

Canoe

FOCUS

It is the BCU's 70th birthday...

and to celebrate, we have a competition on page 50 and we have produced the biggest Canoe Focus yet with features from six continents...

Africa: Kayaking in Morocco...

Australasia: NZ sea kayaking...

N. America: Open canoeing in Yukon...

Europe: Kayaking Dorset, French ww, sea kayaking the Channel Islets, Scottish ww...

Asia: Siberian odyssey...

S. America: Bolivian ww... plus

BCU expedition to Kyrgyzstan

Update on the Rivers Access Campaign



February 2006 / No. 159 / £2.00



Classifieds:

13 pages of jobs, courses, equipment, accommodation etc...

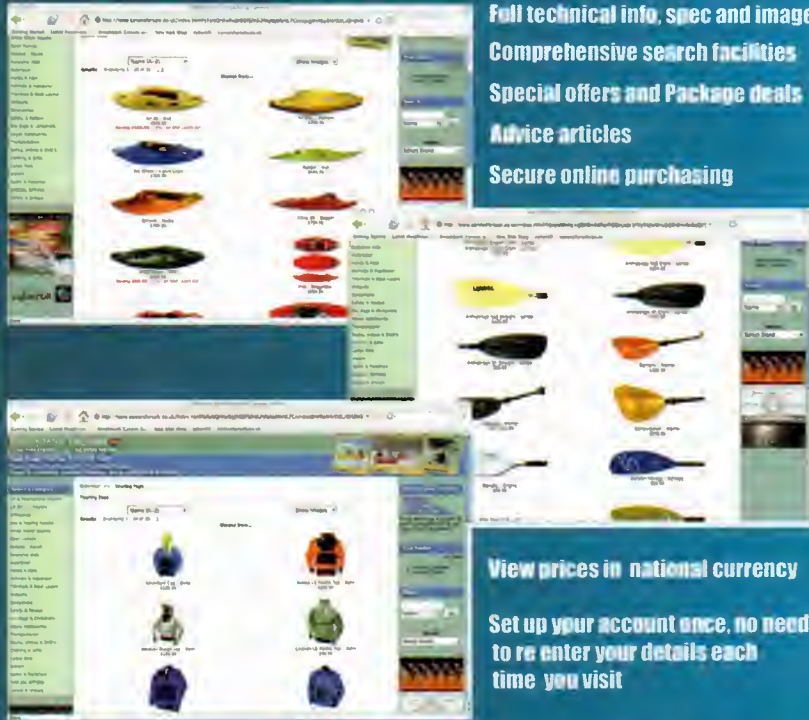


Competition:

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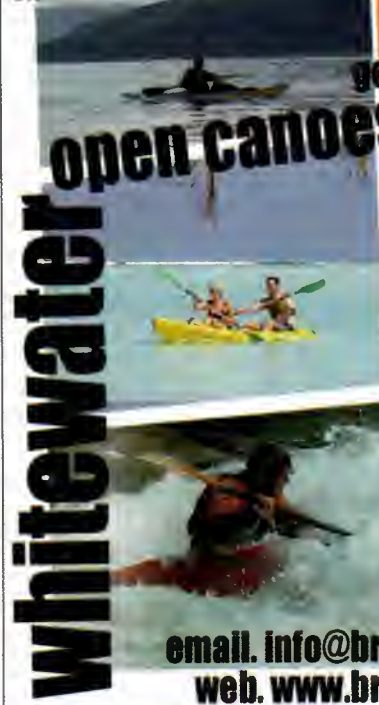
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The BCU vision is to:

enable our members, partner
organisations and the wider
paddling community the best
available opportunity to achieve
their potential in all aspects of
paddlesports.

The BCU's mission is quite simply
helping and inspiring people to
go canoeing.

Paddle now, join us now, together
we can all achieve more.

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Front cover photo: A small tributary of the Saryjaz in Kyrgyzstan.

