

S2 E9 - WCP Coach Interview (Greg Hitchen) - Miniseries

Sid Sinfield 0:01

Right then, so. So thanks for joining us today. And today's interview is with Greg Hitchen. He's one of our world class slalom coaches, and I'm going to start pretty much straight away where thank you for finding the time to join us, Greg.

Greg Hitchen 0:15

Yeah, no problem at all Sid real, real pleasure. I think sometimes you kind of take the fact that we're getting wrapped up in the busy life of being a coach. In actual fact, it's a pretty incredible job to be doing. So I'm more than happy to talk about it. Talk about my coaching so far today, and really enjoy reflecting back on what I've done. And how I've gotten there. So looking forward to it.

Sid Sinfield 0:38

Cool. So do you want to just set the scene in? So what is your role? What mentioned you work in the World Health Program, but which one? And what do you do?

Greg Hitchen 0:46

Yeah, cool. Currently, I am a podium technical coach on the canoe slalom program based in Lee Valley. Working with our elite crew, slalom athletes.

Sid Sinfield 0:57

Oh, cool. So that those are the ones we're hoping to be winning medals with? The best of the best of our bunch, which is all good.

Greg Hitchen 1:05

Yeah, very much so.

Sid Sinfield 1:06

Yes. And how long? How long have you been involved in in, in British Canoeing program?

Greg Hitchen 1:11

Okay, well, the current role I'm doing now is relatively short. I started that position in November. So yeah, pretty new to the role I'm currently doing. However, jogging back a little bit here. Now, I would say I think I started working as a coach for what was the Canoe England program back in about 2008. I think it was okay.

Sid Sinfield 1:36

So you've been in and around the kind of full time coaching setting for quite some time now.

Greg Hitchen 1:43

Yeah, yeah. So in a varying degree of roles, basically. But yeah, I started in 2008. Working as part of one of the regional coaches are part of the thing was through the talent club, community, sports partnership stuff or something, a variation of a program and Club.

Sid Sinfield 2:05

So where did it all start? You were you're a paddler yourself, let's start with just a bit of background about your paddling. Where did you, where'd it all start for you?

Greg Hitchen 2:15

Yeah, cool. My sister used to go canoeing and normally you know, get dragged along to these things, hopped in a boat myself really enjoyed it. And at the time, living in Nottingham, there wasn't actually a strong club, at Holme Pierrepont in terms of real slalom and focused. And so we ended up going along to Matlock. So as a member of Matlock Canoe Club, you spend, you know many, many an

hour on the river Derwent there, that's where I kind of feel, feel my home of canoeing is for me.

Sid Sinfield 2:47

Was it Slalom that you started in?

Greg Hitchen 2:50

Yes. Yeah, straight into slalom. Never really, it wasn't kind of until I started doing coaching. I actually ventured out really and tried different forms of canoeing. I was pretty isolated in what I did, but it was it was always just slalom. Yeah. And started off as a as a kayak paddler and dabbled with a little bit of C2 along the way and they did a little bit more C2 at the back end of my paddling career so to speak. Yeah, I competed as an under 23 athlete on World Class programs, but never kind of really made that next step up. And that was kind of probably what then led me into coaching. I'd always liked to help out as a coach at a Canoe Club and felt almost like I got as much, I think the word, kind of satisfying, satisfying you know, and reward from being a coach it almost was as a paddler. So it always felt quite a natural thing and something I had my eye on even when I was paddling.

Sid Sinfield 3:53

Do you remember what it was about paddling that because there are lots of sports as a as a youngster, you know, what was it about paddling? That that that rang your bell or that attracted you any memories of what it was? Or was it just opportunistic, because of your sister.

