing.

Action: GW

- d. A request was received from Kevin Dennis via the Discipline Chairs meeting for Regional Development Teams to be kept better informed of MRC activities in their regions. The Committee agreed that it is the responsibility of RDTs to seek contact with the Regional Marathon Advisers for their region and they could not expect the latter to report to them. Kevin Dennis was also invited to attend this meeting and or his replacement, will continue to be so in future.

Action: MN to encourage RMAs to contact their Regional Development Team.

- e. Fresh Declaration of Interest forms must be completed by all Committee members at the start of the financial year.

Action: JS to distribute form electronically, if BC allow – all to complete by 31st Dec 2018 please.

6. Finance

- a. DE presented the Final Accounts from 2017-18 and Budget for 2018-19.

Projected revenue from the Racing Levy was down approximately £3k following the cancellation of major races in the early season due to snow and flooding. This led to an operating loss of £7k for the year, and a reduction in reserves to £49.7k, which is in line with what was anticipated.

JS asked about three K2s owned by the MRC, which have no book value. The Committee agreed that it would be best to retain these at least as far ahead as the 2019 Worlds in China, and review next year.

The allocation of £2k for athlete GB team kit was queried by KM, as the new Errea kit from BC was more expensive on a like-for-like basis than last season's Joma kit. No athlete contribution was collected on Errea kit issued in 2018, with just over £5k spent, although some of the additional grant from BC had been earmarked for this change of supplier and our inclusion.

Action: KM to propose a suitable kit budgeting model for 2019, including kit bag contents and athlete contribution.

- b. DE also showed the budget projections for the remainder of the four-year planning term, to 2023. These plan for the maintenance of a circa £50k reserve on average throughout the term, with variance caused by World Championships outside Europe (2019).

7. Domestic Racing

- a. Guin Batten (GB), Chair of the British Canoeing Safety Advisory Panel attended the meeting at 13.30 to discuss Event Safety, particularly in light of “near miss” incidents reported at two end-of-season races.

Whilst it was accepted that the incidents ended without any harm to persons or equipment it was accepted that some important lessons could be learned from the events.

BC is into the second year of online incident reporting, and focusing on the whole sport learning from the experiences reported. “Paddle Safer” guidance has been published (see <https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/uploads/documents/Paddlesafer-v1.pdf>).

BC considers that the MRC has good basic elements in place, with the advice on safety given to Race Organisers. It is difficult for us to be sure that organisers are following our guidance, but it is essential for us as a discipline to be sure we have taken ‘all the reasonable steps’ to ensure that they have had the opportunity to do so. Our guidance does not infer liability on the part of the MRC.

It was noted that BC and MRC guidance was there to protect and not ‘trip up’ event organizers or coaches.

It was also noted that if a safety provision is stated in a Risk Assessment, it **must** be implemented. It would be negligent to have failed to follow through on an identified safety need.

There was some discussion on the extent of coverage of a risk assessment and comment that it should be comprehensive but not so detailed as to lose impact.

BC asked GB how an RMA or the Committee should respond to a Risk Assessment that they felt to be inadequate. **(Action: GB to consult and respond)**

The Committee requested that incident reports should be copied to Race Organisers, RMAs and the Committee as a priority, otherwise we find out about them only when BC inform us (as has happened recently) and cannot effectively act on or learn from them **(Action: GB/BC)**

The Committee agreed to:-

- i.** Refresh our guidance to Race Organisers for the new year **(Action: MN supported by GB)**
 - ii.** All read through the Paddle Safer guidelines and feed back any comments to MN **(Action: All)**, and author a *marathon-specific section* for this document **(MN)**
 - iii.** be clear what we expect from different stakeholders, including race organisers, parents, coaches, team leaders and participants, and communicate clearly about safety to these above via our website **Action: JS/SU supported by MN**
- b.** TS reported on the interim Race Management (Racman) system that he had developed, and which was used in races between the Hasler Final and end of season. Feedback had been positive even though this was a stop-gap solution.

