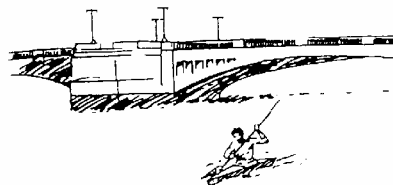


# Reading Canoe Club

The Warren, Caversham, Berkshire, RG4 7TH  
Telephone: 0118 947 7643



## Annual General Meeting

1730hrs on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2007

Held at Reading Canoe Club, The Warren, Caversham,  
Reading RG4 7TH

**Present:** Club Committee plus 50 members

**Apologies:** Peter Burbridge, Tom Patterson

### Minutes of 2006 Annual General Meeting

Nick Daniels, seconded by Anita Seaford, proposed acceptance of the previously circulated minutes of the Club's 2006 Annual General Meeting. The minutes were **unanimously agreed** without comment.

### Chairman's Annual Report – Dan Seaford

As Club Chairman, Dan welcomed everyone to the meeting.

He summarised 2006/7 as being one of 'steady' progress for the Club as it enters its tenth year in the current building and 54<sup>th</sup> year as a Canoe Club. He recognised the debt of gratitude owed to those with the vision and drive to get the Clubhouse built and hoped this would be recognised in the coming year.

Following membership debate at the previous AGM a small sub-group of the Committee had been established to review site security and safety issues and Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks of people working directly with younger members undertaken.

A successful application by the Club, with significant input from Anita Seaford, saw the Club receive a massive £15 000 grant from Radio 2Ten as their nominated Kids Charity. Using this grant the Club was able to purchase a motor launch and 3 new Vadja K2s for training use.

Dan recorded his thanks to Bernard Perrett who had stood down after many years as one of the Club's three lease trustees. He was pleased to confirm that Ron Billingham had agreed to replace Bernard. During the year Reading Borough Council, as landlords, increased the site lease rent to £1200 pa (from £1000). However, discussions continue on an amendment to the lease that would allow them twice yearly access to the neighbouring Caversham Court site, in return for an extension to the lease period.

Maintenance of the Club house is an area that the Committee acknowledges needs to receive an increasing amount of their time as the building fabric moves from being 'new' to 'used'. During the year a significant amount of money was spent in replacing the showers

with arrangements in place to reseal the ladies changing room floor before Christmas. To keep future increasing costs to a minimum Dan thought it inevitable that greater reliance will need to be placed on members prepared to contribute their technical and trade skills to maintain the fabric and services of the building.

Dan expressed his disappointment that the year had not seen an increase in the numbers of Club coaches. His ambition had been to have all members attend at least one coaching related course. He congratulated Brian Greenham and Andy Rawson who had both passed a power boat course, and expressed his thanks and appreciation to the coaches for the contribution and personal time they had given over the year for the benefit of the Club.

Dan announced that having been Club Chairman for the past 5 years he had decided that it was time for him to stand down. He wished all members and the Club well for the future.

### **Treasurer's Annual Report – Dave Sackman**

Dave highlighted key components of the summary of accounts that had previously been made available to members. These included:

- Improved management of club finances through increased use of the deposit account
- A closing balance for the club of £31.3k, slightly (£1.3k) down on the previous year
- Overall income of 49.6K, down £13.5k on 2005/6, was largely due to:
  - Receipt of the Radio 2Ten grant of £15k, all of which was used to buy equipment
  - Hall hire income down by approximately a third following last year's AGM resolution to not allow its use for external parties
  - No income from Nationals
  - A reversal in the membership increases seen over recent years
- Expenditure during the year of £49.9k, down £1.8k on 2005/6, included:
  - Purchase of £15k of equipment from the 2Ten grant
  - Maintenance costs of £16k which included £10k for refurbishment of showers
  - Increasing general expenses costs, up £1.5k to £6.8k
  - The part year effect of moving to an external cleaning contract
  - A year on year £2.7k benefit from regularising Utility expenditure the previous year
- Overall, expenditure slightly exceeded income to give an operating loss for the year of £0.3k

Dave summarised the year as being one where the club had been sustained by income from holding the Nationals the previous year in the face of falling hall hire income and increasing maintenance and cleaning costs.