Greg Hitchen 4:09

Probably a little bit of opportunistic, and also, you know, quite instantly became it was rewarding and that I managed to feel like I was progressing pretty quickly with this, you know, I'm in this boat and progressing. I could see where I was going and I liked the social aspect that was at the club and the people that are around and yeah, just kind of grew into that loving the feeling of having a boat on the water was pretty similar, like I hadn't really experienced before. And so yeah, it just kind of took off and you know, it's not something I've necessarily

really thought about and you just kind of start this journey and next thing you 10 years down the line and it's engrossed in life, you know,

Sid Sinfield 4:50

So you must have enjoyed the racing as well as the training because that's the, Canoeing is quite broad sport and there's lots of ways you can participate actually compete but you know, but it sounds like from the beginning you've been involved in, in the competitive side of paddlesport, which isn't, isn't necessarily the biggest bit in terms of most, a lot of people participate in recreational or non-competitive areas. So was it the racing? Did you enjoy that as well?

Greg Hitchen 5:17

The racing side is probably more of a love hate relationship than anything, I would say, as probably more of a trainer than anything like the training. I like working hard. I was probably somebody who, you know, got the most out of my natural ability in many ways. But probably quite like the challenge of training hard and that kind of daily working towards goals and pushing myself I guess racing would probably be a little bit yeah, like, you know, a bit love hate in that sense of that. Obviously, it's quite a lot of pressure around racing, but that's what you're working towards doing. So I would say at the idea of the recreational side of canoeing didn't really appeal to me that much.

Sid Sinfield 6:06

It gives you the focus of having targets or goals just worked with your psyche the way you like you'd like to do sport.

Greg Hitchen 6:15

Yeah, yeah, save great, pretty influenced by my, my dad and my sister, my dad, you know, really keen into sport and it became a real kind of family, family thing that will that was we were heavily involved with and kind of took over all of our lives in a positive way. So yeah.

Sid Sinfield 6:32

So how do you transition to coaching or, or more to coaching from the paddling? How did that? How did that come about?

Greg Hitchen 6:42

I probably initially started doing a little bit when I was quite young, when I had injuries just helping out at the Canoe Club. And when younger athlete's younger paddles would start I was always felt quite willing and wanted to help them. And then as I moved to be a full time athlete in Nottingham. I was doing quite a bit of slalom specific coaching stuff and just kind of got involved with that started also doing some coaching. What then started as Holme Pierrepont Canoe Club, and just really enjoyed it. Yeah, really enjoyed it felt like this was paddling.

Sid Sinfield 7:21

That was Yeah, he was still Yeah, so it was it was a compliment in the boat. Just before we finish the paddling, any standout memories from you, as a paddler, any bits that really stick out? Or was it the regularity that we recall, and any kind of key? You know, key moments that you think if I think back to my youth, as a paddler, that one stands out or anything like that?

Greg Hitchen 7:47

No, probably just probably just, if I was to look back and think of the stuff I missed is probably that the people I was able to train with, and the sessions on an evening under the floodlights, that sort of thing is that is what I probably missed, even, you know, strangely, again, changing on the side of the road in this stupid cold weather and getting on and kind of those kind of crazy days. Yeah, but probably just some of the people that I was able to go canoeing with would be the fondest memories, you know, I had good results along the way, feel pretty proud of but probably don't necessarily reflect back on those who probably more the, you know, the time I got to spend with people that I respect and enjoyed being around. It's quite interesting that because it from an outsider's point of view, it looks like an individual sport, because it's just you in the boat. But actually, from the conversations I've had with other boat people, mostly people are driven by the social, the show social part of that. Some people are also driven by the winning, but it always seems to be a standout that it's the

social contact that that kept them coming back, as well as the environmental kind of being in the on the water and just the feel of that. Yeah, I would say yeah, yeah, I would say that. But also, I think I was pretty fortunate to have really supportive parents, you know, especially, especially my dad and the time that I got spend doing canoeing with him. And also then, you know, you always have these people in your life that you go along, people that was either training with or coaching me at the time, was really, really fortunate to have some specific people that played a big part of helping me progress. And they probably also would have would have helped shape how I feel as a coach now in that sense, you know, being exposed to, to good people, I think, as has been a real big factor for me, and very fortunate.

