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ABOVE ALL ELSE ENCOURAGE THE YOUNG FOLK-This is the mantra of Paddy Maloney of Kilcullen Canoe-club who was honoured at our inaugural canoeing awards last weekend. He has raced for over fifty years, was central to the development of canoe-sport in Ireland, and indeed, it is said that he built the first kayak! Recognising achievement should be a key objective in our canoeing community, and with the support of our main sponsors Great Outdoors, these awards aim to do this. Currently, we have thousands of members who contribute through their own successes and by supporting others. Across the family of canoe-disciplines from competition to adventure, our partners are instructors, coaches, paddlers and support personnel. The commitment of our paddling community is based on a key tenet of sport-that it requires voluntary effort. With this commitment comes the outcomes of participation, performance and podiums. Achievement is not just about first place, glory or triumph, but about maximising potential and a sense of accomplishment. Indeed, Great Outdoors CEO Gerry Collins was an Olympian in the canoe-slalom event at the Munich Olympics in 1972. More recently, they have been title sponsors of the Junior Liffey Descent, the Lower Liffey, the Dublin Canoe-Polo League and supported the Liffey Descent, the Irish Open in Canoe-polo and the World Cup event at Castleconnell. Furthermore, they offer a 10% discount to our members on purchases in the Great Outdoors stores. It is fitting then that they are the title sponsors of the event as they represent achievement and partnership in canoe-sport. The ESB were appropriately recognised for their contribution to canoe-sport (pictured: ESB CEO Padraig McManus receiving the reward) as a key supporter over the past 50 years. It should be noted that without the support of those that put up the perpetual trophies the awards could not have happened. I wish to personally acknowledge Salmon Leap, Celbridge Paddlers, and Richmond canoe clubs (Thanks Sean), the Training Unit, and both Brendan O'Connell and Cooper family. A half-century of commitment is just one contribution that was rewarded with the other awards going to more youthful stakeholders. In conclusion, I wish to congratulate the award winners in all the categories and wish them well in their future paddling. Remember, we are all surfing a wave of success in canoeing, which can inspire us all for the future.



Eamon Devoy Irish Canoe Union President.

SPECIAL ISSUE: GREAT OUTDOORS CANOEING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Paddler of the Year...LEN KELLEHER

Outstanding Contribution Award...PADDY MALONEY

Junior Paddler of the Year...BARRY WATKINS

Outstanding Supporter Award...ESB

Club of the Year...Wild-Water Kayak Club

Polo Sceál-Allez "Le Verts"

P**ADDLER OF THE YEAR (*The Salmon Leap Trophy*)-Winner LEN KELLEHER**-World champion in kayak surf this October, Len is normally more familiar in the freestyle competition environment where he competes with his brother at the World level. At the World event, he finished ahead of over 30 other competitors but furthermore, he stole the show with a stunning move in the final round. The 19 year old talent has a bright future across the disciplines of canoeing. Nominees included the U21 Canoe-Polo Team (bronze medalists at Europeans), Liz Shouldice (7th in World Cup Final in Wildwater), Eoin Rheinisch (Qualified an Olympic place for Beijing & 6th in Slalom Europeans), Neil Fleming & Brendan Maloney (6th in Europeans in Flatwater Racing). All of these are still on the upward curve of their competitive careers in canoe-sport and this augurs well for the future. One can expect the nominees to have their names etched on the trophies in the future.



J**UNIOR PADDLER OF THE YEAR (*The Celbridge Paddler Trophy*)-Winner BARRY WATKINS**-European Junior Champion in Flatwater racing (500m) and medalist in the 2007 Junior marathon Worlds he is the outstanding paddler of his generation. This son of dual Olympian Howard Watkins, has realistic ambitions for London 2012 and has a potential career at World Class level in marathon racing to match. In 2007, his superb performances included the Irish Senior record for 1000m. Other nominees were Lorcan Feeley (15 year old who raced wild-water racing World Championships in the USA), Aisling Conlon (U21 canoe-polo International and multi-disciplinary talent) and Brian Keogh (K2 Partner of Barry Watkins who together finished 5th in Junior Marathon Worlds). All these paddlers have a bright future in their respective disciplines and deserve every support we can provide them with.



C**LUB OF THE YEAR-(*The Richmond Canoe Club Trophy*)-Winner WILD WATER KAYAK CLUB**-Ireland's largest and most active canoe club still has the spirit of adventure despite providing coaching and competition across all the disciplines within the family of canoe-sport. Nominations for Kilcock Canoe Polo Club (exceptional performance in one discipline), Salmon Leap Canoe Club (producing Barry Watkins & Eoin Rheinisch), UCD canoe club (growth in instructors in largest University Club in Ireland) and Tullamore Canoe Club (meteoric rise in last season) were all considered.

