

GB CANOEING PRESS RELEASE

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GB Canoe Slalom team announced ahead of home European Championships

Britain's slalom athletes competed in Nottingham at the weekend, for a place on the GB canoe slalom team. The qualifying athletes will represent Great Britain at the; European Championships in Nottingham at the end of May, at World Cup events and at the World Championships later in the year.

The three selection races which took place over two days, were the first canoe slalom competition events to take place at the white water course since it reopened in March, after major redevelopment work.

Three athletes per class were selected, based on their performance times. The classes are; Men's K1 (Kayak single), Women's K1 (Kayak single), Men's C1 (Canoe single) and Men's C2 (Canoe double) class.

In the Men's K1, the current European Champion and Olympic Silver medallist, Campbell Walsh, made sure he qualified, so that he can defend his European title in Nottingham at the end of May. Also qualified in the Men's K1 are Huw Swetnam and Richard Hounslow.

For the first time ever, Beijing's Olympic Silver medallist David Florence competed in **both** the Men's C1 and C2 classes, with Richard Hounslow. Twenty six year old Florence will be the first slalom canoeist to compete in **two classes** at a major international event – the European Championships, his intention is to win two medals in London 2012.



Olympic athletes: David Florence (left) and Campbell Walsh (right)

In the Women's K1, it was a shock exit for Olympian Fiona Pennie who marginally missed out on a place on the team. It was young 2012 potential Lizzie Neave, Louise Donnington and Sydney 2000 Olympian Laura Blakeman who made it through.

All of the team will now be preparing to compete for medals on homeground at the 2009 European Championships, which will be televised on BBC 1 and BBC 2 and take place in Nottingham between 28 – 31 May. It is one of the major canoeing events to take place on home ground before London 2012.

As Europe produces the best canoeists in the world, the event promises to showcase some fantastic talent!

The GB Canoe Slalom Team

Men's K1 (kayak single)

Campbell Walsh
Huw Swetnam
Richard Hounslow

Women's K1 (kayak single)

Lizzie Neave
Louise Donnington
Laura Blakeman

Men's C1 (canoe single)

David Florence
Mark Proctor
Dan Goddard

Men's C2 (canoe double)

Tim Baillie / Etienne Stott
David Florence / Richard Hounslow
Dan Goddard / Colin Radmore

Forthcoming Slalom Events

European Championships, Nottingham on 28th – 31st May
World Cup1, Pau on 27 – 28th June
World Cup2, Bratislava on 4 – 5th July
World Cup3, Augsburg on 11 – 12th July
World Championships, La Seu d'Urgell on 8th – 13th September

Athlete websites

www.campbellwalsh.com
www.davidflorence.com
www.fionapennie.com

Ends

For further information please contact:

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Notes to the editors:

GB Canoeing is the World Class Performance division of the British Canoe Union (BCU). It currently supports 20 UK athletes in their training and competition with the aim to win medals in significant international competitions now and within the next 4 years, particularly at the London 2012 Olympics. In the Athens Olympics, Canoeing was one of Team GB's most successful sports with medals for Ian Wynne (Bronze), Helen Reeves (Bronze) and Campbell Walsh (Silver). In the Beijing Olympics British Canoeing became a Gold medal winning sport, with Tim Brabants (www.timbrabants.com) winning Gold and Bronze medals in flat water racing. In slalom David Florence won a Silver medal.

The aim for London 2012 is to win two Gold medals. For more information on GB Canoeing visit www.worldclass-canoeing.org.uk

The umbrella organisation, BCU, was set up in 1936 to send a team to the Berlin Olympics and is the lead body for canoeing and kayaking in the UK. In 2000 the BCU federalised to become the umbrella organisation for the Home Nation Associations in Scotland (SCA), Wales (WCA) and Northern Ireland (CANI). In England, Canoe England was set up, on a par with the other National Associations, as a division of the BCU, to support the development of canoeing in England.

The BCU is responsible for leading and setting the overall framework for the National Associations; including representing canoeing interests through coaching, competition and campaigning for increased access to Britain's waterways for paddlers. Today the BCU has a membership of over 60,000, including over 450 affiliated clubs and 145 approved centres. According to the RYA Watersports Survey there are an estimated 1.1 million people who take to the water in a canoe each year. The vast majority do so under a watchful eye of one of the 11,000 BCU Qualified coaches or as part of an affiliated organisation. For more information visit: www.bcu.org.uk.