

# BRITISH CANOEING SPRINT RACING COMMITTEE

## Pen portrait for Nominated Candidate for Chair at the 2023 ACM

### Nick Fowler Rimell

Sprint Racing in the UK has had fantastic moments, it has created memories that have driven passion and commitment from the community and inspired young athletes to push themselves to compete with the very best in the World. My own experience of learning to paddle, living next door to Steve and Andy Train as they pursued multiple Olympic Games and more Marathon World Titles are a testament to this, more on this experience later.

I have been fortunate enough to have been around for a while now, with over 35 years of participating, racing, volunteering and coaching. I have seen the emergence of the National Lottery backed World Class Programme, the biggest and most influential moment in living memory of our sport. What I hope to achieve as Chair is to aid sharing of best practise, resource and experience between all sides. As many have said there is no one blueprint to success in Sprint Racing, what there is, is a commitment to the discipline, to learning about how to be faster and what are the key ingredients to success for the individual. For me this is the key measure, the individual in front of the coach. We work with people and what is right for one can be wrong for others, we must learn to remove the barriers to progress, this is true for coaches as it is for the discipline itself. So, what are the barriers that need to be removed?

Here's my top 3:

- 1,** Access to events; 4 events a year to practise, deliver and select teams is not enough. Four regattas a year aren't enough to build positive lifelong participation from youngsters or those taking their first few paddle strokes on the regatta lake. I aim to continue to increase the number of SRC affiliated local regattas.
- 2,** Image, for some people Sprint has all the spoils, it has the serious Olympic Discipline tag which has been seen in the past as a millstone. I hope to show through my passionate leadership it is a discipline full of life, full of fun, full of amazing people who share in the joy of head-to-head racing.
- 3,** A decline in numbers, like a lot of sports we are seeing fewer taking part at all levels. A recent study by the Outdoor Group suggests that participants are more interested in the endeavour of a single challenge and are moving away from formalised sport. I believe by providing meaningful experiences through high quality coaching and innovative events we can create the user experience that will buck the trend and see an increase at local, regional and National events.

My personal background in the sport has not been as illustrious as some, but I have managed to represent Great Britain at every level, Junior, U23 at Senior European and World Championships. Shortly after moving back to Worcester, I was asked to help coach at the club and so started to discover the joys of giving back to the sport. From there I was asked to pilot a new local initiative to drive new members into the sport and focus on Sprint. This was a success for the club as not only did the club find new members and families, but the existing generation found new training groups and eventually pushed onto to get the best from themselves. My coaching journey now included some paid work as well as continuing to help structure training plans for the members of the club. I started a full-time role with BC in 2013 and worked there until the 2022. I hope to use my familiarity with those within the World Class Programme to benefit future decision making and engagement as well as helping to create new and inventive ways we as a community tap into their experience.

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The very Heart of our sport are the participants, the volunteers, the parents, and the clubs. Without any of these we don't have a sport. When we come together, we create exciting and fun environments. Look at the recent changes to the Regatta layout; everyone invested thought it needed a change, the RC changed it and it was very successful, let's keep the positivity generated by this event and carry it over into the next racing season and beyond.