

PaddleUK Marathon Racing Committee

2025 Annual Consultative Meeting

This meeting will be held online on 16th June 2025, commencing at 8:00pm for 1 hour.

Meeting details

Zoom Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83750736204>

Meeting ID: 837 5073 6204

Passcode: 634035

We use a one club, one vote system.

Clubs must nominate their chosen voter online with this form by 10pm Sunday 15th June.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdbqwoANE2vDqcQcSV3vhAKUHBmWYLE-qs5CQrtFYWl8N098g/viewform?usp=sharing&oid=115362840123682437105>

Voting delegates will receive a link to vote at the start of the meeting. Every club should endeavour to send one nominated representative to the meeting, but it is open to all PUK members and supporters.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approval of the Minutes of the 2024 Annual Consultative Meeting (Appendix A)
3. Report from the Chairman, Stan Missen (Appendix B)
4. Guest Presentation, Ekaitz Saies
5. Election of Committee Posts (Appendix C)

We have 6 retiring members who have served their 2 year term (Stan Missen, Evan Shephard, Joe Fitzpatrick, Graham Warland, Holly Mobbs, Anoushka Freeman). 5 (Stan Missen, Evan Shephard, Joe Fitzpatrick, Graham Warland, Holly Mobbs) are standing for re-election and 1 is not (Anoushka Freeman).

We have one unfilled seat and would warmly invite anyone interested to get in touch at marathon.secretary@vol.paddleuk.org.uk, particularly if you have an interest in helping with: Coaching, Senior Athlete Development & Safeguarding. The committee can co-opt a member to the committee at any time for a specific project(s)/purpose(s).

a. Chair - Stan Missen retiring by annual rotation.

b. Committee - Five nominations for six committee places:

Stan Missen (BOA), Evan Shephard (RDG), Joe Fitzpatrick (BPS), Graham Warland (BAN), Holly Mobbs (WEY).

6. Finance - report from the Treasurer, Joe Fitzpatrick (Appendix D)

5. Issues raised for the MRC to consider at future meetings (Appendix E)

PaddleUK Marathon Racing Committee

2024 Annual Consultative Meeting Minutes

Present at the meeting. Names were taken by registering in the online chat function prior to the start of the meeting. As a result, names of those joining later may not have been collected:

Committee

Stan Missen (SM) (Chair)	Holly Mobbs (HM)
Evan Shephard (ES)	Joe Fitzpatrick (JF)
Dan Seaford (DMS)	Dave Sackman (DS)
Roland Lawler (RL)	Brian Chapman (BC)
Anoushka Freeman (AF)	Kat Wilson (KW)
Jim Rossiter (JR)	

Club representatives

Julia Lawley (Solihull)	Rob Pretorius (Marathon Dev. Scotland)
Vicky Metcalfe (Pangbourne)	Lee Bennett (Worcester)
Sally Hartland (Banbury)	Siobhan Urqhart (Shropshire)
Bryn Price (Maidstone)	Julian Medina (Kingston)
Evan Shepherd (Reading)	Emma Riley (Fowey)
Margaret Chapman (Kirkcaldy)	Phil Jones (Royal)
Louise Clive (Gailey)	Ian Kershaw (Gloucester)
Stephen Whieldon (Trentham)	Anoushka Freeman (Richmond)
Peter Gorman (Wey)	Greg Spencer (Penine)
Reuben Sweetman (Bishop's Stortford)	Paul Thompson (Wey)

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence

Graham Warland (Banbury)
Scott Hynds (Elmbridge)

2. Approval of the Minutes of the 2023 Annual Consultative Meeting

The minutes of the 2023 Annual Conservative Meeting were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. Report from the Chairman, Stan Missen

The Chairman directed attendees to review his report circulated in the papers prior to the meeting:

I last reported to the ACM, July 2023.

I am pleased to say the year ended as a success for marathon racing, the largest competitive discipline.

Thanks must go to Norwich CC, for hosting a very successful National Championships in July 23. Towards the season end we saw a pick up in domestic race entries culminating in a very successful Hasler finals, hosted on the ever popular Worcester course in September. These major events, together with the frantic but friendly racing and rivalry of the Short Course Nationals in May, were the foundation of our weekly competition around the country. Events continue to thrive in most regions, encouraged by our network of marathon advisors, despite the many financial pressures present in the current economy.

