

# canoe

## focus





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# canoe focus

**The official magazine  
of the British Canoe Union**  
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Tel: 0845 370 9500  
0300 011 9500  
Fax: 0845 370 9501  
E-mail: info@bcu.org.uk  
www.bcu.org.uk  
ISBN 0953-010X

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**Annual Subscription Rates**  
UK inland: £21.00; Overseas: £24.50

Free to BCU members  
For subscription, please contact the  
BCU on the above contacts

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**Your contributions make Canoe Focus happen.**  
The quality and variety of news, articles, reports and photographs depend on the submission of material from you. Very few contributors are professional writers and photographers, so don't be put off writing because you have no experience! Canoe Focus is all about canoeist to canoeist dialogue: a paddler's magazine written by paddlers. Technical Information: Contributions preferably as a Microsoft Word file, which can be emailed to chloe.nelson@bcu.org.uk. All material is accepted on the understanding that the BCU and its agents cannot be held liable or responsible for loss or damage, although every care and effort is taken to safeguard material. Next Copy date is the **7th March 2010**. Material arriving after this date cannot be included in the **April 2010** issue. Canoe Focus encourages contributions of any nature but reserves the right to edit and condense to fill the space available and unless otherwise stated the publishers assume no responsibility for the return of unsolicited manuscripts, artwork or photographs. Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the BCU, its committees or members. The printing of an advertisement in Canoe Focus does not necessarily mean that the BCU endorse the company, item or service advertised. All material in Canoe Focus is strictly copyright and all rights are reserved. Reproduction without prior permission from the editor is forbidden.



**Above:** Many people enjoyed last month's Canoe England Coaching Conference.

## Welcome to February Canoe Focus



I hope everyone had a lovely festive break and that the cold weather at the beginning of the year has not prevented you from getting out on the water too much.

### We start this year with the positive news that more people are canoeing!

At the end of last year, research from Sport England and Ipsos Mori's Active People Survey (3) showed that between October 2008 and October 2009, there has been a fantastic 45% increase in adults participating in 30 minutes of moderate intensity canoeing at least once a week (since the last survey). Canoeing is one of four sports out of a total of 33 (with targets), which has seen a dramatic increase in participation, the other sports are athletics, tennis and cycling.

It is certainly an encouraging set of results and whilst we still face challenges among women and disabled people, we are committed to increasing participation among these groups and to ensuring that everyone has a positive canoeing experience, which will encourage them to keep it part of their lifestyle. I look forward to the BCU building on the optimistic progress already made.

January has also been a month to take stock of the valuable contribution that volunteers and clubs make

to the sport, in the form of the Volunteer and Recognition Awards and Club Awards. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all volunteers, clubs and coaches for their tremendous commitment and contribution to canoeing.

We also start the year with the announcement of a new Sports Nutrition Bronze Level Sponsor – Science in Sport and look forward to working with them over the next few years.

### ICF Board of Directors meeting

In December, the BCU successfully hosted the International Canoe Federation's (ICF) Board of Directors meeting, in Windsor. One of the key issues were changes to the Olympic Programme, where the Men's C2 (canoe double) 500m event has been replaced by the Women's K1 (kayak single) 200m. Further changes are detailed in the news section. Directors from around the world congratulated the BCU on a very well hosted and enjoyable event.

### AGM

The AGM will be held on Saturday 6th March at the British Olympic Association (BOA) offices at 60 Charlotte Street, London, W1T 2NU.

Enclosed within this issue of Canoe Focus is a Voting by Proxy form, an agenda, directions to the venue and the abridged accounts. Several special resolutions will be placed before the AGM, for details of these please refer to the news section in this issue of the magazine.

**Paul Owen**  
**Chief Executive**



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# Competition

February

Start	Finish	Discipline	Event
13-Feb		Wildwater Racing	Goyt - Classic - Div B - North West Series
14-Feb		Wildwater Racing	Inwell 1 - Sprint - Div B and Wavehopper - North West Series
14-Feb		Canoe Marathon	Thameside 1
19-Feb	21-Feb	Canoe Slalom	ICF World Ranking - Oceania Open - Penrith, AUS
20-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 1 - Leeds
20-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 4 South West - Bristol
20-Feb		Wildwater Racing	Derwent Classic - Div B - Youth Championship 3
21-Feb		Canoe Sprint	Canoe Development Day
21-Feb		Wildwater Racing	Taff 1 - Classic - Div B - Welsh Series 1
21-Feb		Wildwater Racing	Leny/Teith - Open - Scottish Series 2
21-Feb		Wildwater Racing	Div B - Classic - River Soar - Barrow Loop Series 4
21-Feb		Canoe Marathon	Waterside B
21-Feb		Canoe Marathon	Winter Time Trial - Linlithgow
27-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 2 Ladies - Derby
27-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 1 Ladies - Coventry
27-Feb		Canoe 2012	North East - Darlington Dolphyn Centre - Indoor Slalom
27-Feb		Canoe Slalom	Div 4 Short Course - Darlington
27-Feb		Canoe Slalom	Div 4 - Dolphin Centre
27-Feb		Wildwater Racing	National Prize Giving
27-Feb		Wildwater Racing	Grandtully Classic - Div A and B Marathon Development Day
27-Feb		Canoe Marathon	Thistlebrigg Classic - Div A and B
28-Feb		Wildwater Racing	Thistlebrigg Team Race - Classic - Div A and B
28-Feb		Canoe Marathon	Thameside 2
Mar TBN		Surf	Mudaka, ESP
6-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 2 North - Leeds
6-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 4 North - York
6-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 4 Central - Derby
6-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 2 South - Coventry
6-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 4 South East - Luton
6-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 4 South West - Bristol
6-Mar		Canoe Slalom	Div 1 - Tryweryn
6-Mar		Canoe Marathon	Runcorn 5km
7-Mar		Canoe Slalom	Prem - Tryweryn
7-Mar		Wildwater Racing	Allen Spetsbury - Wessex 5
7-Mar		Canoe Marathon	Waterside C
13-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 3 North - Stockport
13-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 3 South - Luton
13-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 3 Central - Bristol
13-Mar		Canoe Freestyle	Holme Pierrepont
13-Mar		Canoe Marathon	Longridge 5km
14-Mar		Canoe Slalom	Div 3 and 4 - Stone
14-Mar		Canoe Marathon	Royal K1/K2
14-Mar		Canoe Marathon	Winter Time Trial - Linlithgow
14-Mar		Canoe Marathon	Weaver Descent
14-Mar		Canoe Marathon	Weyside Race
20-Mar	21-Mar	Surf	BCU Surf Fest - Skern Lodge
20-Mar	21-Mar	Canoe Slalom	Div 2 and 3 - Sowerby Bridge
20-Mar		Canoe 2012	N. East - Prudhoe Waterworld Fun Pool - Slalom
20-Mar		Canoe Slalom	Div 2 - Shepperton
20-Mar		Wildwater Racing	Dove - Classic - Div B - Midland Series 1
20-Mar		Wildwater Canoeing	Div B - Sprint - Washburn 2 - Youth Championship 3
20-Mar		Canoe Marathon	Wey Grand Prix
20-Mar		Canoe Marathon	Norwich 5km
21-Mar		Canoe Sprint	Canoe Development Day
21-Mar		Canoe Slalom	Div 1 - Shepperton
21-Mar		Canoe Marathon	Waterside D
21-Mar		Canoe Marathon	Mid Weaver Hasler
27-Mar	28-Mar	Canoe Slalom	Div 3 and 4 - Yalding Weir
27-Mar		Coach Update	Aldwark/Yorks - Time to Listen/Safeguarding & Protecting Children
28-Mar		Wildwater Racing	Div B - Sprint - Stour - Wessex Series
28-Mar		Canoe Marathon	Forth & Clyde Canal
28-Mar		Canoe Marathon	Gailey Haslar - K1
28-Mar		Canoe Marathon	Cambridge Hasler
1-Apr		Canoe Marathon	Runcorn 5km - K2
2-Apr	5-Apr	Canoe Marathon	Devizes to Westminster
2-Apr		Canoe Marathon	Richmond Grand Prix
3-Apr		Canoe Slalom	Div 1 and 2 - Grandtully
4-Apr		Canoe Slalom	Pan Celtic Cup - Grandtully
5-Apr		Canoe Slalom	Div 3 and 4 - Aberfeldy
10-Apr	11-Apr	Canoe Sprint	National Sprint Regatta, Holme Pierrepont
10-Apr	11-Apr	Canoe Slalom	Prem - Grandtully
10-Apr	11-Apr	Canoe Slalom	ICF World Ranking - Hit Challenge - Solkan, SLO
10-Apr		Canoe Polo	Div 4 South West - Bristol
10-Apr		Canoe Slalom	Junior Selection Race 1 - Grandtully
11-Apr		Canoe 2012	South West - Sutton & Bingham CC - Sprint
11-Apr		Canoe Marathon	Spey Marathon
11-Apr		Canoe Marathon	Runcorn 10km - K2
17-Apr	18-Apr	Canoe Slalom	Div 3 and 4 - Oughtibridge
17-Apr		Canoe Polo	Div 1 Youth - Banbury

March

April

Start	Finish	Discipline	Event
17-Apr		Canoe Slalom	Junior Selection Race 2 - Tryweryn
17-Apr		Canoe Slalom	Prem - Tryweryn
17-Apr		Wildwater Racing	Div A & B - Classic - Bala - GB Team Selection
18-Apr		Canoe Slalom	Div 1 - Tryweryn
18-Apr		Wildwater Racing	Div A & B - Sprint - Bala - GB Team Selection - Youth Championship 4
18-Apr		Canoe Marathon	Brigg Hasler K1
18-Apr		Canoe Marathon	Ratho Marathon
18-Apr		Canoe Marathon	Maidstone Haslar
24-Apr	25-Apr	Canoe Sailing	Llandegfedd
24-Apr	25-Apr	Canoe Slalom	Div 2 and 3 - Matlock
24-Apr	25-Apr	Canoe Slalom	Div 3 and 4 - Alva
24-Apr	25-Apr	Canoe Marathon	Glasgow - Edinburgh Canal Challenge
24-Apr		Canoe Polo	Div 2 South - Banbury
24-Apr		Wildwater Racing	Div B - Sprint - Avon - Midland 2
24-Apr		Wildwater Racing	Div B - Sprint - Prudhoe - North West Series
24-Apr		Canoe Marathon	Bedford Assessment
24-Apr		Surf	Shoreline Handicapped - England Ranking
25-Apr		Surf	Widemouth Bay - England Ranking
25-Apr		Wildwater Racing	Div B - Sprint - Carlisle - North West Series
25-Apr		Canoe Marathon	Bedford Hasler
25-Apr		Canoe Marathon	Anker Valley K1
26-Apr	28-Apr	Surf	Santa Cruz, USA



Photo: Daniel Seaford and Owen Peake: Winners of DW 2009.

## 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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:andy.goodsell@bcu.org.uk)

## Websites:

Canoe polo : [www.canoepolo.org.uk](http://www.canoepolo.org.uk);

Canoe sailing: [www.intcanoe.org.uk](http://www.intcanoe.org.uk)

Sprint racing: Visit BCU, then 'Our Sport' and 'Sprint racing'

Freestyle: [www.ukfreestyle.com](http://www.ukfreestyle.com)

Marathon racing: [www.marathon-canoeing.co.uk](http://www.marathon-canoeing.co.uk)

Slalom: [www.canoeslalom.co.uk](http://www.canoeslalom.co.uk)

Surf: [www.bcusurf.org.uk](http://www.bcusurf.org.uk)

Wild water racing: [www.wildwater.org.uk](http://www.wildwater.org.uk)

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## Lone paddlers

**Sorry about this but I am a little angry or is it dismayed? I have paddled since 1954 and walked rivers here and over much of Europe.**

I paddle alone.

Some years back I protested at the insistence of the BCU that canoeists should always be in groups. Why should I feel guilty? There are many instances where fatalities are caused through peer group pressure and emphasis on 'trick' and 'dangerous' paddling. Remember the deaths of the four teenagers in the Lyme Bay canoeing tragedy in March 1993?

Paddling alone during training with planning experience would bring a change in attitude to making go, no-go decisions. Following the leader teaches little other than boat control.

Even streams can be an exciting paddle prospect but if you have not noticed the wire and other fences along with tree and bush material tangled in the banks beneath the high water, this will demand skills that are impossible to teach.

I have no wish to be a killjoy and appreciate the work of administrators and instructors.

A paddler died on the upper Dart recently and his team was also put in danger trying to save him.

**Peter Edwards**

## John Handyside, National Competition Development Coach replies:

Dear Peter,

Your letter raises interesting issues about paddling in groups or solo.

Firstly, however, I would like to say that the BCU do not 'insist' that paddlers are always in groups. Statements that cover this topic, along with others, such as 'wear a buoyancy aid', 'be able to swim' etc are guidelines that are recommended by us to be followed.

The BCU 'Canoe and Kayak Handbook' Safety and Leadership chapter states that, "Guidelines are... for the blind obedience of fools and guidance of the wise." Whilst this might seem a little harsh in some respects it is an accurate statement of what we mean by guidelines.

Certainly there are many instances where the guidelines are not followed by experienced and knowledgeable paddlers, such paddlers would be in a position to assess the personal risks to themselves and be able to have their own measures in place to deal with situations that may arise.

There have been examples of solo journeys recorded both on rivers and the sea. There are much-publicised events that are covered on TV where paddlers do not wear buoyancy aids; in fact the rules for those events do not legislate for wearing them at all.

In competitive white water paddling, much training and all racing is done in isolation with no other paddlers around.

What all this comes down to is that the risk is assessed and is being managed in these situations, appropriate control measures are in place and the individual is capable of dealing with situations that may arise.

So please feel free to paddle the rivers you feel that are in your competency as a solo paddler, we are not in a position to prevent this, nor would we wish to, however we would wish to make general recommendations and guidelines to the majority of paddlers who need such advice.

## Wonderful memories

**I have finally decided to end my long membership with the BCU. Unfortunately, various ailments prevent me from paddling and I have not been an active coach for over 10 years.**

As a past member of the BCU council, I appreciate the wide-ranging work done by the organisation and want to thank you for your past and continuing efforts to improve the sport for the benefit of all paddlers.

It is with reluctance and sadness that I hang up my paddle but I know that I have been fortunate to have paddled in so many places, including the Norwegian arctic and Alaska. Paddling, especially in challenging circumstances, develops mental as well as physical skills, which are still benefiting me now.

I have learned so much from many people, including the young people I have coached. I will carry wonderful memories with me for the rest of my life.

**Helen Mullineux**

## Sue Hornby, Director of Development, replies:

Dear Helen,

Many thanks for taking the time to send us this letter. It's great to get feedback, especially from a long-standing member such as yourself.

Canoeing provides lots of fantastic opportunities and it's great to hear how you have benefited and enjoyed your experiences and challenges around the world, and the wonderful memories our sport leaves you with.

May I take this opportunity to thank you, on behalf of the BCU, for your support over the years as both a member, volunteer and coach, and wish you all the best for the future.

## Effective coaching

**All I hear is, "the new system is useless, you need to be an 'old' Level 3, we know so much more" but what a load of rubbish. I did my UKCC Level 1 in April 2008 and learned so much I couldn't take it all in at once.**

I then did two 4 Star training courses – so effectively the coaching is out the way and the leadership is coming. I then did both 4 Star assessments in the summer, following with my Level 2 assessment and then decided to do Moderate Water Endorsements for my disciplines.

I really like the way the system is set out, it's basic at the start and then gets much more complex and seems there is always a step for me to take, it's pitched really well for candidates and my advice to someone who is doing what I have done, is to have time between the courses to reflect and put into practice what you have learned. Keep the new courses coming, I'll be there.

**Sam Hardy**

## Mike Devlin, BCU Director of Coaching replies:

Hi Sam,

Many thanks for the positive feedback; it is great to hear that you have found the new system works so well for you. I must congratulate you for having achieved so much in such a short period of time; you are obviously a committed and keen coach! I wish you every success with your coaching in the future.

## Dear readers

**It is clear that the publication of Ruth Holdway's letter, published in December's Canoe Focus, prompted strong feeling. Thank you for taking the time to write in.**

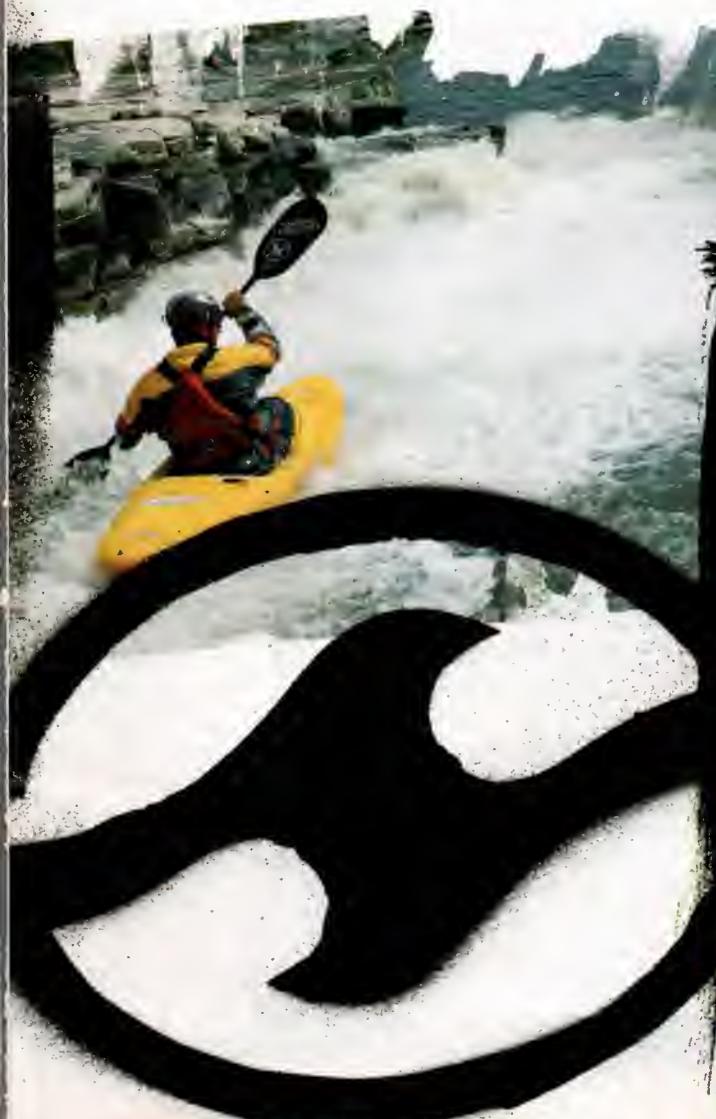
It was unfortunate that 30,000 copies of the magazine had already been printed, (apart from the comment page) when we received the tragic news of Ruth's death.

We sincerely apologise for any offence this may have caused her family, friends or our readers as that certainly was not the intention.

**Chloe Nelson, Marketing and Communications Manager**

## 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](mailto:canoeingnews@bcu.org.uk)



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Canoe England has teamed up with a number of quality partners to offer you a range of discounts. For details of how to claim the discounts log in to the 'Members Area' of the Canoe England website.



leaders in sports nutrition



## 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](http://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; Tamarack Outdoors, Preston **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; A S Watersports Ltd, Exeter **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 would like to hear your comments. Email: [info@bcu.org.uk](mailto:info@bcu.org.uk) or call 0845 370 9500

# New challenges for the 'Big 5' team

The New Year has seen the Big 5 Kayak Challenge team announce five new expeditions with a slightly different format. Expedition leader Richard Harpham and the team want to retain the best parts of the last challenges and reduce the elements that weren't so much fun. Richard explained that "we wanted to do less of the long open water sea crossings, which we found at times very tedious, as we'd be out of sight of land for hours at a time. It was so much more enjoyable when we were paddling close to the shore, taking in fascinating coastal landscapes and regularly encountering wildlife." The team also wanted to retain some river elements given their high profile support for the River Access Campaign.

## The next of the Big 5 Kayak Challenges are:

**Kayaking round Malta** – we wanted one of the challenges to remain a circumnavigation.

**Canoeing the Yukon** – to experience more of the wild side of Alaska, this time river canoeing and following the prospector's route along the Yukon.

**John O Groats to the Orkney Isles** – the Orkneys will provide a great destination, at the end of a very exposed open sea crossing.

