

**British Canoeing Marathon Racing Committee
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at 8.30am on 8th September 2019**

Held at: Adventure Dolphin, Pangbourne

1. Present

Stan Missen (SM) (Chair) James Smythe (JS) Dyson Pendle (DP)
David Enoch (DE) Siobhan Urquhart (SU) Roland Lawler (RL) Scott Hynds (SH)
Kat Wilson (KW) Tom Sharpe (TS) Dan Seaford (DS)

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

Apologies for absence were received from:
Brian Chapman, Jim Rossiter, Mick Nadal, Nettie North and Graham Warland.

2. Approval of Minutes of Meeting 31st May 2019

The minutes of the meeting of 31st May were approved by the Committee and signed by the Chair. They will now be published as final.

Action: JS

3. Matters Arising

a) 'Best practice' Risk Assessments identified by Mick Nadal need to be posted on the website, assuming permission from the clubs involved.

Action: JS to ask MN

b) GB kit for 2019 has been sorted by DP, using the British Canoeing stock returned by Keith Moule. Athletes receiving a set of kit this season paid £130 contribution as a one-off. DP advised that the off-water shorts were not of adequate quality. Budget for 2020 has been set to a nominal amount in the assumption that there will be few brand new athletes in the team, however DP needs to provide DE with a suitable estimate.

Action: DP to seek alternatives with BC, and provide budget estimate to DE

c) The trailer is still for sale, although the Canoe Association of Northern Ireland may purchase it. British Canoeing have advised that we do not need to charge VAT on the sale.

Action: DE to deal with CANI enquiry

4. Governance

a) Declaration of interest forms were circulated for the forthcoming season and those present all signed one. KW offered to follow up with those absent.

Action: KW (JS to send an electronic copy)

b) ACM elections. At the 2019 ACM, Nettie North of Cambridge CC was elected to the MRC for a term of two years. There is now one full post vacant on the committee so the 2020 election will be for seven places.

c) The committee briefly outlined current committee roles, with the aim of preparing for a fuller distribution of jobs at the November meeting. It was identified that Logistics (Graham Warland, with Dave Sackman doing bookings) needs additional support. DE and DP volunteered to help but commented that having four bodies would need co-ordination. It was proposed that GW could lead and delegate to the other three.

Action: GW to discuss with DP, DE and DS

KW volunteered, with help from TS, to bring forward plans for national squad training to the next meeting. This would dovetail effectively with the Junior Development Squad led by SU and GW.

Action: KW/TS to discuss

d) Strategic Plan: JS reminded the Committee of the main elements of the current plan and the need for any changes or new plans to be developed and costed fully in advance of the November meeting.

Action: Any plans to be discussed in advance with DE

The question has been asked by British Canoeing if we should aim to have specific participation or medal targets. The committee felt that these are too much out of our control, but when developing plans the impact on racing numbers or international success should be considered carefully.

The committee discussed ideas for better engaging clubs, especially given the low numbers at the ACM. In some ways a low ACM attendance is a sign that people are generally happy, but DP made a case for an annual Racing Clubs Conference for idea and best practice sharing, regional/national planning and also enabling us to consult better with clubs than at an ACM.

Action: JS/DP to develop idea and report back

DP, JS and TS were all in favour of a national 'short course championships' event, to grow interest in the new racing format, increase experience (and hopefully international success) and increase participation among those who previously enjoyed 10ks etc or who prefer shorter races.

Action: JS/TS to develop idea and report back

5. Finance

a) DE put forward a draft budget for 2020, along with the request that any changes or additions should be put forward asap, as the November meeting is too late.

Action: ALL to discuss any budget questions with DE asap.

An increase in the budget for funding ICF officials was requested, to cover the eventual qualification of new officials in 2020.

DE proposed that we keep the existing minibus for two more years, for two reasons. First, VW and other manufacturers are no longer making these 9-seater minibuses as an off-the-line option, they need to be converted from vans. Second, British Canoeing have been using ours less, resulting in lower revenues than in the past. This was supported by the Committee. The bus can still be hired by clubs via Dawn Keall at BC.

Action: DE to budget for extended warranty cover for minibus; and KW to advertise availability of minibus to clubs for hire.

TS requested an increased budget for software development.

Action: TS to provide costed proposal to DE

The question of contributing to the Racing Handbook again was raised and will be tabled at the November meeting.

Action: JS

6. Domestic Racing

a) TS reported that a trial at the Nationals of the online race entry system developed by Will Abson, went well from a user perspective. However entry money that was paid online (via PayPal or Stripe) did not go immediately to the organising club, and the Committee agreed that this should always happen in future.

