



SLALOM COMMITTEE MEETING

Saturday 1 February 2020

British Canoeing Headquarters

Attendees: Dave Spencer, Chair; Andy Neave; Dee Lindsey; Karen Crowhurst; Steve Linksted; Deborah Catty; Colin Woodgate; Mark Abbott; Fraser Glasgow; Andy Grudzinski (AGz); Peter Curry; Richard Ramsdale; Anna Gray (AG);

Apologies: Hazel Ridge; Chris Baillie; Martyn Setchell

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true record.

STRUCTURE OF SLALOM COMMITTEE MEETINGS (DC)

A slightly revised structure to the meetings was discussed, with a clear “ask” required for each agenda item under the heading of for information, for action / decision or for discussion. The aim would be to keep to a clear timeline and keep the meeting focussed. The revised approach would be reviewed and reflected upon to make sure that the agenda remained full and quality discussion maintained whilst balancing with the need to individuals being held to account.

BC UPDATE (RR / AG)

BC is currently working on developing the 2021-2025 strategic plans. As these develop, there will be roadshows throughout England to share and consult on the plans. Separate sessions are being held by Canoe Wales and SCA.

There was discussion about the need for the slalom plans and annual planning cycle to dovetail with, flow from and feed into the BC plans. AG agreed to share aspects of the BC annual plan with the committee to help with the process.

RR shared his early thinking regarding the future strategy of the talent programme. It was acknowledged that as it was England-specific, elements were not relevant to the slalom committee as a whole. This led to discussion regarding the need for an England committee, which was discussed further later in the meeting.

There was discussion regarding athletes from WCP and other senior BC individuals helping participation by attendance at races and other slalom events. Examples of how this has been very successful in Scotland and at Stone were given. RR explained that there is a mechanism for requesting athlete attendance via the website. It was acknowledged that it needed to be a two-way process, with athletes proactively seeking opportunities.

The need to capture the potential Olympic bounce was discussed. BC have plans in progress to celebrate success.

FOR ACTION / DECISION

Key projects for year ahead (DS)

1. GDPR: it was agreed that there was a need to understand where and how data is currently stored; and how it should be managed going forward. It was agreed that a

small group led by Dee Lindsey would scope out the work. Other members of the group to be Duncan Berriman, Nick Penfold and Karen Crowhurst

2. Four year strategy: to be led by DS and SL
3. Officials on-line training: to be led by AGz/ AG
4. Development of an England committee: to be led by KC/ AN/ DS/ MS

Action: *outline and scope of each projects to be developed for agreement*

Financial assistance requests (standing item) (DC)

No financial assistance requests received.

It was agreed that a standard proforma would be developed for such requests. MA shared the Canoe Wales version as a potential template. **Action:** DC

Future of the year book: potential to move to online (CW)

Other disciplines and sports have moved away from producing a hard copy yearbook. The possibility of doing the same was discussed, with options such as developing a rule book, or charging for hard copies was raised. **Action:** CW to scope this out as a project.

British rafting selection & request for use of timing equipment and poles (CW)

This is happening on the Tryweryn on March 28/29 or if they can't get a release April 4/5. They have asked for use of a timing system and access to some gates. It was agreed that the club rate of £30 for the timing equipment would be charged.

Rolling over of agenda items / items to be retired (DC)

- Talent Squad Impacts: to be added into the participation discussion
- Contingency Planning: to be rolled into the GDPR project, though conflict of interest needs to be considered
- Insurance at entry level competitions: to be added into the participation discussion
- Boater X proposals: to be retired
- Division 1/Premier Timing/Technical costs for all Home Nations: this will become a project to review levies, led by AGz and HR
- Automated Chief Judge reminders: AGz is managing this, through a semi automated process. No further action required
- Rules vs Organisers Handbook: this has been completed for 2020 but will be picked up before 2021. To bring forward in September 2020
- Unaccompanied Minors: no further action required
- Videoing of minors: no further action required. It was however agreed that CW would review notices contained in the organisers pack for the 2021 season to ensure they remain relevant.
- British Canoeing Future Leaders Scheme modules: whilst the scheme is not running in 2020, KC to review the modules for use in the slalom committee. **Action:** KC to feed back at the next meeting.

