

# Thousands flock to Manvers Lake for thrilling Snake Boat Racing

A vibrant kaleidoscope of colours, the rhythmic beating of drums, and lively music set the perfect backdrop for the thrilling snake boat races on the lake over the weekend.



Teams from across the UK gathered for the annual event, competing fiercely throughout the day. The atmosphere was electric, with participants crowding around the timing tent after each race, all eager to claim victory.

Deepa Nair, a famous Indian film actress hosted the event. Various cultural programs, including a mega Thiruvathira dance by hundreds of artists from different parts of the UK, also took place. The live music performance by the band Chai & Chords then

raised the excitement levels even further, and the stage witnessed mesmerizing dance performances.

As the cultural performances unfolded on stage, the boat races continued on Manvers Lake, with quarter-finals, semi-finals, and the women's final taking place. The men's final, a thrilling contest between Nottingham, Salford, Bolton, and Coventry teams, captivated the audience. All four teams finished closely, making for an exhilarating race.

In the fiercely contested women's competition with nine teams, Royal Girls Birmingham emerged as the winners. Warrington Boat Club secured second place, while SMA Royals Salford took third place.

The spectacular event was the annual Kerala Pooram Snake Boat Race and Cultural festival, organised by the Union of United Kingdom Malayalee Associations (UUKMA), a registered charity which represents over 50,000 expatriates from the Indian



state of Kerala who live in the United Kingdom. These races are traditional to Kerala, India, where long, narrow boats powered by teams of rowers compete in an exciting spectacle. The rhythm of the drums is integral to keeping the rowers synchronised as they paddle through the water in perfect harmony.

Events like these, when hosted in places outside India, often aim to celebrate cultural heritage and foster community spirit.

Chris Hawkesworth of Manvers Lake and Dearne Valley Trust said:

"We are delighted to host the UUKMA Boat Race and Cultural Event and warmly welcome the UK Kerala community back to our lake. Organising an event of this scale requires significant effort, but it's truly rewarding to see the lake come alive with activity and enjoyment."



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