

S2 E12: Coaching Conversations (Andy Penhullrick)

Ricky Snodgrass 0:00

Hello, and welcome to this episode of the coaching podcast from British canoeing.

Sid Sinfield 0:08

Right then, so welcome to today's coaching podcast. And today I'm joined by Andy Penhullrick. So Andy, can we start by setting the scene a little bit? So tell us a little bit about what your role is in the world class program, you know, and how long you've been doing it, that kind of stuff. So fill us in a bit on the background to yourself.

Andy Penhullrick 0:26

Okay. Hi Sid. Yeah, so my role now is as a head coach to the under 23. Team.

Sid Sinfield 0:33

Okay, and how long have you been doing that?

Andy Penhullrick 0:36

Only since March. I started this year. So it's a very new.

Sid Sinfield 0:40

And there, but you've been involved in the world class program for a while. How long are you in coaching on the world?

Andy Penhullrick 0:48

Prior to that, I was for a couple of years of being one of the was the podium potential coaches, they were called but that was basically working with the under 23s still. On the Kayak side.

Sid Sinfield 1:00

And so is it yours what sort of give us specialist distance or athletes who you were?

Andy Penhullrick 1:07

I mainly work with the longer 1000 meter, okay, on the Kayak, but I do some work with some of the other with some of the women's paddlers, and some of the canoe paddlers as well.

Sid Sinfield 1:20

Okay, so we'll hopefully unpack that a little bit in a bit, find out a little bit about what your day to day role is. But so what we're trying to do in this little series really is just finding out how you ended up doing what you're doing there. And a little bit more about, about your role, pretty light touch really, but so if you start I'm guessing you started as a partner, is that right? Were you a paddler, is that right?

Andy Penhullrick 1:47

Yeah, so I first got in to canoeing through scouts. And it just so happened that my scout leader was into his canoeing a lot and had been an ex race, marathon racer, and he must have spotted the talent obviously.

Sid Sinfield 2:05

It's dripping off you.

Andy Penhullrick 2:06

Yeah. And encouraged me to come to come across to do canoeing a lot more.

Sid Sinfield 2:14

So what sort of ages that was that? Scouts? Were these about 11 years old?

Andy Penhullrick 2:18

So, yeah. Started mainly as a recreational paddler to start with for a few years' couple years and then actually got into slalom Okay. Yes, I was a kayak slalom paddler to start with and made my way up through the divisions as a junior but then got to the stage where also in the higher divisions and it was needed to be in North Wales and Scotland every weekend to compete and train and these the days before the, the manmade courses, so I just couldn't expect my parents to be driving me around the country. So I, I switched to sprint and marathon and racing,

Sid Sinfield 3:03

And was that canoes was sort of, so you sort of had with that slalom kayak back into the.

Andy Penhullrick 3:10

Slalom kayak yeah. I did a little bit of C2 in that as well just had a play that but now I started off initially in kayaking sprint and Marathon and very quickly moved to canoe. Just saw a fancy go at that. Yeah. And enjoyed it.

Sid Sinfield 3:29

So first of all, what first attracted you, to so you had the opportunity for paddling through your scout leader? But what was it that you first thought I'd give it a go or that's appealing to me? What was the attraction?

Andy Penhullrick 3:42

I think I just took to it naturally. I mean, obviously, the scout leader and the coach, canoeing coach, he was he was very good and encouraging me. But I just seem to pick it up easily naturally. I wasn't one of those people that just went immediately around in circles. I was able to go off in a straight line straight away.

Sid Sinfield 4:03

Where was this? Where did you what part of the world was in Birmingham somewhere or?

Andy Penhullrick 4:07

Yes. In and around Birmingham, where I live in still living there. So yeah.

Sid Sinfield 4:11

How cool. So I'm really intrigued as to the not because I don't think it's a good area of sport but the canoe, high canoe sprint looks incredibly challenging. So when you saw that is that it was that the attraction of trying to master that that challenge area or, you know?

