

NRC Executive February 4th 2019

Recreational and Explore Rowing report

The schedule of rounds for the 2019 Explore Series has been agreed and dates for the 8 rounds are on the Northern Rowing website at <http://www.nerowing.com/sundays.html> . Entries will be opening soon for the first round at Tyne ARC on March 3rd. Tees RC have opted not to host a round this year, and for the first time the sculling skills round will take place at Ebchester, while Talkin Tarn will host a sweep skills round. Hexham RC have yet to appoint a co-ordinator for their entries. We are working on arrangements for boat sharing and transport. There is interest in taking part from clubs outside the region, the absence of a requirement to transport boats being an incentive.

A project is underway to redevelop Ebchester Boathouse, abandoned since the 1970s, under the guidance of the Ebchester Boathouse Development Partnership <http://www.ebchester.org/community/ebchester-boathouse-development-partnership/> The River Derwent offers an ideal location for novice rowers and recreational rowing. Mick Downworth, who is liaising with clubs on behalf of the boathouse partnership, would welcome interest from members in the region who would like to visit or join the Ebchester group.

A team known as Atlantic Dream, who are raising funds in support of their entry for the 2019 Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge, has arranged to bring their boat to the Tynemouth round of the Explore Series in June to raise awareness of their plans. They would welcome any support from the rowing community or from clubs in the region who might be willing to help publicise what they are doing. They have a website at <http://atlanticdream19.com/> and a facebook page.

Entries for the 3rd BR European Tour to Lithuania on June 7th and 8th opened in January and the tour quickly reached the capacity of 40 rowers, with members of Durham ARC and Hexham RC among those planning to tour.

Details of BR's UK tour to the Lake District will be announced at the Annual Tourers' Dinner at Leander on March 2nd. The tour will take place between August 29th and September 1st and will include a day rowing on each of three lakes.

There is disappointment that the touring boats acquired by BR under the sponsorship arrangement with Charles Stanley Wealth Management are not being made readily available to members based outside the Thames and Eastern regions, where the boats and associated trailers are housed, and at the high cost of hiring them for use.

The sponsored boats will however be made available for those going to the Lake District tour, and the Recreational Rowing Committee also has plans for them to be used at the Great Tyne Row on September 8th and Boston Marathon on September 15th.

Although many clubs have Explore boats the apparent demise of BR's Explore Rowing scheme, whereby members of any club could visit another club and use its boats free of charge, has detrimental effect on visits for recreational rowing, as club insurance policies may or may not cover non-members. To satisfy insurance requirements visitors can be required to pay for temporary membership.

Numbers joining recreational squads from Learn to Row courses appear to be in decline, and uptake of L2R by potential recreational members is low, despite Sport England continuing to encourage an active nation, and promoting the benefits of taking up sport, with rowing being an excellent form of activity.

Colin Lawson