C**OACH/INSTRUCTOR OF THE YEAR (*The Training Unit Trophy*)-Winner MARTIN MCCARTHY**-Based in Wild-water kayak club Martin coaches junior and seniors in wild-water racing. He is also Director of Wild-Water Racing at the National level and organises trips abroad for his young athletes. Nominees included the following: Colin Irvine, Ciaran Maguire, Vincent Pierce, Mark McCormack and Gabor Kulscar.

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO CANOE-SPORT (*The Weirgate Trophy-Dedicated in memory of Ken & Violet Cooper*)-Winner PADDY MALONEY-Our octogenarian competitor was honoured as one of the founders of canoeing in Ireland. In the 1950's he constructed the first craft-wooden frames covered in canvas. He promoted canoeing in Kilcullen canoe-club and in the Army at the Curragh, teaching and encouraging generations of paddlers. Those to benefit from his leadership were Brendan O'Connell (Olympic representative in 1972 & 1976) who went on to become a member of the Olympic Council of Ireland and is a former President of the Irish Canoe Union. Paddy, who with his daughter Mary were at the award ceremony, has been seen at Masters events over the past decades. He is well known to anyone who paddled marathon in the 1980's as Paddy would finish with the junior paddlers in a blitz finish. Rumour has it that he may transfer to a canoe (with Brendan O'Connell) in the near future-watch out in the Canadian classes for the paddlers that will never ever give up!



OUTSTANDING SUPPORT (*The Brendan O'Connell Trophy*)-Winner ESB-Our key partner across the disciplines of canoeing over the last 50 years. Ironically, they too celebrate an anniversary, as it is 80 years since the ESB were established with the advent of the Shannon hydroelectric scheme. Both canoeing and the ESB evolved from rivers. In fact, the hydro-stations provided the control that the paddlers needed both in terms of safety and water regulation. This has benefited all canoeists including the 1,000 that pursue the annual pilgrimage that is the Liffey Descent (48 years old now). It is only right that we recognise this partnership with canoe sport with the inaugural award for outstanding support to canoe-sport presented to the ESB CEO Pdraig McManus, by our President Eamon Devoy.



DUBLIN CRYSTAL MAKES THINGS CLEARER IN CANOE-SPORT: The specially commissioned trophies from Dublin Crystal were from their Parnell range and each winners name is on a brass plate on the mahogany base. The perpetual trophies are on display at Great Outdoors canoe and kayak store in Dublin. Each winner received a laser engraved plaque with their award title displayed on it and our six winners keep these mementoes. Three major canoe clubs sponsored trophies, Salmon Leap, Celbridge and Richmond Canoe club (could be aptly described as London Irish) and individual sponsors were the Cooper Family and Brendan O'Connell. Next years awards will be held at the Liffey Descent prize-giving and we hope to see you all there. Dublin crystal can create awards and prizes for races and club awards, and all can be customized to suit your tastes. See www.dublincrystal.com





Achievement Award Winners

Top L-R: Barry Watkins, Adrian Barber & Kevin Murphy , Paddy Maloney Bottom: Martin McCarthy, Paddy Maloney & Len Kelleher, Brendan O'Connell & Len.

COACHING CORNER-COACHES TO QUALIFY IN NOVEMBER: The second round of assimilation occurred on the 24-25th of November. Fifteen paddlers and coaches participated and an observer from NCTC, Fiona Larkin, attended. The sessions included workshop and water based lessons. One session, at sluice, was on creating a safe coaching environment. Kipper and Killian Kelly organised this and took the opportunity to get those more used to flat-water coaching get their toes wet (at the very least). Other sessions included nutrition from Edel Duffy (polo International), the paddling session by Paul Byrne and sport psychology by Nicola McGlade. Experienced coaches including Conor Walsh, Nigel Graham and Alex Doyle attended alongside young paddlers like Mark Coleman and Neil Gibson. It is hoped that with the cooperation of NCTC, soon to be re-branded *Coaching Ireland*, that we can roll-out further levels in 2008, which will be discipline specific. If you require any information on the competition coaching programme please contact canoemedia@gmail.com.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS:			
Dates	Event	Venue	Contact
Sunday 9 th	Wild-Water Race-Classic	Inny, Ballymahon, Co.Longford	www.canoe.ie
Sunday 16 th	Turkey Race	Liffey, Templemills-SLCC	www.canoe.ie
Sunday 13 th Jan.	Wild-Water RaceClassic	Avonmore, Rathdrum-Meetings, Wicklow	www.canoe.ie
<i>See www.canoe.ie homepage for upcoming events and our competition calendar.</i>			