

**Talent Identification Program
report marathon
August 28th – September 6th
2025
Gyor Hungary**



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Introduction and summary

The TIP program at the 2025 ICF Canoe Marathon World Championships in Győr (Hungary) took place from August 28th until September 6th, 2025. For the first time in the Marathon TIP camps, one of our athletes won a medal; we'll get back to that later.

This training camp and starting at the 2025 ICF Canoe Marathon World Championships, has again been a fantastic experience for 06 paddlers (and 01 coach). And again, it has been a great pleasure to teach the youngsters from Macau, Singapore, Tajikistan, and Finland many marathon-specific subjects. Unfortunately, Diego from Chile had to go back home because of personal circumstances.

If I look at the possible improvements from last year, we improved:

- Announcement of the TIP camp to target countries: we have added new countries like Macau and Tajikistan to participate in the camp and the ICF Canoe Marathon World Championships for the first time.
- There were again some really young paddlers in the camp this year (15-16 years), but that wasn't a problem because their English was really good.

Further improvements:

- We must definitely make better agreements on the boats for the TIP camp. We only have a few days in which we can train the paddlers, and this year it took far too much time to get marathon boats. Without the help of Nordic Kayaks, Elio, and later on Nelo, we wouldn't have had proper boats. Arranging boats cost me about two days, days I would rather use for training the paddlers.
- For now, it remains difficult to support countries and athletes after the camp. I promised the coaches to stay in contact with them and support them as much as possible. But it is also up to them to contact me if they need help.
- I will talk to Ruud Heijselaar and Andras Faludi later this year about organizing online sessions during the year. We could also plan to visit countries, hold marathon training camps there, and perhaps shorten the TIP camp for a few days. A country like Macau will never be able to improve without the support of ICF.

The following athletes and coaches attended the program

FULL NAME (FIRST... FAMILY NAME)	Country	AGE
Oliver Bowhay - K1	SIN	16
Aino Lantelankallio - C1	FIN	20
Kai Jing Lim - K1	SIN	16
Ariel Iao - K1	MAC	15
Muhammadi Rajabov - C1	TJK	17
Pui Lei - K1	MAC	16
Coaches	Country	
Andras Faludy	HUN	
Nurmuhammadi Tohir	TJK	
Elly Onnekes	NED	
Bert Onnekes	NED	

As mentioned before Diego Altamirano from Chile was unable to attend the camp.

Preparations before the camp

The preparations for the camp went pretty easily this year. The invitations were sent to the target countries in time, and we see that we get a lot of positive responses from several Asian countries. After one of the paddlers from Chile had to sign off soon, we invited the only C1 women paddler from Finland. Seeing trains together with some of the Danish C-boat paddlers and attending this TIP camp will be very motivating for her.

Looking at the suggestions I made last year, we may conclude:

Suggestion 1: My first suggestion is to improve the publication of the invitation to the TIP camp and make it available online (website, but also Social media). We can try to make a list of countries we want to target for and send them the invitation (explaining the goal of the TIP camp) directly, and ask if they received the invitation.

Status: Several countries have an interest in the Marathon TIP camp; new this year were Tajikistan and Macau. Also, Singapore attended the TIP camp for the first time.

The TIP camp has now secured its own place in the marathon scene.

Suggestion 2: Create an online environment for a TIP camp, like MS Teams, and ask people to fill pre-defined forms (Microsoft or Google forms). Start creating a runbook for the next TIP camp (can be stored in the same Teams environment and is available for everyone who has access).

Status: Sebastian started to create a Google Drive with information. Let's see how we can use this more to our benefit.

Suggestion 3: In the last three years, the TIP camps were in Portugal, Denmark, and Croatia, which made it quite easy to arrange boats for the camp. Last year, Nelo brought the boats for the TIP camp way before the camp in Metković.

Status: This year, Nelo had (at the beginning) no boats at all for the athletes of the TIP camp. We searched for two days, and luckily, both Elio (2 - C1 boats) and Nordic Kayaks (2 - K1's) were willing to help and lent us boats. After the master's race, Nelo had two K1's for the team. Arranging the boats took an unnecessary amount of time, time that I would rather spend training and supervising the TIP participants. This must be organized better next year.



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Suggestion 4: Besides organizing these TIP camps, we need to think about how we can support countries (and coaches) in training for canoe Marathon, but also to organize marathon races in the same way they are held at the 2025 ICF Canoe Marathon World Championships (so with shorter laps, turn points, and portages). We must start thinking of organizing training camps in the target countries; in that way, it is possible to help more local paddlers and coaches. We received the first question from Singapore this week to hold a TIP camp in Singapore. We'll find out what possibilities there are.

