

# The Marathon Paddler

Canoe Marathon Ireland Newsletter

Winter 2017

Without a doubt 2017 has been one of the most, if not the most, successful year in Irish kayaking. A lot of that success is down to one athlete, Jenny Egan. Here's what she had to say about the year.

## "The Year 2017 Has Been A Dream Come True"

As I sit here and reflect on 2017 I have to pinch myself to make sure I am not dreaming. I came into this year with many goals and I am so happy to have achieved most of them and exceeded my



expectations of winning five major International medals. My competition season started off by winning a gold medal at the International Canoe Federation (ICF) Senior Canoe Sprint World Cup 1 in Montemor-o-Velho, Portugal in May. No feeling equates to standing on the podium, seeing the Irish flag being raised and hearing Amhran ná bhFiann being played. It was also great to have my dad to present me with my gold medal at this competition, as he was Team Manager. Next up I won a bronze medal at the ICF Senior Canoe Sprint World Cup 3 in Belgrade, Serbia. The conditions for this race were extremely difficult with an intense temperature of 36 Degrees Celsius which was challenging for an Irish athlete. However, the heat was not going to get the better of me and I crossed the line in the bronze medal position in a very strong field of athletes, finishing off the ICF Senior Canoe Sprint World Cup tour on a high.

As September approached, I knew I wanted to produce the best race of my life at the ICF Senior Canoe Marathon World Championships, having placed 4th in 2015 in Győr, Hungary and with the handle in which I carry my boat breaking last year in 2016 in Brandenburg, I was hoping for some good luck to come my way and for all the hard work to pay off. Little did I know that my wish would come true in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa on Saturday the 9th of September 2017. The Irish Team composed of myself, Peter Egan, Barry Watkins, Ronan Foley, Aisling Smith with coach Jon Simmons and Team Manager Angie Egan and of course Malcolm Banks who competed in the Masters events. We arrived out in South Africa along with the first of our supporters Siobhan Kellett eleven days before my race, this was great as it gave us a chance to recover from the long trip, acclimatize to the weather conditions and become familiar with the race course and the venue at Camps Drift. There

was a great atmosphere within the team and we managed to fit in a short trip to a Safari and Lion Park one week before racing. Thankfully we all survived the Lion Park and have lived to tell the adventurous tale.

Three more of our amazing supporters, Tom Egan, Sinead Foley and Dave McDonnell arrived in the days leading up to the competition. As all the different nations arrived, I began to feel an electric atmosphere. I was feeling excited and nervous at the same time as the World Championships approached.



Saturday the 9th of September race day, comprising of 26.2km and 6 portages. In the morning I got up and had breakfast with the team and there was a nice relaxed atmosphere as I ate my oats as normal. I then relaxed for an hour before going to the race venue. When I arrived to the course I did my last preparations to my boat and secured my drink system. It was then time to get on the water, all my family wished me good luck and one memory I will have forever is that just before getting on the water I looked up at a bridge that crossed the river Dusi near the start line and saw an Irish flag hanging over the side with the following written on it "Good Luck Team Ireland" by Dave Mc Donnell. This brought a tear to my eye and also made me feel like the whole country was behind me. As I warmed up for the race on the water with my fellow competitors the adrenaline was pumping and I could feel my heart beating in my chest. "Ready Go" that was it, we were off, I had a good start and positioned myself well in the lead group. This group was very large for the majority of the race with seven to eight women competing for washes. On the 4th portage this group had broken down to four competitors myself, Lani Belcher of Great Britain, Vanda Kiszli of Hungary and multiple World Champion

Renata Csay also of Hungary. I was feeling great and I knew that the next portage was going to be extremely important. On the 5th portage I got out of my boat quickly and smoothly, ran fast and back in safely and sprinted off in the lead group. I saw Renata had dropped off the group and I knew then I was in a medal position. The crowds were roaring as we came through the final portage with Lani and Vanda just pulling slightly ahead of me as we got back on the water. As I came towards the finish line I was full of emotion and I celebrated as I crossed the finish line in a bronze medal position. "Yes I did it", the tears were flowing, all those years of hard work and I could now say I was an ICF Senior Canoe Marathon World Championship Medallist. It was amazing to share this special moment with all my family, my mum, dad, brother and boyfriend who have been there through all the ups and downs throughout the years and to celebrate with the team and the great supporters. It was a very special day for me, my family, Salmon Leap Canoe Club and my country. It was 12 years since I won a bronze medal at the ICF Junior Canoe Marathon World Championships in 2005 in Perth, Australia and 21 years since Gary Mawer won the first ICF Senior Canoe Marathon World Championship medal for Ireland in 1996 in Vaxholm, Sweden (I was a 9 year old watching this race in Sweden and was inspired). I am so proud to get Ireland back on the medal table. Congrats to all the Team for their results and thanks for all the special memories from this trip.

The final International competition of 2017 was the ICF Senior Canoe Marathon World Cup in China. In February of this year both Barry Watkins and I got sent an invitation for this event with all expenses paid. Of course I jumped at the chance at a once in a lifetime occasion to be paid to go and race in China. This was an amazing experience and a nice way to finish the season winning a silver medal in the long course event (26.2km with 6 portages) in Shaoxing, China and a bronze medal in the short course event (3.4km with two portages) in Shanghai, China. I also made the podium in the long course (23km) World Series event in Shanghai, China. Thanks so much to the ICF and the Chinese Canoe Federation for the invitation and for the great hospitality we received when we were there. Well done to Barry and thanks for all the laughs throughout the trip.

Not to forget one of my favourite races the International Liffey Descent which was extra special this year having raced for the first time with my brother Peter and winning a gold medal in the Mixed K2 Class.