Sid Sinfield 9:41

So when was the transition then to becoming more of a coach than a paddler? So you said you were doing parallel for a while and then I'm guessing at some point, the competitive career or the or the came to an end? Was that when the transition came to more coaching or was there?

Greg Hitchen 9:58

Yeah, kind of Yeah. I guess I'd finished my under 23 career and wasn't necessarily progressing. I'd come off the world class program, and it's kind of self-supported for a few years and it was getting to that point of, you know, needing to kind of make a bit of a career choice. And at the time was really fortunate that a lot of coaching full time coaching positions became available save through Canoe England at the time when these regional roles, and it was one of those where I thought you know, what I'll apply Is this something that really is really interesting to me, I was a bit of a crossroads in my career, so to speak, and thought this would be something that really appeals to me, I'll apply see what happens if nothing else, it's a really good experience to be involved with, and literally just went from there.

Sid Sinfield 10:50

Okay. And so and so that was that first position was in Nottingham?

Greg Hitchen 10:54

Ah no, it wasn't, I was actually a regional coach in in Yorkshire and spent most of the time working with greenstar Canoe Club in Doncaster. So there was a lot of traveling a lot of traveling involved, but that was, yeah, it was working in the Yorkshire region. And kind of, you know, real entry level club based coaching, it was a real good starting point for, for my coaching career. And that sense, you know, really did think, we're just starting at the bottom. But that's kind of, you know, started, you know, Doncaster to working with greenstar, you know, coaching beginners on a lake, coaching kids that did four races. And that kind of was what it was when it started. But again, really fortunate to work with some incredible people, when you kind of really get a real grounding for what goes on and how the sport happens with the amount of volunteers and people giving up their time. And I certainly see that as it was a really good starting point for my coaching career.

Sid Sinfield 12:01

And was it different when? Because that would coaching therefore, for a job as opposed to what would have been a hobby up until then? Was there a change? Or was that or was that a? Did you feel? Actually, it's great, I'm now getting paid to do I quite enjoy it. I was doing this for free before.

Greg Hitchen 12:22

Yeah, to some extent, I mean, I've always felt very privileged to be able to do the job we do, because in some ways, it doesn't feel like a job, you know, I look forward to work every day, which I appreciate Not, not everybody gets is able to do that. I think it probably felt quite a natural transition. However, you soon started to realize that actually don't really know a great deal about this coaching, you know, a bit about canoeing, but actually, I don't know a lot about this coaching business. And you soon start to have a bit of an eye opener, I think.

Sid Sinfield 12:56

So you started, you were decided, having regular athletes that you were coaching, you know, you were responsible for, as opposed to I suppose, before in the club, it might be more ad hoc and helping out. But now you had your team that you're responsible for, is that when you realize maybe I need, I needed a bit

more information. And then I thought, you know, fixed a little bits here and there, or?

Greg Hitchen 13:21

I guess inadvertently what happened was when we started those roles, I started off with, you know, virtually no coaching experience in in reality, I've never done any formal coaching awards fully. So start off a little bit with reducing stuff without an edge. And at the time, the awards, just changed to the ukcc stuff. So we'll quiet again, it was quite a task at the time. But we literally started at the very bottom and did the whole, I did, you know, start at level one, and worked all the way through. So soon kind of get started to get a real insight into the whole process and realizing that there was a lot more couldn't just rock up and coach them? Considering, you know, and being quite fortunate that I've progressed through the whole of the British Canoeing coaching awards. From the start of my coaching career.

Sid Sinfield 14:17

Would you say that is that scaffolded? Your learning has it guided? You know, what, what has been the biggest source of learning? I mean, the actual athletes on the water, they seem too often be the biggest source of learning. But you said you didn't really know much about the coaching process.

