DW Training Days 24 Oct and 12 Dec 2026

1. **Aim**

The aim of the day is to give first time DW entrants the best chance of completing the course and collecting a coveted DW medal.

Participants are encouraged to come as a crew, including the Chief Supporter.

2. **Content and objectives**

The content will include:

- Training schedules, course familiarisation, Watersides and Thames sides, night paddling;
- Support crews - roles, purpose, training, do's and don't's.
- Portages - techniques (shoulders, cockpits, carry handles), where to get out and in, running Crofton/Froxfield;
- Fuelling and hydration - what, where, how;
- Clothing and kit, including boat and paddles;

The objectives will be to:

- Describe the amount and nature of training required;
- Explain the mental challenge.
- Teach and/or revise skills to manage challenging water:
- What the support crew need to know;
- Increase confidence of completing through sharing experiences:
- Explain and describe routes and methods to approach particularly challenging parts of the course including:
    - Newbury bridges, Bulls lock, Woolhampton; County lock;
    - Joining the Thames;
    - Leaving Sonning, Marsh, approaching Marlow, leaving Hambledon, route to Cookham, Boulters, leaving Bray, Eton bridge, Chertsey;
    - Tideway.

3. Location and trainers

Newbury Canoe Club (NCC), The Wharf, Newbury, RG14 5DF.

The course will be run by Kieron Blackburn (DW and Waterside Committee member, 1000 mile club, Coach at Newbury and previously Chelmsford CCs) assisted by DW and NCC coaches, as well as experienced support crews.

4. Equipment

Participants will be strongly encouraged to bring the boat they plan to race in. If this is not possible participants can contact the organisers and we may be able to source a boat elsewhere. Trainees should bring paddling kit, a change of clothes and a packed lunch. There are changing rooms and showers.

Any juniors should advise the organisers so appropriate changing facilities can be arranged.

5. Timings and cost

The course will run from 10am to 4pm. A charge of £40 per K2 crew and £20 per K1 crew will be levied which will include tea, coffee and biscuits and use of NCC facilities. Payment should be made in advance to Newbury CC 309589 45987168. Please advise the organiser (kieronfblackburn@gmail.com) when the payment is made.

Numbers will be capped at 16.

I have run similar courses for the last two years and everybody who attended and started the race has finished. This is not a guarantee!