

United Kingdom  
Surf Rowers  
League



United Kingdom Surf Rowers League

Annual General Meeting

2011



## President Report

After over forty years of leaping, jumping (and finally clumsily clambering) into surfboats and eight proud years of office it is time for a change. I have little to add to the previous seven annual reports (sighs of relief) and the address I gave at the Bournemouth event in September. Ellis & Co. have added a whole new meaning to 'the tea party'.

Ernest Hemingway said, "There are only three sports: bullfighting, motor racing and mountaineering; all the others are merely games." Ernest who?

The challenge that Peter Gaisford laid down at Portreath eight years ago has been duly taken up. The standards have risen to the point where the UK can send their champions to honorably compete with the best. Eight years ago there was an annual competition within the Surf Life Saving Association's National Championships unenthusiastically organized to fit somewhere in a more important programme. Two, possibly three all-male Cornish teams competed.

Not only are flat-water races added to our calendar of the Summer Series and National and European Open Championships but the opportunity for other competition remains as long as the will to organize and compete does. Please continue to advance and promote the UKSRL not only within your own groups but wherever you find men and women of the right calibre who would benefit from this, one of the most exhilarating of all 'games'.

As ever there will be issues to be met and new people to face them. They will be doing so in the best interests of you and the League, please give them your full support.

And finally, as all sweeps should say, "Thanks for the ride, you're great company."

Nick Beringer



## **Chairs Report 2011**

Firstly I would like to thank all of the hard working committee members who have voluntarily spent their time ensuring that the 2011 season runs smoothly and successfully. Special praise must go once again to Peter Gaisford who it goes without saying works tirelessly throughout the season. I would also like to thank Dan Berrimens loan boat scheme which again has proven a massive success and has meant visiting crews can take part more easily.

Congratulations this year must go to numerous crews for a variety of reasons, firstly the men and women from Porthtowan for winning the trebles. The Bournemouth crews for finally getting their boat on the water and for also raising the bar considerably in their racing. To Perranporth for all of their pregnancies and crew alterations, but for also managing to get two highly competitive and competent crews out in most races.

Well done to Khalil Issac who won UKSRL Novice Sweep and to all other podium finishers and crews for making 2011 another successful and closely fought season of racing.

I am also grateful to all clubs/venues who hosted events again this year. Our 5 x Summer Series events and Open Championship format is now well established and seems to run smoothly thanks to the skill, character and competence of all competitors, officials, and helpers.

This year we were extremely fortunate to keep our sponsors for the summer series, Shyman and Shygirl. As chair of the committee I would personally like to thank them for their sponsorship. The partnership between the UKSRL and Shyman / Shygirl has worked extremely well and we hope to continue and develop this over the coming years. Thanks also go to British Rowing and the Extreme Academy in Watergate for their continued support of our events.

Thanks again go to Andy Cox for his continued report writing / photography, and keeping the website informative.

Porthtowan Mens crew also had the fantastic opportunity of representing GB in NZ. They certainly put UK surfboat rowing on the map and did us proud, well done to them.

Sadly this year we have to say goodbye to Nick Beringer, he has been a substantial part of the committee and his support will be greatly missed. I really hope that he remains a firm part of the league and will always be welcome at any event he attends.

We also lose our UKSRL secretary this year and it goes without saying he has left BIG shoes to fill. Lets hope he remains on as President, as the league and committee will be lost without him.

Once again I have truly enjoyed being chair and hope to carry on for many years.

Louise Gapp  
Chair – United Kingdom Surf Rowers League



## Secretary Report

The UKSRL has successfully established an ongoing coaching relationship with three local schools. Truro High School, Truro School and Redruth School. In October 2010 funding was secured with the help of British Rowing under the Sport Unlimited banner, administered by The Cornwall Sports Partnership.

The Learn to Row course uses surfboats to coach 16 students in the skills of slide rowing (using rolling seats). The students were also registered to the British Rowing – Explore Rowing programme. In October 2011 the coaching project was repeated under the Sportivate funding programme and Redruth School students 16 – 17 years joined the two Truro Schools in the project.