Greg Hitchen 14:35

Yeah. So I would say I thought I did. I thought, I thought I thought you know, coaching was all just about the knowledge of canoeing and you telling somebody how to do something, some extent and that's not saying that that's the way I was coached. But it would be more probably thinking that my role was to impart this knowledge of how to do something and obviously well from a person perspective, you soon understand that that's not what coaching is about. And there's far more to it. And it's far more complex than that. And so that is very much evolved over time. And you probably almost sit here now thinking I know less about Canoeing coaching than I did 10/15 years ago, because you start to delve into the complexities of it all for more. We have been very, very fortunate, I think, actually, in terms of learning, I would say, you know, got the learning of an athlete. And then yeah, I've been on quite a few courses and awards, and I've

done all that. But I'd probably say, learning from the athletes that I work with learning from my peers, fellow coaches, and then had some really good, really good mentors along the way. And they would probably be the key the key learnings that are or how I've taken key learnings so far.

Sid Sinfield 15:55

And then I suppose I'm making an assumption here that one of the next biggest steps would have been when you joined the team at Lee Valley, and we're then coaching during the day, as opposed to around the day. What I mean by that is, often with the talent, we're having to fit in around school, college, and things like that. Whereas once you're on the program, you're coaching during the day, you know, on a more of an 8 till kind of 5 slot. So was that was that a change as well? When you when you came on to the to the program?

Greg Hitchen 16:27

Yeah, it was. Yeah, Yeah, I would agree. Yeah, I guess previously, to coming down to Lee valley. I was a coach, based in in Holme Pierrepont. And I've done that for more or less a full cycle, I think, before starting as what the time was the podium potential lead coach to come down to the valley. And yeah, certainly that one thing that really appealed to me was the to have the opportunity to work with athletes on a full time basis without as many restrictions in that, in that sense, you know, you've got pretty much unprecedented access, you've got absolutely probably the best facility in the world to operate out of. And that was it. Yeah, that's a big, big change. But one I was certainly ready for and, and again, would create a as created more opportunities in terms of a coach to learn, learning how to coach in that environment, it was definitely a change.

Sid Sinfield 17:25

What was the different challenges of being in in that in that environment, then, when you were working in the talent space? So what's the, what's the difference? As far as the talent coach, for instance, I was listening to this, what they were thinking about the change, what is the key difference, you think, for being involved in the full time, daytime type of coach.

Greg Hitchen 17:48

Yeah, probably just a lot more bespoke to the individual. You're not trying to work with high numbers of athletes that you're trying to, you know, get through a volume of people to see in a day and cram your sessions in, and you're able to tailor specific sessions, to the athletes, to one or two athletes individual needs, rather than trying to incorporate, you know, 4, 5, 6, 7 athletes into one session where you can't really necessarily work on one specific thing. Whereas here we have the volume of sessions available to be that I can go on, you know, Thursday morning, we want to go and work on this with set athlete, and I can go and do that. And I have less things less blockers in the way of being able to go about as very much yeah, a lot more bespoke in terms of working to a part of this philosophy, and making it about them, rather than making the athlete have to adapt and adjust to what's going on.

Sid Sinfield 18:51

And so, how did you find because there's also a lot more support staff that are around you. And again, that's coach can evolve into a leader as well as a as well as a on the water or on the bank practitioner, that they've also got to kind of lead this team around an athlete as well. Did that come naturally? Or, you know, is there any learnings that reflections on that?