**Scotland to Ireland, via Jura and the**

**Corryvreckin whirlpool** – paddling across the third biggest whirlpool in the world along the way.



Above: Geoff and Rich of the Big 5 Challenge off the inner Farnes last year.

**London to Marrakesh** – this challenge will involve over 2,000 miles of kayaking and cycling. Paddling the Straits of Gibraltar and landing on the shores of Morocco.

The Big 5 team want to give others a chance to join in with their challenges by announcing a competition in March at the Outdoor Show to allow some lucky winners to join different aspects of their next Big 5 Kayak Challenges.

The team will continue to raise funds for the Muscular Help Foundation and the Marine Conservation Society. They will continue to champion the River Access Campaign and support the challenge of the outdated legislation and thinking. Contact them via the Big 5 Kayak Challenge website at: [www.big5kayakchallenge.com](http://www.big5kayakchallenge.com).

## In brief

### Rafting committee AGM

The English White Water Rafting Committee AGM is scheduled for the 3rd April at the Old Nottinghamians Rugby Club (next to the National Water Sports Centre, Nottingham at 18.30).

### BCU AGM special resolutions

Several special resolutions will be placed before the BCU AGM. The one regarding Declarations of Interest ensures that the BCU is fully compliant with new requirements within the Companies Act. The second group of special resolutions widens the BCU's operating environment to include British Overseas Territories. This is in order to allow the British Overseas Territories, which cannot join the ICF in their own right to be covered by the BCU's membership of the ICF and therefore be eligible to compete in the Commonwealth Games.

The BCU has been working alongside the ICF towards the inclusion of canoeing in the Commonwealth Games and it is important as part of the bid process to demonstrate that there are many Commonwealth Countries in membership of the ICF.

### Improving the sporting experience

Last spring Sport England launched a ground breaking four-year research study. It aims to uncover what is truly important to people when participating in sport, in particular what needs to be improved, in the sporting experience. Sport England has commissioned Ipsos MORI to undertake the survey, which will be repeated every spring up to 2013.

The survey will be running again in March of this year. Please take time to take part and have your say in the future of canoeing. [www.sportengland.org/sport\\_satisfaction\\_survey.htm](http://www.sportengland.org/sport_satisfaction_survey.htm)

### Safeguarding and Protecting Children important contact numbers

#### Canoe England 24-hour child protection:

Email: [childprotection@bcu.org.uk](mailto: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: 0808 800 5000 (24 hour).

Childline: 0800 1111.

## BCU hosts the ICF board

The BCU hosted the International Canoe Federation's (ICF) Board of Directors meeting in Windsor, in December.

One of the key issues were changes to the Olympic programme, where the Men's C2 (Canoe Double) 500m event has been replaced by the Women's K1 (Kayak Single) 200m.

In canoe sprint, the World Championships will follow the same programme as the 2008 and 2012 Olympic programme with the addition of three 200m relay races and the 5,000m races, totalling 27 events.

The Women's C1 (Canoe Single) has been added as an official full medal event. The Women's C2 (Canoe Double) 500m will be kept as a demonstration event, just as it was in the 2009 World Championships. Paracanoeing will have 12 events in next year's Sprint World Championships. The application to include

paracanoeing into the 2016 Paralympics will continue.

Also in sprint, the board approved a new compulsory World Cup format that reflects the new World Championship programme and within that organisers can have optional events.

In slalom, the Women's C1 individual and team events will be added to the World Championships as full medal status. The World Cup series has been extended from three competitions per year to four, plus a World Cup final and this will start in 2011.

BCU CEO, Paul Owen commented, "These changes will help canoeing continue to move forward. Making the Women's C1 a full medal event is a good step towards making our sport equitable."

For the full changes, visit the ICF website at: [www.canoeicf.com](http://www.canoeicf.com).

## Advertisorial

### New junior touring kayak

Perception have introduced the newest addition to their Carolina family – the Carolina 12XS – a purpose designed touring kayak for children.

The narrow beam, defined keel and sleek bow gives excellent tracking performance for children and enables them to set a comfortable pace on family river trips.

Contact Perception Kayaks for more details at [www.perception.co.uk](http://www.perception.co.uk).

### Black Gold

Shred Ready's new Black Gold helmet is constructed in Shred Ready's own unibody one piece carbon composite and will be available from this month. Available in standard half cut, the helmet has a one size shell. Small, medium and large fitting pads are included for a comfortable custom fit.

Contact System X on 01189 773709 or [www.systemxeurope.com](http://www.systemxeurope.com).

### Affordable performance

The Rip is a new kayak from Necky aimed at the beginner and intermediate kayaker. At 10'6" long, the Rip offers good glide for a boat of its size with the moderate rocker meaning it handles and manoeuvres well. The roomy cockpit is designed for easy entry and exit and once inside the seat has a foam base and lower back pad, which is adjustable with soft, lightweight thigh pads for handling and control.

For stowage there is a sealed stern hatch with a bulkhead. The Rip is built of polylite offering stiffness, durability whilst keeping the overall weight down.

Contact Johnson Outdoors UK on 01189 773709 or [www.johnsonoutdoors.co.uk](http://www.johnsonoutdoors.co.uk)

### Wenonah Canoe

Wenonah Canoe has announced the addition of a new and a returning model to its range.

The 15'8" Wenonah Southfork is constructed in Wenonah's three-phase rotomold polyethylene. A smaller size and a less weight makes the boat manageable for everyday use and is targeted at schools, centres and rental operations. The Southfork is also aimed at recreational users looking for value in an entry-level canoe.

The 17' long Sundowner 17 is designed for paddling down rivers and across flat water. The sleek bow, straight keel-line and shallow-arch hull, make it ideal for when performance and ruggedness are required.

Contact Outdoor Active on 01454 261058 or [sales@outdoor-active.co.uk](mailto:sales@outdoor-active.co.uk)

# Canoeing for heroes

**Having grown from an idea in a pub on the River Wye, Tom Booth and Ollie Pollard, both canoeing novices, have embarked on a year of events culminating in the two longest canoe races in the world – The Devizes to Westminster International Canoe Race (125miles) and the Yukon River Quest (460miles). Their aim is to raise £20,000 for 'Help for Heroes'**

The first race in the journey to the Yukon was to be the WYE100 – a 100 mile event against the clock on the River Wye. However, this was cancelled in January due to weather conditions but has been re-scheduled for February 13-14th

The final and longest leg in the series, from 30th June to 4th July 2010, takes them to the wilderness of Canada for the world's longest annual canoe race – the 460-mile Yukon River Quest. Ollie and Tom will spend the next seven months participating in fundraising events, in between intensive training and racing, from the Top Gear Thames Time Trials to auction dinners on the Wye and in London. They will also complete the 125-mile Devizes to Westminster in early April.

Ollie said: "Neither Tom or I have served in The Armed Forces, but it was certainly a life we considered. Many of our close friends have chosen that life and have seen active service in the last few years. Directly or indirectly most of us have been touched by the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan and we simply felt it was our duty to do our bit towards making sure that service men and women are looked after."

Fastsigns helped Tom and Ollie when they asked them to brand their canoe and print a sponsors banner. For more information about Help for Heroes, and Tom and Ollie's Wye to Yukon trip, go to [www.helpforheroes.org.uk/wye2yukon.html](http://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/wye2yukon.html)



Above: Tom and Ollie with their new banner.

## Women training days

**With the support of the BCU, Mega Surf Surf Kayaks and Shoreline Extreme Sports; Simon Hammond, former World Surf Kayak Champion will be running a series of women only training days at locations around Devon and Cornwall. The coaching will cover foundation skills and confidence building as well as development of personal surfing, so all abilities welcome.**

All participants will need to bring their own boat and equipment but additional surf kayaks will be available to try. All applicants need to book their places in advance as there are limited places on each day. Applicants should send a £15 non-refundable booking fee payable to TNT Explosive Sports with their name, rough ability level and contact details (mobile and email) stating the day they would like to book.

Courses Available are:

Sunday 4th April - Saunton Sands, North Devon. 10.00 meet.

Saturday 22nd May - Widemouth Beach, North Cornwall. 10.00 meet.

Saturday 3rd July - Sennen, West Cornwall. 10.00 meet.

Sunday 1st August - Sandymouth, Near Bude, North Cornwall. 11.00 meet.

Anyone wishing to find out more about these days and other surf kayak courses available should contact Shoreline Extreme Sports at [info@shorelineactivities.co.uk](mailto:info@shorelineactivities.co.uk) or phone 01288 354039.

## Obituary

### Ruth Holdway

**It is with great sadness that we report on the tragic loss of 29-year old Ruth Holdway, on the 30th November 2009. Ruth died in a tragic walking accident whilst on holiday, when she fell over 100 metres from a footpath which had become unstable due to a landslide.**

Ruth was a true inspiration to the sport of canoeing, competing in canoe slalom from an early age. On gaining her position as Community Coach to a flat water club, she had a new challenge to conquer and learnt the art of sprint and marathon, in which she also competed.

Ruth learnt to paddle at Stafford and Stone Canoe Club at the age of 11 and had become a key member of the club. She had just completed a three-year post as Community Sports Coach, was a member of the committee, editor of the club's newsletter and planned to continue a voluntary coach position with the club.

### Trentham Canoe Club

Ruth helped found Trentham Canoe Club in 2006 and had just taken on a new role of Participation Coach, in addition to a brand new National post of Disability Officer. As Secretary to Trentham Water Sports Association, the umbrella organisation to Trentham Canoe Club she was instrumental in the efforts to establish the newly completed £350,000 boathouse at Trentham Lake and the article about this achievement in December's Canoe Focus was the last one she wrote. The new boathouse is filled with her achievements as many of the boats gracing the new racking system were gained by her diligence and knack of knowing where to seek and procure grants.

Her commitment to the cause of canoeing was 100%; she lived, breathed and even wrote canoeing seven days a week. Whatever she did, she did with the sports interest at heart. At Trentham she worked with adults, children in all age groups, as well as disabled people and those with learning difficulties. At Stone she coached mainly the juniors, who through her efforts and support are achieving great things in the sport of slalom. Ruth also provided instruction for Scouts and Guides in Staffordshire and helped pupils on GCSE PE courses at the local high schools and colleges.

Her personal input to both clubs was phenomenal and among the awards received by Ruth for her coaching work was the Professional BCU Sports Coach 2007 and third place in the Tom Brennan Service to Sports in the City of Stoke on Trent Sports Awards 2008.



### World record

Ruth at the age of 23 was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma and whilst unable to participate in sport herself utilised her talents to raise £17,500 for three cancer charities by organising a world record 24-hour canoe polo match. She then repeated this with a 26-hour polo match which raised £10,000 and went on to raise further funds for cancer charities through long distance marathon; racing K2, with further events to have followed.

Her drive, energy and enthusiasm especially at events will not be forgotten, she thrived on the belief that joining in and doing your personal best was the most important goal and just doing that made you a winner! We aim to carry on her legacy working together in the various clubs and organisations, as individuals and a team, as paddlers, coaches and committee members to continue her 'dream'.

The family sent donations in memory of Ruth to MacMillan Cancer Care and Mountain Rescue Services.

### Philippa and Keith Sunderland

## In brief

### Canoe England Coaching Conference

Canoe England held their second National Coach Conference over the weekend of January 16-17th at Wyboston Conference Centre, just outside Bedford. The purpose built conference centre was fantastic with excellent food and accommodation as well as a first class conference hall and numerous workshop rooms.

Despite the bad weather over 200 coaches attended the conference (a 180% increase on last year). The freezing conditions meant that we had to run all of our workshops indoors, but some creativity on the part of our presenters allowed the sessions to run, with lots of really useful content for the coaches.

With the success of the conference it looks like we will be putting the event on again next year!

### Scandinavian third leg

April 2010 will see the start to the third leg of Jeff Allen's attempt to circumnavigate Scandinavia by kayak and ski. This leg shall also mark the creation of a new team, which will consist of Jeff, Jim Frampton and Petr Major. The journey shall take them from Havnømaden, which lies 30 miles south of the Arctic Circle to the small Russian border town of Kirkenes. They will then paddle north through the Lofoten Islands around Nordkap, Europe's most northerly headland and then on through the Barents Sea to Kirkenes. Follow the expedition on [www.expeditionpaddler.com](http://www.expeditionpaddler.com)

### Selected from hundreds to train towards 2012 Olympics

Kerry Blewett, an RNLI lifeguard who patrols the beaches in west Cornwall has been selected to train as part of the GB sprint kayak team working towards London's 2012 Olympics.

In October 2008 Kerry entered a UK Sport and English Institute of Sport (EIS) talent recruitment drive, which set out to find highly competitive sportswomen with the potential to become champions in a number of targeted Olympic sports. Over 900 female athletes were tested during Phase One, with 26 progressing to the Phase Two assessments for GB canoeing.

As one of seven girls out of the 26 who met the required performance standards, Kerry went on to take part in an intensive talent confirmation programme designed to better explore her general adaptability to sprint kayaking.

Kerry will now train at the National Water Sports Centre in Nottingham for eight months before moving to London in the spring to continue training with the national team.

Kerry who is 23 and from Penzance, has been a lifeguard in Cornwall for five years.

## In brief

### The Big Paddle

Symonds Yat 15-16th May

To celebrate thirty years making gear for paddlers, Palm Equipment invites you to come for a paddle at this new and unique event. Set on the stunning River Wye, Symonds Yat East will play host to a very special paddling weekend that will bring back the feel of the grand river tours of the 1980s.

Palm will be providing shuttles to several stretches of river, as well as a variety of unique guided paddle trips and of course as it's a birthday party there will be free gifts for everyone! Amongst the activities on offer will be nature tours, multi sport challenges, free 'have a go' demo boat trials and coaching sessions. There may even be a return of the legendary Paddles Up! Visit: [www.thebigpaddle.com](http://www.thebigpaddle.com)

### New British Leisure Show

Organisers of the new British Leisure Show have announced that watersports, including canoeing are a key feature of the new show which will be held at the Royal Windsor Racecourse, from Friday 19th – Sunday 21st March 2010.

The show will feature a range of sports, activities, products and destinations to inspire you for the summer season and a great range of free activities at the show to test your fitness, including canoeing. With Tickets from just £5.00, free parking, free show guides, onsite camping and dedicated boat trips to Windsor town, it's definitely a show worth visiting.

To celebrate the show launch, we have a special '2 for 1' ticket deal for Canoe Focus readers, which means you can take the whole family (two adults and up to four children) for just £10.00! Visit [www.britishleisureshow.com](http://www.britishleisureshow.com) and enter the code 'canoefocus' when making your purchase.

### Paddling companions

Calling those who never have and always wanted to, or those that already have and just know! An experienced 50-something couple is looking for paddling companions for a 15-20 day open canoe trip on moving water in Canada, this summer. The choice of river not yet fixed – we are open to suggestions? Please contact Geoff at [canoered@hotmail.com](mailto:canoered@hotmail.com).

### Photo competition winners

We are pleased to announce that the overall winner for 2009 in the photo competition is Kath Pigdon who wins a Sony DSC W190B digital camera. We are also pleased to announce that the winner for November's photo competition is Graham Jones and for December, the winner is Jenny Brammer. Each will receive a £20 Cotswold voucher. Congratulations to all the winners! Please turn to page 56 to see all the photos.

## Obituary

### Stephen Chapman

The members of the Causeway Coast Kayak Association would like to express their deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Stephen Chapman, who drowned in a tragic canoeing accident on the River Bann. Stephen was an active member and highly respected coach who held the position of treasurer within the club. He had led numerous trips on the River Bann and was often accompanied by his son Duncan who shared his enthusiasm for the environment and the sport.

On the afternoon of Sunday 13th of December, Stephen was leading a CCKA 'family paddle' from Kilrea and had safely led the group to Carnroe Weir where they portaged their canoes past the lock gates. Stephen then made a conscious decision to canoe over the weir on his own and experienced difficulties.

Stephen had brought his family to live near the Causeway coast so that they could enjoy the natural beauty of the area and he welcomed the opportunity to explore it by canoe. We have many happy memories to treasure of family camping expeditions in beautiful surroundings with such a humble and well-respected man.

Stephen was head of administration in the Faculty of Life and Health Sciences at the University of



Ulster at Coleraine and was held in the highest regard by his colleagues.

We would like to thank everybody who participated in the rescue attempt including the members of the group, local landowners and the emergency services. The entire paddling community is in shock at the loss of such a perfect gentleman and family man. Our thoughts and prayers are with Stephen's family, his wife Lesley and children Orla and Duncan.

**Robin Ruddock**

## Obituary

### Chris Wheeler

The kayaking world was both shocked and deeply saddened by the death of Chris Wheeler on 21st November whilst running the Upper Dart, a run he knew well and always loved to paddle.

Chris was an exceptional white water boater who had paddled extensively all over the world and who had dedicated his life to adventurous white water. He was incredibly focused and achieved so much during his life. A typical week during the season would see him monitoring water levels all week to work out where the best water would be at the weekend.

As a teenager Chris started his paddling at Riverside in Oxford and then joined Kingfisher in Abingdon from which he branched into expedition paddling.

He wrote regularly for canoeing publications as well as writing a large section of the English Whitewater Guide. As always he was meticulous in his research for the book, going out to monitor weir levels in the Thames Valley on a regular basis. On returning from a particularly tree infested exploratory trip on the lesser known streams on Dartmoor, I remember him coming in



saying that if he looked like he'd been dragged through a hedge backwards that's probably because he had!

In the last few years Chris had also developed a love of sea kayaking, which again, he went into in a big way. He particularly enjoyed this because it was something both he and Julia could do together.

Despite all these achievements, Chris remained a quietly spoken and modest figure who was always willing to talk and share. He had a great sense of humour and a caring personality and was a very dear friend to so many of us. He was always fun to be with and inspired so many.

His death has affected many people, as witnessed by the number of people at his funeral. There is a big hole in many people's lives but Chris would want us all to carry on doing what he loved so much.

**David Surman**

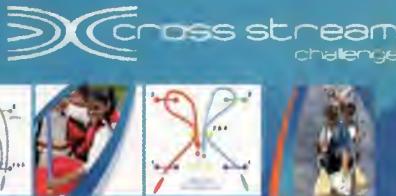


**Canoe 2012 Events- Something for everyone**  
Local Sprint and Slalom Events

A Canoe England Initiative designed to develop and widen the pathways into our Olympic Discipline Events.

Canoe 2012 Events are aimed at those already involved in Paddlesport who would not normally have the opportunity to try the Olympic disciplines of sprint and slalom. The initiative will be reaching out to clubs, centres and paddlers from across the community providing local, accessible events tailored to the needs of the participants, providing something for everyone.

To find out more and to find dates of an event near you, visit [www.canoe-england.org.uk](http://www.canoe-england.org.uk) or contact Your Regional Paddlesport Development Officer

Designed around the BCU Long Term Paddler Development Programme **Cross Stream Challenge** has something for everyone. It aims to develop and challenge boat handling skills, strokes and moves, whilst blending Slalom, Freestyle, Polo, Wild Water and Flat Water Racing as well as Surf. Its flexibility in delivery focuses on the paddler- not just the boat, enabling paddlers to develop skills based around a predetermined course in a managed and measured environment

The challenges will fully open the doors to our sport for all paddlers, providing an opportunity to experience the many different disciplines and helps coaches spot where an individual is most motivated.

For more Information contact your Home Nation.

# Let the challenge begin

Cross Stream challenge can be purchased at [www.bcushop.org.uk](http://www.bcushop.org.uk)

**A Funtastic Flexible Paddlesport Challenge**



## Don't Forget National Go Paddling week



1st - 9th May 2010

### A 9 day week of Paddlesport inspiration!

**National Go Paddling Week?**

The aim of the week is 'to help and inspire people to go paddling' and this will be achieved by your Club/Centre providing a positive and welcoming paddling experience within a managed environment, a Go Paddling day.

Each club/centre will be encouraged to provide both a taster event at a time which suits your club/centre. All Canoe England are asking, is for your club/centre to run a follow up a session preferably during the week of 29th May – June 6th or just as soon as possible after your Go paddling day.

Let's get as many people paddling as possible during the National Go Paddling week. Events big or small, for beginners to accomplished paddlers now that really is something for everyone!

**How do we get involved?**

To get involved, please contact Kimberley Walsh Development and Participation Team Support Officer – Canoe England Tel: 0845 370 9520 [kimberley.walsh@canoe-england.org.uk](mailto:kimberley.walsh@canoe-england.org.uk)



**Go ahead, give it a go!**

FUN and FLEXIBLE Paddlesport for young people. 5 Awards that take you on a fantastic journey of Paddlesport discovery.

