

# BDA Congress Meeting Notes 2019



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## **1. Roundup of Club News for 2019**

### **Thames Dragons**

- A year restoring the club to stability
- Started off badly in Worcester but improved to post fantastic results at Nationals
- Two massive Open days with £5 cost – didn't manage to recruit much. Most recruiting through emails to club
- Went to Vogalonga and Venice Festival
- Cleaned the dock as part of Keep Britain Tidy National Litter pick
- Lots of socials and a healthy 60 members by end of year

### **Notts Anaconda**

- Went to the European Club Crews in Seville, looking to go to Worlds.
- Maintained membership,
- Nationals – every major final.
- Won everything at Stockton

### **Preston Dragons**

- Loved this season! Membership up to 60, moved up a lot, lots of socials.
- Raised £2000 for local hospice.
- Went to Barcelona.
- Looking to develop a youth team next year

### **Secklow Hundred**

- "done all right". Had a good season.
- Managed to get a second crew out for most events this year - biggest achievement.

- Looking to develop a youth team potentially next year.
- Created a regional training and coaching group to develop the coaching

#### **Yaguara Dragons**

- Joined BDA this year
- Attended League events and Nationals with Thames Dragons
- Went to Venice International Festival and Vogalonga
- Need a coach.

#### **Worcester Dragons**

- Big squad but getting people along to events is a challenge.
- Promoted to prem. Mixed, social group.
- Ran their 28<sup>th</sup> annual regatta this year - 24 crews plus reserves.
- Hard to recruit from charity/regatta crews.
- Like to be a little bit quicker, a little bit stronger.

#### **Pink Champagne**

- Over 50 members, all welcome.
- Went to Vogalonga, "Racing against normal lot".
- Went to Barcelona and European Club Crews in Seville. 9 BCS teams in Seville, came away with silver. Thanks to Notts who helped them out. Want to be treated as a competitive crew. World club crews next year.
- IPCPC – Wendy is UK representative. Five BCS teams in the UK.
- Five crews "adopted" by BDA clubs.
- Pink Royals launched – composite five clubs to put team into events. Barcelona next year.

#### **Cambridgeshire Royals**

- Moved to open this season in standard league. Second in standard league, sixth in the mixed. Biggest achievement – 4 youth members to Thailand.
- Concentrating on building membership.
- Trying to develop juniors.
- More helms and coaches coming through.
- New fitness for winter started.
- Night paddling started.

#### **Kingston Royals**

- Attended 6 league events, mixed or open.
- Went to Alicante – interesting racing.
- Helming services to Thames this year!
- Diverse club with some serious and lots of social paddlers.
- Big recruitment drive, changed the way we market by using Eventbrite to 3 session for £20. Better retention rate as a result.

#### **Windy Pandas**

- No problem getting people to training, hard to get them to commit to racing. Particularly long distance. Where's Liverpool?!!

- Issues around income generation to pay fees for water at Regatta Centre.
- Good racing, not so good Nationals.
- Collaboration with Wave Walkers (cancer survivors). L
- Successful London event run to replace Surrey Docks BDA event for London clubs.
- Helped to run Chinatown Hong Kong festival – lots of lessons learnt.

### **Henley**

- Middle of 3 year plan.
- Increasing number of ethnic minorities in the sport. Fiji, Bangladesh and India.
- Youth development a priority, also women's racing.
- Working with Richard Parrott on the outrigger session.
- Dragon boat ergo sessions being run. Safety a big priority, compulsory to do a capsized every year.

### **Pershore**

- 5 BDA events, rescued from nearly folding a couple of years ago.
- Double active membership in the last year.
- Raised money for cancer research.
- Hoping to start setting up a BCS crew.
- Women's crew started this year.

### **Purple Warriors**

- Not raced BDA this year, be going to festivals instead.

### **Officials team**

- 100% at events!
- 17 people in the team
- 8 officials in Seville
- 4 in Thailand (selected, not automatic).
- DO exams! Grades 1-4. Joanne – grade 4, Darryl – grade 2. Paul international trainer for grade 1. Always looking for more people to help out, volunteer scheme first.

### **Amathus**

- 30 year celebration Lots of boats on the water
- Northern challenge started as a winter series. 2 events this year, one at Preston 10k 09 Feb. Something in March at Liverpool Slalom added to National League event.
- Dragons and Flowers (Pool of Life) with input from the BDA for BCS crews to come to. Several thousand pounds raised for charities associated with Pool of Life.
- Attended National league races.
- Development work going on at centre.
- Ambition to take 2 teams.
- Universities and schools programme.
- Main development area in women.
- Wants younger men in the sport, looking at developing this through kayaking.

### **Excalibre**

- Five events, would have liked to attend more.
- Raced mixed this year, struggling to recruit younger men.
- International representation in Thailand, Cyprus.
- Taster day with two boats, but only 1 retained
- Lost funding towards rent
- Looking at new build with several other clubs, also developer involved.

#### **Bristol**

- Quiet year.
- Some members gone to race the Yukon
- Looking to build up this year.