The MRC provides the framework & rules for competition but as ever, it is the dedication and drive from all the volunteers at club level that allows us all to participate, and enjoy, a packed calendar of events that take in many different courses and types of water. Most importantly courses should and can continue to provide a challenge, to build confidence and ability and I again encourage clubs to make sure their event & chosen venue does continue to do just that.

Your committee needs to hear from you and your club. Small rule changes have been introduced by your committee this season that they believe will enhance competitive marathon racing but it is only with your input can they consider any more radical or positive changes.

During the year our endeavours have continued to be supported financially by Paddle UK; formerly British Canoeing. Their support allows us to continue to commit sizable sums to ensure GB team representation at International events around the globe. Non competitive membership of Paddle UK now makes up the majority of membership, driven up by those focusing on SUP's, which some kayakers suggest as negative, however this has to some extent allowed the transformation of Paddle UK and we are now seeing some refocus back towards the importance of the competition side of our sport, despite the competition disciplines being in the minority of overall membership. Our race organisers should continue to embrace SUP's where possible within our established regular competitive programme.

Your committee financially supported the DW committee in 2024 with a sizable contribution and our encouragement saw additional funding following from PaddleUK. It is important that we work with the DW Committee to promote positive change to guarantee the future of what is by far the most well known kayaking and canoeing event in the UK. We were also pleased to work with the DW committee in the organisation of the National Schools Championships.

Challenges for 2024 come in the form of the 17 page draft 'competition review document' which we have been asked to comment upon. Additionally the long awaited 'Standard of Deployment' paper (another 17 pages!) will be testing for some and will need thorough consideration within affiliated

clubs and amongst their volunteers as we are required to structure how paddlers and volunteers enter and progress through our clubs and our sport. PaddleUK is understanding of those challenges and will be providing assistance.

Our international performance has been full of high level successes but also with some disappointments. There is no doubt that the experience of international racing assists our athletes at the highest domestic level to perform at the next level needed. It was pleasing to see so many British paddlers, selected as part of our team and as private entries from clubs, competing at the 50th anniversary Waterlands Marathon with some outstanding results, despite the added negative experience of abnormal weather! Weather intervention is something that a number of our domestic events at the tail end of 2023 and the beginning of 2024 suffered from. There were a number of widespread disruptions and cancellations to our events. It is important that paddlers at all levels experience testing weather conditions and practice on higher water levels, as it is only with that experience gained that the ability to paddle and race safely in such conditions is learnt. It is certain that our weather will continue to have effects upon all outdoor sports including our own and we will have to embrace this.

Sadly there have been a number of incidents that your committee have had to deal with of poor behaviour both on and off the water, involving athletes at home and whilst abroad. Such things are totally unacceptable and we will take appropriate action against the individuals involved where necessary. Coaches and a few supporters also need to ensure that they focus their energies positively. The committee and its volunteers and race organisers are doing their utmost to deliver fair competition to all.

Lastly, I would like to thank all those elected and co-opted on to the committee during the 2023/24 season for their hard work and commitment. Particularly a huge thank you to Dave Enoch who has served his last year (of very many!) on the committee, having now completed the handover of treasurership. Scott Hynds' contribution towards coaching and running the race coach programme has also been invaluable.

The MRC is YOUR committee and we welcome new members, either through the formal election process or those willing to be co-opted during the year to work on specific tasks and projects.

4. Election of Committee Posts

The MRC elects places on a rolling basis, for a period of two years with the election of the Chair taking place annually. We had 6 retiring members who had served their 2-year term (Stan Missen, Dave Sackman, Mick Nadal, Bryn Price, Roland Lawler, Scott Hynds). 5 (Stan Missen, Dave Sackman, Mick Nadal, Bryn Price, Roland Lawler) stood for re-election and 1 did not (Scott Hynds).

