**Adult Introduction to Racing Kayaking Course**

**Course aims & content**

The course is an introduction to racing kayaking. It’s suitable both for people with no paddling experience, and those with experience of other types of kayaking or canoeing e.g. white water but not of racing kayaking. It’s also an introduction to Richmond Canoe Club, so that you can decide whether or not you would like to join at the end of the course. Those who are interested in membership can sign up and continue to the Level 1 and 2 sessions, which also run on Saturday afternoons, and ultimately to other sessions on Saturday mornings, Sundays, Wednesday evenings etc.

In 5 weeks we’ll cover:

- The basics of good forward paddling (and racing paddling) technique in kayaks and canoes

- Steering and manoeuvring the boat

- Safety issues, including capsizing and rescuing yourself and your boat

- The river environment (reading the water, tides etc)

- An introduction to kayak racing and what it’s all about, and a chance to try out a few fun short sprints and racing starts

You will have five water sessions and four indoor sessions over five weeks. Saturday afternoon sessions are on the water in racing kayaks (starting with the most stable and progressing to something tippier) and Tuesday evening sessions are indoors in the gym and on paddling machines, teaching the fundamentals of racing paddling technique and looking at exercises to help you develop the strength and flexibility you’ll need.

**Course timing & attendance**

The course will run for five weeks, on Tuesdays from 7-8.30pm (for the first four weeks) and Saturdays, from 1.30 – 3.30pm (for all five weeks.)

We expect participants to attend all 9 sessions. If you cannot make the first Tuesday session nad the first two water sessions (Saturdays) then we cannot accept you on the course, for safety reasons. If you have to miss one of the other sessions unavoidably we will try our best to cover the skills you have missed on another day. If, however, you miss more than one session and have not covered all of the basic skills by the end of the course you may not be able to continue to the next level at the club. If you know that you will miss more than one session please therefore consider booking for another course later in the summer when you can attend every session.

**Richmond Canoe Club**

Just some words about the club, before you consider signing up for our beginners course.

Richmond Canoe Club is a flat-water racing club. You don't have to be super-fit or sporty to join, it’s more important to be enthusiastic and committed. If you sign up as a member you will be expected to paddle or do land-based training at least twice a week, that way you'll see real improvement in your technique, stamina and speed. Some members do other types of paddling (white water, sea kayaking etc) in their own time, but the club focuses purely on racing.

We hope we can enthuse all newcomers with the joy of racing, even those who never thought it would be for them, but if you're sure from the start that you're not going to be able to commit to at least two sessions a week at the club then we would recommend maybe trying somewhere else first – local clubs that offer weekly recreational kayaking sessions on the Thames nearby include Brentford Canoe Club (e-mail bba@BrentfordFCCST.com) and Chiswick Pier Canoe Club

(www.chiswickpiercanoeclub.co.uk) You can find others by looking on the Canoe England website (www.canoe-england.org.uk/findaclub.aspx).

**Course booking & payment**

We invite anyone interested in our courses to come down to the club to meet our coaches and some of our novice paddlers. That way you’ll have a chance to discover a bit more about racing kayaking and about Richmond Canoe Club before you decide whether or not to apply for a place. You can come down to the club for a chat with coaches and novice paddlers any Saturday at c.4.15pm (except Easter Saturday) when we will be coming off the water after the afternoon training session.

If, after your visit to the club you decide that you would like to come on one of our courses you will need to submit a booking form. Bookings for each course will open approximately 3 weeks before the start date of the course. Exact dates will be given on the Richmond Canoe Club website. To book a place please download the booking form attached to the website (click the ‘booking form’ link), fill it in and e-mail it to lovekayaking@googlemail.com. Bookings will be taken on a first-come, first served basis on the date that bookings open. Please remember that if you have not visited the club and spoken to a coach your application will not be accepted.

You will receive confirmation that you have a place within 5 days. We do our best to contact all of those who send in bookings, including those who have not got a place, but if you do not hear from us please assume that you have not got a course place.

Once you have been offered a place on a course we request payment (£70) which must be received one week before the course starts, or your place may be given to someone on the waiting list.

You will be asked to pay either:

- by cheque, to Richmond Canoe Club. Please post cheques in an envelope with a copy of your booking form, addressed to: Membership Secretary / Adult Beginners Course, Richmond Canoe Club, 81-83 Petersham Rd, Richmond TW10 6UT)

or

- By cash, in person at Richmond Canoe Club on a Saturday morning. Please e-mail

lovekayaking@googlemail.com to make arrangements

Please do not send any payment until you have received confirmation by e-mail that you have a place on the course.