## **2. Officials Report**

Paul Griffiths – Officials

Joanne – Chief Official for World Champs

- Worked on a new starting system – thanks to the BDA where they are trying to give crews the benefit of the doubt. Sport is too small to be harsh, people have spent a lot of money to get there.
- New helms can identify themselves to the officials before a race but starts needs to be the crew's responsibility as well as the helm.
- Frustrated by some of the crew sheets submitted. At Nationals time penalties were given for safety violations.
- At Nationals. Nobody shouted at the officials! Officials understand the adrenalin that goes with racing.
- What should clubs should be working on – starting procedure, holding the boat on the line against the wind and flow.

## **3. TOPIC ONE: BDA and Club Communication**

Current situation:

- Crews Congress: Yearly event for BDA members to attend. Here they can raise items, listen to what the BDA exec has been up to and feedback.
- AGM: Yearly event for formal voting in of BDA exec, BDA accounts but also some informal presentations
- Crews@: Email distribution list that the BDA uses to send out information to a point person at each club
- Facebook, Twitter: Social media the BDA uses to send out some info, share stories etc
- Contact form: Email address ([exec@bda.org.uk](mailto:exec@bda.org.uk)), Website form or Facebook Messenger to send questions to the BDA exec
- Communication between the BDA and Clubs and members is not considered good

Setting up a Club Forum

- A Club Forum run at certain points during the year to feedback to the BDA exec on things the clubs need, want, like or don't like that will be collated and presented to the BDA exec to discuss.
- Two point people from each of the BDA clubs – ideally a committee member at the club or coach but could be anyone – to represent them. One (or two) BDA committee members would then also sit on the Club Forum.
- Initially start using email, then review at a later date to see if it works.

#### Setting up a Member Database

- BDA Exec has approved the setting up of an online Member database separate from the current website.
- Currently reviewing providers and options. Have a specification document, but would look to be viewable and editable by clubs.
- Looking for volunteers for creating short videos after Regattas, writing blogs after events and helping create a BDA Newsletter.

## **4. TOPIC TWO: Providing Competitive and Innovative Racing**

#### What do you want to race?

- Got to be fair eg River clubs might struggle with things like Slalom
- Could we consider ten person boat racing (9/10 attending congress have 10 person boats)
- If different racing formats, need to know the potential formats way in advance so can be trained for
- Difficult to add too many more classes without disrupting the race day schedule
- Should digress too much from international race distances to avoid us become uncompetitive.
- Should provide some consistency in race formats over the league season
- Some regattas could have different formats but not all
- 1000m Chase down straight line
- Relay Race

#### Venues?

1. Improve incentives for clubs to put on events
2. Regionalisation: general agreement this is good but more interested in the details before making up minds. Could consider Core events in centre of the country and regional in further away places
3. Towing boats – could we link to a provider as clubs increasingly finding it difficult to tow boats to events due to Driving license restrictions, especially further away events
4. North/South Core venues eg northern clubs have different core venues to southern

#### Race organisation

- Drawing worked out on league position. Clubs complain they race the same teams each regatta

- Some clubs express their desire for the standard and premier club crews to only race each other – separate competitions
- Can we base the drawing on relative positions?
- Communicate about race venues and race structure earlier
- S14 – shouldn't allow composite/combined crews
- Limiting clubs who “chase points” ie put a crew in to get points with no chance of winning race

## 5. TOPIC THREE: GB and International Participation

There was a general intro from Jenni explaining GB participation in the EDBF and IDBF. Currently we have two key representatives

- Mike Thomas IDBF chair
- Andy Menzies – EDBF Members' representative

The structure of the BDA coaching committee was presented and those GB coaches and officials introduced to the room.

- Sponsorship

The BDA does not actively seek sponsorship on behalf of the GB teams as experience tells us this is not a worthwhile use of the limited resources we have. Even Olympic sports struggle to get sponsorship and we have no media profile particularly for international events. The majority of sponsorship in the past has come from personal contacts from individual paddlers and this continues to be the recommended way forward.

- Equipment

The BDA own 5 O1s that are currently kept at Liverpool and used for time trials. These could potentially be loaned out to clubs or paddlers for development purposes providing they are properly maintained and repaired as required. The BDA would also encourage clubs to apply for development grants to purchase their own equipment including O1s.

- GB Coaching

There was a useful conversation around how GB coaches could work together to deliver better and more consistent coaching, however it was recognised that all coaches are volunteers and are already stretched simply delivering coaching. Dave Bangs, as Director of Coaching is available to discuss coaching issues with all coaches individually.

- Entry into BNTS

There was some discussion around the entry level for BNTS. The Senior B squad are currently setting a minimum standard whereas the Premis are willing to start with people at a lower level and develop them on. The Senior A squad is starting a development squad separate to the main BNTS squad to help develop paddlers in the longer term.

It was made clear that however the squad system is implemented by the different coaches time trials are open to all without the need to have attended BNTS (though this is encouraged).

A discussion around whether club coaches should be more active in “signing off” people as being of a suitable standard to go to BNTS didn’t come to any conclusions given the differing standards set by the various squad coaches.

Some clubs felt that they didn’t really understand the process they needed to go through to get paddlers into GB. Some further information could be made available on the website.