Data/Digital Strategy

1   Introduction

2020 was definitely a year to be forgotten, and canoe slalom statistics (other than number of races cancelled) are probably not going to be exciting even for those who love such things. However, software support of the sport continues to be expanded.

I'd like to extend my thanks to those who build and maintain the software that supports Canoe Slalom, in particular Duncan Berriman (Ranking Database & Bib Administration); Dave Spencer (Simply Slalom); Nick Penfold (Website); Matt Stephens (Bib Applications & Floating Ducks); and Ben Collins (Website Calendar).

2   Covid Support in 2021

Even with the new vaccine, running competitions in 2021 is going to be a challenge! These are some little things that might help, they can't all be confirmed as yet, but they are at least being considered:

- Remember that www.canoeslalom.co.uk is still open for business for communicating with competitors.
- Displaying Simply Slalom results via a monitor on site is really not going to be an option as it encourages paddlers to "gather". However, the possibility of providing functionality to display results via a web page is being investigated.
- Canoeslalomentries will have a privacy policy update to allow passing of data to appropriate health/government organisations where requested (eg for contact tracing) and there will be an option to use the system to collect non-paddler details for accompanying coaches and parents.
- Emails are already available for contact tracing, but investigation for collecting phone numbers (preferred by track and trace) is ongoing.
- There *may* be a way of providing Protest Management via the internet, subject to the viability of posting results information in the first place!

3   2020 Statistics

Most 2020 stats are of limited use this year and those from the first few months now seem like they are from another lifetime, so no charts and graphs (in any case, we've seen enough on the TV!). However:

- Average number of early entries (received in January) to Prem races were *up* about 20% on 2019, whilst those for Div 1 races were *down* by a similar amount. Unfortunately, it is impossible to know whether this pattern would have been seen throughout the year.
- The first day of entries being opened for entry this year saw slightly less frenetic activity than 2019 and everyone appeared to go to sleep between 2am and 4am.

4   Software Updates

Apart for the updates around Covid support above there are several additional changes that have happened in 2020 or are planned for 2021.

4.1 Ranking Database

The existing automated interface to British Canoeing membership database has been extended to include the other nations, which means up-to-date information on membership expiry dates.

4.2 Online Bib Applications

This is now being developed as two parts:

- The Bib Application System – this is the part that the competitors will see and use
- The Bib Officer Admin System – This will be used by the bib officers to manage bib allocations and issue bibs

Once the system is introduced then the following changes to the current applications process will come into force:

- Bibs will only be applied for online, no postal applications – This will make sure that there is one central list of names and addresses for the yearbook and remove the data-security risks associated with every bib officer keeping details locally.

- Bibs may be still be delivered by bib officers at events by prior arrangement, *if* the bib officer is able to facilitate – However there will be no discount for any postage and it will be up to the paddler to arrange this directly with the bib officer.
- Where payment is required, it can be made by card, cash or cheque. – It is expected that most will pay by card, but we do not exclude anyone who either doesn't want to pay online or can't (Cash or cheque to be posted to bib officer, as they are now).
- For the first 2 years paper bib vouchers will also be accepted in lieu of payment for a bib. These must be posted to the bib officer with name and bib number written on the back.
- "Electronic" bib credits will start to be created as bibs are returned (in the main towards the end of the season in Autumn 2021) – These will replace the old bib vouchers.

Bib officers will no longer receive post applications:

- Bib officer will be notified via the admin system of bib applications (optionally, by email alerts, daily summaries or by logging in).
- They will be able to see whether a payment is outstanding.
- Where no payment (or return bib) is due the officer will print a postal label and issue the bib.

4.3 Calendar Applications

As this was the second year of running with online applications those using the system will have been offered the option of copying the details from the 2020 calendar entry, where appropriate. Hopefully this will make the task of providing the additional data post ACM a little easier, though you will still need to go through the process of checking and submitting. Please do this promptly when asked so that the new calendar can be produced.

Sadly, technology has its limitations and the system cannot resolve the clashes; it just means we can spot them sooner.

4.4 Online Entries

Changes you may have seen this year if you were lucky enough to be involved in a competition that went ahead

- Sponsors are now pulled from the ranking database so that we get consistency. If you want to add a sponsor to your record, contact your ranking officer(s).
- For competitions needing a bit of extra info (eg Scottish Schools, Selection etc) there is a popup to ask for additional information when the paddler enters the race. This is race specific and should not be a frequent occurrence.
- Practice slots can now be set up as "sessions", this allows organisers to move entries between slots, without the complication of cancels and recharging that was previously required.
- Selection specific functionality has been added to help organisers identify invalid entries.
- An update to Stripe (the payment processer) requirements for "know your customer" regulations, meant we needed more information from club treasurers. So many, many thanks to those who responded and provided the additional details required.

BC Expiry – The good idea that wasn't!

Early in 2020, a process was added whereby if you had a race coming up and your membership association had or was about to expire you would get a reminder letter. There were a few issues!

- The data updates were less frequent than we'd realised (so data was out of date).
- Instead of sending membership updates to the ranking officers as requested, paddlers replied to me.
- Those whose membership had not quite expired had problems trying to re-join ahead of expiry date.

The code for this was therefore removed, at least for the time being. However, there remain concerns about membership expiry so a variation may yet be reinstated!

Strong Customer Authentication

Strong Customer Authentication (SCA) is a new European regulatory requirement that, was planned for the end of 2019, but will not now be enforced until the end of 2021. The work on canoeslalomentries was implemented for the start of 2020, but because of the enforcement delay, you may not yet have seen the impact. Those that entered races last year will have seen a changed interface for entering card details, but we may see additional impacts at the end of the year.