In questions from the floor it was suggested that the club should look to see if discounts would be available from arranging Insurance through the brokers used by the BCU. Responding to another question Dave said that he was not aware of what grants might be available to the club and confirmed that no major grant application was currently outstanding. He agreed this was an area the Committee could consider further.

### **Membership Secretary's Report – Abi Coulson**

2006/7 saw a 7% fall in membership from 195 the previous year, down to 181. However, as 2005/6 was acknowledged to have been an exceptional year, up 26% on 2004/5, the underlying trend is still for increasing membership year on year. Over the last three years membership has increased by 46%.

The decrease in the year's membership was mainly from a reduction in the number of juniors, thought to be largely due to the summer floods adversely affecting the number of

new entrants to the sport.

Abi reported that boat storage space is now at a premium and consequently the Club is faced with a number of options which she summarised as:

- remove the sliding scale for boat storage charges as a disincentive for multiple boat owners
- build a concrete pad to store the Club trailer outside
- provide external racking for open canoes
- charge more for the wider open canoes

Following a debate of these options Phil Ede proposed (Nigel Frankland seconded) that the sliding scale be removed and all boats be charged £30 for storage – this was **agreed** by a show of hands.

The committee's recommendations for 2008 Membership fees were debated, ie Adult £170; Family £340; Junior (Full)/Senior/Over 65 £75; Associate £20.

The background to the recommendations were summarised as:

- last year's AGM decision to not accept bookings from non-members for parties had resulted in a reduction in income of approx. £400 pm
- the move to contract cleaners to ensure cleaning consistency had resulted in an expenditure increase of £2000 pa
- increasing maintenance and administrative costs for the Clubhouse can be expected as the building ages
- membership fees were last increased 9 years ago – the proposed increases need to hold for several years

In debate the need to ensure the level of fees agreed did not introduce an unintended barrier to membership of the Club, and that the fees should be reflective of budgeted expenditure requirements were highlighted. The recommendations were unanimously **agreed** by a show of hands

Tamsin Phipps raised concern that some members were using club boats to race without charge, despite a club expectation that adults would buy their own boats. The committee had recommended all adults without boat spaces be charged a boat usage fee of £30 pa. After a short debate Paul Toomey (seconded by Tamsin Phipps) proposed changing the recommendation to read: a boat usage charge (£30 pa) will be levied on all adults only using club boats after a year of club membership. This was **agreed** with 27 votes for and 12 against.

### **Flatwater Racing Report – Dave Coulson**

Dave reported that the coaching structure at the club remained fairly static during the year. In thanking them for their valuable contributions during the year he noted that;

- Professional coaching continued to be provided by Brian Greenham and himself in their respective roles as Community Sports Coach (CSC) and National Junior Coach (NJC), although future funding for the CSC is unclear whilst the BCU tries to secure partnership funding so that this school link work (Thameside, Highdown, Reading) can continue
- Andy Rawson and Sue Gray continued their work with the Cougar group, the vital link between beginner groups and the top junior group,
- Nigel Frankland continued with his sessions with some of the very young children which encourage some to join a competitive pathway
- Martin Lomas, Mark King and Martin Watson provided adult beginner groups which have been as busy as ever and make Reading one of the few leading clubs catering for adult beginners.

He also reported the intended appointment of a new BCU junior club to be based at the Club which will provide further opportunity to increase junior coaching facilities.

The racing fleet remained relatively static during the year albeit augmented by the 3 Vadja marathon K2s purchased with the 2Ten FM grant. All the boats continued to be heavily used, along with continuation of the Cougar lease scheme.

In reviewing the Club's flatwater racing season Dave recorded the Club's continued position as the lead club in the Southern Region Hasler races albeit with reduced dominance compared to past years. Having won the region the Club finished 3<sup>rd</sup>, some way behind Wey and Elmbridge.

