



Royal Canoe Club Newsletter

August/September 2026

The long, hot and dry summer is coming to an end, the weather is cooling and nights are now drawing in. Please be aware of club rules regarding paddling at night and in adverse weather conditions before you go out on the river.

PLEASE NOTE that junior paddlers must only go on the water with a senior coach present. Under no circumstances must they go out paddling alone.

Below is an update from the committee meeting on 7th September. Thanks very much to our Captain Bernice King and to Junior Coach Zak Benstead for their reports on recent Club activity.

Wednesday Club Nights

As the nights are now getting darker, the 10k time trial has been brought forward to a 6pm start, with dinner straight after. We hope to run the time trial until the clocks go back but please check with coaches for the latest information. It is hoped to continue with the club night dinners throughout the winter but if numbers drop below 14 diners it will not be financially viable to provide food. Thanks to everyone supporting us throughout the summer.

Boats and Equipment

A review of club boats has taken place, and some older boats have been removed from the site. We are looking to buy 2 new K2s and are hoping to have them for the start of the 2027 season.

Please remember to treat all club boats and equipment with respect and care.

Royal Regatta

Our sprint regatta took place on Saturday 18th July and was a great success, despite a low turnout. Everyone who came and raced enjoyed the day with 500m and 200m races in the morning and the Aussie eliminator and a mixed K4 race in the afternoon. Many thanks to Zak, who organised the racing and did a fantastic job. We had a lot of positive feedback. Next year, we will look to hold

the regatta earlier in the month, if we can, as the date did clash with the summer breakup for schools, which affected the attendance.

Royal Paddling Challenge

The oldest canoe race in the world will take place at the club on Saturday 10th October. Racing is for K1s only starting at 10:30 for U12s 3k, 11:30 for Juniors 5k and 12:30 for the Open 10k race. We will also be giving cash prizes with men and women senior winners receiving £250 for 1st place, £100 for 2nd and £50 for 3rd. The first junior girl and boy racing in the 10k race will each receive an ICON voucher to the value of £50, and the winners of the 5k race will each receive a £25 voucher. As usual, volunteers are needed to help make the event a success. Please contact club secretary, Eleanor McKinlay at secretary@royalcanoecub.com if you're able to spare a couple of hours on the day.



Royal Fundraising Event

Regrettably, we have had to postpone this event and hope to run it at the end of the season next year.

Seniors Report from Bernice

What an exciting summer! A number of Royal Senior paddlers have been competing hard at home and abroad, helping to almost rounding off a fantastic season with the Nottingham Sprints, Tonbridge Hasler, U23 Europeans, Sella Descent, and the Thames 200 Ultra to name but a few! Here are the key highlights and podium results:

Nottingham National Sprints
Podium Places (05/09/2026
– 06/09/2026)



- Stuart Bristow, Zak Benstead and Lewis Smith: 2nd, K4 Senior Men's 500m
- Jordy Banton: 1st, Inter-Services K4 1000m
- Zoe Clark: 2nd, K1 Women's Senior 200m

Thames 200 Ultra (29/08/2026 – 30/08/2026)

- An amazing result for Graham O'Regan, who finished in 21:01:25! Graham placed 2nd in K1 and 18th overall.

Tonbridge Hasler (23/08/2026)
Well done to all paddlers! Royals finished third overall behind Wey and Tonbridge.

Podium places:

- Tristram Turner & Marco Mangiantini: 1st, K2 Div 2
- James Russell: 2nd, K1 Div 5
- Aaron Nolan: 2nd, K1 Div 7 (Promoted to Div 6!)



International Success

U23 European Sprints & FISU World University Games (Hungary, 23/07/2026 – 26/07/2026)

- Congratulations to the GB U23 K4 and K1 crews, including Royal Canoe Club paddlers Edie King and Elise Montagna, who made the A Final at the European Championships in Szeged.

Sprint World Championships (Poznan, Poland, 26/08/2026 – 30/08/26), Zoe Clark was in the Ladies K4 crew that finished 3rd in the B final. Well done!

Sella Descent, Spain (08/08/2026)
Royals placed 19th out of 117 clubs competing at the Sella!

- Mario De Bilio: 1st in his K1 category!
- Graham O'Regan & Tris Turner: 4th in their category.



- Great performances also by Betsy Ray & Natalie Day (K2) and Sue & Lloyd Camp (K2). Let's get even more Royals out there in 2027!

Junior Report from Zak

It Has been another busy and successful period of racing for the junior squad, with strong performances across marathon and sprint.

Here are the key highlights and podium places -

Medway Marathon:

Marco Mangiantini – 1st K2 with Tris Turner

Edward Luckett and Jake Hughes 3rd K2

Tonbridge Hasler:

Marco 1st K2 again with Tris

Nottingham Sprints -

We took a strong team of 11 RCC juniors to Nottingham, with the squad producing some fantastic performances across the weekend, including multiple National titles and medals.

It was particularly exciting to welcome Leo to his first regatta. He came away with four Tiddlywinks, a brilliant start to his sprint racing.

Crispin also had an excellent weekend, winning three Tiddlywinks. His performances throughout the season have been consistently strong, and this was rewarded with him winning the Mini B Series.

A huge congratulations to all 11 juniors who competed.

At time of writing, the official results are still to be published, so I will share a full breakdown of the results and medal winners once they are available.





Sella Descent –

A fantastic result for Dianora de Bilio, who finished 2nd Junior Woman at the Sella Descent race in Spain. A great international result as she prepares for the Marathon world Championships in Argentina next month.

Upcoming Racing –

Olympic Hopes Sprint Regatta (17th to 20th September):

We have Adriana and Dianora representing the club and Great Britain at the Olympic Hopes in Bratislava, Slovakia.

French National Marathon Championships (26th to 27th September):

Adraina will also compete at these championships later in the month. Another exciting opportunity to gain international experience and compete at a high level.

All the very best for Dianora and Adriana in their races.

Elmbridge Hasler (27th September):

The Elmbridge Hasler will be our next major club racing opportunity and, importantly, the first qualifying race for the 2027 Hasler season.

We would like all juniors to enter where possible. This is a great opportunity to get the new Hasler season underway, gain racing experience and start building towards next year's championships. And have fun!

Autumn Training:

Following the completion of our main sprint regatta programme, we are now moving into our Autumn training phase. The new Autumn timetable has been sent out.

The September programme will act as a transition between the sprint season and our main winter training programme. We will continue to train consistently

and make progress, while gradually changing the emphasis towards aerobic development, strength and crew boat work.

As the days become shorter and darker, some session timings may need to change to ensure we can continue to train safely and efficiently.

Women on Water

Members enjoyed a fantastic paddle and meet-up at Hampton Court Bridge to watch the lunar eclipse!



Dates for your Diary

Only a few left for this year, dates for next year's activities coming soon!

Royal Paddling Challenge – Saturday 10th October.

Club Awards Evening – Wednesday 4th November.

Royal 10@10 – Sunday 22nd November.