

Adaptive / Para Rowing Meeting, 25th Sept 2019 @ City of Oxford RC

Attendees: Mark Dewdney, Mark Brookes (Stratford-Upon-Avon), Bruce Lynn (Marlow), Robert Hall (Guildford), Rachael Lunney, Andrew Weekes, Mic Dixon (City of Oxford), Nick Steel (Maidenhead). Paul Simon, Colin Hayton (Pengwern), Guy Williams (Hereford), Helen Rowbotham (British Rowing).

Draft Minutes (prepared by Mark Dewdney 27th Sept))

2020 Racing Calendar

1. Robert H suggested a proposed calendar for 2020 Regatta Season. These are the events which all the clubs will try to attend. Pretty much as 2019.
2. Peterborough in June was proposed as an addition in 2020. Nick S to progress and report
3. Adaptive only event at Pengwern in July 2020 discussed. Probably informal and possibly as an "open day" for potential adaptive rowers. Pengwern to progress, get authorised and advise date.
4. Robert H to contact Bedford re their April Head
5. Robert H to advise on Phyllis Court date when known

Handicap System, Rules of Racing, etc

6. It is known that the BR Rules of Racing Committee are concerned at the use of the group's handicap system. Mark D has been advised that Chris Anton may be able to help on these and any rules issues. Mark D will contact him.
7. BROE remains inappropriate for the current practices in adaptive racing; e.g. no concept of support rowers
8. It was agreed with Helen R that we would send a list of proposed rules and BROE changes Helen to ensure these would be handed to the appropriate bodies. Mark D to review these docs, issue for comment to the group and then forward to Helen R.
9. The meeting agreed that the use of the word "para" for grassroots events was unhelpful and is probably a barrier to a more flexible rules regime. It is believed the more general "adaptive" term may be better for our events and as a general description of what we are about.
10. The classification of competitors seems unnecessarily complex in adaptive rather than para terms. Adaptive is seen just as "para-lite". Once a person is seen as meeting the requirements of "adaptive" any further differentiation is largely meaningless at grassroots level. This will remain the case whilst numbers are very small.

Events and Clubs

11. Mark D apologised for not having completed the "Guide" for offering adaptive events. Following Helen R's briefing on BR'S Strategy Review (see below) it was agreed that the group would give this priority with a draft being passed to her by the end of October.
12. The group discussed how to encourage other clubs to attend events. The difficulties of transporting boats etc is seen as an issue for small clubs with just one or two rowers. Bigger clubs and those local to the event to provide kit where possible.
13. Mark D will also complete his Guide to starting and running adaptive sections and have it delivered to Helen R by the end of October.
14. All members of the group will need to read and comment on any draft version of the guide docs promptly. To ensure quick progress Mark D will assume acceptance of the draft if comments are not received within 72 hours of circulation. It is assumed there will be several iterations before any final guide is agreed

British Rowing Strategy Working Group

15. Helen R reported on where the group had got to. Many of the issues our group have discussed had been picked up in BR's research. A doc indicating what the strategy group see as the major priorities was circulated
16. Agreed that our group would feed out concerns and recommendations to Helen R and her strategy team. Helen R in turn will feed these to the appropriate bodies within BR and/or into the strategy. It was emphasised that we need to see on-going progress
17. Our group will be provided with a pre-publication version of the strategy document for review and comment.
18. Helen R stated that we are now seen as a key player in helping to determine future strategy and in any implementation. In these circumstances, it was felt important to get other "out of area" clubs to join our discussions (e.g. Tees, Bradford etc)

Next Meeting: End Feb / Early March (Provisional) @ Venue to be decided