Photo: David Fairweather

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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 peter@canofocus.co.uk, or mailed to 2b Graphic Design, 49 Greenfields, St Ives, Cams PE27 5HB. 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.

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Comment

by Paul Owen, Chief Executive

Welcome to the February issue of Canoe Focus

I hope you had an enjoyable festive season and a good start to the new year.

British Canoe Union's 70th anniversary

In 1936 the BCU was formed to send a Great Britain team to the Berlin Olympics. Since then the organisation has grown and the canoeing opportunities have increased tremendously.

We could not be where we are today without the help of thousands of past and present volunteers who given many hours to help support the work the BCU does in promoting and enabling canoeing. Thank you.

70th BCU anniversary photo competition – what does canoeing mean to you?

To celebrate and create a lasting legacy, we are inviting you to send us photographs of what canoeing means to you; photographs which you think represent the diversity and appeal of canoe and kayaking.

- The competition is free to enter and open to all.
- There are two categories; adults and those under the age of 18.
- Starting from February, one photograph from the two categories will be chosen each month to win prize vouchers.
- A selection of photographs will also be published in Canoe Focus, displayed in a dedicated section of the BCU website and will feature in a planned canoeing calendar.

The top prize is a camera worth £150 (one for winner of the adult category and one for the winner of the youth category). Vouchers will also be given away monthly.

For an opportunity to win get clicking now! (See page 50 for full details)

Annual General Meeting

The BCU's annual general meeting will be held on 11th March, 2006 at Westminster City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP.

The International Canoe Exhibition

17-19th March

The International Canoe Exhibition will again be held at the NEC between 17th and 19th March, 2006. In this issue of Canoe Focus a dedicated insert with the magazine will give you all the information you need. Or for you can visit the website www.theoutdoorshow.co.uk

Save money by booking your tickets early

If you book before the 3rd March, 2006 you can buy two tickets for £18, just quote the code CF2 when calling the

ticket hotline on: 0870 010 9086 or when buying on-line.

Tickets cost £14 per adult on the door, so you could save £10!

Channel 4 TV celebrities at Nottingham

Paddling is one of the sports included in this year's Channel 4 programme 'The Games'. Six celebrity women learn particular sports (four hours over three months with a top coach) and then compete against each other in a 'final' competition. Paddling launches

programme one live on Friday 17th March at 9-10pm on Channel 4 and is taking place at Holme Pierrepont Nottingham.

Competition

National Canoe Polo Club Championships, 6-8th January
 Congratulations to canoe club champions; Friends of Allonby (men), St Albans (women) Meridian (youth). Well done for holding another successful event. (See page 24)

Website

After the hurdle of creating a new website, we are now concentrating on improving its functionality. In order to help us make the website more user friendly, if you have any comments, we would like to hear from you, just e-mail:

chloe@bcu.org.uk

Canoe England Members' Area

The Canoe England members' area is where members can:

- Renew their membership
- Post classified adverts
- View special discounts

Following member's feedback we have developed the facility for members to retrieve their password from the website by entering a few security details.

To login in to the member's area, visit: www.canoe-england.org.uk/ click on the 'Members' heading at the top of the page in blue, enter your membership number and tick 'pick up password'.

This year there are some exciting events that will be taking place:

2006 Dates for your Diary

- The Outdoors Show, NEC Birmingham 17-19th March
- Devizes to Westminster International Canoe Race, 14-17th April
- Freestyle European Championships, Nottingham, 26th June-2nd July
- Youthfest, Dorney Lake, Berkshire, 9th July
- U23 and Junior European Slalom Championships, Nottingham, 25-27th August

Rivers Access Campaign



Typical UK access!

The Rivers Access Campaign is continuing to make progress.

In total, 110 MPs have signed up in support to the Early Day Motion (EDM no. 957) introduced by the Selby MP John Grogan. Why not contact your local MP and ask them to sign to the EDM?

