

## Commodore of Canoes report.

### Club vision and goals for 2018

At the beginning of the racing season we set out the following:

#### Club vision

- 1. To become the leading flatwater kayak club in the South-West region:** We are now considered as one of top racing clubs in the south west. With a squad of at least 8 or so elite paddlers and attracting members from as far away as 40 / 60 miles, to join us in our group training sessions.
- 2. To increase overall membership and participation in regional races:** We increased our overall number of members interested in racing, however our participation in regional races could have been better.
- 3. To improve our recreation and social side of the club.** Yes we can tick the box here, our annual walk, group meal and barbeques. With other volunteers it is an area we could improve on.
- 4. To further develop links with other sporting hubs and schools in Bradford on Avon.** We have on a number of occasions invited local clubs to our events, but with limited success. As yet we have no official link with BOA schools, apart from using their facilities.

#### Club Goals for 2018:

- 1. To qualify for the Marathon Hasler Finals in Norwich.** We did qualify, sadly with only two paddlers making the long journey up to Norwich.
- 2. To have 20 club members racing at the National Marathon Championships in Reading.** We had a total entry of 14 paddlers.
- 3. To increase the overall club size to 80 plus members of which 20% are juniors.** We recorded our highest ever number of canoeing members, 106 of which 25% are junior members.

#### Membership

The level of enquires and new members from our latest figures have been surprising, up 12% from last year to 106, of which there are 29 females and 77 male paddlers.

This included a total of 27 junior paddlers. We have at least 6 county members that regularly travel from as far away as 40 / 60 miles to take part in our training sessions.

## **Racing Report**

Throughout the 2018 season many of the South West and Southern regional Hasler races were attended by our paddlers, in particular at Exeter and the Gloucester races, where we had in each race 15 plus BOA paddlers taking part.

The season began with the **Waterside series** of four races, recognised as being the classic build up for the Devizes to Westminster, held on the Kennet and Avon Canal, covering 87 miles and 110 portages.

This year the Waterside series celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and invited those paddlers, complete with their zimmer frames who had entered the very first race to take part under the 'Legend' banner. Four of the original paddlers took up the challenge, two of them no less from BOA, Mike P and Steve P (ex BOA paddler)

**In Race 'A'** – 14 miles,

Veteran K2: 'Legends' Mike P and Steve P - 16<sup>th</sup>.

Women's K2: event Kathy and Roseanne racing for the very first time together – 15<sup>th</sup>.

Senior men's K1: Rob Beer – 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Race 'B'** – 18 miles, Mike and Nigel in the Veteran K2: - 7<sup>th</sup>,

Men's K1: James Escott – 2<sup>nd</sup> and Rob B – 6<sup>th</sup>.

Races 'C' and 'D' were cancelled owing to extreme weather conditions.

**Thameside 2**, 18 miles from Reading to Marlow in horrendously cold conditions.

BOA was represented with three boats:

Rob B, 2<sup>nd</sup> – senior K1

Richard L and Callum G, 1<sup>st</sup> junior / Vet K2.

James E and Connor P, 5<sup>th</sup> senior K2

## **125 mile Devizes to Westminster 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary.**

Sadly for the second time in its history the race has been beaten by the weather, with the River Thames in full flood conditions. For safety reasons the organizers stopped the race at Reading, a distance of 55 miles.

**Rob Beer**, senior men's K1 a four day staged event, started on Good Friday and completed the second stage to Reading. Rob finished 4<sup>th</sup> in a time of 8hrs 38min.

On the Saturday, the start of the non-stop straight through race, many of the top senior K2 paddlers decided to pull out of the event. This included James Escott and his partner Connor Peters, if the race had gone ahead they would

have had a good chance of breaking the 15hr 34min. record. Sounds like unfinished business.

### **BOA race weekend, June 30<sup>th</sup>, the 62<sup>nd</sup> Classic Bath to Bradford race held on Saturday and the Hasler Circuit Race on Sunday.**

A fantastic club effort, made the weekend a huge success both on and off the water, with the glorious weather helped to attract by far our largest turnout of paddlers we have seen for many years. Just over 220 across the two days. In the Bath to Bradford 12 mile upstream race with its five demanding portages, there was an exciting finish on the line between our two Bradford senior K2 crews, James E and Connor P, pipping Stan M and Tom S to the line.

In the Hasler Circuit Race the 4, 8 and 12 mile races, we had a total of **34 club paddlers** taking part, gaining seven - 1st, four - 2<sup>nd</sup> and four – 3<sup>rd</sup> places, a fantastic effort by all.

On Saturday and Sunday the newly acquired club barbecue, which was donated by 'Apetito' Trowbridge, was a sizzling success serving up hot dogs and burgers.

### **Inter-club sprint regatta**

Held in Nottingham on 7-8th July, nine paddlers represented the club at this event.

Our Senior Women's K2 crews of Alana P/Sarah K and Hannah S/Vicky B put in some impressive performances in Women's 'D' category, they then teamed up for the K4 200m event finishing 6th- the first full BoA women's crew for a very long time!

In the Men's categories there were some good performances from Joe S, finishing 2nd and 4th in the Men's 'D' 500m and 200m. James E/Arthur U (Royal CC) managed two 2nd places in the Men's 'B' K2 500m and 1000m races. Tom S/Rob B claimed a 4th place in the Men's 'A' K2 1000m.

In the men's 'A' / 'B' K4 500m event Tom, James, Steve and Rob put in a strong performance finishing 6th.

Overall, a great weekend's racing finishing in a creditable 16th place.

