



BRITISH CANOEING SPRINT RACING COMMITTEE

Annual Consultative Meeting, Chairman's Report.

This year has been very difficult for many, not least those who have lost friends and relatives through this terrible virus. To those within our sporting family I hope you will accept my condolences. With almost no competitions and no Olympic Games, I also feel strongly for all the athletes and their coaches and families who have lost the opportunity to make use of their talents and all the work that has gone into their training. Hopefully on the day of the ACM there will be some racing at the Royal CC with the Paddling Challenge and that all those that race there enjoy this currently rare outing.

I very sincerely hope that 2021 will see a much better situation.

The development of South Cerney continues albeit with a recent set back in having to cancel the proposed test regatta in September. It did get a test with a training group earlier in that month, and the potential was clear to those taking part. It certainly is a place that fits with the current drive to increase the number of regattas and particularly Regional Regattas. However, as there is a conservation area very close by, we do need to work very closely with the site Board of Trustees to ensure it becomes a long term venue. It would be right to thank Kevin Bowerbank and the Wiltshire Youth CC for all their development work so far.

Mentioning the drive for more regattas I refer to the letters I sent to clubs asking them to look closely at how they could add to the calendar for 2021. I would like to thank all those that did respond, although given the circumstances of this year it's not surprising that there were not all that many. We clearly need more events and the recent Sprint Performance Strategy Review; Task groups have gone into detail as to how to set up a tiered level of regattas to provide a system that can allow athletes to progress. The Sprint Competition Workgroup Review set up by the SRC initially back in 2018, found that this was a necessity as the overwhelming view was one of wanting to compete.

As one of the ACM agenda items there is an update on the current Sprint Performance Strategy Review. There are not many places in the UK providing the same facilities as Holme Pierpont so there is a need to seek out and develop those that can assist in a tiered system.

Whilst looking back at all the years I have been a member of the SRC [since 2006] and that have gone by so quickly, I must thank all the committee members over those years, for the help and guidance I have been given to try and move the discipline forward. Whether my efforts have brought about any success is not for me to say but for others to draw their own conclusions. Suffice to say I have endeavoured with my very best efforts.

I would say that *all* the committee members have added greatly to the good work that has been accomplished.

As ever it might be considered to be unfair to single out those for special mention but at the risk of being so, I would like to mention a few.

Phil Caisley as Chairman of the Regatta Committee and his team have put in a great deal of work to allow us to hopefully run regattas next year by working through the regulations imposed by Covid. Louise Clive has added the job of Treasurer to that of the SRC and the Regatta Committees despite the pressure of opening a new business and follows on with providing considerable clarity to the financial position. This remains very healthy although there are potentially a large number of calls upon the reserves with the updates needed to be able to continue at HPP and many other



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Chairman's Report cont'd

The potential deficit each year cannot continue, and talks are already in hand with the central organisation of British Canoeing on ways to improve facilities and help for those athletes that currently do not receive any.

This brings me to Cathy Wynne. She has been my right arm [and I have felt hers occasionally] as she has tried to keep me on the straight and narrow.

Her work and countless hours as both Secretary and Regatta Chief Official are legendary and the attention to detail is exemplary. All this and she tells me she is only doing her job.

My personal gratitude is considerable.

Margaret Chapman leaves the committee this year but has promised her support as Representative for the Scottish Canoe Association. She has been most helpful as a full and active member of the SRC despite the difficulties in travelling to meetings, also keeping it clear that we are about the whole of the UK and not just England.

It would be fair to say that *all* the members of the SRC and the RC have worked above and beyond the normal call and I thank them for their support.

I should also give thanks to Anna Gray from the BC office for her tireless assistance.

The work of a Chairman is not only to lead and guide, but also to follow the advice and democratic decisions of the committee as a whole. I hope that I have done both.

The work of the Chairman is also to represent the SRC at a number of British Canoeing organisations within the Governing Body.

I have attended a number of such meetings during the past year but there has been a departure from past arrangements in that Ian Wynne as Vice Chairman has attended a number of such meetings to spread the workload and also to get a better insight as to the workings of the whole organisation.

All the BC Discipline Chairs, meet twice a year to consider matters of general commonality. This has proved very useful over the years. Indeed, the basis of the current arrangement follows on from the initial "Competition Liaison Group" started in 1976 and yes, I was there too.

The English Forum, also meets twice a year where the Competition Disciplines and Regional Development Teams also come together with the Board of BC and staff management leaders.

The World Class Management Group also meets twice each year to deal with matters relating to the Performance Department.

The International Panel that creates and oversees the GB Team Selection Policy and GB teams has 6 members.

The SRC Chairman sits as a non-voting observer of this panel.

Whilst not a part of the SRC Chairmans remit I have also tried to advance the level of canoeing at the Albert Dock in East London, being a Trustee for the Management there. The Directors normally meet 4 times a year but in the current situation this has increased to ensure as much activity in a safe situation as is possible. I intend to continue that effort as I still see the venue as one for regatta development.

I close by saying it has been a privilege to be the Chairman of this committee.

Alan Laws