The campaign has also sustained media coverage since the December Canoe Focus;

Radio 4 Today Programme, national newspapers and regional media coverage in Devon and Bristol. Also, questions have been asked in the House of Commons about rivers access. For details look in this issue of Canoe Focus (pages 12 and 14) and for the most up to date news on the campaign visit www.riversaccess.org.uk

Canoe Focus future issues

For your reference, the next issues of Canoe Focus in 2006 are:

- April
Editorial deadline: March 1st
- June
Editorial deadline: May 1st
- August
Editorial deadline: July 1st
- October
Editorial deadline: Sept 1st
- December
Editorial deadline: Nov 1st

Happy Paddling!

RaftFEST 2006

25-26th February
Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham

This is the event for anyone involved in rafting, or who wants to get involved and participate in white water rafting and/or raft racing. A fun weekend offering guide training and information on white water rafting, with opportunities to participate in 'Come and Try it' and Raft Racing. The

British men and women's team will be there on hand to offer advice and chat about their experiences at the World Championships in Ecuador.

Pete Meredith will be presenting "The Longest River" the film of his source to sea of the White Nile by raft.

The English Rafting Committee will also be holding their AGM on the Saturday evening prior to Pete Meredith's talk. Anyone wishing to become involved are more than welcome put forward nominations.

Booking places on the weekend is essential, so please e-mail
ewwrc@yahoo.co.uk or
telephone 07985 453 450.

Underspent

Awards for All is underspent this financial year (ending March 2006) by £40,000,000.

For canoeing projects of up to £5,000 or discreet parts of projects up to £5,000 'Sport for All' is ideal. One award per club per year is the general rule.

'Awards for all' has proved to be good for equipment purchases and for club/coaching development in the past.

Further details:
www.awardsforall.org.uk or
0845-600-2040 for a pack.

PADDLE THIS

Slalom British Open

The final Slalom of 2005 is by tradition the British Open and Class C International. This race normally takes place at Llangollen, North Wales but due to the continued access problems we were for the second year running forced to make alternative arrangements and run the race at Nottingham.

The race however was a resounding success, with a number of paddlers from abroad. What to me as organiser was even more important was the high numbers of the British team that took part. For many junior paddlers to have the opportunity to be on the same start line as the British team is a chance of a lifetime. For the first year all Division 1 paddlers were able to enter and the coveted prize of promotion to Prem for the 1st K1M, K1W and C1 was up for



Laura Blakeman

British Open Results:

K1Men

1st Campbell Walsh
1st U23 Rob Neave
1st J18 James Mugford
1st D1 Dave Rawding

K1W

1st Laura Blakeman
1st U23 Lizzie Neave
1st J18 Lizzie Neave
1st D1 Gwawr Evans

C1

1st Dave Florence
1st U23 Dan Goddard
1st J18 Mark Proctor
1st D1 Dan Rawding

C2

1st Stott/Baillie

Photos courtesy of Simon Perry at XL Digital simon@xldigital.co.uk 07771 734406



Campbell Walsh

grabs. The weather on Saturday was wonderful, ideal for the many spectators and the racing exciting, Sunday's racing was exceptional but the weather not so good!

We were fortunate to have sponsorship from EPM Technology and its director Graham Mulholland who many remember from his many year of competing in Premier division. A Great big thank you to Graham and his staff. A wonderful hospitality tent was provided with many invited guests visiting form sporting bodies, industry and local businesses, creating a lot of interest in the sport. Graham is keen to raise the profile of slalom in the coming years and to gain a sponsor taking slalom up to the 2012 Olympics.

Tenth anniversary of adventure activities instruction

Cornwall College is currently celebrating ten years of outdoor instructor training programmes, delivered at Duchy College and Falmouth Marine School. Today, activities include kayaking (placid water, river, sea and surf), canoeing, climbing, mountain leadership, orienteering, mountain biking and surfing, surf lifesaving, sailing, windsurfing and powerboating, with expeditions in the UK and abroad. The current training packages combine technical and leadership skills, industry work experience and academic qualifications.