The online entry system can work with or without an online payment method, and the club organising a race can decide whether or not to use online payment. To do so, the club would need to set up a PayPal or Stripe account, and entry money would go directly into this.

TS stated that the ultimate goal of the system would be to maximise the number of entries made online, and minimise entries made on the day, as these have a large impact on race organisers' resources. This system feeds into RACMAN, which works much better with data from this source than manual entries which risk breaking/confusing the system.

TS reported that Will Abson is incurring some minor costs which the MRC indicated it will be willing to meet. (TS to inform DE of these costs as noted above).

JS asked about the online entry system developed by Richard Cawthorn, and if we should have a proper comparison of the two approaches to ensure the best value for the sport. DS has discussed Richard's system with him, but feels we must have one system and committee control over its development and ownership or licence, a view which was supported by the Committee. However we need a clear service contract with Will Abson.

Action: DS to propose a service contract for Will; TS/DS to bring forward a full proposal to the November meeting, with costings provided to DE by mid-October

b) JS proposed the adoption of a rule that people wishing to enter a Hasler race be listed on a single database of racers in advance. This would have major benefits in terms of avoiding the mistakes in names and clubs which plague race organisers and the MRC and RMA volunteers who process results.

In practice, this means setting up an online registration page, where racers provide their name, club, gender and YOB, upload a BC membership card (from which the expiry date can be gathered), and agree a basic consent form relating to assumed risk. The start-point for this list will be the current Ranking List, and racers need only register for the list once.

Racers must be named on this list by the time that the Ranking List is downloaded by a race organiser, and the RACMAN file will not accept entries from names not on this list.

The proposal was agreed in principle by the Committee, on the assumption that the system put in place would not prevent racers from entering (or currently from late-entering) races.

Action: JS to detail idea for TS plan

c) KW reported that a working group had been set up to refine the U12 rules, including members who had challenged this at the ACM. A proposal will be tabled for the November meeting.

Action: KW

d) DE proposed a rule change to change the number of Hasler points for a win to 50 (100 for doubles). The effect would be felt where there are large numbers in divisions, and racers feel that they are not contributing to

their club's scores if they finish below 20th place, but there would be no negative impact on overall club positions. The Committee agreed with the proposal, and that it should be applied asap within the current season.

Action: TS to edit RACMAN, GW to email race organisers & RMAs, JS/SU to communicate on website.

7. International

a) JS reminded the Committee that we had agreed to review the Selection Policy at the end of the season, for refinement if necessary in 2020. TS and SH agreed to feed into this process alongside the Selection Committee. Both TS and KW highlighted shortfalls in how some things were communicated this year, which were acknowledged by the Selectors.

Action: JS to co-ordinate review and bring any revisions to November meeting

b) The agenda item on possible international venues was also pushed forward to the next meeting

Action: TS

8. Coaching & Development

a) SH reported that British Canoeing are in the process of appointing someone to help candidates get through their coaching qualifications for non-Olympic disciplines (update: the successful candidate is not someone in the racing community).

The MRC also needs to nominate assessors and tutors for the Performance Coach course. Lee Pooley would be speaking on the subject at a coaches' meeting at Wey KC on 21st September.

Candidate assessments are now also receiving contributions from the MRC/SRC bursary, to the tune of £100.

Action: SH to co-ordinate nominations and report back from 21/9 meeting

b) SU reported that dates for the Junior Development Squad will be published shortly. The plan is to repeat the successful activity of 2019, with dates in Feb, Jun and Sep and a camp in April.

9. Major Events

a) DP reported that the experience of the Nationals this year, with very poor weather and safety considerations, highlighted the need to have an organising team who know the water well. Organisers were under

pressure to change or cancel races from people who didn't know the course. This factor would make it harder for a club to organise a major race on a river they don't know well. Despite the weather, the event proceeded without incident thanks to the organising team's planning.

The MRC agreed that it needs to provide better support to club organisers of major events.

Action: KW to support DS

b) The 2019 Hasler Final is progressing well. All entries will be made via the online portal, as well as TS's system helping RMAs to check the qualifying status of paddlers.

c) The 2020 National Championships will be held at Reading on 11-12 July.

d) The 2020 Hasler Final will be at Richmond, with two possible dates at this stage. It was suggested that the MRC could take over the admin of entries and results, which will be brought forward for planning at the November meeting.

Action: DS to lead discussion in November

10. Any other business

RL reported that he is seeking election as Chair of the SRC. If successful he would like to start a discussion of how Marathon and Sprint could work together more successfully.

12. Meeting Dates 2019

- a) 16th November 2019 all day meeting, Cropredy. DP presented his apologies for absence in advance.
- b) 2020 dates to be agreed at the November meeting

The meeting closed at 11 am.