

canoe

focus



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Above: From left to right: Women's K4 – Jessica Walker, Hayleigh Mason, Louisa Sawers and Rachel Cawthorn.

Broxbourne

The beginning of July saw works start on the new London 2012 white water course – exciting news and a major step towards securing a fantastic venue for our British canoe slalom athletes as they prepare for the London 2012 Olympic Games. The venue will also provide lots of opportunities for people in the surrounding area and in the UK to try (for fun or competition) what is the UK's most popular watersport



Welcome to August Canoe Focus

Congratulations to the Great Britain's women's Canoe Polo team who added World Games Champions to their World Championship title. The World Games were held in Chinese Taipei and the women stormed to victory, confirming themselves as the world's best women's canoe polo team.

Meanwhile at the Sprint European Championships the women's K4 crew of Jessica Walker, Rachel Cawthorn, Hayleigh Mason and Louisa Sawers won a Bronze medal in the 200m event and Rachel Cawthorn also won a Bronze in individual women's K1 500m, a very well done to this very talented pool of young women athletes.

In slalom, Campbell Walsh won a Gold medal in World Cup two in the men's K1 class and David Florence won a Bronze medal in the individual

men's C1 event at world cup one and the men's C2 pair of David Florence and Richard Hounslow also won a Bronze medal in world cup one.

Congratulations to the women's K1 wild water racing team consisting of Sandra Hyslop, Hannah Brown and Jessica Oughton who won Gold in the European Championships team event.

The men's C2 team (Wright/Christie, Cartwright/Bradburn and Hollis/Wylie) also won a medal, a Bronze in the sprint event. These medals add to Jessica Oughton's Bronze medal and Sandra Hyslop's Silver medal.

It's great to see that canoeing has a new supporter in the case for greater access to inland waterways. Since filming for the BBC series 'Rivers', Griff Rhys-Jones has been very vocal about access for all. Canoe England fully endorses his comment that rivers are a wonderful resource.

Thank you to those readers who have submitted recreational canoeing articles, many readers have commented that they would like to see more articles in the magazine about recreational canoeing and it's good to see that some readers have shared their experiences with the rest of the canoeing community.

Happy paddling.

Paul Owen
Chief Executive



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Chloë Nelson.

Competition

August

September

October

Start	Finish	Discipline	Event
12-Aug		Marathon Racing	Linlithgow Loch Summer Series 10km
12-Aug	16-Aug	Sprint Racing	World Championships - Dartmouth, CAN
15-Aug		Marathon Racing	Elmbridge - K1 - Assessment
16-Aug		Sprint Racing	Scottish Sprint Championships
18-Aug		Marathon Racing	Strathclyde Park 10km
19-Aug	23-Aug	Canoe Polo	European Championships - Essen, GER
20-Aug		Marathon Racing	Forth CC - 10km Time Trial - Union Canal
22-Aug		Slalom	Llandysul - Div 2, 3 and 4
22-Aug	23-Aug	Surf	Mega Plastic Championships - Woolacombe
22-Aug	23-Aug	Slalom	Pre-World Championships - Tacen, SLO
22-Aug	23-Aug	Slalom	Fairmilee - Div 2 and 3
23-Aug		Marathon Racing	Tonbridge - Hasler 09 - London & S. East - K1
23-Aug		Slalom	Fairmilee - Scottish Junior U14/16 Champs
23-Aug		Marathon Racing	Adlington - Hasler 09 - North West - K1
23-Aug		Sprint Racing	Kirkcaldy CC Regatta - Kinghorn Loch
29-Aug	30-Aug	Wild Water Racing	Llandysul - Div B and Wavehopper - Welsh Series 3 and Youth Ch 7
29-Aug	30-Aug	Slalom	Grandtully - Div 1 and 2
29-Aug	30-Aug	Slalom	Nene - Div 2 and 3 plus Short course Div 4
29-Aug	30-Aug	Marathon Racing	National Champs - Longridge, GBR - Assess
31-Aug	6-Sep	Freestyle	World Championships - Thun, SUI
5-Sep		Wild Water Racing	Washburn - Classic - Div B and Open - Yorkshire Championships
5-Sep		Slalom	Washburn - Yorkshire Championships
5-Sep		Coach Update	London - Bexley Heath
5-Sep	6-Sep	Sprint Racing	National Regatta - Holme Pierrepont, Notts
5-Sep	6-Sep	Surf	N. East HP Series - Final - Open ladies - Junior Short Boat
5-Sep	6-Sep	Canoe Sailing	Grafham Water, Cambs
5-Sep	6-Sep	Slalom	Cardington - Div 2, 3 and 4
5-Sep	6-Sep	Slalom	Marple - Div 3 and 4
6-Sep		Wild Water Racing	Chippenham - Wessex Series 1
6-Sep		Freestyle	Youth Series - Washburn
6-Sep		Slalom	Washburn - Premier
8-Sep	13-Sep	Slalom	World Championships - La Seu d'Urgell, ESP
9-Sep		Marathon Racing	Linlithgow Loch Summer Series 10km
11-Sep	13-Sep	Surf	Army Canoe Union - Surf Championships
12-Sep		Wild Water Racing	Trent - Div A and B - Youth Championships 8
12-Sep		Wild Water Racing	Trent Daleks - Wavehopper - Midland Series 6
12-Sep	13-Sep	Slalom	Cardington - Inter Club Championships
13-Sep		Wild Water Racing	Bathampton - Wessex Series 2
13-Sep		Marathon Racing	Chester 2 - Hasler 10 - North West - K2
13-Sep		Marathon Racing	Hemel Hempstead - Hasler 10 - Eastern - K1
13-Sep		Marathon Racing	Calder 2 - Hasler 10 - Yorkshire & Humberside - K1
13-Sep		Marathon Racing	Henley - Hasler 10 - Southern - K2
13-Sep		Marathon Racing	Poole Harbour Circuit
13-Sep		Freestyle	Youth Series - Nottingham
13-Sep		Sprint Racing	Broadwood Regatta - Cumbernauld
18-Sep	20-Sep	Marathon Racing	World Championships - Crestuma, POR
19-Sep		Slalom	Alva - Div 3 and 4
19-Sep	20-Sep	Slalom	Holme Pierrepont - Premier - Qualification - Semi-Finals & Finals
19-Sep	20-Sep	Slalom	Shepperton - Div 3 and 4
19-Sep	20-Sep	Slalom	Oughtibridge - Div 3 and 4
20-Sep		Slalom	Holme Pierrepont - Div 1
20-Sep		Marathon Racing	Macclesfield Adelphi - Hasler 10 - N. West - K1
20-Sep		Marathon Racing	Ratho East Marathon (HQ '10) - Union Canal
20-Sep		Marathon Racing	Huntingdon Gt Ouse - Hasler 10 - Eastern - K1
20-Sep		Marathon Racing	Soar Valley - Hasler 10 - Midlands - K1
25-Sep	27-Sep	Freestyle	Euro Cup - Zoetermeer, NED
26-Sep		Wild Water Racing	Langham Farm - Wessex Series 3
26-Sep		Coach Update	Northamptonshire - Nene WWC
26-Sep		Wild Water Racing	Washburn - Sprint - Div A and B
26-Sep		Wild Water Racing	Washburn Classic - Div B and Wavehopper - Youth Championship 9
26-Sep		Slalom	North Walls Short Course - Div 4
26-Sep		Coach Update	North Yorkshire - Ellerton
26-Sep		Slalom	Grandtully - Scottish Championships
26-Sep	27-Sep	Slalom	Bala Mill - Div 2 and 3
26-Sep	27-Sep	Slalom	West Tanfield - Div 3 and 4
27-Sep		Coach Update	Bedfordshire
27-Sep		Coach Update	Devon & Cornwall
27-Sep		Wild Water Racing	Aire - Div B and Wavehopper - N. East Series 2
27-Sep		Slalom	Stone - Div 3 and 4
27-Sep		Marathon Racing	Hasler Final - Reading
2-Oct		Coach Update	Hampshire
3-Oct		Wild Water Racing	Exe Descent - South West Canoe Show - S. West Series 3
3-Oct		Slalom	Tees Barrage - Premier
3-Oct		Club Event	Endeavour Canoe Challenge
3-Oct		Coach Update	Derbyshire - Castleton
3-Oct		Marathon Racing	Reading K4
3-Oct	4-Oct	Surf	British Open - Wales
3-Oct	4-Oct	Freestyle	British Championships - Nottingham
4-Oct		Slalom	Tees Barrage - Div 1

Start	Finish	Discipline	Event
4-Oct		Marathon Racing	Fladbury - Hasler 10 - Midlands - K2
4-Oct		Marathon Racing	Elmbridge - Hasler 10 - London & S. East - K1
4-Oct		Marathon Racing	River Isla Marathon (HQ '10) Bridge - Hasler 10
10-Oct		Wild Water Racing	Nene 3 - Wavehopper Finals - S. East Series Finals
10-Oct		Coach Update	Norfolk
10-Oct	11-Oct	Slalom	Llandysul - Div 1 and 2
10-Oct	11-Oct	Surf	British Open - Wales - Reserve Date
10-Oct	12-Oct	Canoe Polo	World Masters Games - Sydney, AUS
11-Oct		Slalom	Morpeth - Div 4
11-Oct		Marathon Racing	Mersey Descent
11-Oct		Marathon Racing	Chelmer - Hasler 10 - Easter - K2
11-Oct		Marathon Racing	Lincoln - Hasler 10 - Midlands - K1
11-Oct		Marathon Racing	Windsor - Hasler 10 - Southern - K1
11-Oct		Marathon Racing	Fowey River - Hasler 10 - South West - K1
12-Oct		Slalom	World Master Games - Sydney, AUS
14-Oct	15-Oct	Marathon Racing	World Masters Games - Sydney, AUS
14-Oct	16-Oct	Sprint Racing	World Masters Games - Sydney, AUS
17-Oct		Wild Water Racing	Stone - Div B - Midland Series Finals
17-Oct		Coach Update	South East Region - Chichester
17-Oct		Slalom	Llangollen - Premier
17-Oct	18-Oct	Slalom	Sowerby Bridge - Div 2 and 3
18-Oct		Wild Water Racing	Sleningford Mill - Div B and Wavehopper - N. East Series 3
18-Oct		Wild Water Racing	Lower Dart - Div B and Wavehopper - S. West Finals
18-Oct		Slalom	Llangollen - Div 1
18-Oct		Coach Update	Staffordshire - Burton
18-Oct		Marathon Racing	Wolfeaton - Hasler 10 - York & Humberside - K1
18-Oct		Marathon Racing	D. N. V. Dee Marathon (HQ '10)
18-Oct		Marathon Racing	Richmond - Hasler 10 - London & S. East - K2
24-Oct		Wild Water Racing	Usk - Div A and B - Masters Championships
24-Oct	25-Oct	Wild Water Racing	World Cup 1 & 2 - Upper Mersey - Tasmania, AUS
24-Oct	25-Oct	Slalom	British Open, Llangollen - C Class International
24-Oct	25-Oct	Slalom	Yalding Weir - Div 3 and 4
25-Oct		Wild Water Racing	Taff 2 - Div B - Welsh Series 4
25-Oct		Slalom	Yalding Weir - Kent and Sussex Open
25-Oct		Marathon Racing	Banbury - Hasler 10 - Southern - K1
25-Oct		Marathon Racing	Trent K2
28-Oct		Wild Water Racing	World Cup 3 - Echo Valley - Tasmania, AUS
31-Oct		Wild Water Racing	Dee 1 - Sprint - Div B - Team and Club Championship Final
31-Oct		Wild Water Racing	BCU Wild Water Racing - ACM

October

I am new to competition events – what is it all about?

There are many paddlers who may not have thought about the competition side much, but the competition disciplines DO welcome newcomers to their sport. Information and contact details for each of the competition disciplines are available within the BCU Directory, or alternatively visit the BCU website (www.bcu.org.uk) and look under 'disciplines' to visit a competition website.

Have we missed any?

We have compiled the list from those events which people have notified us of and we do our best to ensure that the information is correct at the time of writing. However, circumstances change, so if this is the case or if you know of any competition events that you think should be added. Email: andy.goodsell@bcu.org.uk

Club events

We are aware that there are hundreds of club based events that take place throughout the year. Unfortunately we will be unable to list them all here, however, we are very keen to publicise them on the BCU website. Email: andy.goodsell@bcu.org.uk

Websites:

- Canoe polo : www.canoe polo.org.uk;
- Canoe sailing: www.intcanoe.org.uk
- Sprint racing: Visit BCU, then 'Our Sport' and 'Sprint racing'
- Freestyle: www.ukfreestyle.com
- Marathon racing: www.marathon-canoeing.co.uk
- Slalom: www.canoeslalom.co.uk
- Surf: www.bcusurf.org.uk
- Wild water racing: www.wildwater.org.uk

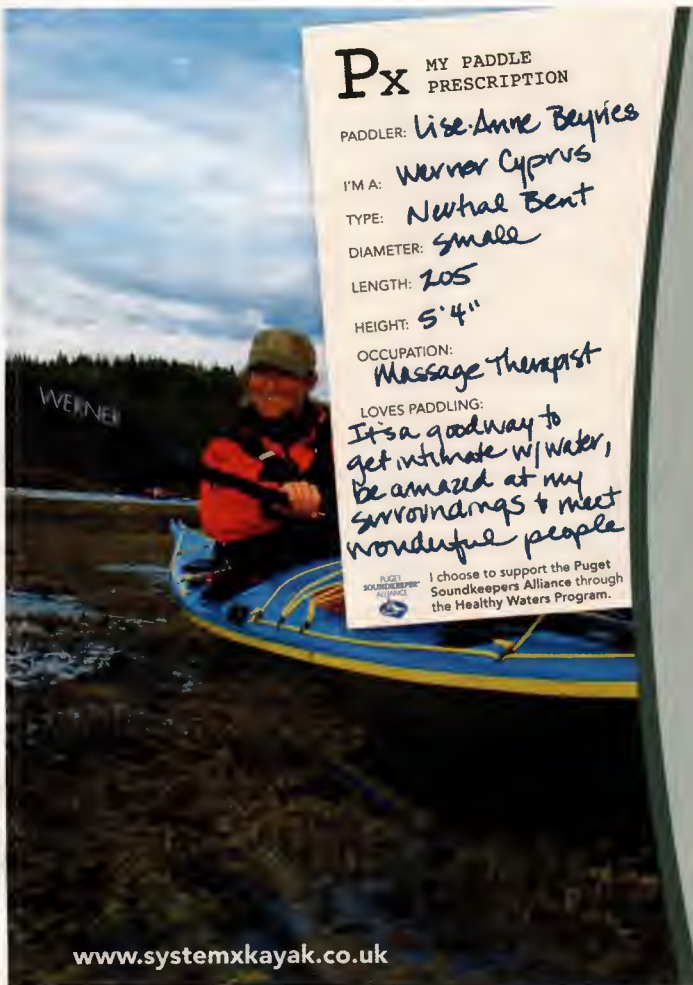


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I'M A: *Werner Cyprus*

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New Award Scheme

I have been a BCU coach for about 17 years, a Level 4 open canoe coach for six years and have assessed Star test 1 to 4 as a club coach on a regular basis.

Unfortunately the new BCU Star tests no longer meet the needs of the general recreational paddler. Indeed I would argue that that is no longer the intended target of the awards. The new awards are good for those wishing to develop a broad overview of paddlesport and to train as coaches. As such this should lead to coaches that are better informed of the possibilities within the many disciplines of the sport.

My ideas have become clearer since I offered to run 3 Star training and assessment at the Open Canoe Association rally in May. It was immediately clear to me that some of the candidates while competent canoeists would find 3 Star difficult because of the lack of basic skills offered by the new 2 Star and the quality of execution of skill required by the 3 Star due to it being a prerequisite for Level 2 coach training. A draw stroke may work well but at 3 Star it must also be executed in a 'near perfect' manner. This is a necessity in order to try to maintain consistency within coaching.

To meet the needs of recreational paddlers in my club and I believe in the Open Canoe Association, we do not need to reinvent the wheel but pick up the wheel so carelessly cast aside by the BCU.

Below are my proposals for recreational open canoe awards.

All awards skills will be assessed on competence and function and can be taken as solo or tandem.

Currently registered BCU coaches will assess the awards. Any coach from BCU Level 2 or UKCC BCU Level 1 will be able to assess the award below the one they hold or its old BCU equivalence.

eg. A UKCC Level 1 coach with the old BCU 4 Star could assess Open Canoe Association flat water proficiency.

Recreational award	BCU equivalent
Beginner	Old BCU oc 1*
Improver	Old BCU oc 2*
Proficiency flat water	Old BCU oc 3* or new 3* oc touring
Proficiency moving water	Old BCU 4 *
Advanced moving water (advanced flat water	BCU 5*
	Proposed new touring 4*)

Why am I adopting the old BCU awards? Well they worked well for me and my club in meeting the expectations and aspirations of participants. They

are well understood and respected awards. Almost all current Level 2 open canoe coaches know them.

It would take years to develop a new set of awards and train people to assess them; here we have it all ready to go. It could be up and running in weeks and indeed it will be in my club.

Is there any chance that the BCU will realise they have created this void and adopt this idea?

John Sherwen

Lara Tipper,
English Coaching Manager replies:

Dear John,

The structure of the new Star awards, with the generic 1 and 2 Star is based on the premise that paddlers who are new to the sport should be given a variety of opportunities, with the intention that this helps them two fold. Firstly, it gives them access to a range of disciplines, helping them make informed choices about which path to follow; and secondly, by challenging their skills in a range of boats it gives them a broader base upon which they can build their specialist skills. To support this philosophy the coaching scheme aims to empower the coaches who are working with beginners and improvers, to be able to provide varied opportunities based on the individual paddlers opportunities, skills, and areas of interest – rather than on their own! This philosophical stance, came predominantly from the well researched BCU Long Term Paddler Development Pathway, published back in 2003.