Andy Penhullrick 4:32

Yeah, I think he was I saw it and thought I fancy give that a go and I tried it and again, for whatever reason I picked it up quite quickly and didn't do a lot of falling out which I think probably helps. And yeah got moving and got quite good quite quickly. So

Sid Sinfield 4:52

Okay. And what was it? What was it about the racing then so you said you were recreation or not into the competitive sight initially. So what? What was the other reason? So slalom, and then and then sprint and marathon Racing was it as well?

Andy Penhullrick 5:06

Yeah, I just seem to be a competitive person. I think it always been in competitive sport school and being one of four boys in my family, four brothers. So it was, it was natural competition between us.

Sid Sinfield 5:23

And were any of them paddlers or was it was your thing? Different sports?

Andy Penhullrick 5:30

No.

Sid Sinfield 5:31

So what about your journey? What happened there? Did you keep paddling canoe?

Andy Penhullrick 5:35

Yeah I did. So I kept paddling canoe and yeah, was in the senior team. And yeah, it was going quite well. Unfortunately, I then picked up an injury to a knee. And which eventually forced me to have to stop and retire.

Sid Sinfield 5:55

Okay, so what was so that was obviously a bit of a disappointment, I suspect but what was an any highlights that stand out from your racing career with any bit So you'd look back and you think that was a highlight for me? I really enjoyed that competition or that spell that season?

Andy Penhullrick 6:12

Obviously, making the team when I made the team for some international race, that was good. That was a highlight. Yeah, so it's difficult because it's like I said, it's sort of tinged with the fact that I don't think I really reached my potential. Okay, very that that's sort of the thing that...

Sid Sinfield 6:33

Yeah, okay. So you were kind of maybe a bit bittersweet. You would like to have kept racing, but then the, the knee maybe the injured one?

Andy Penhullrick 6:40

Yeah, I don't, I felt I had more to go. So that's, Yeah.

Sid Sinfield 6:44

And it wasn't an option to transfer back to kayak. Or was that was that sacrilege at the time?

Andy Penhullrick 6:51

It was just too big or too big gap to change I think. Certainly. So

Sid Sinfield 6:58

So were you coaching as well then? Or was that the trigger into coaching? How did you how did you become a coach?

Andy Penhullrick 7:05

Well, I guess I'd sort of became a coach back almost back when we're doing the recreational stuff as a sort of an assistant leader through the scouts and things like that and sort of done some beginners coaching in that respect. During the sort of latter years of my paddling, I went back to university as a mature student, decided I wanted to do something more on the sports side. So I took the opportunity to go back to university and did sports science. And through that, I got into my experience obviously as a paddler, as I my niece started I got asked by the club, was at Royal Leamington Spa at the time if I could help with the juniors, junior canoe paddlers there, which was she was good. And that helped. Yeah, got me to coaching really, and bringing them onto the junior team and then on to senior success as well. So

Sid Sinfield 8:06

Okay, so how did that transfer then? So I'm kind of interested in though so you're backed out and then was that around the time you were starting to help out with the juniors or this kind of all...

Andy Penhullrick 8:17

Yeah it all sort of happened at the same time. So I think because people knew I was injured and I couldn't paddle so much anymore asked if I'm willing to help out as a junior.

Sid Sinfield 8:31

And what did you enjoy the coaching then? So I mean, obviously you must have done and you kept at it. So what was the was the bit about coating that that?

Andy Penhullrick 8:41

I think that I guess the thing was it was a mix I guess it was a wanting to be still be involved in the sport because I love the sport. And secondly, it was trying to help make sure others didn't make the same mistakes that I did. Because when I started paddling there wasn't really much coaching around at all and I didn't get any coaching I was self-taught really in canoe most of the time and I think you know inevitably I've made mistakes I think one of the problems was having been quite you know, a previous slalom paddler and then having done some training in kayak, sprint kayak. I overdid it is probably the best way to describe it when I started canoe. I spent too long kneeling I think that's what did for my knee in the end with it. I spent too long on it too soon. Okay. Yeah, and probably an ill-fitting Knee lock because it was just one that I was given with the boat that I bought second and so...

