

FAST & CLEAN-THE FACE OF IRISH CANOEING: 8,000 km from the Liffey, on an artificial channel at the Shunyi Olympic Park, our own Eoin Rheinisch paddled to our best Olympic result yet. His fourth place in the final, put memories of his efforts in Athens behind him, superseded Ian Wileys fifth in Atlanta, and reinforced the belief in our ability to produce World Class paddlers. After his run in the final, we were all on the edge of our seats as the next nine boats paddled the course and with a hint of luck, Eoin took fourth place. His performance off the water was worthy of a medal as he articulated his disappointment with being off the podium with no modicum of modesty. In order to convey to Eoin that in our eyes he was deserving of a prize, upon his return to Ireland the Irish Canoe Union presented him with a gold watch as a memento of his Olympic performance. Undoubtedly, Eoin Rheinisch has become the face of Irish canoe-sport for 2008 and he carried the flag for canoeing in Ireland in the best possible way, by performing to his potential. He did us proud. It will be his own choice if he wishes to continue to the World Championships on Eoin's favoured course in Seu, next season or beyond to London 2012. The quest for us now, given that we have had four individuals in slalom post top 10 results since the slalom discipline returned to the Olympic fold, that we seek to develop athletes for 2016 and beyond. This will become a major theme for us and we are working with our funding partners, the Irish Sports Council, in order to make this happen. In the interim, give slalom a go, try some races this season and maybe you too can be fast and clean.



Eamon Devoy

Irish Canoe Union President.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:			
Dates	Event	Venue	Contact
6-7 th Sept.	Irish Open Canoe Polo	Royal Canal, Kilcock, Co. Kildare	www.canoepolo.ie
13 th Sept.	International Liffey Descent	R. Liffey, Straffan-Islandbridge	www.canoe.ie
19-21 st Sept.	World Universities-Slalom	R. Danube, Bratislava, Slovakia	www.cusai.ie
19-21 st Sept.	World Universities-Flatwater	Belgrade, Serbia	www.cusai.ie
4 th Oct.	Blessington 500-fundraiser	Blessington Lakes, Co. Wicklow	www.siairl.ie
See www.canoe.ie homepage for upcoming events and our competition calendar.			

BLESSINGTON 500 -SPINAL INJURIES IRELAND FUNDRAISER: Following on from the huge success in 2007, where €5,000 was raised, this seasons event will take place October 4th. The aim is twofold, firstly, as a fundraising kayak challenge where participants obtain sponsorship for each mile they complete. Participants collect tokens at check points thus proving the miles done. This meant that first timers along with seasoned kayakers could choose the distance that suited them best, totaling 500 miles in one day. We are hoping for an increase on the 100 participants from last year, and we can guarantee sunshine! The second function of the event is as a tribute to Niamh McGrath who died in a tragic accident in 2005. Niamh introduced kayaking as an option for people with a spinal cord injury in 1998. With Niamh's support and endless enthusiasm, kayaking became a wonderful reality for people who have sustained a spinal cord injury and it has been included as an ongoing part of Spinal Injuries Ireland's venture sports activities programme. We remain truly grateful for all her support and encouragement and hope you will share in this event. Download an entry form from www.siairl.org



FROM BELGRADE TO BRATISLAVA-WORLD UNIVERSITIES TEAM TO MAKE WAVES: The day after the Liffey Descent two Irish teams head for Eastern Europe, one flatwater and another in slalom, for the 6th World University Championships. Breffni Earley of CUSAI (Colleges and Universities Sports Association of Ireland) heads the racing team with sprinters Luke O'Sullivan and Sean Marchetti. Following selection in Scotland last March, a team of four will tackle the big water artificial course at Cunovo, Bratislava. Ciaran Heurteau (Nottingham Trent Uni.), Patrick Hynes (Maynooth) and Eamon Rheinisch (DIT) compete with Pauline Griffin in Women's kayak (Manchester Met). These paddlers comprise the next generation of slalom athletes that exist and we need to build for the future by encouraging juniors into this Olympic discipline. The annual event at Shawsbridge organised by Dymna Carville and Peter Spence is one chance you should take if you want your kids to be part of generation 2016. It is hoped that in future the selection for these teams will occur as part of the Intervarsities event which would add an elite edge to the already successful colleges events. Follow the progress of our student-athletes where you can expect Ciaran Heurteau to excel at <http://www.cusai.ie/>



POLO SCEAL-FLIGHT OF THE IRISH GEESE: The city of Edmonton, Alberta was the host venue for the 8th ICF Canoe Polo World Championships. 23 countries were participating and Ireland were represented in Men's (Captained by Mark McCormack), Women's (led by Caoimhe Ni Chuinn) and U21 Men's (with Capt. Patrick Mooney). Other than the opposition the Irish had to deal with many challenges-firstly, getting boats there-which they did better than most team-thanks to excellent planning by the delegation leader Sean Downes and the efforts of the three teams. Despite being only 3 hours (that's flying time) from Whistler the perennial snowy slopes contrasted with the dry heat of summer in Edmonton. A polar bear, which was in fact the mascot of the Championships, would have died in the temperatures the paddlers had to withstand there. The organization was led by the O'Brien brothers, Daryll and Dale and a contingent of locals all with Irish heritage and this was reflected in the Irish welcome we and our rival teams received. Personal touches from the organizers, listening to our needs, and the ability to solve problems quickly were all integral in their management style which led to a superb event. However, events off the water had a major role in the possibilities for the Irish contingent. The draw was inauspicious to say the least-the U21s had eventual medallists France and Italy, the Women faced the Dutch and Australia to make top 8. Only the latter of our teams got a reasonable draw and they took some scalps along the way. The beat Australia, Portugal, South Africa (twice), Denmark and only a despite a draw early on with Chinese Taipei, they had the chance for top 8 after the first round of matches. They hit the net five times against Italy, who were eventually only three goals ahead (8-5) but took heavy losses to Britain, France and the Dutch. Nevertheless, the team led by coach Val Pierce showed real potential and could never be written off in a match, with 6 losses, 1 draw and 6 wins, can take a lot of positives from the tournament. The U21's coached by Conor Walsh, despite losing their group games finished strongly, trouncing Canada 10-1, defeating Chinese Taipei and losing by one goal to Japan in a 7-6 thriller. Their day will come again one thinks. Mark Cummins coached the Women's team to some great scoring feats with the USA defeated 2-1 and then 6-1. Irishman Karl Wall, former national player is the US Women's coach, was full of praise for our team. An unlucky draw against Singapore in the first round created an insurmountable challenge for the team, who beat Russia, but lost to Iran and Japan in matches that could have gone either way. In the end, 10th place was the finish position for our Men's teams and the Women were 12th, after an unexpected loss to Canada. Eventual winners were the Dutch (Men's) and Britain (in both Women's and Men' U21). It is worth noting that Irelands young" U21 team defeated Britain last year at the Europeans, and our friends across the water seemed to gain from a sport science orientated approach (Strength & Conditioning). Also, France reached the podium in all three categories, so their system is obviously working. Our future in polo is still bright as we have qualified in all three classes for the next World Championships. With additional support the podium won't be so elusive for Irish paddlers in this discipline. See results at <http://www.2008worlds.ca/>