With the new Star award scheme having being run for over 18 months, we are starting to see more clearly the benefits and also the challenges this change has created.

One of the biggest benefits has been an increase in canoe activity. Before these changes the majority of our coaches were qualified to coach kayak (76% of Level 2 qualifications held were in kayak), I think it is a fantastic move forward that so many of these have now expended their skills so they can introduce canoeing to the people they work with. We had 1500 Level 2 canoe coaches in the old scheme able to assess 2 Star Canoe and introduce people to the sport of canoeing. We now have just fewer than 4,000 coaches who can assess the new 2 Star awards, and over 3,300 new Level 1 coaches qualified to coach both canoe and kayak! Yes, some of those coaches with old kayak qualifications were able to assess canoe awards – but the system generally created a divide between the disciplines, that we are now someway to breaking down.

You are not the first person to report that the canoe skills of paddlers with the new 2 Star are sometimes lower than they were with the old 2

Star. The true spirit is that the standard of canoe skills in the new 2 Star is the same standard as it was in the old. We are working to support our 2 Star assessors, ensuring they know the correct standard (i.e. the new 2 Star DVD) and we are also continuing to run education sessions at our coach update events.

The current position is that BCU, through the UK Coaching and Management Committee (UKCMC), uphold the principle of generic 1 and 2 Star awards and do not support the concept of discipline specific alternatives. The committee are currently reviewing the whole Star award scheme; at this point in time the review does not support the move away from generic 1 and 2 Star awards. An approach that addresses some of the challenges, whilst still reaping the wider benefits to the sport of generic awards seems to be the majority view. (Data taken from BCU Database 22/07/09, accurate at the time of reporting)

Discouraged women

I read the article on DW 2009 with interest. Congratulations to all those who took part in such a challenging race. However, I was very disappointed to find no mention of any winners in the female categories. How does this encourage women to participate in the sport?

From a disgruntled dad.

Alan Taylor

Peter Tranter,
Editor of Canoe Focus replies:

Dear Alan,

Unfortunately, we only have limited space in the magazine and on this occasion - four pages were devoted to the race. However, one of those pages did concern a women's team that took part in the marathon with the intention of encouraging more women and girls into the sport. We do not generally publish a list of results and winners due to the limitations of space but instead refer the reader to the discipline's website where they can be obtained.

Send us your letters!

We'd love to hear from you! Please send your letters to Coral Jackson, BCU, 18 Market Place, Bingham, Nottingham NG13 8AP or email canoeingnews@bcu.org.uk

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Note: All offers are subject to terms and conditions. To find out about these and to learn how to take advantage of the discounts visit the 'Members Area' of the Canoe England website.

Canoe and kayak retailer discounts

Here at Canoe England we continue to seek great deals and discounts that members can benefit from. We look to secure only deals that we think are relevant to members. We are now pleased to announce that we have negotiated a **10% discount** at selected canoe and kayak retailers around the country. For the retailer's contact details visit the Canoe England member's area – www.canoe-england.org.uk. To take advantage of the **10% discount**, just show your membership card at the time of purchase.

WEST MIDLANDS: Bear Creek Adventure, Worcestershire; Brookbank Canoes, Warwick; Canoe Kayak Trader, Warwick; Joel Watersports, Worcester; West Midland Canoe Centre, Walsall **YORKSHIRE:** Fear Gear, Doncaster; Robin Hood Watersports, Heckmondwike; Wipeout, Sheffield; Yorkshire Canoe and Kayak, Doncaster **LONDON AND SOUTH EAST:** Brighton Canoes Ltd, E. Sussex; Kent Canoes, Kent – Kent Canoes offer 10% discount on boats and 5% discount off kit; The Family Boat Shop, Surrey; UK Kayaking, West Sussex; Whitewater The Canoe Centre, Middlesex **EAST MIDLANDS:** Desperate Measures, Nottingham; Tradewinds Outdoor, Northamptonshire **EASTERN:** Nucleus Watersports, Clacton; Reeds Of Cambridge, Cambridge **SOUTHERN:** Berkshire Canoes, Reading; Marsport Ltd, Reading; Riverside Central, Oxford; Woodmill, Southampton **NORTH WEST:** Brookbank Canoes, Stockport **CUMBRIA:** Brookbank Canoes, Carlisle; Brookbank Canoes, Lancaster; Carlisle Canoes, Carlisle; UK Canoes, Lancaster; Windermere Canoe Kayak, Bowness-on-Windermere **SOUTH WEST:** Camel Canoe and Kayaks Ltd, Cornwall; Cheltenham Canoes, Cheltenham; Cornwall Canoes, Newquay; Family Adventure Store, Wiltshire; Kayak and Paddles, Plymouth; Outdoor Active Ltd, Gloucestershire; Performance Kayaks, Weston-Super-Mare; Totnes Kayaks, Devon **SCOTLAND:** Stirling Canoes, Stirling, Central Scotland; Nevis Canoes, Fort William, Highlands; Brookbank Canoes, Perth.

If you have any suggestions for improving the member benefits you receive, please get in touch – we could like to hear your comments. Email: info@bcu.org.uk or call 0845 370 9500

Paddlesafe online child protection course now available

This new training course provides an easy way to access the basic training requirement for volunteers, coaches and staff involved in paddlesport but who are not working regularly or alone with children*. Avoiding the time and cost required to travel to and attend courses.

The course covers basic awareness training, explains best practice, and what to do if you have a concern regarding child protection. There are five sections – with questions at the end of each section. If you do not pass all the questions you will be directed back to the knowledge section to re-enforce the key learning points.

The course takes approximately 45 minutes to complete but you can log out and back in again at any time. On successful completion of the course there is a certificate for you to download and keep.

This BCU initiated course has been produced by child protection experts and has been funded through grants from Sport England. This has enabled the BCU to keep the cost of the course to a minimum – to benefit our members. If you are a member of Canoe England (or other home nation) you will need your membership number to access the reduced fee course of £7.96. For non members the cost is £16.99.

You can access the course from the training section of the safeguarding pages of the Canoe England website. Go to www.canoe-england.org.uk and click on the safeguarding button on the home page.

* Coaches who work regularly with children should attend the three hour Sports Coach UK Safeguarding and Protecting Children workshop or equivalent (see above).

Campaigning canoeist wins award

North west paddler, Chris Cleaver has won an award in the individual category of this year's Unilever Dragonfly Awards for leading the effort to open up the River Mersey to canoeists. He receives £1,000.

Today, canoeists regularly paddle the River Mersey between Stockport and Carrington and each

October for the last two years, Chris has organised the Mersey Decent Race.

But when Chris first began to canoe on the Mersey in Stockport in the 1990s the river was still heavily polluted. However, Chris recognised the potential – 18 miles of river canoeing available close to the homes of a million people.

In 1999, as the local access officer for the BCU, Chris proposed the

creation of a canoe trail on the Mersey, and contacted the Environment Agency and the three local authorities on the river to ask for help. He spent several years trying to secure permission to use the river from more than 100 landowners.

Chris Cleaver said: "I am pleased that our work to improve opportunities for recreation on the rivers of

the Mersey catchment has begun to show success and I am thrilled to receive the Dragonfly award, the £1,000 grant will be used as seed money to promote a canoe trail on the River Tame."

The Unilever Dragonfly awards are run by the Mersey Basin Campaign and recognise volunteers from across the Northwest whose dedication has made a real impact on environmental improvement projects.

Below: Chris Cleaver paddling the Mersey.



Safeguarding and protecting children regulars

Website and new resources

We have reorganised the website pages for Safeguarding which we hope will make it easier to find what you need. There are three additional pages for Safeguarding which includes resources, CRB and training. In addition the resources have been updated. They have been divided into policy, guidance and templates. Each document has a number and date which will help to identify the latest version.

Independent Safeguarding Authority

The government has recently announced a major change in the implementation process for the new Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).

Individual applications for scheme registration will not now begin until summer 2010 with a five-year phase in of the scheme anticipated.

Consultation for the needs of sport in the new scheme are currently being undertaken by representatives for sporting organisations. Canoe England will update all clubs and members once this is completed and will provide guidance to support everyone who is involved with young people. For further information see the Safeguarding and Protecting section of our website.

Paddlesafe – online Child Protection course

The course is a first step in helping volunteers and coaches to understand more about child protection in an easy to access format. Coaches who regularly work with young people should still attend the Safeguarding and Protecting Children workshop. You will find further details on our website under training. For all Safeguarding matters go to: www.bcu.org.uk or www.canoe-england.org.uk and click on the Paddlesafe box on the home page.

Important contact numbers

Canoe England 24-hour child protection:

Email: childprotection@bcu.org.uk

Mobile: 0777 570 7364

(For use by individuals wishing to report incidents outside of office hours)

BCU Child Protection, Vulnerable Adults and Harassment Lead Officer:

Mike Devlin: 0845 370 9514

Canoe England Child Protection Support Officer:

Nigel Timmins: 017684 80084

(For BCU individuals who have received an allegation against them with respect to child protection and require support).

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline

Tel: 0800 800 5000 (24 hour).

CHILDLINE: 0800 1111

In brief

Ipswich invests in coaches

Ipswich CC will spend their £6000 lottery funded Awards for All grant on developing their coaching team. The club has a membership of 200 paddlers and like a lot of clubs, they have seen a healthy increase in numbers over the last few years. They need to increase their coach numbers to develop the skills of existing club coaches. Specifically, they want to get new paddlers into the BCU coaching scheme and to update the knowledge of existing coaches. There is also a need to increase the remit of some coaches to offer new paddling activities in the areas of sea, surf, and open canoeing.

Kayak fishing at disability 'try it' day

The freedom and fun of fishing from kayaks was introduced to an enthusiastic new audience at the Disability 'Try It' Day on June 27th at Llangorse Sailing Club, Powys. The event was promoted by the website 'Anglers Afloat' and supported by Johnson Outdoors UK. Representatives from the British Disabled Angling Association (BDAA) also took part and now want to promote kayak fishing. The event was organised by Martin Hurst, the manager of the Llandrindod Wells Leisure Centre.

Organisers were particularly moved by a lady who attended the event with her son. He was kayaking and at the end of the day she approached the organisers with her son saying she would love to have a go as well. She then told them she was blind. "We got her out in one of the Ocean Kayak Malibu tandems and she came powering in with one of our lads behind her like she had been paddling all her life," said Martin who hopes it would be an annual event.

Photo competition winners

We are pleased to announce that the winners for May's photo competition are Paul Fleming and Matthew Ryder. For June, the winners are Richard Watson and Jack Weddall. Each will receive a £25 Cotswold or WH Smith voucher and will automatically be entered into our annual competition, to win a digital camera. Congratulations to all the winners! Please turn to page 60 to see the winning photos, along with a selection of the nominees.

Krumlovsky marathon race

While rough water river marathon racing in the UK effectively finished with the demise of the Exe Descent, such events are still incredibly popular on mainland Europe. The Krumlovsky Marathon race in the Czech Republic is certainly one of the biggest attracting over 700 competitors from all over Europe. Last year's winners included GB's Jessica Oughton, who won the women's kayak class. www.krumlovskymaraton.com

Sport satisfaction survey results



Earlier this year Sport England commissioned a unique survey

through Ipsos MORI to find out how satisfied we are with the quality of our sporting experiences. It involves 45 sports and was based on research produced by the Henley Centre as to what drivers are important to people in sport.

Over 1000 people were asked questions on 10 key areas they had to rate on a scale of 1-10 of how important this aspect was to them and then how satisfied they were with this. The initial results show a high level of satisfaction across sports with our sport above average on overall satisfaction.

You probably won't be surprised to note that the top areas of importance and satisfaction to us were scoring over 8.5 on all of these:

- Release and diversion.
- Social aspects.
- Exertion and fitness.

If you get the chance to participate next year then please grab this chance to give your views on what is important to you in our sport and how satisfied you are with it. And if you completed the questionnaire this year then you will be invited to be involved again – so another great opportunity to feedback your views.

For more information visit the Sport England website on www.sportengland.org.

How does canoeing compare?	Overall	General Participation	Affiliated Club Members	Talent Pool
Canoeing/kayaking	80.4%	80.3%	80.8%	81.3%
All Sports	80%	79.8%	81.2%	82.2%

Big5 Kayak Challenge

A team of British and Irish kayakers have completed 850 miles from Port Hardy, on the north of Vancouver Island, up to Glacier Bay, Alaska in record time. What makes their story so remarkable is that they have completed it in 27 days of paddling, averaging over 30 miles per day, unsupported day to day on their expedition and paddling plastic Wilderness Systems kayaks weighing approximately 65kgs fully laden. It is believed to be the fastest time for this journey on the Inside Passage.



Above: The team at Glacier Bay National Park.

The final push from Alaska's capital, Juneau, north to Gustavas and Glacier Bay, National Park, a world heritage site, almost failed due to heavy northerly winds gusting at Force 6-7 and a tight schedule to cover 46 miles on the second day. Along the way there has been plenty of adventure including experiencing flooding during the record high spring tides while wild camping on a beach. Despite being experienced paddlers and qualified coaches, one of the team, Geoff Tilford, capsized in heavy seas in Alaska and had to be rescued by his fellow team members.

To stick to their ambitious schedule the team paddled for 12 hour days and on occasions, covering as much as 45 miles in one day. Persistent and heavy rain dominated the weather for the first two weeks of paddling, whilst the second half of the trip brought about a

distinct change in the weather and almost two weeks of constant sunshine with a notable rise in temperature. It also made for some stunning sunsets with fiery red colours at the end of days paddling.

The team completed their final two days of paddling in what must surely be one of the most beautiful places in the world especially with the aquamarine watercolours of the glacial melt. The team is now heading back down the Inside Passage via the Alaskan Marine Highway ferry and BC Ferries to return to Vancouver to fly back to the UK.

All of the challenges have been aimed at raising funds for the Muscular Help Foundation and raising awareness for the River Access Campaign, which seeks to allow kayaking and canoeing on English and Welsh rivers.

New Medway canoe pass completed

The Environment Agency has just completed the installation of an innovative type of canoe pass at Allington Lock on the Medway Canoe Trail in Kent. The pass is the first of its type to combine fish passage with safe passage for canoeists.

A strong team combining the efforts of the Environment Agency, Halcrow, Breheny Civil Engineering and Hunton Engineering Design Ltd has now successfully installed the German designed pass. From inception to completion the project took just five months.

The pass consists of a 1.5 metre wide steel trough, 70cm deep, and 17 metres in length, with a gradient of approximately 1 in 12 (8%). The key feature of the design is the use of artificial plastic reeds, known as fish brushes. The fish brushes slow down water flow and create eddies and back currents to enable fish to

swim up the pass. Importantly, the softness and flexibility of the brush strands allow canoeists to safely pass without injury to themselves or damage to their canoes.

Project Manager, Phil Munslow said, "The success of this innovative project was due to good cross team working between Waterways and Fisheries departments, and the dedication, expertise and flexibility of the construction team. Thanks also must go to our German colleagues who provided excellent free design advice.

"This structure is a further string in the bow of what the River Medway has to offer for canoeists, and saves the effort of portaging at this location."

Installation took three weeks. The total cost of the project was £94,000, of which the Environment Agency's recreation fund contributed £70,000. Details on the Medway Canoe Trail can be viewed at: www.allingtonlock.co.uk



Above: View of the fish brushes and after completion at Allington Lock.

YORCIE www.yorcie.org.uk

Our YORCIE website has had a substantial update, try the new site link to the Washburn, where you can now do a reality run down the river and click on and view the water features (we need a few more pictures please). You can click in the right hand corner and automatically subscribe for updates or on all the frequently asked questions and drill down for coaching events. The coaching team have been planning the next six months and overhauling the website – when was the last time you visited www.yorcie.org.uk/coaching/? A big thank you to John Lucas and Kate Wright. You can also supply information on accommodation, pubs, etc.

Coach update/re-validation day on September 27th at Aldwark Scout Activity Centre, near Borough Bridge. If you are interested and as places are limited, please drop an email to Janet at secretary.coaching@yorcie.org.uk with your details. The same weekend also includes a new UKCC L1 and L2 training course and a transfer course for existing BCU level 2s.

Open canoe skills training – we are running one day skills course at £40 per person per day to suit demand. If you are interested please drop an email to rco.yorkshire@bcu.org.uk. This is a high quality day with a maximum of four students per coach ratio. Currently the LCOs are setting dates for local coaching forums, giving you the opportunity to find out what's happening and how we can help you. These are scheduled to run from the end of September into October. Details will be circulated to coaches who have opted into the region's circulation lists. If you are not sure if that's you, then please email Janet to the address above.

Please save Tuesday October 27th to come to Ossett and support the region's ACM. All the fun starts at 19.15 and you'll get fed. Contact Jon on secretary@yorcie.org.uk.

And finally, a very warm welcome to Cameron Charlie Field and congratulations to your proud mum and dad (and PDO) Gareth and Leigh.

DICK CONSTABLE RDTchair@yorcie.org.uk

In brief

Reading kayakers save fishermen

Five members of the University of Reading Canoe Club were involved in saving three people on a fishing trip in Teignmouth, Devon.

Two of the kayakers rescued the three men, who had been in the water, back to the shore on their kayaks, while the other three pulled the fishing boat back to the beach.

Kathryn Charlesworth, President of the University Canoe Club said: "The sea was rough when we saw the people in the water and it took us 15 minutes to get them to shore on the ends of our kayaks. We were well prepared as we drill for deep water rescues for kayaking incidents and we always carry full survival kits, which includes blankets to warm up anyone suffering from hypothermia. We are truly delighted to have been able to help these people and it shows just how important it is to carry the appropriate equipment on the sea. I am really proud of all the students."

