



1 Attendance

1.1 Present

Andy Grudzinski	[4/4]	Chair	Donna Hawkins	[4/4]	Alison Longhurst	[2/4]	England
Dave Spencer	[4/4]	Treasurer	Karen Crowhurst	[4/4]	Zac Allin	[3/4]	Athlete Rep
Les Ford	[4/4]	Secretary	Peter Curry	[4/4]	Mark Abbott	[3/4]	Wales
Sally Atkinson	[3/4]	Vice Chair	Dee Lindesay	[4/4]	Gareth Wilson	[3/4]	British Canoeing
			Mark Haylett	[4/4]			
			Mike Mitchell	[2/4]			

Also present: Matt Crowhurst.

1.2 Apologies

Vacant [3/4] Scotland

Donna?

2 Previous Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted.

2.1 Kayak Cross

The initial planned meeting didn't happen, but it is hoped that those involved can catch up at the upcoming HPP race to make progress and inform how we can offer Kayak Cross at domestic events, and offer a wider meeting to encourage others to consider looking at running events. **Action: MH.**

Selection Kayak Cross was a success, good format, and coped with some technical issues for timing/results. There was also some feedback that it might have been better as a separate event.

2.2 Participation Research Update

GW updated on progress to date with 227 responses to the survey. Also the researcher attended the Pinkston 2/3 in March and will be at the HPP Prem on 13/14 April. Phase 2 will see several focus groups and interviews with key stakeholders.

The intention is that the research will report back to July's committee meeting. The results would then be presented to the wider slalom community at a subsequent webinar. The ongoing research should inform the discussion around the future structure of the sport, to support the development of a strategic vision and long-term plan for the sport, and the wider involvement of the slalom community.

2.3 ITO Expenses

DS is meeting with Paddle UK regarding ITO expenses across all disciplines, and it is hoped to have clearer guidelines consistent across all disciplines for expenses. **Action: DS**

2.4 BUCS Support Offer

It was noted that the BUCS event has been rescheduled to 11/12 May.

The proposed support offer document for the BUCS race in future years is still being developed. **Action MS/SA**

3 Actions / Priority Items

3.1 Calendar Updates

The Mile End Mill 3/4 has been cancelled due to high water levels.

Discussions are ongoing regarding a new date for the Tees Prem/1, but have been proving difficult as clubs running lower division races are understandably reluctant to accept a clash. *[Post meeting note: Tees has now been agreed for 29/30 June, with thanks to Stafford & Stone].*



Currently applications have been submitted for 25 Div 1 races in 2025, with no HPP races yet applied for (usually 3). This significantly exceeds the number of races allowed in the rules, and is not sustainable for participants or volunteers, so difficult decisions will be required again. It was agreed to put 2025 calendar discussion on the agenda for May's meeting **Action: LF**

3.2 Awards Evening 2024

The cost of an event in the Lee Valley areas on the British Open weekend is proving very expensive. Paddle UK have reached out to the Mayor's Office in Waltham Abbey which has enabled a venue to be obtained at a very reasonable cost for 28th Oct.

GW is now looking to engage a small group, including paddlers, to take ownership and be involved in delivering this event for the community. **Action: GW/ZA/MH**

3.3 Grandtully Update

Information has been shared with the slalom club chairs regarding the new lease and site use arrangements. This includes arrangements for events and use of the site/gates outside of events, including a check in before using the site/gates. Additionally, Paddle Scotland members would need to purchase an annual pass for the use of facilities (parking changing, showers), non-members would have to purchase a 14-day pass. There have been objections to the new arrangements. Therefore, the new lease for the site has yet to be signed. Currently there are no events approved for this year, as they can't be approved without the lease being signed.

There is concern that the August races are now at risk, and we need to ensure that paddlers are not committing to accommodation. There needs to be a timely decision about whether these events will go ahead. The organisers will be contacted to discuss the events. **Action: AG**

Currently both events are not open for entry and the slalom entries website states that they are at risk. This should be replicated on the calendar on the slalom website. **Action: DL**

3.4 Rolling Points

DS has shared an analysis of the potential impact on promotions from different approaches to implementing rolling points. This will be discussed at July's committee meeting. **Action: DS/LF**

4 Review of Ranking Slalom Safety

The Benjamin Leonard Prevention of Future Deaths Report had previously been circulated regarding the death of a Scout on Great Orme, which is expected to have an impact across voluntary sector activities.

Risk management is being reviewed across the sport. PC has met with Paddle UK to provide details of processes in slalom, and we are in a good position. A report is due to be produced by Paddle UK and it is envisaged that some actions will be required from clubs and the committee to meet recommendations and improve our processes around safety.

Linked to this are the Minimum Standards of Deployment that will require specific training for those in key volunteer roles. Details of the requirements are due later this year, with training and implementation following on. Full details will be shared as they become available.

5 Marketing Communication

5.1 Improving Marketing and Communications

A SWOT analysis of our current position with regards to promoting the sport was shared, along with suggestions to improve this area and raise the profile of the sport. LF will continue to work this up into simple actions that can be progressed. We will also be looking to recruit some volunteers that can help support these marketing actions. **Action: LF.**

This will also feed into a longer-term plan for the sport.