Students can enter college at 16 to gain qualifications at all levels up to 'A' level equivalents through the National Certificate in Sport specialising in outdoor education or watersports, allowing progression to a range of two year Foundation Degrees. Instructor Training Programmes are available for those already working in the industry.

For further information visit www.duchy.ac.uk
Tel: 01579 372233 or email stoke.enquiries@duchy.ac.uk

Making a splash at London New Year's day parade

Richmond CC made a splash at London's New Year's Day Parade in front of more than 450,000 spectators. Thirty club members turned out on the chilly but dry day to

rattle buckets and promote canoeing. The Richmond float celebrated the importance of the Thames with a K2 racing between the bridges on the river in Richmond.

Lord Mayor of Westminster and Richmond Canoe Club member Tim Joiner opened the Parade. "Richmond Canoe Club did a sterling job of representing the BCU and paddlesport in the Lord Mayor of Westminster's Parade, and I was delighted to see them win a special prize for their efforts," said Tim after the parade.

Ten thousand people took part in the parade, with 4,500 travelling from abroad to join in. The parade continues to grow from strength to strength in this it's 20th year and was broadcast across the world with an estimated audience of 220 million.

Richmond won a prize of £1,000 which will go towards funds for the clubhouse refurbishment. The club needs around £200,000 to refit their gutted clubhouse.





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Kent Canoes	Wrotham, Kent	01732 886688	www.thecanoeshop.co.uk
Marsport	Reading, Berkshire	01189 665912	www.marsport.co.uk
Marton Boats	Swinderby, Lincolnshire	01522 868689	www.martonboats.co.uk
Norfolk Marine	Norwich, Norfolk	01603 783150	www.norfolkmarine.co.uk
Nucleus	Clacton-on-Sea, Essex	01255 812146	www.nucleuswatersports.com
Opportunity Outdoors	West Lothian	01506 834488	www.opportunity-outdoors.co.uk
Outdoor Active	Berkely, Gloucestershire	01454 261058	www.outdooractive.co.uk
PSM Outdoors	Hay on Wye, Hereford	01497 820022	www.psmoutdoors.co.uk
Stirling Canoes	Stirling	01786 478820	www.stirlingcanoes.co.uk
Surflines	Llanberis, Gwynedd	01286 879001	www.surf-lines.co.uk
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Woodmill	Swaythling, Hampshire	02380 555993	www.woodmill.co.uk



www.pyranha.com



partners

Calshot brochure 2006

Calshot Activities Centre's Summer 2006 brochure is out now. Available online or as a hard copy, it features a wide array of exciting watersports including canoeing, dinghy sailing, windsurfing and powerboating.

The Solent-based outdoor centre, which recently opened the brand new £1.2m RJ Mitchell accommodation block, enjoys a fine reputation for the quality of its instruction as well its superb location.

Contact Calshot Activities Centre.

Tel: 023 8089 2077

Fax: 023 8089 1267

Website: www.calshot.com

Holidays in Morocco

Water by Nature Rafting Journeys are pleased to announce the launch in 2006 of their short break holidays in Morocco where clients will experience the exhilaration of white water rafting in the high Atlas. The length of this trip is ideal for a long weekend break away from the office.

As an added extension to the trip, we can arrange a few days with a traditional Berber family in the Sahara; enabling the clients to experience both the exhilaration of the river with the serenity of the desert.

For further information see www.rafting.ma or their more general site: www.waterbynature.com. They can also be contacted on 01488 72293 or by email at raft@rafting.ma.

Fun and games

Those crazy kats at Kayak Capers have created a series of fun games to play on your computer.

They will be introducing more games over the coming months. They can also customise the games to your personal requirements and offer a game creation service. In-game advertising is also available. Go to www.kayakcapers.co.uk for more information.