30/Aug	Sat	1 Speed endurance training									
		Warmup all together									
		This must be a hard session									
				1000	m	warmup paddle					
		5	*	300	m	80-90% (300m or 1min30)	R:	200	m		
				800	m	rest or 6 min					
		5	*	200	m	80-90% (200m or 1min)	R:	200	m		
				800	m	rest or 6 min					
		5	*	100	m	80-90% (100m or 30sec	R:	200	m		
				1000	m	cool down					
		2 2st Portage training (practice get out - get in the boat)									
		Warmup all together (don't forget legs)									
		Review of what was praticed yesterday									
		Emphasis is on stepping in the boat after running									
		After portage training 1 short lap light endurance 1500m									
		Explanation of marathon rules by Elly									
31/Aug	Sun	1 Endurance training									
		Warmup all together									
				1000	m	warmup paddle					
		3	*	3400	m	3 big laps on the course					
						C1 2 big laps					
				1000	m	cool down					
		2 3rd Portage training (practice get out - run - get in the boat)									
		Warmup all together (don't forget legs)									
		Emphasis is on running with the boat and take drinks									
		After portage training 1 short lap light endurance 1500m									
		Start training from the startsystem (when possible)									
		Warmup all together									
				1000	m	warmup paddle					
		4	*	100	m	start from start system	R:	300	m		
				1000	m	cool down					



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Warmup Tajikistan style

The first portage sessions were only about getting out of the boat correctly at a beach. It was very useful portage training sessions, and like the group of earlier years, they learn very fast. Once you know how to get out of the boat, it's practice, practice, practice.

But portage is only one subject in marathon racing you have to master; the most important is to paddle fast and smart. In fact, marathon paddling is "lazy" paddling and makes use of other (or work together).

They all had a useful introduction to the marathon paddling, and we will keep on practicing this throughout the week. To give additional attention here from a different perspective, I asked Szofia Czellai to explain to the group what marathon paddling means, what you should do, how you prepare for training and races, and what she likes most about marathon paddling.

Monday 1st and Tuesday 2nd September

On Monday, Andras organized a visit to the Kovacs Katalin Akademia. It was a long and warm trip, but it was worth it every second. The academy is very impressive, with several gyms, test rooms, a “kanu stromungskanal”, a 4-star hotel, very large boat sheds, and its own 2000m course. Everything is built for kayaking and canoeing, and to improve the paddling of young Hungarian paddlers.

Children come in the morning for training, go to school, and after school, they come back for training again.



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1/Sep	Mon	Morning visit Katalin Kovacs Akademia									
		1 Short training after masters races									
		Warmup all together (don't forget legs)									
		1000 m warmup paddle									
		10 * 300 m turn point tactics R: 200 m									
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As said before, it took a lot of time to get the boats for the team, so finally, on Tuesday afternoon, I was able to collect and prepare all the boats for the TIP team paddlers.

After the first 5 days, the morning rest was very welcome to them, so I decided to prepare all the boats myself.

Later on, Tuesday, the paddlers could use the boats and had a nice paddle after the masters races finished.

On Wednesday, we did a last check on the boats to make sure everything is ready for the race day on next day. They really learned a lot in the first week and are all able to do a decent portage, know what wash riding is (although this is still very difficult), know how to start, know the marathon rules, and know how and where to paddle on water with the current.



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Thursday September 4th

Today, the TIP team started with the K1 short-distance heat for all participants, except Muhammadi, who chose to save his energy for the long distance.

At 08.00 hours sharp, the first start was for Ariel. Ariel did the best she could do, and we see that she really learned a lot in the last two weeks. She made no mistakes, had fun, but wasn't able to make it to the final.

At 08.30 hours, it was the turn for Pui and Kai for the second heat. Kai came in 15th of 20 paddlers. A nice result, and if she continues paddling and training marathon, she will be able to make it to the final. For Pui, as for Ariel in the first heat, this starting field was too strong. Also, Pui did what she could and finished her race without making any mistakes.

Thirty minutes later, Oliver from Singapore had his race. He had a decent start and was able to stay on the back of a big group. The first portage was fine, and Oliver was able to pass some paddlers and paddled in 10th position. This cost him a lot of energy, and Oliver finished in a fine 12th position. Not enough to reach the finals, but well done.

Next up in the afternoon was Aino from Finland in her new Elio C1, which she now really enjoys paddling in. Aino wasn't able to paddle in the front, but like the TIP participants this morning, Aino showed that she learned a lot during the camp. Aino finished 16th out of 18 paddlers.



Ariel



Pui



Kai

Friday September 5th

After about 24 hours of rest, a good warmup, and preparation of their drinks, Kai, Pui, and Ariel were ready for the long-distance women's junior event. For all three of them, this was a new and exciting experience.

As expected, Kai was the best-performing junior of the TIP team in this race. After the start, she paddled in a nice group but was unable to stay in there. This is a lack of experience in paddling in bigger groups. I think that in her training group at home, Kai is one of the fastest and therefore isn't able to practice wash riding. Kai finished 25th out of the 30 women who were at the start. This is a good achievement for this moment, but if she wants to improve her performance in a marathon, she needs to do a lot of marathon-specific training sessions. The

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most important thing is to be able to paddle at high speed for a longer period and learn to relax on the wash of other boats. Like the TIP camps in previous years, I found that it is very difficult to train this in a TIP camp. The most important reason is that we don't have a bigger group of paddlers with the same ability. Kai was by far the fastest women paddler in this group, but wasn't strong enough to paddle with the men.

