

Nick Fowler-Rimell – Pen Portrait

I have dedicated much of my life to canoe sprint, with a journey that has taken me from grassroots paddler to international athlete, coach, and committee member. I first discovered the sport at Fladbury Canoe Club before progressing through the ranks to race at senior level for Royal Canoe Club, ultimately representing Great Britain on the international stage.

After retiring from international racing, I turned my focus to coaching. I have coached at Worcester Canoe Club and worked with both club-level and international teams, helping athletes of all ages and abilities to reach their potential. These experiences, combined with my career as a teacher, have given me a deep understanding of how to bring out the best in people and how to support others to grow and succeed.

In recent years, I have served on the Sprint Racing Committee, where I have helped to develop pathways for young paddlers, helped to improve communication between stakeholders involved in the running of the discipline. We as a committee have spent a long time looking at how to improve the paddler experience at national regattas, from raffle K4's, new divisions, new standards and new events. I look forward to developing the National regatta experience for everyone so that more people feel more welcome as they have done at the recently successful September regatta.

If elected Chair, my priorities will be to:

- Champion fairness and transparency in decision-making.
- Support clubs and volunteers in growing participation.
- Strengthen the competitive pathway from club to international level.
- Ensure sprint racing continues to thrive as an accessible, inclusive, and exciting sport across the UK.

Canoe sprint has been central to my life, from my first strokes on the water to representing Great Britain and now coaching and supporting the next generation. I want to use this experience, and my passion for the sport, to work collaboratively with athletes, coaches, clubs, and Paddle UK to secure a strong and sustainable future for sprint racing.

David Martyn.

I joined the sport when I was 14 and since then:

- I was GB's first junior to reach 2 K1 finals at Junior World Championships
- I was a member of GB teams for 10 years.
- I have coached paddlers up to international level in both sprint and marathon.
- My family have become involved in the sport through racing at all levels, coaching and enjoying the paddling community. Our children now give back to the sport and compete for fun predominantly in marathon.
- I have been head coach at Wey, during which we won the Macgregor paddle twice, had the highest club membership ever, ran club overseas training camps and employed paid coaches.

I recently took early retirement from a major energy company where I was a senior leader. I was best known for:

- Creating simple solutions to complex problems
- Calmly getting the best out of people through collaboration, respect and support.
- Leading teams, both locally and globally to find and fix underlying problems.
- Chairing groups for the chemical engineering national institute.

My leadership style is all about finding out what people do well and enjoy doing, then supporting them to have fun, collaboratively creating great solutions. If those organising, coaching and volunteering are having fun then it's hard to create an event which competitors don't enjoy too.

Current situation. There are many positive things happening in the sport but in sprint racing we have falling numbers of clubs engaged in the sport

	2017-2022	2024-2025
Average number of clubs attending the Macgregor paddle regatta	50	40

To have a vibrant, growing sport we need to turn this trend around. Growing the number of clubs and paddlers to create a vibrant sport at the grass roots level is imperative for the success of the sport in the UK. Other sports using Holme Pierrepont bring thousands of people to their events, this is unachievable for us today, but we need to go from loss making to profit making to enable investment in the sport.

Making change is essential. A real start on this has been made and those involved should be commended for doing so, but the effort required to achieve this has taken a toll on the volunteers. Some of the most valued and proactive committee members have recently stood down at least in part because of the divided and antagonistic meetings. I hope this is where my skills can really help. Being new to the committee with fresh ideas and approaches I hope I can unify the strong characters already on the committee and bring out the quieter voices.

Diversity is key. The composition of the SRC and regatta committees need to represent the people of the sport we aspire to be. Engaging with people with different ideas, backgrounds and experience to create an environment where everyone feels involved and empowered to contribute.

The Clubs – the SRC serves the clubs. You elect who you think is going to represent you and further the sport in a positive, dynamic way. Ensure your club discusses the SRC and who you would like to work with in developing the sport. **Vote** at the ACM. Give **your** club a voice, choose who will bring

forward ***your*** ideas for improvement and growth. Always give volunteers respect for their efforts and support them as we build a truly great sport that everybody enjoys.