For more Information contact your Home Nation.

<b>Paddlepower Start</b>
An entry level award suitable for taster sessions or part of a series of beginner sessions.
<b>Paddlepower Passport (Equivalent to BCU 1 Star)</b>
Four progressive levels based on 24 topics which can be grouped into Safety Awareness, Paddling Skills, Valued Experiences and Supporting Knowledge.
<b>Paddlepower Discover (Equivalent to BCU 2 Star)</b>
Following on from Passport with a further four levels taking the young paddler to equivalent of 2 Star standard.
<b>Paddlepower Explore (Supporting levels 7-9)</b>
Explore takes the paddler on an extensive journey exploring the great variety of Paddlesport- participating in events and journeys in competitive and non-competitive disciplines.
<b>Paddlepower Excel</b>
Excel is the highest level of the Paddlepower awards.

Paddlepower resources can be purchased at [www.bcushop.org.uk](http://www.bcushop.org.uk)

British Canoe Union, 18 Market Place, Bingham, NG13 8AP



## In brief

### Zac Wins Stan Calvert Scholarship

Zac Allin from Tyne Valley Canoe Club was awarded the Stan Calvert Scholarship comprising a £500 grant and trophy at the 2009 Tynedale Sports Awards ceremony in November. The presentation was made by Newcastle United goalkeeper, Steve Harper. Zac was recognised for his achievements following his successes at Fairnilee Slalom where he won the Under 11 Slalom Championships and his achievements in the Wavehopper series during 2008/09.

Zac has been paddling his kayak since the age of four and is quite at home paddling and playing Grade 3 water. He is just as happy playboating as he is competing in slalom, wild water racing, and freestyle or playing canoe polo. In essence he just loves paddling along with his mum, dad and sister.

With the escalating costs of petrol these grants will help support travel to events and training sessions in 2010 and Zac is looking for some new lightweight paddles and possibly a new helmet and spraydeck.

Zac said, "It was really exciting to get the award and Steve Harper was very nice. I was very happy! My thanks go to Tyne Valley Insurance. The money will make a big difference and I'm looking forward to some new paddles."

Chloe Glendenning from Hexham Canoe Club was awarded a £200 cheque as a runner up to the award for the second year running.

The Stan Calvert Annual Scholarship is awarded annually by Tynedale Sports Council, to any young person who has displayed excellence in their chosen sport, but who can also be encouraged to develop even further an outstanding potential.

### Grassroots grants for larger kayaks

Halifax Canoe Club has been successful in securing a Grassroots Grant of £3,400 from the Community Foundation for Calderdale. This has funded the purchase of six new large volume kayaks plus equipment to allow more adults to try the sport.

Les Ford from the club explains "If a kayak is too small for someone, it does nothing to help their enjoyment of the sport, it's uncomfortable, unstable, they are worried about being able to get out if they capsize and it hampers the development of basic kayaking skills. Having these new kayaks means larger adults can enjoy the sport and develop their skills quickly."

The new kayaks are already being used in winter swimming pool session, at coached sessions at the club and on river trips.

Anyone interested in joining the club can find out more from [www.halifaxcanoe.org.uk](http://www.halifaxcanoe.org.uk) or can contact either Mark Limmer on 01706 812265 or by emailing [halifaxcc@ntlworld.com](mailto:halifaxcc@ntlworld.com)

## Tyne Tour success

**Hexham Tyne Tour on 6-9th November was once again a paddling success. The tour is organised and run by Hexham Canoe Club steering group. Many of the regional volunteers from clubs in the region give their support for car parking, camping and safety duties amongst all the other tasks. Organisation of this huge event starts straight after the previous one and could not be possible without the strong core of committee members.**

But what is it that makes this event so huge, attracting over 1000 paddlers to the largest recreational tour in Europe with the largest Ceilidh dance gathering of 800 partygoers?

The region offers a wide range of paddles on the Tyne and other rivers in the North East from Grades 1-3 (4 high water).

The expected release from Kielder Dam did not arrive till late on Saturday. Shuttle buses to the start points are a good help, as is the camping on Tyne Green. The town is certainly eager to open its doors to the visitors as it boosts the economy at a

quiet time of the year. The other noticeable change was that the Tyne Tour committee put safety at the forefront of the event and encouraged groups and leaders to paddle within their capability. This was very noticeable with the safety cover at the bottom of the Warden Gorge (Grade 3) having very few swimmers. Thanks to all paddlers, coaches and leaders for taking notice of this safety notice and maintaining the excellent safety record for the event.

The Tyne descent race included Wavehoppers, open canoes and kayaks. There were a few more Topo duo boats than usual to add to the fun. The first boat home in a time of 1:05 minutes was Ray Hudspith (PDO for the North East region).

The committee would like to thank everyone for

the help and support and would like to thank the trade stands for the generous prizes, which they donated for the race. Profits made from the weekend go to the North East region to help with the regional funds that support clubs and coach development.



Above: A competitor in the race.

## Yorkshire news

I would like to thank Dick Constable, who is standing down as chairman, for his support to the region for the last six years. Canoe England and your Regional Development Team (RDT) have put in plenty of time, effort and money in developing two superb facilities in Yorkshire. As these move from construction into the operational phase, we will be looking for your support.

At the Washburn, facilities are taking shape. There have been substantial changes to the riverbed over the winter months. This could well be one of England's best white water and slalom training venues! Release dates for 2010 have now been added to [www.yorcic.org.uk/washburn](http://www.yorcic.org.uk/washburn)

The clubhouse at Manvers Lake has been built and is being fitted out this spring. The newly formed Manvers Waterfront Boat Club is attracting many members. This will be an excellent flat water facility and has the potential for sprint, polo and coaching both on the water and classroom based.

I am pleased to announce that this year's coaching weekends have a great line up, with Level 5 coaches and keynote speakers being brought in to run sessions. Applications are now being taken for the weekends of 13-14th and 27-28th March, which will again be held at Aldwark Scout Centre near Boroughbridge. For more details, contact John Lucas [rco@yorcic.org.uk](mailto:rco@yorcic.org.uk) or see [www.yorcic.org.uk/coaching](http://www.yorcic.org.uk/coaching)

To keep all clubs in Yorkshire and Humberside up-to-date, I urge all club chairs/secretaries who read this to email me [rdtchair@yorcic.org.uk](mailto:rdtchair@yorcic.org.uk) as soon as possible so that we can ensure we have the correct contact details for each club. Our next RDT meeting will be on 1st March in Leeds. Please can club and discipline reps that are unable to attend send a brief report to [secretary@yorcic.org.uk](mailto:secretary@yorcic.org.uk) so that we know what you are involved with?

Robert Wright

# FEBRUARY OFFERS

## STAR OFFERS



## PACKAGES



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## In brief

### Useful feedback from regional club forums

The East region club forum came as a bit of a surprise to the people attending, when they walked through the door of the Sawston village church in November. Meanwhile at Leicester Outdoor Pursuits, a joint forum between East Midlands and West Midlands was held at the centre in the same month.

Presentations from Canoe England and discussions in groups containing representatives from several clubs were well received by the attendees. Feedback indicated that information provided by Canoe England was very useful to many clubs but and perhaps more so, was the opportunity for club representatives to interact and, basically, pinch ideas from each other! Indeed the general consensus from the delegates was to provide two distinct opportunities next year. Firstly, discussion groups for clubs to talk to each other about their plans, procedures, policies etc and secondly a club forum in each region!

### Foundation modules

#### in high demand

Team Central coaches are seeking to enhance their coach education through recognised Continuous Development (CPD) by attendance at one or more foundation modules. Colin Broadway and team of LCOs are busy in the East Midlands and Ian Dallaway and team of LCOs are developing their programme in the West Midlands. An excellent example of collaboration by Canoe England staff and regional volunteers!

### Lincolnshire award successes

At the Lincolnshire Sports Partnership Sports Awards, Lincoln Canoe Club really made their presence felt with a nomination in each of three different categories: Coach of the Year (Gary Quittenton), Veteran Sportsperson of the Year (Don Robertson) and Young Sportsperson of the Year (Peter Quittenton). Well done to Gary, Don and Peter.

### Foundation Modules in high demand

Across Team Central, coaches are seeking to enhance their coach education through recognised Continuous Development (CPD) by attendance at one or more Foundation Modules. Colin Broadway and his team of LCOs are busy in the East Midlands with Ian Dallaway and his team of LCOs are developing their programme in the West Midlands.

Fitness for Paddlesports, Performance Planning for Paddlesport Coaches and Mentoring for Paddlesport Coaches seem to be particularly popular. Another great example of collaboration by Canoe England staff and regional volunteers!

# Norwich celebrates

**Norwich Canoe Club is celebrating their most successful competitive year ever since its formation some 20 years ago by a group of local scouts. From this handful of founder members and in a relative short time the club has grown to boast a 100 plus active membership and to be one of the top performing racing clubs in the country. Their major achievement this year was to win the Hasler Finals for the first time.**

This year they have had three members selected for international events. Former European Junior Champion Tim Pendle competing in K2 was fifth in the European Marathon Championships and tenth in the Marathon World Championships. Oli Rix won the under 16 class of the Tour of Gudena and Albert Hicks was fourth. Fiona Grady and Ali Pendle, racing together in K2, brought home silver medals from the Masters Marathon Worlds.

Training sessions are organised every day of the week all year round – more than once a day during the summer and special junior training days during school holidays. Club holidays, both canoeing based and other activities are very popular.



Above: Hasler Final team members celebrate their win.

Head coach Dyson Pendle, benefits from the help of a community club coach and a strong team of volunteer club coaches and helpers who tirelessly give of their time for the benefit of the club. The club have achieved Clubmark, Top Performance Club and Top Community Club awards and have had BCU Coach of the Year.

Norwich canoeists enjoy access to excellent water facilities. They are based on the banks of the River Yare, which is not affected by floods, adverse high tides, freezing over etc so enables unlimited, year-round use. There also have access to two lakes which support straight lane racing and shore-based coaching.

The club is one of the two lead partners in working to build a new clubhouse at a cost of approximately £1 million. The new Whitlingham Boathouses facility will provide a centre of excellence as it is shared with Norwich Rowing Club, University of East Anglia Boat Club and rowers from Norwich School and Norwich High School. More importantly, it will be open to all members of the community providing state of the art facilities.

# Fundraising slalom

Proteus Canoe Club attracted 79 entries to their slalom event at Peterborough's Orton Mere on Sunday December 13th from all over the area and it was not just die hard experienced canoeists, nearly half the entries were from the lower divisions with 16 from Division 4 including Danny Acquisto, who was entering his first ever slalom!

The event was the second of two winter events hosted by the club, which gave out prizes in all categories and age groups and divisions, which is brilliant for encouraging youngsters. Congratulations and thanks to Colin Woodgate and his team.

The event is a good fundraiser for the club, which could be an incentive for a few more clubs to open up in the closed season. Stafford and Stone run three events early in the New Year at their Stone site (the last on 21st Feb). Their course is really good for beginners without being boring, has changing facilities and excellent catering. For clubs wanting to prepare youngsters (or

maybe those not so young) for the new season or a new discipline these events are ideal. Everybody from the club can enter as the event caters for all divisions, plenty of time for practice and there are more experienced paddlers on hand to give new comers some help and advice.

For more information visit [www.canoeslalom.co.uk](http://www.canoeslalom.co.uk).



Above: James Prowse of Hemel Hempstead CC.  
Photo: Sue Prowse.

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## In brief

### Thames Canoe Rally

This summer will be the first year for the Thames Canoe Rally, which has been created so anyone can enjoy the real challenge of paddling the whole length of the non-tidal Thames – a distance of 123 miles with 44 locks. Paddlers can use Canadian canoes or kayaks and have the whole summer to complete the rally. The start will be at St John's Lock and the finish at Teddington Lock. The rally expects participants to do the journey in convenient steps anytime from the first of April until September.

The Rally is being supported by Canoe England and sponsored by a new charity 'Age Unlimited', which has been established to provide support for the most marginalised groups in the country. Contact Richard Nissen on 020 7830 9337.

### Broxbourne WWCC Forum

On 3rd March, the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority and Canoe England would like to invite you to a forum on the new white water facility being built in the park for the 2012 Olympics and beyond. The forum is being held at the Lee Valley Athletics between 19:00 and 21:00. For further information please visit the website [www.gowhitewater.co.uk](http://www.gowhitewater.co.uk).

### Noel Humphrey

Noel Humphrey who was Access Officer for both the South East and London now only covers the South East region, including the following rivers: River Medway (Surrey).

West Rother (Sussex).

He has also recently moved house and his new contact details are as follows: 11 Kiln Lane, Brockham, Betchworth, Surrey, RH3 7LX. Email: [electron@nhumphrey.freemail.co.uk](mailto:electron@nhumphrey.freemail.co.uk)

### South East region ACM

The South East ACM was conducted on 5th December, with Jim Rossiter of Wey Kayak Club being elected as chair. The team are looking for more volunteers from to push this group forward. For more information contact Paul Newman at [paulnewmanpaddlesport@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:paulnewmanpaddlesport@blueyonder.co.uk).

### Bell Boat Championships

Dorney Lake is to become the home of the National Bell Boat Championships on Saturday 31st July. Around 70 volunteers will be needed to run this event, which has been branded a Canoe 2012 event. A training day for volunteers will be run on Sunday 27th June. Contact Nigel Wear on 01753 832756.

### Grassroot WW kayaks

Basingstoke and Deane Canoe Club has been awarded a Grassroots grant of £5,000 to buy white water kayaks and safety equipment. Grassroots is an exciting new funding programme aimed at helping small, local voluntary organisations throughout England. For more information on visit [www.badpaddlers.org](http://www.badpaddlers.org).

# A taste of Hawaii

**Given the number of storm warnings announced for the weekend of 14-15th November, one would have been forgiven for keeping well tucked up in bed. Not so for the intrepid members of the newly formed St Ives Outrigger and Paddle Sport Club who revelled in the balmy waters at Carbis Bay. For those who witnessed the event from shore could have been forgiven for thinking that they may well have been in Hawaii!**

If you have not been lucky enough to have travelled to Hawaii and marvelled at these majestic ocean craft, a Hawaiian outrigger is a canoe designed to travel hundreds of miles in open water. The outrigger compared to other types of canoes, can be quite fast, yet is also capable of being paddled and sailed in rougher water because of the stabilising float on one side.

Intriguingly how did they find their way here in St Ives? Founding club member Glenn Eldridge of Ocean Sports UK had this to say, "After having travelled to Hawaii for a race in 2001 I was

awestruck by these beautiful craft and had always thought that they would be fantastic here in this country, despite the cooler climes." Nearly nine years on and Glenn has nearly fulfilled his ambition.

At present the club will focus on the outrigger only but will also, in warmer months, incorporate ocean ski paddling along with the rapidly expanding sport of stand up paddling, also a Hawaiian sport. "My ambition is to really engage the local people of St Ives with the ocean, I have spent countless hours training along this coast and I would like to share this experience; either by paddling an outrigger or chasing exhilarating 'runners' using ocean skis."

During the winter months the club will meet every other Sunday running between one and three sessions from 9.30 onwards; if you are interested in attending one of the club paddling sessions email [glenn@oceansportuk.com](mailto:glenn@oceansportuk.com) or phone 07533 0695031.



**Above:** A taster session in progress.

# Brave canal challenge



**Now in its ninth year, The Ross Warland Canal Challenge was set up in memory of 21-year old Ross, a dedicated young paddler from Banbury and District Canoe Club, who tragically died of bone cancer in 2000.**

29th November 2009, saw 175 paddlers, of all ages and abilities, brave the horrendous early-morning rain, to turn out and race. The K1 straight-through honours went to Aaron Jordan in a record-breaking time of 2.41.20, while the winning K2 team of Jean Watson and Richard Lovell completed the 20-mile course in just over three hours. In the K1 relay, first prize went to Mark and Jack Chiderstone and the K2 relay winners were Albert Hicks and Matt Robinson

with Oliver Rix and Tom Deacon. The mixed K1/K2 race was won by James Webster and Vicki and Adrian Croucher.

Banbury would like to thank all those that have supported the race and to extend an invitation for next year.



**Above:** Competitors in action.

# Contact the Participation Team

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# Canoe England Volunteer

Volunteers around the country travelled to Bedford last month to attend the Canoe England Volunteer and Recognition Awards 2009. Almost 200 people gathered at this annual celebration of volunteers' contributions to the sport, which took place during the Canoe England Coach Conference.

Canoe slalom C2 European and World Championships medallist Etienne Stott was on hand to present the awards alongside Shaun Dawson, Chief Executive of Lee Valley Regional Park, who sponsored the event.

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## This year's winners are:

### Young Coach

**Ushma Chohan**

Ushma has thrown herself into the sport both as a paddler and coach. As a member and coach at Leicester's Paddleplus, Ushma jumped at the opportunity when Leicester Clubs for Young People invited young paddlers from local clubs to help develop a new canoe club. Motivated by her own experience of caring for her younger brother, Ushma has been a key voice in the development of this club and is now vice chair.

Last year, Ushma qualified as a Level 1 coach and was renowned for her maturity and sense of humour throughout the course. Her thirst for learning compliments her high level of enthusiasm.

### Paddlepower Coach

**Stephen Moore**

Stephen has been volunteering for more than 20 years at Itchen South District Canoe Club. As a Level 3 canoe and Level 2 kayak coach, Stephen is also a coach tutor. Stephen recognised the gap for young people five years ago and set up a Saturday session based on the Paddlepower scheme. Since then, several hundred young members have participated.

Stephen has provided the opportunity for young people to progress from novice up to competent paddlers and ensures that recreational and competitive opportunities are available to everyone.



Above: Stephen Moore – Paddlepower Coach.



Above: Kari Martin – Female Volunteer Coach.



Above: Kevin Tidbury – Male Volunteer Coach.

### Female Volunteer Coach

**Kari Martin**

For over nine years, Kari has dedicated herself to the sport and Leighton Buzzard Canoe Club. As a Level 4 placid water coach, and Level 3 competition racing coach, there is no end to Kari's list of voluntary roles.

Not only does she coach, Kari is also a bell boat helm; club coach coordinator; oversees the Cadet Leader awards at the club; helps deliver FSRT courses and is also the club's joint sprint team leader. Away from the club, Kari officiates at regattas and has been involved in profiling events and training camps within the UK and overseas.

# and Recognition Awards



**Above:** Siobhan Terrington – Young Volunteer.



**Above:** Vivien Mugford – Community Volunteer.

## Male Volunteer Coach

### Kevin Tidbury

Having completed his 2 Star award, Kevin started work at Guildford Sea Cadets when he was 18 years old. His love of the job and paddling was enough to start Kevin on the coaching qualifications and he soon became a Level 3 coach.

Kevin later took on the responsibility of district canoe representative, which involved promoting the sport to eight other units within Surrey.

Running regattas and Star award weekends, Kevin soon brought out the best results from cadets and guided many to national medals.

In his spare time, Kevin is working with the Surrey police to help victims of crime. As a joint venture, Kevin provides children aged 10 to 14 years, the opportunity to experience paddlesport and build up their confidence.

## Teacher of 2009

### Amanda Western

Brimrod Primary School in Rochdale has a predominantly Asian community while the area is renowned for its urban deprivation. Amanda is passionate about providing opportunities for the pupils at Brimrod to experience canoeing and has succeeded in incorporating the sport as part of a formal education to develop skills such as speaking, listening and social skills.

As well as organising six weekly Paddlepower programmes for the children, Amanda organises residential trips for the school. Her enthusiasm has also seen her set up, develop and coach a small junior club called Northern Star Canoe and Kayak Club.

## Employed Coach

### Paul Ratcliffe

Paul is a frontline coach employed by the BCU for the World Class Olympic Programme. Following his own successful career as Olympic Silver

medallist at the Sydney Olympics in 2000, Paul quickly made an impressive transition into coaching.

For the past five years, Paul has been coaching the senior women's K1 slalom paddlers within the programme. His impact on his athlete's development as well as the sport has been immense and is renowned as one of the best technical coaches in the world – outlined by the outstanding results achieved by his athletes last year.

In 2009 alone, Paul guided the slalom women to team gold medals at both the World Championships and the Slalom European Championships. In addition, Lizzie Neave picked up a bronze medal at the World Championships under his guidance.

## Young Volunteer

### Siobhan Terrington

Siobhan has been a member of White Rose Canoe Club for five years. As a keen paddler, the 19-year old is now a key volunteer within the club and will not hesitate to help out wherever she can.

