

GAUTENG CANOE POLO

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



Dear fellow canoe polo enthusiasts!

Welcome to the 3rd edition of the Gauteng Canoe Polo Quarterly Newsletter!

With the 2024 Olympic Games fresh in our memories, this edition of the newsletter is dedicated to the 2024 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships, which is the highest level of competition in which canoe polo teams can compete. As usual, the newsletter is also jam-packed with details of upcoming events, expert tips for players, and much more. As always, we aim to keep you not only informed, but also inspired to either join this amazing sport or to continue playing it, because **that's how we roll!**

Jeanri Verster

Editor

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Recent Events: Aug to Oct 2024

Heritage Day 2024 – The Canoe Polo Way!

In true South African fashion, the players and coaches at Dabulamanzi Canoe Club celebrated Heritage Day with a braai after the training session. Numbers were low because of the school holidays, but those who could, attended the training session and the braai. Fun was had by all!



From left to right: Leon (newbie), Coach Niel Burger, Coach Kyle Hardy, Finn Idicula-Strom, Lisa Vogels, Vicky Vogels, Neelsie van Niekerk, Etienne Pieterse, Zeanté Nel, Elna Betz, Mia Verster and Coach Ruhan Marx.



Recent Events: Aug to Oct 2024 (cont.)

Summer League at Dabulamanzi Canoe Club

The first Summer League was held at Dabulamanzi Canoe Club. Over the course of four weeks the two teams, the Badgers and Dreamworx, battled it out and gave their all in an attempt to be crowned the winners. During the final game, a tiebreaker and a "golden goal" lead to the Badgers winning the league. Congrats guys!



Coach Niel explaining the format of the league to the players on the first day.



Team talk with coach Niel Burger and his team.



Team talk with coach Kyle Hardy and his team.

Recent Events: Aug to Oct 2024 (cont.)

**Team Name: Badgers**

From left to right: Mia Verster, Anje Pieterse, Nicholas Rens, Zeanté Nel, Finn Idicula-Strom and Reenen Loubser.

**Team Name: Dreamworx**

From left to right:

Neelsie van Niekerk, Vicky Vogels, Megan Cruickshank, Albert Strydom, Rouke Loubser and Elna Betz.

Recent Events: Aug to Oct 2024 (cont.)



The Badgers celebrating their win with a big splash!



From left to right: Coach Ruhan Marx, Zeanté Nel, Vicky Vogels, Mia Verster, Anina Bischoff, Anje Pieterse, Etienne Pieterse, Finn Idicula-Strom and Reenen Loubser.

Upcoming Events: Oct - Dec 2024

2024 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships

The 2024 ICF Canoe Polo World Championships will take place in Deqing, China from 15 to 20 October. South Africa is one of 22 countries who will compete at the Championships this year. See more info on page 7 and 8.



Gauteng Training Camp – 7 to 8 December 2024

What used to be the annual National training camp, which is affectionately known under players as the “Cape Town Training Camp”, was held at the Peninsula Canoe Club in Muizenberg in December 2022 and 2023. In future it will be a regional training camp. In the current transitional period Gauteng will host a camp for Gauteng players and anyone else interested in joining.

The 2024 Gauteng training camp will take place at Dabulamanzi Canoe Club in Emmarentia, Johannesburg from 6 to 8 December 2024. During the camp new techniques will be learnt, game plans worked out, fitness levels increased, and much more. Whether you're a seasoned player or new to the sport, this camp promises plenty of on-water action!

ICF Canoe Polo World Champs

The Canoe Polo World Championships were founded in 1994 by the International Canoe Federation (ICF). The ICF serves as the global authority for canoe and kayak sports. Canoe Polo is a non-olympic sport, which makes the World Championships the highest level of competition in which canoe polo teams can compete. The World Championships are held every two years.

