

THE GREAT BRITAIN v FRANCE J16 ROWING MATCH by Pam Davies

In 1980, after the failure of the Belgians to produce a team for their annual match with the Juniors of France, Jacques Bloch put forward a proposal to replace it with a match between the North of France and the South of England. The idea was first suggested to Joe Carter during a regatta run on the Mame who conveyed it to the Amateur Rowing Association. The ARA immediately invited Monsieur Bloch to London to agree a protocol for the first match which was to take place in the summer of 1981. After the success of the matches in the first two years, the rowing leagues of the South of France requested their inclusion, and the match was extended to the South of France and the North of England. This format lasted for three years and included boys and girls at both J16 and J18 levels. However, when the Coupe de la Jeunesse was introduced in addition to the World Junior Championships, both federations found it difficult to raise three J18 teams, so in 1996 it was decided to limit the match to the J16 age-group only. In order to encourage fraternisation between teams and to emphasise that sport should be fun, a series of supplementary 500 metre sprint races was introduced in 1990 in which mixed crews composed of boys and girls, English and French, compete against one another. As the match coincided with the Henley Regatta for the Disabled, for some years an event for a crew of partially-sighted oarsmen was included. Unfortunately, both the ARA and the FFSA have found themselves unable to produce a crew consistently and this has now lapsed. The match has continued with one break only – in 1994 when the French Federation found itself unable to stage the event. Since 1990, however, thanks to the support of the local clubs in both towns, the match originally found its home in Henley-on-Thames and Boulogne-sur-Mer in alternate years. Now, the match is held in different locations around both countries. The original protocol having become well out of date, a new one was agreed in December 1996 at a meeting held in Paris between the founder of the match, M. Jacques Bloch, M. Jean Porte, Vice- President of the FFSA and M. Pascal Joly. Match Organiser for the FFSA on the one hand, and Peter Politzer, Chairman of the ARA Junior Rowing Commission and his predecessor, Mike Fox who had run the English end of the match for many years, on the other. As a result of this new agreement the nature of the match as essentially a competition between the clubs of the two nations has been re-established and the event is no longer confined to English rowers but has opened up the youth of Scotland and Wales. The 'Anglo-French Match' is therefore no more. It has become a fixture between the two full federations, and is now the Great Britain v France Match.

Sadly, Jacques Bloch, who presided over every match up to and including 1996 when he was already eighty-six, passed away early in 1997. The match was very much his personal baby and his singular work in initiating it and fostering its growth will never be forgotten as long as young rowers of Great Britain and France gather in friendly competition each year. The ARA was proud to commemorate his work by presenting in 1997 a new trophy for the overall match – 'The Jacques Bloch Cup'. We hope that the youth of our two nations will enjoy for all time the happy rivalry that he worked so long and hard to promote.



33rd Match

GREAT BRITAIN V FRANCE

Junior International Match Cadets

London Regatta Centre
Royal Albert Docks

Sunday 14th July 2013

Race & Match Officials

National delegates	Jean-Pierre Caumont FFSA Oliver Kimberley GBR
Umpires	Maggie Phillips GBR John Hedger GBR David Biddulph GBR Jean Belleval FFSA Catherine Wittrant FFSA
Team Managers	CD Riches GBR Remi Duhautois
Assistant Team Manager	Kate Callaghan GBR
Match Organisers	CD Riches GBR Pam Davies GBR
London Regatta Centre	Simon Goodey GBR

The organisers would like to express their thanks to London Regatta Centre for their help in bringing the GB v France Match back to London again. Many thanks!

Race Timetable

	Time	Boat	Lane 1	Lane 2	Result
Race 1	10.00	W8+	FR	GB	
Race 2	10.10	M1x	GB	FR	
Race 3	10.20	W2x	FR	GB	
Race 4	10.30	M4x	GB	FR	
Race 5	10.40	M4-	FR	GB	
Race 6	10.50	W1x	GB	FR	
Race 7	11.00	M2x	FR	GB	
Race 8	11.10	W4x	GB	FR	
Race 9	11.20	M4+	FR	GB	
Race 10	11.30	W4-	GB	FR	
Race 11	11.40	M2-	FR	GB	
Race 12	11.50	W2-	GB	FR	
Race 13	12.00	M8+	FR	GB	
Reserve	12.10	M1x	GB	FR	
Reserve	12.20	F1x	FR	GB	

MATCH WINNER GIRLS:

MATCH WINNER BOYS:

OVERALL MATCH WINNER 2013:

Following the match proper all athletes will be involved in a series of Dragon Boat races kindly organised by Thames Dragons.