Whether it is helping newer members, fitting out boats, or correcting paddling techniques, Siobhan is always patient and willing to help. As Youth Coordinator, Siobhan sits on the club committee while her sister follows in her footsteps as Youth Representative.

## Access Volunteer

### Patricia Green

Patricia dedicates her time to volunteering at Ribble Canoe Club. As access volunteer for the club, Patricia has successfully negotiated long-standing access agreements in the North West of England. Over the years, she has built up relationships with local angling clubs and

societies to work towards providing greater access to water.

Patricia, who is retired, excels in both her commitment and enthusiasm towards the sport and helps guide, support and encourage other people to try paddling. As a volunteer for 15 years, Patricia is also editor of the club's magazine as well as organiser of the Flat Earth Kayak tour. She continues to encourage young paddlers to try the sport, many of which have gone on to become national level paddlers and coaches.

## Community Volunteer

### Vivienne Mugford

As her nomination states Vivienne "is the glue that holds Shepperton Canoe Club together." She devotes much of her life, especially the last 10 years, to making things happen and keeping everyone organised, positive and cheerful.

Vivienne can be seen organising first aid courses, welcoming newcomers, painting the clubhouse walls and cleaning the toilets. Whilst at home, she can be found writing press releases and working through the tasks for Clubmark.

Wherever something needs doing, Vivienne will be there! As if that isn't enough, she also sits on two club committees – one at Shepperton and the other at Addlestone Canoe Club. Vivienne is always doing whatever it takes and is definitely a star behind the scenes.

## Impact on Disability

### Matthew Baines

Matthew has been a member of the Newark based four A's (Adventure Activities for All Abilities) for a number of years both as a national level paddler as well as a volunteer. Matthew helps out during coaching sessions, unloads and loads boats, clean debris from the river as well as acting as a mentor for the younger members through giving them valuable support, advice and encouragement. He is a keen fundraiser and is willing to help where needed.

Matthew has also signed up to his local district's sports volunteering scheme, which enables young local people to gain rewards for their hours dedicated to volunteering. Despite only starting in May, Matthew was the first person to achieve an award by working towards his gold hours. Having Ataxic Cerebral Palsy, Matthew never lets his disability get in way of volunteering.

# Volunteers



Above: Caroline Barnes – Official of the Year.

## Official of the Year

### Caroline Barnes

Caroline, a member of Southampton Canoe Club, has volunteered for over 20 years. Caroline is a key member of the Devizes to Westminster race team. Her attention to detail is outstanding and testament to her part played in coordinating the presentation of trophies at the event.

Known for her professional and focussed character, Caroline has also taken a lead in campaigning for the veteran ladies to be represented at the national sprint regattas. Her determination has seen her raise support for the campaign from many clubs.

## Outstanding Contributions

### Andy Barclay

Andy has played an active role within the South West region as a Level 5 coach and assessor. His dedication has led to the development of coaching throughout the region and his passion has been key to making things happen. Until recently, he was also RCO for Devon and Cornwall where many coaches have benefited from his courses, workshops and expertise.

### Wiktoria Daniels

Over ten years ago, Wiktoria developed the Hasler Race Management computer programme. This programme calculates and records results providing a welcome relief to volunteers. Wiki, as she is more affectionately known, is continually improving the programme, which now enables calculations of athlete promotions and demotions, rankings and providing an entry system for events. Wiki has worked hard to ensure that the programme can also be used for Lightning races as well as the National Marathon Championships. She is always available by phone or email to help the 50 race organisers who use the programme, responding with her usual patient, cheerful and positive manner.

### David Cassell

David has been a Level 3 coach for 20 years and club chairman for Waveney Valley Canoe Club for more than 10. As chair, David has guided the club into thriving prosperity and been instrumental in ensuring the club is friendly and welcoming. Last year, he provided sessions to a group of young



Above: Andy Barclay – Outstanding Contribution.



Above: Wiktoria Daniels – Outstanding Contribution.



Above: David Cassell – Outstanding Contribution.

### Martin Davies

For over 20 years now, Martin has been a coach and committee member of Edmonton Canoe Club. More recently, Martin started a group at Herts Young Mariners Base and was successful in bidding for £70,000 to provide them with equipment.

Martin has used his skills to help one young woman with learning disabilities who had very little self-esteem or confidence on the water. Under his guidance, she is now racing and taking part in slalom competitions. As well as coaching, Martin organises training trips ensuring the health and safety aspects are in place for each trip.



Above: Martin Davies – Outstanding Contribution.

### Peter Schofield

Peter has been chairman of wild water racing for the past 10 years and has been responsible for the significant rise in participation within the discipline. As part of his role, Peter has developed a training structure, which supports paddlers from raw talent through to world champion level.

Peter has introduced several new initiatives including a youth race series and a development academy to improve general paddling and marathon skills. Peter has also led bids to host two major competitions and ensured both the 2002 Junior World Championships and 2005 World Cup Series were a huge success.



Above: Peter Schofield – Outstanding Contribution.

### Tibor Herbent

Tibor has been a volunteer at Royal Leamington Spa Canoe Club for over 20 years. He has coached athletes to international standard and for many years has organised the club's annual river race. He has been instrumental in organising sponsorship for the club and works hard to raise its publicity in the local papers.



Above: Tibor Herbent – Outstanding Contribution.

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# Volunteers



Above: Dave Royle – Outstanding Contribution.

## Dave Royle

Dave is a pillar of strength at Stafford and Stone Canoe Club. As secretary for the club, Dave has been an integral part of the committee and was previously club chairman.

His previous roles also include website and newsletter editor, as well as being a part of the slalom committee in the 90s. Dave is now a key volunteer within canoe slalom running many events himself and helping to set up courses at events including the World and Junior Championships.

## Dave Mackay

Dave has been volunteering in the sport for some 30 years and has been fundamental to the development of the sport in Sea Cadets providing coach training and development to fellow coaches. For the cadets, Dave is coach and mentor while opening doors to the wider sport of canoeing. He has introduced sea paddling, white water kayaking, slalom and open canoeing to the cadets and staff.

Dave is also a key volunteer at Winchester and District CC as coaching officer and club chairman. Through his hard work, dedication and enthusiasm, Dave is the driving force of the club helping them to achieve Clubmark accreditation.

## Jerry Rogers

As a member of Blackwater Valley Canoe Club, Jerry can boast of holding every main committee role during the last 23 years. During his career he has been chairman, treasurer, secretary, trip organiser, youth officer and club coach.

Jerry has been successful in introducing flat water racing to the predominantly white water dominated club producing excellent results along the way. He has also introduced Paddlepower into the club.

## Sue and Steve Bright

Over the last five years, Sue and Steve have been managing and running the timing team for slalom. They have built from scratch a new mobile timing system spending many hours testing it out.

More recently, the couple volunteered at the European Canoe Slalom Championships working with the Siwidata personnel. They organised the start and finish teams as well as the results team.



Above: Dave Mackay – Outstanding Contribution.



Above: Jerry Rogers – Outstanding Contribution.

## Outstanding Contributions at the European Canoe Slalom Championships

### Paul Tuffin

Paul was one of those volunteers who threw themselves into their role at the championships and dedicated their time to making it one of the best events canoe slalom has ever seen.

Despite training to be a paediatric nurse, Paul found the time to assist Emma Aldridge in the organisation of the stunning opening ceremony and impressive medal ceremonies. His enthusiasm, energy and commitment was outstanding. His efforts ensured that everyone knew what they were doing and even took a trip to the shops to kit out all those who were visible in the medal ceremonies.

### Martyn and Alison Setchell

Martyn and Alison have been volunteering for the last 10 years. They can be found on the river bank at many premier events in their roles as section judges, jury chair or jury member.

Martyn was involved in the course design for both the junior and senior selection events, while both were key to the smooth running at the championships. Alison took on the role of chief judge, dealing with queries and objections with Martyn taking on the role of the chief official responsible for ensuring the event ran to ICF rules.

## Outstanding Award for 2009 European Canoe Slalom Championship Volunteers

### Canoe Slalom Committee

In recognition of all the volunteers who came together in Nottingham to make the championships the successful event that it was.

Volunteers came together from every discipline – not to mention those from outside the sport who had never even seen a canoe slalom event before. Their efforts did not go unnoticed with praise gained from the ICF themselves saying it was "well organised to a level the ICF would like to see all major canoeing championships organised at."

This special award was presented to the Canoe Slalom Committee, on behalf of all the volunteers, as a token of Canoe England's appreciation for their hard work and determination.



Above: Sue and Steve Bright – Outstanding Contribution.



Above: Paul Tuffin – Outstanding Contributions at the European Slalom Championships.



Above: Martyn and Alison Setchell – Outstanding Contributions at the European Slalom Championships.



Above: Canoe Slalom Committee – Outstanding Award for 2009.

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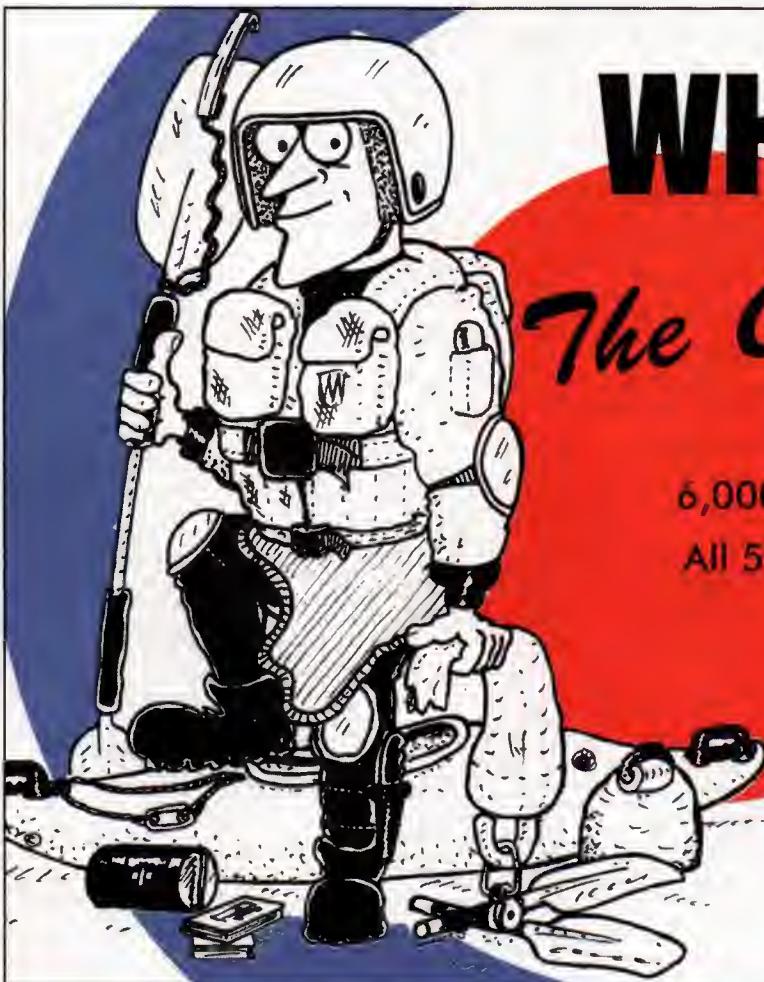
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This year's Canoe England Club of the Year Awards saw a record number of clubs being nominated to compete for this prestigious title. With support from Towergate tlc, the awards offer the opportunity for the top three clubs to win up to £700 in cash as well as the opportunity to battle it out against other sports clubs in the CCPR Sports Club of the Year Awards, later in the year.

 towergate tlc



The standard of nominations was so high this year that the Canoe England judging panel struggled to separate the three short listed clubs to find the overall winner. After much deliberation, the panel agreed a winner but raised the award to the runners up, by £200, to a prize of £500 each in order to recognise both club's strengths.

All three clubs were invited to attend a special presentation following the Canoe England Volunteer and Recognition Awards where the overall winner was revealed.

# Canoe En Year Awa



Above: Banbury CC receive their award by Etienne Stott.

## Club of the Year 2010 Kingston Kayak Club



Based within the tenth most deprived city in England, Kingston Kayak Club have thrown themselves into being the heart of the city. Many people in Hull come from deprived backgrounds and compared to national averages, have higher crime, poorer housing, higher unemployment, lower incomes and low participation levels in sport.

With their hallmark-welcoming atmosphere, the 30-year old club has embraced this challenge and recognised the issues facing the people of Hull. Their fully inclusive attitude is a credit to Kingston's volunteers, many of whom have been with the club for over 20 years. Their philosophy is apparent and the club can be proud of the difference it is making to the local community. Through providing these opportunities the local people are growing in confidence as well as gaining the skills to manage their lives more effectively.

Without a doubt, the club are determined to continue providing opportunities to as many people as possible and last year alone organised sessions and courses for disadvantaged children; children with learning difficulties and young people who are out of education and work. Kingston also provided a six-week course at a care facility for problem teenagers, as well as raised money for 'Help the Heroes'. It is testimony to the club that they are continuing to develop new initiatives and have recently made links with the Humberside Police Operation Lifestyle, a nationally organised youth diversion project.



Below: Kingston Kayak Club being presented with their award by Etienne Stott.

# gland Club of the rds 2010

Sponsored by Towergate tlc



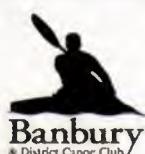
**Above:** Basingstoke CCCC receive their award by Etienne Stott.

As well as focusing on providing opportunities and increasing participation, Kingston Kayak Club are keen to encourage the competitive side of canoeing and even host an annual ranking slalom event. Furthermore, the club's Hull International Canoe Polo event has proved popular with spectators each summer.

Club members are at the forefront of the club with every new 'roller' being praised with the customary cheering celebration. The light-hearted 'Fish Award' has become a highlight within the annual presentation evening and performance awards are presented in disciplines based on both effort and success alongside recognition for coaches and volunteers. Kingston Kayak Club is definitely a club for everyone!

## Runners Up

### Banbury Canoe Club



Described by many local people as friendly and inclusive, Banbury Canoe Club, certainly live up to their reputation as an extended family for everyone. The club aims to bring people together of all ages and abilities and of all sports for that matter.

The club not only take advantage of their ideal Oxfordshire location on the border of two additional counties, but they have also reached out to other local sports clubs to offer the ultimate cross training opportunity. Their links with local triathlon, running and swimming clubs ensures that not only can their members get a well-balanced all-round training programme but also that more people get a taste for canoeing.

Banbury's focus on providing opportunities is balanced well with being community and family orientated whilst having

competitive ambition. Their links with slalom and polo specialists Cherwell Canoe Club complements the racing and touring which is on offer at Banbury. Their partnerships extend to local schools and groups including the guides, scouts, and the air, sea and army cadets. The club has expanded greatly over the last few years and now employs a club-funded Community Coach.

Forefront to the club is their desire to encourage as many people as possible to canoe – they even take their ergos to local shopping centres and rural communities to provide taster sessions. Their female only beginner groups have proved popular and the club encourage disabled people into membership. Taking the extended family philosophy one step further, Banbury have developed an exchange programme to provide links with France, Germany and Hungary!

## Runners Up

### Basingstoke Canal Canoe Club



Last year's runners up, Basingstoke Canal Canoe Club, impressed the judges once again this year. Providing opportunities for young people, adults and families, the club makes the most of the local canal. Their multi-discipline approach provides a welcoming environment while encouraging everyone to get involved – regardless of age and ability.

With over 300 members, the club offers opportunities to the community working closely with the local council, Baptist church, scouts and guide groups as well as the Canal Authority to ensure the water remains litter free. The club also works with young offenders through the Domestic Violence Unit of Hampshire Police and Youth Service and are actively working with Aldershot based charity KC21, which supports disadvantaged children. A new initiative sees the club provide weekly sessions to encourage older people and women to canoe in a child free environment while all members get the opportunity to visit Europe through their organised canoeing holiday.

Members compete at all levels of marathon and racing with some juniors competing for GB. The club also link with Blackwater Valley Canoe Club to enter a combined team in the SW youth polo league. Volunteers work hard to maintain the success of the club at local through to national level and are rewarded annually at their 'thank you' supper. The younger members of the club are equally involved and have formed their own committee. As organisers of the annual Hasler Marathon, Basingstoke balance a family orientated club with the professional organisation of a national event.

**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](mailto:womenandgirls@bcu.org.uk)

It could be argued that there are few greater challenges than the Devizes to Westminster Marathon. However, why is it that most of the entrants who choose to paddle through the night are predominantly men?

**Feature by:**  
Jean Ashley.

**Below:** Adele (left) and Jean (right).



# DW Divas



**Each year, a handful of hardy women set themselves the challenge, knowing they will need to draw on every ounce of their mental and physical strength to cross that finish line. Is it that women, for whatever reason, often find it difficult to commit the time required to train for such an event, or is it they are put off by the male dominance?**

If you fancy the challenge girls, draw up a plan... see it... believe it... and you'll achieve it.

I have been involved in various sports for many years, but over the last 15 I have been a keen triathlete. In October, the end of each season I always set myself a goal for the following year. Having raced in Hawaii at the Ironman World Championships in 2003, I wondered what could possibly be harder. This is when I took up the sport of quadrathlon (swim, kayak, bike, run). Canoeing was something that I did in my younger days, so I thought that adding another discipline to triathlon would be a great new aim. Since then, I have raced in many Quadrathlons, in both the UK and Europe, and

re-joined my old canoe club in Chester, where I had spent many of my teenage years!

I spent a lot of time training with my K2 partner Adele, a well-experienced marathon paddler. Adele and I train well together; she is very calm and in control with a perfect paddle stroke, whilst I tend to be a little too keen and very excitable, a good match for a K2 team or so we think! Last year we decided to enter the National Marathon Championships in the K2 veteran class, and on the back of this success, after a glass of wine or two I asked her to think about the 2009 DW.

We decided to give ourselves a month's trial to see if we could fit the training into our lifestyles, so in October 2008 we began. We worked out how much time we could commit to each week - hours in the K2, extra running and sessions in the gym. One of the other most important things is finding a partner you can trust and train well with, as you spend so much time with them in the months of preparation and training, not to mention on race day. After eating lots of carrots and a trying a couple of night time

**"If you fancy the challenge girls, draw up a plan... see it... believe it... and you'll achieve it"**



**Above:** Jean (back) and Adele (front).



**Above:** Jean (front) and Adele (back).



**Main photo:** Adele (back) and Jean (front).



**Above:** Adele and Jean at the finish

sessions at the canoe club, we had talked ourselves into the challenge by the beginning of November. We compiled a 16-week training programme, and I knew from past experience that consistency was the key. We knew that we would be spending three sessions a week together in the boat, so we tried to make them as interesting as possible. We paddled with other club members, but as we got further into the winter and earlier in the mornings we were out on our own, but we always found plenty to chat about and the GPS always kept us motivated! The weather did get very cold and on several occasions we arrived back from training covered in frost and ice, but the promise of a flask of hot chocolate in the changing rooms kept us going. When it got really cold and we had to increase our hours, we started to do a 'brick session' as triathletes call it. We'd do our two hour paddle on the river, then ran a couple of miles to the swimming baths, we'd then join in with our triathlon club for their one hour 30 minute swim session. This became a great key session each week and worked really well in the depths of the winter. We earned a lot of respect from the triathletes too, which lead to a great training race two weeks before the DW. Chester Tri Club threw down the gauntlet to

Chester Canoe Club and we did a runner versus kayak race along 35 miles of the Llangollen and Shropshire Union Canals. We didn't get much opportunity to practice portages as there were only two locks, but it included three long dark tunnels and two aqueducts. Much to our amazement a runner came in first but the kayakers were close on his heals!

Getting friends and family involved, certainly helps cope with the training load, the support and encouragement we've had from them all has given me great strength. My friend Sue had devised a nutrition plan for us, and my daughter Kate went to great lengths to help us put it into practice – concocting tasty 25 gram carbohydrate chunks! She also worked out our race schedule, and support crew schedules, and she gave me weekly memory tests on all the Thames locks! My husband and other daughter Lucy, helped with housework and cooking to allow me to spend more time on the water, gaining valuable brownie points! We've also had lots of sponsors helping us raise money for Cerebral Palsy Sport. This helped us dig deep when the going got tough, knowing we were not just doing it for us... there was a whole support team willing us on to the finish line!

## Planning

Planning for a race like the DW is incredibly important for me, it's just like baking a cake - five key ingredients blended together perfectly give you the best possible result! These help me focus and I feel they are behind the success of my goals.