The group consisted of: Kathryn Charlesworth, third year art and psychology student; Iain Hissett, masters student in meteorology; James Pardoe, Reading graduate (2008); Kieran Terry, Reading graduate; Stuart Moffatt, undergraduate studying building surveying.

Disabled kayaker plans European challenge

Madcap disabled New Zealand kayaker Rikki Johnson has never been to Europe, but soon he will be paddling from Paris to London. In his latest challenge, the 41-year-old will attempt to kayak the 714km journey in what is believed to be a world-first. He hopes to cover the distance in less than 32 days, beginning in early September.

Rikki spent three weeks in hospital and lost the use of his right elbow after a car crash in 1990 and has been planning the trip for nine months. He will begin on the River Seine in Paris and make his way up the coast of France, cross the English Channel, then paddle up the Thames, finishing under Tower Bridge in London.

Rikki will travel 30-50km a day without leaving his slightly modified Kevlar Tasman kayak so he can sleep lying down tied to his support boat.

Charity trip sets new record

A lawyer from West Sussex has set a new record, after cycling and kayaking from London to Paris, in less than 24 hours. Mike Ellis, 41, completed the 450 km journey in 20 hours and 24 minutes. Starting out in London, he cycled 125 km to Dover, before kayaking 38 km, across the English Channel, to Calais. From there he then cycled another 288 km, to finish at the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. So far, Mike has raised over £2,000 for 'Help for Heroes', a charity which supports wounded British soldiers. Visit Mike's charity page: www.justgiving.com/L2Pbybikeandsurfski/

In brief

Canoe polo

Great Britain's Women's Canoe Polo team netted success at the weekend, as they beat Germany to win the Canoe Polo World Games.

The team, who are the reigning World Champions, beat the Germans 4.1 in the final on Saturday, to add World Games Champions to their ever-growing list of achievements.

It rounded off a hugely successful tournament for the girls. The team, led by Ginny Coyles, dominated this year's games by winning all of their three pre-final matches – beating Chinese Tapei, Australia and France.

Pru Blyth was also named the tournament's top women's goal scorer, with 12 goals.

The GB women's team members were: Kirsty Sutcliffe; Pru Blyth; Ginny Coyles; Pip Grayson; Ellie Bridgstock; Kathryn Grieves and Zoe Anthony.

For more information visit:

www.worldgames-iwga.org

www.canoe polo.org.uk

Marathon

Nine teams in six classes took part in the 96 mile, Cheshire Ring Race around the canals of Manchester and Cheshire in July.

The Double Tourer Ten Paddler Relay class, comprises five pairs of paddlers, each an adult, a junior or female. Wheelock Pioneers youth group made their best tourer time of 21h and 53s in ten years. The host Macclesfield club ran a K2 in the ten paddler format in a time of 18h 17m 06s.

Irene Hills, Chris Hills, Lucy Ryan and David Stanton of Banbury Canoe Club in the K1 four paddler relay reduced the record to 18h and 5s, setting a new hour barrier to be broken. There has been a steady increase in paddlers wanting to paddle all the way and this year in the K1, Joe Leach of Bangor University Canoe Polo Club achieved 21h 20m 51s.

Peter Howson of ACU and Lee Howson of Bradford on Avon in the K2 stormed round in 17h 37m 19s taking two hours off the record.

How does the Cheshire Ring compare with the Devizes to Westminster? Peter and Lee Howson completed the 2009 DW in less than 21 hours and 20 hours respectively, so perhaps an 18 hour ring compares with a 21 hour DW? Peter said he was not prepared for the last stages of the Ring, instead of Teddington Lock and the run home with the tide there is a 100 foot ascent and one mile run up Bosley Lock flight then 11 miles of flat shallow canal. When asked: "Peter, would you come back and paddle the ring again?" he replied "If someone takes our record, I will have to, won't I?" Now there is a challenge!

Thanks to all those who helped with this year's race - MADCC members, Raynet and others. Chris Cleaver

Striking Gold in the Canadian Klondike



The Yukon River Quest is a marathon canoe and kayak event covering 740 km from Whitehorse to Dawson City in the far north-west of Canada. The 2009 event saw a record British entry achieve some eye-catching results. Four crews were placed in the top three of their category, including two firsts and a new course record.

The race passes through one of the most remote wilderness areas in the world. In the entire course, there is one bridge, one village and many trees and mountains. Early on, there is Lake Laberge – a gruelling 50km of still water that splits up the field. Once back on the river, the Yukon is joined by the Teslin River and then the Big Salmon to make a large, fast flowing river. The first mandatory stop is at Carmacks, after about 320 km. The seven hour stop is the only chance of external support during the race. About two hours after Carmacks, the river goes over Five Finger Rapids – not difficult if approached from the correct angle, but nevertheless a place that many people have died over the years. The river winds on past the deserted settlement of Fort Selkirk after 500km before the second and final stop at Kirkman Creek before embarking on the final 120km scramble for the line.

The start is a 'Le Mans' style run of some 300m before jumping in the boats with crews jostling for position. After 30km, the teams emerge onto Lake Laberge. As the river goes north, lights are only needed for the first night – by Dawson City the midnight sun keeps it light 24 hours per day.

Left: The start of the race.



Above: The British contestants after the finish.

Most crews arrived at Carmacks around lunchtime on the second day and gratefully grabbed some 'real' food and sleep. Many crews had paddled non-stop for more than 24 hours. No crews relished restarting the race, but it proved too much for the British pair of Christopher Shelton and Dominic Jackman who stopped at this point.

All remaining six British crews made it safely through Five Fingers Rapids, and were treated to a fine midnight sunset/sunrise before a four hour downpour dampened everybody's spirits. Many crews suffered their worst moments during this second night as the rain was followed by a bitter northerly wind straight from the Arctic.

For many crews the third day passed as a blur with endless rows of mountains lining the river, the constant search for the fastest water and the counting of miles to the next landmark. Eventually, however, the crews rounded the final bend and the brown of the Yukon turned to clear water as the Klondike joined from the right. A few hundred metres more and the small but enthusiastic crowd cheered in each finisher and helped them stagger ashore.

Shaun Thrower was the first British contestant home in 47:00 hours, fourth overall and second in the men's K1 event. Next were Rob Withers and James Heath in 50:51 hours in tenth place overall, second in the men's C2 event. The Oxford crew of Lou Maurice and Hilary Greaves, arrived in Dawson in 13th place, winning the women's K2 event and breaking the course record in 51:48 hours – not bad for their first canoe race. Pete Budden and David Townsend were 16th overall, winning the men's K2, the Voyageur 'London Pride' a seven man team, were 18th overall and third in the Voyageur open division, whilst Daniel Routier and Jeremy Woodall finished 37th overall.

The organisers are particularly keen to welcome more British teams next year. See www.yukonriverquest.com for more information.

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OFFER £350



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RRP £350
OFFER £329



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RRP £610
OFFER £530



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In brief

Slalom

Silver Olympic medallist David Florence made history by being the first British athlete to win two medals in a major international competition. David won a Bronze medal in his familiar Men's C1 (canoe single) class and a Bronze medal in the Men's C2 (canoe double) class with Men's K1 athlete Richard Hounslow, in the first world cup of the series.



Above: David Florence (front) and Richard Hounslow in the C2.

Olympic Silver slalom medallist Campbell Walsh won Gold in the Men's K1 (kayak single) at the second slalom World Cup in Bratislava, Slovakia. The world cup series consists of three races which take place over consecutive weekends and ended in Augsburg, Germany.

Walsh won the race after very nearly missing the chance to qualify through to the semi-finals, he



was 20th after the heats and only the top 20 athletes go through to the semi-final phase.

Left: Campbell Walsh (right) and Shaun Pearce – men's kayak single coach (left).

Wild water racing

There were medals galore at the Wild Water Racing (WWR) European Championships, as Great Britain won a selection of Gold, Silver and Bronze medals, making it the most successful WWR European Championships ever.

The boys started off the medal flurry, winning Bronze in the Men's C2 Team Classic race. The team: Simon Goulding, Matthew Harrison, Simon Wright, Jamie Christie, Colin Cartwright and Dave Bradburn, finished just behind Slovakia in second and the Czech Republic in first.

On Friday, it was the turn of the girls to add to the medal tally. In the Women's K1 Individual Sprint, GBR dominated the race with Sandra Hyslop winning Silver, closely followed by fellow team mate Jessica Oughton, with Bronze.

On Saturday, Hyslop and Oughton teamed up with Hannah Brown to finish the competition on a real high, taking Gold in the Women's K1 team sprint race.

For more information visit www.wildwater.org.uk

Cawthorn makes history at Sprint Europeans

Rachel Cawthorn made history by winning double Bronze at the Sprint Racing European Championships. Twenty-year old Cawthorn, from Guildford has got stronger and stronger this season, demonstrating her potential as a real contender for the London 2012 Olympics.

Cawthorn's Bronze medal, is the first ever medal for Great Britain in the Women's 500m, at the European Championships, which were held in Brandenburg, Germany on the 26-28th June.

Said Cawthorn, who looked completely stunned after racing, "That was such a surprise, I just can't believe it. I went a bit harder off the start, followed my race plan and it went perfectly. It's such a surprise."

It's a fantastic result for Cawthorn, an ex swimmer by childhood, who only stepped in a kayak at the age of 15 in May 2004. Coach Miklos Simon was quite speechless, "It's amazing," he repeated over and over.

Cawthorn's medal in the individual Women's K1 (kayak single) 500m event followed a Bronze medal in the Women's K4 (kayak quadruple) 200m event, the first medal for a K4 crew boat at a major international competition. The Women's K2 (kayak double) of Lani Belcher and Olympian Lucy Wainwright took a fifth place in the 500m.

In the Men's K1 (kayak single) Ed McKeever won the B final to achieve a European ranking of 10th and an opportunity to race in the World Championships later this year. James Train also had a good championships with a fifth place in the Men's C1 500m B final (14th overall). The Men's K4 crew also achieved a personal best for GB, coming 7th in the 1000m A final.

Below: From left to right: Women's K4 – Rachel Cawthorn, Louisa Sawers, Hayleight Mason and Jessica Walker.



Above: Rachel Cawthorn with her Bronze medal.

GB's, Olympic and World Champion, Dr Tim Brabants, was not present to defend his Men's K1 European Championship title, as he is taking a year out from competition to concentrate on his medical career, but he had these words of support for his K4 colleagues, "The K4 Men have done brilliantly. It's fantastic to see them stepping up to the mark and making the final at a major championships. Hopefully this will give them the confidence and belief to continue on a successful path."

In the Men's K1 500m event, Tim relinquished his 2008 crown to Anders Gustaffson of Sweden who led Germany's Ronald Rauhe over the line.

GB Canoeing's Performance Director John Anderson said, "This is an all around very solid performance by the whole team. With Rachel now performing in a world's best field, all of the women's squad finishing in the top five and the men breaking through, we are further forward in the first year of the Olympic cycle than we hoped to be. This is really inspiring for GB canoeing."

The team will now be very much looking forward to the World Championships in August.



Strength

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EDGE

2009



1930

1980

1960

In brief

Seven Year Old Discovers Paddling Success

Timothy Dowden successfully completed his Paddlepower Discover Award at Leam Boat Centre, just five days before his eighth birthday!

We believe Timothy to be the youngest paddler to date to achieve this 2 Star equivalent award and would like to congratulate him on this excellent achievement.

Timothy's dad Chris said, "As far as kayaking goes he just plain enjoys it." Timothy also enjoys other sports and hobbies but "kayaking is both a firm favourite and one where he seems to have natural talent. The children, and adults, he paddles with are key in this - they all encourage and challenge each other and above all they all have fun."



Education outside the classroom



Above: Carter Bar border crossing. This was a first time away from home for many of the year 10 group.

Development contacts

TEAM NORTH

SDO NORTHERN

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TEAM SOUTH

SDO SOUTH/PDO SOUTHERN

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PDO LONDON and SOUTH EAST

Position vacant. Contact James Hives.

PDO SOUTH WEST

Andy Davey andy.davey@bcu.org.uk
Mobile: 07912 466264

In June, 13 intrepid Kenton School students, three staff and two instructors paddled 55 miles down the River Tweed from Peebles to Banff Mill. Students are engaged with the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) Adventure and Residential Short Course to accredit this experience and will bank it towards the Certificate of Personal Effectiveness; a GCSE equivalent activity based qualification.

The ASDAN scheme is an alternative curriculum which aims to develop the 'key skills' of: communication, application of number and IT and the 'wider key skills' of problem solving, working with others and improving own learning. The ASDAN courses are about accrediting students that demonstrate these skills through a range of challenges using a variety of modules. It is up to the deliverer to adapt the challenges to offer an exciting and interesting syllabus that engages the most difficult to reach or students who struggle with a traditional curriculum.

The programme is also a way of introducing Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) which provides a framework for the qualities and skills needed to succeed in learning and life.

Most of the group started out as complete beginners but thanks to the

excellent instructors, Jason and John, from the City of Newcastle Outdoor Education Service (CNOES), ASDAN Coordinator and teacher Karen Hudspith, (Level 2 coach) and a lot of patience, practice and perseverance; the group successfully ran Grade 2/3 rapids at Fairmile and Makerstoun and several weirs before the week was out.

The BCU definition of Grade 3 rapids is 'Rapids with fairly high waves (1-2 m); broken water, stoppers and strong eddies; exposed rocks; small falls. The passage may be difficult to recognise from on the river and inspection from the bank may be required. Manoeuvring to negotiate the rapids is required.'

A Kenton student's definition of Grade 3 rapids is, "It's like when the water is going proper fast and it's all like white and pretty scary so you just have to paddle hard, try not to hit the rocks and think about what your doing and concentrate or you fall in like Mr James and Ashley. It's mint!"

Education Outside the Classroom is certainly

happening at this school and paddlesport is one of the many fantastic ways to develop responsible young citizens for the future.

Karen Hudspith – ASDAN Coordinator, Kenton School, Newcastle.



Above: Fairmile slalom site.

Paddling weekend a great success

On the weekend of the 20-21st June the North West regional development team put on the annual paddling weekend. Based at the Anderton Centre Horwich, the event has been running for the last five years. This year's being the most diverse event so far.

Coach update sessions ran all weekend where safeguarding young people and coaching foundation modules ran on both days alongside pre requisite courses such as 2 and 3 Star assessments and FSRT courses.

On the Saturday night John Driver from Lets Go... put on a fantastic BBQ for all those staying over.

With the burgers flowing it was a great opportunity for local club paddlers to get together and tell tall adventure stories.

Fiona Whitehead gave a slide show presentation on her recent expedition to the Falklands Islands, giving those staying over a chance to be inspired.



Above: Taking advantage of Big Dog's demo fleet.

Throughout the weekend there was good support from Big Dog Kayaks who brought their demo fleet up for all to try throughout the weekend. On Sunday, Desperate Measures rocked up with a fleet of demo boats and a small shop.

A huge thanks needs to be given to the organising team of the weekend. For Ian Bell as RCO in the running and staffing of the sessions, Gill and Mark Davies for taking all the bookings, Helen Sharples for being my deputy in case my wife gave birth, Helen, Liz and James for making the weekend run smoothly with all the refreshments and sessions.

A huge thank you needs to be given to all the coaches that gave their time for free over the weekend plus Desperate Measures, Big Dog, Lets Go, Fiona Whitehead and last but not least to all the people that came and made it a fantastic weekend.

Gareth Field

In brief

Leeds Canoe 2012 event

The first Canoe 2012 event hit Leed's White Rose CC as part of their annual fun day. This year a six-gate slalom course was suspended over buildings, which hung the slalom gates over the lake.

This development of the slalom gates led to a greater involvement with the paddlers in the morning slalom competitions. With entries from each paddler in a number of boats including slalom boats, polo boats and racing boats.

White Rose being a strong polo club excelled at the polo competition, with some surprising misses from a certain GB paddler!

The afternoon open canoe orienteering competition was entered into with great enthusiasm with teams searching for the orienteering markers around the lake and the afternoon was finished off with some Pyranha Speeder racing and a bell boat tour.

West Yorkshire Canoe Club invest in equipment

West Yorkshire Canoe Club celebrated an 'Awards for All' grant from the National Lottery of £10,000. The award has allowed the club to update equipment and storage facilities at its three weekly venues in Pontefract, Batley and Wakefield (Pugneys Water Park) as well as purchasing equipment. The club runs the annual slalom at West Tanfield on September 25-26th where over 150 entries per day are taken.

Tyne Canoe 2012 event

An large number of paddlers descended into the Tyne Valley at Prudhoe in June. The one-day Division 4 short course attracted over 44 entries along with coaches parents, coaches and friends to shout encouragement.

The site now offers safe, Grade 1 rapids above and underneath the bridge with a large still pool below. Many of the regional clubs have access to open canoes but few have closed cockpit canoes (C1 or C2) therefore it was a natural move to inject a fun event. Participants were encouraged to sign up for an OC1 or OC2 race to get down the course in the fastest time.

The event attracted 15 OC2 pairs and six OC1 to take part. Many of these competitors from the main competition were in the under 12 and junior 14 groups, which was a fantastic achievement. It is quite a feat for these young people to manoeuvre a 16 foot open boat around the course.

Tyne Valley Canoe Club committee are grateful for the prizes which were donated by Powerhouse Marine. All entrants received pens and pencils courtesy of Northumberland Sport and junior entrants were awarded Canoe England 2012 participation certificates.

Ray Hudspith – Event Organiser

Coquet Island race

Coquet CC has been in existence for 21 years and the 2009 event was the 20th race round Coquet Island they have organised. There was a light swell, gentle breeze and even the sun shone!