PADDLE THIS

New SCA Access and Environment Officer

Mike Dales, holidaying in Norway



Mike Dales joins the SCA in this post, after working in a similar role for the Mountaineering Council for Scotland.

Mike is also an active sea kayaker and has been involved with the Touring Committee. He took up canoeing in 1973 after paddling a friend's giant canvas canoe on the Pocklington Canal in his native East Yorkshire. From there he progressed to rivers, until discovering the sea in the 1980s. Along the way, he dabbled in slalom, wild water racing, surf and polo.

Over the past few years Mike has been involved in the development of Scotland's new access legislation and code, and worked alongside first Fran Potheary and then Andy Jackson during the key stages of this process. With the new access system now in

place, Mike is looking forward to working with local authorities, public agencies and paddlers, to implement the new legislation and to using it to improve the atmosphere at the places we all love to paddle.

The Environment part of the SCA post is also of great interest to Mike. He is a great believer in the defence of wild land, and is hoping that through this post he can work hard to protect the fantastic places that paddlers are privileged to explore in Scotland.

New National Access Co-ordinator

Eddie Palmer has taken over from John Picken, who stood down at the recent AGM.

Eddie has been a paddler for 47 years, starting on the canals in Wolverhampton as a teenager, and moving on to marathon, slalom and white water racing, firstly in the days of soft-skinned kayaks. He has paddled and rafted in the whole of Europe, North America, and Africa., and since moving to Scotland ten years ago, has undertaken many expeditions. He is now a keen open canoeist, a leading member of the Open Canoe Sailing Group, and likes nothing better now than a couple of hours on interesting Grade 3 followed by a nice warm pub.

He became involved in access early on when he moved to North East England, and in over 20 years service, became Regional Access Officer, and then Chairman of Region for the BCU. During this time, with others he negotiated the Tyne Agreement, and started off the weekend rallies which became the Tyne Rally.

His main job is to help Mike with priorities, and to enable clear communication between members, the Access Committee, the Board, SNH and the Local Access Forums. In his other life, Eddie is a freelance trainer and consultant, working mainly with Boards and committees of voluntary organisations.



Lightning strikes Cardiff!

Cardiff Bay Water Activity Centre has taken delivery of the first Pyranha Lightning fleet in Wales.

Cardiff Harbour Authority has purchased the six Lightning kayaks as an initial start to the development of flat water racing in South Wales. This is in conjunction with their overall strategy to support the development of the sport in Wales, and is in partnership with the Welsh Canoeing Association, who are also seeking to promote elite flat water racing.

South Wales paddlers are now training at the Water Activity Centre, using the new boats on the River Taff and the Bay. Regular training sessions are being held on Saturday mornings and are becoming really popular with both novice and more experienced paddlers. The majority of the paddlers are from South Wales Surf Life Saving clubs, and are trading their ocean skis for kayaks during the winter months.

The vision to promote participation in sprint and marathon paddling within Wales and to compete at the five national regattas that take place at Nottingham along with other marathon races throughout the UK is coming to fruition.

Richard Harvey, CEO, from the WCA added, "We look forward to developing flat water racing at the Bay in partnership with Cardiff Harbour Authority. Canoeing offers something for everyone and the facilities at Cardiff Bay offer tremendous potential for Paddle Sport. Our aim is to offer opportunities for all levels of participants from those just wishing to have fun to those who aspire to excellence".

Freestyle for beginners

'Freestyle for Beginners' was introduced as a trial coaching programme. It was aimed at those wishing to experience this popular and dynamic discipline of paddle sport in a fun and safe environment.

The course was designed to make freestyle accessible to those keen to develop their skills, and was suitable for beginners and intermediates learning the ropes. Based initially in the flat water environment on Cardiff Bay the paddlers then progressed to the moving water environments of the Rivers Rhondda and Taff.