### PLAN:

Work out how much time you can give to training each week, be honest with your time allowance and consistent with your training. Write your plan and keep a diary, to motivate you especially if you are having a bad week.

### PERSEVERANCE:

Set yourself short term goals along the way and build on these. If you have a bad session don't worry just look forward to the next and focus on continuous improvement.

### PURPOSE:

Know exactly what your goal for the race is - to win, to beat last year's time, or to finish with a smile and savour every moment!

### PERSPIRATION:

Make the most of your sessions and, make them count. Follow your plan and work hard.

### PASSION:

Have that burning desire to achieve your goal. Visualise going over the finish line, and hold onto your dream, never say never and you will succeed!

Do you feel motivated girls?  
Get planning and remember –  
enjoy the Journey! //

## How did they do?

Jean and Adele started in Devizes at 11.00 on Saturday and finished underneath Westminster Bridge on Sunday at 09.21. They came 38th out of 180 starters and they finished in 22 hours and 21 minutes - winning first place in the ladies class and also taking the ladies veteran prize. They also raised £1,000 for Cerebral Palsy Sport.

Jean says 'The DW is certainly an amazing journey. It's a great way to test yourself to the limit and find your personal strengths. No matter how fit you are it is the strength in your mind, with the help of your support crew that gets you over that finish line. There will be highs and lows along the way, it is very tough during the night, but when the birds start singing at dawn I know you will be singing with them! But ladies put it like this – it's hard work at the time, but very soon after you only remember the goods bits, just like giving birth!'

"Paddling down the last mile of the Thames, with tears of elation in our eyes, knowing we had achieved our goal, is a memory that will stay with us both for ever." //



Above: Jessica. Photo: Dave Bradburn.

## Quickfire questions!

**I would describe my character as...** quietly confident.

**When I'm not canoeing I...** am quite normal and do normal everyday things.

**The last book I read was...** Captain Corelli's Mandolin.

**The last film I watched was...** 500 days of summer.

**My ultimate goal is...** to be a World Champion river racer.

**I relax by...** reading, listening to music, making things.

**My favourite food is...** proper pizza or pasta.

**My favourite drink is...** flat white coffee.

**My favourite TV Programme is...** America's Next Top Model.

**My favourite car is...** my Cinquecento.

**My favourite subject at school was...** textiles.

**My favourite place, in the world, is...** Italy or the Isle of Man.

**On my iPod, I'm listening to...** the Smiths.

**The person I most admire is...** umm, I admire a lot of people a little bit.

**I get really angry about...** ignorant people.

**The one thing I'd change in WWR is...** to get more people doing it.

**If I hadn't got into WWR I'd be...** a completely different person.

**In 10 years time, I'd like to be...** in a job I enjoy, still involved somehow in WWR.

**One thing you don't know about me is...** I love magazines and can't throw them away.



Above: Jessica competing at the European Championships, Italy.

# An interview with Jessica Oughton

Jess Oughton took last year's Wild Water Racing season by storm. After winning an individual Bronze and team Gold at the Euros in Italy, she went on to be named World Cup Champion, before the event had even finished! Here she talks about hating PE at school, lucky shorts and being a World Champion...

### Congratulations on being named World Cup Champion! How did that feel?

Thank you, yes it was definitely a highlight of 2009, it was good to win races in such a faraway place! Winning the Sprint team race at the European Champs, with Hannah [Brown] and Sandra [Hyslop] in Italy, was another highlight.

### Besides winning lots of medals, what else have you been up to this year, outside of the sport?

I spent last year studying languages at Bangor University. I love Bangor but the course wasn't really what I wanted to do so I left. I am planning to start studying an art foundation course in September. Since I left university I've been working part time and have made training my biggest priority. I travelled a bit after the world cup in Tasmania, staying in Auckland and on the Gold Coast but am now back home in Leicester.

### How did you first get into canoeing and what made you choose wild water racing?

I started paddling when I was 10 years old; I just went down to a summer scheme day at my local outdoor pursuits centre with my brother. He started doing wild water racing and I got into it a few years later after watching him race quite a lot and getting to know the people involved.

### Canoeing isn't a typically 'girly' sport – why didn't you pursue a sport such as netball?

I don't know really, I used to hate PE at school! I wasn't into sport until I started training for wild water. Now I enjoy more sports, I really like running and riding my bike,

### What's a typical training day like, for you?

I do most of my training on the river Soar in Leicester around six times a week in the winter. The other session each day is either a run or a weights session in the gym. I always have one rest day per week.

### Do you have to watch what you eat?

When I'm training I'm quite strict with my diet, I don't drink alcohol or eat anything too fatty and eat lots of fruit and vegetables.

### You've been training and competing since you were young. How have you managed to stay motivated?

I've always thought that as soon as I'm no longer motivated I will stop, I've never forced it and I've always thought that the life I have training and racing is better than I'd have not doing it!

### What's the best place you've ever visited, through canoeing?

My favourite place is Italy; I really like the lifestyle and the sun there. Tasmania and Auckland were

really cool and places like Slovenia and Bosnia have been really beautiful too.

### Do you get nervous before a race?

I only get nervous if I'm not sure about some part of the course. If I've had chance to do all the training I'm usually ok on the start.

### Do you have any pre-race rituals?

I definitely have to have a coffee an hour before the start. I used to have some lucky shorts but they got too holey, I had to chuck them.

### With seven medals last year, you must be used to winning, but what are you like when you lose?

I hate losing. When I feel I could have done better I am really gutted. I'm definitely not used to winning either though! Of all the races I've done internationally, I've only won a really small percentage!

### What would you like to see being done, to encourage more women and girls to take part in sports?

I'd like to see more media coverage of these types of sports in women's and girl's magazines and TV. Also parents should be trying to get rid of the notion of girls and boys' sports.

### You have the World Championships coming up in June. If you're selected, who do you see as being your biggest competition, and why?

Definitely the Brits! Each one of the girl's WWR team in 2009 won a gold or silver individual international medal this year, no other teams can say that at the moment! Other than them I think the French will be strong this year.

### Do you think you have the potential to be a 2010 World Champion?

Yes, I hope I can be in with a chance of being World Champion. I will be trying to make my training as good as it can be, making sure I know every inch of the course and getting lots of practice in.

### Which of your other team mates should we look out for this year?

Well, Hannah Brown has just won her first World Cup medals in Tasmania and I think she will also do really well at the Worlds. Also Sandra Hyslop, she is consistently strong each summer and jumped straight from the top of the junior ranks to top of the seniors last year!

### And finally, what's next for Jess Oughton?

My big focus this year is the Worlds, after that I'm not sure.

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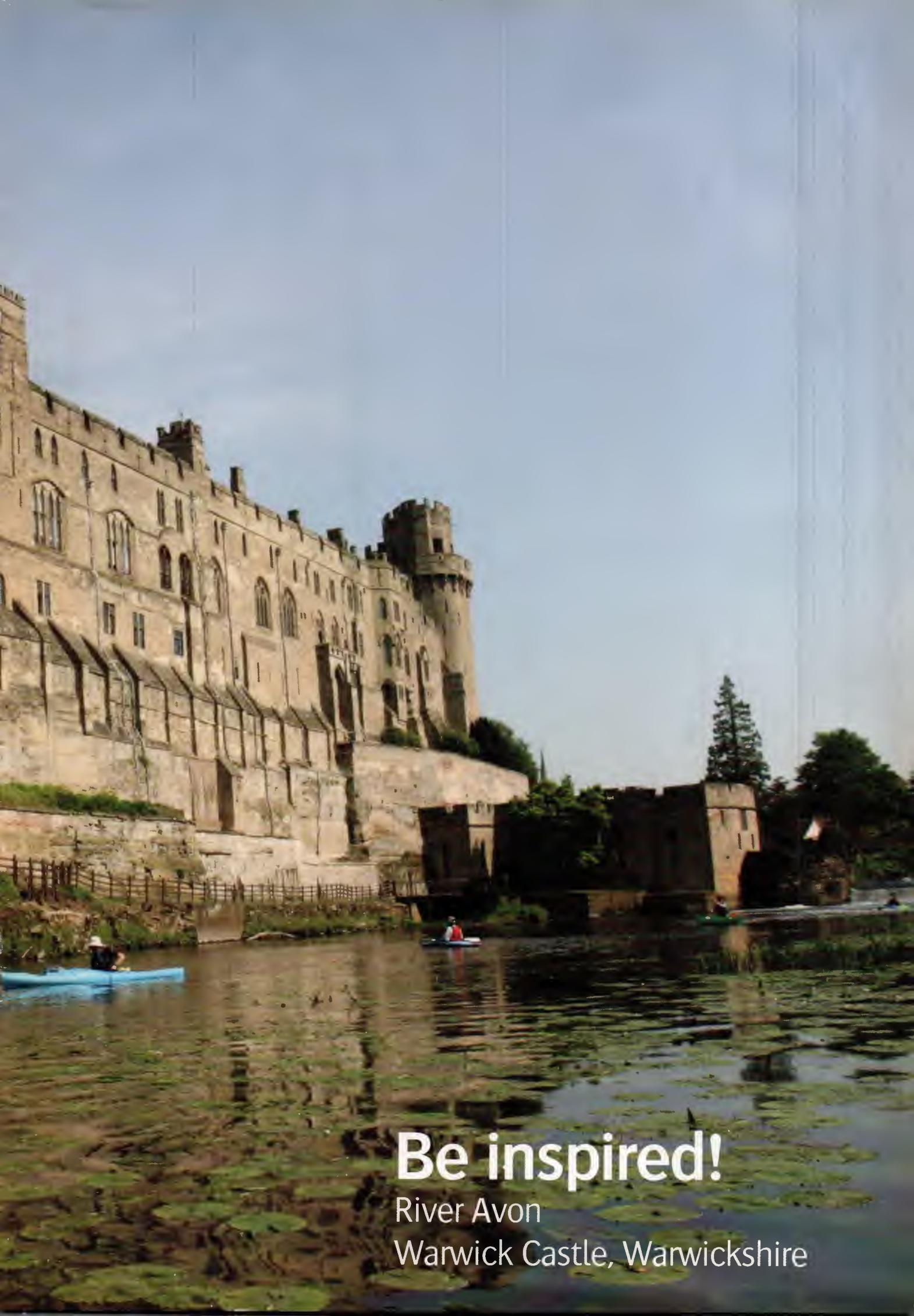


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**Be inspired!**

River Avon

Warwick Castle, Warwickshire

# Monsoon boating

## 270km in two days

It all began after our group triumphantly completed the Tsarap-Zanskar (India) multi-day expedition in very high water, then hitched into Leh. It was here we found that river levels were the highest they had been since the 70s, which explained the mysteries of why we didn't recognise any of the descriptions of rapids we had just paddled!

**Feature by:** So, you're in Leh, and all of the classics you had planned on paddling are too high. What do you do? Go and discuss your options with a local raft company, have a whisky or two, then a few more, challenge some Nepalese raft guides and a six-foot six legend of a German to a drinking competition et voila! Early the next day bags are packed and we're on a road trip to Nepal for some monsoon boating in the ultimate kayak wagon!

Dave Burne.

The plan was that Patrick and myself would make our way to the top of the Sun Khosi, have a couple of runs down the upper section, then Andy would get the bus up two days later and the fun would begin!

Not only was Andy a world-class kayaker and could speak the language (after marrying a Nepalese woman and living in the country for seven years), but he had also paddled the river before so (claimed he) knew a couple of nice villages to stay at along the way. One thing you learn from expeditions though and more so paddling with Andy – plans don't always go as smoothly as desired!

Two days later – no Andy.

Three days later – still no Andy.

Four days later, in the middle of nowhere, with the company of Patrick and an incomplete deck of cards running thin we decided to bite the bullet and go it alone.

Six kilometres downstream we stocked up on snacks and supplies from a little run down shack at the side of a road in a small village and in this unassuming little run down shack at the side of a road in a small village would you believe it – a phone! Our first method of communication in five days! Patrick decided to ring Andy to confirm he wasn't going to turn up and would you believe it? Andy

was on the bus only 30 minutes away!

The first day was relatively tame. Some big holes to avoid and the usual sketchy, boily eddy lines, but we made good

**“**Luckily Andy then spotted some smoke against the setting sun, a village, thank god! Another five minutes and the only light we would have had would have been that of the moon and stars! **”**



progress. Better than expected in fact. After setting off at around 11.00, we passed the village Andy predicted we would stay at only 15.00 hours. This left us in a bit of a predicament. Roughly three hours daylight left and Andy's 'backup village' another seven hours (normal levels) downstream. We thought we'd risk it! Did the risk pay off? Definitely! Did we make it to the village? Definitely not! It was quickly getting darker and Andy's reassurance that the bridge was 'just around the corner' kind of lost its effect after the tenth time! With thick jungle on either side of us, and nowhere to camp we were really starting to worry! Luckily Andy then spotted some smoke against the setting sun, a village, thank god! Another five minutes and the only light we would have had would have been that of the moon and stars!

### Cultural experiences

It turned out having Andy with us was invaluable. Don't get me wrong, Patrick and I would have coped just fine, but we would have missed out on all the cultural experiences that can only be had with a native speaker. Andy managed to negotiate food and accommodation in a secluded village, where only the elders had ever hosted white people before, and they were two missionaries trying to convert the local people to Christianity. It was amazing how self sufficient the people of the village were. They had everything they needed with no outside support.

# ting in Nepal



**Above:** Andy approaching the wave.

"These guys are lucky. If anything did ever go very wrong in the village then they are really close to a road" translated Andy, "only a four day walk." Four days walk? To the nearest road! And I thought my local was in the sticks! It's difficult for any



**Above:** Village children.



**Left:** Village street festival.

westerner (apart from perhaps from the odd village in Wales) to imagine life without a car or bus, let alone a road! The next morning we left some rupees, and a pair of sandals for their hospitality and we were on our way to find 'the bridge' (though Patrick and myself severely doubted its existence). However, 30 minutes later there it stood, along with an increasingly large group of spectators who had seen us coming in the distance. Faith in Andy was restored! Again, with him translating we found out (not unexpectedly) that we were the first down of the season, and also, had just missed the rebel Maoists who left the village only a day before! Phew!

Being the first kayakers down that season to pass the town there was much interest from the local people, and some of the keener came down to the next rapid – the biggest on the river, and in these water levels, it was big! Inspecting from the bank it was obvious there was no chance for safety anywhere. There were three 'lines' – none of them were pretty!

A messy boulder garden river left would go cleanest, but if you missed your line at the start it would go down hill from there on! In the centre was a narrow window between a nasty



**Above:** A village style open canoe.

“ As we neared the start of the rapid we were certainly not expecting to see eight-foot standing waves completely blocking our view of the rapid! ”



**Above:**

Patrick with an audience.



**Above:** Patrick on the Sun Koshi.

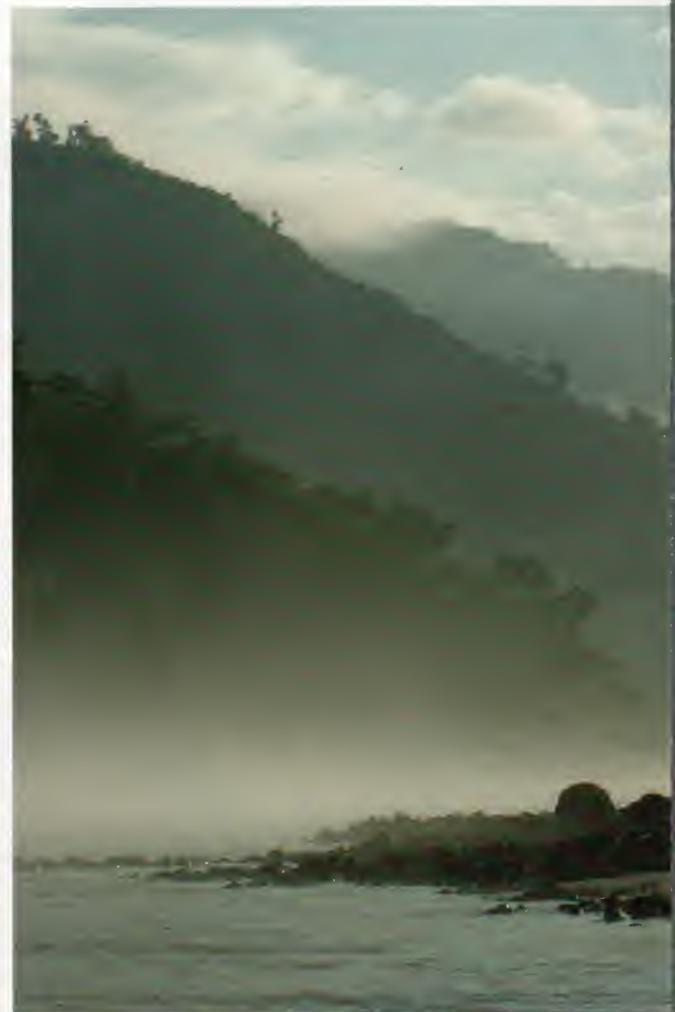
stopper with an intimidating tow back and a huge crashing wave with deck popping force, complete with curling shoulder that threw you right into the meat if you were unfortunate enough to venture into its grasps.

A long ferry glide to the far bank to skirt past the crashing wave was the third option and one I fancied most. The downside? Firstly if you didn't make the ferry glide (highly likely with the width of the river and speed of flow), it would be far from happy days! Secondly 'skirting past the crashing wave' was not as easy as learning your ABCs! You'd need to surf up the boil line created by the wall at the far side, which would then ride you back into the horrible swirling boily eddy line and mercilessly leave you to battle your way out.

“The wave was much bigger than it looked from the bank, especially when you're staring up at it from the trough!”

## Wealth of experience

Andy was settled with the centre line and quite persuasive that I do the same, due to the risk of not making the ferry glide in time. On this occasion I decided



**Above:** The truck carrying the kayaks.

to take note of his wealth of experience in big water boating and centre line it was. Since none of the lines were particularly clean Patrick portaged deciding it was a silly idea... Patrick was right!

Andy set off first with me close behind. The water was flowing at an unbelievable rate! We had expected this however, but as we neared the start of the rapid we were certainly not expecting to see eight-foot standing waves completely blocking our view of the rapid! Where was the window? As Andy reached the crest of the first wave he immediately put on the accelerator and paddled hard left. We had overshot on the ferry glide.

I followed suit knowing exactly where we would end up if we were too far right to make the window, it wouldn't be pleasant. It was only as I rose up on this peak and saw Andy get swallowed by the surging wave that I realised exactly how far out we were. There was none of this 'we' business now, it was every man for themselves! Still powering left I prepared myself for the same fate, knowing I'd never make the line. Since he went straight into the meat, I was slightly relieved to see I was further left than Andy, until I realised this meant I was heading



**Above:** Andy with local children jumping.

straight for the gnarl! Don't you just love that feeling of helpless inevitability?

The wave was much bigger than it looked from the bank, especially when you're staring up at it from the trough! Don't you just love that feeling of being dwarfed by big rapids? No, me neither! I would use artistic licence and say I was whipped up by the curler but, well, that's just not how it happened. It was all in slow motion; I just kept going up this wave, up and up as it got steeper and steeper. "You beauty!" I thought, "I'm going to get away with it."

But no. It was merely toying with my emotions. Just as I reached the peak and truly though I'd make it over the top, everything resumed full pace. I was picked up out the water, bow thrown over my head and face planted back into the pit with impressive ease and force. Now all I could do was to hold on. My paddles were being ripped from my hands and my shoulders weren't far from being ripped from their sockets! A few seconds later, and ten metres downstream I resurfaced. Rolling up I saw Andy beaming wildly at me, still getting his bearings.

**Above:**  
A morning view of the village.

"Oooops!" he called "think we misjudged that one a bit!" My confusion as to where I was and where I needed to go quickly turned to elation. We'd made it! The rest of the rapid was fairly straight forward. A big wave train with a nasty eddy line to avoid. Still grinning we pulled up at the bank where Patrick was, chuckling at us, "Yeah... glad I gave that one a miss!"

The next 40 miles were spectacular! Huge waves with the odd stopper and occasional tree trunk to keep you on your toes. These weren't your average wave trains though. Instead of constant standing waves, it was like being in the middle of the ocean. Waves sloshing in any direction, appearing and disappearing from nowhere. They were so powerful they could easily pick you up, shift you over a couple of metres to the side then drop you down again, be it on your hull or on your head – you were at the complete mercy of the water. The 'Jungle Corridor' usually takes two hours for a raft in the normal season. For monsoon boating however, the eight kilometres are completed in just 20 minutes! The water was flowing fast!

