

# Agenda for the Coaching Development Group Meeting

8<sup>th</sup> March, 2022



## **Apologies:**

Alan Nevard, Annie Davis, Rob Davis, Catherine Dacey, Mike Lambourne

## **Present:**

Ian Dann, Paul Newman, Bryn Price, Wally Shave, Martin Hall, Matt Clegg, Geoff Licence, Mark Harris, Kathy Sypliwczak, Larry O'Connell, James Copeland, Steve Chinn, Matt Simmonds, John Simmonds, Mark Corti, Jacob Baisley, Melissa Sullivan

## **Minutes:**

### **1. CPD needed? Reschedule first aid course**

All coaches present were up to date, with the exception of those who were booked on the recently-cancelled First Aid Course. **Kathy Sypliwczak** offered to re-arrange, ideally finding a date that those booked on the previous course are able to make.

### **2. Beginner Courses – any changes suggested for this year?**

- It was suggested that brief mention of the risks of cold water should be made during the course. It was noted that Discover-award paddlers should only be paddling with more experienced members anyway, but this is probably still worth mentioning.
- The pool sessions are a great resource to build capsizes confidence for new members fresh from the beginner course. They should still perform capsizes in the river as part of the course.
- It was reported that **Jacob Baisley** experimented with changing the order of the sessions during longer courses (Jacob not present for this discussion). It was suggested that on 1-day or 2-day courses, having the more-intensive sessions 1 & 2 consecutively was hard work for students, and that running session 1 & 3, then 2 & 4 after gave more time for consolidation and mental recovery. Worth considering by coaches running these courses.

### **3. Explore Award – any changes suggested for this year?**

- Cold water risk awareness was again raised. This is already part of the MCC Syllabus but worth emphasising.
- Some discussion around required experience between gaining the Discover Award signing up for an Explore Award course. This should be mentioned at the end of the Discover Award course, when telling them how to join the club

and what the next steps are.

- Some feedback that most people who wanted their Explore Award already have it; also that the main driver for this was to get a Club key, which led people to attempt the award before they were ready.
- There was some feedback that the levels for passing the Explore Award weren't consistent across coaches. It was noted that this is partly inevitable due to the way BC specify the course. **Mark Corti** to contact coaches offering these courses and arrange a discussion.

#### 4. PAA trips – any changes suggested for this year?

- Good feedback about how valuable these have been. The Sunday rota seems to be working well. **Mark Corti** to liaise with Catherine Dacey about when to re-introduce led paddles on Wednesday evenings also.
- There are lots of regular paddles being organised via private WhatsApp groups, e.g. Paddle & Pint group, Ladies who Lunch, Monday Paddlers, etc. This is fabulous – the more paddling the better – but concern was raised that the private nature of these makes it harder for new paddlers to join in. Some inconclusive discussion around this; this is only likely to be an issue once beginner courses start to run and new paddlers join the club. One for further consideration.
- **James Copeland** is going to restart his successful PAA paddles aimed at less-confident paddlers shortly. **Geoff & Norman** still publicising their regular paddles on the website.

#### 5. Explore Award course dates

**Alan Nevard** offered to run a course, dates TBC.

#### 6. Beginner Course dates

- **Mike Lambourne** offered a course May 12/13<sup>th</sup>
- **Jacob Baisley & Melissa Sullivan** offered a course May 15&22<sup>nd</sup>
- **Alan Nevard** offered 1-day courses on 7<sup>th</sup> May and 2<sup>nd</sup> July
- **Mark Corti & Alex Corti** to run a course in April
- **Wally Shave** offered a course dates TBC
- **Matt Clegg** offered a course with **Anj Hill** dates TBC
- Several others said they'd get in touch and offer dates. You know who you are!
- **Jacob Baisley** will offer a canoe-specific beginner course during the season
- **Steve Chinn** with **Melissa Sullivan** will offer SUP-specific beginner courses during the season

#### 7. Kids Club

**John Simmonds** will again take the lead in organising this, and requested that the fantastic support he got last year continues. Start date TBC but hopefully this will be announced before beginner courses start.

**John Simmonds** also offered to run a Kids-Only Beginner Course to feed the Kids Club. These were a huge success before – coaching kids is different to adults, and

it is felt that a combined group can be hard to coach effectively. Again, grateful for support on this.

