

TIDINGS

The Official Newsletter of Richmond Canoe Club

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Fund fun

The club has started to raise the funds it needs to purchase a 125-year lease of the boathouse from its new owners, Leander Estates. To achieve this, a dedicated fundraising committee has been established and the fundraising kicked off with a summer barbecue and jazz evening on Saturday 4th August.

Around 90 people, many of whom were rowers roped into supporting the club by Marcus de Grammont, enjoyed music by After Eight and South African prepared barbecue food. (Many thanks Kelby, Andrea and of course 'After Eight'). The response to the evening was enthusiastic and the club plans to turn the barbecue into an annual event.

The evening was a success as a fundraiser too, producing an estimated profit of around £1,000.



Scene from last months barbecue. More pictures on back page

**The next fundraising event will be a Salsa evening on
Saturday 6th October.
See you there.**

Racing news

The Speed of Youth

OUR batch of promising youngsters performed well again at the recent July sprint regatta at the National Watersports centre in Nottingham.

For the ladies, Nannette Kelly won the girls' B 500 metre singles event. She also picked up second place in the girls' B 200 metre singles final and silver in the girls' B 200 metre doubles event, together with fellow Richmond canoeist Kimberley Wetherall.

For the boys, Oliver Isbell and Gvidas Papreckis formed half of the winning crew in the boys' B 1,000 metre fours event, together with two paddlers from other clubs. The same Richmond duo picked up silver in the boys' B 200 metre and 500 metre doubles finals, while Papreckis won second spot in the boys B singles finals over the same distances as well.

Richmond's senior canoeists performed well too, with elite women's A paddler Tricia Davey picking up silver in the ladies' A 500 metre singles final. Jackie Eastwood claimed first place in the ladies' B 1,000 metre singles final, along with a silver in the ladies' B 200 metres singles event. The ladies' B combination of Samantha Wetherall (Richmond) and Nikki Taylor (Barking & Dagenham) claimed gold medals in the ladies' B 1,000 metre doubles final, as well as silver in the ladies' B 500 metre doubles distance.

Lastly, the men's C 200 metre single event was won by Richmond paddler Rupert Elkington-Cole.





Irish "Ayes"

It has been a good year for Richmond canoeists Gavin Turrell and Shane O'Cuinn, who have been called up by Ireland for a string of events in the K4 category.

Both men, who have sponsorship backing from McVities, have competed for Ireland at the Paris World Cup, the Duisburg International and the Milan European Sprint Kayaking Championships this year. Together with teammates Peter Egan and Simon Vanlonghausen, O'Cuinn and Turrell form Ireland's elite K4 200-metre crew.

Turrell has had an excellent 200-metre season in the K1 class as well, booking a series of strong results and this year's Nottingham sprint regattas.

Club News

Young Richmond canoeists secure funding

THREE of Richmond Canoe Club's most promising young athletes have received a grant towards the purchase of equipment from Sport Aid. Kimberley Wetherall, Nanette Kelly and Oliver Isbell, who are members of the Great Britain's junior Olympic and international canoeing set-up, each received £500.

"We're delighted with these grants. They will help us to continue to improve as canoeists and we are grateful to Sport Aid for its support," says Kim.

"To compete at the highest level, we need the best equipment. We have all used the money to buy new, high-tech paddles," Nanette explains.

"It's great to have your achievements recognised by an organisation such as Sport Aid and it's a boost to our ambitions to become part of the senior Great Britain squad in the future," Oliver says.



Banking on success, Oliver Isbell and Kim Wetherall

Noticeboard

THE club website (www.richmondcanoeclub.com) now has a noticeboard facility where members can post requests, for-sale items and so on.

Noticeboard information should be e-mailed to Sean Martin at astoncolourpress@compuserve.com.

In committee

IT was agreed at the last committee meeting to purchase two state-of-the-art K2s for use by the club's leading paddlers. In particular, the club is keen to encourage our young canoeists.

At the moment, our paddlers are at a disadvantage at regattas and races after this seasons dramatic rule changes allowing boats of any width to be used. Currently all our club boats are built to the old rule widths and not proving competitive against the new generation of slender craft. With the purchase of the new boats, we will be on a more even footing.