Under its Terms of Reference, the MRC operates a one club, one vote policy for the Committee elections. Voting took place online and the following were appointed:

a. Chair - Stan Missen (BOA)

b. Committee - Dave Sackman (WOK), Mick Nadal (NOT), Bryn Price (MAI), Roland Lawler (ELM), Sally Hartland (BAN), Lee Bennett (WOR)

4. Finance - report from the Treasurer, Joe Fitzpatrick

The Treasurer gave an overview of his report circulated in the papers prior to the meeting:

Our financial year runs to 31st October so the last set of fully audited accounts are up to 31st Oct. 2023. You will see that we carried forward reserves of £54,673.66.

The number of entries to marathon racing this year has stayed steady, producing about 26k in race levies 2022 to 2023.

There has also been some good international racing with us sending teams to Croatia and Denmark as well as development teams to Germany, Bulgaria, Spain and France. The cost of these has increased substantially in the last couple of years. Unfortunately the increase in costs has resulted in an increase to the amount athletes contribute.

We have also been able to invest £5k in supporting race coach courses and underwriting the Short Course Nationals by £1.4k.

Income

PaddleUK central grant is dedicated to help us achieve the goals of the MRC as per the terms of reference for marathon canoeing within the UK.

We also have a grant from PaddleUK specifically to support athletes to attend the Para Euro and Worlds demo events.

Race Levies are funds collected by race organisers on behalf of the MRC.

Athlete contributions is money received from athletes to help support the expenses of the trip they have been selected for.

Expenditure

Major Internationals are the trips within the sport of marathon racing. This allows British athletes to compete against the best in Europe and the World.

Development Internationals are the trips that allow the up and coming athletes to improve their race skills internationally.

Race Entry system is the software that is used for all marathon races in the UK. This is used to process entries and publish results.

Website is the website hosting and coding.

Tracksuits and Racing Kit cost is due to the gradual rebrand required for international racing kit.

Education Maintenance Allowance is a pot of money to fund qualifications for racing coaches within the club network.

Short Course Nationals is to help run the short course national championships and turn it into a premiership event.

ICF Officials to Major Internationals is an expense for all the Officials at major internationals. This is the share we have to pay.

Bank Charges is the fee the bank charges us to make and receive payments.

National Coach Training is a pot of money there to help team leaders and coaches improve themselves allowing the people that volunteer to upskill, to aid the MRC.

Gender Equality Projects is to help clubs and regions increase the number of women and girls competing in marathons. For example, this has been used to buy changing tents for regions.

Numbers Boards is to replace the MRC number boards used in major events.

Trophy engraving is a pot of money reserved to engrave the Trophies awarded at the nationals and Hasler Finals.

SCN, Nat champs & Hasler Final Medals is a pot of money reserved to buy and engrave the medals for all championship events and hasler finals.

Sinking Fund- this is a new fund this year and it is a fund to support Capital Expenditure of the MRC. We currently have a minibus that is ageing and will need to be replaced soon and this fund will be used to help alleviate the burden of this cost when it comes.

Committee Members Admin is the cost used to run the committee.

In addition to this, the MRC supported the DW this year. Paddle UK also supported this, matching what we were able to put into it. This brought PaddleUK's support for the marathon this year to £52.5K plus all the support from their staff.

With everything going on this year we are likely to be down to £50k in the bank at the end of the year. This is the level that the committee feels it should maintain as the bottom line which has been agreed by Paddle UK as a reserve level.

I would also like to thank all the volunteers at all the clubs that plan and run hasler races and support marathon racing throughout regions in the UK.

5. Standards for Deployment Policy.

Clubs were reassured that the clubs support team (clubs@paddleuk.org.uk) stand ready to assist with any necessary support or clarification needed regarding the Standards for Deployment Policy.

6. Issues raised for the MRC to consider at future meetings

During the next year the MRC will be looking into:

1. Ways to increase participation at the Hasler Finals in 2025. Initial ideas include:
 - a) Whether a system could be introduced whereby if a qualify club doesn't send a 'reasonable sized team' (where 'reasonable' is yet to be quantified!) then they may lose their qualification status to the next club down in the points order.
 - b) Whether paddlers in top divisions could enter regardless of their club qualifying. Historically attendance has always been better in the lower divisions so this would help address that imbalance.

