

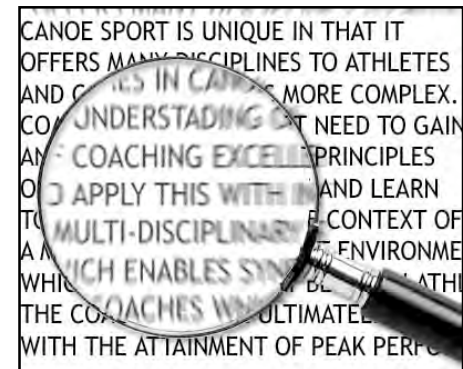
JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS

ELECTION FEVER-FIRST PAST THE POST-Putting yourself forward for election is a risk that few are willing to take. This is not surprising given the pressure involved, the commitment needed if elected and the few benefits that accrue having served your constituents. Naturally, this refers, not to Dail Eireann, but to our own elections for positions within the Irish Canoe Union. At our AGM and discipline specific AGM's the first step in the commitment to serve our fellow paddlers is taken-by going for election. In my experience the ethos and dedication off-the-water matches our extensive on-water feats. In fact, it is worthy for recognition on its own merits and this is something that we will look at over the coming months. What is laudable is that many of these positions are taken up by former elite paddlers, who continue to give something back to the sport after gaining so much satisfaction as competitors. They, however, only comprise one cohort that represents canoe-sport-there are many others-parents, those with specific expertise in administration, child-protection and sport-science. While we are in partnership with the Irish Sports Council and have a number of professional staff, without the commitment and support of our fellow officers and committee members, we the Irish Canoe Union, could not function. Much of the day to day work requires volunteers and the major events we hold, including the Liffey Descent rely heavily upon the sacrifice of a few (relatively speaking) for the enjoyment of many (usually over 1,000 paddlers). In fact, the very foundation of our sport is reliant on volunteers. Invariably our paddling community has been part of a canoe-club, whether at school, college or local level. In our competition disciplines the bedrock of work is done by clubs and their members. As the racing season hots up (and the weather hopefully) we wish to thank in advance all those who give so much to facilitate our events. Elections, like races have winners and losers, but often the journey is more important than the outcome.

Eamon Devoy Irish Canoe Union President.

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE-CHANGING THE RULES GIVES BETTER PERFORMANCE?

One facet of canoe sport that has hit the competition disciplines in recent years were rule-changes. In flatwater racing the width restrictions, that gave k-boats their diamond shape, were removed in 2002. In 2005, slalom underwent a major shift with the minimum length reduced from 4m to 3.5m. The outcomes were desirable in both cases-K-boats-particularly K4s were significantly faster. Although an early version of the four-man kayak sunk when the designer failed to ensure there was enough volume to keep afloat four 100kg paddlers. C-boats became known as pencils and balance became a pre-requisite. While some may say the jury is still out on the changes in slalom it appears that the boats are now more suited to the narrow artificial channels that are now part of the racing circuit. There is no worse feeling than grinding your tail every time you leave a break-out in Seu. Speed tests strangely appear to show that the boats are no slower with a half-metre truncated from the tail and more spectacular turns are now possible-see Eoin Rheinischs 1-stroke breakouts-on a sweep stroke on his website. In general, due to the quest for Olympic recognition slalom has changed most due to rule changes. In 1985, after Ian Wileys first World Championships, reverse gates became downstreams and you no longer had to present your shoulders perpendicular to the gate. Twelve years later and practice runs were abolished, touches reduced to 2-second penalties, and the two runs were now combined to give a total score. Consequently in twenty years the duration of a run halved to 90 secs. More recently, sprint introduced the 200m event and Wild-water racing brought in a sprint event (in 2002). Only minor changes have occurred in canoe-polo with the introduction of a shot-clock one of the most topical suggestions. Perhaps we could all learn a lesson from freestyle where few rules on boat design enable almost continuous revolution. Up the revolution!



JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS

CLUB PROFILE-CELBRIDGE PADDLERS- Founded in 1982 as Templemills Canoe Club by Carol Briscoe, Eamon Burke, Eugene Ryan, Paul Heuston and Desmond MacIntyre, it moved from a back-garden club based on the River Liffey to the Grand canal at Ardclough. In the 1990's the club secured support from UCD and secured a permanent site at Lyons estate. In their 25th year, they now have four containers for boat storage, recently installed changing and shower facilities and have planning permission for the development of a clubhouse. With over 150 members, sometimes there can be over 40 paddlers on the canal at any one time, mainly comprising junior paddlers and their parents. Elder lemons can be seen putting in the miles each Summer in the wake of their younger and typically faster counterparts. What makes this club different from most in Ireland is the number of junior paddlers performing at a high level in flatwater paddling. For three years, under the guidance of Chairperson Tom Smyth, the club won the Ribadesella Trophy (Top marathon club) and can boast paddlers such as Neil Fleming, Sean Marchetti and Paul McKay.



The legacy of the club has been its offspring as well as its current members. The Coopers were all instrumental in the club over the years, although an off-shoot club run by Fergus emerged. Digger, Gary Mawer, and Sean Martin are among the former members. Although not exclusively a marathon-sprint club, this is the main trend and the base on the canal has been developed to create a safe paddling environment (there's a 1K floodlight section of canal for Winter training). A recent visitor, World Champion in Wildwater racing, Guillaume Alzingre said the club had the most valuable of all assets-the pursuit of excellence by working together. Off the water expertise abounds with coach Eugene Ryan, Eamon Devoy, Eamon Fleming and a committee of twelve-they could be called the apostles given their faith in canoe-sport. According to Gerry Keane, who was Chairperson for the last seven years, the club's greatest achievement was in organising the national pre-special Olympic canoeing games and the canoeing event in the Special Olympics. "We did get it right, and it was generally recognised that the atmosphere at the Salmon Leap venue was exceptional, even when measured against the high standard of the other Olympic events. However, we all recognised that we weren't the important people and the few days belonged to the athletes and their families." The club has been involved at committee level across the disciplines and integral in hosting the Wildwater World Cup events and the Annual Turkey race (last year raised €1,500 for SVP). A penchant for fundraising akin to that of our Taoiseach, we have had whip-arounds for our international athletes for over 20 years. More recently, a sponsored paddle from the sea to the Shannon, was worth about €18,000 for the development of the club facilities and they continue to fundraise with this in mind. Eamon Devoy says the club has evolved from a nursery club-developing young paddlers for other clubs-to being a major player in racing canoeing in Ireland. The future is bright and after a quarter of a Century a youthful enthusiasm still abounds in Celbridge Paddlers.

POLO-BREWING UP A STORM: Top class canoe-polo and not the high winds were the abiding memory of the first day of the Docklands tournament and torrential rain failed to dampen the spirits of the throngs at the Carrick Cup event. First order of the day is to congratulate the organisers of each event, Nikolay Valchinkovski and Adrian Barber, who controlled everything admirably except the weather. They promise they will sort this out for next year! Carnage (it's a team) reigned at Docklands and Kilcock were supreme at Carrick, with Swink runner-ups in both. The standard across the divisions was higher than ever with top class goalkeeping on show. Both the Mens and Womens squads are busy with regular squad training and the latter will compete in Mechelen this month. All eyes for the National teams are firmly focused on the European Championships, in Normandy, this September. In the interim, the standard at home continues to improve. www.canoe polo.ie



JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS

FAMILIAR FACES-EAMON DEVOY: Having recently been elected General Secretary and Treasurer Designate of the Technical Engineering and Electrical Union, re-elected on the committee of Celbridge Paddlers and in case you didn't know, elected unopposed for another three year term as president of the Irish Canoe Union, Eamon could be said to suffer from election addiction. Eamon brings the diplomacy and leadership required to lead Ireland's largest craft union with over 45,000 members, to steer the way within our paddling community. He has put his stamp on many of the major events that we have organised in the past decade-Chorus Wild-Water World Cup, Liffey Descent, Canoeing events at the Special Olympics and most of the junior events held in Ireland in the last 20 years. During the sometimes hectic moments of the Shannon event, Eamon would answer the phone any time of the day or night-unfortunately for Eithne his wife, Eamon is a heavy sleeper and she would have to answer the phone. Like all the events Eamon has helped lead canoe-sport through he gives his incredible commitment and candid nature. Problems are challenges and dilemmas are decisions-it's a simple but effective mantra. The same mind-set brought Eamon into adventure sport-caving and potholing first, then over two decades ago he introduced his children to canoeing and became an active paddler himself. His sons Aidan and Shane participated in slalom, marathon and wild-water. Shane competed internationally in the latter discipline as a junior and showed great promise. Daughter Sheena is still an active marathon paddler but her Dad appears to be catching up. Not contented to be on the bank, Eamon is among the group of wiser (or elder-they're know as the fossils) paddlers that pounds up and down the canal. Off the water, he played a key role in the development of Celbridge Paddlers, was Secretary of the Marathon Racing Committee for 10 years up to 2005, and then nominated to the position of President of the Irish Canoe Union and elected unopposed last month. They say you only really know Eamon if he is willing to play the spoons in your presence, a man worth knowing.



