



Irish Freestyle Committee
chairperson@irishfreestyle.com
www.irishfreestyle.com

Irish Freestyle Kayaking Committee AGM 24th April 2004 Chairpersons Report

The 2002-2003-2004 committee was elected at the last AGM which was held on the 9th November 2002 in Cork. Despite a low turnout for the AGM and the condition of some of its current committee members a successful AGM was held and a great committee agreed to stay on for another term.

Since my election to this position at the last AGM Freestyle kayaking in this country has undergone some massive changes and diversification. The committee outlined a full calendar of events with the event organisers early last season but all the odds went against them and event after event suffered at the hands of the driest winter on record. We did however manage to hold an event under difficult circumstances on the Curragower wave in Limerick and big thanks needs to go to Ross & Morgan for all the effort put in. It is worth pointing out that after the problems with unreasonable insurance premiums that effected the 2002-03 season & having worked with the ICU to resolve this situation we were then hampered by weather conditions affecting even more events this season than the insurance issue did last season.

This season did however see a great interest in the Rapid Freestyle & Boatercross Events. Successful events were held in Kerry and Wicklow. I have high hopes for these and similar events for next season.

Once again this season we sent a team to the World Championships which were held in Graz, Austria. I would like to congratulate all who took part. With a Pre-European event hosted in Sort last summer very soon after the Worlds the committee decided not to send an official team to this event and left it as an open team. As with the European event the Pre-World Championships that took place in Australia in January were only a couple of months after the World Championships and we again decided against sending a team due to financial constraints. We once again left it as an open team. The idea behind not sending teams is that we would give all the support we could to the 1st Official European Freestyle Kayak Championships in June 2004 & to the World Championships in January 2006 in Australia.

It is with great disappointment that after 3 years all of the members of the current committee are standing down but I think you will agree that they have served their time and have done a fantastic job. Colin has organised some great training events in his time, Mick has kept the Finances in order and Coran worked hard on the new scoring system which we adopted this season & liaised with all the teams for various events.

There is one man that keeps us all together and deserves a lot of thanks, our man on the keyboard Peter Barron for his continued monitoring & work that he does on our website (Pause for applause). This job goes on unappreciated but some of us know the time involved that it takes to do the work he does and we love you for it Pete.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite any paddlers wishing to run events for next season to contact the new committee as soon as you can. We are here to support and develop new events as well as run the traditional events and all trial events will be given the full support of the committee.

Everybody I have mentioned previously does this job voluntarily, some of you for a lot longer than others and all for the good of the sport, because you love it, I think? That means they haven't, aren't and won't ever be paid to do this job and believe it or not a lot of the time it costs them money. In recent times the committee and their methods of performing their business have been subject to much bad press. I wonder how many of these people are here today. Personally I know how much time these people put into this

committee and feel it quite unfair that they should come under attack in this manner. I do however agree that everybody has a right to their opinion but some that have been expressed in recent weeks are completely inaccurate and invalid. I know of no occasion that any member of the committee was contacted at any stage in the last season where the wild card system, the team selection system or any other business of the committee came under question. We have tried to do the best with what we had and if it wasn't good enough for some of you I'm sorry. Coran & myself will be happy to discuss it with you after the meeting around the back of the clubhouse.

There are a number of issues that I feel need urgent attention. I would like the incoming committee to deal with these post haste and some of these can be discussed at this meeting and decided on at this meeting.

1. Next seasons calendar
2. Team Selection Process
3. Funding team travel to Australia
4. A Freestyle Coaching syllabus
5. Development of a Freestyle Specific training site
6. Adoption of the new Anti-Doping policy
7. Inclusion of Freestyle on carding international scheme with SCI

The last thing I would like to do is wish the incoming committee the best of luck and ask you to give them all the support they require to administer YOUR sport and YOUR events. Also I would like to thank all our event organisers from this season & the last, those that took place and those that worked hard to try and make them take place and were let down by circumstances beyond their control.

If no other candidates come forward for election I personally am happy to stand for re-election for the chairperson's position.

Best regards,

Shane Cronin
Chairperson Irishfreestyle Kayaking Committee 2002-2004