“Background to trophies” project (tbc)

It has been agreed that information on the background to each trophy would be provided to the winner of the trophy each year. Whilst some work on this has been done to date, it needs to be coordinated and completed. It was agreed to ask Alison Setchell if she would be prepared to do this. **Action:** DC

ICF/ECA nominations (CW)

A revised process has been put in place for ICF nominations. The Committee reviewed the process and had no comments to feedback. Colin Woodgate stated that he will be applying and asked the committee for their support, which was agreed unanimously. Nominations close on 30th March and the committee will consider any other applications received in line with the published process.

Pre-race email to paddlers (DL)

DL had previously been asked to set up an automated email to go to paddlers in advance of races where it appeared that their BC or home nation membership would be out of date for the race. Because of the way the system worked, it had meant that some paddlers had received the email even when they had current membership which led to confusion. This had led to the automated email being switched off. It was agreed that it was important to ensure that paddlers had membership – and so insurance – at the point of the race. Following discussion, it was noted that bib officers could update paddler membership on the system, and identify where a paddler's membership had expired. **Action:** *as an interim measure DL to email the bib officers and ask them to carry out this check. DL will also review the automated email to see if it could be revised to reduce confusion. To be discussed again at next full meeting*

Support for BUCS race

In 2019, the committee had agreed to support a number of judges to go and support this race. This was not claimed as BUCS said they would pay. However, BUCS did not pay. It was agreed that to support the provision of a high quality competition for competitive slalom paddlers, there would be a flat sum paid of £25 to slalom judges for expenses in 2020.

BUCS have requested use of the timing system. This will be charged at the commercial rate of £60. **Action:** *CW will request HR to raise an invoice.*

UPDATE / FOR INFORMATION

Automatic bib application system (MA)

This is progressing slowly with the backend currently being worked on. The developer, Matt, is linking in with Duncan Berriman and BC during the development process and is now working from the process flowcharts agreed between MA and KC. It was agreed that the bib officers should only view what they needed to view, rather than all information; and a master view needed to be available. The system would be shared with the bib officers when it was further developed.

The initial focus is on promotion from div 4 to div 3. It will not be ready in time for the start of the season, but hopefully will be ready to run in tandem with the manual system later in the season.

Bib allocation system for div 4s to div 3s (AGz)

AGz had reviewed the two options – of continuing with continuous number allocation following promotion; or waiting for the paddler to apply before allocating a bib number. He proposed that the continuous number allocation approach was continued as this was in line with what happens when promotions happen from div 3 to 2 etc. It would ensure consistency, and reduce the need for manual moving of points following a retrospective bib application. It was agreed to adopt this approach.

Alternative vets points system (DS)

For the 2020 season, the current system will continue to run, but with a trial of the points system that AN proposed running alongside to demonstrate effect on rankings. **Action:** there will be communication to raise awareness of this

Migration to vol.britishcanoeing (all)

This is now complete. No issues raised with access. DC is liaising with BC to understand who is a member of the slalom.committee@britishcanoeing.org.uk email address, and to take ownership of it to manage it going forward.

Veterans trophies and prizes (AN)

MS is currently canvassing opinion amongst vets regarding vets trophies. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

Coordinator reports

Attached for information

DISCUSSION

Participation (all)

It was agreed that this was a wide area. It was agreed that in order for it to be a manageable piece of work, the focus would be on areas under the control or influence of the committee.

It was agreed that by participation, we mean:

- How we attract people to canoe slalom
- How we retain people in the sport
- How we encourage returners to the sport.

The measure of success would be the number of people attending races. What we know is that numbers at entry level are dropping, which will lead to lower numbers feeding through to the higher divisions; and retention at div 2 is dropping.

