



1948-2013 - Celebrating 65 Years of Personal Endeavour

2 April 2013

Devizes Westminster Winners Battle Tough Conditions to Victory

In a time of 16 hours and 44 minutes Daniel Seaford and Stuart West battled against sub-zero conditions and wind to win the 125-mile non-stop Devizes Westminster International Canoe Race over the Easter Weekend.

Seaford and West were victorious in the blue ribbon non-stop event, which saw 35% of the 160-boat field retire due to the harsh conditions. For the first 87-miles Seaford and West were vying for the lead with Richard Hendron and James King who had won for the last three years. Winning this year's race would make them the first pair to win four consecutive races.

The record breaking fourth win was off when Hendron and King broke a paddle at Olde Windsor (87 miles) and their support crew used valuable time to get a new blade.

Fast flows on the river in the week leading up to the race had supported hopes for a course time record, breaking the 34-year record of 15 hours and 34 minutes set in 1979. This failed to materialise.

Over 600 canoeists entered the annual 65th DW2013, with some competing over four days.

In the four-day race – same course completed over four days – the Junior Doubles event was won by George Barnicoat and James Allen in a time of 15 hours and 12 minutes.

DW is the UK's toughest, open to all endurance event. On average around 20% of entries fail to finish. Retirees in 2012 included Sir Steve Redgrave and fellow Olympians Ben Hart-Davis, Sarah Winckless and Kate MacKenzie.

Reflecting on the race, DW commentator Paul Ralph paid tribute to competitors. "The conditions were incredibly tough, everyone who entered has done incredibly well."

Devizes Westminster International Canoe Marathon sets out from Devizes in Wiltshire, heads along the Kennet & Avon Canal to Reading, then down the Thames to Teddington ending just downstream of Westminster Bridge.

The event takes canoeists to the limit of mental and physical endurance, battling against the steady and inevitable onset of physical depletion.

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The four-day race is equally demanding, starting on the Friday 29 March, completing the course over four stages to finish on 1 April, Easter Monday. Open to anyone over 15 years of age – many schools take part – you'll need to train for at least six months if you're new to paddling.

Frozen hands, weary minds and fatigued bodies will be recovering over the coming days. And many will already be thinking about DW2014, starting on 18 April 2014.

Pictures available.

Senior Double Winners. Daniel Seaford and Stuart West. Please credit Ollie Harding – www.olypics.co.uk

Junior Double Winner. George Barnicott and James Allen. Please credit Ollie Harding – www.olypics.co.uk

Full results at

<http://www.dwrace.org.uk/results/2013/Results/OverallClassResults.html>

For more information about Devizes Westminster International Canoe Marathon or to follow the race online over the Easter weekend visit www.dwrace.org.uk

For more information, details about crews, an interview or photographs contact Peter Hutchison on at peterhutchison24@gmail.com or on 07736 424200.

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