Greg Hitchen 19:13

Yeah, it's probably something that I still work having to work on now. You know, you're not just you. Certainly, were operating in the in the talent side of the program, you're probably a little bit more you're in charge of everything. Whereas Yeah, as you get into the world class programs, you've got to it's really good that you've got an opportunity to tap into many people, but sometimes that can become complex in itself. You've got far more people to draw upon. And far more people to for the athlete to go to as well. And yeah, probably still getting used to being able to optimize those opportunities, whether it's, you know, how we best work with the physio or the s&c or performance analysis. And again, it becomes you, you might have worked with one athlete that doesn't want to draw upon some of those areas, and might just look specifically to yourself. Or you might have another athlete who is really eager to delve into every single area, and might require you to go and work quite explicitly with

some of those people. So you've got a kind of variety and adapt to the individual's needs a bit more, rather than being a blanket approach.

Sid Sinfield 20:31

So I suppose that comes with that bespoke, as you've said, that becomes more and more bespoke, and more and more individualised, the further along the pathway we get, partly because we've got the luxury of time, and luxury of ratio, and then the luxury of more support. So the coaching role kind of evolved, it sounds from towards you there, you've actually worked the entire part of the pathway from say, from Introducing flatwater, to coaching podium athletes, you know, compete at the highest level. So, so I've asked this question to each of the coaches up, because I'm sure you've made some mistakes along the way. And, and I think it's about the human to the human in it, because I think we all make mistakes. And I think there's any key learnings that stand out from you that it always does talk about learning from mistakes, as well as learning from the things you've got, right? Any that stand out? Or any ones that you could, that would bring some light for the aspiring coaches?

Greg Hitchen 21:35

Yeah, no, absolutely. It could be, could probably be here all day. So I guess a few things would be is working hard to not install my thoughts and theories and philosophies, necessarily, on individuals, is not about me necessarily my beliefs of how something should be done, which I think is a real fine balance as a coach, the even if you're not careful, you could have an athlete and you're trying to get them to do essentially what you think, is right, and that it takes a bit of time to realize that that isn't always the case, what you or your picture in your head of what something technically shouldn't be doing might not actually be right for that individual and trying to take a more broader approach to not just instil my philosophy, but working with the athlete to develop their own whilst knowing that a role of a coach is to be a source of knowledge. And you know, the they are, you are there to help them work on areas that they want to work on to develop without imposing your ideas and thoughts on and that was something I certainly feel I've got better at doing. And, you know, realizing it's not, it's not about me, it's about the athlete, I think it'd be a big one. Time would be another one and not trying to do too much. I think the biggest thing is making sure every session you do, you're clear on the purpose, you're clear on the task and the

goal you're trying to achieve within that session, because you can get drawn into when you've got so many sessions available to you day in day out, you could probably get drawn in to actually just churning these sessions out. And you don't really you can get to the end of a block of training and not really be clear on what you're actually trying to achieve. Whereas you really wanted to make every single day count. And that comes by being absolutely clear. What when you start that session that day, what is your therefore and what you're trying to do? And I think that would that would probably be one of my over overriding things that I've learned and would reflect back on and think, Oh, my word What on earth are we doing there? We're just going canoeing essentially, which isn't a bad thing. We're certainly at this end, this level of a sport you need to be, you need to be clear everyday what you're doing and why you're doing it.

Sid Sinfield 24:01

I think you made a valid point there is elsewhere in the pathway, it might just be about going paddling, because you want to keep enjoying what they're doing and not overly focused on always getting better. And is about let's have some fun.

Greg Hitchen 24:14

Yeah, but again, like this, and this can be if you're clear on that, what that's what's the task for the day is, then that's absolutely perfect. But if you know, if we're putting the boat on the water, or we're setting a course for the athletes to do, we're not we're just setting it without any clear means that I want to try and achieve then you start to get into, you know, sessions that are just you just doing for the sake of.

Sid Sinfield 24:42

So it's one of the learnings has been that you're needed to adapt to the to the athlete to how they perform. So part of that role might be to help them understand how they perform, because early days I mean when we saw more novice paddlers, they don't necessarily know how it's best for them. And so it might be more coach given information. But as we move further along, that's not really not going to work. Very nice, much more partnership and helping them

understand their strengths and how they're going to maximize them for that particular gate sequence or that particular race.