There was a wide-ranging discussion with key points:

- Universities are a potential untapped market
- The racing structure needs to be better organised
- What experiences do we need to provide to encourage participation?
 - How do we encourage people to turn up
 - What do we give people at weekends
 - How do we need to manage the calendar to maximise attendance at races?
Do we reduce the number of races which will reduce clashes; or increase race numbers to increase access to races? How do we control this?
(managed calendar)
 - Use of non-ranking races such as mini slaloms (eg Stone minis)
 - Potential for non-ranking regional weekends
- Why do people drop out? Because of the number of race opportunities? The distance of races? How good is the water? The community (or lack of it) at club level?
- The need to develop an England structure to help engage more regions
- BC have improved retention rates (calculated via membership numbers) so this is not a global issue, though the number of new memberships has dropped
- Potential for div 1 / 2 races, to provide div 2s access to better water
- Ensuring that there is a coaching structure in place; and coaching programme to support. For example, there are three England Talent Regions, with two running 'Rapid Talent' programmes.

It was noted that there had previously been a piece of work carried, looking at factors / interdependencies impacting on participation (attached - "Div3-4 review"). This will be incorporated as part of the current project.

Actions:

KC, AN, DS and MS to explore establishing an England committee which can then support / feed into the regional structure

DS, AN and Donna Hawkins to work on the managed calendar

KC to share the draft questionnaire for paddlers who have left the sport with the committee; and then circulate it to ex-paddlers.

AN to identify two specific areas for consideration at the next full meeting

AOB

The next meeting will be on 1 April 2020, from 7.30pm – 9.00pm via skype. **Action** AGz to circulate skype details.

REPORTS

SCA Slalom report for the BC Slalom Committee meeting on Saturday 1st February 2020

Bridge of Earn slalom site

The posts are now installed and work is progressing towards completion.

Performance

Selection will be supported by 4 coaches. Stuart Gerrie, Performance Coach based in Scotland, Adam Johnstone and Mark Delaney. Additional support will be provided by Sam Miles recently appointed as a shared partnership coach in conjunction with Breadalbane Canoe Club. Sam has settled in well at Breadalbane and has already been working with the Performance group.

Central Squads

The Scottish Central Squads training programme is working well using a combination of whitewater training and gym work coached by a mixture of volunteer coaches and paid coaches. There are regularly about 35 paddlers with the squad. Camps in HPP and LV so far and 6 different camps planned this summer including the Krakow and Bratislava ECA Cups. Strength and fitness tests are being benchmarked against the ENTS, liaising with Daniel Thompson

Chris Baillie
January 2020

Slalom Safety and Competition Management Report – February 2020

There is little new to report.

Almost all clubs responded to the need to get plans in early.

The quality and comprehensiveness of plans continues to improve. Hopefully we will see little testing of them as the season progresses.

We do need to consider having a consistent and constructive approach to cancellations and proposed changes when races have water and other issues.

Participation Report February 2020

I would appreciate if we can all bring our ideas to the meeting regarding how we can potentially increase participation in our sport.

Areas I think we should be looking at:

