

Junior Liffey Descent Report

Last Saturday the Junior Liffey Descent took place. This race takes place on the River Liffey each year and is specifically aimed at the young racers of Ireland. The race is approximately seven miles in length, beginning at the Salmon Leap Canoe Club in Leixlip. From here the juniors raced across Leixlip lake before completing a 500 metre run, while carrying their kayaks, around Leixlip Dam. On re-entering the River Liffey down-stream of the dam, the canoeists had negotiate their way down four big weirs before finishing at the Irish Canoe Union Training Centre in the Strawberry Beds.

Five members from the Thomastown Paddlers Canoe Club took part in the Junior Liffey Descent and all finished fourth or better in their respective classes. Four of the five members from the Thomastown club raced in the K1 categories. These are for the narrow and fast kayaks, which are also very unstable. Cáit Broderick competed in the Over 15 Girls grouping and what a race she had. She powered her way from start to finish taking the gold well ahead of her nearest competitor.

Anthony Forristal was extremely unfortunate last Sunday as his kayak capsized following a collision early on in the race. Forristal was many people's favourite to take gold in the prestigious Boy's Over 15 division and he certainly showed his grit and determination when he fought his way back up the field to take a credited 2nd spot. In the Boy's Under 15 class young kayakers Eamon Forristal and Callum Taylor had a fantastic day on the River Liffey finishing 3rd and 4th respectively.

Alex Broderick was the final Thomastown Paddler to complete Saturday's Descent and he eased to victory in the Boy's General Purpose Class. Alex has made this class his own over the past two years and he certainly signed off in fitting style, in what will more than likely be his final Descent in this division.

Next for the Thomastown Paddlers is a marathon race on Leixlip Lake on June 12th, while they will also run a Beginner (Level 2 Skills Kayak Course) starting on Monday June 13th. There are still some spots available on this course for anyone interested in trying out the sport of kayaking and joining this very exciting club. There is also a similar course in July. Full details of these can be found on www.thomastownpaddlers.com or 0863391549