

## **Mark Ratcliffe appointed as Canoe & Extreme Slalom Performance Director**

British Canoeing is delighted to announce that Mark Ratcliffe has been appointed as Canoe & Extreme Slalom Performance Director.

Mark, who has been Slalom Head Coach since April 2017, will take up the role as the World Class Programme moves to a two-performance director model.

Based at Lee Valley White Water Centre, Mark will lead the Canoe Slalom high performance programme at an exciting time for the sport as it builds towards the Paris 2024 Olympic cycle, which will include Extreme Slalom for the first time.

A former competitor, Mark has progressed through the whole performance pathway over the last 18 years with British Canoeing, coaching Joe Clarke to gold at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. In 2019, he graduated as one of just nine coaches from the UK Sport Elite Programme.

Since his tenure as head coach, the canoe slalom team have achieved an impressive haul of medals on the international stage.

Despite the disruptions of Covid-19 the Tokyo cycle culminated in 4 Finals and Mallory Franklin's Olympic silver medal in Japan, as well as two golds, one silver and one bronze medal for the team at the 2021 ICF Slalom World Championships in Bratislava.

On his appointment, Mark said: "I'm delighted to have been appointed as Performance Director of the Canoe Slalom programme.

"It's an incredibly exciting time. There are two new medal events in Paris with the inclusion of Extreme Slalom and a real opportunity to build on the success we've had over the Tokyo cycle.

"I feel incredibly proud to be leading the team over these next three years towards Paris. We have a fantastic group of athletes that are all highly committed to trying to achieve the goals there and I see my role as helping them do that along with our talented coaches and support staff.

"The new structure will help us to operate with more agility and clarity of support to the athletes as we move forwards and the next steps are to set up a slalom leadership team which will be responsible for the key strategic decisions for the programme.

"On the water, the athletes are continuing winter preparations ahead of what will be another exciting season in 2022 and I am really looking forward to the journey ahead."

Keir Worth, Director of Paddlesport for British Canoeing, said: "Under Mark's leadership over the past five years, the Canoe Slalom programme has continued to cement its place as one of the leading nations in the sport and in the emerging sport of extreme slalom.

“We are thrilled to appoint Mark to the role as Canoe Slalom Performance Director and I’m looking forward to working with him and the team as we look to Paris 2024 and beyond.”

The recruitment process for the Performance Director for Canoe Sprint and Paracanoe is ongoing with interviews taking place in December.