At the Marathon Nationals (Wokingham) the Club put out a large team which finished second in the team event with important individual medals won, including Andy Daniels winning both senior mens events in his first year as a senior.

The Club was well represented at the Marathon Masters with 5 paddlers coming away with at least one medal each.

In sprint racing the Club continued to send teams to the national regattas and came 5<sup>th</sup> at the Interclub regatta.

During the year the club continued to feed national teams at all levels from u16 development squads to senior world championship level - 3 seniors in the Duisberg sprint world's team.

Dave expressed his thanks for the support provided by Phil Ede and Kris King as Marathon and Sprint Team Leaders respectively.

In standing down as Race Captain Dave explained that he had come to that decision as he felt he was no longer able to provide the level of integration and breadth of coaching required of the role. Particularly as his employment commitment was focused on one specific group of paddlers.

### **Slalom Racing Report – Nigel Winters**

Nigel described the year for the slalom section as being one of ups and downs with a number of capable lady paddlers leaving for University and both of the Club's premier paddlers retiring from competitive paddling. Also, Tom Paterson ceased to be available as a coach when he emigrated part way through the year.

These changes were though compensated for with the return of a number of paddlers to slalom.

Although regrettably the Club was not represented at International level during the year Nigel highlighted the performance of a range of paddlers, many of whom achieved promotion such that the Club continues to be represented in all Divisions domestically.

Nigel was particularly pleased to report improvements in the Canadian class with promotions to Division 1 and Premier along with a number of improving paddlers in the lower Divisions.

Although the Inter Clubs Championships posed a challenge Nigel was able to report that the Club was well supported at the event and all competitors achieved a personal best with two paddlers achieving fourth place positions.

Reading Canoe Club, led by David Warby, ran the River Loddon Division 3 & 4 Slalom event for the second year. Over 90 paddlers competed during the weekend. The event was also

used as a training event for a group of Level 3 competition coaches and as a pilot of the new BCU coaching qualifications scheme. Nigel thanked all the members who had helped and supported the weekend.

Nigel also expressed his thanks to Chris Masters, Dave Lomas, Tom Patterson, Andy Field and Trevor Haynes who had all assisted in training and coaching sessions throughout the year.

### **Election of Committee Members**

No nominations had been received, or were put forward at the meeting, for the vacated posts of Chairman and Head Coach. All other currently filled committee posts were re-elected unopposed.

### **Members Debate**

#### **Boat Fleet – Peter Mainprize**

In the interests of time, Peter proposed that the Committee establish a working party to undertake a gap analysis of the current fleet and review this against available budget and from this determine a fleet replacement plan. The proposal was **agreed** unanimously.

#### **Cycle Racks – Tamsin Phipps**

Tamsin raised concerns that parking of cycles inside the Boatshed created additional hazards in an already congested area, and put club and members' boats at risk of damage. When challenged cyclists had cited the lack of an alternative dry parking place as the reason they parked inside the shed.

Tamsin proposed that the Club erect a canopy over the cycle racks so that a 'no cycles' rule could be enforced in the Boatshed. The proposal was **agreed** unanimously.

#### **Club Colours in Competitions – Paul Toomey**

Paul proposed that when representing the Club competitively and in particular when using club equipment, members should be required to wear Club Colours. In debate it was noted that club colours are only awarded after certain targets had been achieved eg 3 Haslers competed in. However it was pointed out that club colours are presented to recognise achievement – members can purchase colours before they are formally presented.

The proposal was **agreed** unanimously.

#### **Club Cleaning – Gail Battison**

The proposal that the club revisits the current cleaning contract was withdrawn following assurances earlier in the meeting that monthly meetings are being held with the contractors, that a comments book has been established to ensure timely two way communication, and that there had been a recent temporary hiatus when the new changing room codes had inadvertently not been passed on to the cleaners.

The meeting closed at 19:45hrs.