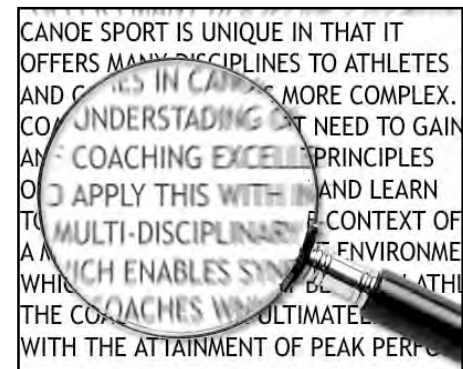


**SUMMER FEVER-BEYOND BEIJING:** The Buzzword for the Summer of 2007 would appear to be “joined-up thinking”-meaning that we should think strategically and not just respond to issues as they arise. With Beijing fever setting in, this is all the more apparent. The five-ring focus of our two Olympic disciplines shouldn’t take away from the love affair we have with our sport. In fact, we could all learn from the photo accompanying this feature-teamwork is how all great things are achieved. This holds true whether a paddler be in an individual discipline like slalom, where you need your team-mates to push in training you or in canoe-polo where team cohesion is paramount. As the season comes to a peak, with the Liffey Descent, World Championships in marathon and slalom, and Polo Europeans, we must look beyond the performance and support the long-term development of the paddlers. Furthermore, we should recognise that performance is never down to one individual but is the sum of effort of a whole group. As the major events of the Season arrive -think of the team, remember those behind the scenes supporting the performance and above all put safety first!



*Eamon Devoy* Irish Canoe Union President.

**UNDER THE MICROSCOPE-MENTAL PREPARATION:** Straffan weir is the Beechers Brook of the Liffey Descent and yet technically it is one of the easier weirs on the Liffey. How does one account for a 50% capsize rate at the first water hazard, which occurs when paddlers are fresh and full of energy? The reason is that the competitive stress of the situation typically interferes with performance rather than facilitating peak performance. Try recall your last Liffey and many of the anxieties of Straffan will return-the crowd, the commentary and perhaps, a swim. Now, how to cope with these stresses and negative images? Firstly, the best way to deal with this is to simulate the experience, which reduces unnecessary stress and allows you to focus on the task at hand. So if you have done the Liffey for the past decade then Straffan will diminish in size with each passing year. The quick fix is to use concentration strategies to focus your attention on the relevant information. Keeping the right focus prevents distraction but you have to know what to attend to. Having specific goals, like where you want to shoot the weir, having a Plan B, and visualising a number for variations of your shoot can help. Ironically, it may help to imagine a capsize or a spin, just to rehearse your recovery plan. Finally, settling into your natural rhythm and pace in the first 800m above the weir will enable you to focus on your goals and achieve them.



## CANOE EZINE AUGUST CANOE EZINE AUGUST CANOE EZINE AUGUST CANOE EZINE AUGUST

**S**PRINT STORY-BEIJING & LONDON A STEP CLOSER: After reaching the A final in the European Championships the World-Class K2 of Fleming and Maloney has established themselves in the European elite. However, consistent excellence is the hardest factor to achieve in sports performance. At the World Championships in Duisburg, they didn't make the A final and consequently their goal of Olympic selection will have to wait till the 2008 qualifier. Nevertheless they have proved themselves as a quality crew this season. At the Junior World Championships in the Czech Republic, in early August, Barry Watkins had underlined his form with a fourth place finish in the 500m. His time of 1 minute 40 seconds was an Irish Senior record, and he was less than a second off a podium place. At the Europeans, he was even more impressive, with gold in the Junior K1 500m and bronze in the 1000m event, creating an Irish Senior record in the process. The future for both Beijing and London is getting brighter. See [www.irishsprintcanoeing.com](http://www.irishsprintcanoeing.com)



**S**LALOM MOVES-CRAIC IN KRAKOW AT U23 EUROPEANS: With Eoin Rheinisch on the other side of the World at a test event in Beijing, our generation London 2012 paddlers took to the artificial course in Crakow, for the U23 European Slalom Championships. Three kayaks: Eamon Rheinisch, Daniel Boxwell and Daniel Menton were joined by Irelands first ever international C2 crew, Stephen Quinn and Rob Shaw. The World class training facilities here are second to none, with a swimming pool, gym, restaurant and accommodation facilities all on site. Former C1 paddler Zbigniew Miazek, the Senior Coach, runs this Polish Olympic kayaking centre, which boasts a 400m indoor section for winter training. The team showed their potential all posting at least one run that would have put them in the semi-finals. The C2, in their first event improved meteorically throughout the 10 day training and racing stint. Best performers were Daniel Boxwell, closely followed by Eamon Rheinish. In the team event, two respectable runs put the Irish kayaks into 7<sup>th</sup> place. Meanwhile in Beijing at pre-Olympic slalom, which was captioned a "Good-Luck" event, didn't live up to its name for Eoin, who suffered from food poisoning. His results in the extreme heat reflected this, nevertheless, he enjoyed the challenge of the dramatic 2008 Olympic course. A team of five athletes, three Mens K1's and two Women's K1's, will compete in the World Championship and Olympic qualifier, in Brazil, this September 19-23<sup>rd</sup>. See <http://cbca.org.br/foz2007/>