Sid Sinfield 9:45

Alright, so you actually do I do a public service by staying involved in the sport, also helping people not to make some mistakes. I suppose there must have been if it was, did you enjoy some early successes with some athletes and then get that bug of actually helping people progress. And....

Andy Penhullrick 10:03

Yeah, it was quite lucky because the juniors I picked up, we're already really good standard. And, you know, on the edge of the junior team, and naturally they moved into the, to the junior team went to junior World Championships, and Europeans and things. And sort of the better ones are that then carried on into senior team.

Sid Sinfield 10:27

So, so if you think back to that kind of early, early years, what would you say you've been the key learning as a coach, when you've when you first started doing it, when you start to do a bit more regular coaching, as opposed to those ad hoc stuff earlier on?

Andy Penhullrick 10:42

I guess the, one of the main things I learned was about every athlete is an individual. And you've got to treat them as such, and provide a program for them as such. And that's not to say that every single athlete gets a totally individual time slot on their own with me as a coach or wherever it's about identifying what each athlete needs, and then where necessary, them having individual sessions, but quite often, individual things can be worked on still in a group. But it's just ideally what that athlete needs within a group. I think, along with that, it's about listening to people, listening to athletes, listening to other coaches, learning from both of those, you know, the athletes and the coaches. And understanding the best way for me is through teamwork, you grab it, it's going to be a collect collaborative efforts around an athlete to help them get the best, you know, as good as coaches may think they are, I think there's always benefit in getting the advice and support of other people and specialists, you know, available to you. So I'm always open to information from people advice from people, their thoughts, their opinions, because it's quite easy. I think sometimes when you're so close to athletes, that you miss the bigger picture and can miss things. And so I think people can quite often spot things. You know, I've had people spot things who, you know, they're not even canoe coaches, but they've gone, they've asked a question, and it's just started that brain word and thinking that thing, so they've got a point there.

Sid Sinfield 12:26

Okay, so I've got that, that individualization, that's a real kind of key for me to good coaching is the ability to, to understand the athlete and to tweak to tweak stuff to help, I suppose it helps engagement with them as well, because if this their program, they're more likely to kind of, to really commit to it if they feel that it's an individualized approach rather than a team training session. How do

you help with a goal setting? You know, is that is that been a key part over the years, you know, in terms of understanding what the athlete wants really wants?

Andy Penhullrick 13:00

Yeah, I mean, it's obviously keys now you got to know what an athlete wants, make sure that you help them chase whatever that is. Yeah, I mean, you grab a good get to know them as well, really well, first, I think so you can understand them properly. And because you can make all sorts of goals without being Olympic champion, but if you there should be other goals that are going to need to be goals before you get to that one, though, it's the appropriate goals at the appropriate time. At the right level to not be easy, but not be too hard that so that they're achievable. With hard work.

Sid Sinfield 13:41

Yeah, that kind of aspirational, but also attainable and, and that will help keep you motivated.

Andy Penhullrick 13:47

Yeah, I get some of these I've learned from mistakes, I guess I made when I first started coaching, if I go back to those juniors, I started looking after. I did the classic. Right I've got a good group of junior canoe paddlers. Here's the plan. It was the same plan for all of them, even though they were at in hindsight, they were at different stages. You know, there was spread over two years of continuous you know, to use different age. And yeah, I just did the classic, right, is a plan, boom, we're all doing this, and it's just in hindsight. It wasn't, you know, it worked for some, not for others.

Sid Sinfield 14:34

Yeah, so for some it might have been too much of one's maybe not enough.

Andy Penhullrick 14:37

Yeah. Yeah. Precisely. So

Sid Sinfield 14:40

So how do you manage that? How did you manage? How did you know, that's obviously you've had some sort of period of reflection on all those, you know, is that is a key part of your coaching, reflection thinking about what you're doing?