Dan Seaford is writing a specification for a long-term solution, which can operate without internet connection from a riverbank but which can transfer data via the internet once online. He is taking a fresh look at all the discipline's requirements, and potential admin efficiencies that a new system could offer. He is also in discussion with the many volunteer developers within the Marathon Racing community who have volunteered to help. JS asked that we make sure any intellectual property in a new system is transferred in full to the MRC. The new system is to be ready for the start of the 2019 season.

Action: DS

JS reported that BC have made an API available for checking of membership status, and this works. The caveat is that it requires a numeric-only BC number format to check; old-style letter prefixes will not be accepted, and club youth section tickets or day tickets are not recognised. **Action: JS to finalise method for bulk-**

checking of membership from entry lists or results

- c. The question of promotions outside Hasler races, particularly in K2, was raised at the ACM and discussed by the Committee. The point was made that there are few opportunities to balance rankings across regions apart from at National events, and regional Haslers can result in disparity in abilities between each division in different parts of the country during the season. The Committee agreed that the main issue was individuals understanding of the repercussions of mixed-ability doubles: if a higher ranked paddler races with a lower-ranked one for experience, they risk getting the lower-ranked paddler over-promoted in comparison to their singles racing ability. This has always been the case. The Committee agreed to not change the current approach but to explain the risks better via a website post **(Action: RL to draft for SU; JS to contact Exeter CC who had raised it)**
- d. The question of organizing ability-grouped races as well as age-grouped races at the National Championships was also raised again at the ACM. The Committee agreed that these had been ended for good reasons: the status of the National Championships and the already very busy timetable, so the decision should not be changed, simply there is not enough time available in the crammed timetables. **(Action: JS to contact Reading and Longridge CCs who had raised it)**
- e. MN reported that the new Div 10 had been up and running since the start of the new Hasler season. Questions have arisen, which he will add to the guidelines published online. These included:-
- i. There is no corresponding Div 10 doubles class;
 - ii. U12s who are currently racing Div 9 are free to race Div 10

RMA's need to negotiate with club team leaders about when and where promotions out of Div 10 should occur, to ensure the new system does not promote U12s too soon.

The Committee are asked to direct any questions to MN.
Action: MN to update guidance and brief RMA's

- f. SMC has volunteered to be co-opted to the MRC in a bid to promote single blade racing. He described his experience as a c-boat racer, feeling little motivation to race marathon due to a lack of numbers and feeling attracted by other single-blade disciplines like SUP or OC1. He highlighted a few areas where Canoe racing could be better supported:-
- i. Better information for paddlers on other C-boat racers in their regions, so that they can co-ordinate more opportunities to race others in their class;
 - ii. Guidance on permitted designs (as evidenced by recent confusion on the legality of US-style sit & switch C2s)
 - iii. Encourage race organisers to give prizes for the fastest C-boat, as this practice has fallen into disuse

Action: SMC to draft communications for the website and social media

- g. Rule amendments were discussed to clarify the status of new types of craft in marathon races, such as SUPs, surf skis, and non-ICF sit & switch C2 designs. Currently these are starting to enter races particularly in the SW and race organisers are seeking clarification. It was accepted that the original fears that such craft may have an advantage over the traditional K1 and K2 craft has not materialised. The Committee discussed safety issues, such as the risk that an SUP paddler could fall from height onto a K1. It was agreed that these craft should not be forced upon race organisers, but race organisers would be free to accept entries from such craft in appropriate circumstances, if they felt confident to do so within their risk assessment.

Action: MN to issue more general guidance to race organisers

- h. GW and MN have identified a number of races nationally which offer courses suitable for a “paddle-by” of a false portage, and these will be marked up in the racing calendar as being accessible for *para athletes or those with any disabilities* who may find a portage very difficult. MN pointed out that portages are not the only issue, safety in case of a swim and accessible ingress/egress are also critical. Race organisers will not be responsible for organizing assisted portages for those that want help, it is up to the athlete to arrange this. There will also be no additional rules on gaining unfair advantage from a paddle-past or assisted portage;

an assumption of fair play will be allowed to operate. It was noted that the committee do not want race organisers to change the format of their current courses and that natural portages that do not allow paddle past are still fully acceptable.