For the past 30 years, canoe polo athletes from across the world have competed at the championships to be crowned the best in the world. The first Championships took place in the United Kingdom in 1994. The other countries who have hosted the championships are: Australia (1996), Portugal (1998), Brazil (2000), Germany (2002), Japan (2004), Netherlands (2006), Canada (2008), Italy (2010), Poland (2012), France (2014), Italy (2016), Canada (2018) and France (2022).

South Africa is one of 22 countries who will compete at the 2024 ICF World Championships in China. According to Niel Burger, captain of the SA Men's team, they are extremely proud to represent the South African Canoe Polo community on the world stage.

The Men's Division are made up of six groups with two teams qualifying out of each group. The groups are based mostly on world rankings.

The groups are:

Group A - Germany (World number 1), Japan and Belgium

Group B - Spain (World number 2), New Zealand and Sweden

Group C - Italy (World number 3) Chinese Taipei, Malaysia and China

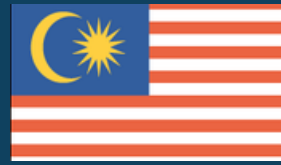
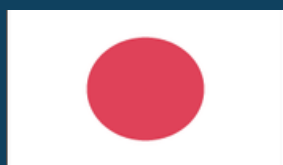
Group D - Great Britain, Australia, the United States and Poland

Group E - Denmark (Reigning European champions), Switzerland, Hong Kong and **South Africa**.

Group F - Iran, Singapore, France and Portugal

ICF Canoe Polo World Champs (cont.)

Participating countries:

**Australia****Malaysia****Belgium****People's Republic of China****Chinese Taipei****Poland****Denmark****Portugal****France****Singapore****Germany****South Africa****Great Britain****Spain****Hong Kong China****Sweden****Iran****Switzerland****Japan****United States of America**

SA Men's Team - A Closer Look

The squad consists of 5 players from Gauteng, one player from Knysna and one player from the Western Cape.



From left to right: Coach Clive Whitton, Chris de Bree (ERK), Jamie Truby (Knysna), Luke Hoets (Canoe Polo Cape Town), Niel Burger (Dabs), Kyle Hardy (Dabs), Ruhan Marx (Dabs)
Front row: Kyle Buhler (ERK)



Kyle Buhler

Kyle (20), the youngest member of the team, has been involved in canoe polo since 2014. His dream of representing South Africa became a reality this year when he was selected for the SA Men's team. Previously, Kyle played for the SA U/21 men's team at the World Championships in France in 2022 and also competed at the African Championships in South Africa in 2023.

Kyle believes that his dedication and hard work truly paid off when he earned his spot on the Men's team. Ultimately, he aims to make the SA polo community, along with his friends and family, proud.

Kyle hopes the SA Men's team will achieve a top-15 finish at the World Championships. Kyle is a member of the ERK Kayak Club in Benoni.

SA Men's Team - A Closer Look (cont.)



Niel Burger
Captain

Niel's lifelong passion for coaching and sports is evident in his extensive involvement in Canoe Polo. He began his journey in the sport at the age of 15, quickly earning a spot on the South African U/21 team. Today, Niel proudly represents his country as the captain of the South African National Men's squad. Reflecting on his journey, Niel shares: "The intensity and excitement of the game fuel my passion, and I am dedicated to sharing this love with young athletes to help grow and develop the sport."

Niel played for the SA Men's team at the African Championships in South Africa in 2023.

Niel holds an International Canoe Federation Level 1 coaching qualification and has been coaching canoe polo for the past five years.

Niel is a member of Dabulamanzi Canoe Club in Johannesburg.



Chris de Bree

Chris started playing canoe polo when he was a Boy Scout and has been playing polo for close to 23 years. He has been to 4 World Championships as a player (2002, 2012, 2014 & 2016).

Chris is chairman of the South African Canoe Polo Committee and has held this position for close to 10 years.

Chris was selected to play for the SA Men's team at the African Championships in South Africa in 2023.