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. You've nailed it in the summary that said, to be honest, it's yes, and it's very much a collaboration. You're working with, fortunate enough to work with some of the best athletes in the world. And clearly they know a thing or two about going canoeing. Yeah, it's about working together and working with that wider team to, too really, you know, effectively plan reflect, effectively reflect and look for those next steps and stages that you can make the benefit in. Whereas Yeah, down the pathway, there will be an element of having to be a little bit more direct and explicit around what you're doing. And as I said earlier, you can't be as bespoke, because of just it doesn't allow the amount of people that you may be working with. So yeah, really, really agree with what you've what you said there.

A few occasions from here, Greg, you've talked about how you really enjoy your job that you enjoy coming, you know, and, and I suppose the question I'm going to ask you is, what is it that you really enjoyed about that? Because on the outside, it can also appear like a high pressure job in terms of delivering results. So what is it about that high performance environment? That that really, really resonates for you? What is it?

Greg Hitchen 26:37

Yeah, good, really good question. And probably something that I don't think about enough, I just would say, very fortunate, fortunate here in Lee Valley, the environment to work in with the colleagues, they get to work with all the athletes, the autonomy that we have is pretty is really good. You know, you're very much allowed to go about shaping how you want how you want to be as a coach, the development opportunities that are out there to progress your learning as a coach is something that's really cool. But probably is just working with people that are driven. And they want to be there as much as you do. And so you're not kind of think you've not got to get your I've got to go in to talk to whoever in the canteen at work, who clearly can't be bothered to go and pack those boxes today, or whatever ways I'm able to turn up to work and know that there are 20 other people, they're absolutely desperate to be there and be the best versions of themselves and want to learn and want to progress and want to

think about new things and try new ideas. And just yeah, maybe the evolution of the sport as well. It's pretty cool. It's really never standing still, there's always new ways of doing something or trying new things. That's really appealing.

Yeah, no, it was I suppose it is. The fact that, again, I'll paraphrase a little bit is the fact that each day is different. And you're surrounded by people who are driven. One of the things that always strikes me, we talked about Lee Valley being a world class facility, and I don't just think that includes the bricks and mortar. I think it does include the people that are actually there. It's such a positive environment to be to be in as a as a an employee, but equally the athletes I think, you know, although we will have days when we don't feel quite like that. Yeah. But I suppose I stand there, I look back and you think the water looks amazing. And, and, and we've got these people really aspiring to be the best versions of themselves, which, which is great. Absolutely. In that environment. And that positivity, it makes that the day pass a lot quicker than it might do.

Yeah, no, absolutely. You know, sport can be brutal, don't get me wrong. It's, it's a tough place to be at times, and can be, you know, mentally pretty draining. You know, the amount of travel time away, it's a real, and it's not just the commitment of myself to the role. It's the commitment of my wife and children, they have to you know, that it's a commitment to them as well, it's a life thing, you know, you've got to be prepared to probably not see your wife and kids for over 100 days a year, you've got to enjoy the people around because you spend so much time with them. And that's probably the other key element of, of what you don't realize at this level is that I probably see the athlete, I'll probably see the athletes that I work with more than I do my family. And so you've got to be able to work hard at building those relationships with those individuals and find that common ground. And that's why you've got to really enjoy what you do because it is it's a commitment. It's not just something where it's not just that nine to five, you know, one day you might be required, you know, you know, you're never not coaching in that sense, I think is probably the other thing that you maybe don't realize when you get into that, but you never really not coaching, there's no necessarily such thing as a full day off, there's probably something to me to do it or somebody who you have to speak to because, you know, being an athlete is 24/7.

Sid Sinfield 30:24

Yeah. So if you had somebody was thinking about, you know, I've experienced of being on the, the athlete side of this offense. If I was thinking about going into high performance coaching, you know, that high points environment coaching, what is any advice you'd give them about being your replacement in the future? So what if you were going back to, to chat to your young self, when you first started? Any key advice you'd give to them? In developing?

