

Agenda for the Coaching Development Group Meeting

25th August 2023



Present:

- Matt Clegg, Larry O’Connell, Steve Chinn, Jon Lock, Anj Hill, Mark Corti, Paul Fife, Charlotte Fife

Apologies

- Mike Lambourne, Rob Davis, Annie Davis, Carolyn Hawkes, Alan Nevard, Sarah Kemsley, Geoff License, John Simmonds, Wally Shave, Mike Lambourne

Minutes of the Meeting

1. Beginner Courses

1. Feedback

Booking has been erratic this summer, with some courses oversubscribed and others almost empty. Bookings have generally come in last-minute, making it tricky to provision, and there have been an unusual number of cancellations and reschedulings.

Matt Clegg, Jon Lock, Larry O’Connell have run courses this year and all related that these had gone well, with positive responses from participants and many new members.

2. New dates

We’ve got two courses already planned for September, one weekday daytime and another weekend. These have plenty of spaces. **Jon Lock** may run another daytime 10am-2pm course. It seems there may not be demand for any more.

2. PAA Paddles

No direct feedback but these seem to be going well.

3. Explore Courses

Demand for Explore courses seems low this year. **Mike Lambourne** and **Alan Nevard** have both run courses, and have another planned in September. Demand for improver coaching in general seems low. Some discussion around this, summarised as follows:

- It was felt that there wasn't enough communication about either the benefits of Explore Award and further coaching more widely, and that perhaps there was a disconnect between the coaching group and the wider club in this regard.
- There was no broad agreement on how best to solve this. The website isn't looked at by most people; Facebook is less popular than in the past; and there's no way of posting automatically to the Club WhatsApp group. **Matt Clegg** may have some suggestions on how to improve this as part of the new website.
- One suggestion was to post more on the WhatsApp group; it's unclear how many of the coaching group actively read or post on this group.
- Another was for beginner-course coaches to take a personal interest in their students and pro-actively follow up with them after a year or so.
- It was recognised that people are more likely to do courses if it is suggested personally to them, rather than through an untargeted club communication channel. The PAA paddles were suggested as a good opportunity to do this.
- **Mark Corti** to promote the upcoming Explore & Touring Award on the website, and encourage those leading PAA paddles to suggest further coaching to their paddlers.

4. Touring Award

Larry O'Connell is now signed off to deliver these courses – congratulations! He described them as "Explore Plus".

Mike Lambourne is running another course in September.

5. PSRC

Mark Corti is now signed off to run these, and there is a course currently ongoing. Only 3/8 spaces were booked the night before the course, rising to 6/8 on the morning of the course. Without the junior club, this number would be lower. There is the possibility for a one-day weekend date before the weather gets too cold, but see above for low demand for courses.

6. Junior Club

Matt Clegg & others related these are going well. **John Simmonds** still intends to offer ongoing Explore Award assessment for the older ones but is yet to arrange this.

7. Racing

1. Police Cadets + Young Offenders update – Bryn Price

No information

2. Hasler Winter Series info

November 19th. No further information.

8. Pool Sessions

Mark Corti related that these have been incredibly poorly attended, with only one paddler in August. Location was recognised as an issue - **Jon Lock** and **Anj Hill** may try to find another pool in a more central location. Tuesday is also not ideal as previously discussed; we hope to move to Thursdays from October, but this depends on the pool.

1. Cover needed for September 19th

Jon Lock offered to run this.

9. Fun Sessions

Kathy Syplywczak related by email that these all ran and went well, and sent a huge thank-you to all those who had helped make them such a success for the voluntary groups we helped onto the water this year.

10. Outstanding from Previous Meeting:

1. T-Shirts:

John Simmonds related by email that these would be distributed next week.

11. Date of Next Meeting

TBC by email – early October

12. AOB

None

13. Feedback on New Boat Shed

The meeting adjourned to the new boat shed and we spent some time lifting boats in and out the two racking systems and discussing their various merits. Discussion summarised below:

- It is fabulous that this is finally nearly ready.
- It was unanimous that the vertical racking was significantly preferable to the horizontal racking.
- It was assumed that longer boats (sea kayaks, canoes, longer touring boats unsuitable for vertical storage) would be stored elsewhere. There is space along the internal wall for approx 5 long boats on horizontal racking, but it was felt this space was probably better used in another way.
- It was unclear whether SUPs are intended to be stored in this shed, and no consideration was given to the best storage for them.
- No consideration was given to storage of other kit – BAs, paddles, etc.
- Comments on horizontal racking as follows:
 - it wobbles and was felt not safe (particularly apparent at the near end)
 - it is flimsy; several slats already broken. It cannot support a person's weight – it will be climbed on to reach kit in the centre of the top shelf.
 - The density is very low compared to vertical racking, mostly because of the wasted space above, but also due to the intrinsic nature of horizontal racking
 - It is the only way of storing very long boats; however, there isn't space to turn very long boats to exit the doors, so this is irrelevant in this shed.
 - It is hard to alter shelf heights as boat fashions change
- Comments on vertical racking as follows
 - Vertical racking felt to be very robust and smart.
 - Stress-testing was done to try and make boats fall over, e.g. by kicking away the bottoms or pulling them over. The boats remained solid – the vertical

racking was felt a secure way of storing boats.

- Long boats stored at the sides (where the roof is lower) catch on the steel girders; longer boats should be in the central racks.
- It is easy to remove and return even long boats (e.g. Ethos 10) from the vertical rack. This was tried by various people both single- and double-handed. With good technique it was easy and safe, with little strength required. Good technique needs to be taught to all club members, then ongoing during beginner courses, and backed up with signage. It was felt this is an opportunity to improve manual handling at the club.
- Rubber matting on the floor would help to stop boats sliding when raising them to the vertical. Some discussion that this should be on the walkways between racks only rather than under the racks themselves, to aid removing the boats. This needs experimentation with some matting.
- There should be lighting above each walkway. The central lighting leaves gloomy areas in the side walkways and this will be exacerbated as more boats are emplaced.
- The hooked bungees are a good solution to securing different-sized boats, but are a significant hazard particularly to shorter paddlers. They will get twanged and the metal hook flying at eyeball height is unsafe. There was also a concern regarding longevity. Other suggestions include a knotted bungee with some kind of cleat on each rack; chain; cord.