2. Ways to increase participation at the Short Course Nationals in 2025 (while being mindful that the schedule/timetable is already fairly packed!). Initial ideas from the meeting (& the survey sent out before the meeting) include:
 - a) Build it into a 2-day event to include K2 racing and/or a relay race.
 - b) Ensure that all categories have heats and finals.
 - c) Introduce more events of this type regionally to build momentum.
 - d) Introduce B races for those who feel intimidated by the high level.
 - e) Changing the location of the venue yearly so that people living further away are more likely to participate.
3. Possibility of removing the boat length restriction for GSC. At the moment some under 10s are forced to race in GSB due to racing a full sized K1. This means they race paddlers up to 3 years older, and a lot stronger!
4. Possibility of adding a SUP ranking based on the understanding that a paddler may choose to race SUP, Canoe, and/or kayak on different days and be relatively different speeds in all three disciplines.
5. Possibility of allowing Div3 paddlers to race Div4K2 with a Div5 or lower to support those who are tethering between Div4 and Div3. This is on the understanding that these paddlers often do not have many options for K2, particularly in smaller clubs.

A concern was expressed about promotions often being made in K2s where the paddler is not capable of being promoted in their K1. This concern was discussed and the committee and other club representatives noted that Team Leaders always have the right to request a demotion and that historically demotion requests, with good evidence, have always been accepted.

A discussion was had around the double promotions and resultant lack of points at Hasler Final. The committee explained that this system is necessary so as to ensure that participants do not suppress promotion in the lead up to the Hasler final in order to gain extra points at the final. The expectation is that coaches & Team Leaders assess their paddlers and ensure that they are racing in the correct division. Looking at evidence, there were no double promotions in K1 in 2022 and 2023. The committee therefore feels there is not sufficient evidence to support a rule change for K1s. This rule was however changed for K2s due to the difficulty in assessing which paddlers should be promoted.

There being no other matters to discuss everyone was thanked for their attendance and the meeting formally closed at 8.50pm.

PaddleUK MRC Annual Consultative Meeting 2025

Appendix B

Chair's Report

I last reported at the ACM in July 2024.

The 2024, moving into 2025, season has not been without its issues. As always! Happily, however, most have been well within the capabilities of your committee, and those who so helpfully agree to be co-opted in the work that we do. All involved, whether elected or co-opted, spend a considerable amount of their voluntary time helping keep things on an even path and we should all thank them for their individual input.

Perhaps the most challenging problem for event organisers has been the changing weather patterns which have left us with either too little or too much water in our rivers and canals! We, as a committee, rely heavily upon clubs and race organisers, as well as our regional marathon advisors who have close involvement with their waterways, to assess risks and make safety a prime concern.

It is vital that we continue to be risk aware but also promote the skills and experience that in itself provides a higher degree of security, by allowing paddlers to gain experience on flooded and challenging rivers, rather than cancel too early and destroy any chance of gaining this valuable and lifesaving experience.

Financially, with continued tight fiscal management by our Treasurer, our finances, whilst still under some pressure, have managed to maintain inflows at near previous levels. This is despite our central grant from PUK being a little less than we had hoped for, based upon our budget for the season. Very helpfully, acknowledgement followed that we should support our Para athletes which then saw some additional resources made available.

As always, our international representation has been wide and stronger with some excellent performances and long-awaited medals, at the highest level of international competition. We should all extend our congratulations to the achievements attained by those individuals.

The new look website has been long awaited and all the hard work put in has certainly brought it up to date for news and rules.

For the first time we were able to send a small representative team to the FISU World University Championships hosted by Montemor-o-Velho.

In conjunction with the DW Organisation we were pleased to be able to help host the National Schools Championships at Hawley Lake in November.

We must thank those involved with the organisation of and coaching at the JDS training and skills days, held over the winter period.

A timely cancellation of the Hasler finals at Richmond, whilst disappointing, meant that costs and paddlers travel plans were able to be satisfactorily dealt with in good time but it was a huge disappointment for all those individuals and clubs that had spent so much time during the season to qualify. Weather conditions were again to blame.

