



## Devizes to Westminster International Canoe Race 2019

Easter Weekend, April 19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>

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### **MEDIA ADVISORY – WORLD'S TOUGHEST CANOE RACE**

The 125 mile Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race takes place at Easter.

Amateur canoeists, elite international racers and military personnel from around the world converge on rural Wiltshire to race along the Kennet & Avon Canal and the river Thames, to finish at Westminster Bridge on Easter Saturday.

- Great Britain athletes Keith Moule and Tom Sharpe from Chelmsford and Richmond Canoe Clubs are the race favourites.
- Personnel from numerous Army regiments, the Royal Air Force and the Royal Marines will vie for military honours.
- Former Royal Marines Jonathan White and Lee Waters, both injured in Afghanistan, are hoping to finish in less than 24 hours.
- Canoeists hope to raise hundreds of thousands of pounds for charities, including the official DW Charity, The Stroke Association.

The nonstop race starts at Devizes Wharf, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 1EA from 0700 on Easter Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>. The winners will arrive at the steps of County Hall downstream of Westminster Bridge around 0630 on Easter Sunday, April 21<sup>st</sup>.

The stages races (for youngsters under 19 and singles competitors) start at Devizes Wharf on Good Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, finishing at Westminster around 0600 on Easter Monday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

- Best interview/photos are at the start. 0700-1000 Good Friday and/or Easter Saturday
- Photos also at Wokingham CC, Reading RG6 1RA, 1900-2100 on Easter Saturday.

Finishing "DW" is a colossal achievement. Most paddlers take about 24 hours but the course record is 15 hours 34 minutes, set in 1979 by Tim Cornish and Brian Greenham of Reading and Richmond Canoe Clubs.

The race started as a wager in a pub in 1948. Seventy years on, it has grown into a firm fixture in the world's canoeing calendar and open to all comers. Previous competitors include Olympic rowing medalists James Cracknell, Ben Hunt-Davis, and Guin Batten, the explorer and adventurer Sir Ranulph Fiennes, TV presenter Steve Backshall and his wife, Olympic rower Helen Glover.

Competitors carry tracking devices and can be followed at online at [www.dwrace.co.uk](http://www.dwrace.co.uk)