Action: MN to issue guidance to race organisers; GM to draft comms for website

- i. GW reported that the North West region races appear to be in serious decline, with only one race in the calendar so far for 2019. There have also been no enquiries to JTR about the new coaching qualifications, from candidates in the NW region. GW and MN are in regular discussion with clubs in the region. MN confirmed that a merger with the already large Midlands region would not be appropriate at this stage.

Action: GW to get a final answer on outstanding NW region races for the Calendar.

- j. Races nominated to the new DW Prep series have been going ahead, and these have been promoted on the MRC website, the Watersides website, and by DW Committee email to all 2018 DW entrants.

Action: GW to stay in contact with Gareth on DW Committee and review impact on the 2019 race

- k. GW reported that the 2019 calendar is almost complete, and the process of gathering better course and conditions information from race organisers has been productive and will be available in the 2019 calendar, hopefully improved further in subsequent seasons.

Action: GW to get additional information accessible via MRC online calendar

- l. BRC updated the Committee on the changes to Hasler racing in Scotland, where Hasler races have been split from “classics”, and points are scored by all teams when racing in either region. The change has boosted the Hasler races in its first year of operation, but not descent race entry numbers. It is felt that descent skills may be in decline as fewer races with challenging courses now operate.

8. Internationals

- a. An internationals sub-committee comprising RL, DP, KM, TS, KW and chaired by JS had met and corresponded since the August meeting to attempt to define a new strategy for international teams, and selection policy. JS outlined the result, which represents both a significant change, and a compromise which keeps selectors' experience at the heart of a necessarily complicated process.

Communication with athletes, parents, coaches and clubs is essential for keeping them well informed and content with the strategy, so there will be lots of communication around the changes, not just in published documents.

The major changes outlined were:-

- i. A move to using one single assessment event per international
- ii. Experimentation in 2019 with a multi-race format for two assessment events, including a short race, long race and time trial.
- iii. Greater focus on senior places in international teams, and a recognition that junior competition is often better domestically up until major international level.

The proposed strategy and changes to the 2019 Selection Policy were agreed by the Committee, with the understanding that the success of these changes would be reviewed in the winter of 2019/20.

Action: JS to publish the new strategy and selection policy, and to organize effective communication

- b. It was confirmed that the ICF are not likely to support the candidacy of Worcester CC to host a major championships in the city.

TS pointed out that the ICF calendar is booked until 2021 and BC are unlikely to be able to support a major international in Marathon for a couple of years beyond that. The Committee expressed a keenness to host such an event in the future in the UK, provided that BC are clear that they would need to underwrite it and run it with our help.

JTR recommended finding and developing a venue first, using it for large domestic events to test its suitability, and organizing lower-level international events there.

Action: TS to establish a sub-committee to investigate

- c. A need was identified for a risk assessment for getting international teams out to events. GW has identified that the Performance Department has such a document, and will adapt it for MRC use.

Action: GW

- d. Jim Rossiter has announced his retirement from providing commentary at major marathon internationals. The Committee thanked Jim for the latest chapter of his long and illustrious service to the sport, which began as the GB team's longest standing Team Manager, and covered the organization of World Cups and World Championships, through to recent ITO duties.

Great Britain now has fewer International Technical Officials (ITOs) accredited and active than at any time in the past. In 2019, Brian Chapman and Ali Pendle will be our only active ITOs, plus Ivan Lawler on race commentary. The Committee discussed how new candidates could be recruited, as well as getting more knowledgeable ex-racers into team staff volunteering.

Action: JS to publicise on website

- e. One request to change nationality to GB has been received by BC and the ICF in time for 2019. Sean Rice, world Ocean Racing champion and world class marathon paddler, is now resident in the UK long-term and has been released by Canoe South Africa.

- f. British Canoeing have launched their new online shop for Errea team kit. GB Masters racing at ICF/ECA events will be encouraged to purchase team kit from this shop. Although the shop does not sell racing kit, blue team t-shirts can be used.

Action: JS to publicise on website

9. Coaching & Development

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- a. JTR reported positive progress on the joint subsidy with SRC for volunteer race coach course fees. Budgets were allocated and sums have been spent to date by each committee. Since January, MRC and SRC have funded courses for 42 candidates. Twelve Talent clubs have been appointed by BC and set up and funded their own race coach courses.

