



Matthew Richardson
Under 18 Great Britain Coach

My Dragon Boating Background

I started Dragon Boating in 2004 with Amathus DBC and paddled for their Premier Crew were I won the league in 2006, 07, 08 and 09. I also put together a charity crew (2Fast 2 Furious) for St Helens Youth Matters in 2006 which were used as a way of developing Dragon Boating within the St Helens area, the team are still unbeaten and at the Royal Splash held by the St Helens Youth Service over one hundred young people took part. From this ten young people have stayed in the sport successfully and six trained with the BNTS squad, two of them progressed into the Under 18 Great Britain Squad for the World Championships in Sydney, Australia in 2007 and one progressed into the Under 18 Great Britain Squad for the European Championships in Italy in 2008. In 2010 I moved to Crusaders DBC which was a new Dragon Boat Squad within the North West to help develop the squad and the youth program within the squad and local area of Sefton.

My GB Dragon Boat Background

My own experience with the Under 18 Great Britain Squad started when I represented my country at the World Championships in Berlin in 2005, following this I had the opportunity to go to the European Championships in Prague 2006 were I came home with two Gold and three Silver medals. The following year I was selected by Paul Griffiths (under 18 Great Britain Coach) and Joanne Griffiths (Under 18 Great Britain Team Manager) to get involved with the Under 18 Great Britain Squad going to the World Championships in Sydney, Australia in 2007 as a Mentor, as the year went on I got more involved in the coaching through assisting Paul Griffiths (GB coach). After the success of Australia when the Under 18 BNTS started I was selected as assistant coach for the European Championships in Italy in 2008, the championships were very successful coming home with two silver and three bronze medals. As Paul and Joanne were retiring after Italy I applied to the BDA to take over as the Under 18 Great Britain Coach. In November 2008 the BDA awarded me the position of Under 18 Great Britain Coach.

The task then was to develop a strong management team divided into two areas, one being the coaching and the other being the administration which would be developed by myself and the Team administrator. The goal of the New Management setup was to develop a new infrastructure that would move the squad into the future by expanding the back room staff by increasing the coaching staff and administration staff, this would allow the coaching staff to obtain specialist assistance from specialist coaches, nutritionists and physio's.

My Role and Responsibilities

As the Under18 Great Britain Coach I am responsible for the selection, preparation, coaching and performance of the team. It is also to ensure programmes are in place for individual athletes so that they are prepared to their best ability to perform to the highest standard they can. It is my overall responsibility to organise training weekends, training weeks and championships. This will allow me to select the best team possible for the World or European Championships.

The past three years as Coach

The GB squad we have won a Bronze medal over 200m at the World Championships in 2009 in Prague and 2 Gold and 2 Bronze medals in the small Boat competition at the World Championships in 2011 in Tampa Bay, Florida.

My Experience and Qualifications

I have worked for St Helens Council and Sefton Council as a Sports Coach/ Outdoor ED Instructor working with young people between the age of 6 to 21 years old, these young people come from all types of backgrounds with all different ability levels and came to take part in courses in Dragon Boating, Canoeing, Kayaking, Sailing, Raft Building, Archery, Mountain Biking, Football, Navigation and D of E. I have also got a degree in sports coaching from Edge Hill University, which gives me the opportunity to use my knowledge in sports coaching bringing the latest and most effective ways of coaching from the psychological to the physical aspects of coaching to my role as the Under 18 Great Britain Dragon Boating Coach.