PADDLER PROFILE-NEIL CAFFREY: For some paddlers, canoe-sport is something you do for a couple of years and for others...it's a lifestyle choice. Neil is first in line among the latter, he enjoys boating, coaching and racing, is a former canoe-polo international, qualified the spot for Ireland for Athens 2004 and is one of our two World Class slalom kayakers. I can testify that he's also a TETRIS ace, a mean indoor skateboarder and as forerunner at the Wildwater World Cup in 2005, set the fastest time for an Irish paddler. Undoubtedly, he's a real paddling talent, says Richard Fox, five-times World Champion. Neil now resides in Gamston, near Nottingham, and went back to college recently to continue his studies in engineering. Last year he was 12th in the Europeans and won the coveted British Slalom title (following illustrious names such as Fox, Pearce & Raspin). His girlfriend, Claire Harrower, is among the group of elite paddlers he coaches. He trains with the British team and has received great support from their system, and has an array of International training partners including Matthias Rothmund (Switzerland). How did he get into paddling-Sessions at Blessington Leisure Centre was the first step. More recently his brother John has provided coaching and family is at the centre of his paddling World. At one stage, the Caffrey family were turning up on masse at Irish races, not just to support Neil, but to organise the event. The future- Rivalry is not the main target-with himself and Eoin proven World Class racers the focus isn't on one another anymore, they could take first and second in a major Championship-so the focus is on performance. Still, watch the rivalry carefully as Neil is currently outpacing his rival and ahead of Olympic silver medallist Campbell Walsh in the British standings. The World Cup series in July will be a real barometer of form for the showdown at the World Championships to be held in Brazil in September. Neils' aim is to make top ten in the Worlds and few would bet against that. See Neils profile on www.canoe.ie



DID YOU KNOW-BRINGING EXCELLENCE TO OUR WATERS OPENS DOORS FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

In the last twenty five years, Ireland has hosted World Cup events in Wild-water (Shannon, 2005), Slalom (Sluice, 1998), Marathon (1994, 1988) and European Championships in canoe-polo in 2003 and major events in the emerging discipline of kayak-surf. Together with our regular flagship events, the Liffey Descent, the Irish Open in Canoe-polo and the Big Boat Bonanza at Jackson's, these events offer the next generation an opportunity to view the best of our paddlers and the best at World level. This has a direct impact on paddlers development in canoe-sport. The photo highlights volunteers Clare Vance, Edel Duffy, Louise O'Brien, Pauline Griffin and Ashling Franzoni at the European Canoe-Polo Championships, who since that event have all become part of the National Women's team, either as an athlete or team manager. In addition, these events give our event organisers a chance both to contribute to the International Calendar in a unique way and put the organisational and administrative skills to the test. It should be noted that we also hosted the canoeing events in the Special Olympics at Salmon Leap Canoe in 2003, for which the organisers were commended for their organisational capabilities in this unique event. The Chief of Operations on that day, Eamon Fleming, has been asked to assist in the organisation of the 2007 Special Olympics, being held in Asia. Hosting of International events does more than this. It can anchor a sport in a community-the development of canoe-polo in Kilcock since is testament to this. The club successfully harnessed the momentum of the event to continue local involvement and develop their excellent clubhouse. Another discipline , the Chorus Wild-water World Cup at Castleconnell had a 30 minute film of the event broadcast on the Setanta television network. So the legacy hosting International events is mani-fold. What events will we hold in the future? Marathon looks likely to return to Ireland, and both canoe-polo and wild-water are possibilities. If we are to inspire our athletes to aim for the top level of canoe-sport, there is no greater inspiration.