I must thank Nick Healey for assisting me, to coach the school students. The UKSRL also secured funding for two members, Nick Healey and Ed Hartgill to attain the British Rowing Level 2 Coaching qualification.

Due to the success of the above programme the UKSRL has been approached by Plymouth University to provide Learn to Row coaching for 18 – 21yrs students attending Cornwall College.

The UKSRL conducted five Summer Series events and the UK Open Surfboat Championships in 2011. Attendance of crews at these events has plateaued and some thought needs to be given as to how the organisation can promote or re-invent the competitions to draw in new rowers and crews.

This is to be my last report as Secretary of the UKSRL. I have decided to retire from the role which I have held unofficially and officially for about 10 years. There is a very real danger that should I not retire no one will know how the organisation functions. We have an amazing diversity of members within the organisation who all share the thrill of surfboat rowing, whether it be for leisure, social or competitive occasions. It is important that those same members are encouraged to participate in the decision making of the organising body.

New members on the management committee can revitalise and motivate the decision making process to reinvent and take the UKSRL in directions anew. At the heart of it all there is a body people who enjoy the thrill of what can only be described on some occasions as “extreme rowing”.

I thank all those who have helped and advised me over the years and in so doing have created a respected and worthwhile body responsible for the rowing of surfboats.

Peter Gaisford



## Treasurer Report 2011

[See attached financial documents](#)

The accounts show that the UKSRL maintained a surplus of income over expenditure by £476.52 over the year from November 1<sup>st</sup> 2010 to October 31<sup>st</sup> 2011.

The balance at the bank as of 31<sup>st</sup> October is £5854.91

Membership numbers reduced from 135 members in 2010 to 89 members for 2011. This is a worrying sign as the income generated from the memberships is needed to cover the costs of the six UKSRL events. The primary cost being safety cover and beach permissions at £786.00 for all events.

This year the UKSRL implemented an option for members to pay their membership by an online bank transfer. Whilst this makes it easier to receive payments, it does make it more difficult to keep track of payments received as there is no paper trail. In some cases payments were made as a crew and only one name would appear on the bank statement. This situation is unsatisfactory and therefore steps are being taken to either create a stand alone payment system on the UKSRL website or to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with SLSGB and use a payment portal system via the SLSGB website. The setup costs will determine the best course of action to take.

An area that has generated income for the organisation is that of funding for the coaching of rowing. In 2010 – 2011 with the assistance of British Rowing the UKSRL received £1690.00 Sport Unlimited funding, expenses incurred were £1003.80 giving the UKSRL a surplus of £686.20

Once again in 2011 with the assistance of British Rowing the UKSRL secured Sportivate funding for a school rowing six session project in the autumn of 2011. This funding included £500 for two UKSRL members to attain the British Rowing Level 2 Coach qualification. Nick Healey and Ed Hartgill are in the final stages of completing the qualification. Total Sportivate funding is £1278.50 with the addition of £320 course fees giving a total income of £1598.50. Expenditure is likely to be £1153.80 giving a surplus of £444.70

The UKSRL made a successful funding application to The Rowing Foundation and received £509.00 towards the provision of 8 sets of rolling seats. These were allotted to the surfboats from Porthtowan and Perranporth used for the coaching. Both clubs paid an additional £50 each to cover the full purchase costs of the seats at £583.63.

Jane Mansfield



## Publicity Officers Report 2011

### Television

No coverage as far as I am aware.

I'm not sure if the discussions with Boulder Creek ever came to anything. I have seen some footage that Chris Lane put together but don't know how far he got with this.

### Magazines

Rowing & Regatta did not want any material from individual rounds of the Summer Series, UK Open or European Champs.

They did take a 500-word piece reviewing the whole season and will also publish a similar length piece on P Gaisford Esq following his decision to take a well-earned step back.

### Newspapers

No copy filed on behalf of UKSRL.

Individual clubs (Porthtowan) may have had articles published relating to their time in NZ and following the visit by Matty Pinsent.