Boats were kindly on loan from Palm/Dagger Europe, White Water Consultancy, Outdoor Active and Square Rock (Jackson Kayaks), which meant participants were able to use the most up-to-date equipment.

Coaching was provided by Malcolm 'Talc' Durnan, who has already a proven track record working with freestyle paddlers at all levels and Cardiff Bay Water Activity Centre. It was his specialist involvement that contributed to the programmes success.

Organised training and coaching takes place every Saturday morning and all are welcome to attend. If you or your club wish to attend please contact Ben Longhurst or Richard Rogers on 02920 378161, rirogers@cardiff.gov.uk, blonghurst@cardiff.gov.uk



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Immersion Research 2006 range revealed

System X will start shipping IR's 2006 range in February.

The all new IR X Jacket features ultrasonically welded seams with no stitching and promises to be their driest jacket ever.

Further information at www.systemxkayak.co.uk



New slalom boat to hit the UK

After many months of trying different manufacturer's boats, slalom sisters Cassandra and Heather Slater decided that the only solution was to design a boat that gave them all the features they were looking for themselves.

After enlisting the help of a boat designer and working closely together they came up with a design that gave them all the features they were looking for.

After the design stage came the building process, as the boats were to be made from Carbon/Kevlar as durability was one of the key design and manufacturing requirements. A boat builder was found production is now underway and boats will be available shortly for demonstration and order in different constructions depending on the requirement. There will be a 'Club Spec' boat that will be in easy reach of all paddlers' and clubs with a top spec 'Race' boat that will also be very affordable.

So look out for the new 'Slater Design' boats at competitions throughout the UK. A new website will be running shortly with pictures, specification and prices.

PADDLE THIS

Saunton Sands Surf Lifesaving Club retains the Super Cup

Club Captain Mark Ressel retained the Men's Open ski event with a great win over arch rival Glenn Eldridge, Crantock. A tight start saw Glenn pull clear until the turn cans where Mark was able to haul back a five length lead and sprint finish to take his second title. In the Men's Open double, there was another win for the Saunton Sands pair of Peter Maycock and Mark Ressel. A good start and a comfortable lead nearly evaporated when the surf died out for the pair, but the chasing pack could not compete with the dash to the line. In the Women's Open, Rachel Pascoe from Portreath pipped Jenna Hawkey also from Portreath with Kirsty Edwards Aberavon in third. Interesting to note that Jenna Hawkey will get stronger in the future after combining sprint kayaking with surf lifesaving – lookout for the World Lifesaving Champs next year. In the Women's doubles, Rachel and Jenna from Portreath came home in first with team mates Holly Hawkey and Chantelle Richards in second with Penybont in third. In the mixed doubles Tim



Widdershoven and Jenna Hawkey won in big surf with many crews failing to negotiate the initial breaks.

The final standings in the 2005 Super Club Aggregate were:

Club	Total	Position
Saunton Sands	3658.05	1
Woolacombe	3501.69	2
Portreath	2791.40	3

Peter Maycock
Saunton Sands Surf Lifesaving Club

Brush off your winter paddling blues!

Following a successful 2005, North Yorkshire based AdventureX are expanding their portfolio further to include even more amazing worldwide destinations. Set up by Ben Mason, a well known UK paddler and expedition kayaker, and his partner Jo Featherstone, they are specialists in worldwide river adventures.

From the more relaxed class II/III in Morocco to the adrenaline pumping class IV/V of the Bhote Kosi and Marsyandi in Nepal, they have adventures to suit people of all abilities. For those looking for something a little different in 2006 you can now also enjoy a relaxed sea-kayaking trip set amongst the beautiful islands of Fiji, or if something a little closer to home is needed they offer tailor made multi-activity trips in the Austrian Alps.

Opportunities now range from specialised kayak clinics for complete beginners or improvers, to fully raft supported multi-day expeditions to far flung warm corners of the world. For more information please visit www.adventurex.co.uk or contact info@adventurex.co.uk or 0870 7669509.



