



## **Canoe Slalom Committee**

### **British Canoeing Annual Report 2017**

#### **Competition**

##### **Senior Europeans and World Cups 1-3**

The Great Britain Senior Team began its International season at the European Championship in Tacen, Slovenia. There were some stand out performances from the younger members of our team. Chris Bowers paddled superbly to make the K1M final in his first Senior Championship. Mallory Franklin, in her first Senior Championship in K1W, delivered an excellent 4th place. In C1W Eilidh Gibson produced a strong performance to final. She was joined by teammate Kimberley Woods who laid down a smooth and clean final run to take the Gold medal and Championship title.

After a short break the first block of World Cups were swiftly underway. In Prague the team made 7 finals with Mallory Franklin winning Silver in C1 whilst Kimberley Woods became the first British female to win medals in more than one class at senior level with Silver in K1 and Gold in C1. World Cup 3 took the team to Markleeberg where amidst four finals Adam Burgess secured his first individual senior podium with a Bronze Medal.

##### **Junior and U23 World Championships**

In mid-July Bratislava welcomed athletes to the age group World Championships. After a very competitive selection series a strong British Team with a blend of youth and experience travelled out to Slovakia. Across a 6 day racing schedule in searing heat stand out performances came across all 4 Tokyo Olympic classes. In C1M Juniors Scotland's Peter Linksted shone on his Worlds debut finishing in 9<sup>th</sup>. In the U23 event Tom Abbott made his 2nd U23 Championship final finishing in 8<sup>th</sup>. In the K1M U23's Britain narrowly missed out on medals with Chris Bowers and Bradley Forbes Cryans producing strong PB's to finish 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> respectively. In K1W Kimberley Woods made her third successive U23 Workds final finishing in 9<sup>th</sup> place. In the C1W event Great Britain continued to show its strength with Kimberley Woods taking Bronze and Mallory Franklin securing her first World Championship title.

In the team events our C1W team struck Gold and were joined on the podium by their K1W counterparts who won Silver. The C1M U23 team rounded off a successful team event with a fine Silver medal.

##### **U23 Europeans, Hohenlimburg, Germany**

August saw the junior and U23 team travel to Hohenlimburg with a young team to compete in the Junior and U23 European Championships. With many of the senior U23 athletes releasing their spot for the team, it gave a fantastic development opportunity for several younger boats to step up and gain some invaluable race experience. Even without the strongest team available, there were some strong individual performances across the board with Sam Ibbotson (U23 C1M) finishing 6<sup>th</sup> in the final and Tom Abbott finishing 9<sup>th</sup> (U23 C1M) backing up his Worlds result from earlier in the season. Rachael Houston narrowly missed the final finishing in 11<sup>th</sup> place (C1W U23). The junior event saw a host of personal best performances across the board with several stand out results from, Etienne Chappell 8<sup>th</sup> (J K1M), Beth Forrow 4<sup>th</sup> (J C1W) and Megan Hamer Evans backing up her final result from the Worlds finishing 6<sup>th</sup> (J K1W).

##### **World Cups 4 and 5**

With the Senior Team focusing toward the World Championships in Pau World Cup 4 in Ivrea became a release race and saw some stand out performances. Notably Zak Franklin made his first Senior Final in K1M finishing 6<sup>th</sup> where he was joined by Jasmine Royle in C1W who finished 5<sup>th</sup>.

The World Cup Final in Seu was utilised as the final warm up race for our Senior Team following a week of training in Pau. The team achieved 2 finals in the Canoe classes.

### **Senior World Championships, Pau, France**

The season finale took place in Pau for the Senior World Championships held for the first time alongside the Wildwater and Extreme Slalom events.

With team events opening the event schedule GBR got off to a great start with a Silver from Florence, Westley and Burgess in the C1M and Gold from Woods, Franklin and Gibson in the C1W event. For our C1W team this concluded an impressive year in Team events taking World titles at Senior and U23 level and retaining their European title too.

In the individual events the team achieved 5 finals in the Olympic classes. The Olympic Champion Joe Clarke showed his class in the K1M event finishing in 6<sup>th</sup> place his first World Championship final to back up a fantastic 2016. In the K1W event Fiona Pennie came into the Worlds in good form following multiple World Cup finals. Placing first in both heats and Semi-Finals Fiona picked up an unfortunate penalty in the final to finish in 10<sup>th</sup>. Our C1W team all produced strong performances throughout the rounds to all qualify for the Final. A fantastic run from Kimberley Woods was marred by the need for a paddle back late in the run and she went on to finish in 8<sup>th</sup> place. Eilidh Gibson showed excellent form to peak for the biggest race of the year and raced superbly to narrowly miss out on the podium in 4<sup>th</sup>. Having qualified in 10<sup>th</sup> for the Semi-Final Mallory Franklin went off first in the Final and laid down an excellent fast and clean run to set the early benchmark for her competitors. Ultimately her run stood the test of time as she was crowned senior World Champion to add to her U23 crown and became Britain's first female World Champion since Lynn Simpson in 1995.

