



## Gael Force Marine Ness Marathon 2016

<http://www.gaelforcemarine.co.uk/>

### **Course Description – Long Course, First Half**

The race shall commence with a mass start by Caly Marina, racing up the Caledonian Canal. This section is flat, wide and easy going. The canal bends through the town where you may be exposed to the wind from all sides. At the A82 swing bridge duck your head, there is room to get underneath without slowing down but not much. Boat and canal traffic shall be running as normal and it will be the racers responsibility to avoid them. If you encounter a cruise boat or other large craft turning and manoeuvring across the canal you must stop and allow them to finish. If there is a delay instruct others and yourself to portage around them and get back into you boat beyond their turning area. The race start has been adjusted to avoid clashing with the cruise boats – but if they run off their advertised schedule we cannot control it, and they have right of way. If the boats are simply cruising up or down the canal, you should overtake them on the right hand bank as you head up, though if you are near the other bank and it is faster and safer, stay on it and race up the side. Do not race up the middle please if boats are moving.

As the race reaches Dochgarroch you will see the Canal Locks before you, These must be portaged on the left - do not paddle into the lock gate if it is open!, Instead get out on the left hand grassy bank in sufficient time to allow you to portage the locks, keep running past the locks straight ahead onto the grass path, continue for 200 meters until the grass bank ends and get back in by the cobblestones at the start of the weir. Experience racers who have done this before note this portage has changed - do not get in across from the pontoons – its run run run to then end of the canal banking and get in at the start of the weir.. From here stay out of the boat lane and keep a wary eye for moving yachts as we must keep out of their way. Continue up past the river and turn round on the fifth Large green channel marker bouy shortly before the start of loch Ness and the renovated light house building on your right. A race marshal shall be here to remind you to turn round and check your race number. From there turn back down to the weir or portage point you passed previously and portage at the cobblestones at the ends of the canal grass embankment onto the river. NO running of Dochgarroch weir, running the weir will get you disqualified- Take care when portaging as the weir blocks are slippery and sometimes loose.

### **Course Description – Short Course and second half of the long course.**

The Short race will commence with a mass start from the eddy below the Dochgarroch Weir and proceed down river. The long course second half will start immediately after the second portage over the top weir and similarly continue downriver.

1. At the first Island 700 meters take the right hand channel.
2. On the second Island a further 1.2km downstream either channel may be taken, the faster water and best route on the right.
3. A flat section follows and then after the left hand bend a central weir wall (Fast eddie rapid ) is visible ahead, take the wide left hand channel and look for the deepest water, it is shallow here but you will get down. Avoid the river right channel Fast Eddie.
4. Immediately after this section another central wall appears, stay on the left channel and continue straight on as the river bends around a prominent outcrop called the dragons tail, stay wide of the white water for speed and to avoid the fast re-circulating water in the eddy on the left bank just below the outcrop.
5. Follow down another 1km and come to the Ness House Weir recognized by the broken rubble on the left hand of the river, take this on the right hand half of the river and follow straight through the standing waves. Anywhere in the white water is good, and fastest.
6. After this you come to a very flat slow section for about 1.5km, at the end of this is the Torvean weir with the visible concrete sluice gates, portage this on the far right hand bank It will have a guide and be mine-taped to mark the route of 300 to 500 meters, This is a compulsory portage and racers attempting to paddle the weir will be disqualified.
7. After another 1km you will come to the Ness Islands and Inverness, stay left of the first Island, go under the white footbridge in the centre. – 100 meters further on take the river chute on the right hand side heading downstream and stay in the middle heading towards the next white pedestrian bridge, run this bridge under the river left side \ between the left hand bank and the left leg as the water is deeper and faster

here, onwards past Inverness castle on your right hand side – under the centre of the high street concrete main road bridge and then finally on towards the fourth and final bridge the white pedestrian footbridge which is the race finish. The markers in Hi Visibility vests should be in view on the bridge, shout your race number out as you pass underneath. Get out is on the left hand bank immediately after the finish bridge look for the stepped wall and lowest point in the railings and get out here – do not continue on towards the next bridge.

#### **SAFETY ADVICE –**

You must assess your own skill and ability level to paddle this canal and grade two river section safely in the craft of your choice, if in doubt please read the SCA Guide to Scottish rivers for advice or the UK rivers online guidebook.

All racers on whatever course are required to wear a modern good condition CE approved buoyancy aid, Paddlers in close cockpit \ Rolling style kayaks are required to wear a paddle-sport suitable helmet and footwear will be required for the portages, it is not suitable to try and portage bare-foot, K1 paddlers please consider this.



# ***Whitewess Project***

**The Racing Arm of Nairn Kayak Club - Smarter, Stronger, Faster**

