Data/Digital Strategy

1   Intro

This has been my first year on the committee and I'm still finding my feet. It is however fascinating to see how our sport in run and the enormous amount of effort invested on our behalf by many of our officers. If you are interested, then I can highly recommend volunteering or just contact the secretary and ask if you can come and observe!

Inevitably my focus through the year has been online entries and the data that we can glean from this; my report reflects this.

2   Online Entry

2.1   Competitions and Entries

The year has seen a significant increase in the number of competitions accepting online entries. A couple of slaloms used a club system for entries, but most used www.canoeslalomentries.co.uk:

- All Prem and Div 1 competitions
- All but one of the div 2 races
- 70% of Div 3/4s – increasing as the season progressed.

We have processed over 12,000 entries including over 1,100 cancellations (higher than expected numbers of cancellations because of competition cancellations).

2.2   Advance Entries vs On-the-Day

Anecdotally it appears that availability of online entries increases advance entries and thus reduces some of the stress of on-the-day entries. Comparisons of results and entries through CanoeSlalomEntries (imperfect as matching is sometimes unsuccessful) shows that on average:

- With rare exceptions, Div 1 and Prem paddlers enter in advance and of these 97% enter online (postal entries include overseas paddlers at the British Open)
- Over 91% of Div 2 paddlers also enter in advance and 91% of these enter online
- 63% of Div 3s enter in advance, of these 87% enter online.

It is not currently possible to compare Div 4, Open and Officials entries against results. However, all of these can and do enter online.

2.3   Online Entry Payment Failures

Around 2% of payments fail on first attempt to charge the payment card. This is well within industry acceptable norms. We make a second attempt before notifying the paddler. Paddlers mostly fix the problem without being chased further. Some need a bit of a nudge from the organiser and a few will have their entry cancelled. (Lower divisions are less likely to have a problem, primarily because entries are made closer to the date on which we take payment).

Failures are often outside of the account holder's control. Reasons as supplied by the credit card company are often vague:

- Do Not Honour 48%
- Insufficient Funds 30%
- Pickup Card/Stolen Card 12%
- Restricted Card/Transaction Not Allowed 10%

2.4   Charge Backs

Charge-backs occur when the account holder reports the transaction as fraudulent to their bank after the money has changed hands. We have had one incident of this during the year. This incurs a dispute charge of £15 as well as the initial fee. So, please if you are concerned about whether payment has been taken in error talk to us before the bank.

3   System Development

3.1   New This Year in Online Entries

As the take-up of the system has grown additional functionality has been added to meet requests (and some bugs have been fixed!). Some of the key areas:

- Ability for Div 4s to enter online;
- The multiple entry button/page to make entering multiple competitions easier;
- Filtering options;
- Allowing organiser to reinstate cancelled entries;

- Filters and colours for entry card production;
- Sign in sheet for non-ranked paddlers;
- Simply Slalom Export/Import (with thanks to Dave Spencer and Ken Trollope);
- Restructuring of fees reflecting changes from last ACM and allowing for C2 discount;
- Promotion Management;
- Additional emails to organisers to support competition management through system;
- Competition Cancellation Button to automatically refund all paddlers;
- Late fees refund button for when late fees have been charged unintentionally;
- Statistics pages (restricted access).

3.2   Planned Next Year For Online Entries

We are always willing to look at further enhancements, time permitting. The following relates to outstanding requests. No guarantees, but hopefully at least some of these will appear next year.

- Changes to meet ACM rule changes;
- Rewrite of div 4 entries with a view to allowing Scratch C2s to enter online;
- Recording reasons for cancellations;
- Changing the promotion management process so that when a promotion is processed *prior to the account being charged* the whole amount for the new division is taken, thus reducing the need for additional payments to be collected on the day.

3.3   Other Data Systems

Online Entries may be the new-comer to the scene but would never have been possible without the systems that have come before. These continue to support organisers and paddlers:

- www.canoeslalom.co.uk developed and maintained by Nick Penfold continues to be the go-to place for information about our sport. This year, by request, committee mug shots have been added to the site and can be seen at http://www.canoeslalom.co.uk/committee/committee_members.htm.
- The ranking database run by Duncan Berriman is key to fast awareness of promotions and enabling online entries and will be key to providing the new waiting list order if the rule is passed at the ACM
- Ken Trollope's legacy of Simply Slalom, now managed by Dave Spencer, is key to the running of many lower division events and as of this year can now import all the online entries in one go, saving all that re-typing and cutting and pasting.
- www.giveitfish.co.uk (by Steve M) is a great resource for discussions, chatter and opinions. We even agree with each other sometimes!

More systems/enhancements are being considered for development:

- Duncan is looking at options for taking online bib applications
- New developments to the national membership schemes mean that we may be able to access current status of BC membership and use this in our slalom systems
- Consideration for providing online management of the co-ordinated slalom calendar continues.

4   GDPR

Canoe Slalom collects relatively little personal data but, in spite of that, we are not exempt. from GDPR and it is an ongoing process. You may have noticed that we now only collect year of birth (not the date) and that the bib form now tells you what we do with your data. The new-style entry cards and online entries do not collect your address (though they do need email addresses as there has to be some means of contact). In the coming year addresses for organisers and officials will not be added to the year book unless there is a specific need.

5   Year Book Survey

A year book survey has been carried out this year and received 71 responses representing a reasonable cross section of roles but biased towards those in the higher divisions.

Attitudes to the year book were fairly evenly spread with a definite bias to the physical year book being useful. There were a few comments that suggested web only would be preferable, saving paper and being searchable. However, there were also comments almost begging the retention of the physical year book.

Data/Digital Strategy ACM Report 2018 (Dee Lindesay)