New canoe kayak store in Coventry

Canoe Kayak Trader are expanding and have opened a new store in Go Outdoors Superstore. Advertised on TV as the UK's largest outdoor store, it covers everything for the outdoor enthusiast from rock-climbing to fishing and now canoe and kayak gear too.

Matt Bishop, manager of Canoe Kayak Trader and The Leam Boat Centre said, "It's been a great expansion for us. It's a really comfortable shopping environment, (we are next to the café!), its open 363 days a year and offers a massive range of outdoor gear at drastically reduced prices! It's also been a great venue for meeting newcomers to canoe and kayak sport."

To coincide with their expansion, Canoe Kayak Trader are also launching a new on-line catalogue.

Check it out on www.canoeandkayaktrader.co.uk or visit their new store at Go Outdoors, Coventry Business Park, Canley Rd, Coventry CV5 6RN. Tel 02476 671 280.

www.gooutdoors.co.uk

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Conservatives and EDM 957

Visited my MP (as part of my new years resolutions, mind you have been trying to do so for months!), she said that the Conservatives had concerns about signing the EDM 957, even though we know many who would, in addition to the ones who already have, because with their new leader they are establishing new policies and this includes access to water. This will fall under their Quality of Life Strategy and their Social Justice.

Have a look at their site to see what they say.

www.conservatives.com

Whatever your political beliefs if you have a Conservative MP please contact them to ensure they have the right facts, figures and understanding about the access issue. We can influence strategy now!

Did you know?

In the Lake District there are only access agreements on 88kms of the waterways when in fact there are well over 600kms of available water!

This is yet another example of the appalling access situation.

Comment from a supporter of the campaign, "It would be nice to be able to drop my kayak in the water at the end of my road, instead of having to drag it across two busy main roads, and half a mile through town to a completely different river!"

This is from someone who lives in Dorset. The campaign office receives many similar comments... time for the situation to be resolved!

The Environment Agency launches their waterway plans



At the London Boat Show, the Environment Agency launched their waterway plan for the River Thames along with other many others.

The Agency's head of Recreation and Navigation Julia Simpson said: "2006 is the year we launch all eight of our waterway plans which provide blueprints for the future of our rivers".

The River Thames Waterway Plan was two years in the making, and involved over 100 organisations along the 127km long river. Many canoeists went along to meetings and commented on the draft plans and consultation documents. The EA claims the plan is a breakthrough in river management, in that it incorporates the views and priorities of all those who work along the river, from local authorities and river businesses to resident groups and public sector bodies.

The Great Ouse Waterway Plan will open up 240kms of waterways in what is the most ambitious waterway project seen in the UK for two centuries, while the 31km Medway can

look forward to more temporary moorings and automated lock gates at Allington.

Next in the pipeline are plans for the rivers Wye, Nene, Ancholme, Glen/Welland and Stour. Each of the plans here contain specific actions for these rivers, for both the natural environment and for the people who use them.

The plans are part of the EA navigation strategy, 'Your Rivers for Life', which sets out how the EA will restore, conserve and develop the waterways in line with the needs of modern society over the next 20 years.

Anglian

Five plans to develop, maintain and improve the Anglian region's rivers, Great Ouse, Ancholme, Stour, Nene and Welland/Glen.

Southern

A plan with over 45 improvements to be completed on the 31km freshwater River Medway before 2010.

Thames

A plan to improve how the 217km freshwater River Thames will be developed and cared for in the future through a partnership called the River Thames Alliance.

River Thames Alliance

The River Thames Alliance is a partnership of public and private sector organisations, set up in June 2003 to help manage the future of the non-tidal Thames. There are now 68 member organisations of the Alliance which is chaired by David Suchet.

