

MRC 03/04/09

Report on the Gent K1 race, Saturday 28th March 2009

Team Details

Athletes were invited (rather than selected) to be part of the team to Gent, based on performances and commitment to our series of winter training days. The team was as follows:-

SMK1	B Bradshaw; J Keeble
SWK1	S Millest
JMK1	P Bannister; G Barnicoat; M Bowley; J Childerstone; M Clive; T Deacon; A Hicks; O Rix; M Robinson; C Welch; M Wilkes; P Wilkes; S Willis
JWK1	A Haws; E Hawthorn; J Illidge; J Illinesi; E Lewis; S Rooney; I Smith; N Smith; J Swallow
Staff	Melvin Swallow; Sarah Swallow; Ollie Harding; Sue Hawthorn; James Smythe

Travel & Accommodation

As in previous years, we used two 15-seater minibuses, and the large trailer, crossing via Eurotunnel. Accommodation was at Laarne youth hostel, which is around 10k out of Gent and reduces the risk of paddlers going off exploring.

The Race

The course distance for most of our classes was 18km, with senior men doing 25km. The course included a first lap on the regatta lake, loops of a river circuit and two portages per lap. The weather this year was around 9 degrees centigrade, with some wind and occasional heavy rain, but much improved on last year's sub-zero conditions.

In the senior men, Ben Bradshaw and James Keeble were racing. Ben raced strongly in the front group until the end of his second lap, but lost time from there to finish 8th at +7m. Winner Bram Brandjes of Holland finished in 2h02m. James finished 10th, 12 minutes behind the winner. The race contained half a dozen world cup regulars.

The junior men's race saw much stronger performances from our team than in recent years - we have never had a top 3 placing at this event. Last year's world K2 marathon silver medallist Toon Broeckx won in 1h30m, just ahead of Charlie Welch and Matt Bowley who had stayed with him for most of the race, with Mark Clive not far behind. Unfortunately the organisers' results for this race bear no relation to reality, so we are still trying to establish the finishing positions of our other boats.

The combined ladies race was won with a dominant performance by Jenny Illidge, who dropped 2nd place Alice Haws and 3rd place Jenny Swallow early in the race. Emily Lewis finished a close 4th.

SMK1			
1	Brandjes Bram	NED	2:02:13
2	Van Bakel Joep	NED	2:02:54
3	Cremers Tom	BEL	2:03:20
8	Bradshaw Ben	BCU	2:09:09
10	Keeble James	BCU	2:14:25
20 starters, 15 finishers			

JMK1			
1	Broeckx Toon	BEL	1:30:02
2	Welch Charlie	BCU	1:30:29 (?)
3	Bowley Matt	BCU	1:31:56 (?)
4	Clive Mark	BCU	??

followed by (order within groups is uncertain)... Sam Willis, Mark Wilkes, Oli Rix / Peter Wilkes, Tom Deacon, Albert Hicks / Jack Childerstone, Matt Robinson, Peter Bannister / George Barnicoat.
19 starters, 18 finishers

J/SWK1

1	Illidge Jenny	BCU	1:39:50
2	Haws Alice	BCU	1:41:29
3	Swallow Jenny	BCU	1:42:03
4	Lewis Emily	BCU	1:42:26
6	Smith Naomi	BCU	1:43:01
7	Millest Sarah (S)	BCU	c. 1:45:00
8	Smith Isobel	BCU	1:46:23
10	Hawthorn Emma	BCU	1:49:57
11	Illinesi Jenny	BCU	1:54:01
17 starters, 15 finishers			

James Smythe, 01/04/09