Tides dictated the race this year and a record 67 competitors set off from the start. Any boat is allowed to take part, provided it is seaworthy for the conditions on the day but the main prizes are for sea kayaks. If there are sufficient boats in a 'class', they receive trophies as well – all being decided on the day!

John Burleigh finished in a time of 44 minutes and 22 seconds, four minutes faster than the next paddler – a course record. The next 20 paddlers came in within five minutes of each other – 38 taking less than an hour.



Above: The start of the race and approaching Coquet Island.

Taking the competition seriously means picking the right boat for the job and organisers are seeing more people entering with custom-built racing sea kayaks. The race is not a level playing field – no two sea kayaks are comparable at the best of times. The difference the boat makes is even more marked in the junior event for under 4m boats. Fifteen junior paddlers competed and was won by Robert Naylor, hotly pursued by Ari Hodgson and Connor Turner.

Many thanks to the the local RNLI, Coquet Sailing Club and Coquet Shorebase Trust – and the local coastguard. Club members deserved extra thanks this year, as they were out at 08.00 supervising safety cover for a triathlon before rushing over to organise our race.

Vic Brown

In brief

Trentham watersports groups celebrate grassroots funding

Watersports groups in Trentham are celebrating receiving thousands of pounds worth of funding for boats, equipment and the fitting out of their new boathouse.

Funding for boat racking has been received by Trentham Watersports Association (TWA) from Coalfields Regeneration and Staffordshire Community Foundation (Grassroots Grant) totalling £10000 and £3500 respectively. Without this funding for purpose-built racking, the three clubs that make up the TWA – Trentham Boat Club (TBC), Trentham Canoe Club (TCC) and Eccleshall Scouts – would not have been able to move into their new boathouse at the south end of Trentham Lake.

To cope with the extra numbers, Trentham Canoe Club are soon to take delivery of two junior K4 boats (four seater racing kayaks), a kayaking ergo and some paddles and Trentham Outrigger Canoe Group are soon to get three outrigger single canoes. Both are thanks to £5000 grants from the Staffordshire Community Foundation.

In addition, the TWA has recently received nearly £1000 from '02 Its Your Community' for teaching and presentation equipment for the new meeting and teaching room in the community facility.

The TWA moved into their new purpose-built boatstore and associated facilities at the south end of Trentham lake within the Trentham Estate two weeks ago with the clubs busy erecting the boat-racking and fitting out the interior ready for TBC's first regatta on the lake. The clubhouse will officially be opened in September.

TWA and TCC Secretary, Ruth Holdway, says: "It's an exciting time for all the clubs, moving into the new boathouse, receiving new boats and preparing for a major rowing event." Contact: Ruth Holdway Tel: 07815 768360



Wild water returns to Hertfordshire



Above: A competitor taking on the wild water race.

Hertfordshire's first wild water race for 15 years attracted paddlers from all over the region to Hertford town centre for the River Lea Division B Race. The honours went to 14-year old Daniel Foley from Leighton Buzzard with a time of 3:21.81, just beating veterans Dom Murphy and Neal Underwood. The first woman home was Vicky Hills (4:01.40) and the fastest under-12 was Josh Westwood in a time of 4:15.75.

Race organiser James Perrier said "it was a really good event, and we really pleased with the turn out. We are now looking forward to organising several more in the area and this will definitely be a regular on the wild water calendar."

Paddlers in the area are now working with Jeff Toser, Regional Paddlesport Development Officer, to establish a series of development races in the east region to help promote the sport. If you are interested or know a stretch of water that might be suitable please email Jeff at: jeff.toser@bcu.org.uk.

St. Albans and Hertsmer Canoe Club are organising a Divisions 3 and 4 slalom at Harefield on 8-9th August. Contact Carl Rouch at email: carl.rouch@tiscali.co.uk for more information.

Neal Underwood. Photo: Kaycee Underwood

The 100 mile canoe test

Paddlers and support crews descended on the village of Fownhope in Herefordshire in May for the final preparations to attempt this year's 100-mile canoe test. Rain fell for the preceding two days, bringing the Wye up to a nice healthy flow, which made the miles fly by in glorious sunshine!

The 100-mile canoe test is organised by clubs for young people, starting at Glasbury and ending at Monmouth. The paddlers have a set get-out each day where they leave their boats and travel back to base camp. Each evening the organisers produced a newspaper called the 'Paddler's Post', which gave information about the day containing lighthearted banter poking fun at some of the paddlers, support crew, organisers and even safety crew!

There were 158 paddlers on the water with 156 completing the distance. In the four days a total of 15,672 miles were paddled! Every year the event is held on a different river, as there are very few rivers in England where you can tour for 100 miles, so next year's event will be on the Severn.

If you fancy entering the event is open to Canoe England clubs with a registered youth section. Contact the organiser stuart.malcolmson@clubsforyoungpeople.org.uk

Phil Hadley. Photo: Stuart Malcolmson



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In brief

Sibleyback Paddlefest weekend

The annual Sibleyback Paddlefest started in the pouring rain but this did not dampen the enthusiasm of the team from Wadebridge Canoe Club, South West Lakes Trust and Camel Canoe and Kayaks who were organising the event. Sibleyback Water Sports Centre hosted the largest collection of demonstration kayaks and canoes in Cornwall this year. The fun slalom on Saturday evening was cancelled due to the increasing wind with the floating gates being blown horizontal! Sunday arrived dry but still blowy; this did not seem to put anyone off with well over 250 people taking advantage to try out a whole variety of different boats. A big thank you to everyone who contributed to making the weekend such a success.



Hampshire and IOW Games

Future sporting stars aged between 6-16 years old from all over Hampshire and the Isle of Wight gathered in Aldershot in June to represent their local authority at the Hampshire Games. The canoeing event was held at the picturesque Basingstoke Canal Canoe Club. There was a challenging 10 gate slalom course for the kids to complete, most of whom had never completed anything like it before. There was also a BCU coach on site running 'try-a-boat' sessions over lunchtime before the second slalom run took place. All the kids were suitably pumped and certainly gave it there all. For more information and a full list of results please go to www.sporthampshireiow.co.uk

Longridge launch cartoon posters

Longridge Canoe Club launched two posters promoting the 2009 National Marathon Championships at the May Sprint Regatta in Nottingham. The poster is a cartoon of the race and the mini sprinters asked the World Class paddlers to identify with one of the caricatures and with a fair amount of hilarity they duly signed the posters with messages of good luck.



Primary schools take to the river

Primary school children from all over central Oxford came to try out canoeing and kayaking at Falcon Boat Club at Donnington Bridge Oxford over a week in July.

This year Falcon is working to get kids into more activity in order to let them see that sport is fun. Some looked like outstanding future athletes so our

coaches invited them back with Olympic competition as the goal. More likely 2016 than 2012!

The children took to the river like ducks to water and we look forward to many of them coming back to race for Oxford - or just to have more fun on the river. Children's kayaking is now so popular that our smaller children's club is now full but we still have spaces for teenagers.

Peter Travis



Lessons in boat building

Southampton Canoe Club applied to the Canoe Foundation for support in developing a programme of building boats to support club development and growth and help with the club's understanding of boat repair.

The club managed to purchase a selection of moulds from Nottingham Kayak Club's George Oliver and asked Tim Middlehurst from Canoe Sport Paddles to come and supervise the building of the first boat.

The boat was built with the support of Workmobility, a workshop for people with Learning Disabilities in Southampton with a view to working together more in the future and possibly creating links through to the Southampton Canoe Club Special Olympics Programme.



Club Chairman Neil McLeod said "Purchasing new boats is possible when we are supported to do so but being experienced in the building process will allow the club to grow at its own pace."

Meridan CC receive youth funding

Meridan Canoe Club is based at Danson Park, Bexleyheath and encourages all sections of the club to try every discipline including the competitive ones. The club has been especially successful in canoe polo where four of the eight GB Under 21 men's squad, who were crowned World Champions in 2008, came from the Meridan youth teams.

Meridan has a very active youth section and were successful in their application for a Youth Opportunities Funding grant to broaden the range of opportunities on offer for paddlers. The grant will purchase five junior flat water racing boats, and six junior slalom boats with a range of paddles.

Meridan coaches will be able to offer a broader range of competitive events for those youth paddlers who wish to try their hand at the Olympic canoeing disciplines. Every effort will be made to nurture and develop any talent shown.

For more information about Meridan Canoe Club please email: enquiries@meridiancanoecub.com

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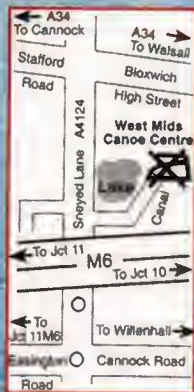
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OUR PROUD SPONSORS AND PARTNERS:



In brief

Volunteers recognised at local award ceremonies

The work of our many volunteers is invaluable so it's great to be able to congratulate a few on their recent achievements...

Dennis Walls

Congratulations to Exeter Canoe Club's Dennis Walls who was honoured at the recent Active Devon Sports Awards. Having previously been recognised in the Canoe England Volunteer and Recognition Awards, Dennis was again awarded for more than 20 years with canoeing at his local club. Active Devon's James Bogue said: "The idea of the awards is about recognising and appreciating what these people do for the benefit of others. Dennis was a more than worthy winner of the award because of the amount he gives to the sport."

Katie Wood

Congratulations to Katie Wood for being awarded Sportsperson of the Year in the Chipping Norton Town Council's presentation evening. Katie was honoured with the award for her volunteer work in Paddlesport and impressed the judges with her coaching of young people in the area.

Young Volunteers Camp

Thirteen young volunteers gathered at the National Watersports Centre, Nottingham at the first ever Young Volunteers Camp. The day, held on May 28th 2009, was a pilot event for Canoe England and also provided the opportunity to gain ideas and feedback on the Cadet Leader scheme. The youngsters, aged from 13 up to 21, tried out new aspects of the Young Leaders award as well as providing suggestions on content and a possible new name for the revised scheme. As part of the day, the group enjoyed action from the European Canoe Slalom Championships also being held in Nottingham.

Can you represent the voice of young people?

Are you a young person who is part of your club committee? Are you part of a youth committee? Would you like to be part of your committee to represent the views of young people? Do you have any ideas or issues, which you would like to be heard? If so, Canoe England would like to hear from you – get in touch with Julia Robertson, see details in the box below.

If you would like more information on any of the topics on this page, visit www.canoe-england.org.uk/volunteers or contact Julia Robertson, Volunteer Development Officer julia.robertson@bcu.org.uk

Our Paddlesport rewards scheme attracts all ages

The Canoe England Paddlesport rewards scheme is proving popular with volunteers of all ages signing up. Some of those who are already logging their hours are volunteering as coaches; some are working on club websites and behind the scenes; while others are helping at events and competitions.

Matthew Bishop, aged 13, is the youngest so far to register on the scheme. Currently a paddler himself, Matthew registered for the scheme after it was suggested by his coach Martin Davies of Herts Young Mariners Base. Martin says, "Matthew is one of the youngest volunteers. He has had several operations to his feet this year which has kept him off the water for several weeks at a time. We encouraged him to be involved for the rest of the squad – timekeeping; rigger; preparing for events; slalom judging; assisting younger paddlers and gopher. He is always cheerful and helpful despite sometimes being in pain!"

Having already logged 25 hours, Matthew has found the scheme beneficial. He says, "The Paddlesport Rewards Scheme is good for volunteers – it helps me make new friends and gain more experience on the water. It will also look quite impressive on my CV in the future."

The oldest to register so far is Louise Clive (40-something!). A member of Gailey Canoe Club

It helps me make new friends and gain more experience on the water. It will also look quite impressive on my CV in the future



Above: Matthew Bishop is the youngest to enrol on the Paddlesport Rewards Scheme

since 1999, Louise followed the rest of the family into the sport. Having already taken on roles as a school governor as well as being secretary for Korekushon JuJitsu Association, Louise has put her skills to good use within the club. The keen mother is now the club's secretary; keeps the club notice board interesting and up to date; created (with the help of her brother) and updates the website; is the events photographer; plus anything else which Louise feels will help the club to develop! Louise is now working towards the scheme's gold award of 50 hours: "I registered for the scheme because I am one of those people who still gets a kick out of getting a certificate!"

Make sure you get recognition for the hours you dedicate to volunteering in paddlesport! Register now for the Paddlesport Rewards Scheme and start logging your hours of volunteering to receive recognition after 10, 25 or 50 hours.

REGULARS

Volunteer coordinator pack

The resource is designed to provide support in your role including a number of templates, which may be useful. Focusing on recruitment, recognition and retaining your volunteers, the handy pack offers advice as well as useful documents. The resource has been designed so that volunteer coordinators can dip in and out of the pack to support them in their role as well as a CD with easy to use templates already designed and ready for you to edit and adopt for your club, centre or committee.

Volunteer website – keep updated!

The website is updated regularly with templates and news to assist volunteers and clubs in recruiting, rewarding and retaining volunteers. Don't forget that your club can add your volunteer opportunities to this section of the website – if you are looking to recruit more volunteers in any role then let the Volunteer Development Officer know! Likewise, if you are looking to take on another role at club, regional or national level then keep your eyes posted on the website!

We enjoyed it and so did you!



The European Canoe Slalom Championships saw 320 volunteers work hard to ensure the success of the event – from existing slalom volunteers to those new to the sport. They did a fantastic job and ensured they enjoyed the action while working hard – some have even been converted to both the sport and to slalom!

Here is just some of the feedback from volunteers:

"I wanted to say thank you... I really enjoyed the day and I think I would like to give slalom a go after seeing it!" **Graeme Haigh, Cheshire** (marathon paddler).

"Despite all our moans, groans and panic you had us well organised, were extremely patient and supportive and your cheerful disposition never diminished! It was a lot of hard work but I had a wonderful time, met some lovely people and made some new friends." **Janet Gittings, Stafford** (new to paddlesport).

"All our volunteers really enjoyed the day and it gave them the opportunity to see what it's like to volunteer at a more high profile event." **Dianne Holmes, Newark and Sherwood District Council** (Sports Development Officer).

"I just wanted to say well done and thanks... I had a great time! Bring on the Olympics!" **Annie Thomas, Hertfordshire** (new to paddlesport).

"I would like to thank you for my certificate and to tell you how much of a brilliant day I had and it will be an experience I will never forget." **Natasha Bailey, Nottingham** (Young volunteer new to paddlesport).

"Just wanted to say thank you. I had a great time over the five days and wanted to say thanks for looking after me. I really enjoyed it!" **Russell Whittle, Gloucester** (BCU member and level 1 coach).



Sterling service



Mark Wilkinson joined Tyne Valley Canoe Club in 1996, having done very little canoeing; nevertheless he entered into the spirit of the club and became a very active member. Mark very quickly showed an aptitude for kayaking and progressed very rapidly through the various awards and progressed to achieve 2 and 3 Star and the Canoe Safety test by 1997.

As the years progressed, Mark became involved with the club as a coach and committee member taking responsibility for membership. Mark continued to progress with his canoeing where he qualified as a BCU Level 2 coach and was one of the first people in the country to gain a level 2 Coach Sport NVQ award.

A few years later, unfortunately Mark suffered a serious back injury, which entailed an operation and severely affected Mark's ability to continue canoeing. He continued to contribute to the club for many years always giving out kit and the same can be said at pool sessions.

Just before Christmas, Mark decided to resign his position and both Canoe England and the club would like to say a very big thank you for all of his voluntary contributions and the years of sterling service he has given to the club and paddlesport. "Mark is going to be a real miss in Tyne Valley and the North East region," says North East paddlesport Development Officer Ray Hudspith. "I knew I could rely on Mark to help and generally be there to offer his time."

Dave Gray





Canoe England Volunteer & Recognition Awards 2009

Canoe England would like to hear about the volunteers, officials and coaches working behind the scenes supporting our paddlers in your clubs, centres, regions and disciplines who have made an outstanding contribution to Paddlesport over the last 12 months.

Nominations open now!

Categories:

- Young Volunteer
- Community Volunteer
- Official
- Access
- Young Coach/Leader
- Paddlepower Coach
- Volunteer Coach
- Employed Coach
- Teacher
- Outstanding Contribution

Nominations are encouraged for volunteers from the European Canoe Slalom Championships.

**Nomination forms available on
www.canoe-england.org.uk/volunteers**

**Nomination forms should arrive no later than
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Canoe England Volunteer & Recognition Awards lead onto the UK Awards for those who qualify for an award of Merit, Valour and Honour as well as the prestigious Geoff Good award for Coaching.

**Volunteer Development Officer, Canoe England,
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Volunteer & Recognition Awards 2009

CANOE ENGLAND

Following the success of last year's Club Forums, Canoe England have announced new dates for 2009. Canoe England staff will travel across the country to meet clubs and volunteers to provide information & updates and to listen to your ideas.

The Club Forum Programme includes sessions on:

- * **Developing your Club** - action plans, funding & adult participation;
- * Role of the **Committee** - ideas and guidance for your club;
- * Update on **Access** in England;
- * **School Club Links** update;
- * **Open Forum**: Your opportunity to ask questions to the team!

Workshops in your area (10am - 4pm):

- | | | |
|---|---|----------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North West | <p>Sunday 25th October, Kendle</p> <p><i>Book your place by Wednesday 14th October</i></p> | <p>TEAM NORTH</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yorkshire | <p>Sunday 15th November, date & venue tbc</p> <p><i>Book your place by Wednesday 4th November</i></p> | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Midlands
West Midlands | <p>Saturday 17th October, Burton</p> <p><i>Book your place by Tuesday 6th October</i></p> | <p>TEAM CENTRAL</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East | <p>Saturday 14th November, venue tbc</p> <p><i>Book your place by Tuesday 3rd November</i></p> | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • London / South East
/ South | <p>Saturday 21st November, venue tbc</p> <p><i>Book your place by Wednesday 11th November</i></p> | <p>TEAM SOUTH</p> |

"I was expecting to leave by lunch but found the forum interesting & stayed!"

