



2009 European Canoe Slalom Championships

Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham, Great Britain

28th – 31st May 2009

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Watch Nottingham's Olympians start their journey to London 2012

Senior European Canoe Slalom Championships

The first major international canoe slalom competition since the Beijing Olympics takes place in Nottingham at the end of May 2009. With the best canoeists in the world competing for medals, the Slalom European Championships will thrill and captivate. In canoe slalom, Europe is the strongest continent in the World and the most successful Olympians will be in Nottingham to start their journey on the road to London 2012.

What is Slalom Canoeing?

There are lots different types of canoeing, everything from exploring a tranquil piece of river to playing team canoe polo, to sea kayaking, but flat water racing and canoe slalom are the two Olympic types of canoeing.

Canoe slalom is absolutely incredible to watch; it involves canoeists negotiating, on challenging whitewater, a series of green and red 'gates' (between 18 and 25). Canoeists go through the green gates downstream and the red gates upstream, battling against tonnes of fast moving water. Competitors set off at 2minutes intervals and have a total of two runs; the times are then combined and the competitor with the fastest time wins!

Slalom canoeing is fast paced and requires skill, strength and accuracy, as hitting or missing a gate incurs a time penalty.

Key people to look out for include:*

David Florence, Great Britain

Olympic Silver medallist at the Beijing Olympics, Nottingham's David Florence will be competing in the C1 (canoe single) class and will also, for the first time ever, also compete in the C2 class.

Campbell Walsh, Great Britain

Olympic Silver medallist from Athens 2004 and current European Champion, Nottingham's Campbell Walsh will want to defend his European title on home ground.

Michal Martikan, Slovakia

Martikan has won four Olympic medals (two Gold and two Silver), 10 Gold World Championship medals and is arguably the world's most successful canoeist.

To see the world's best canoe slalom athletes battling for medals, starting on the road to London 2012, put the date in your diary!

The competition takes place between 28th – 31st May 2009 at the whitewater course, Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham.

What else is going on?

Running alongside the main competition there will be opportunities to try canoeing yourself.

Details will be available on www.canoe-england.org.uk closer to the time.

www.bcu.org.uk/09-slalom-europeans

EuroSlalom09@bcu.org.uk

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How can I get into canoeing?

It's easy, fun and for everyone! Whether you are 8 years old or 80 years old, the best way to get into canoeing is to visit a local Canoe England affiliated club or centre. Clubs and centres have coaches and all the equipment you need. To find a club near you visit www.canoe-england.org.uk and follow links to the club finder.

*subject to selection

ENDS

The event will be televised live, for sponsorship opportunities contact chloe.nelson-lawrie@bcu.org.uk

The Senior European Canoe Slalom Championships are supported by: The British Canoe Union, Canoe England, UK Sport, Sport England, Rushcliffe Borough Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, the International Canoe Federation and the European Canoe Association. To receive updates about the event email: EuroSlalom09@bcu.org.uk

About the British Canoe Union:

Set up in 1936 to send a team to the Berlin Olympics, the British Canoe Union (BCU) 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.

In the Athens Olympics, Canoeing was one of Team GB's most successful sports with medals for Ian Wynne (Bronze) in flat water racing and medals for Helen Reeves (Bronze) and Campbell Walsh (Silver) in slalom. In the Beijing Olympics British Canoeing became a Gold medal winning sport, with Tim Brabants winning Gold and Bronze medal in flat water racing. In slalom David Florence won Silver. The aim for London 2012 is to win two Gold medals.

Today the BCU has a membership of over 60,000, including over 450 affiliated clubs and 145 approved centres. According to the Paddlesport Review there are an estimated 1.5 million people 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.

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