5.2 Paddle UK Competition Officer

LF has had a meeting with David Rogers, Competition Development Officer to discuss support that might be available to promote slalom at the participation/recreational level. These fit with increasing our promotion and marketing to make the sport more visible. Initially this is going to be around filming promotional videos (hopefully at Wagon Lane in May), and getting better information on the Paddle UK website about slalom.

Action: LF

DR is also keen to help the roll out of Kayak Cross to engage new paddlers in competition.

5.3 Promoting Events through the Paddle UK website

It is possible to list events on the new Paddle UK website and on the recreationally focussed gopaddling.info website which both pull event data from a single source entry. This would give slalom events much greater visibility to the wider paddling community that are not currently engaged with slalom. LF and AG have been speaking to the Events and Digital teams to test the setup for slalom events and discussing being able to import slalom events from a spreadsheet. It may also be possible to have a feed from the slalom entries website to list events. An update will be given once we have the full details. **Action: LF.**

5.4 Rebranding

Paddle UK, Paddle England, Paddle Scotland and Paddle NI are all now live. Wales is expected to change at the start of 2025 following consultation. This was always going to be a slow transition. New logo's and brand guidelines available in due course.

Slalom Officer's emails and email groups are now Paddle UK (e.g. slalom.secretary@vol.paddleuk.org.uk) although British canoeing addresses will continue to work for a while.

6 Working Group Updates

6.1 Volunteer Training

MC and SA have been pulling together information and a presentation that can be used for engaging and training volunteers around various roles (thanks to Cath Brown and Sarah Ford for their contribution). There is potential to use these to engage new volunteers (paddlers and parents) through clubs with new intakes of paddlers, at slalom schools and squad sessions, etc. These will be shared with the committee for comment. It was agreed that the slides should be accompanied by some notes to be used widely across the sport. **Action: SA**

There have been previous discussions about having e-learning to support training for volunteer roles, and this could be looked at again.

7 Home Nations Updates

7.1 Scotland

The committee is continuing to monitor the situation in Scotland and support race organisers as needed.

Levies from Scottish racing will be identified by Paddle Scotland and if the Paddle Scotland Slalom Committee is established will be available to support slalom.

7.2 Wales

The Welsh committee has approved a few grants to support clubs and events. There are a number of changes of personnel happening within the performance coaching programme.

7.3 England

The March meeting focused on funding, with more requests for support for coach training. The committee was also involved in small grants being distributed by the talent Programme.

The committee is also considering supporting and encouraging some regional development weekends during the season, and also looking at support for gaps provision by the slalom school programme.



The Pan-Celtic is expected to be run in two parts again with the J16 upwards age groups at HPP Prem on 22 June, and the younger age groups and Vets/Masters at Kilnhurst on 21 Sept. The rules are in the process of being updated to incorporate some changes to reflect lower numbers currently racing.

8 Any Other Business

8.1 ITO Support for domestic races

Officials are required to support at least 8 days of domestic racing to be eligible to attend races as an ITO, but there are 32 days of racing that can count towards this. It is suggested that this minimum number is increased to encourage additional support at domestic races. A proposal will be drawn up with a view to implementing this for future years. **Action: MC**

8.2 Interclubs Update

Planning is ongoing looking at budgets, entry fees, event set up etc. Following discussions about a possible change to the format, the consensus is that it will remain the same.

There are a few trophies that could do with being replaced. It was suggested DH speak to Fiona Pennie to see if there are any spare national trophies that could be repurposed. **Action: DH**

8.3 Selection Expenses

MC has had quite a lot of feedback from volunteers that they are out of pocket when attending to support running selection at Lee Valley. This has been noted and is to be considered by the International Panel for future years.

8.4 Inquorate Points at Events

Communication has been received expressing frustration at paddlers only receiving low points at inquorate C1 events. It is recognised that there is an issue with points awarded with lower numbers paddling in all events, however it is still early in the season. This will be monitored throughout the year.

8.5 Participation Numbers

So far this season 513 paddlers have applied for bibs (a total of 692 bibs). It isn't possible to do a comparison with this point in previous seasons but in the whole of 2023 there were 715 paddlers who applied for 1068 bibs.

8.6 Bib Application System

An enhancement to the bib system /ranking database will automatically suspend points where a paddler has not applied for their bib, or when a paddler's Home Nation membership lapses. The onus is on the paddler to ensure that their Home Nation membership, and therefore insurance, is current throughout the season. A reminder to this effect is to be communicated to all paddlers via the slalom website. **Action: AG**

8.7 Future Meeting Dates

- Monday 20th May, 7:30pm – virtual
- Saturday 20th July, 10am - BC HQ
- Wednesday 18th September, 7:30pm - virtual
- Saturday 9th November, 10am - BC HQ
- **Saturday 30th November ACM**
- *Sunday 1st Dec – Slalom Coaching Conference (tbc)*
- Post ACM meeting tbc - Sunday 1st December or Wednesday 4th December