"It's good to meet the officers and people from other clubs for an informal exchange of ideas and information."

"An informative and good humoured day."

Places cost £10 per person. Refreshments provided, please bring your own lunch.
 Booking forms can be found on www.canoe-england.org.uk; from your Paddlesport Development Officer or by emailing volunteers@bcu.org.uk.



Canoe England

18 Market Place
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 NG13 8AP

Tel: 0845 3709500
 Email: volunteers@bcu.org.uk

Women and Girls in Paddlesport



Tell us your stories!

Are you or do you know of a female coach or paddler that helps inspire more women and girls to go paddling? Has your club recently received funding to develop women and girls in paddlesport? Please tell us about it and help and inspire others. Please send any articles or good news stories to womenandgirls@bcu.org.uk.

Girls out racing

I am sure there cannot be anyone that has missed the fact that we have all been asked to try to get more women and girls into our sport.

At Elmbridge it was one of the challenges we embraced. Last time I had to provide statistics I noticed that in our junior section we were one third girls and two thirds boys. Not bad I thought. We had done quite well with coaches too, where we had five women and three men.

This year, as I stood on the start at our grand prix club regatta on May 16th, I was struck by how many girls were taking part. Other clubs were also obviously doing well. On checking the results afterwards I found that there were actually more girls than boys taking part: 36 girls to 31 boys! I have been running events for many years and I thought that this had never happened before.

This got me checking again. What else could I find out on the 'girl power' front. Well, in 2008 there were 17 girls and 15 boys taking part in the Elmbridge Half Marathon. The boys won the count for 2009 with 29 to 19, however the girls were going for quality in 2009: six children broke records, four girls and two boys.

It's good to know that we are getting more girls into our sport, but the effort must go on regardless for both boys and girls.

Diana Lawler

Girls Outdoors Day a huge success



Lloyds TSB has partnered with the Youth Sport Trust to deliver Lloyds TSB National School Sport Week between now and 2012 – an initiative that will use the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games to inspire more young people across the UK to do more sport.

This year's events took place from the June 29th to July 3rd and have inspired millions of young people in more than 10,000 schools across the country to take part in more sport.

Schools from across the Plymouth area were invited to take part in an innovative initiative of a girl's only event organised and hosted by Plymstock SSP (School Sports Partnership). The Girls Active Outdoors Day with 180 young girls attended started with an opening ceremony, which included a dance performance by students from Ridgeway School followed by an inspirational speech by Joe Glanfield (School Sport Ambassador), Olympic Silver medallist in the 470 sailing class and Robyn Pearcey, Ladies British Surf Champion giving a kayak skills display.

The coaches for the events were as far as possible female with Robyn Pearcey running a rolling

Above: The girls having fun.

master class and Port of Plymouth Canoe Association helping out with the kayaking events. The ethos of the day was all about getting involved and giving sport a try so inspiring the young girls to lead an active and healthy lifestyle and pass this message on to others.

The schools attending had been asked to select young girls who would be most pro-active in promoting the sports to their contemporaries by make a pledge to get 10 other girls signed up to try one of the activities and so lead to an increase in participation. Throughout the day there was a high level of excitement, big smiles and a lot of excited chatter.

Plymstock SSP have been running indoor events for four years, this was their first venture into running an outdoor event (held at the Plymouth Amateur Rowing Club on a tidal stretch of the River Plym) and what a success it has proved to be some of the comments of the girls coming off the activities. Even the ones who were a little apprehensive and frightened at the start ended up with big wide smiles.



It's hoped to build on the success of this event and have an even better one next year. So if you are a female coach in the south west and would like to get involved then contact your local PDO Andy Davey (andy.davey@bcu.org.uk) and he'll keep you informed as next year's event develops.

Left: The girls trying sit-on-tops.

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World Games

The 2009 World Games took place in Kaohsiung, Taiwan on the 17-18th July. The games are held every four years and consist of 32 sports that are not included in the Olympic Games. For canoe polo, the top six placed teams from the previous World Championships, including the hosting nation, qualify to compete at the games. Qualifying teams at this year's games were Great Britain, Germany, France, New Zealand, Australia and Taipei.

Feature by: Pru Blyth. **We left for Taiwan on 11th July for an early afternoon flight to Hong Kong, where we caught a transfer flight to Kaohsiung.**

Photos by: Ginny Coyles. **After 17 hours of travelling we were greeted by volunteers who welcomed us with plenty of smiles and escorted us to our hotel where we would spend our first night.**

Team:

1. Kirsty Sutcliffe
2. Pru Blyth
3. Ginny Coyles
4. Philippa Grayson
5. Ellie Bridgstock
6. Kathryn Grieves
8. Zöe Anthony

With a seven-hour time difference and each day averaging temperatures of 30 degrees plus, we needed to acclimatise to the heat and time as soon as possible. We hit the streets of Kaohsiung for the first few days with some sightseeing and a lengthy accreditation process in the city hall with many other athletes from a variety of different sports and nations.

The first 'official day' was spent at the Lotus Pond where the competition was held. After some swift scrutinising we had the chance to train on the official pitches and get used to the bath water temperatures. Thursday evening was the opening ceremony at the main stadium packed with 50,000 spectators. We sweated it out for four hours in the heat but it was a fantastic and overwhelming experience we will never forget.

Feeling fired up for the games following the opening ceremony, we kicked off with our first match against Taipei at 7am. An easy win of 10-3 settled our nerves and our success continued for the rest of the day with great results beating both New Zealand and Germany by 2-1 and lastly, an outstanding game against Australia hammering them 8-1! This meant we had cruised into the semi-finals with still another group game to play on Saturday morning against the French.

After a less than convincing 4-3 win against the French, our semi-final was also to be against them. With whispers of a typhoon on its way, we carried on as normal and started to warm up on the water. However, the wind arrived and whipped up the stands and officials' tents into the air meaning the competition was postponed until the polo committee had decided a resolution. After a five-hour break and some impressive logistics, we were relocated to the Kaohsiung International Pool to finish off the last remaining games of the tournament.



Above: The GB women's team celebrate. Left to right: Ginny Coyles, Pru Blyth, Kathryn Grieves, Ellie Bridgstock, Philippa Grayson and Kirsty Sutcliffe.

The heat in the pool was pretty intense, with no air circulation, so we found it much harder to play than outdoors. The French took an early lead but Pip Grayson kept us in the game scoring the equaliser. In the second half Pru Blyth was given a yellow card so the team was down to four women for two minutes. The French continued attacking, but some fantastic goalkeeping by Ellie Bridgstock kept the game 1-1 until full-time. Continual five-minute halves of golden goal were played to settle the score. We won the sprint for possession of the ball and in the last 15 seconds of the first five minutes, Pru Blyth scored the golden goal and we were through to the final! Relief all round!

Polo Champions



Above: Pip Grayson (4) in semi final versus France.

Germany beat New Zealand in the other semi so once again it was a fight between Great Britain and Germany for the Gold.

Going for Gold

We had played Germany on many occasions over the past year with mixed results and although successful at the World Championships last year, this was a whole new ball game with huge pressure and expectation on everyone's shoulders. Revenge for four years ago was certainly in the back of a few minds. This was the game we had come for and within the first 30 seconds we had put our stamp on the game with a dynamic defending and breaking game. After five minutes, we were three goals up and had numerous chances to extend the lead! It was a fantastic team game with the Germans having few opportunities to pressure us. A goal from Zöe Anthony and three from Pru Blyth, putting her top of the goal scoring board, sealed the win. Although the Germans scored within the last minute to bring it to 4-2, the result was never in doubt. We were World Games Champions – four years in the waiting but worth every cold dark night of training.

This was a real team effort and a huge thank you must go to coaches Paul Brain and Elan Winter and our physio Charlottle Lister, but also to everyone else who helped us on our way including Peak UK, Reed Chillcheater, DB Xclusive and Run and Jump Clothing for sponsoring us. Last but not least to all our friends and families. Thank you!



Above: Post final win - Pru Blyth and Pip Grayson (4).
Below: Pru Blyth (2) celebrates after scoring Golden Goal.



Above: Disappointment for France.



Above: Pip Grayson (4) in semi final versus France.

Below: Ginny Coyles (3) in semi final versus France.



“Within the first 30 seconds we had put our stamp on the game with a dynamic defending and breaking game”

World Whitewater Rafting Championships

As we stepped off the plane onto a warm baked tarmac, the months of training in the snow and frost suddenly started to make sense. The teams had arrived in Bosnia to compete in the World Rafting Championships held on the rivers Vrbas and Tara. A week early, we planned on making the most of our time in Bosnia by training intensively.

Feature by: Adam Norfolk. **The event organisers had done us proud, big wooden stadiums had been constructed along the banks of the Vrbas. For the opening ceremony Bosnia's sporting heroes had been brought together to display their skills at various points along the broad main street that had been shut off for the evening. Each team walked along headed by a glamorous Bosnian lady each pulling a raft bedecked with flags and team kit. The road sides were ringed with people clapping and cheering – we all felt like superstars!**

Photos by: Adam Norfolk and David Leathborough.

First up was the time trial and head to head sprint disciplines, which gives you your starting line up for the head to head races. Fighting between rafts is not encouraged but often the races are set for maximum impact for the cameras and spectators with the start being staggered in such a way that both rafts came together at the top and had to fight past each other to take the winning line.

The ladies fast time in the sprint meant our first race was against Latvia, with lane choice and managed to clear past them on the start line, this put us against the Netherlands next. They had won the time trial and had denied us victory in the past so nerves were frayed but our strong start managed to pull past them and down the rapid. Canada was next on the list and this time it was a fight for a silver medal position. A scuffle at the top saw us push past them and on down the middle fast line, clear past them and over the finish line. Ecstatic we waited at the bottom to hear who we were against next. News came through it was the Slovaks. The blood was up as we approached the line, 10 seconds, ready, GO, the raft surged forwards neck and neck with our nemesis. The rafts came together, paddles clashed and the crowd went wild. Suddenly I felt our raft just pick up speed and we were pushing past them finding our choice of flow. They were on our back corner nudging our boat almost pushing us off course through the bottom hole. A big hit filled us with water and we turned almost sideways on, straightening up we charged into the bottom pool. Vaguely aware of screaming Brits and hugely aware of swearing Slovaks on our right flank, we put in a huge effort and crossed the finish line in front. Wow what an indescribable feeling, the six of us howled and laughed and just felt on top of the world. We ran back up chased by journalists and presenters.

The men's team had also been putting in an incredible performance! An epic first round battle against Germany, then



Above: Celebrating the sprint win with our host.

Costa Rica, and Bulgaria, beating Austria from the slower lane and finally team USA. Screaming past everyone they looked incredible on the water, a machine that was completely in tune with all its parts. The girls followed all their races and when they battered their way past the USA in the final we all ran to the bottom to give them a hero's welcome – two Golds for GB!

The success of the first day spurred us both on for the endurance race next, both teams starting in pole position. This race was across the other side of the country on the border with Montenegro, held on the river Tara, a beautiful blue river, bouncing and boiling its way through amazing limestone scenery, completely unspoilt with springs and butterflies round every corner. Both teams started really well but the amount of pressure from the back from other teams made for a tiring 45 minutes where both teams slipped back in their starting pods. A very close race saw the men finishing 11th and ladies sixth.

Shipped back to the Vrbas Valley the slalom event was the grand finale. Spotlights had been rigged to the sides of the canyon wall, sending beams of bright light up through the tree canopy and reflecting ripples and waves onto the limestone. It was such a spectacle, the teams paddled from darkness into the light from upstream, suddenly faced with cheering crowds and tricky, powerful slalom moves it was an awesome experience. The Vrbas was set at about 95 cumecs, so quite a flow to tackle. An unlucky judgement in the faster second run after a controlled first run saw the ladies finish sixth and an amazingly strong second run from the men, after missing a gate in the first, put them in fourth.

The closing ceremony saw us all up on the stage receiving our gold medals and trophies, elated we were trooping back to the audience when an official approached the men's team, "excuse me, where are you going, you have another medal to collect". Because of their consistently strong performance throughout, the men's team had finished third overall! We were so proud when they went up again; cheering and yelling till our voices were raw!

Thanks to our supporters, family and friends and to Peak UK, Run and Jump and Teva for making sure we look presentable on the water! We are a totally self funded team who organise fund raising events throughout the year to help us pay for competing for our country and to help us develop the sport in the UK. www.britishraftteam.co.uk

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Above: Men sprint world champions.



Above: The men flying.



Above: Ladies sprint world champions.



Above: The GB women's team.



Above: The men ready to party.



Above: GB versus Germany.



Above: Banja Luka. Below: Opening party.



Above: Adam and Pas.



Above: The Germans sky rocketed. Below: The ladies showing how to





do slalom in a raft.



Above: GB ladies schooling the Canadians in the sprint.



Below: GB versus Germany. Above: Banja Luka.



Broxbourne construction works underway

Construction work on a world-class White Water Canoe Centre in Broxbourne, Hertfordshire for the London 2012 Games, has started. The White Water Canoe Centre is being built on a 10-hectare site, covering an area the equivalent of 25 full-size football pitches.

Feature by: Chloe Nelson. **The Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) started work at the beginning of July and the venue is due for completion (for training, testing and some public use) in 2011.**

The centre, on part of the River Lee Country Park, will host the canoe slalom events during the Olympic Games. After the games, the venue will be developed to become a sporting and leisure facility for canoeing and white water rafting, as well as a major competition and training venue for elite athletes. The centre will be owned, funded and managed by Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (owners of the site).

Team GB slalom canoeist Laura Blakeman, who won Gold at this year's European Canoe Slalom Championships, visited the venue. Laura commented: "I'm delighted that after the excitement of the games in 2012 this new venue will leave a lasting sporting legacy for a new generation of canoeists of all ages and abilities."

ODA Chairman John Armitt said: "The start of construction work at Broxbourne is a significant milestone and keeps us on track to deliver a world-class venue for 2012 and a major leisure attraction after the games. With the venue due for completion ahead of 2012, we will deliver an early legacy of first-class new sporting facilities allowing the huge benefits of the games to be felt in Broxbourne and the east of England region well before 2012."

Shaun Dawson, Chief Executive of Lee Valley Regional Park Authority said: "The centre will open shortly after the games and we're expecting 70,000 visitors per year, most of them taking up the challenge of white water rafting. We'll also be providing canoeing sports development opportunities for clubs, colleges, universities, schools and community groups."

A new visitor information point is open at the YHA Lee Valley, next to Cheshunt Railway Station where visitors can find more information about the Broxbourne project.



The venue will include: An Olympic standard 300m-competition course

- Water has a height drop of up to 5.5m from the start pool to finish pool.
- Up to 15 cubic metres (3300gallons) of water per second is pumped through the Olympic course – enough water to fill a 25m swimming pool in 30 seconds.
- In places the water speed through the course will be in excess of 7mph.
- The water will be delivered through the Olympic course by four pumps each weighing five tonnes.
- A boat conveyor will transport participants to the start of the course in their rafts or canoes.

A 160m-intermediate/training course

- Water has a 1.6m drop from the start pool to finish pool.
- 10.5 cubic metres (2310 gallons) of water per second pumped through the intermediate course – enough water to fill a 25m swimming pool in 46 seconds.
- The water will be delivered through the intermediate course by three pumps each weighing five tonnes.

Finish Lake area of 10,000m² (2.5 acres)

A facility building and pumping house containing a reception, café, changing rooms, admin offices, spectator viewing facilities, storage and water pump/filtration plant.

Around 240,000 tonnes of material will be imported to help create the venue landscape, including path and bridge networks.

“I'm delighted that after the excitement of the games in 2012 this new venue will leave a lasting sporting legacy for a new generation of canoeists of all ages and abilities”



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Above: How the course will look when completed.



Above: An artist's version of how the site will look.



Above and below: Aerial views of the site, at the moment.



Above and below: Scale models of the course



Below left to right: London 2012 Board Member and IOC Member, Sir Craig Reedie, Karen Livingstone BOA Chairman John Armitt, Team GB Canoeist Laura Blakeman, Shaun Dawson, Chief Executive of Lee Valley





Below: Team GB Canoeist Laura Blakeman.

ard Member of the East of England Development Agency,
y Regional Park Authority and Charles Walker MP.



Wild canoe a

A river journey through inland France may not, on the face of it, seem all that adventurous. Well let me tell you, there were plenty of challenges to make even the strongest heart pound during our journey along wild, swollen inland rivers, speeding tidal rivers and even lazy canal systems.

Feature by: Why did it begin?

Geoff Lovell (below).



The idea for this 'inland voyage' (the title used by Robert Louis Stevenson for his canoe trip through Belgium and France in 1878) began in my local pub, unusually named 'The Blue Ship', in central Sussex. Whilst supping a pint with a friend he mentioned he was selling up in France. Instantly I recalled images of his 'Old Town' canoes that languished in his barn. A couple of beers later I was their new owner.

Pondering upon how to transport two 17-foot canoes home from central France, 350 miles from Calais, I dismissed the car roof rack and remembered he was only 20 miles from the Loire River, and so the idea of canoeing home was born.

What was my plan?

I determined that the journey would begin at the confluence of the Loire and Allier Rivers near Never, up the Loire to Briare, pass on to the Briare and Du Loing Canals linking to the River Seine, pass through Paris to take the River Oise Northbound, finally joining the River Somme into the English Channel, not far from Dieppe, an estimated distance of 400 plus miles.