January saw the new MRC selection policy launched with various updates to address previous concerns. Clarity being the key. We must thank the selection committee for all their hard work in

this respect and throughout the year, studying performances and the data that allows us to select teams and deliver that much needed international experience. This helps enhance our competitive stance on the world stage, as well as give clear expectation to our up and coming athletes as to what is necessary for them to achieve to excel at international level.

We are delighted to be able to send a small contingent to the World Games to be held in China on 10-11th August. Good luck to them.

We have been encouraging paddlers to test their skills and gain experience, that they may not find on normal Hasler courses, by attending some of the non-Hasler events in our calendar.....over 30 at the last count to consider! For a full list see the News item January 2025 on the MRC website.

The National Short Course Nationals proved a huge success in May 2025. The MRC team, assisted by many others, put on a terrific day's racing with some thrills and spills at the portage, resulting in some specular close up portage photographs! This event, master minded by our dear friend James Smythe has been going from strength to strength over the last four years and entries were higher again this year, no doubt partly attributed to the early bird discount offered!

Major events for the summer '25 are the Long Course Nationals on the 26th -27th July hosted by Norwich CC and the Hasler finals on 5th October hosted by Worcester CC.

With a packed calendar, there are numerous events both domestically and internationally to gain experience and enjoy. Good luck in your competition.

Stan Missen

May 2025

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Appendix C

Candidates for Election

The following have volunteered to stand for election to the MRC at the ACM.

We have 6 retiring members who have served their 2 year term (Stan Missen, Evan Shephard, Joe Fitzpatrick, Graham Warland, Holly Mobbs, Anoushka Freeman).

5 (Stan Missen, Evan Shephard, Joe Fitzpatrick, Graham Warland, Holly Mobbs) are standing for re-election and 1 is not (Anoushka Freeman).

We have one unfilled seat and would warmly invite anyone interested to get in touch at marathon.secretary@vol.paddleuk.org.uk, particularly if you have an interest in helping with: Coaching, Senior Athlete Development & Safeguarding. The committee can co-opt a member to the committee at any time for a specific project(s)/purpose(s).

CHAIR - One Candidate.

Stan Missen, Bradford on Avon CC

Proposer: Mick Nadal. Seconder: Graham Warland

I believe that our sport needs openness and clarity, and I have tried to bring that during my past few years as Chairman of the MRC. Having been involved in Marathon for many years and being from one of the smaller regional clubs myself, I have also tried to ensure that everyone's concerns and opinions are brought to, and are shown equal importance, in the work of the MRC. I am willing to stand for another term if required. I would encourage others involved with our sport to consider joining the MRC and contribute to the running of marathon racing.

MEMBERS – Five candidates for six positions:

- Stan Missen (BOA)
- Evan Shephard (RDG)
- Joe Fitzpatrick (BPS)
- Graham Warland (BAN)
- Holly Mobbs (WEY)

Evan Shepard, Reading Canoe Club

Proposer: Mick Nadal. Seconder: Sally Hartland.

Hoping to be re-elected to the Paddle UK Marathon Racing Committee and would love to keep contributing to the sport I started as a junior in Chelmsford.

Over the last two years, I've been focused on:

- Keeping our results and race entry systems running smoothly and making them better by working with clubs, volunteers, and developers to make them easier to use.
- Helping out a lot with planning and supporting big national races.

As Team Leader for Reading and Southern Region RMA, I'm really keen on helping new and young paddlers grow. By organizing promotions for the Geoff Sanders Series, I see how much their confidence and skills improve.

If I'm re-elected, I want to:

- Keep improving the systems we have.
- Keep supporting successful events.

Help make marathon racing accessible and fun for everyone.

Joe Fitzpatrick, Bishops Stortford Canoe Club

Proposer: Kat Wilson. Second: Peter Gorman.

I have paddled since I was 8 years old and am a dedicated club paddler and a club coach. I would like to join the MRC, as I believe marathon is the heartbeat of the flat-water world, and I would bring passion, energy, and a different way of thinking.

My ambition, if I am elected, is to increase participation across all elements of the sport and to build up the Hasler numbers.

Graham Warland, Banbury & District Canoe Club

Proposer: Sally Hartland. Second: Evan Shephard.

