

The sudden death of a record bid rower and ex-judo player has sparked the British Judo Council Cornwall Area to raise money for a defibrillator that can be taken to all major area competitions, grading and courses around the county in case of an emergency.

23-year-old Nathan Woodcock collapsed with a suspected heart attack in his boat before dozens of spectators following a gruelling practise raise to break a transatlantic rowing record.

The father of one from the Scilly Isles had been training in a four-man team for a race from New York to Bishop Rock lighthouse on the Scilly Isles aiming to break the 101-year-old record for the 2,900- mile crossing held by Norwegian pair George Harbo and Frank Samuelson.

Following the incident the members of the British Judo Council Cornwall Area have started to raise funds to purchase the medical equipment that is hoped to save lives in case of an illness during the organisation's numerous judo events around the county.

Senior instructor and six dan international referee Jacky Gray says a defibrillator is a vital piece of first aid equipment at the events. She said: "Nathan was once a student of the Isles of Scilly Judo Club and when he fell ill there wasn't a defibrillator available, which possible could have saved his life.

"Every year hundreds of people from all over the country take part in our events and we want to make sure that we have got adequate medical equipment in hand in case of an emergency.

"We may never need to use it but we feel that we should have one at our big events just in case."

A defibrillator, which restores normal sinus rhythm in a patient having a ventricular fibrillation arrest, costs about £1,300. The organisation is hoping to raise the money through financial donations and raffle prizes.

Mrs Gray continued: "We have already got a number of brilliant raffle prizes from local businesses but we need more.

"We are a non profit making organisation and I would like to appeal to anybody who would be able to help us by making financial donations or providing raffle prizes, no matter how big or small.

"We have events in November, December, February and Easter time and hope to complete our fund raising target by then."

Anyone able to help should contact Mrs Gray on 01209 712728.
Mr Woodcock had a 21-month-old daughter Meghan with his partner Vicky Bennett.