Some of the new regulation 'slender' boats appearing on the market this year



Parent power

John Tooze, father of club member and 'Richmond Sports Council Young Sports Man of the Year' Sean Tooze (right), has secured £1,000 of funding for the club from chemical giant ICI.



PADDLER PROFILE: Charmian Gradwell

1994. While appearing in *Lysistrata* at the Wyndham theatre in London, Charmian Gradwell tears her cruciate ligament. She is laid up at home for several months.

1999. Charmian wins first place the mixed crew category of the Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race with Richmond paddling guru Brian Greenaway.

These are two seemingly unrelated events. Yet had Charmian not stumbled on stage, she may never have taken up canoeing. "I had been in a canoe once in a television programme and thought I didn't need my legs. I lived on the river in Richmond at the time of my stage injury and was keen to do something, so I hobbled up to the club and joined Peter Barnes' group," she says.

Three years later, in 1997, she did her first DW and won gold in her age category at the World Masters marathon event. "Basically, I was the fastest old woman in the world," she quips.

When Charmian took up the sport, she was already in her thirties. While hardly on the scrap heap of life, her competitors were generally a sight younger. Nonetheless, she represented Great Britain at B level in a marathon K2 with Suzi Mealing from Harlow. In 1998, they won a first place at an international marathon in

Amsterdam, followed by a silver medal later in the year at Gaduna in Denmark. A year later, she and Brian Greenaway steamed to victory in the DW mixed crew class. They were fifth overall and helped Richmond achieve the overall team victory that year, beating a strong field that included teams from the armed forces.

Her success in canoeing gives her some pause for thought. Though a professional actress – she played a leading role in BBC/ITV series *Howards' Way* in the 1980s – she admits that if she were ten years younger, her ambition would be to win an Olympic medal. She would happily settle for a BAFTA today. And had fate taken a different turn, she may even have collected some cricketing accolades, having played the national league indoor game for Tottenham. She still plays occasionally and is a member of the Lord's Taverners, a side that includes such luminaries as impressionist Rory Bremner and lyricist Tim Rice. "I once bowled Sir Tim out off a bad ball," Charmian recalls. She has never appeared in one of his musicals.



Charmian's canoeing career was interrupted in 2000, when she spent eight months in Nigeria as part of a VSO project to teach theatre skills – a period she describes with great fondness. "There was no paddling. The city I lived in was called Kaduna, which translated means 'Place of the Crocodiles'. I joined a women's football team and all the three-year-olds in the village would watch our training and howl with derision at the white woman's lack of ball skills."

Currently half way through a diploma in sports psychology, Charmian has plans to increase her involvement in sport when she finishes. "It is another aspect of sport and something that will also help me with my acting," she says.

They say that sport is show business. The two have combined to shape Charmian's life, at least.

Richmond European Championship Adventure Racing Winner

Club member Anna McCormack was part of the four-athlete team that beat 30 other teams to win this years Adrenaline Rush adventure race, the sports European Championship.

Racing as part of the 9feet.com/Ford team, McCormack and team mates Pete James (team captain), Tom Gibbs and Steve Sharp completed the race in 3 days 12 hours and 37 minutes, having only taken an hour-and-a-halfs sleep during the entire event. This years Rush was held over a 300-mile course in the Scottish Highlands around Stirling and included kayaking, cycling, swimming, running, abseiling and horse riding.

According to Anna, "The hardest part of the race was when I very nearly dropped out due to hypothermia the closest I have ever come to dropping out of anything. The best moment was an amazing downhill on a bike along a hard-to-distinguish old Roman road with the moon rising across the valley behind us."

The 9feet.com/Ford team result qualifies it for a place at the Adventure Racing World Championships in September. However, Anna will be filming a BBC documentary Tough Enough for the SAS? and her place on the team will be taken by fellow Richmond Canoe Club member Sarah Odell, a contestant on ITVs Survivor. She will be reunited with team mate Steven Sharp in October for the Eco Challenge and in November, when both will team up with Sir Ranulph Fiennes and Runners World editor and Richmond Canoe Club member Steven Seaton to compete in the Southern Traverse, a multi-discipline event across New Zealands South Island.

No fewer than seven of the participating athletes in this years Adrenaline Rush train at Richmond Canoe Club. "Richmond is basically now the hub of adventure racing training in London," Anna says.