Andy Penhullrick 14:53

Yeah, I consider myself a pretty thoughtful sort of person. I like to you know, think about things and mull them over and examine them and have a good look at the data and stuff like if it's available and just yeah, and even like I said have said before, you know, work working with somebody else, but you know, even if not necessarily working straight away with somebody else. So bouncing the ideas of another Coach, what do you think I'm seeing? I'm thinking that there's something in there that I'm seeing this, I'm seeing that. So yeah, very much. It's sort of, as I consider myself a real reflective person, I try not to jump to immediate decisions and conclusions. Sometimes you need to make the decisions or whatever about things, but where I can I like to take my time and get it right.

Sid Sinfield 15:44

But yeah, and I suppose is that also an element of experimentation? You said there about making mistakes? I think it if we're open as a coach to that we know we're going to make mistakes, but we're not fearful of them. If they're if they're, well, if they're well informed, if we're trying to get we're trying to make progress, rather than doggedly sticking to a plan. So have you ever you mentioned some mistakes down? I'm sure there's been one or two other ones, any other standout mistakes? The reflect back on and think that was a key learning for me?

Andy Penhullrick 16:20

I guess, where I have focused too much on one thing in a plan and, yeah, as a whole, it wasn't. It's always difficult, because when you're looking at long term development of an athlete, you know, there are different ways you can do it, you know, I'm starting with one athlete and saying, right? We need to build you up, we need to get you in the gym and build you up, make you physically stronger in

order to be able to do a lot of the other things we want to do. And say to them well, and they said, well, you know, how are we going to do that? Well, there's almost a choice here we can, we can always stop paddling for a year and just get the gym and get it done in a year, or we spread it out over three years, or more amount against that way. So it's always difficult, because you're always trying to make gains. And the said, perhaps in that respect, I emphasize too much on one thing, but as a long term thing, perhaps wasn't such a bad thing, because that development of that part has come on, a long way was able to keep growing. So I would guess that's probably possibly one of the key things that makes it Okay, or not as bad as it could have been is that we were still at least making progress in that area. You know, it would have been worse, it would have totally flat lined. Or, you know, that would have been really bad. But it's just its difficult things. Yeah. As a coach, when I think it's one of the difficult things about the pressure to perform, sometimes I think for athletes that you can end up chasing, you end up chasing short term goals in order to be able to perform, stopping your long term progression from going to where it could go.

Sid Sinfield 18:17

And that I suppose that is a challenge of all competitive sport, that you the suppose the athlete wants to be involved in that sport, they want to be racing, because that's what they like to use, that's what they enjoy, or you enjoyed about it. And you want to keep developing, but you've also maybe got distinct goals that that you're working towards. And getting that balance, right, that priority in the training programs can be quite, it's a delicate balance, isn't it in there, you've got to think about the psychology, the motivation of the athletes and keep them engaged, the ownership of it, and they know that they're buying into that program. And I might do this but I might not get the return for a year. That's actually quite a quiet and with younger athletes that that feels like forever waiting a year can be...

Andy Penhullrick 19:05

Definitely that's right. And I think that for me, the key thing is my coaching is that it's the and I say as much as it can is it's the athletes journey. It's their it's their time, it's their career, it's not mine, I had my go and it's my job now to help them achieve their goals, targets. And the only thing I can do like any coach can do is to try and give the best advice you can always seek the best advice you can for

you for your athletes and then help them develop so they can make the decisions themselves. Maybe take that ownership of what it is they want.

Sid Sinfield 19:50

So if we if we go a little bit back on your journey as he started coaching you and picked up those juniors you were coaching some successful juniors how did how did you end up on the world class program, what was the? Because you actually now you're coaching kayak, predominantly on the world class program. So what was the? How did you? I've got a little lost link there somewhere. But you picked up some juniors when you first retired and that's how did you end up as a world class podium coach?

Andy Penhullrick 20:17

Yeah, so off the back of the juniors I in the canoe, I took them through the senior canoe, and I then got approached by kayak paddlers, local kayak paddlers, to ask if I'd help them, which he did. And he just kept on for that and sort of had helped paddlers out and then I offset the part of them probably most well-known at the moment. Who do we develop through into the U23 team, the senior team? And I just became involved, I guess, with the team, we might work with him. And...