Andy also had a couple of ideas for riverside towns with accommodation for the second night. At 15.00 and the first potential village arrived. Ever get the feeling of dejá-vu? Should we stay here or should we go on? We thought we'd risk it! Did the risk pay off? Definitely! Did we make it to the next intended village? Don't be daft! You know what they say, once is a mistake, twice is stupidity. Yup. At 16.00 we though we ought to pick up the pace a little – to be on the safe side.

After a lucky escape yesterday Andy obviously didn't fancy his own judgement and asked a local how far to the next town, "One day walk downstream from here" was the reply. Ok, so at the rate we're going that's only 30 minutes. 45 minutes later Andy spotted another local, "two days walk downstream from here" was the reply. Strange, so at the rate we're going that's only an hour. One hour later the sun was setting fast. We had misjudged. Again!

There was a Nepalese man fishing at the side of the river – he really was our last chance of finding anywhere with shelter. "Five days walk downstream from here" was the reply. What?? How does this work? Three days upstream the village was only a day's walk downstream! Then a lifeline "But if you need you can stay in my small village, just around the corner." Paddling round the corner the jungle opened up into a stunning little clearing, complete with mazes of paddy fields and cattle. We had lucked out. Again.

### Greeted by many a bewildered villager

Trudging up the bank with our fully laden kayaks we were greeted by many a bewildered villager, young and old. It turned out that, although having seen many Westerners pass on rafts they had been host to none. This really is my favourite part of kayaking. Forget a big rapid, a must make boof, or a large waterfall (all of which can't be sniffed at!) the unique opportunities and experiences kayaking can offer outclass the adrenaline rush by far. How many other people can say they have slept the night in a remote village where no white person has stayed before?

Definitely some but not many. Once again, the independence of the village struck me, and the skill in joinery using only local materials to produce two story high sturdy houses was incredible. It was almost as if you had been thrown 100 years back in time, with squealing piglet's running round and squawking hens. Again, dinner was served, rice and watery sauce with vegetables consumed in the typical Nepalese way – fingers only. Dusting off the bed bugs (who took a particular liking to the taste of Andy) we we're back on our way.

By 11.00 next day we were in a pub toasting a successful trip. 270km in two days, a couple of unique nights living like local people – monsoon boating in Nepal? It can be done! 

# Land of the m

It is not often you get to see an otter pushing its velvety head through still waters with dark eyes watching you gingerly 12 feet from your boat, or perhaps a sea eagle soaring gracefully above, expertly catching thermals.

However, in Nuvsvåg, 250km north of the Arctic Circle, such Norwegian delights await anyone from the novice to seasoned sea paddler.

**Feature by:** This once in a lifetime experience came through a month long expedition with the British Schools Exploring Society, a charity set up to provide 16 to 23-year olds with an opportunity for exploration and personal development.

**Photos by:** Lucy Bound.  
Angelina Renner. BSES prides itself on adventuring to remote places the average gap year candidate would unlikely reach. The leaders for this expedition were an impressive line up of highly experienced paddling and mountaineering coaches.

Nuvsvåg was our base-camp location, a small hamlet of 100 people perched on one of the countless fjords, which interrupt the pristine coastline. A blink of the eye and one could be paddling in the Scottish Highlands, until closer inspection reveals the high mountain backdrop of the glacial plateau. There are a mere 17 children in the local school, and our local contact Oddvar Berne and his effusive wife Anne Marie, told us that migration of the younger generation is a growing problem. "It is a very sad day for us when we see the fish drying in the nets" she tells us, "this indicates the fishermen cannot get the fresh fish to the markets in Alta to sell." She goes on, "if they cannot do this, they must hang it until the autumn where the dried fish fetches a lower price; unemployment is a real problem for us here in Nuvsvåg."

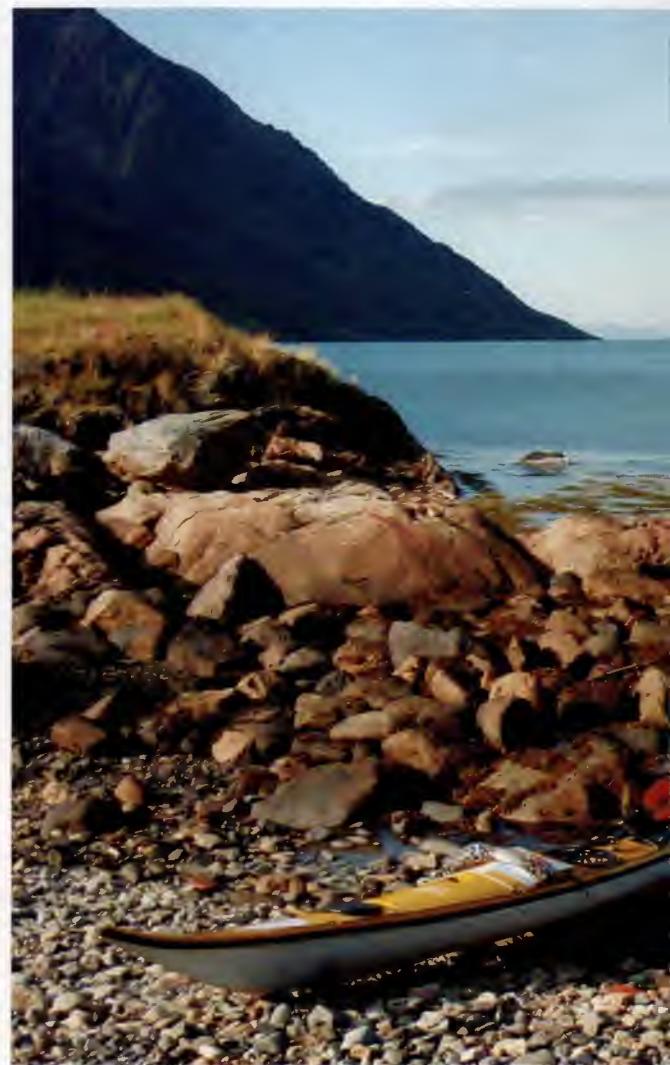
The expedition operates in small teams called Fires, as founder Surgeon Commander Murray Levick (a survivor of Captain Scott's 1911-12 South Pole expedition) believed this was an optimal number of people to converse around a fire. So with a group of six 'Young Explorers', fellow leader Chris Heaney and myself set off for a week of discovering what the 'land of the midnight sun' had to offer.

## Carnivorous insects

As Norway has relatively liberal attitudes towards wild camping, we were able to head out along the coastline with a 1:

50000 map (sourced at Stanfords) and find a suitable camping spot when we were ready to get off the water. In July, there is still good run-off from the snow melt so fresh, (cold) drinking water was

What was more of a nuisance were the carnivorous insects whose favourite feed was clearly freshly salted human flesh //



rarely a problem to source. What was more of a nuisance were the carnivorous insects whose favourite feed was clearly freshly salted human flesh, thankfully less present at the breezier camping spots.

We soon realised how the 24-hour sunlight added flexibility to our journeying. We dodged stronger winds and unwanted tides by paddling early morning or through the night (night – being purely a theoretical concept which took some getting used to). Due to the high-pressure system, we enjoyed a dramatic sun setting scene - cameras at the ready, only to witness the sun touching the watery horizon and then tracking majestically back up into the sky. It was a strange thing to set up camp in a shaded bay early evening, only for the sun to move into view and slowly warm the rocks as the night progressed.

## Breathtaking

Once we were out of the Nuvsvåg Fjord we headed east towards neighbouring Oksfjorden. This fjord was home to a school of porpoise that kept a regular fishing schedule of early

# midnight sun



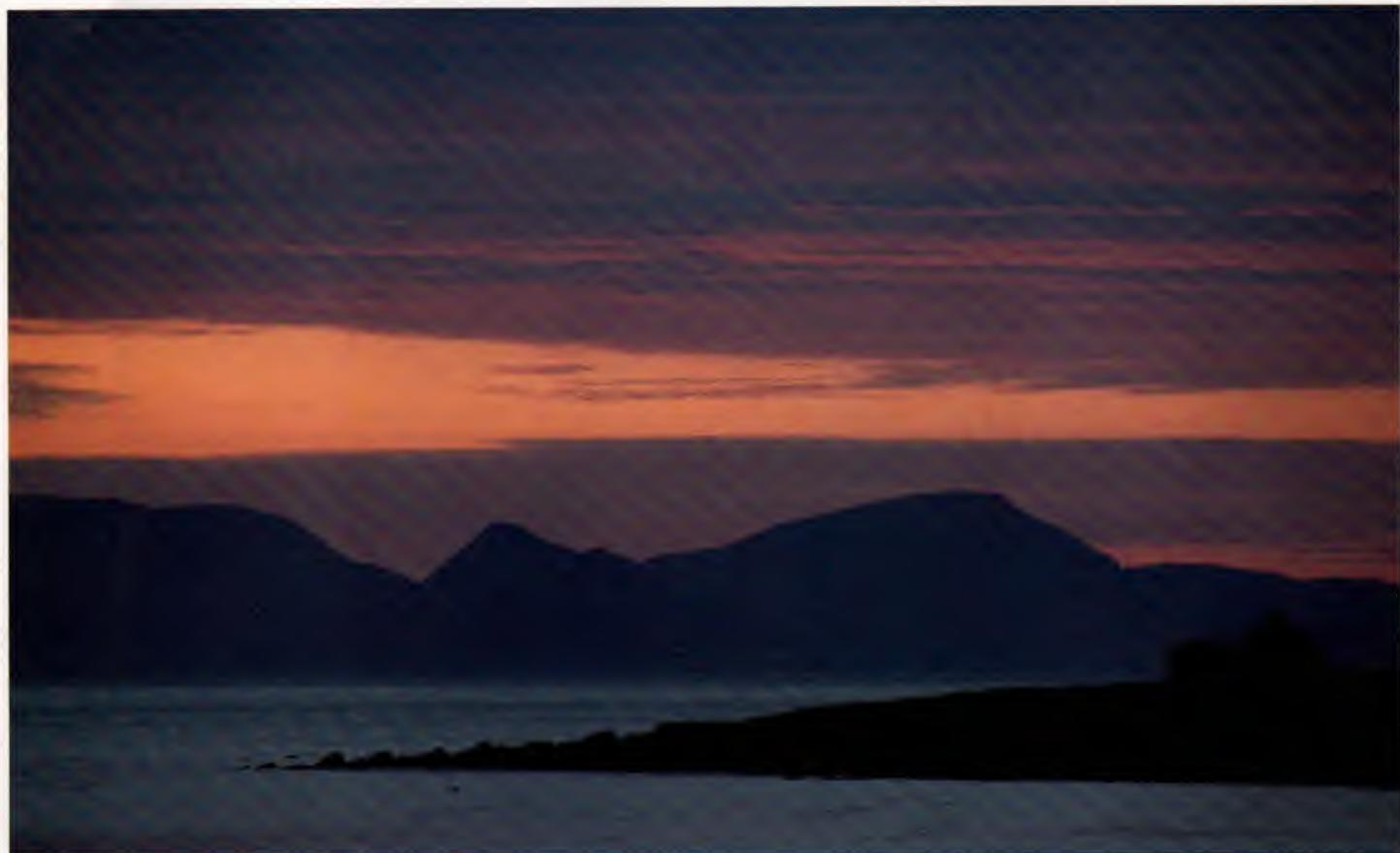
“It is clear that the people of these parts are hardened to their environment and have a strong sense of survival”

morning and late evening, providing us with one of those rare moments in life where the natural environment is so breathtaking it is hard to take it in.

We carried some rudimentary fishing kit and with a few false starts caught trout on a hand-line from the boat. We were warned by local fisherman that the catch in the area would easily take a sea boat under so took to fishing in pairs, so at least it could be captured on film as the boat was being taken down by a 50lb halibut. Sadly no such footage was made so we settled for a dinner of more manageable catch within moments of being caught. Mussels were another delight; similar in size to their UK counterparts and abundant at every beach we landed at. This proved a highlight as the group got quite well versed at subsidising their ration packs.

We headed up Oksfjorden away from the small village towards more remote waters where the occasional summer house was





the only sign of human life. Many people come to the area to fish during the summer months returning south as the long winter sets in. "You have to learn to be at peace with yourself," a local told us. "Some people come to live here because it is so beautiful, but then they cannot cope during the winter darkness." During the dark months of 1944, when this part of the world was invaded, a handful of Lap people over-wintered in nearby caves. Although open and friendly, it is clear that the people of these parts are hardened to their environment and have a strong sense of survival. The weather especially, notorious for being fickle clearly puts those who get in its way to the test. There is a small obelisk in the churchyard, family names listed of those lost at sea. Still waters were punctuated with clear storm damage, fishing nets cast high into shoreline trees.

### Research projects

We had a couple of nights at the far end of the fjord, carrying out some scientific research on behalf of the State of the Environment, a Norwegian government department. The science element of the expedition gave the group a chance to engage with the marine environment beyond being mere tourists. Additionally they were able to put something back into specific research projects. With the migration of the formidable king crab into the area, researchers are keen to gather some base data to investigate the longer-term effect of this new visitor to the fjords.

A misty morning shrouded our return journey to base-camp, spotting more porpoise along the way. By way of a departure gesture, a white tailed sea eagle escorted us out of Oksfjorden. Unbelievably, these kings of the sky have a larger wingspan than

their golden eagle counterparts. As we drew into the beach where we had started from the previous week, the group were unusually quiet and seemed loathed to get off the water. This part of Norway had been described to us by a

resident as absolute paradise and as our journey concluded we felt unable to argue with such a claim.

### Information

BSES run summer month long expeditions, departing to Svalbard in 2010 and Greenland in 2011. If you are a keen with some paddling experience, go to the BSES website at [www.bses.org.uk](http://www.bses.org.uk) to find out how you can get involved.



Some people come to live here because it is so beautiful, but then they cannot cope during the winter darkness

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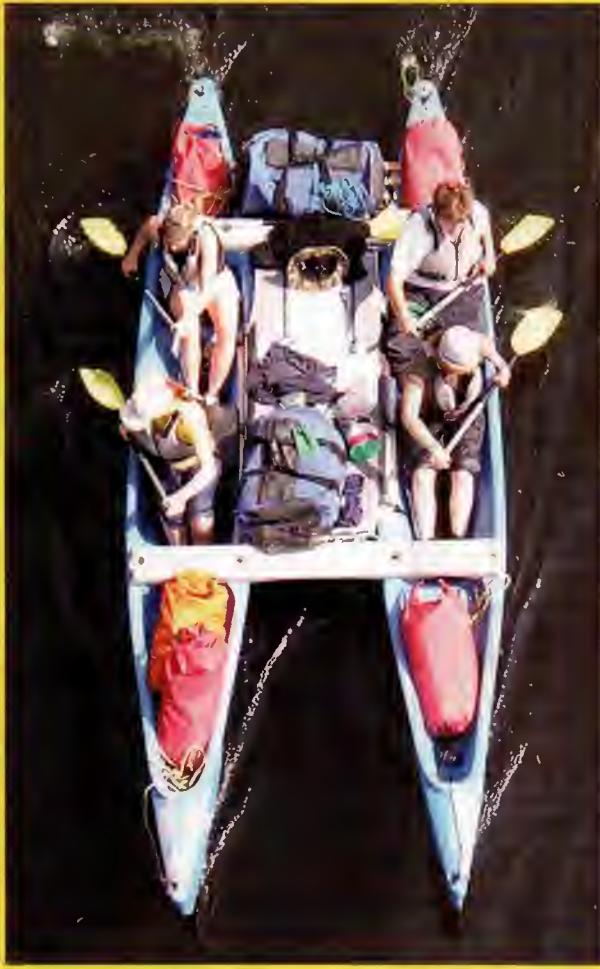
"We enjoyed using the Scouts KataKanu so much that we have bought our own!"  
Lynne Bowler  
Cheshire.



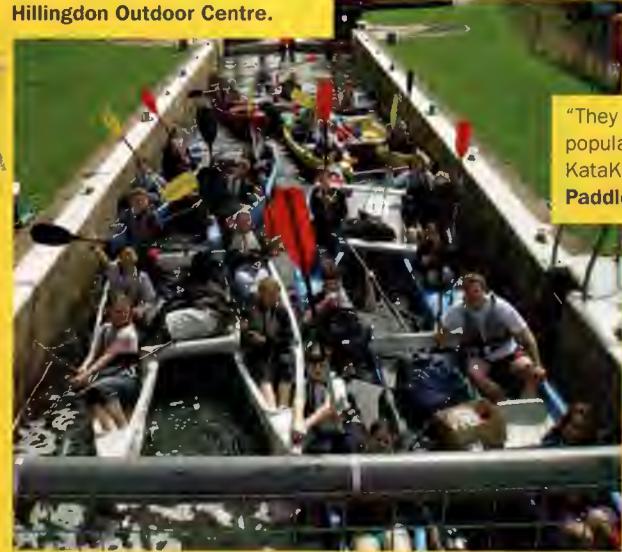
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Lynne Elgy Frensham Heights.



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# The annual Wye expedition

It is early June and time to make letters available for pupils to book places on the annual canoeing trip on the River Wye. Within minutes all the letters have gone and there are promises to have replies in by the end of the day. The competition for places for both children and teachers is fierce.

**Feature by:**  
Lynne Elgy  
Frensham Heights School,  
Surrey.

Of course the planning for the trip began weeks before but was very straight forward and part of the fun. Book the activity provider, the campsites and plan the food.

Eventually the day arrives and two minibuses full of excited children and their teachers arrive at the campsite to find that the boats are already in the water, the kit is laid out in a neat and colourful array under a huge, brightly coloured awning that somehow sets the scene for the rest of the weekend.

## Bats and swallows

After setting up tents and having supper the group are ready for a training paddle. As so often happens there is quite a lot of zigzagging across the river but within half an hour all the boats are confidently paddling along and are able to enjoy the sunset and gathering dusk as bats and swallows swoop over the water feeding on insects. A quietness descends over the group as they realise how peaceful and beautiful the river is at this time. Next morning, after a quick shuffle of kit and minibuses to the next camp, the party are ready for a whole day of river touring. A fairly leisurely pace is adopted with lots of chatter within and between the boats. Other river users stop to watch our

Whoops of excitement as the spray breaks over the boats and they buck like broncos through the waves //



Above: Excitement on the rapids.

colourful flotilla pass by with our instructor making sure that all the group are in contact with each other and that the river code is observed.

## The rapids

The type of twin hull canoes we use, have extra stability allowing complete novices to come on the trip and they are able to have more independence than they would in traditional canoes. On the way we spot herons, geese, ducks and kingfishers, leaping fish and cows cooling their feet in the shallows. Then the big excitement of the day – the rapids. We can hear them before seeing them but soon all the boats are speeding through the white water to whoops of excitement as the spray breaks over the boats and they buck like broncos through the waves. Finally we collect in the quiet green shallows near the evening camp.

A hearty barbecue around the camp fire, followed by games and stories and it is time for a good night's sleep.

After a morning paddle to Monmouth and a picnic lunch it is time to make our way home. The journey is often quiet with the children dozing in the minibus, many have been on the trip before and several will come again. It has been another memorable and happy expedition. ♡



Above: Ready for the off.



Above: In the groove and cruising along.

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# Perfect technique Of course you have!

Given the extraordinary simplicity of paddling, why is this 'technique' thing such a great bone of contention and why is it so hard to do well?

**Feature by:**

Matt Thornton Brown,  
Level 3 race coach with  
5 Star sea qualifications.

**Photos by:**

David Leathborough.

**Before we get stuck into the great debate of our sport I need you to cast your mind back over the last six months. When looking at a paddler or analysing your own technique what were the words you used, the mind picture you created and what corrections did you suggest?**

This is truly a massive subject so it seems wise to look at the main power stroke and not move into the vast array of additional skills that are essential to each discipline. Kayak paddling is the focus for this article but I know canoe boat paddlers have the intelligence and fortitude to convert the concepts for their own use! There are also many variables in the background that must be managed by the coach and I assume you have these covered, things such as paddler safety and well being, injury prevention, boat and paddle choice, length, blade size, shaft strength, seat height and type and the relationship to the athlete dimensions and so on.