According to Chris his aspirations for the 2024 World Champs is to help lead the team to perform to the best of their ability.

Chris holds an International Canoe Federation Level 2 coaching qualification and has been coaching for the past 14 years.

Chris is a member of ERK Kayak Club in Benoni.



Kyle Hardy

Kyle's canoe polo journey started at the age of 13 and he was immediately hooked. According to Kyle the canoe polo community has been the largest reason why he has continued to play this amazing sport. In Kyle's words: "My passion for the sport reaches further than just playing. My goal is to pass my passion for the game on to young canoe polo athletes."

Kyle was selected to play for the SA U/21 men's team at the 2022 World Championships in France and for the SA Men's team at the African Championships in 2023 in South Africa.

Kyle holds an International Canoe Federation Level 1 coaching qualification and has been coaching canoe polo for the past two years.

Kyle is a member of Dabulamanzi Canoe Club in Johannesburg.

SA Men's Team - A Closer Look (cont.)



Luke Hoets

Luke was introduced to canoe polo by his father, Greg. After watching his dad train for the Canoe Polo World Championships in 2012 and 2014, Luke was eager to give it a shot. He shares, "Thanks to canoe polo, I've made most of my closest friends. I've known and played alongside all the guys in this squad for many years; they are like brothers to me. I can't wait to tour with these guys because I know that, win or lose, we're bound to have a great time. It's a privilege to be surrounded by such a fantastic group of individuals."

In 2022, Luke represented the SA U/21 Men's team at the World Championships held in France.

Luke is is a member of Canoe Polo Cape Town.



Ruhan Marx

Ruhan began his journey in canoe polo at the age of 15. According to Ruhan, although he has played various sports over the years, canoe polo holds a special place in his heart. It is mainly due to the supportive canoe polo community but also the unique blend of technical skills, strategy and physicality of canoe polo. He is enthusiastic about imparting his knowledge and experiences to newcomers in the sport.

In 2023, Ruhan was chosen to represent the SA Men's team at the African Championships held in South Africa.

Ruhan is committed to giving his all on the pitch during World Champs - to honour his teammates and his country.

Ruhan holds an International Canoe Federation Level 2 coaching qualification and has been coaching canoe polo for the past three years. Ruhan is a member of Dabulamanzi Canoe Club in Johannesburg.



Jamie Truby

Jamie started playing canoe polo 7 years ago. He first made the National U21 team when he was 16, and since then, he has been dedicated to canoe polo. Jamie says: "For the longest time, my goal with Canoe Polo wasn't to play internationally, or to compete competitively. It was to play on the same provincial team as my coach, Chris Du Bree. As time went on, and I got more competitive, this goal changed to playing with him at an international level."

Jamie played for the SA U/21 men's team at the 2022 World Championships in France as well as at the African Championships in South Africa in 2023.

Jamie holds an International Canoe Federation Level 1 coaching qualification and has been coaching for the past 4 years. He is a member of Knysna Canoe Club.

SA Men's Team - A Closer Look (cont.)



SA Men's Team - A Closer Look (cont.)



A big thanks to Brendan Willson for taking the amazing photos of the SA Men's Team during their recent training camp at Dabulamanzi Canoe Club.

Game clock vs shot clock - what is the difference?

In a canoe polo game, two clocks run simultaneously: the **game clock** and the **shot clock**. The game clock tracks the overall time remaining in the game. Meanwhile, the shot clock counts down the time a team has to take a shot on goal once they gain possession of the ball. Both clocks are closely managed, but they operate with different rules and stoppages.

When the clocks stop:

- The **game clock** generally keeps running during normal play unless a referee calls for a stoppage, such as for a timeout, when the ball goes out of bounds, or during certain fouls.
- The **game clock** does not automatically stop after a goal unless the referee specifically instructs it.
- The **shot clock** stops when the game clock stops (e.g., during a referee stoppage or a major foul), or if specific game events require it to pause independently.