For Pui and Ariel, everything is new here. As stated before, they don't have good opportunities to train enough at home in Macau. Ariel is a very young girl (almost 16) and has a very good feeling for paddling. She also learns quickly and has improved a lot in the last two weeks. Also, Pui is young and gave the best she had today. Both girls were lapped on the last long lap, but handled the situation perfectly. Both girls were very happy that they could attend this TIP camp, which gave them a good motivation to continue their paddling. I sure hope to see them, or another paddler from Macau, back in international marathon racing.

Results:

- 25th place: Kai Jing Lim (Singapore)
- 29th place: Chi Ham Loa (Macau)
- 30th place: Pui U Lei (Macau)

At 14:05 hours, it was finally Muhammadi's turn to paddle his C1 long-distance race. He had been practicing all marathon-specific parts over and over again and was very motivated to paddle the best he is able to. Well, Muhammadi did that.

Unfortunately, he was hit at the back of his Elio C1, which probably cost him a good position in the first group. But motivated as Muhammadi (and his coach) is, he kept fighting the whole race together with a Spanish paddler. After the first lap, Muhammadi was 6th, but on the next three laps, he showed what he is capable of and finished in 4th position.

The Hungarian winner of this race made a mistake just before the finish and fell out of his boat before the finish line. This meant that he had not finished his race in his boat and got a Did Not Finish. Because of this, Muhammadi finished third and won the bronze medal. This was a big surprise and the first time a TIP participant won a medal at the ICF Canoe Marathon World Championships. Also, this was the first ever medal for Tajikistan at a world championship canoeing.



Muhammedi on the 1st lap



at the portage



and on the podium

Five minutes after the start of the men's junior race, the women C1 U23 started in their race with 11 paddlers. Aino from Finland was one of them.

Aino had a good start and paddled together with an Australian girl. We see that it's difficult for them to paddle in a group and make use of each other's wash. Because most countries only have a few women C1 paddlers, it is also very difficult to practice this. Aino paddled a good race and finished 9th out of 11 boats. She is very motivated to improve her performance and tries to move to Denmark, to be able to train in a women's C1 group in Copenhagen.



Aino before the start



and during her race

Results:

- 3rd place: Muhammadi Rajabov (Tajikistan)
- 9th place: Aino Lantelankallio (Finland)

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Saturday September 6th

After a rest of one day, it is the juniors' K1 turn to paddle their race of 6 big laps, 1 small lap, and 5 portages. This year, it was a very big starting field of 37 boats.

Today we have Oliver from Singapore at the start at 09:00 hours.

The 17-year-old Oliver had a great start and was able to stay just behind the big first group until the first turn point. We see that Oliver is the most experienced paddler and can stay in the second group for quite some time.

And that is what a marathon is about, paddle in a group and relax as long as you can, so you can save energy for the last part of your race.

Oliver stayed in the top 20 the whole race and finished in a very good 18th position, about 8.30 minutes after the winner. Well done.



Oliver at the start



and during the first lap

This year again, we were able to use the drinking bags, which you carry around your neck. The bags are filled with half a liter of drinks. We agreed with the paddlers that every two laps, they have to get in the drinking lane for new drinks. At that moment, the bag they had must have been empty.

We practiced with them so that they can only throw away the old bag once they are near the drinking lane. If your bag falls into the water, you get a penalty of 30 seconds. Also, we made agreements on the number of drinks they should take, and all of them kept to the agreements.

This concludes a wonderful 2025 ICF Canoe Marathon TIP camp; all went home with a bag full of experiences and new friends. Team Singapore went on to the Olympic Hopes regatta in Racice, and I hope they learn a lot there, too.

Although this year we had troubles getting boats, this was a nice camp with promising young and well-motivated Canoe and Kayak paddlers and some of their coaches.

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Speaking of the coaches, Mouhammad from Tajikistan was with the team the whole period and really wanted to learn about marathon paddling. We also spoke to the Hungarian coaches of Singapore, who were interested in getting more support, perhaps organizing a marathon camp in Singapore.

Thanks to all for making this camp possible

- This was the fourth TIP camp for me, and I must say it has been a great experience again. I want to thank Ruud Heijsselaar, Sebastian Cuatrin, and Tim Cornish for giving me this opportunity, and I would love to run next year's TIP camp in Argentina. I also want to thank Andras Faludy for his much-appreciated support to make this camp a success.
- Many thanks to my wife, Elly, for her help in setting up this camp, driving with me to Győr, and her always clear explanation of the most important marathon rules to the TIP camp participants.
- Thanks also to Nordic Kayaks, Elio, and Nelo for having the boats for this TIP camp available.
- Last but not least, many thanks to the athletes attending this 2025 ICF Canoe Marathon TIP camp and the effort you all put into the lessons I tried to teach you. Although you all have a long way to go in marathon paddling, you all showed the will to improve your skills. I also saw that this camp has surely brought new friendships between paddlers. I hope you stay in touch with each other.

Bert Onnekes
TIP coach 2025