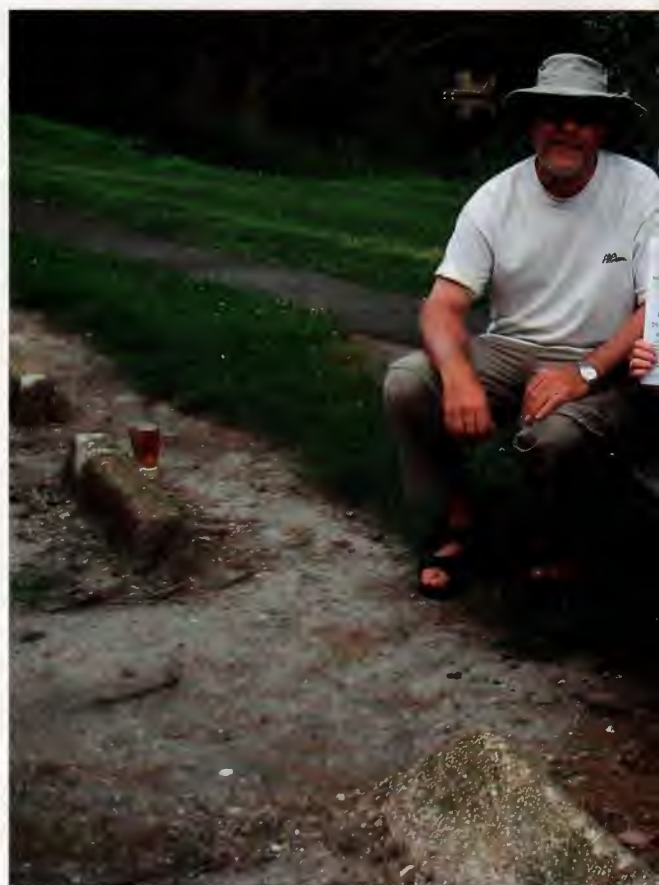
But with two canoes and only me, prompted some frantic phone calls for help, shaking loose a sailing mate, John Parker, who agreed to join me – better still he volunteered his van (with roof rack) and brother as back up.

When should we go?

We decided to reconnoitre the route so during a freezing March we made a hasty four day round trip also visiting the FFCK (French Federation of Canoe Kayak) in Paris, with who I would had some difficulty in communicating, they listened curiously to our plan then told us that canoeing is banned through central Paris, apart from that we could canoe wherever we liked. Our trip went well until homeward bound we crossed the River Oise and noticed it flowing south not north! A quick re-think later, we decided to stay on the River Seine to the English Channel at Le Havre.

A charitable gesture!

Seeing this as a trip of a lifetime we felt someone should benefit and we chose to support the Starlight Children's Foundation a



Above: Madmoselle supporting Starlight.

charity that 'brightens the lives of seriously and terminally ill children'. Their sponsorship form required an event name and it became 'Geoff and John's Crazy Canoe Caper'.

Raising £1,600 of pledges the pressure was on to actually complete the whole trip, effectively removing our 'bail out plan' in the event things got too tough!

5-7th June – Loire River section – 57.6 miles

With camp one 18.3 miles distant we shoved off into the turbulent current and tested our rusty paddling skills, prompting a sharp reminder that in a fast flow you must get the bowman paddling furiously to allow the stern paddle to steer!

The ample opportunities for rest breaks upon countless riverbank beaches and islands seen in March were now gone, submerged, making rest stops all but impossible. However the river's speed resulted in a four-hour journey recording 4.6 mph, including stops!

The Loire is described as 'untamed' to which we would add 'wilderness' reminding us that any accident here would be serious. We saw neither man, beast nor boats and little evidence of habitation, except the odd charming towns and vineyards. Our average speed continued at 4.5 to 5mph thanks to the fast river flow but all this was to change!

“The Loire is described as 'untamed' to which we would add 'wilderness' reminding us that any accident here would be serious”

Adventure



Above: Difficult final pull out at PK348 Near Berville before Honfleur.

Below: Montbouy.



Below: Seine chalky cliffs.



8-12th June – Briare Canal – 62.9 miles

The weather remained dismal as we paddled constantly in the slack canal flow, worse into headwinds that we had barely noticed before. Our speed fell to a dismal 1.8 to 2.3mph meaning our paddling time must double. From the outset lock keepers eyed us suspiciously, until finally a VNF official informed us that we were prohibited from using canals. We pleaded our case, he listened and left and we carried on, two days later he returned with a letter of authority from the VNF.

13-15th June – Seine south – 36.8 miles

Our hopes for a speedy river flow were instantly quashed by the sluggish flow requiring an eight-hour paddle at a meagre 2.6mph. We now encountered massive super barges who's wash was minimal when compared to that of smaller craft that create steep waves.

Completing the southerly section we camped at La Rochette just outside Paris and woke to discover that we, along with others, had been robbed whilst asleep apparently not an infrequent occurrence! So we fled far away from Paris to Vernon for safety.

16-20th June – Seine north – 77 miles

Slipping over during lunch I heard a crack from my forearm but apart from pain, no symptoms. The vast lock systems were all

but impassable requiring lengthy detours. The river looped endlessly north and south whilst it broadened and stiff northerlies meant keeping track became difficult, though our speed improved to between 2.8 to 4.0 mph.

21-25th June – Seine north – 72 miles

The Seine became tidal and wow! With speeds of up to 5mph and tides reversing direction to full speed within 15 minutes, careful attention to the tide charts were imperative! Large sea going ships passed us endlessly and the riverbank changed between impenetrable sea walls to lazy beaches set against backdrops of white chalky cliffs and stunning countryside.

Our last day saw us pass under Tarncanville Bridge into the Le Havre/Honfleur estuary and directly into a Westerly gale. We ran out of tide just past the Risle River junction and 'called it quits'. Wading out through waist deep mud we hauled the canoe over the huge sea wall and on to our waiting transport a half mile away, where we made off to Honfleur and a well earned rest (and beer).

Summary

An undreamed-of adventure, 'doo-able' for everyone, old or young, fit or not so fit. ♡

Below: Sany.



Below: Seine ships.



Below: St Mammes.



40 (three) days

The three of us, Chris Millington, our esteemed leader, Tim Carter and myself, Richy Simpson, had set out to paddle around as many of the Falkland Islands as we could manage, hoping to do at least east and west Falkland – the two major islands.

Feature by: Richy Simpson.

Two other teams were also attempting a circumnavigation: Tom Parrick and Fiona Whitehead from the UK and Marcus Demuth, a German living in New York. Like most circumnavigation expeditions, they planned to travel in a clockwise direction. Ignorant of this unspoken convention, we set out anti-clockwise.



Above: King Penguin.



Above: Rockhopper.



Above: Elephant Seals.

After 14km the famous westerlies picked up for the first time. Paddling in these winds was futile, so we poled through a kelp forest and beached on Kidney Island, a small Tussock island with a pleasing lack of landmines. Our first stop saw us settled down in a four-berth hut nestled amongst the Tussac Grass.

After a 200m walk we came across a sea lion colony. We crept onto the beach and were soon metres away from a vast colony with a number of large bulls. Another 100m saw us stumbling, forewarned only by the smell, across a colony of Rockhopper Penguins and King Cormorants. The finale was a flight of thousands upon thousands of Shear Waters landing amongst the Tussac to roost at sundown. This was our baptism of fire!

For the next 15 days we were battered by strong westerly headwinds and hindered by huge kelp forests, which flattened out some of the swell but grabbed our blades at every opportunity. On a number of days we only managed five to six kilometres before the winds picked up and we had to seek shelter. Luckily the frustration we experienced with our lack of progress was matched by our awe of the surrounding coastline and wildlife.

A coastline of stunning beauty

There are a number of mountain ranges on east and west Falklands, but these rarely extend as far as the north coast. This was barren, uninhabited moorland, treeless and fit only for sheep and geese to graze. As the land sweeps down to the cold nutrient rich seas of the south Atlantic, it produces a coastline of stunning beauty. It provides habitats for a huge array of birds, sea mammals and other marine life. Gracefully arcing white sand beaches peppered with penguins, cormorants and assorted seals, separate large, cliff-bound capes.

On a number of occasions we were joined by small pods of Peale's Dolphins. These had striking grey and white markings and played in and around the small bow wave of our kayaks. Penguins were so



Above: Dutchman's Cove.



common place it was not long before we became desensitised to their presence, although the Rockhopper, a small penguin with a Mohican and beady red eyes, remained a favourite throughout the trip. These penguins were named Johnny Rotten by Chris not only for their punk looks but their aggressive nature.

Our progress along the north coast was slow but steady. Each evening campsite seemed more beautiful than the last and wildlife abounded in the seas and the air. On one particular

“Each evening campsite seemed more beautiful than the last and wildlife abounded in the seas and the air”

in the Falklands



Above: Caves towards Port Edgar.



Above: Sea stack.



Left: Westpoint looking east towards Carcass.

evening being particularly bored of ration packs we spied a couple of gosling. With the thought of sweet roasted gosling, our hunter-gatherer instincts kicked in and after a particularly damp and misty day on the water it was a great morale boost to roast the meat on the open fire. Having got a taste for goose we later managed to catch an adult male using a bolas, an ancient hunting implement comprising of three rocks joined by short lengths of rope. This was spit roasted over an open fire but was not quite as tender as the gosling.

On a typically windy but sunny afternoon we set off through the Tamar Pass between the two main islands, a notoriously tricky tidal race and the gateway to the west. Tom Parrick and Fiona Whitehead gave us a little shock by turning up in the morning. They had been forced up the Falkland Sound on to the north coast by bad weather and had decided to continue their journey in an anticlockwise direction. By sheer chance they were forced onto the same bivi site as we were by high winds. And so it was that five of the six kayakers currently

Right:
King Penguin at
Palomona.

Below:
Wood Cove.



The Falkland Island facts

- Stanley is the same latitude south as London is north.
- There are no trees.
- There are no biting insects.
- Consists of 740 islands with a total land area equal to Wales.
- There is over 180 shipwrecks.
- The average wind speed is 17 Knots, compared to four in England.
- The population is 2500, over 2000 live in Stanley.
- The islands have over half a million sheep.
- 255 British soldiers and an estimated 700 Argentinians died in the Falklands conflict.

circumnavigating the Falklands set out through Tamar Pass. In an even more bizarre twist, we bumped into Marcus Demuth on the other side of the pass. Now all the kayakers who left Stanley two weeks ago were in one spot after nearly 250km of coastline. The pass itself was relatively innocuous but it opened up the second leg of our adventure, the western archipelago.

The western islands

In direct contrast to the north, the western islands are dominated by mountains and huge cliffs hundreds of feet high. The second leg of our journey began at Pebble Island Settlement. We had a rest day and experienced some good, old-fashioned Falkland's hospitality from Areni and Raymond who farmed the settlement. We were welcomed in and afforded every luxury excepting a shower due to a water shortage. Of all the things we needed a shower was pretty high on the list after 15 days in the wild! This warm hospitality characterised our trip through the west and would become a highlight of our stay in the Falklands.

Although the north coast had involved a number of small crossings, the west coast provided two crossings of around 15 miles, which were exposed to the full force of the westerly winds, King George's Bay and Queen Charlotte Bay. Some of the map names spoke of the terrors to come such as Deaths Head, Cape Terrible and Grave Cove, but with a well placed weather window of two or three days we made our crossings in fine style.


Smylies Channel is another tidal race to the east of Weddel, which had to be navigated to access the south coast. The flooding tide pushed southwards and with seemingly constant south westerly winds causing rough conditions, access was denied for a short time.

Smylies channel soon gave up her secrets and we found ourselves paddling onto the south coast straight into some of the roughest, most exposed seas we had encountered. The strong south west wind, which had blown for the last couple of days, had driven a solid swell against the vertical cliffs around

Cape Orford. With nowhere for this swell to dissipate the waters were very confused around the headlands. Three days of these anarchic, unpredictable sea conditions made for some character-forming days.

We passed the ironically named Cape Calm with a little difficulty, after which the seas calmed and, excepting a few areas, never troubled us like this again. With the difficult conditions and lack of landing opportunities, this stretch of coast to Fox Bay proved to be the most technical but also the most imposing. In contrast we encountered our calmest conditions on this stretch with the final two days into Fox Bay being wind free and glassy.

Channel fever is characterised by random, excitable behaviour experienced by seamen when approaching their destination and regaining their liberty. On the final approach to Stanley a hair-brained scheme was hatched to paddle from Elephant Point to Stanley Harbour, a distance of around 40 miles. A stiff proposition with empty boats, but after 43 days at sea and fully laden, probably a little unrealistic! We set off early making good progress with a stiff westerly breeze. By morning tea we had made a sizeable distance and, despite steadily increasing winds we decided to push on. I couldn't say how windy it got whilst crossing Port Fitzroy but it was howling on to our beam pushing us offshore.

In the rough seas we lost sight of Tim who, unbeknownst to us, couldn't turn his kayak through the wind and landed a number of miles up the coast from us. Unfortunately Tim had no kettle so whilst Chris and I pondered our course of action sipping a nice cup of tea Tim did not and promptly fell asleep! Unsure of what fate held in store for Tim, we were just about to phone for search and rescue when a timely phone call said the Spot beacon had been activated and all was well (a big thanks to Marvin and Trudy Clarke for all their help and to my sister, Helen for phoning me back). This was the only time our judgement was found wanting and gave us a final reminder of the paradoxical Falklands weather. Throughout the escapade the sun shone and there wasn't a cloud in the sky! 



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Paddling Engla

I have read many articles in Canoe Focus over the years and have enjoyed reading about the wild and expensive adventures to far flung places which take several months to organise and several days to arrive. Fabulous but unfortunately not available to me as I am tied down by work and too many children!

Feature by: Roger Savage **That doesn't mean that I can't have a bit of fun too and over the past seven years, I and one of my children, Frances, have been canoeing four to six day trips along the canals and rivers of England and Wales – clocking up over 700 miles and hardly meeting another canoe! This year we did a short 48 mile trip from Newbury to Windsor (Kennet and Avon Canal, River Thames). We were going to Godalming but it rained so much our kit got too wet and it is meant to be fun!**

Our first trips were planned with military precision but these days we are a bit looser with our plans but we make sure we have a target destination to get to by the end of the day, depending on how many locks we have to go through and where we think we can camp it is anywhere between 18 to 25 miles. As we camp we have to take our kit with us, all our clothes, tent, bedding, and food supplies for a couple days, most importantly loads of water – it is possible on a warm day to need a over a litre an hour between the two of us.

The Kennet and Avon Canal

This year we put in at the wharf in Newbury, which is adjacent to a public car park. The Kennet and Avon Canal is beautiful, it has very few long straights and is punctuated by locks every mile or so. From Newbury – we needed to get close to Reading, close enough so that we could get to Hurley Lock campsite the next day. So we paddled around 14 miles to arrive at Burghfield Lock a couple of miles outside the Reading where we camped. We often choose remote locks because the grass is well cut, it is usually flat and it is off the towpath. We travel light, everything is packed into sailing dry bags, and we each have a small bag of clothes, a sleeping bag, a roll mat, a pillow and a towel. We have a one burner stove a bowl and cup plus some cutlery. We eat well but simply – cooking pasta in our one saucepan with a sauce followed by fruit, whilst breakfast is cereal. Whilst camping, the canoe becomes a bench and a shelter from the wind for the stove to work. We have stayed at some lovely places and canal side owners have helped us when we have

been desperate to find somewhere to stay – using their gardens.

From Burghfield Lock we paddled down to Reading. The Kennet and Avon Canal as the name suggests uses the course of the two rivers at



Above: Frances at the front of the boat.

various stages. Going towards Reading we are often on the Kennet, which is a peaceful river with a bit of flow to help. From Reading onto the Thames – what a contrast – a wide river with long reaches and bends that extend sometimes for miles. The Thames is a much busier waterway with canal boats and large cruisers. Where possible we try to stick close to the centre respecting the convention of being on the right hand side. The river flows best here and the water is deepest. Very close to the banks there is no noticeable flow and the weed causes drag not to mention the danger of fisherman. We avoid their swims and ask where they would like us to steer often sharing a joke and enquiring after their catches. Keeping near the centre of the river is nowhere near as important as keeping out of the wind. A headwind is a nightmare, canoeing all day into the wind is at least twice the work.

Paddling technique

Down the Thames we paddled none stop for around 40 minutes before resting for a minute to take on water. I sit at the back and paddle the J stroke, with Frances paddling on the opposite side. We paddle around 10 minutes on one side before we switch to the other side without a break – we take great pride in our switch! Sometimes we both paddle on the one side to go around corners or to put on a sprint to get to a lock before the gates shut. Paddling technique is also very important because some days we have paddled up to 10 hours and you can't do this just by strength alone – it helps – but good position of the body and therefore the paddle is essential. If the front paddler isn't pulling but just 'dipping'

“ From Reading onto the Thames – what a contrast – a wide river with long reaches and bends that extend sometimes for miles ”

nd



Left: Camping at a lock just outside Reading. There are many great scenic places to camp, we always leave no trace that we were there – even brushing the grass up again when we leave.



Above: Nice vertical paddle!

Thames locks have campsites on the islands that are between the lock cut and the river; they have various levels of facilities and are ideal and safe places to camp.

Canoeing is quicker

It continued to rain and our kit got wetter and wetter, the waterproof bags work but it is packing and unpacking in the rain, eventually everything gets wet. We decide not to stay another night as planned in Chertsey and onto Godalming but to paddle to Windsor and get out and go home! Being in a canoe is like riding a motorbike when getting to a traffic light or in our case a lock. You seldom have to wait as the lock keeper fits you in. So it might be the boats with motors can go faster on the river between the locks but at the locks if there is any sort of queue you pass them and down the river you go whilst they wait. On canals, canoeing is quicker between the locks because the boats have to slow so often to go around corners or pass each other – a canal boat in the distance is the quarry for a chase.