When the clocks start/restart:

- The **game clock** starts at the beginning of each period when the referee blows the whistle to start the game. After a goal, the game continues with the clock running, unless the referee stops it.
- The **shot clock** starts when the referee restarts the play by blowing the whistle, or when the player taking the throw holds the ball up.

Resetting the shot clock:

The **shot clock** resets when there is a shot at goal or when possession changes. If a shot rebounds off the goal, a defender's paddle, or goes out of play, the shot clock resets even if the attacking team regains possession. However, if the shot misses but stays in play and the same team recovers the ball, the **shot clock** does not reset.

Common misconceptions:

The idea that the **shot clock** resets every time a whistle is blown is not correct. It resets under specific conditions, such as after a major foul or a change in possession. Additionally, the game clock runs continuously unless stopped by a referee's explicit decision, while the shot clock only pauses during specific game stoppages.

For more on the official rules regarding the shot clock, visit the www.ICF.com.



Game clock

Shot Clock

Shoulder Health: Tips for a strong season

Maintaining shoulder health is essential for canoe polo players, as the sport demands intense upper-body movement and repetitive arm actions. From paddling to throwing, the shoulders endure significant stress, increasing the risk of injury. As biokineticists, we emphasise the importance of conditioning, flexibility, and recovery to ensure optimal performance and longevity throughout the season. Here's how to keep your shoulders in top shape:

- **Strengthen the Rotator Cuff:**
The rotator cuff is crucial for stabilising the shoulder joint. Incorporate resistance exercises like external and internal rotations, and scapular strengthening to enhance shoulder stability. Start with light weights or resistance bands, gradually increasing intensity as strength improves.
- **Maintain Flexibility:**
Flexibility is key to avoiding overuse injuries. Include shoulder mobility exercises such as dynamic stretching before training and static stretching afterward. Pay attention to the shoulder joint and the muscles surrounding the scapula to ensure a full range of motion.
- **Focus on Core Strength:**
A strong core supports shoulder movements, especially when paddling. Core exercises like planks, Russian twists, medicine ball rotations, and some on-water exercises such as washing machines or pitch sprints, will help distribute the force more evenly through the body, reducing the strain on the shoulders.
- **Monitor Paddle Technique:**
Proper paddling mechanics can prevent unnecessary strain on the shoulders. Work with a coach or biokineticist to ensure you're using efficient paddling strokes. Avoid overreaching or repetitive high-intensity paddling without proper form.
- **Prioritize recovery:**
Recovery is as important as training. Incorporating rest days and techniques like ice therapy, massage, or stretching helps reduce inflammation and muscle fatigue. Active recovery, such as low-intensity swimming or light stretching, also aids in keeping the muscles supple and strong.

Canoe polo is a demanding sport, but with proper care and conditioning, your shoulders can stay strong and healthy throughout the season. If you have any questions on how to ensure that you keep your shoulders strong and injury-free, don't hesitate to ask any of our coaches or your friendly neighbourhood bio.

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Club Profile: NWU Club (Potch)

The NWU Canoe Club forms part of North-West University's sport codes for recreational and lifestyle sports. Before the pandemic, the club boasted a larger membership and had more competitive players. However, a significant drop in membership numbers resulted in the club currently undergoing a rebuilding phase. In an effort to increase awareness of canoe polo as a sport in Potchefstroom, the club hosts regular open days where players of all skill levels are welcome. It is a great way to find out what this fast-paced and exciting game is all about. No experience necessary! Training sessions take place on Tuesdays, Wednesday and Thursdays from 15:00 to 18:00 at Potchefstroom Dam.

The club organises an annual kayak surf trip to Jeffrey's Bay, which is very popular amongst paddlers. The preliminary dates for 2025 are 21 to 27 June.

NWU Canoe Club

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Facebook: potchkano

Instagram: @nwucanoeclub



A group of enthusiastic new players at a recent open day.