I am a member and trustee of Banbury and District Canoe Club, as well as a coach and paddler. In addition to this, I assist in organising the annual Banbury Hasler race and the Ross Warland Memorial Canal Challenge.

My current roles on the MRC are as follows:

1. Marathon race calendar compiler – I liaise with all the clubs to create the race/event calendar on the MRC website. I also include sprint events on the calendar, as I see it all as flatwater racing, which usually involves the same clubs and individuals.
2. Race Records Officer – I process all the Hasler races on the MRC database and update the ranking list on a weekly basis during the racing season.
3. International Travel Administration – this involves working with both the athletes that have been selected to race abroad, along with Paddle UK and the staff that volunteer, to ensure that the documentation required to race and travel abroad is both current and correct. This includes all the athletes who have been selected to race abroad – from the development squads to the World

Championships.

Holly Mobbs, Wey Kayak Club

Proposer: Scott Hynds. Secunder: Peter Gorman

I am seeking re-election on the MRC this year to ensure I can continue my work within Junior Development, Communications and Major Events as well as recent work as Marathon Welfare Lead and sponsorships/partnerships.

Over the last four years, I have greatly enjoyed the opportunities that the MRC role has provided me. Some of the roles/jobs I have managed to be achieve or support on have been:

- the continuation of successful junior development programme with the SRC and Paddle England Talent which allows juniors to build skills and learn while also bonding with peers their age to support a life-long involvement with the sport
- Annually organising Short Course Nationals as it becomes a staple in the marathon calendar
- Continuing to improve engagement on the MRC social media accounts and the general coverage of the sport via the Paddle UK media team, our own website and social media as well as national and regional media.
- Create a partnership with the Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race Schools Liaison to support an annual delivery of the National Schools Canoe Championships with more work to continue here
- Create a strong partnership with Precision Fuel & Hydration to support our International team members
- Draft an internal marathon welfare policy to continue the delivery of safe racing for all

I am keen to continue these roles and work closely with the rest of the community and committee to drive marathon canoeing forwards.

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Appendix D

Treasurer's Report

Dear all,

Last year we made a loss of £10,583.01 this was due to several factors including some key races getting cancelled due to weather conditions, writing off old medals and kit, and putting money aside for a new minibus.

Racing numbers and numbers through the levy system have been maintained this year and the first half of this year the only race cancelled so far has been the Ross Warland. It is positive to have paddlers racing across the country.

Paddle UK has supported us again with funding upwards of £40,000. This is much needed and appreciated. Paddle UK have also supported Marathon Races like the Devizes to Westminster (DW). The MRC has also been able to support the DW and Thames200 by offering our minibus as a support vehicle along the course as required. Further to this PaddleUK are now hosting the MRC website which helps further reduce our overheads in 2025.

The costs of international trips has become an increasing challenge to the MRC, with many events being hosted outside of Europe. Traveling to China bears extra costs and pressure on the international logistics team, who have dealt with the challenges well.

Last year we increased the Athlete Contribution to £500 per paddler to allow a First Past the Post Policy. This year it has been increased to £600 to increase the team size to 24 Paddlers for the European Championship. As a committee we do our best to keep costs for paddlers as low as possible.

Last year we put aside £5000 for a minibus and we will be looking at purchasing a new minibus this year. The committee feels it still needs to own a minibus to make sure one is always available for the trips and to help support our ultra marathon races.

Thanks,

J Fitzpatrick

PaddleUK MRC Annual Consultative Meeting 2025

Appendix E

Items raised for the MRC to consider

The following items have been raised by members of marathon racing clubs for the committee to discuss. Views on these from the marathon racing community are very welcome. If you do not wish to put your views forward at the ACM, please send them to the secretary at marathon.secretary@vol.paddleuk.org.uk

1. Some changes have been made to Racman to include: 1) *Age for GS*, 2) *SUP category*, 3) *GUI to represent 'Guide Paddler'*. Evan Shepherd will explain a bit about what these are and how they can be used.
2. Questions from clubs or individuals?

If you have any other issues you would like the MRC to discuss during the 2025/26 year, please contact the secretary at marathon.secretary@vol.paddleuk.org.uk