Just before explaining what might be different let's just take a check point, what do we want from the base forward paddling technique? What can we learn from each discipline? From my viewpoint I see the following:

## Sprint

Optimum boat speed for very high speed cruising over 1000m to a maximum speed over 36 seconds for a 200m race driving boat speed max in excess of six meters per second and using paddle rates between 90 and 140 strokes per minute.

## Marathon

Relaxed but strong aerobic pace at about 80 strokes per minute with minimum energy use but also with the ability to change gear instantly to gain a wash or move for tactical position. Increasingly a near maximum speed sprint for the 200m from the start and for portages is also essential.

## Race ski

Similar to marathon but with the ability to cope with rough water, waves, wind and high-speed surfing.

## WWR

High speed aerobic threshold pace but also very highly agile to manoeuvre and gain speed from every rapid and carry that speed through dead or slow water.



**Above:** Excellent use of core power to drive the paddler forward and results in a very powerful stroke, covering maximum distance.

# ique?

## Slalom

Boat speeds between gates without impacting the immense power required to complete highly complex moves and endure a 90 second plus event.

## River running

Speed when needed to keep boat speed or make a high cross, but economy of action to last a day and face a final big drop plus more than a bit in reserve to undertake a rescue if needed.

## Polo

Ultra high-speed sprints for just a few seconds to gain ball possession or open space but able to change direction instantly whilst under intense competitive pressure.

## Sea

Energy conservation to drive a relatively heavy boat over long periods whilst retaining a reserve of speed and power for emergencies, coping with rough water or a tide race, rescuing or towing other paddlers and finally making a safe landing through, possibly, heavy breakers.

## Surf

Ability to drive a flat hull out through heavy surf and then achieve near instant acceleration to hit take off on a wave plus maybe endurance to get home against a tide rip or rescue somebody.



## Freestyle

Again massive power to pull into the boat into any position needed to exploit the power of the water.

## Touring

An unobtrusive, smooth and low energy demanding stroke but with reserves for the occasional critical passage.

So, there are our critical design characteristics for forward paddling, in automotive terms it's a requirement for a Formula 1 car, a rally car, a long distance tourer and a Landrover all wrapped into one!

Most people new to our sport think there is a lot of arm pushing involved, we know differently //

## Key Concepts:

### Number 1. It's not about the paddle in the air but rather about what the athlete or paddler is causing the boat to do.

This almost certainly means it's about the effect of the paddle in the water, not the bit in the air – or the arms or where the hands are. It's so easy to think and talk about the end of the paddle in the air. But don't! Start with the boat speed and movement and work back through legs to hips to lower back to shoulders to head and lastly to arms (if you really have to). Most people new to our sport think there is a lot of arm pushing involved, we know differently but why is it we still focus on how pretty the stroke is rather than how effective it is? So, let's try shifting emphasis from flailing arms to power drive and boat reaction.

### Number 2. It's not about pulling the paddle to the body or past the boat but vitally it's about locking the blade in the water and driving the boat past that point.

The objective is distance per stroke – repeatable, without disturbing the boat or delaying the next stroke unduly. So a long power drive as a basis for the stroke that is modified for endurance and the physical capabilities of the paddler. To do this well means slowing down the stroke rate, this is extremely difficult to do for most of us because of life's experiences. When we learnt to run we were told to move our legs faster. When we learnt to ride a bike going fast meant spinning the pedals round faster. The basis of good technique can be found in a slow but powerful action, not unduly forced to be slow or long but absolutely not rushed.

Locking the paddle, rightly described as the connection with the water, is another skill that initially can seem to be counter-intuitive. It can seem best to rip the blade through towards our body, fast and with lots of splash. In reality this gets us nowhere. All we are doing is getting wheel spin as a car does on ice. Good swimmers take to paddling knowing that there is a very subtle connection, a point at which water can support the power of the stroke beyond which there is no point pulling or ripping harder as traction is lost. Many top swimmers, just as paddlers, have a slow smooth action. Power and endurance training then allows the stroke rate to increase to between 80 (K1 marathon) and 140 strokes (K4 200m) per minute - this then defines boat speed. The faster the boat speed the faster the stroke components must be – exit, lift, rotation, reach, catch but all completed without breaking the connection. Have you ever seen a newcomer trying to go fast with arms and paddles everywhere and then an established paddler gliding past at half the stroke rate? This is the principle being shown very graphically, connection with the water first, controlled and considered boat drive next and finally build up the speed of movement through training but based on those foundations. Wing paddles are designed to grip the water – when used correctly. They also encourage use of the core as the wing



**Above:** Tim Brabants showing Gold medal winning core power!

action takes the water based paddle away from the body giving room to 'wind' around.

#### **Number 3. It's not just about strong pulling muscles but much more about core strength.**

To pull well past the paddle requires good technique for each type of boat but above all else strong core power to hold posture in a kayak or canoe and to drive the required action using the hugely strong muscles that surround the main part of the body. It can help to think of there being three types of fitness required to paddle well, good general athleticism, strong specific pulling muscles and a very powerful core capability. The last is by far the most important but until relatively recently it has been the most neglected during preparation or training.

Good technique starts with the way we use the paddle, our lever. Think of rowing for a moment, that sport has the advantage of a rigger around which the blade must move as it's locked in. This cuts down the variety of movements possible. We do not have that fixed point so we must make our own rigger by the way we control the blade with our hands and body. This is the bit that demands good core strength to paddle comfortably and excellent core strength and power to paddle at anywhere near maximum force.

Understanding the value of our core capability and the need to specifically train improvement is fundamental to raising standards in our sport. Remember core strength must be dynamic and for competition or big rough water explosive speed in also needed. Static exercises help but better build up to fast full range power movements. Medicine balls are ideal for this but get some help starting as they can be dangerous if used incorrectly (see the GB canoeing website for examples).

#### **Number 4. It's not about arm use but much more about engaging the strongest muscles we have first.**

It's usually a bit of a shock to newcomers to see how much good paddling is dependent on the use of our legs. How much we can and do use them is of course itself dependent on the type of kayak or canoe being paddled. Use in kayaks is extensive, in some boats such as fast sea kayaks or WWRs paddlers set up to be able to

drive hard with their legs on flat water but then move their knees to fixate more against the roll bars in tougher conditions.

We know the body movements required to paddle well are amazingly complex, learning the precise timing to get the best from legs, then lower back then upper body, shoulders and arms is tricky to say the least and requires a 'feel' that takes time to develop.

#### **Number 5. It's not about fast hand and paddle movements but much more about controlled use of the body to move the boat.**

One of the images that can help here is to think of planting fence posts in the water (they do need to magically hold in position for this to work!) and then reaching out to grasp each in turn and pull the boat past. This can really help slow down a frantic paddling action but better still is a slide training machine. Not a paddle ergo but a track along which a seat can slide when driven by a paddler holding a paddle shaft which in turn has a fixed length of rope from a pivot point engineered to be directly ahead of the paddle action. These machines, with careful coaching support, can provide an excellent way of correcting technique as well as developing both core and paddling power. There's nowhere to hide with these things – every wrong movement reduces the distance the paddler can pull towards to paddle point and becomes easily visible to the athlete and coach alike.

The stroke power and length is strongly affected not only by the relative balance forces of the hands but also by the boat type and the power to weight ratio of the paddler. Sprint paddlers have a faster boat which allows them to hold the paddle more vertically for longer than slalom paddlers whose boats are not designed exclusively for forward speed. To gain power at the loss of stroke length and therefore boat distance moved a paddler can 'over-push' with the top arm. This can quickly become an ingrained fault as it gives a lighter and easier feeling to the stroke but it's a false economy as distance per stroke drops dramatically. So in the context of competition a good stroke often feels really very heavy but the reward is much greater boat speed and distance. For non-competitive

paddling the efficiency of a good stroke, moderated for the boat type and physical capability, will yield easier paddling with better endurance.

**Understanding the value of our core capability and the need to specifically train improvement is fundamental to raising standards in our sport**



## How therefore can we change the way we use the paddle and the way we coach?

I suggest this starts with some changes to the way we communicate, both as paddlers and coaches and to the mindset we all adopt.

To start with how we communicate. Three things, phrase things into positive language, express coaching points and questions around driving or winding the body to and sometimes past the paddle and aim to educate rather than dictate or just motivate.

Of course there are times when a quick word to perhaps 'sit up' or 'rotate' is justified but avoiding saying what's wrong or 'that's not good'. It's much more about what to do to put things right, but better its about education not just motivation. A coach's external view is vital but it's only of use if they can communicate with their athlete in a way that is meaningful to them and over the longer term results in different self perception – how they see themselves from their own eyes – if the change is to be sustainable.

This means it's about the paddlers perception of their movements and the effects they have, not about how the coach sees those movements. It's therefore about excellence of communications that is meaningful to the recipient, not merely shouting orders. It's about mindset changes that lead to moments of truth leading to breakthroughs leading to sustainable change and improvement.

Coaching this way is much tougher, it requires very careful use of empathy to see from within the athletes' eyes using their experience, their mindset, their motivation and being highly aware of their perceptions, their fears, their confidence. This applies every bit as much to established senior athletes as well as young novices, perhaps even more so if you are to really make progress.

Moving onto mindset; are we open, always keen to learn, to stay up to date, try new ideas, do we read, watch, study, attend updates, talk to champions and ask questions? Do we ask for feedback on how we are doing? As a coach when was the last time you asked your athlete how you are doing as a coach? Agree some new ways of working, communicating and expressing movements we have gone through in this article before starting the next session and work together to make the change – help each other, yes get the paddler to coach the coach in how they are coaching! This will really get the paddler

“Moving onto mindset; are we open, always keen to learn, to stay up to date, try new ideas, do we read, watch, study, attend updates, talk to champions and ask questions?”

to think about things and will almost certainly lead to breakthroughs in thinking and actions. Back to the slide machine then please and support it with video feedback. Express points in terms of body to the paddle and in an empathetic manner – 'how does that feel to you' or 'can you see the difference that is making'.

It's often said that the biggest constraint we place on ourselves in life is denial; we avoid facing truths and avoid doing what we need to move forward or help. How many people have you seen this week in DYKB (Do You Know Best) mode? How many times recently have you heard 'I know' - one of the quickest ways of shutting down the brain to new learning and breaking communication?

One of the most valuable times is the warm up, with or without a coach as a paddler do you think through what you are to do, what the specific goals are, how you are to focus and what outcomes you are looking for. As a coach did you ask for the right to coach today? There's a funny one, 'the right to coach? "But I am the coach" I hear you say! Maybe but if you ask for the right to coach your athlete will be reminded to be more open to suggestions and be prepared to give it their best shot whilst asking for more help. If they say no then another type of conversation maybe needed as something has gone very wrong somewhere. Remember warm ups are for the mind as well as for the body.

## Conclusion

Has this article made a difference, can you see the value of trying things differently? Are you motivated to try the ideas with an open mind?

In the end the right technique is the winning technique on the day and for that paddler in that event or trip. I remember asking Kristina Medovcikova, the Sprint Development Coach for Scotland if she would like to borrow a bike to get up to the start to watch her athletes finals, her response put things into perspective for me "No, it is the finish line that matters." ✓

**UK Coaching's Forward Paddling Technique: Level 1 DVD** is available from [www.bcushop.org.uk](http://www.bcushop.org.uk)

# General Election 2010 – questions are you going

The long expected General Election will happen sometime in the next six months and we all have the opportunity to make a difference and get our issues noticed and acted upon in the future.



**Most current MPs and Prospective Parliamentary Candidates (PPCs) will be out and about door stepping to find out what the issues are and to try and canvas your vote. This election for the first time in many years sees well over 200 current MPs not seeking re-election including one of our own supporting MPs so the opportunity to inform and influence is here right now!**

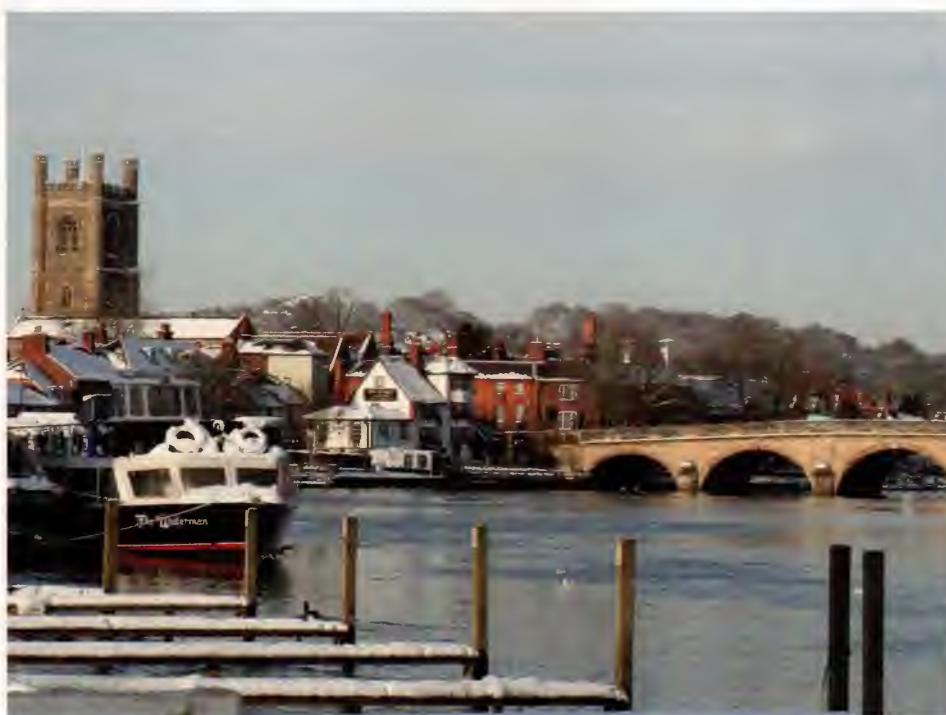
You can also go to the hustings etc and seek out the candidates out to put your point across. These open public forums are really interesting as you can hear the views of lots of different people and then see what their concerns are locally, nationally and in some cases internationally too.

What questions are you going to ask the candidates in your area and then your newly elected or returned MP? We need to keep them aware of the access situation and that you have a concern about it as one of their constituents.

## Remember

1. We can all legitimately use footpaths and bridleways etc that are public rights of way. In Scotland and the rest of the world there is also a public access to rivers, but not in England and Wales where only 1,500 miles of some 40,000 miles of rivers are open to the public for navigation. Will your party take action to create public access to rivers in England and Wales?

2. Over two million people go canoeing each year. Indications are that this number is increasing at a spectacular rate.
  - New research recently released from Sport England and Ipsos Mori's Active People Survey (3) shows that between October 2008 and October 2009, 62,900 adults participated in 30 minutes of moderate intensity canoeing at least once a week. This is a fantastic increase of 45% since last year's Active People survey.
  - Canoeing also contributes to the wider agenda with many programmes that reflect our social responsibilities such as working with young offenders and the socially disadvantaged.
  - Canoeing can support government initiatives on health and the nation where exercise is fundamental to prevent obesity and future illness. The BCU is one of the few sport governing bodies that can achieve the targets set.
  - Canoeing also contributes to the rural, local and national economy.
  - Rivers are a superb natural classroom. Given greater access, schools can support the National Curriculum without classroom learning and the possibilities for cross-curricular activities are almost endless.
  - The canoe is a traditional craft used throughout the world for exploring wilderness areas and quietly observing wildlife and flora. It causes no erosion, noise or pollution, and leaves no trace of its passing. Canoeing at appropriate water levels is an environmentally benign activity and causes no damage to fish stocks. Kayak fishing is a rapidly growing part of the sport too.



Above: River Thames in Henley.

# - What to ask?

3. How can we develop and support the economic, health and education agendas if greater access to water is not enabled?

If you do not get door stepped and public meetings are not your thing then why not write to the candidates. This can in many cases be done via e mail but letters are just as acceptable too. The campaign office regularly receives replies from MPs sent to us via Canoe England members who have taken the trouble to write and some of the MP's replies are very interesting. Some are the usual civil servant speak about voluntary access arrangements whilst others show real concerns both for and against more access. Where the concerns are against it gives us the opportunity to write (or meet) to that MP and put another perspective across.

So what is going on in the minds of MPs? Well we had a meeting with a former shadow spokesman for the environment who was very anti access. He even did not like access for walkers etc and was adamant that the CRoW Act 2002 had been a retrograde step and people should not be able to have access as it states and that large sections of it should be repealed and in fact that was what they were looking at!

Ask probing questions and it's amazing what you can find out about personal views let alone the views of that particular political party.

During the last election campaign we were made aware that many of the campaign supporters were asking the candidates about their views on the river access situation when them met with them. This was happening on doorsteps all over the country. These questions need to be followed up with a letter and/or a visit to your MPs surgery to explain the situation further and to obtain greater understanding and support for a change in the rivers access situation.

Copies of suggested letters and questions can be found at [www.riversaccess.org](http://www.riversaccess.org) but it is always best to make what is a national issue, a localised issue too.

Compare the English situation to Wales. Why are the Welsh doing something about access and yet in England despite the fact that access is noted as a real and developing issue, nothing is being done?

## National Assembly for Wales – Sustainability Committee's Inquiry into access to inland water in Wales

Canoe England is one of many organisations who have responded to the inquiry. Inputs can be viewed on the Assembly website, as can video recordings of inquiry hearings that have provided an insight to the proceedings. Whether in text or on video, the division of opinion is clear cut between those supporting and those against public access to inland waters in Wales. The latter are predictably drawn from the fisheries and land owning interests.

Evidence has produced some interesting statements. The University of Brighton has advocated that access to inland waters should be available 365 days per year. Environment Agency Wales, reported a high demand for access to water in Wales, in many places this is not met and no evidence that existing uses have a significant impact on spawning fish and their spawning areas. The Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) also stated they had no evidence of damage to fish stocks or spawning fish.

Contrary to the evidence given by the EA Wales and CCW as competent bodies, angling and fisheries interests claimed environmental damage would result from public access and especially canoeing. It gained a response from the inquiry chairman that this was opinion and not evidence.

The Pembrokeshire Coast National Park considered it was impractical to expect it possible to gain voluntary access agreements with so many landowners to have involved. Forestry Commission Wales did not pull any punches when it attributed the failure of an exemplar access scheme (River Mawddach catchment) entirely at the door of the anglers who "refused to co-operate and then to communicate."

The inquiry will continue into 2010 and proceeding can be progressed by visiting web sites for the National Assembly for Wales [www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third1/bus-committees-third-sc-home.htm](http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-third1/bus-committees-third-sc-home.htm) and Canoe Wales [www.welsh-canoeing.org.uk/introduction/home](http://www.welsh-canoeing.org.uk/introduction/home).

A further development has been for the Welsh Assembly Government announcing the forming of an access to inland water steering group and inviting the BCU to attend. The meeting is scheduled for 18th January in Cardiff and a report of this event will be posted on the Canoe England website. The meeting agenda is set to review the progress of the inquiry and the Strategic Plan for Wales on Water-Related Recreation.



Above: Snow Hills by the River Thames in Henley.

## Calling all paddlers!

Canoe England is working hard to improve the environmental credentials of canoeing; however we frequently encounter those who say that we give little or nothing to the waters that we use. While we know that this statement is incorrect we have little evidence to support our side of the debate.

### We need you!

This is where you can help. We want to build up a portfolio of work carried out by canoeists from all over the country. Whether it's collecting litter from your local riverbank, conservation work such as habitat restoration or even removing cars from your local river – we want to know about it! Send in your stories and photos to [andy.green@canoe-england.org.uk](mailto:andy.green@canoe-england.org.uk).

Please remember, before you do any work along a river, canal or any other water course, be aware that you may need to get permission and that some rubbish can be hazardous; if you're unsure, seek expert advice before removal. If you need any help on where to get this information or want to discuss a project further then please contact [andy.green@canoe-england.org.uk](mailto:andy.green@canoe-england.org.uk).

# CE contribution to Environment Agency studies

**Continuing the development of regional strategies for water-related recreation, the most recent study entitled 'Enjoying water in the North West' was released for consultation by the Environment Agency in November 2009. Details, along with the other completed studies for the South West region and east of England are available at [www.brighton.ac.uk/waterrecreation](http://www.brighton.ac.uk/waterrecreation).**

Canoe England has contributed to each of the strategies that set out to consider the growing demand for outdoor pursuits, gaps in provision and how best access to waters can be widened in each of the regions; whilst protecting the environment and wildlife that live within them.

Thames, Southern and the Midlands are the next regional studies in a programme of strategies conducted for the Environment Agency by the

University of Brighton. Work in these regions has commenced in the past few weeks with a series of local workshops attended by Canoe England. A study in the North East region that takes in Yorkshire and Northumberland is expected to commence later in 2010.