**S**AFETY STORY-FAIL IN PREPARATION; PREPARE TO FAIL: The phrase immortalised by Roy Keane in Saipan, certainly holds true for the Liffey Descent, our flagship canoeing event. With up to 1,000 paddlers taking to the waters in the annual Liffey pilgrimage, a journey with a “jungle”, two rapids and 10 weirs, the safety of paddlers and spectators is our priority. On the day we rely upon our volunteer staff to perform rescue at the water hazards, specialists to perform first-aid if required and scrutineering to ensure your craft are river-worthy. As competitors you will have a responsibility to ensure you are prepared for the event, both physically and technically (your boat is up for it). If you have only recently washed the cobwebs out of your boat ensure it is up to the pressure of the Liffey challenge. Take duck-tape and appropriate drinks with you. Check that you’re your paddles and buoyancy aid are up to standard and wear gear that you are used to. On the water, prioritise safety-both yours and your fellow paddlers! The Liffey Descent is a huge opportunity for paddlesport and for some it’s a race and others a canoe-tour-respect one another’s motives. Remember, if you succeed in Preparation; Prepare to succeed!

[www.liffeydescent.com](http://www.liffeydescent.com)



**C**OACHING CORNER-COACHES TO QUALIFY IN NOVEMBER: Last March the ICU in conjunction with the National Coaching & Training Centre, ran the first of our coaching assimilation weekends. The second round of Assimilation takes place on November. This is a fast-track process for former International competitors (5 years experience) and those who were qualified under the previous competition coaching scheme. It is hoped that many of those who participated in March will graduate in November, having logged their coaching hours and received appropriate relevant qualifications (e.g., first aid). Furthermore, this Autumn will hope to roll out an online course for our existing instructors to be recognised as foundation level coaches. Currently, we employ full-time professional coaches in the two Olympic disciplines and our athletes receive technical expertise from a number of other coaches. Several clubs now pay coaches to add to their expertise in particular disciplines, and the number of volunteer club coaches is in excess of fifty. Ultimately, we aspire to creating a system that enables us to develop home-grown coaches at both club and National squad level across the canoe-sport disciplines. Coaching excellence is central to the development of quality performers and our future depends on continuing professional development for our coaches. If you wish to participate in either our online course or feel you are eligible for the assimilation process please contact [media@canoe.ie](mailto:media@canoe.ie).



**CANOE EZINE AUGUST CANOE EZINE AUGUST CANOE EZINE AUGUST CANOE EZINE AUGUST**

**P**OLO SCEAL-WOMEN ON PODIUM: At an International Tournament in Leper, Belgium, the Irish Women team took bronze losing only to the Spanish and French teams. The capped their weekend with a 9-1 win against Belgium, who had beaten them in 2006. More important than the outcome was the timing-this was just three weeks prior to the European Championships, to be held at Thury-Harcourt, Normandy, France. For the first time ever, Ireland will be represented in all events, both Senior and U21. In early August, the U21 Mens team finished seventh at a warm-up event at the same venue in Belgium, and the Senior Mens team have form from last year although they are competing without a number of key players due to injury. New recruits to the sport, the U21 Womens squad are out to gain experience while their Senior counterparts have an opportunity to capitalize on their excellent form and match their best ever performance at Championship level when they finished fifth in 2003. One key variable is that many of this squad have been together for a number of years and have committed to do so for the 2008 World Championships in Canada. This strategic thinking may well bear fruit and we wish all the teams the best at the European Championships, where Adrian Barber will be delegation leader for the Irish contingent, of almost 30 athletes and a huge number of traveling supporters. Bain taitneamh as!



Follow the teams progress at [www.canoepolo.ie](http://www.canoepolo.ie)

<b>FORTHCOMING EVENTS:</b>			
<b>Dates</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Contact</b>
9 <sup>th</sup>	Liffey Descent	Straffan-Islandbridge	Liffeydescent.com
8-9 <sup>th</sup>	World Marathon Championships	Gyor, Hungary	Gyor2007.com
11-16 <sup>th</sup>	European Canoe-Polo Championships	Normandy, France	Canoepolo.com
19-23 <sup>rd</sup>	World Slalom Championships	Brazil	www.canoe.ie
25 <sup>th</sup>	Wildwater Racing	River Boyne, Stackallen-Slane	Brendan Devlin

*See [www.canoe.ie](http://www.canoe.ie) homepage for upcoming events and our competition calendar.*