Length of the season

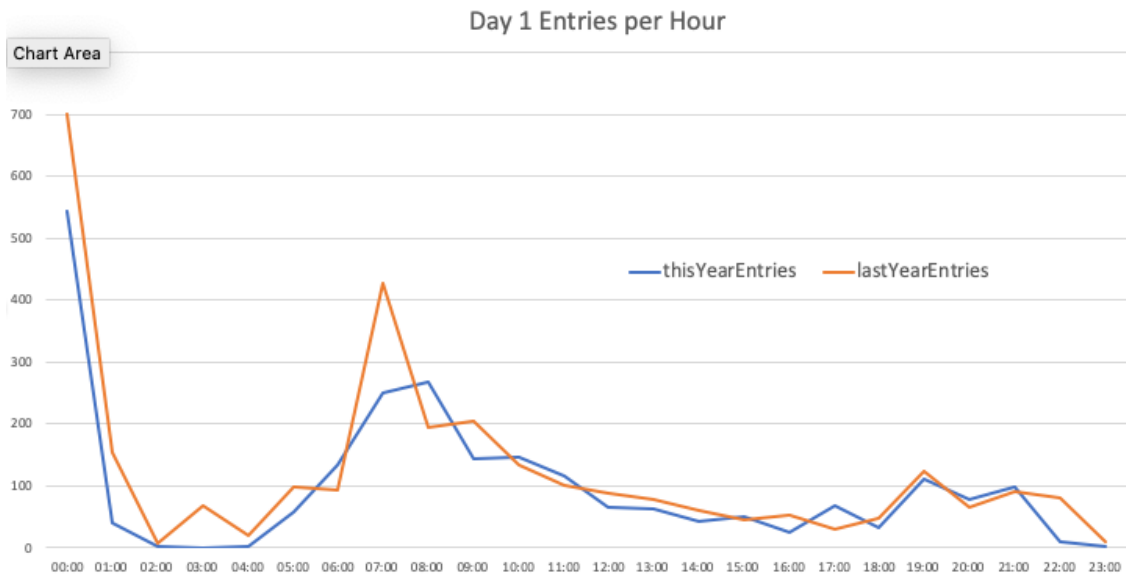
- Race clashes
- Location:
 - Difficulty of water especially within Div 2.
 - Multiple races at same location
 - Course design
- Education:
 - Number of juniors being taken out of school on Fridays for domestic races.
 - Missing school for ECA cups in June/July.
- Cost once promoted from Div 4 – home nation membership.
- Squad paddlers are encouraged to attend ECA cup races in June/July rather than domestic races.
- Increase retention at U23 and S.
- Why paddlers give up:
 - I have drafted a quick questionnaire that could be sent out via bib officers to all paddlers that give up.

I am sure there are more things we should be considering but hopefully this will give us direction as to where we want to take our sport. I think we should remember it is not all about podium at Olympics for the majority it is about taking part and enjoying the race weekend.

Karen

1. Has Sanity Returned?

Last year it seemed that the slalom community went slightly frenetic on the first day of online entries. This year was busy, but the peaks of activity were down slightly and paddlers did sleep between 2 and 3am (☺). Overall entries at the end of day 1 were around 25% lower than last year



2. Entry Availability as at 28th January

Entry availability (except for a couple of official's competitions) looks good, but there is a visible change in numbers of entries between Prem and Div 1.

1. Premier

On average Prem entries are **up** about 20% on a similar time this year. Ignoring selection races:

- mean entries per competition day in January 2019 was 88.6
- mean entries per competition day in January 2020 is 107.3

Competition	Day	Daily Limit		Included in Day Limit							Not Triggering Day Limit			
		Divisions Included	Max	Reserved Places	Accepted		Offered		Available Places	Waiting		Accepted	Offered	Waiting
Holme Pierrepont Premier Race 1	Sun	Prem	160	10	133	0	0	0	17	0	31	15	0	0
Grandtully Premier Race 2 & 3	Sat	Prem	175	10	106	0	0	0	59	0	33	20	0	0
Grandtully Premier Race 2 & 3	Sun	Prem	175	10	106	0	0	0	59	0	32	20	0	0
Holme Pierrepont Premier Race 5 & 6	Sat	Prem	190	10	95	0	0	0	85	0	17	14	0	0
Holme Pierrepont Premier Race 5 & 6	Sun	Prem	190	10	94	0	0	0	86	0	16	14	0	0
Holme Pierrepont Premier Race 7/Div 1	Sat	Prem	190	10	113	0	0	0	67	0	52	26	0	21
Tees Barrage Premier Race 10/Div 1	Sat	Prem	175	0	104	0	0	0	71	0	56	21	0	18

2. Division 1

Division 1 appears to be almost a mirror opposite of Prem with

- mean entries per competition day in January 2019 of 108.0
- mean entries per competition day in January 2020 is 85.9

Note: Div 1 2020 is slightly skewed by the later Tully which came online late. However, even without that the mean is 94.9 which is still a significant fall.