WILDWATER WAVES-EUROPEANS & WORLD CUP SERIES:

Mick Feeney made a welcome return to team management supporting three competitors at the Championships in Bihac, Bosnia, in May. Liz Shouldice put in a credible performance in her first race outside of Ireland. Keith McGuirk finished 17th in the classic event within 11% of the class winner. The sprint race saw Tadhg MacIntyre finish ahead of Keith but both made significant time errors. For the first time in the sport a sprint team event was held, yes, a sprint team event which provided for carnage on the course. The on-the-water entertainment was excellent despite the classic course being flat and the sprint site resembling Castleconnell rapids. Off the water, ECA Chairman Albert Woods made the point that to develop the sport by having events in regions requiring investment was a laudable cause. No one could disagree with this principle given the incredible welcome by the locals. The World Cup series now takes off with events on the river Saalach in Lofer, Austria, river Tepla in Karlovy Vary, Czech and the Dorea-Baltea in Italy. A team of 10 athletes, mainly from WWKC, competes across the series. The team includes Mens K1: Sean MacIntyre (ULKC), Paddy Hynes (Newbridge) and from WWKC, Cillian Duggan, Jason Fitzpatrick, Simon McGarry, Kevin and Vincent Pierce, C1's Keith McGuirk (WWKC) and Tadhg MacIntyre (Celbridge) and Womens Kayak: Liz Shouldice (WWKC). Finally, Lorcan Feeley of Salmon Leap will compete next month in the Junior World Championships in the U.S.A. www.ivreacanoaclub.com



JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS JUNE NEWS

MARATHON MOVES: Dara Fleming, Lorcan Feely and David Buggy have been the stars of the marathon junior series and the Great Outdoors Junior Liffey Descent. The latter event had over 150 participants with tough competition across all the classes. In the past, all of our flatwater Olympians in the past 20 years have been class winners in this prestigious event. Recent winners include Jenny Egan (World Junior medallist 2005), and current Olympic prospects, Brendan Maloney and Neil Fleming (former Junior World Champion). Ireland continue to produce World Class talent in marathon racing and this race is central to this paddler pathway, says Michael Scanlon. He continues: "This is one of the biggest events in the canoeing calendar and the fact that it is a junior competition shows the healthy state of Irish canoe sport." "Our past Olympians have typically all won this event, the current Olympic prospects are former winners, so don't be surprised if this years winners turn up on the start line in London in 2012," says the director of marathon racing, Gary Mawer. Class winners were Dara Fleming, Aine Fleming, Declan Kedney (Thomastown) and Lorcan Feeley (SLCC, pictured). A prize courtesy of Great Outdoors was also awarded for the club with the most participants. The €500 voucher was was shared between two clubs. Junior series events have had up to 60 competitors taking part, at Newbridge, for example. This continues to be the breeding ground for our future generation of marathon paddlers and Eamon Devoy is encouraging all the disciplines to have specific events for underage athletes to keep this development pathway open. On the Senior front, the SLCC long distance event took place in windy conditions and the turnout was good, particularly in the lower division. With the World Cup series kicking off in July, it appears that we will have competitors in the junior category and this team will be announced shortly. www.irishmarathoncanoeing.com



FORTHCOMING EVENTS:			
Dates	Event	Venue	Contact
June 9-10 th	Wildwater-World Cup I-II	Saalach, Lofer, Austria.	Okv.at
June 14-17 th	Slalom-European Champs	Liptovsky-Mikulas, Slovakia	euro2007.ktklm.sk/
June 15-17 th	Sprint International Bochum	Bochum, Belgium.	Irishsprintcanoeing.com
June 16-17 th	Wildwater World Cup II-IV	Karlovy-Vary, Czech Rep.	Kanoemattoni.com/wc2007
June 23-24 th	Wildwater World Cup V-VI	Dorea-Baltea, Ivrea, Italy.	Ivreacanoaclub.com
June 24-28 th	Polo-Mechelen International	Hazelwinkel, Belgium.	Canoepolo.com
June 27 th -July 1 st	Sprint-European Champs	Pontevedra, Spain	Irishsprintcanoeing.com
June 30-July 1 st	Slalom-World Cup I	Prague, Czech Rep.	slalomtroja.cz