### Website

The poor volume of traffic noted last year has continued but this has been off-set by the reaction to material published on Facebook, notably images post events. Blogs appear to have had their day while social networking sites seem just to rise and rise.

Two trips - by Porthtowan to NZ and Perranporth to the Vogalonga - did generate some comment on the blog but only really from the die-hards.

Andy Cox



## **Development Officer Report 2011**

2011 has seen our sport continue successfully for another year, with European titles yet again coming back to us and the same high standards of competition and techniques showing at all domestic events.

This in itself shows that as a country we are learning and mastering the skills required for our sport to reach the highest of standards. Porthtowan men's crews travelling to New Zealand to take part in competitions over there equipped themselves well and showed that we are a country that can produce world class crews.

We seem to have a reduction in numbers this year in memberships but as in all sports this happens and it may be possible that the current financial climate may have had some bearing on this also.

We are now recognised by British Rowing formally the A.R.A as a successful division of rowing within the United Kingdom and are recognised as such in there 5 year plan covering finance, coaching and development.

The U.K.S.R.L is seen at European level as a successful way forward for the development of the sport of surfboat rowing, with the U.K.S.R.L represented at area level within British rowing as well as at national level on the development committee.

With some key figures stepping aside at the end of this year after many years of hard work, the sport will need new people to come into these very important roles for us to continue successfully. Make no mistake that these roles can be very demanding of time and of your patience. However! The roles can be very rewarding and without this work being done quietly behind the scenes, the events that we have become so used to will not take place and our sport could suffer because of this.

As with all clubs, society's and organisations this work is generally undertaken very quietly by people who ask for nothing in return at what is in essence a very thankless task in the first place. Without the tireless enthusiasm and efforts of these people, many clubs and organisations would not exist.

A sport is only as strong as its members and supporters; they bring finance and participation and because of this development can take place.

We perhaps need to look towards increasing beginner participation at all levels, and the training of more sweeps as well as level 2 coaches. Nick Healey having passed his level 2 this year will hopefully pass on his knowledge as well as his winning formulae to other crews and rowers. If every current U.K.S.R.L member introduced just one person to the sport just think what we will have achieved.

For this to happen, people will have to give up there time, coach, tow boats, organise people and generally give of themselves in order for the sport to continue to develop successfully. Many people already do this and I would like to thank them for there efforts as without them we would not be enjoying the sport as we currently do.

It has been nice to see new faces in boats this year as well as attending the opening of a new club in Bournemouth. I know from experience the hard work that goes into getting something like that of the ground. Well done Bournemouth!

Another good year of competition has been had and enjoyed by many this year and I am looking forward to next year being equally as enjoyable and successful.

Phil Martin

Development Officer 2011



## **UKSRL COMPETITION OFFICERS REPORT – 2011**

This year saw the continuation of the Boat Loan Scheme thanks to the generosity of many loaning clubs and sweeps willing to take guest crews out. Attendance was generally down throughout the season, but the scheme was particularly beneficial to both Bournemouth Surfboat Club and Newport Vets crews who didn't travel with their own boats. Perhaps next year we will see both these boats at UKSRL events.

The BLS raised £260 this year with no significant breakages. However, logistics of collecting payments and cross-checking members has become increasingly difficult. Hopefully this will be resolved in the new season.

UKSRL Secretary Pete Gaisford is stepping down this year and his replacement has some big boots to fill. It is imperative that the workload be spread more evenly across the officers in the coming seasons.

There are many great ideas offered by a large number of the members on the beach in the summer months that rarely see the light of day due to poor attendance at the AGM/GM. This is likely to be down to the timing and venue of the meeting outside of the high-season. A greater involvement could be achieved in one of three ways:

Hold a UKSRL fun weekend around the AGM/GM with rowing training/racing.

Move the AGM/GM to a central location – Tiverton/Taunton area.

Hold the AGM/GM at R5 Bournemouth as part of a rowers 'conference' event.

The Olympic year 2012 is a great opportunity for UKSRL to capitalise on the public support and interest in British Sport and every effort should be made to expand the sport.

Dan Berriman

COMPETITION OFFICER 2011