The main barrier to completing courses is a lack of assessors, as only one volunteer course tutor is suitably qualified.

£3,000 is budgeted by the MRC to continue this scheme in 2018/19.

JTR and RW have met with the WWR Committee to assist their own plans for coach qualification; their first course will be in April.

- b. BC have reported that coaches relying on their legacy qualifications should make sure that their First Aid certificates are renewed when required, their CPD is done and BC membership current, in order to retain the same rights and protections under the new coaching qualifications system.

Action: JS to post reminder on website

- c. KM outlined plans for senior GB squad training days, which have started with a series of events in the afternoon of the Thames K2 series days. The days are intended as an opportunity to train hard and not be assessed. All seniors over Div 2 standard are currently invited, and KM will continue to organize training into next summer.
- d. GW outlined a new plan for Junior athlete development, led by SU and supported by KW. There was felt to be a need for such activity since the MRC stopped organizing the Gent trip. SU mentioned her own experience as a parent, seeing the lure of the sprint pathway, which was seen to have social and status value, as well as being something that's easy to explain to school if paddlers need exceptional time off for races. An effective pathway would also retain those young paddlers who aren't at the elite end, and help provide more diverse and stronger racing skills to young paddlers who may not get the opportunity at their clubs.

The activities planned will be aimed at juniors ranked in Divs 3-6, and roughly 90 juniors have been identified at this level. Regional

training days will be organized on a quarterly basis, self-funded through entry fees, and leading to a new invitation-based international trip in 2019.

Action: SU and KW to discuss transition between junior and senior groups.

10. Major Events

- a. With DS unavailable due to being unwell, discussion of the planned Major Events sub-committee, and 2019 National Championships were deferred until the next meeting.
- b. The proposal by Southampton CC to organize the 2019 Hasler Final on 29th September was accepted. The Committee agreed that it would be acceptable to run the races with no portages. The only concern was that in case of rain, the local council may not allow use of their grass areas for parking. The date selected worked well for tides and hopefully good weather.
Action: SM to brief DS
- c. The list of club places by region for the 2019 Hasler series was noted. There were no changes for 2019. **Action: MN to distribute to RMAs**
- d. It was noted that there may be some new races coming into the calendar during 2019, after expressions of interest from Gloucester CC, at Tewkesbury (Glos. already run a successful Hasler event) and possibly Devizes CC.

11. Communications & Website

- a. BC have requested that the MRC write a section on Marathon for the 2019 Annual Report; SU agreed to write this as she did last year.
Action: SU
- b. SU has made some suggestions to evolve the MRC website, which will be implemented with support from JS. Having more than one Committee member involved with Communications is essential to keep the marathon racing community well informed of all that is going on. AD, TS and KM agreed to be involved with social media

comms, although the *website will remain the means of making official statements* by the MRC.

Action: SU/JS to overhaul website; TS/KM/AD to extend to social media and other forums

12. Other Business

- a. JTR informed the Committee that an Ocean Ski Racing Committee may be established. The Committee agreed that this area of the sport should not be an MRC area of responsibility but acknowledged that ski paddlers are often also Marathon competitors.
- b. JR asked whether the MRC has responsibility for marathon events *not* listed in the Racing Calendar, such as the various winter series. It was confirmed that we did not, unless they wished to raise the racing levy on entries. The new race management software being planned would be an added incentive for race organisers to join the levy scheme and contribute to the central administration and rules of our discipline.
- c. DSa asked if we would be willing to consider hiring boats for the 2019 World Championships in China, instead of shipping them there. Nelo have provided hire costs of roughly 400 euros per boat.

Boat transport is not only expensive but the time competitors boats will be in transit and awaiting return will be considerable.

Action: DSa to liaise with JS for planning

13. 2019 Meetings

- a. 9th March 2019 (BC Conference) afternoon 1pm to 4pm
- b. 23rd June? TBC
- c. ACM 10th August, Norwich 6pm
- d. 28th September? TBC
- e. 16th November, all day meeting, Cropredy. 9am to 3pm

The meeting closed at 15.00

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