Competition	Day	Daily Limit		Included in Day Limit							Not Triggering Day Limit			
		Divisions Included	Max	Reserved Places	Accepted		Offered		Available Places	Waiting		Accepted	Offered	Waiting
					Host	Others	Host	Others		Host	Others			
Lee Valley Olympic Div 1 Double	Sat	Div 1	120	0	107	3	0	1	9	0	0	30	0	15
Lee Valley Olympic Div 1 Double	Sun	Div 1	120	0	105	2	0	1	12	0	0	30	0	16
Llandysul Div 1 Double	Sat	Div 1	250	10	107	0	0	0	133	0	14	5	0	0
Llandysul Div 1 Double	Sun	Div 1	250	10	107	0	0	0	133	0	14	5	0	0
Shepperton Div 1 Double	Sat	Div 1	170	10	66	0	0	0	94	0	4	1	0	0
Shepperton Div 1 Double	Sun	Div 1	170	10	68	0	0	0	92	0	4	1	0	0
Grandtully Div 1 Double	Sat	Div 1	200	10	111	0	0	0	79	0	9	4	0	0
Grandtully Div 1 Double	Sun	Div 1	200	10	110	0	0	0	80	0	9	4	0	0
Holme Pierrepont Div 1	Sat	Div 1	160	10	109	0	0	0	41	0	7	9	0	0
Washburn Div 1 Double	Sat	Div 1	160	10	84	0	0	0	66	0	8	7	0	0
Washburn Div 1 Double	Sun	Div 1	160	10	82	0	0	0	68	0	8	7	0	0
Pinkston Div 1 Double	Sat	Div 1	200	10	80	0	0	0	110	0	7	53	0	5
Pinkston Div 1 Double	Sun	Div 1	200	10	79	0	0	0	111	0	7	1	0	0
Grandtully Div 1 Double	Sat	Div 1	180	10	18	0	0	0	152	0	1	0	0	0
Grandtully Div 1 Double	Sun	Div 1	180	10	19	0	0	0	151	0	2	0	0	0
Holme Pierrepont Premier Race 7/Div 1	Sun	Div 1	160	10	109	0	0	0	41	0	8	7	0	0
Tees Barrage Premier Race 10/Div 1	Sun	Div 1	175	0	99	0	0	0	76	0	10	10	0	0

3. Online Entries

I've been insanely busy in the last couple of months in preparation for new season. Some key changes and issues:

1. Club Stripe Account Updates

This has been my biggest headache!

In order to safeguard fees and ring-fence for individual clubs, we set up club accounts on Stripe. Whilst the clubs don't need to do anything to manage these, and indeed do not have direct access, Stripe requires that various "know your customer" (KYC) regulations are followed. This is normally done at the time we first add a club to the system and club treasurers are asked to provide ID to Stripe (pretty much as they would do when becoming a signatory on the club bank account).

Recently Stripe have changed their rules such that they now require two forms of ID rather than the original one.

Stripe has said that after 31 March, we will not be able to pay-out money to any accounts that have not been updated. Based on this I do not believe we should take money in the first place (and we might not be able to).

This means I have needed to update the system at our end, but also get the club treasurers to supply their details. Out of the 34 clubs that are using online entries this year, 11 have still not provided their data. This could impact a number of races including Selection. I've been chasing treasurers relentlessly, but can only go so far.

2. National Association Membership Expiry Dates

Last year following discussion in committee I agreed to start sending emails to paddlers who had entered a competition in the near future and whose membership was due to expire prior to the competition. This was introduced (briefly) this week. The email explicitly requested that paddlers send their updated membership to the bib officers:

- 13 paddlers were identified and corresponding emails sent (some of these were in the same families)
- Within minutes I got the first email to tell me that that paddler's membership had not expired.
- And within a few hours I had three paddlers send *me* photos of their (current) membership cards (this was only 5 hours ago so I may receive more).