The strategic study findings so far make it very clear that public access to inland waters in many places continues to be limited, frustrated by legal constraints where water is claimed to be private, and opposed by other user interests. How these strategies can be considered viable under these circumstances and address gaps in provision must in many cases be seen as a distant proposition. Canoe England discusses in more detail at [www.canoe-england.org.uk/access-and-environment/consultations-and-reports/](http://www.canoe-england.org.uk/access-and-environment/consultations-and-reports/).

## Wilts and Berks Canal

**Canoe England has accepted an invitation to work with the Wilts and Berks Canal Partnership and assist with the promotion of canoeing activity on the canal. Canoe England has also joined the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust.**

Facilitated by Wiltshire Council, the canal partnership is a consortium of organisations that support the restoration project for the recreational benefit of local communities and create a green/blue infrastructure habitat for wildlife. Partners include British Waterways, Inland Waterways

Association, Environment Agency, Sustrans, Kennet and Avon Canal Trust and local authorities that border the canal route. Sections of the canal are open for canoeing and information is available from the newly appointed Canoe England, Local River Advisor – Robert Yeowell, who can be contacted on 01793 812708, email [robyeo19@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:robyeo19@yahoo.co.uk).

For the background, progress and extent of the canal restoration scheme visit the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust website at: [www.wbct.org.uk/](http://www.wbct.org.uk/) and [www.waterscape.com/canals-and-rivers/wilts-and-berks-canal](http://www.waterscape.com/canals-and-rivers/wilts-and-berks-canal).



Above: Foxham.



Above: Westleaze, Swindon. Photos by: Wilts and Berks Canal Trust archives.



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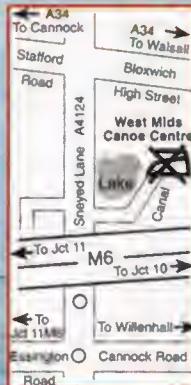
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## In brief

### Lower Thames Flood Risk Management strategy

The Lower Thames has a long history of flooding with more than 15,000 homes and businesses now standing within the flood plain. Some homes and businesses are more at risk of flooding than others, but it is expected to increase in the future. The Lower Thames has already experienced two significant floods this century: in 2000 and 2003.

The Environment Agency have made recommendations for a £300 million scheme. For more details visit: [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/lts](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/lts) for details.

Three new flood diversion channels are proposed between Datchet and Shepperton to the west of London, increasing the capacity of the Sunbury, Molesey and Teddington Weirs and widening Desborough Cut, near Walton-on-Thames. Canoe England has responded to the public consultation welcoming the proposals and looking for the flood diversion channels to have a public right of navigation for linear access and provisions for water and other recreations; as per the Jubilee River that serves as the Maidenhead, Windsor and Eton flood alleviation channel.

# The Green Blue

[www.thegreenblue.org.uk](http://www.thegreenblue.org.uk)



Our waterways heritage and environment is extremely important to us all and perhaps even more so to those who get enjoyment from canoeing and other watersports.

The Green Blue is the environment programme for the British Marine Federation and the Royal Yachting Association. Their aim is to promote the sustainable use of coastal and inland waters by boating and watersports participants, and the sustainable operation and development of the recreational boating industry throughout the UK.

The Green Blue has practical advice and information to help you think and act in an environmentally conscious way. Inland or coastal, individual or boating business, there is something here for you. They show that by taking a few simple steps you can keep costs down and sustain high quality water and local environments. The Green Blue is testing out practical projects, conducting research and providing best practice advice to help recreational boating go green.

Canoe England recognises that whilst canoeing may be a low environmental impact sport, the actions of individual canoeist may have an impact on the environment, and acknowledges responsibility to take reasonable measures to safeguard the environment for both the present and future generations. We have 'You, Your Canoe and the Environment' as well as [www.canoe-england.org.uk/about/environmental-policy/](http://www.canoe-england.org.uk/about/environmental-policy/). In addition, The Green Blue helps provide other practical ways of going green. Admittedly a lot of the advice is for powered craft (many canoeists are also powered craft users so do take a look) but there is some excellent practical advice about watching wildlife, taking care of litter and waste and how to recycle more as well as advice on environmentally friendly washing and cleaning of boats, kit, etc. The site is full of very useful information and is worth not only reading now but bookmarking to come back to as the site is regularly updated with new information and advice.

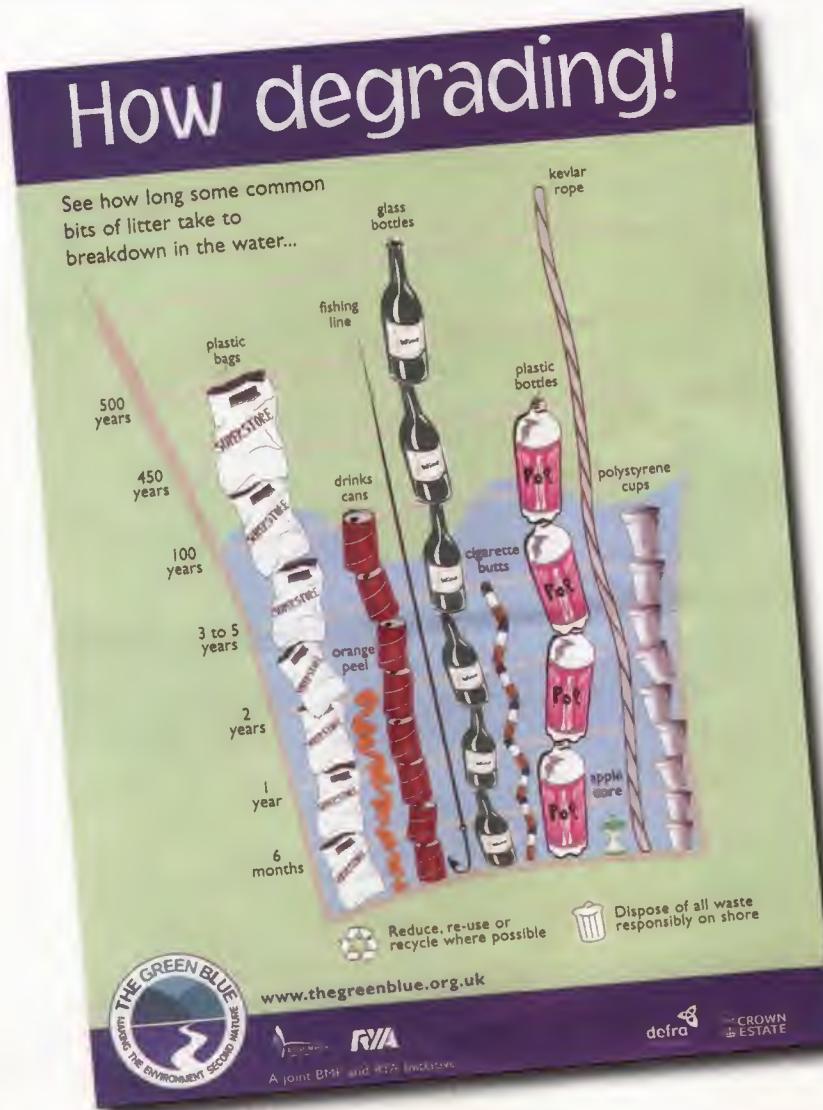
For example did you know how long some common pieces of litter take to break down in the water?

### Have a look at 'How degrading'.

For example, it takes almost five years for a cigarette butt to breakdown in the water!

The message must be always take your rubbish home and recycle or dispose of as appropriate.

The Green Blue have supported our updated 'You and Yours' leaflet and the link with them will help us to continue to promote green issues for watersports.



“The Green Blue is testing out practical projects, conducting research and providing best practice advice to help recreational boating go green”

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# Photo competition

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More information, along with the terms and conditions are available at [www.canoe-england.org.uk/about/photo-competition](http://www.canoe-england.org.uk/about/photo-competition). The winners are announced on page 14.



Above: Angela Emmanuel – Derwent Water.



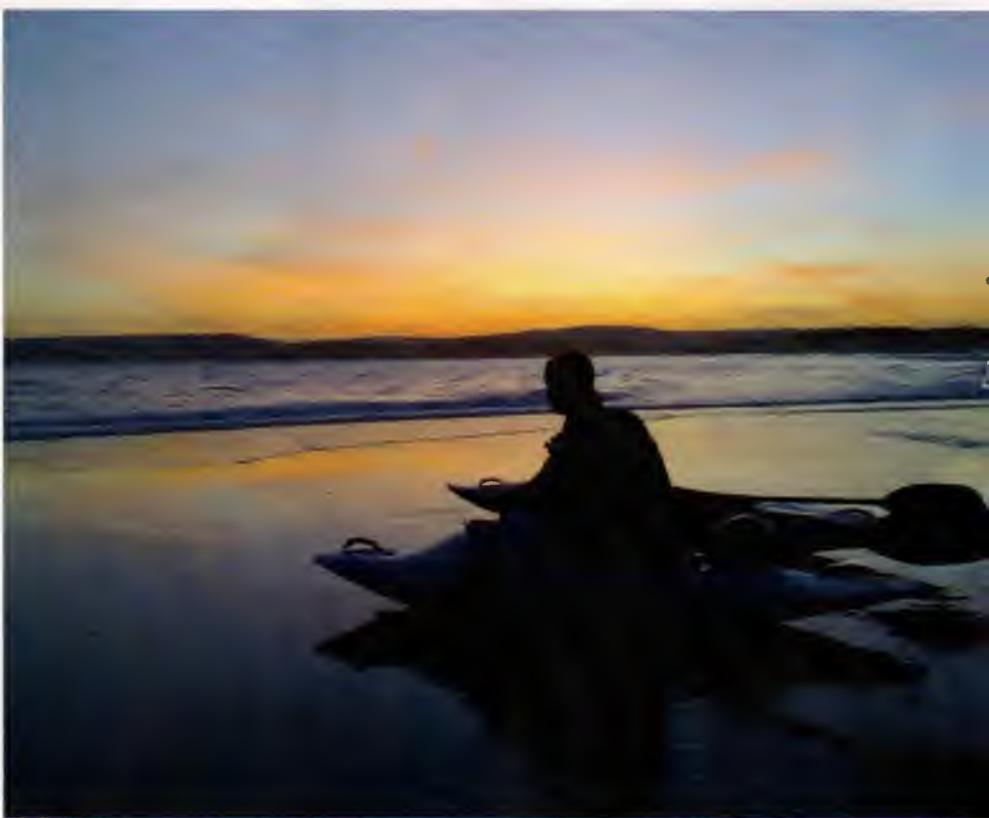
Above: Peter Parker – River Great Ouse.



Above: Jonathan Maddock – Rum and Sky, from Arisaig.



Above: Graeme Edwards – Llangenydd on the Gower, S. Wales.



Above December Winner: Jenny Brammer – Exmouth Beach.

# tion



Above 2009 Winner: Kath Pigdon – Ross of Mull.



Above: Max Hunter – Peru Jungle, near Bolivia.



Above: Tobias Wyatt – Loch Moidart.



Above: Steve Lenartowicz – Winter Camp on the Spey.



Above: Mike Channon Cricklade.



Above: Richard Moore – R. Thames, London.



Above November Winner: Graham Jones – Loch Ness, looking towards Inverness.

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ISBN 0953-010X

**President**

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**Annual Subscription Rates**

UK inland: £21.00; Overseas: £24.50

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**Publisher**

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[peter@canofocus.co.uk](mailto:peter@canofocus.co.uk)

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49 Greenfields, St. Ives, PE27 5HB

Tel/Fax: (01480) 465081

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We would like to thank the following:

Andy Goodsell, Fiona Jarvie, Julia Robertson, Tamsin Phipps, Jean Ashley, Jessica Oughton, David Leathborough, Dave Burne, Lucy Bound, Lynne Elgy, Dave Bradburn, Matt Thornton Brown, Andy Green, Howard Blackman, Kimberley Walsh, Coral Jackson and Chloe Nelson.

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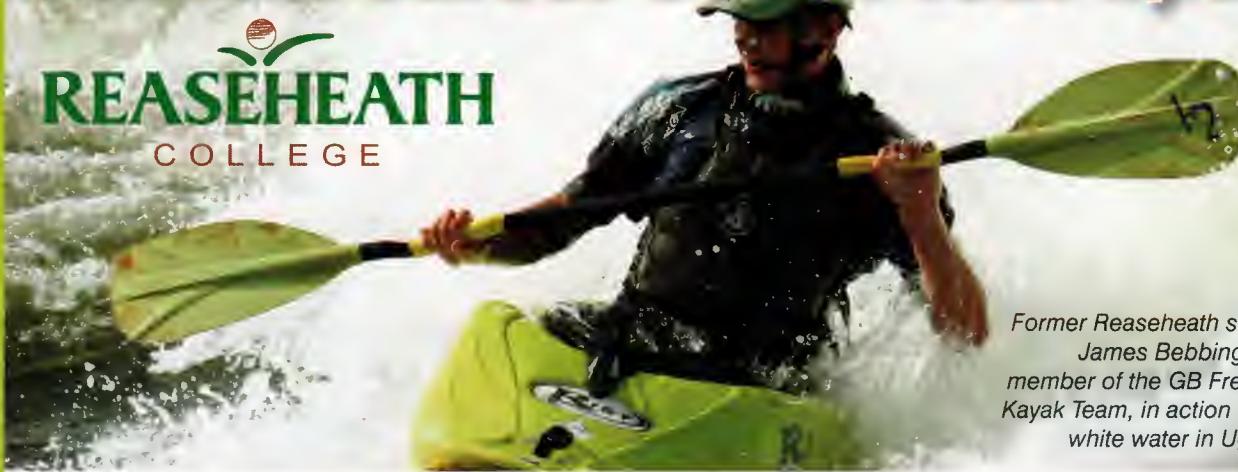
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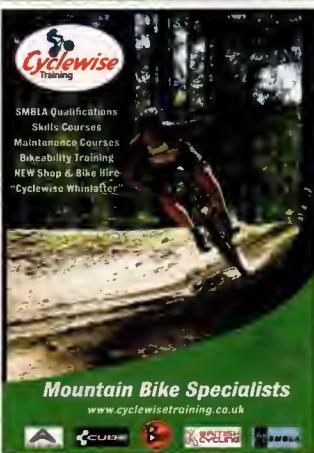
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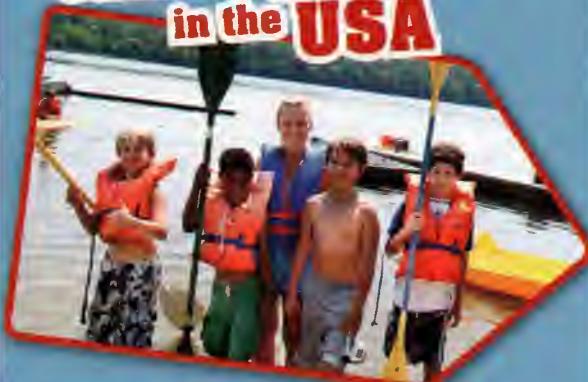
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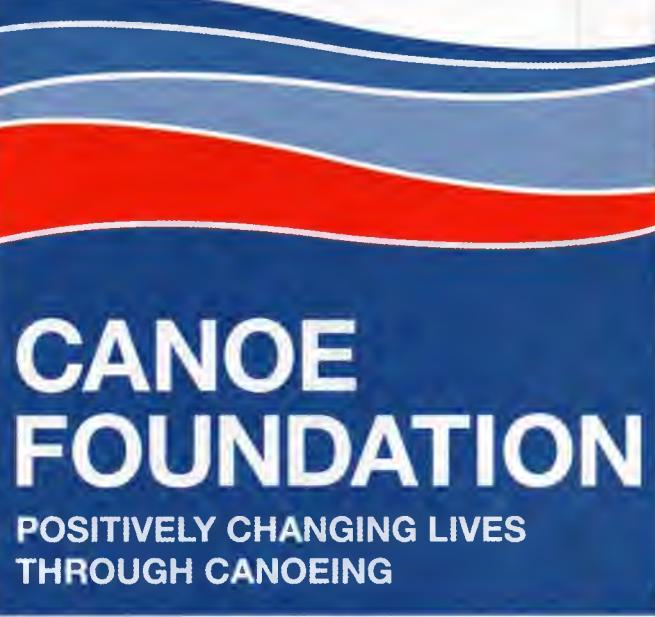
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# Behind the scenes

## Julia Robertson, Volunteer Development Officer

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.

**Congratulations on organising another successful Volunteer Awards Ceremony! It must take months of planning - how did it all go?**

It was a fantastic evening and an honour to be able to meet just some of the many hundreds of volunteers who commit their lives to the sport. We started planning the event eight months ago and it always gets a bit hectic around Christmas making sure everything is in place, but it's great to be able to recognise the volunteers each year.

**You work as Canoe England's Volunteer Development Officer; describe your role, in just three words?**

Enjoyable, varied and rewarding!

**And now, with a bit more detail...**

I work closely with the participation team especially the Paddlesport Development Officers but also with coaching and access teams. Externally, I keep in touch with Runningsports, Volunteer England and Sport England to keep up to date with what support is available to volunteers as well as ensure our sport is promoted within any national initiatives. A typical day varies depending on the time of year. Sometimes I will be developing resources, the website or support material, other times I will be organising events such as club forums and the awards. I am also the Lead Officer for Equality and more recently I have taken on a support role for the Canoe England Capital Grants.

**Below:** Julia.



**You've worked at Canoe England for almost three years. What's been your biggest highlight?**

The Volunteer and Recognition Awards are one of the highlights of the year meeting all the extraordinary committed volunteers. It was great to be involved in the European Canoe Slalom Championships and it will definitely be one of the highlights in my life. So many hard working, professional people who gave up their time for free yet worked endless hours in the extreme heat to run an event that the country could be proud of.

**You used to compete in track and field sprinting. Didn't you ever fancy pursuing a career as an athlete?**

When I was a junior athlete it was my dream to compete in the Olympics. I competed for Great Britain in a couple of international events but there are so many other good sprinters out there that the funding was hard to secure. My parents gave me the opportunity to train full time so I gave up working at Athletics Weekly and moved back home to train full time for a couple of years. It was hard work but I loved every minute of it – pushing your body so hard and the mental battles - it was all worth it to get into the top of the national rankings and a once in a lifetime experience.

**So, what made you decide to move into Volunteering? Had you volunteered yourself, before?**

Yes, I'm one of those people who doesn't have the heart to say no! When someone would say that something couldn't happen because there was no one to volunteer, I always find myself stepping in. I soon realised that there is a limit to the amount of time, which you can offer especially when doing a full time job. I had to give up a few roles including team manager and county championship organiser but my current roles still include Lincolnshire Athletics minute's secretary; Grantham AC sprints coach; Clubmark officer and newsletter editor.

**What do you enjoy most about your role and in particular working with Volunteers?**

The different aspects involved in the role from developing resources to organising events. I'm based mainly in the office but

when I have the opportunity to, I love meeting the volunteers and finding out ways in which I can make a difference. Unfortunately, we have our own targets to maintain which means we ask a fair bit from our clubs and volunteers – if I can make just one person's role easier to get on with the actual volunteering they enjoy doing then I feel it is worthwhile.

**The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games are coming up in just over two years. How do you expect volunteering to be involved with the Games?**

Volunteers will be fundamental to the whole games taking place successfully. I would recommend anyone who is hoping to volunteer in London to register on [www.london2012.com](http://www.london2012.com) and build up his or her volunteer experiences.

### Quickfire questions!

**I would describe my character as...** positive, determined and smiley!

**When I'm not working I...** enjoy spending time with my family and friends.

**The last book I read was...** Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows!

**The last film I watched was...** Notting Hill.

**My ultimate goal is...** to be happy. **I relax by...** reading, walking, playing the piano, flute and violin, going out for a nice meal and the odd glass of wine!

**My favourite food is...** lobster.

**My favourite TV programme is...** Friends.

**My favourite car is...** I'm not sure, so long as I like the colour! I'd quite like Kitt from Knight Rider though.

**My favourite subject at school was...** maths and French.

**My favourite place, in the world, is...** Bermuda.

**On my iPod, I'm listening to...** whatever my husband downloads for me!

**The person I most admire is...** my mum (corny but true!).

**One thing you don't know about me is...** I was ranked fourth in the country as a junior sprinter and stayed in the top 20 until I retired, last year.

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