### **Weekend 21<sup>st</sup> / 22<sup>nd</sup> July, National Marathon Championships**

With paddlers from over 50 clubs and with almost 1200 entries over the two days, hosted by Reading CC

Congratulations to our team members who raced in very competitive races.

Notable club successes were:

- Stan M, **Silver**, in the over 54 men's K1

- Stan M and John E, **Gold**, in the over 54 men's K2
- Mike P, **Bronze**, in the over 69 men's K1
- Tom S, 5<sup>th</sup>, in the senior men's K1
- Tom S and Rob B, 5<sup>th</sup>, in the senior men's K2
- In the open mixed K2 event with over 80 plus boats James E and Vicky K. came 8<sup>th</sup>.
- And a special mention to Georgia K competing for the first time in major national event, came 21<sup>st</sup> in the U14 junior ladies K1.

### **Weekend 18<sup>th</sup> / 19<sup>th</sup> August**

There were some notable successes from paddlers at the Wye Descent and Dart Circuit Hasler races. With three 1<sup>st</sup>, and two 2<sup>nd</sup> places.

### **Gloucester Hasler**

On Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> September the season for the 2019 Hasler finals kicked off with the first race of the season held at Gloucester. Bradford sent a team of 14 paddlers. There were some decent results, gaining 5<sup>th</sup> place in the club points. Congratulations to Joe R (junior) for gaining promotion from Div. 7 to Div. 6.

### **Hasler Finals 30<sup>th</sup> September.**

For the fourth year in succession BOA qualified for the biggest club event of the year, the Hasler Finals, with over 1000 paddlers taking part. Unfortunately we had only one paddler from BOA taking part, which was held up in Norwich a long distance to travel to.

Tom Simmons paddling in the elite Div.1 K1, race came 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **Congratulations to Nigel Unwin a British quadrathlon athlete.**

Having represented the club at a series of quadrathlons throughout the year and at the last event of the season in Bude, Cornwall, 15<sup>th</sup> September, the Awesome Foursome Quadrathlon, 800m swim, 30km cycle, 10km kayak and 10Km run. An extreme multi-sport race event. Nigel came 1<sup>st</sup> in the over 50 category and 2<sup>nd</sup> overall in a time 2:51:40, missing out by 14 seconds! Nigel also won the British Quadrathlon series trophy for the over 50's class and the trophy for coming 3<sup>rd</sup> overall in the series.

### **Training Sessions: duathlon series, time trials and handicap races**

The success and development of our racing team has been the result of a series of structured weekly and monthly training sessions, organized by Tom Simmons and James Escott. This included a series of winter and summer duathlons,

monthly time trials and handicap races. The training sessions are based on six days a week programme. We now have three main training groups,

- **Barton** for novice and new paddlers.
- **Packhorse** for intermediate paddlers.
- **McKeever** for Div.'s 1, 2 and 3 paddlers.

We have had on occasions up to 40 plus paddlers on the water for our club sessions.

A big thankyou to Tom and James for organizing the training sessions.

### **Winter Circuit Training Sessions.**

Held up at St Laurence School on Tuesday evenings continue to be very popular with a high attendance from our members. Credit to James and Tom for keeping us in shape.

### **Learn to Paddle Courses**

We completed another very busy season of 'Learn to Paddle' Courses. With an overwhelming response from people wanting to learn how to paddle. All four courses were fully booked. A successful series, earning the club in excess of £2,280 for our equipment fund. We have also gained many new members.

A big thankyou to our club coaches Mike, Stan, John E and assistants John K, Simon K, James M and James E.

### **Duty coaching rota**

For the past year we have been running a system for Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings so that we always maintain a duty coach and one assistant coach to look after our junior and novice paddlers. The scheme has proved very successful with our team of 22 experienced paddlers passing on their skills to others.

### **Boat storage**

Owing to the limited amount available canoe storage space, we are putting in place a stronger set of rules for 2019:

In brief:

- A maximum of two boats per fully paid up member.
- There will be no preferential allocation of racking spaces
- Kayak storage fees per year 1<sup>st</sup> boat £25, 2<sup>nd</sup> boat £35.
- Members who have not renewed their membership by the 31<sup>st</sup> January will be asked to remove their boats.
- Boats must have a number disk attached in order to identify the owner.

A full set of rules will be sent out with the canoeing members' renewal notices.

### **Paddlesport Activity Assistant Programme.**

We are planning to introduce the British Canoeing Paddlesport Activity Assistant Programme which is targeted towards volunteers within our club and is designed to help support and develop their activities within our club.

The aim is to deliver or support specific sessions on and off the water. For example: supporting our novice and new paddlers, organising and running a training group, time trial session timer, videoing of training groups and helping with boat storage etc. James Escott and Harry S. have volunteered to act as the paddlesport activity coordinators for the scheme.

### **Canoeing finances**

Our expenditure for the year was **£5,704** which included two new kayaks, a set of new buoyance aids, training equipment, sportswear and other costs. Our Income from LTP course fees, boat sales, circuit training, donations and race entries etc. was **£5,962**

With increased membership for 2019 we are planning to purchase at least 3 new kayaks.

### **A big thanks to all members**

Especially to the sub-committee:

- To James Escott and along with Tom Simmons for their hard work and dedication, on the racing side for organizing the training sessions.
- To Simon Kay for taking on the difficult job of sorting out the boat racking.
- To Vicky (our welfare officer) for compiling our monthly newsletters.
- To Stan along with Mike for their organizing and coaching the LTP courses, along with help from our other coaches.
- To Derek for helping Mike with the new memberships.
- To John Escott and Harry for looking after the intermediate 'Packhorse' training group.
- Not forgetting all our other club members and parents in working together to achieve a very successful season for the club.

Mike Purchas

16<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2018