Clearly this is not going to work. I have switched the emails off until this can be discussed in the committee meeting. There are a number of issues that have been highlighted by this exercise.

- The expiry dates on the ranking database are only updated weekly.
- Duncan only pulls expiry dates for those paddlers who have either applied for their bib in the current year or competed in the current year. As there have been no competitions yet a number of paddlers had not been updated.
- The bib officers cannot enter/overwrite the expiry dates for the automated process so even if a paddler sends in their proof of membership the systems cannot be updated.
- Quite apart from the above there are concerns about the accuracy of the data
- SCA and WCA do not have the API so this data is even more likely to be out of date.

Follow on queries/actions:

1. I would like committee to revert its previous decision – if necessary, we need a different approach.
2. We may need to consider a rule change for next year – I believe rules in 1.1.1 currently state that results will not count, but I'm not sure that they would stop a paddler from racing if they have a bib but expired membership (though 1.1.1a).
3. Rule 1.1.1a says that "*athletes, at the time of entry, must quote their current National Association number*". As far as I'm aware currency of number at time of entry has never been checked and it is generally accepted that membership does not have to be current to place and entry. This needs changing to match reality.
4. Are SCA/WCA going to adopt the API used by BC and, if so, when?
5. There is an issue with BC API returning dates formatted UK or US. Duncan has chased a fix for this but had no response – can anyone push forwards.

3. Bits And Bobs

For the most part **payment processing updates** have gone smoothly. A bug (resulting in undercharging in a few cases) was identified when we took payments for the Lee Valley Div 1. This has been fixed (which is why report is late!) and as far as I am aware no further issues have been encountered. Payment failures (due to insufficient funds, lost cards etc) seem in line with expectations based on previous years.

I have as requested removed the capability for paddlers to update their own **sponsors** (sponsor now only comes from ranking database). However, for those special cases where additional info is required (Scottish Schools/Selection/Pan-Celtic) the competitors do get a popup query at time of entry. I have had no feedback on this so am assuming the impact on the entry process is at least acceptable.

For **selection** races the entry process also picks up the position for qualified seniors and U23s which is then used in the start list for selection specific ordering.

A couple of extra bits of information have been added to the competition home page (eg organising club, site location) and some tweeks made to the start list process.

4. Calendar Application System

Looking back at my report from last January, I believe that, from a technical perspective, I did achieve what I set out to do. From a more general view of the managed calendar process as a whole, we still have a way to go, but technology cannot resolve everything!

Since the ACM, outputs have been provided for Nick and the yearbook. In addition, as the data was online, it was used to initiate the setup for online entries. This made that process easier.

I'm hoping to put something in place to allow users to "copy" a competition from a previous year, before we open for applications this year!

CANOE WALES REPORT FOR MEETING ON 1st February

Winter training camps are progressing with regular sessions at HPP and Lee Valley. Sadly due to water conditions some camps at HPP have had to be cancelled/re-scheduled.

Work is continuing to refurbish the club house damaged in the floods at Llandysul.

Canoe Wales have members roadshows planned allowing members to ask questions to the management team. The events are held at various locations throughout Wales at the end of February/early March.

Development groups are continuing throughout Wales with new paddlers being encouraged into the sport.

Coaching Coordinator Report

Coaching Courses

A Slalom DST course organised by Andy Neave just before Christmas attracted five trainees. Four of these trainees successfully applied for funding through Slalom Committee (3 England, 1 Wales). The course was held at HPP and Stone following the new two-day programme. At present no courses have been planned for 2020.

To date, only a very small number of trainees have progressed to assessment. The need to support trainees in the period of consolidation between training and assessment has been identified.

Talent Coach Developer

Pete Catterall, appointed in November to the England Talent Programme in the role of Talent Coach Developer, has been travelling extensively to build a clear picture of the full requirements of his role. In addition to spending time with the British Canoeing (England) employed Talent Coaches, Pete has also visited most of the slalom clubs within the Talent Club Partnership, met with club coaches and started to formulate plans to address each club's needs.

Andy Neave

27/01/20