



Junior winners Lovell/Cramer.



Zielski, Walkinton, Payne and Williams at Wilcot.

Further Sharpe practice

ThruDark Devizes-Westminster Race

A late Easter meant there was more daylight than usual for this race although that did not guarantee good weather. The run up was fine and pleasant but it ran out just before the big event. As a result, water levels were low so it was not a year to break records while a cold northeasterly headwind took its toll. On the other hand, portages remained fairly dry underfoot, no slithering down muddy banks.

Sponsorship came from the appropriately named ThruDark, an outdoor clothing company set up by two former special forces members. The success of the race has often been credited to the lack of involvement of the BCU but this year some funding also came from PUK. No doubt this was the reason for a SUP class. There were only two entries. Slow paddlers are not much of a problem for kayak paddlers but do not help race officials needing to wait for cutoff times at the end of a long day or night.

A relay class was also introduced. Why you would want to take part in and get the credit for only a section of an extreme distance race is not clear but nobody did and there were no entries.

Veteran/juniors Davies/Davies of Wey got racing off to a good but overcast start, taking a first day lead to Newbury of 8 minutes over



Junior/veteran pair Bullion/Colman.



Emma Watts of Wey, fastest veteran lady.



Half century racer Beaver of Soar Valley.



Devizes mayor Ian Hopkins, Allan Bennett and former record holder Brian Greenham with starter Sally Peake.



Graham Bell trails a Lord Wandsworth College pair.



Junior/veteran winners Davies/Davies.