Reflecting on the week, canoe slalom head coach, Mark Ratcliffe said: "Overall to be in five individual finals and come away with two team medals and an individual gold for Mallory was amazing. It was a strong performance from Mall in this new Olympic class at the start of the cycle. Especially to come from 10<sup>th</sup> position in the semi-final, to go on and put down a really strong run in the final to win.

"Today we would have hoped for more, but overall we are quite satisfied."

### **Programmes**

#### **UK Programme**

The first year of the Olympic cycle has seen considerable change across our staffing team as we refine our strategy toward Tokyo 2020.

Following the decision of John Anderson MBE to step down from his role as Performance Director after many years of great commitment to our programmes throughout multiple successful Olympic Cycles, Paul Ratcliffe was appointed into this role. Recruitment for Head Coach took place in early 2017 with Mark Ratcliffe beginning his post in spring of this year.

During the course of this year one of the programmes longest serving and most successful coaches Mark Delaney took the decision to stand down from his role as Podium Coach at Lee Valley in order to spend more time closer to his family in Nottingham. Following many years as a programme athlete Mark delivered 18 years of service as a World Class Coach for our programmes and will be greatly missed on the front line by the entire International Slalom community. Mark will continue a contracted role within our programmes working to support coach and athlete development throughout the pathway.

Following the announcement of Mark's departure Richard Hounslow was successful in the recruitment process for a Podium Coach and begins his transition from Podium Potential throughout the annual review. Within this cycle of recruitment the programme were delighted to also bring Mark Proctor on board as a Podium Potential Coach working alongside Greg Hitchen in Lee Valley to help transition the next wave of athletes through toward 2020 and 2024. We are very pleased to welcome two highly accomplished athletes into the coaching team and look forward to supporting their development throughout the cycle.

As we move into year two of the Tokyo Cycle all elements are well set up to roll out our mission to Tokyo starting from a senior perspective with a primary focus on the World Championships in Rio.

## **England Talent Programme report Oct 2017**

End of season programme review will start at the end of October. Programme activity will be reviewed and planned for 2018. Squads will be reviewed and reallocated at this point. Athlete reviews and programme status will be communicated to athletes and parents ahead of formal publication on Nov 13th.

Our Club Partnership Programme has been launched, we are currently inviting interested performance focused clubs to submit expressions of interest to become involved with the aim of established part funded coaching roles in clubs that are underpinned by a sustainable business model.

Athletes and Parents have been consulted for their views by completing an end of season questionnaire. The intention is that the information will provide insight, gauge opinion and provide a quantifiable measure of satisfaction and help the coaching team and programme be more effective. The results will be fed back to coaches during our programme review and I intend to publish a summary of the key themes during the next Talent update.

We are facilitating a University open day in Nottingham on November 18th to help inform our aspiring and developing athletes and their parents about the support and opportunities available to them from the range of High Education institutions based in Nottingham.

We are inviting local institutions to attend and present on how they can facilitate academic flexibility and further support athletes through scholarship programmes, performance sport facilities and entry requirements.

We want to be able to support and help athletes realise and achieve both their sporting and academic ambitions without having to choose between the two.

Zofia Campbell has been appointed as the new Performance Wellbeing Coach. Her role is to help ensure the Talent Programme is a positive environment for athletes, coaches, and parents, and to support with any questions or concerns relating to the wellbeing of our athletes.

On behalf of all the coaching team within the England Talent Programme I would like to extend our thanks to all volunteers and helpers that have played a crucial role in delivering a racing calendar in 2017. Without your invaluable help and input we would not have the strong domestic system that we currently benefit from.

**Rich Ramsdale**  
**Talent Pathway Manager**

British Canoeing Strategy  
Recruitment

### **Recognition**

British Canoeing would like to give a special thanks and recognition to Ken Trollope for his outstanding services towards producing the yearbook over many years.

On behalf of all of us in the Slalom community we would also like to acknowledge the excellent commitment, drive and support of both the Slalom Committee and the excellent force of volunteers that enable all athletes to challenge, thrive and enjoy our amazing sport year on year.

As part of restructuring within the Tokyo 2020 strategy it is with regret that we said goodbye to Heather Williams following many years of strong work with the England National Talent Programme. Heather has played a pivotal role in the evolving professional structure of our pathway across Slalom and Sprint and has been a key figurehead in securing funding for our athlete pathway through collaboration with such bodies as Sport England. We would like to thank Heather for all her work and success within her role and wish her the very best for her next step.