The London Kayakathon 2014: The London Marathon Alternative

Tuesday 4 March, 2014

‘The 2014 London Kayakathon is taking place on the River Thames on April13 and this year we’re aiming to raise in excess of £30,000 for various organisations.’ So says Matt Loots, events director for Paddlesports Events C.I.C., organisers of this annual charity fund-raiser.

Held on the same day as the world-renowned London Marathon, the London Kayakathon will see close on 100 paddlers rowing the 26.2 mile course. Starting beneath Tower Bridge, and with the London Marathon front-runners racing past above, the kayakers will travel 13.1 miles upriver to Chiswick Bridge before heading back to Tower Bridge, passing the Houses of Parliament, London Eye, the Tower of London and many other iconic London landmarks en route.

The brainchild of one of Britain’s leading kayakers, Simon Osborne, the London Kayakathon has grown from strength to strength since its inception in 2008. ‘This is a unique event,’ says Matt, ‘in that it gives paddlers the opportunity to pit their expertise against the vagaries of the tides on what is one of the world’s best-known rivers. At the same time their participation allows them to raise funds for the charity of their choice.’

He goes on to explain that because the Kayakathon is coupled with so prestigious an event as the London marathon, it offers sponsors and would-be sponsors a clear and open window to the world. ‘Kayaking is one of the fastest growing sporting and recreational activities around,’ says Matt, ‘and we at Paddlesports Events C.I.C. are so enthused by the impact it can have in terms of offering paddlers an opportunity to not only do something worthwhile, but also to experience some of the globe’s most iconic rivers, that we are planning a further three Kayakathons this year with a view to adding to those events in 2015.

‘We would like to encourage as many people as possible to give serious consideration to finding out more about the London Kayakathon and the impact that taking part could make on their lives and the lives of others.’

Notes to editor:

Paddlesports Events C.I.C works closely with a wide variety of charities that are fundamental in staging the London Kayakathon and is currently seeking corporate sponsorship for its Kayakathons events.

Shadwell Basin Outdoor Activity Centre has played a vital role in hosting the London Kayakathon in previous years. The centre has supported the event since it’s inception in 2010 and we are extremely grateful for the continued support in 2014.

Shadwell Basin Outdoor Activity Centre provides watersports and adventurous activities. Open to everyone and with many ways to get involved, the centre organises training courses, events and sessions for groups, schools and individuals throughout the year.

They are a Registered Charity and rely on the support of grants and donations to continue to provide the activities at an affordable charge.

The safety for the London Kayakathon is being provided by Northern Exposure Rescue , the UK’s premier not for profit organisation that travels the country providing event management, photography and safety cover for all manner of water sports. They use experienced and highly qualified volunteers coupled with reliable equipment to deliver activities in a safe and controlled environment, and work closely with the Royal Yachting Association, British Rowing and relevant statutory bodies to meet event organisers’ needs whilst ensuring the highest standards of safety. Their history includes some of the most significant and high profile events in recent years, such as the Thames Diamond Jubilee River Pageant and the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay.

Boiler Plate:
Paddlesports Events C.I.C. Has been established to encourage participation in paddle sports and to provide members of the paddle sport community with opportunities to utilize their chosen sports to support charitable organisations that are dear to their hearts.

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Paddlesports Events C.I.C. aims to deliver international paddle sport fundraising marathons, encourage participation and enable its participants to safely paddle through some of the world's most iconic cities and locations with the goal of raising £2,000,000 for charitable causes by 2016.

It is the mission of Paddlesports Events C.I.C. to utilize the global popularity of paddle sports to deliver safe and sociable paddling marathons around the world, raising money and awareness for a variety of charitable causes, no matter how big or small.

London Kayakathon founder Simon Osborne has rowed the Atlantic, paddled in Madagascar, South Korea, Brittany, Scotland and Greece and has completed circumnavigations of Great Britain and Ireland. He is a Level 5 – BCU coach and an A5 Assessor and is incredibly enthusiastic about his sport. Simon began the event Kayaking for Cancer in 2002 where he successfully raised £30,000 for Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research, in memory of his brother Mark. It was during this circumnavigation of Britain that Simon came up with the idea for the London Kayakathon. He wanted to give people, without the resources to partake in large-scale expeditions, the chance to use kayaking as a means to raise money for causes that are close to their hearts by creating a headlining event on the kayaking calendar. After many years of thought, planning and struggling to gain the necessary permission, the inaugural London Kayakathon took place on 25 April 2010.

Paddlesports Events C.I.C Founder Matthew Loots has been part of the London Kayakathon since 2011 and although he's anything but a Sea Kayaker, he is passionate about the potential positive impact that Paddlesports Events C.I.C. can deliver. Dedicated, creative and target-driven, this first-class BA Hons Creative Events Management graduate has over three years experience volunteering on, planning and delivering a diverse portfolio of events.
He is concerned with events that are both innovative and influential and he is particularly interested in utilising the power of events to bring about positive social change. Whilst studying, Matthew received the "Best Business Plan Award" from Falmouth University for his plan for Paddlesports Events C.I.C.

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