

## **CANOE ENGLAND PRESS RELEASE**

January 2009

### **Surrey's Olympic Champion recognises South East Volunteers**

Olympic Champion Tim Brabants MBE led the presentation of awards to England's most deserved volunteers and coaches on Saturday (January 17<sup>th</sup>). Having been recently recognised in the New Years Honours List, Brabants presented awards to three volunteers from the South East region at the Canoe England Volunteer & Recognition Awards held at Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham.

Following the success of last year's awards programme, the Canoe England Volunteer & Recognition Awards recognised Surrey's Trevor Wetherall, and the late Alexis Gohar, also from Surrey, with outstanding achievement awards.

It was only fitting that the Olympic Champion from Surrey paid tribute to his own coach, Eric Farrell in honour of the support and coaching given to him over the last 16 years. Eric, Royal Canoe Club, was presented with Male Volunteer Coach of the Year as well as Outstanding Contribution to Paddlesport.

"All three are an inspiration to us all and they join a fantastic network of volunteers and coaches who dedicate their time and energy to the sport," says Julia Robertson, Volunteer Development Officer for Canoe England. "Their input can, directly and indirectly, help our countries paddlers to achieve their best whether this is as a club volunteer, official, or coach."

Dr. Tim Brabants, aged 31 years old, is the current Olympic Champion in the men's K1 (kayak single) 1000m and he also won a bronze medal in the 500m event in Beijing. Tim is also the current World and European Champion.

Anyone interested in volunteering in Paddlesport should contact Julia Robertson on 0845 3709530 or email [volunteers@bcu.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@bcu.org.uk).

- ENDS -

#### **Alexis Gohar, Richmond Canoe Club (Outstanding Contribution to Paddlesport)**

This award is a special award for Alexis Gohar who sadly died in November 2008. Alexis was an active member of Richmond Canoe Club for over 30 years, coaching for 15 of those years. Alexis will be remembered by all for his infectious enthusiasm, energetic and endless encouragement coach and leader for the club. Alexis was involved in the Competitive Edge Programme – a scheme to introduce and encourage young people to remain in the sport after education. Alexis is an inspiration to us all and despite his visual impairment, he focused on what could be achieved rather than obstacles. His award was collected by brother Marcus.

#### **Trevor Wetherall, Richmond Canoe Club (Outstanding Contribution to Paddlesport)**

Trevor Wetherall has been involved in Paddlesport for over 45 years. His boundless encouragement extends across all ages and groups at Richmond Canoe Club and beyond his capacity as the recently appointed Local Club Coach for London. His input has helped re-energise the junior group and he has helped devise the Competitive Edge programme with the local council to introduce local school children to competitive paddling. Trevor is at the club almost every day, supporting, encouraging, developing and empowering anyone who shows they care enough to make themselves a better paddler.