Sid Sinfield 21:01

This was why you were what you were still had a day job. And you were coaching this year around a job.

Andy Penhullrick 21:06

Yeah the day job, but then just conversations with the people at British canoeing and they put seemed keen to have been involved and a role came up. So I applied for a while, let's go for it. My children grown up, so wasn't there sort of the need for me to be around so much. So I had the time I could make the commitment.

Sid Sinfield 21:37

So what would you say is that the difference of being like a full time coach on the program, what how does that differ? Any anything differ there any pros or cons?

Andy Penhullrick 21:49

Lots of pros and cons isn't that I mean, I guess one of the things that what involved was I felt I could make it I could help develop athletes and if I could make a difference. So I was part of the team. You know, on the on the with the team, you know, with the Great Britain team, also there was a chance to sort of prep strong influence things in in directions, I felt that we needed to go as a as a program, you know, as to be tinkered with, you know, the fact that everybody has their own ideas as to how things should be done. But I consider myself a team player. And, you know, listen, I think probably was the first for the first year was a call where I listened, I listened to what people had to say. And I've always done that in the community as well, when I've been chatting to other club coaches, when I was a club coach and continue to try and chat to other club coaches in the role of being just to find out what people other people think and their thoughts on how we should do things. So I feel like informed decisions should be so.

Sid Sinfield 23:11

If you if you would just explain it a little maybe about the high performance environment. So how does it you know, in terms of the because there's support staff available? How does that because you sound to me, like you like that collaboration in terms of getting everybody's knowledge, opinion, expertise, and then shaping that with the athlete to benefit them? Is that full time role in there, in the high performance environment allow you to do that that really allowed us to draw on all those expertise?

Andy Penhullrick 23:45

It does. Yeah. And it's all it's there to be to be accessed. I mean, my athletes are generally called the outlier. The outer lying athletes, so they're not based at Nottingham, they're based elsewhere which makes things a little bit more difficult. But yeah, I'm able to access that and get the support I need and the information. And I think part of the thing about being a coach, I think at this level is that you've got to have you got to be able to listen to people and you got to

seek advice and get out from people but I think part of it is as an as a coach, you need to have the got some knowledge. You need to be almost a jack of all trades. So that you can take in that information and decipher it. What for what's best for your individual athlete, your issue every athlete you've been working with. think that that's I see that as an important thing. And that sort of I draw upon my experience as a paddle that my experience has been a SPORT SCIENCE lecturer because that's what I need to do in his job and using that using that to help, you know, we understand what the sports scientists are saying to me. So you know what this condition is education saying what the sports or psych saying what the data guy saying, you know, and helping me to be able to take that information and pass it on to the athletes as best as possible.

Sid Sinfield 25:20

What's coming across to me as well as that there's that constant learning that you said there, you need to be very of a jack of all trades in, in, in some of the areas, obviously, very specialist knowledge in other areas, but also accepting that there's more to learn. And maybe that's a key. I know I've put words into your mouth, and maybe a key behaviour of a coach is to keep that learning part of your brain open. And that I don't know what there more to learn is always.

Andy Penhullrick 25:49

Yeah, definitely. Yeah, because there's no point having these sort of the sports science advisors and people, but if you don't understand it as a coach, how you can possibly get it. Right, always think how you're going to pass it on to your athletes. If what they say confuses me, am I going to expect the athlete to understand it? And am I going to give the athlete the best they can? So yeah, there's a Yeah, as you say, There's got to be a constant learning and checking of your knowledge and information. Because it's a major changing picture. When I go back, think back to sort of, certainly when I was paddling, there was a much more of a crossover between sprint and marathon. And it's almost you could do that to a certain extent. But I think the events have almost changed to a certain extent, the even the 1000 meters has become much more powerful event. You look at the look at the shape and physique of the athletes, paddling now I could have narrow compared to when I was, when I was racing, there's a there's a marked difference for me, and what I'm seeing and then the margins in the way they're racing.