We manage about 48 miles in two and a half days and two nights camping – not as far as we hoped but who wants to spoil the fun by persevering in the wet! In the hundreds of miles we have canoed and camped we have hardly met anyone else doing the same – only on the Thames. On canals it is rare to even find a kayak never mind a canoe. Tripping is fantastic fun, it has got a purpose, goals, it tests your physical and mental strength, it is interesting to see the entire historic canal and river infrastructure and it's very cheap! We have had so much fun, shared great moments and enjoyed real feats of achievement, teamwork and endurance. I encourage you to set out and explore our canals and rivers. ♡



Above: Stopping at Henley for a cup of tea from the cafe in the park - crew looking a little fed up!

the canoe goes very slowly – it needs both paddlers to work together to get to the destination.

On this trip we arrived in Henley for our lunch break having paddled for four and half hours. It had been pouring with rain all day so we were soaked, not just with water but our waterproofs make us sweat. At Henley we had a welcome hot drink from a cafe and sandwiches and supplies from Waitrose! Places like Henley down the Thames are fun, there is always something going on, boats passing, boats making a mess of mooring, rowers and boats getting in each others way – it's never boring. After lunch we canoed up the famous regatta straight passing Temple Island. We imagined some of the great rowers who have belted down the course – so we put on a good show for posterity! We arrived at Hurley Lock where we stayed the night on the campsite on the lock island – with a hot shower! Several of the

A 'first' open sea kayak crossing

My first open sea crossing was back in 1982, Plymouth out to the Edison Lighthouse and back. The sense of achievement has never left me and for several months I had in mind a trip from Belle Île to the French mainland, being based in St Nazaire decided the route; it would be good to finish on my home beach. I invited Mike Smith to come and join me.

Feature by: Colin Appleby. **The European medium range forecast had been predicting high pressure off the west coast of France for some three weeks, long enough for Mike to make arrangements to get across. Long open crossings usually involve tedious shuttling of cars or cadging a lift off friends, but for this trip neither were necessary, my club at St Nazaire had a trip to Belle Île on their calendar.**

We arrived at Quiberon, and watched our friends leave for the northern end of the Isle to start their three-day tour, shortly after we departed in brilliant sunshine due south for the Pointe du Kerdonis running with the tide.

Both Mike and myself were familiar with this Island having paddled there in 2007 and planned to bivi on the last section of beach just north of the Pointe du Kerdonis, we landed on the white sand mid afternoon on Friday May 1st and spent the rest of the day walking and preparing our kit.

It all now depended on the wind, if conditions were right we would leave Saturday morning, we also had Sunday to fall back to, but Saturday was perfect. On May 2nd we left the Pointe de Kerdonis at the southern tip of Belle Île for Saint Nazaire, 37 nautical miles on the Atlantic coast of Brittany. The morning was very quiet and misty but we soon were able to pick out the Lighthouse Le Grand Cardineax, off the Island of Hoedic, the sea was unexpectedly quiet, but the wind was rising.

Below: Loading kayaks at Quiberon with Mike Smith.



As we moved further along our route we managed to pick out Le Four, the lighthouse four miles west off Le Croisic. A good mark for us it indicated the end of our open passage and we knew that shortly we would have the mainland in view. A small amount of swell now gave us the advantage of the occasional surf towards our destination and a welcome distraction from the flat water of the morning. By the Bay of La Baule we had moved much closer to the shore and now had a number of sailing craft moving around us. They are a real hazard, one passing 30 metres in



Above: Pierre Piercée Bay of La Baule.



Above: Kayaks loaded ready to launch with Colin Appleby.

“A small amount of swell now gave us the advantage of the occasional surf towards our destination and a welcome distraction from the flat water of the morning”

front of us towing a 'log' through the water on a very fine wire. In the brilliant sunshine I only saw the wire glint at the very last minute at neck height!

Even the small amount of swell gave quite spectacular results crashing on 'Pierre Piercée' the stone with a hole, on calmer days the hole can be paddled through, but not today. Leaving this last landmark behind, we paddled on to our destination rounding the corner at Pointe de Chemoulin under the eyes of the coastguard. The beach at Villes Martin was a welcome sight; we pulled up after paddling for nine hours and 10 minutes.

This was an enjoyable trip; the currents were difficult with no real assistance until the last leg of the journey. Both of us used 'Tahe Marine' Reval Viking Sea kayaks capable of handling big seas and carrying a good load but at 5.8 metres is excellent for those who enjoy longer trips. ♡



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The 3 Star Surf

Peace in Bude and how to

OK so not everyone wants to collect tickets but you have to admit that most paddlers have the odd Star award somewhere in their collection. In fact the BCU Star awards had become a bit of an institution.

Feature by:
Simon Hammond.



Above: Shoreline surf coach Naomi Taylor.

Then, when just about every paddlesport coach in the country could quote the requirements and the 1, 2 and 3 Star award, the BCU go and change everything... What a disaster I here you call! Well no, I would say, not really!

The new BCU 3 Star Surf award is a real gem, it's a great target for surf paddlers to aim for and it's a real pleasure to teach and assess as I was fortunate enough to do recently here in Bude.

For those of you who don't know Bude let me set the scene. It's a great place to surf with five perfect beaches within a couple of miles of each other and as most of these beaches face directly west it always gets its fair share of surf. In fact it's a great place for outdoor pursuits of all kinds with wonderful coastal scenery, great cliffs and a quiet little rural canal and as a result several outdoor centres are based here.

Now anyone waiting for a 4 or 5 Star award will know the weather can throw a great spanner in the works when you are trying to get the right conditions for your training and assessment. Now that the 3 Star awards are discipline specific this may become a similar problem but on this occasion conditions couldn't have been better. Plenty of swell, white water waves, not too much wind and sunshine all week, well almost!

So what do you need to learn for your 3 Star Surf award? Balance and stability are always a good start and there is no better way to develop these skills than getting hit side on by good white water waves. There is an old but persistent myth in surf kayaking that the best thing to do when side on to a white water wave is to lean on it with a low brace, this is totally wrong! You may

Below: Adventure International instructors returning to shore.



survive the hit but you'll never be balanced and you'll never develop good balance. Instead try to be strong, grip your boat tight, lean forwards and try to maintain your balance as the wave hits you. Use your abdominal muscles to connect your upper and lower body and keep your boat almost flat, you'll soon be able to do this with your paddles held over your head!

Once you have some balance start getting some sideways skimming rides to the beach, commonly known as Bongo Slides.

Below: Simon running through top turn - bottom turn technique.

Below: Naomi giving feedback to Beccy on individual surfing sequence.



urf forward keep sausage rolls hot!



Above: Shakey' showing good strong body position as he bongos to the beach.

These are great for learning about neutral edging. Try to keep your boat as flat as possible but at the same time don't let it trip over and capsize you on your run to the shore. You will need to find out how flat you can hold your boat and in exploring this you might have to capsize once or twice. The guys weren't afraid to push this to the limits and several swims later their feel for their boats was vastly improved.

You can't surf responsibly without some knowledge of surfing etiquette. It's not just about avoiding collisions but also about being a thoughtful and considerate surfer. Knowledge of the beach shape helps you to understand why waves break in certain ways and where rip currents might form as the tide comes in. Weather forecasting and beach selection have a huge effect on the quality of your surfing experience and an

“You can't surf responsibly without some knowledge of surfing etiquette. It's not just about avoiding collisions but also about being a thoughtful and considerate surfer”

appreciation of how kayak design will effect your surfing performance.

Back in the water and with a feel for a neutral edge it was time to test things out with a wonderfully simple paddle-out-take-off exercise, all done in the white water surf environment. The guys soon picked up this take-off technique together with more positive edge skills such as bottom turns and diagonal runs.

In fact in just a couple of days our team of paddlers had mastered enough skills to construct a controlled and pre-set ride to the beach, an important stage to get to. The thing is that surfing for a lot of paddlers is a bit of a survival exercise followed by a fairly random path back to the shore. For surf skills to develop you have to get in control and start to decide what you want to do with your ride rather than letting the wave decide for you. With Naomi briefing each paddler on their next pre-set ride our guys were soon linking together a straight take-off with a bottom turn followed by a diagonal run and ending in a bongo slide or else an angled take-off into a diagonal run then carving off the wave and so on. It was fantastic to watch these paddlers take control and see their skills slot into place.

Not everything is easy, in fact everything takes practice and success rates are always low to start with. Never be too hard on yourself, if you get something right once in every 10 attempts you are doing well, that ratio will improve as long as you don't get frustrated. Rolling in the surf is a classic example. The trick is to use the environment to your advantage and in the surf you can make rolling even easier than in a swimming pool, really! The trick is what I call a wave roll. This is where you put your boat sideways on to a white water wave and then roll towards the beach just as the wave hits you. The turbulence under the wave will assist this roll and will actually want to roll you back up, a little pull on your paddle blade is usually all you need to come up.

Add in a couple of rescues, some group awareness sessions, hot chocolate breaks at the Crooklets Beach Cafe and an ingenious way of keeping hot sausage rolls warm (inside the biggest mouthed thermos flask you've ever seen) and you have all the ingredients for a great 3 Star Surf course. ♡

Below: Nice early top turn position.



Above: Tag team competition at the end of the course.

Thanks to Mega Surf Kayaks and Lendal Paddles who played their part as usual in allowing me to demonstrate some of the techniques required, Gecko Helmets and Artistic's BA kept me safe, Palm's Ocean Pro Towline kept the group safe and Reed Chill Cheater kept me warm (along with the hot sausage rolls) when the sun occasionally went in. Also to my colleagues Dave and Naomi at Shoreline and to our new friends at Adventure International.

Below: Feedback from Naomi.



A big topic on the BBC's the One Show

Griff Rhys Jones did a preview of his series 'Rivers' on the 'One Show' on July 7th. He spoke about the pleasure of canoeing and the beauty of our countryside and then went on to mention the facts and figures about the very limited access there is to our rivers in England and Wales.



He also talked about riparian ownership and being threatened with guns by gamekeepers on the Derwent below Matlock.

Griff was also on the Radio 4 Midweek programme the day after where he commented that canoeing is very pleasant especially with his children. Griff explained very eloquently as to how lovely it is exploring the wildlife and countryside by canoe. The long history of the rivers and their use by all for travel and leisure was discussed at length.

Thank you to the many BCU members who have worked with Griff and the production crew along the way supporting the filming by providing canoes, instructors, and guides. The campaign has been in touch with the programme makers since the start of filming and they have provided all the information regarding access and rivers with access issues etc.

Needless to say the airing of the issue so openly on the BBC has caused a bit of a stir, none more so than in 'The Times' newspaper. On Saturday July 11th there was an editorial carp at canoeing, full of misinformation and spreading the usual myths about our call for access. Further on in the paper was an article written by Valerie Elliott concerning the rivers access issue and comments from John Grogan about the Rivers Access Campaign. In the pullout supplement was a spread titled 'It's time to reclaim our rivers' written by Griff Rhys Jones www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/travel/outdoors/article6681018.ece

In the article Griff discusses the issues and fun he had whilst filming the Rivers series and also states, "but after a year spent canoeing, swimming and surfing along our waterways, I have discovered that, in England and Wales at least, (rivers) no longer belong to the people. They belong to stockbrokers, to anglers and to farmers."

"A river is, for all of us, a great spiritual resource. We are healed by rivers: they are wondrous natural corridors through the countryside or the town. That is their value, and if we allow ourselves to be pushed off them, we lose access to a great natural British marvel."

Charles Walker MP for Broxbourne meets the campaign and BCU

The campaign and key BCU staff went to the ceremony to mark the start of construction work at Broxbourne for the 2012 White Water Course. The MP for Broxbourne Charles Walker was also present. You may have heard his name before as he signed Martin Slater's amendment to an earlier EDM put up by John Grogan. Charles was elected to the House of Commons in May 2005 replacing Dame Marion Roe who served the constituency for more than 22 years.

In his spare time, Charles enjoys fishing for chub on the River Lee and walking his small dogs – one Jack Russell and two Daschunds. Charles had a short speech to make and in it he did sing the praises of the venue, the new course and the sport of canoeing.

We took the opportunity to meet with him... not to let the moment pass us by! He said that he had expected to be lambasted by canoeists and receive hassle from them at this event! He was surprised to meet us and see how pleasant we were. The rumour mill has obviously been working overtime.

We did discuss the access issue especially as he is going to buy two kayaks to fish from in Scotland. We did suggest that because he can go kayak fishing in Scotland it is therefore unjust that it is not the same in England! He was also keen to see how many calories were burned up whilst canoeing!

Charles is to take over from Martin Salter as Parliamentary Angling Spokesman whilst Martin is set for a new career in the Angling Conservation Association. We are bound to hear more from him!

Below: Chris Walker MP at the Broxbourne site.



The Blue Print for Water

You may well have seen the 'Our Rivers Campaign' and thought it was a good idea, then looked again and realised that the campaign is in fact not what it says it is. It is a tool for lobbying the government about the Water Framework Directive, which is currently being consulted upon.

The promoters are the World Wildlife Fund, The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and anglers. It is notable that boaters (powered and non-powered), walkers, outdoor swimmers and cyclists are conspicuously absent from its list of promoters as they were from the 'Blueprint for Water' document.

Our organisation (along with many other water based activities) was not approached in being part of the campaign or 'Blueprint for Water'. Both the 'Our Rivers Campaign' and 'Blueprint for Water' say they speak on behalf of all water users but we have reminded them that in fact they simply cannot as the majority of users have not even been considered.

We have indeed replied to the Blueprint for Water Chair but in fact Peter Bottomley MP wrote to them very early this year to question why canoeing and other watersports had not been included in the development of the document, as it would have had greater strength.

In our reply to a recent letter we stated that amongst other things, "The Blueprint to Water, in our view, and that of many other users groups, would have indeed been stronger if more water users, like ourselves, had been involved in its development. There are now many millions of waterways users, other than the groups that set up Blueprint for Water, who too have a vested interest in the waterways and that also includes greater access for all."

The future and health of the waterways is in fact a concern of us all!

Read more about the Blue Print for Water here: www.boatingbusiness.com/archive101/2009/june/news/boating_policy_decided_by_others

Calling all Girl Guides

As it is the Guiding centenary next year we would like to paddle the Devises to Westminster with a parchment scroll for delivery to Westminster. We are hoping to do a relay up the course over four days



Above: The DW finish at Westminster. Photo: Peter Hutchinson.

passing on the parchment to the next crew so no one need paddle a huge distance and all can take part. We have some volunteers already and two who would be happy to paddle the last 17 miles on the Monday. If you would like to take part or would like some more information please contact: tamsin.phipps@bcu.org.uk. The Scouts may have started the race but we can make our impact upon it too!

MP suggests that boats should be banned from Kennet and Avon Canal

During a meeting concerned with the Rivers (England) Adjournment Debate about the state of English rivers, Martin Salter MP (Labour, Reading West, not standing for re-election) took great exception to the use of the Kennet and Avon Canal by boats, which he says results in silt being carried into the adjacent River Kennet and reducing fish catches.

So now does he not only want to permanently ban anyone else using the Kennet other than the anglers but he is now trying to stop boats on the canal. One can only speculate as to how many other anglers will get on the bandwagon?

As far as we know canals were designed for use by boats to transport goods around the country.

In fact the Kennet and Avon Canal came about during the 1780s. However, as soon as the Great Western Railway started operating from London to Bristol in 1841, the competition started affecting canal trade and it was not long before the canal began to decline.

As a consequence of railway nationalisation in 1948, the canal came under the management of the Railway Executive. It was in 1955 that the Transport Commission went to Parliament to close the canal.

A few years later and after considerable campaigning, the restoration of the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust were formed. After several decades of fundraising and hard work, the Kennet and Avon was eventually re-opened by Her Majesty The Queen in August 1990.

It does appear more so than ever, that the anglers are having a 'go' at us and many other outdoor groups. However, as we have always said access

to and along the water is not a question of canoeing versus angling, as we are only one of the rapidly increasing huge numbers of people and groups who want access to use our natural waterway heritage!

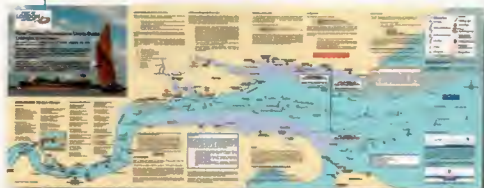
Below: The Kennet and Avon Canal. Photo: Trevor Palmer.



Port of London Authority (PLA) new publications

The tidal Thames or Thames Tideway as it is also known between Teddington and the sea is a busy commercial waterway. The combination of frequent river traffic movements, tides that can flow at up to six knots around bridges and weather can create demanding water conditions. A local knowledge of the Tideway and how it operates is required at all times. The port authority has produced two new publications to assist recreational users:

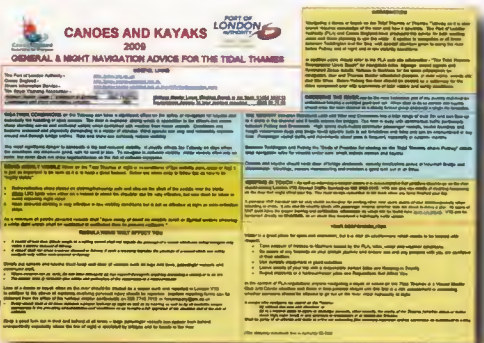
River Thames Recreational users guide – Teddington to Sea Reach



This easy to use guide is a two-sided, waterproof map of the River Thames and is a less formal method of highlighting key points for leisure users. Information includes: practical guidance, marine and leisure activity areas, danger zones, vessel traffic services information and port VHF channels, speed limit areas, marina and yacht club information, useful contact details and a summary of local port rules and regulations. Copies can be obtained free of charge. www.pla.co.uk

Canoes and Kayaks – General and Night Navigation Advice

Canoe England has joined with the PLA and issued advice for the canoeing community on how to use the tidal Thames safely. The advice is available in document format from the PLA web site www.pla.co.uk under the leisure/guidance section or as an A3 laminated poster for notice board use. Contact the PLA river manager alex.brown@pla.co.uk for a poster. All who navigate on the tidal Thames in canoes are advised to read this document, especially those paddlers who intend to travel at night. The advice also acts as a reminder of regulations, navigation rules, and the local navigation arrangements above Putney for vessels under oars that includes canoes and kayaks.