## 8. Other courses needed?

- **Kathy Syplywczak** is keen to organise a Coastal Navigation course; several people already interested. **Paul Newman** can offer this although can't issue the certificate; **Rob Davis** can offer this professionally and can issue the certificate. **Kathy Syplywczak** to organise. Noted that Committee approval needed for chargeable external providers; Kathy to liaise with **John Simmonds** if necessary.
- **Bryn Price** reported that he and **Catherine Ayling** were planning to run several Intro to Racing courses in April aimed at existing members, with the aim of preparing them for a Hasler race in mid-May. Dates TBC.
- **FSRT** – desirable to run these. To be reconsidered next meeting.
- **First Aid** – see above
- **Rescue Practice** – informal rescue practice sessions were well-regarded last year. **Melissa Sullivan** to run one Sunday June 5<sup>th</sup> 11:30am – 1pm
- **Intro to Sea Kayaking** – very successful invitation from HDCC last year, where they made us hugely welcome. We've joined them on their Lee Valley trip and invited them on a couple of WW trips. It would be nice to repeat the experience, but we should definitely invite them again.
- **Core Coach** – **Wally Shave** and **Jacob Baisley** are both keen for this. **Mark Corti** to gauge interest and hopefully organise.
- **Paddlesport Instructor** – we ran loads of these last year so no immediate demand. Revisit later in the year.
- **PAA training** – **Jacob Baisley** to gauge interest and run as required
- **Bowl Water** – there was interest in a paddle at Bowl Water. We believe you can only paddle there with Bowl Water Canoe Club. **Bryn Price** to contact them and explore a joint activity.
- **Advanced Canoe Leader Training** – **Jacob Baisley** is booked on a course for this in May and would welcome anyone interested in joining him

## 9. Lessons Learned from Estuary incident. See incident report document for agreed facts.

Lots of thoughtful discussion around this. The consensus take-home points were:

- Know your remit. British Canoeing describe exactly what kind of water different qualifications are intended to operate on – see <https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/uploads/documents/British-Canoeing-Environmental-Definitions-Deployment-Guidance-for-Instructors-Coaches-Leaders-Apr18-v1-1.pdf>  
This is emphasised in all leadership and coaching qualification courses so all coaches & leaders should be aware of their remit. **Mark Corti** to publicise this to CDG.
- Stay within your remit. When you're leading a group, your participants have placed their trust in you and may not be able to assess the risks themselves. (This does not apply for peer paddles when you're out with friends of similar ability)

- BC's guidance explicitly states that you must take into account your own experience as well as that of the group. This may reduce the level of your remit (but can never increase it!)
- We are part of a paddling community with a wealth of experience. If unsure, listen to advice from more-experienced paddlers.
- Verbalising your remit and your dynamic risk assessment during your paddle briefing was suggested as a good way to ingrain the culture of good practice, and empower group members to question leader's decisions. For instance: *"I'm a Paddlesport Leader and qualified to lead you on lakes up to 200m from the bank, in no more than Force 3 onshore winds. The forecast is for light breeze blowing from the North, and we'll be staying close to the shoreline so we're good to go."*
- Being correctly equipped and calling the coastguard early prevented worse problems.

#### **10. Incident reporting – how, who to.**

- All incidents requiring medical attention should be reported in the first instance to the committee using the form on the "Contact Us" part of the website.
- A no-fault Incident Report for British Canoeing can then be prepared, with the committee taking the lead and soliciting input from all involved.
- British Canoeing use these reports to identify patterns and prepare advisories as necessary (for instance, the recent advisory on hazards from shallow-water SUP use was based on a pattern of incident reports in this environment).

#### **11. Racing Risk Assessment**

Ongoing. Communication required.

#### **12. Plans and ambitions for this year**

Postponed due to lack of time; mostly covered above under "Other Courses needed".

#### **13. AOB**

##### **1. Blankets**

**Kathy Syplywczak** requested blankets to be available to re-warm cold paddlers. **John Simmonds** to organise with committee.

### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

**Thursday, April 21<sup>st</sup>**

**6pm: Peer Paddle (sharing tips on beginner course games, techniques etc)**

**7:30pm: Meeting**