Sid Sinfield 27:07

Okay, so there's kind of maybe been a bit of an evolution, as we've all as we've all Yeah, as with everything, as everything evolves and specializes knowledge is progresses and we kind of go, particularly, you know, coming from Paris, because there's going to be a great emphasis on 500 meter distance isn't there for the crew boats. So actually, that's even further away than some of the longer distance racing, you know, 500 meter relatively, you know, short competitors to marathon distances. So if you were if somebody was interested in thinking like, I like a job like you've got all over your advice to a you know, a either an athlete who's racing now and is thinking, post career, I'd probably like to be involved in coaching, what would be your advice to, to replace you down the line? So somebody's coming down the line, and be the next Andy P?

Andy Penhullrick 28:03

I think the thing is, it's a strong, strong base of knowledge. And then experience of lots of different sorts of paddlers. Yeah, I've done canoe and kayak, but I think it's benefited. The things you can say you can learn from one that helps the other for me. So I think that and along with the acceptance that you've got to be a team player, you've got to work as a team, you can't be you he can't be an individual, you can't be the one person that you know, is going to solve it all because it just doesn't work. And, you know, there's lots of people out there that do fantastic jobs, and I think they don't gain credit at times. They're fantastic jobs in the clubs that develop those beginner athletes into, into what allows us to, to take them on, in U23 into senior. Yeah, so that ability to work as a team, I think and acknowledge the people in there.

Sid Sinfield 29:13

You always think that that the as a coach, we're only part of that journey, talk about the athlete journey, wherever we are, we're only part of their journey, we might be the early days of really inspiring and helping them to develop that love of paddle sport and, and, and then being quite happy to be that role of moving them on and then somebody else may be taking them there and somebody else just finishing the job, you know, and they're there because all the other people were successful before them. I think that's, that's really the, for me, a really important part of being a coach is that you're supporting that athlete on their

journey more so than my athlete, and I'm going to take him to him. It's definitely Yeah, he thinks less of the athlete.

Andy Penhullrick 29:54

Yeah, definitely. I always think about it almost in you know, if you were to go to the. To see the nurse at your doctor's about something, and she thought there was something wrong with you, that required surgery, you wouldn't want the nurse to do the surgery. But however, they've done a valuable job in spotting that, they pass it on to a doctor, do something else. And then eventually your surgeon will do the job. The final bit, and while that's the, you know, the will, that you can be, could be seen as the most important that, you know, that wouldn't happen without those other bits happening.

Sid Sinfield 30:31

Yeah, that's nice. So the other thing you come across me there, you've coached in quite a few different context. So we have this development, okay, you know, this developing coach, the, the athlete looking at retiring, or the other person looking to get into coaching. So if you is that been a big benefit to you coaching the chance that you've coached in lots of different contexts in lots of different settings. So, you know, from your scouts, through to the club, to remote athletes to spread over the country to, you know, a High Performance Centre? So, all that must have been learning in all that yeah?

Andy Penhullrick 31:04

Yeah, Yes, very much. So very much. So yeah, even back to that sort of young person helping out with teaching scouts to canoe, it was, you know, it was all helps, it's all helped shape me a thing. And how can we do to, as I say, see their role as an individual and that people do things at different times, right back as a beginner. This is I wanted to pick up there in straight away, and straightaway, other people are going around in circles, he kept that in a group of 10 Kids you're looking at, because some of them will, some of them won't. Some of them will take longer and some bits some of that long and other bits. And it's I think it's helped me to understand that either, you know, even at the level I'm now coaching that people are developing at different levels, and in especially in under 23. Five years is a massive gap from being a junior International, or

perhaps not even being a junior international but developing on as a late developers, some of my paddlers have been, you know, to do under 23s success, it is a massive gap. There's a lot happens in those five years, it's a, it's a lot of people's lives with university, work. All sorts of things happening.