Greg Hitchen 31:01

Yeah, I mean, a really big question. So I think, just being willing to learn and not be, you know, paralyzed by one or two ways of doing something that there's, you know, there's, as I said, earlier, coaching is so complex, you're working with people and social interactions that you, you know, no one day is going to be the same, no, one session is going to be the same, and then you've got the complexity of canoeing itself in there, then you just got to really be willing to adapt and adjust. And it's very much about the person that you're working with, not necessarily even about the sport in that sense. And you can get more out of a session by being able to work and understand the individual than necessarily knowing how to do an upstream. Yeah, that makes sense. And I think if I had known that earlier, that could have that could have helped me. But again, yet at the same time, really fortunate to have been able to interact with quite a few what I would see as mentors along the way, I know, they always encourage people to go and have conversations with other coaches, because that's really how I think you can do a lot of learning and understand other people's experiences, there's probably, they've probably already done what you've done. And you can kind of trim that experience down a little bit by just constantly having good, good conversations, you know, embracing yourself in any learning opportunities that come along. I think that'd be my key things, really.

Sid Sinfield 32:38

I always, always think about if I was able to talk to my younger self, I would say, don't be afraid to experiment. As long as you reflect on those experiments, and don't be afraid to engage with the athlete, about what they thought about the experiment as well. I think it's great. And actually, and I speak to them, and they go, that didn't work for me at all.

Greg Hitchen 32:59

Yeah, and I guess, as an athlete, you have a very clear picture in your head of what success was for you, and what that journey to success looked like. And so you have to be really clear, and that you're not trying to shape or impose that picture on to the people that you're working with, because they're on a different journey, you know, they're not doing this, taking the same path as you. So I think that would also be another key thing to be thinking about. And that, you know, you probably pick up on those first few coaching sessions that you're going to do. And you'll start off basically, you know, almost trying to replicate what you did. And you soon start to realize that, that's quite a narrow way of thinking.

Sid Sinfield 33:45

So that's Yes. Gets a bit open minded about solutions, I suppose. Is that that that paraphrasing that back to you? So we're coming kind of to the end conversation? So but what's the future for you? Was it was the short term, what's happening in the rest of what's happening this year?

Greg Hitchen 34:03

Well, you've got if you've got the answer to that Sid, that'd be fantastic. If you could update me, but yeah, we're very much at the minute look at preparing towards the European Championships at the beginning of May. So all being well, obviously, we know, we know what things are going on in the world right now. But that's probably again, another thing about being a coach, you've got to constantly make a plan. You know, adapt, adjust, make a new plan, adapt, and adjust. And that would probably, you know, signify what's going on at the minute. But hopefully, yeah, European Championships began in May. And then as we progressed to the summer, some of the World Cup races and then into the world championships in Bratislava, towards the back end of the season in September, as the start of the start of the Olympic cycle as we lead in towards Paris. So yeah, just really try and look at those first, first stepping stones of that cycle with the athletes we work with. And hopefully we'll get to do some international racing.

Sid Sinfield 35:00

That will be that will be great won't it. We will keep them across the world is going in the positive direction there we go racing. Yeah. So absolutely Thanks for taking the time Greg to chat to us I've enjoyed finding a bit of background knowledge yourself there and I'm sure it will give me even more to pick your brain when I'm stood next to on the bank.

Greg Hitchen 35:25

Yeah, no problem no problem at all. Always happy to chat canoeing and coaching and to say when you're a coach it's is everything it's you know, it's your passion it's life and think it's all good and well when you say and I really enjoy it, but I think you have to you have to enjoy it to want to get the most out of it. So but yeah, no thanks. Thanks for really enjoyed it myself too.

Sid Sinfield 35:46

Splendid. Right then. Bye bye.