Words will never be able to describe how much these medals and experiences throughout 2017 mean to me. Thanks to everyone for all your support and I hope 2018 will be another exciting year.

Many thanks,  
Jenny

### **Dermot Stack 1972— 2017**

It is with great sadness in our hearts that we got the news that Dermot Stack of SLCC passed away. Dermot will remain in our hearts as the true gentleman he was, his friendship will be missed by all his friends in our canoeing fraternity. The CMI Committee would like to pass on their condolences to his wife Carmen, his two children, and his friends in Salmon Leap Canoe Club.

**National Marathon Championship**  
**Salmon Leap Canoe Club**

22/23 of July, 2017

**Senior K2**

1 Brian O'Neill	SLCC	Peter Egan	SLCC	1'31'55"
2 Aisling Smith	SLCC	Matt Burke	SLCC	1'39'43"
3 Iomhar Mac Giolla Phádraig	SLCC	Liam Banks	SLCC	1'44'08"

**U18 K2**

1 Ronan Foley	KCC	Kate McCarthy	SLCC	1'24'25"
2 Oisín Mulligan	SLCC	Odrán Henson	SLCC	1'24'26"

**Veteran's K2**

1 Declan Halton	SLCC	M. Majchrzak	WWKC	1'17'36"
2 Aisa Cooper	CPCC	Fergus Cooper	Contrast	1'17'48"
Malcolm Banks	SLCC	Liam McCarthy	SLCC	DNF

**Division 4 K2**

1 A. Smylie	BCC	L. Fitzhenry	BCC	55'17"
2 K. Butkevicius	SLCC	L. Butkevicius	SLCC	1'02'59"
3 Brendan Buggy	CPCC	Kevin Durkan	CPCC	1'07'57"

**Girl's U18 K2**

1 Aoibhán O'Broin	GKC	R. Dillon	GKC	1'23'39"
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**Boy's U15 K2**

1 Adam Foster	SLCC	N. Devine	SLCC	44'17"
2 Gaél Caislean	SLCC	Paul Donaldson	SLCC	49'17"
3 Liam Flanagan	SLCC	Conor Smith	SLCC	52'25"

**Senior Women's K1**

1 Jenny Egan	SLCC	1'15'52"
2 Aisling Smith	SLCC	1'19'36"
3 Clodagh Ni Giolla Rua	CPCC	1'31'51"

**Boy's U18 K1**

1 Oisín Mulligan	SLCC	1'24'51"
2 Ronan Slattery	SLCC	1'28'21"
3 Shane Durkan	CPCC	1'30'47"
4 Odhrán Hensen	SLCC	1'32'14"
5 Klaidas Butkevicius	SLCC	1'32'57"

**Senior M's K1**

1 Tadhg De Barra	SLCC	1'34'21"
2 Peter Egan	SLCC	1'34'47"
3 Ronan Foley	KCC	1'34'44"
4 Brian O'Neill	SLCC	1'35'27"
5 Donacha Brennan	TPCC	1'38'47"
6 David McDonnell	KCC	1'38'49"
7 Paul Russell	Phoenix	1'39'57"
8 Iomhar Mac Giolla Phádraig	SLCC	1'43'31"
9 Matt Burke	SLCC	1'44'24"
10 Simon Grennell	UCD CC	1'45'14"
Liam Banks	SLCC	DNF
Craig Cummins	SLCC	DNF

**Division 3**

1 Lar O'Brien	KCC	1'23'42"
L. Medvedev	SLCC	DNF

**Veteran's K1**

1 Malcolm Banks	SLCC	1'17'45"
2 Declan Halton	SLCC	1'21'01"
3 David Pringle	SLCC	1'22'41"
4 Fergus Cooper	Contrast	1'28'21"
Douie Keating	SLCC	DNF
Mick O'Farrell	KCC	DNF

**G's U'18 K1**

1 Kate McCarthy	SLCC	1'08'19"
2 Aine White	CPCC	1'10'57"
3 Aoibhán O'Broin	GKC	1'23'51"

**Girls's U15K1**

1 Anna Kass	TPCC	52'30"
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**Boy's U15 K1**

1 Senan Forristal	TPCC	42'00"
2 Evan O'Keefe	CPCC	44'25"
3 Lukas Butkevicius	SLCC	47'07"
4 Adam Foster	SLCC	49'02"
5 Nathan Devine	SLCC	49'20"
6 Ben Smith	SLCC	51'08"
7 Rory Bray	SLCC	51'40"
8 Senan O'Neill	TPCC	42'00"
9 Liam Flanagan	SLCC	54'29"
10 Cian O'Sullivan	SLCC	56'06"
11 Evan Cawley	SLCC	57'08"
12 Conor O'Sullivan	SLCC	59'14"

**Division 4**

1 Mark Redmond	WWKC	1'10'32"
2 Luke Logan	SLCC	1'11'10"

# Winners of the 2017 Ranking Series

**Ribadesella Trophy** SLCC 2559 points

**McLean Trophy** KCC 1144 points

**Junior Club** SLCC 1145 points

**Division 1** Dermot Hudson SLCC 79 points

**Division 2** Declan Halton SLCC 86 points

**Open K2** Morgan Cooper / Aisa Cooper CPCC 82 points

**Division 3** Lar O'Brien KCC 83 points

**Division 4** Matthew McCarthy CPCC 88 points

**Ladies Division 4** Mary Fitzgerald 84 points

**Division 5** Evan Crawley SLCC 46 points

**Men's GP** Terry Smith ARC 90 points

**Women's GP** Debbie McHugh KCC 90 points

**Girls' U18 GP** Cleo Pitcher Farrell WWKC 90 points

**Canadian** Patrick Marshall Laois / Matt McGrath BALTO 90 points