Sid Sinfield 32:21

Just pretty, pretty critical development on that. So just before us kind of we're looking kind of coming towards where next but so you said there wasn't a lot of coaching, you weren't exposed on our coaching when you were younger. So where did was there any other coaches that you've spent time with that? That what you learn some of this knowledge? Because I'm kind of curious to know, if you just have a mouth, if you just like been a melting pot from lots of different people is any key people that you remember learning more far more? Or is it just been a drip from lots of different areas?

Andy Penhullrick 32:57

It's just been a thing a drip, drip from lots of areas. Do you guys within canoeing and outside of canoeing have tried to keep being involved in in various coaching forums to UK coaching more recently through British canoeing? But going back, when I was first coaching the juniors there was a local scheme that brought together coaches from other sports that I got offered and I lept on that opportunity. So yeah, just constantly as our thoughtful sort of person, I tend to listen, just listen, think, absorb it, and perhaps come back with some questions. And I'm just, yeah, I'll listen, listen to everybody and anybody.

Sid Sinfield 33:46

I was just so for me, that's one of the crucial aspects of being a coach isn't the ability just to talk, it's the ability to listen, you know.

Andy Penhullrick 33:54

Yeah. And I it's one of the things I always say about communicating to people, whether it be athletes, or coaches or whatever the and I always say to my athletes is if you don't understand something, it's not your fault. It's my fault.

Because the important thing is that that is what the listener is not what I say.
And so...

Sid Sinfield 34:16

It's very because it quite often in a coaching role we get into that transmit mode I often talk about transmit mode we can be on transmit mode quite a lot and maybe not too much on receive and we'll make sure that we are between both otherwise it's an it's not that two way process that you describe after the beginning Yeah, definitely. So it was it was in the near future and so what's coming up what's the rest of your well let's hope the rest of your year in like and what am beyond what what's the future hold in paddling?

Andy Penhullrick 34:50

Hey, it's a bit mixed. I mean, hopefully we'll we might get some international competition next year at some point but I guess in my in my role, it's trying to get in place a good structure for the U23s, I think we perhaps haven't quite got it right. In the past. There's been there sort of the rush to get onto program, which is required results, which is forced people to focus on competition, competition. And I think, for me, there's a development element to this under 23. Five years, I'd like to see the first couple of years being used for development, rather than, you know, people are ready to race, then they should go racing. And I think they will need to have the opportunity to race in that in those first couple of years. But it needs to be an appropriate level. So I think there's some exploring for me to do there around some of the smaller international regattas that take place in Europe. So you know, our involvement, try to get some involvement there, provide some opportunities at the right level for the athletes, as they developing those in through that time. I think alongside that is following the sprint strategy review. It been identified that actually, the rush to Nottingham isn't perhaps the greatest thing for a lot of athletes. So it might work. For lots of others, it might not. And we need to be providing something for those athletes that don't want to come to Nottingham, because I want to go to a different university, or they want to stay at home or work. And it's how we capture and develop on that talent as well. So there's an it's in consultation at the moment about developing some academies that are like to be out in the community, in various places around the country. So to develop some academies. So it will be part of our role

is going to be establishing those and then helping those get started and to operate at the best possible way.

Sid Sinfield 37:01

Sounds like there will be the chance for more learning as well there, we've been integrating with more people.

Andy Penhullrick 37:05

And we will need lots of support and help from people. So save people to come forward, please, and come and chat to me. Give me your thoughts.

Sid Sinfield 37:21

That seems like a perfect place. For us to draw a line under there Andy. So thanks for your time, mate. That was an it was interesting for me. So the journey, the journey former, unfortunately, retired early athlete through to a to a head coach the under 23 program. So I wouldn't say that it's been a particularly straight line journey. It's been it's been very varied. And I suppose there's a lesson in there for all of us, isn't there about athlete journeys are very varied as well. And maybe we need to reflect how we support them on that very journey rather than expecting them to get on the tram tracks and go in the straight line is the way maybe it has been at times. Well, Andy, well, I'll see you at the regatta this weekend.

Andy Penhullrick 38:05

Thanks Sid.

Sid Sinfield 38:05

Cheers mate.