Marine Conservation Zones outlined in new draft strategy

The Marine and Coastal Access Bill, introduced into Parliament in December 2008, proposed the designation of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs). The aim is to improve the management and protection of eco-systems and species in the marine environment – spawning and nursery areas, threatened habitats etc and include sites to be designated for features of geological or geomorphological interest

The Department for Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) have released a draft strategy setting out a proposed vision and framework for MCZs. These will be established in territorial waters adjacent to UK offshore waters over the next 10 years and extend to the tidal limits of inlets and rivers.

Details for how the strategy is to be developed and managed are available from the link: www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/marine-conservation-zones/index.htm. There are implications for recreational activities.

MCZs will be an addition and contribute to an ecological coherent network of Marine Protection Areas (MPAs) formed by - Marine Nature Reserves that will be superseded by MCZs; Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for the protection of habitat and geological features; Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) that include reefs, sandbanks, sea caves; and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated for birds.

Four regional projects have been established for MCZs to cover: Eastern Channel from the Suffolk/Essex border to the Hampshire/Dorset border that includes the Thames Estuary; west of Hampshire and the sea area around to the Severn



Above: The Four regional projects.

Estuary known as the Finding Sanctuary project; the Irish Sea and the North Sea.

Each region will have a project team led by Natural England and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee and a stakeholder group involved in the selection of MCZs and the level of protection to be applied depending on the biodiversity objectives. The projects have a tight timetable to produce recommendations for MCZs by Spring 2011.

Canoe England is already a stakeholder member with the Finding Sanctuary project and has attended an introductory meeting for the Eastern Channel project and will be taking an interest in the other projects when they commence.

This strategy does not cover marine areas where nature conservation responsibilities have been devolved, such as territorial waters adjacent to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Environment Agency (EA) continue strategic planning for water-related sport and recreation

The EA continues to develop regional strategies for water-related recreation. The third and latest is for the north west of England and commenced with a series of five workshops in June and July at Crewe, Preston, Liverpool, Manchester and Penrith.

Canoe England attended each of these workshops that sought opinions and knowledge from as many people who have an interest in water-related recreation. Access to water and proposals to support the Canoe England Development Plan were high on the Canoe England agenda. Thanks go to Chris Cleaver, NW Regional Access Advisor and the volunteers who assisted him to represent Canoe England.

The University of Brighton are again acting as consultants for the EA and facilitated the workshops. The detail and format of their strategic planning work can be viewed at www.brighton.ac.uk/waterecreation. A plan for the south west has been launched that identified gaps in the provision of facilities and needs of users; that for east of England is in a draft form and preliminary details for the north west are also posted. Canoe England discusses these strategies at www.canoe-england.org.uk, refer to the access and environment section under consultations.

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Striving to be a rubbish canoeist

Nancy Maddock started the Great North American Clean-up in 2006 with considerable success. This was repeated in 2007 with even more support, then later that year Nancy joined the 'Song of the Paddle' forum and her event went global. Not only were there numerous clean up events in the UK but also members as far away as Brazil got involved.

Feature by: John Kelly. **These clean-up trips all take place in early May each year and range from a canoeist on their own picking up litter to a flotilla of boats clearing whole lakes and sections of canals of every scrap of rubbish.**

The 2009 events are just starting to take place and so I thought I would share a short report of the first of these. I posted a message on the forum asking if anyone wanted to join me in clearing some of the rubbish at Castle Semple Loch at Lochwinnoch. As usual with these events there was a great response and on the day we had more than a dozen volunteers to help.

High water levels meant there was less rubbish than normal but still more than enough.

“We found a car wheel and tyre, two traffic cones, beer crate, punch bag, trike, buckets, a piece of gas main, camp chair, fishing lures lines...”

There was the opportunity to use or develop new skills to get to all the hard to reach places where litter was to be found. Paddling under overhanging trees, poling into

reeds or even just trying to get a spot to land so you could retrieve some piece of garbage from the shore.

It was fun and nonsense from start to finish. Finding and getting rubbish actually becomes quite competitive with people vying to get the most in their canoe and be first to find the more unusual items. As well as the usual bottles, cans, plastic bags, wrappers, fast food containers, paper etc we found a car wheel and tyre, two traffic cones, beer crate, punch bag, trike, buckets, a piece of gas main, camp chair, fishing lures lines and hooks galore, scales, rod bags, seven or eight buoys and much more that had no place being where it was.

Below: John paddles a boat full.



Above: John weighing in.

The volunteers split into two groups and worked their way round the loch clearing all the litter they could find. We portaged into the drainage ditch on one side and paddled and poled its length to clear the rubbish from this hard to get to spot.

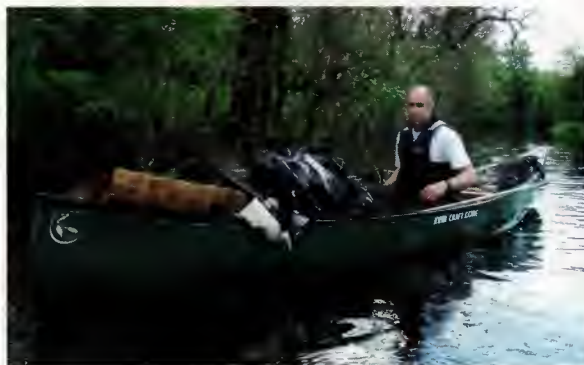
We were of course fortunate to have great weather on the day of our clean up but I doubt any weather could have dampened our spirits or held us back. In the end, as the pictures show we cleared a lot of rubbish which was mostly in fairly remote spots and but for our intervention would have been there for years.

Best of all we had a great day on the water and the satisfaction of knowing we had done our bit to help clear a little patch of our paddling domain. It is of course never too late to join us in this battle against litter. So why not organise a clean up paddle on your favourite paddling place or just grab a bag for some rubbish when you next you lift your paddle from the rack. It does not take much and then like us you can hold your head high and say, "I am a rubbish canoeist!"

Below: Some of the more unusual items.



Above: Discarded fishing tackle.



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Front cover photo:

GB versus Germany in the women's canoe polo final of the World Games

Photo: Glenn Summerbell

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The SpeedStroke kayak ergometer by KayakPro is the best I've ever used. Over many years of training I have tried many different paddling machines from the most basic to the most advanced – from 'one off' designs to mass-produced machines. Designed by world champion kayaker Grayson Bourne, the SpeedStroke has that world class feel about it. It is an exceptionally well constructed machine made from high quality materials with clearly a lot of thought in the design process.

Since the Olympics, I have mainly been focussing on progressing my medical career so have been working hard as a doctor in an accident and emergency department. As a result I do not always have the time to get out on the water. I have a SpeedStroke kayak ergometer in my garage and can fit in a quick training session easily at any time. Certainly in the winter, when weather conditions make it impossible to achieve a quality training session on the water, the

SpeedStroke would be an ideal alternative. Clubs and gyms would benefit greatly from using this ergometer for teaching technique, warming up and training.



The SpeedStroke has a very positive, smooth feel with a nice catch at the front of the stroke and a realistic release at the back end.

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The SpeedStroke computer can be interfaced with a laptop computer to allow for recording and analysis of the data. This can be used in physiological testing for example, power analysis or for monitoring progress in training. Another development is the ability to then link with other machines via the Internet enabling potential head to head racing with athletes anywhere in the

world. The next generation of the ergometers computer will improve on this even further

I would highly recommend the SpeedStroke kayak ergometer as a useful tool for kayakers of all levels and abilities. It will be an essential tool in my preparations for the London Olympic Games.



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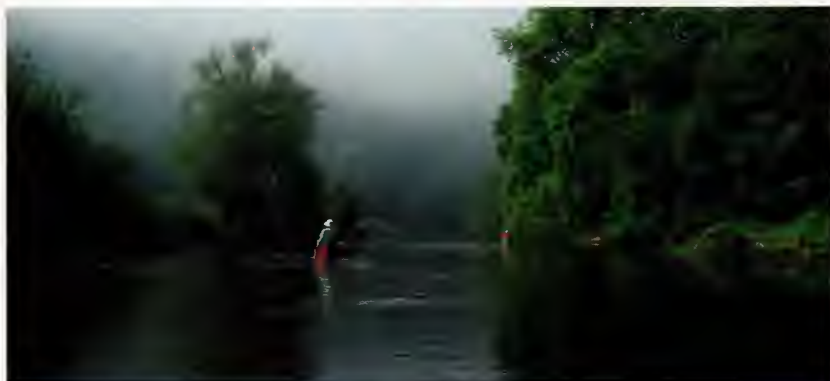
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The winners are announced on page 12.



Above: Paul Fleming – BUCS canoe polo tournament.



Above: Anne Dorber – River Wye.



Above: Jack Weddell – U18 Tryweryn Ski Slope premier slalom race.



Above: Mike Skehel – Symonds Yat.

Right: Richard Watson River Teifi, Llandysul.

Below: Tony Canning – Sheffield clean up.





Above: Neil Willis – Caledonian Canal.



Above: Richard Moore – Low Force, River Tees.



Above: Bob Hamilton – River Lochy.



Above: Clinton Gillet – River Waveney.

Left: Matthew Ryder – Missy on Lake Bala.

Above: Mike Lee – Abingdon Weir.



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Behind the scenes

Chloë Nelson

An excellent team of people support the work of both the BCU and Canoe England at the Bingham office in Nottinghamshire.

This hard-working team are mainly unknown to members. Many of you may have spoken to them or received mail from them at some time, so we thought we would unlock the mystery and show you who they are. They are a very important part of our organisation.

Chloë Nelson is the BCU's and Canoe England's PR, Media and Marketing Manager and is responsible for external and internal communications and commercial.

What is a typical work day like?

A typical day is busy. It depends on the time of the year and even then every day is different.

Winter activities tend to include; reviewing and negotiating commercial contracts, reviewing the previous year's activities and planning for the next year.

Summer activities revolve a lot more around raising the profile of the sport through media and PR.

How long have you worked for BCU and Canoe England?

Over four years. Before joining the BCU I worked at Boots head office as a Product Manager, the commercial exposure was invaluable.

What makes you really enjoy your role?

I enjoy the broad spectrum of the activities I manage; PR, communications, online, direct marketing, sponsorship and branding. I get pleasure from working in a team and it goes without saying that I am delighted by being involved with a home Olympics with all the benefits that offers.

In my work, I have met extraordinary people and am inspired and motivated by them – committed volunteers, focused athletes, dedicated coaches, passionate paddlers all of whom continue to champion canoeing.

How difficult is to get more exposure in the media?

Very. Unfortunately people still perceive canoeing as a 'minority' sport, particularly in terms of media coverage.

Achieving consistent Olympic medal success certainly helps, Beijing showed that the media are constantly looking for bigger news stories – more Gold medals.

Canoeing isn't just about the Olympic disciplines, but that's what the media are interested in and they are an excellent showcase of the sport.

The way I see it, the Olympic disciplines are a hook, they are an opportunity to say, this is just one element of canoeing, did you know that canoeing is also about this.

Having strong personalities in the sport also helps and we as a sport are lucky to have such outstanding ambassadors. The media always comment on how quickly our athletes get back to them, how professional and articulate they are.

Things are changing. What helps is the constant drip of good news stories from canoeing, dedicated volunteers, a home Olympics on the horizon and successful athletes. It also helps that volunteers, staff and athletes all recognise the importance of media coverage and are either providing me with news content, or publicising their activities themselves.

The fact that several national journalists have referred to Tim Brabants as a celebrity reinforces this and is testament to his hard work in the limelight since Beijing.

What is the biggest change you have seen since you started working here?

The growth of the organisation and the associated challenges and progress.

What aspirations do you have for canoeing?

The next three years present unique opportunities for canoeing, but I think it's a longer term vision that will drive the sport forward. Myself and my colleagues will work closely to help achieve joint objectives and vision for the sport.

Within my remit I would like to help increase revenue for the sport, secure a high profile media partner and to continue to carve out canoeing's reputation as a leader in sport.

What are you most proud of?

Being fourth in a local half marathon and then ranked as 11th in the UK for the half marathon, but disappointed that I missed out on winning a turkey by one place!

I'm also proud of my mum, who by herself formed a charity in Congo, Africa.

The charity, Congo Action, has grown tremendously in terms of volunteer recruitment and fundraising. My mum has since built two schools and started numerous farming and educational programmes in the area.

In terms of work, it is the consistent incremental advances that I am proud of.

Working for a sport such as canoeing have you ever canoed?

Yes last night on the Trent. It's not part of my daily routine but I do love to be outdoors and relax on the river. I canoed regularly when I was at school at a local swimming pool and on the river Medway. I've thought about doing Devises to Westminster, but then the reality of the feat sinks in..

We have seen you out running and competing in races what is it about running you enjoy so much?

Everything, giving my body a good shake, the freedom, being outdoors, exploring new routes and the thinking time. It invigorates me and makes me feel alive!

I love pushing my body and the mental challenge it involves, with a strong mind I think anything is possible. I've done two London marathons (3hrs 30mins), cross country running, 10kms and lots of half marathons. If I ever do another marathon it will be something completely different - maybe the Himalayan marathon.

What other sports do you do?

I really enjoy doing heavy weights at the gym, cycling, snowboarding, climbing, swimming, walking. It helps me stay sane. I do enjoy non sport related pleasures like gardening, travelling, good food and the odd glass of wine.

Below: Chloë enjoying the fresh air.





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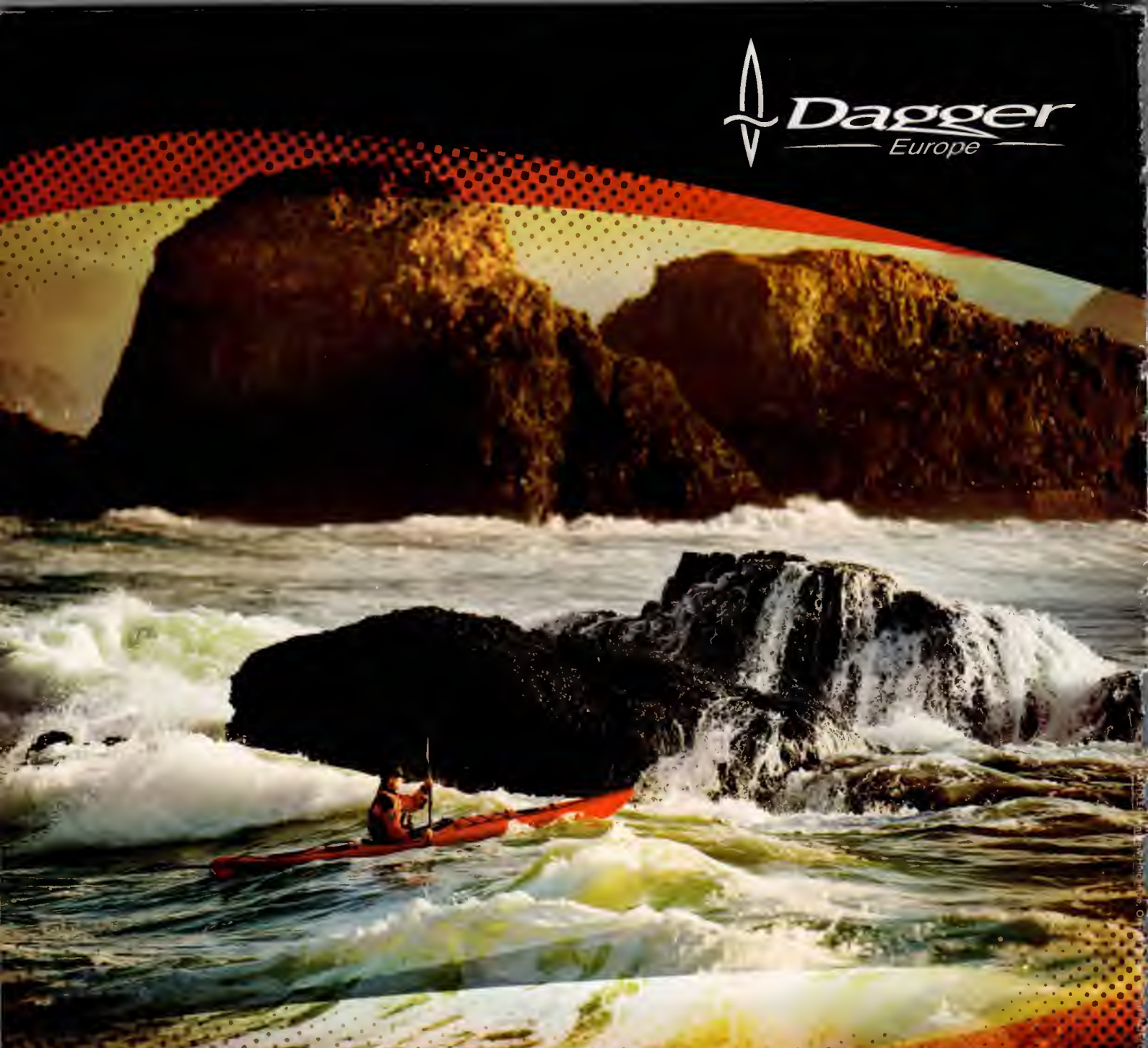


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