You can read the Thames plan at:

www.riverthamesalliance.com

Wales

A plan to protect the Wye's unique conservation and develop more recreation opportunities. To view the plans go to www.environment-agency.gov.uk/waterwayplan

New years' resolutions?

Have you made yours yet (and broken them)? How about making one to do with access?

Such as

- Writing to your MP and keeping them updated on the access issue.
- Informing your MP that if you had the access to 'x' river you would have gone and spent 'x' £s there, thus not only helping your fitness but the local economy.
- Writing an article for your local news paper about the access situation and giving examples of where locally and nationally you can not go.
- Informing everyone that canoeing is a great sport and whether you compete or paddle for fun it all contributes to the individuals well being. It is one sport that can increase its participation rate (2.5 million went canoeing last year and its set to increase in 2006) and help meet the Government's Health Agenda. (Government's target for increasing participation is 1% per annum, canoeing is at 6% and rising).
- Running an event to highlight the lack of access to waterways... get your local MP involved... local media etc.
- Promoting canoeing by running a 'come and try canoeing session' and get local dignitaries there... out in a canoe. Don't forget to take pictures.
- Taking your local youth/scout/guide group out and then tell the papers how well it went and how much enjoyment was had by all and how this could be replicated all over England and Wales if there was more access.
- Writing a weekly/month/regular article for your local paper about what you/the canoe club etc get up to and slip the access issue in to the articles.

- Running a regional event and highlight the access issue through it.
- Going canoeing more often and sending us the information about 'Your Favourite Paddle' so that we can share the information with others.
- Letting us know what incidents (positive and negative) you experience trying to canoe due to access problems etc. Contact info@riversaccess.org if you have information for us and/or need help and advice when planning/running an event.

Questions have been asked in the House... read on we need your help

The following questions have been asked and the usual stock answer given ie work on voluntary access agreements and that there is little unmet demand... well we know otherwise. Please can you contact your MP and inform them that there is a huge unmet demand. There are thousands of us who will not knowingly trespass and require the law to be clarified before we venture out on to 'disputed' waters.

10.01.06 Rights of Way

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps are being taken to improve public access to waterways.

Jim Knight: Following publication of the report, 'Water-Based Sport and Recreation: the facts' in 2001 we commissioned the Countryside Agency to work in partnership with other government agencies to pilot four demonstration projects to

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develop best practice for access agreements for canoeists on key stretches of water in England. The feasibility study indicated that voluntary agreements can offer a means of increasing access to water and we asked the Environment Agency to complete agreements in all four pilot areas. In addition we have agreed to the development of a strategic approach to recreational access to water inland waters, led by the Environment Agency but in collaboration with other key stakeholders.

10.01.06 Rights of Way

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the merits of amending the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to cover public access to waterways.

Jim Knight: We commissioned research into the opportunities and demand for water-based sport and recreation during the passage of the then Countryside and Rights of Way Bill through Parliament. The report, 'Water-Based Sport and Recreation: the facts', was published in December 2001. It concluded that there is some unmet demand for white water and long distance routes for canoeists, but that for most canoeists, as for most other water users, overall supply is roughly in balance with demand. We therefore concluded that the case for a statutory right of access had not been made and that we should pursue a voluntary approach instead.

For your MP

- Draw their attention to the Countryside Agency – Landscape, Access, Recreation research notes Issue CRN 93 Date June 2005 titled 'Demand for outdoor recreation in the English National Parks' which states: "Constraints on access to rivers for canoeists continue to cause conflicts. Access to good white water is particularly lacking for more serious canoeists – and this leads to clear evidence of unmet demand in some National Parks." www.sportengland.org/outdoor_recreation_report.pdf
- Give local examples as well as the one of the Hampshire Outdoor Education Centre which cannot use local rivers and has to travel either to the Thames or to Devon rivers

where access has been agreed. It is pointless for them to ask for local access repeatedly, knowing it will be refused. In the case of rivers where access exists, it is generally for restricted periods, with limited numbers and obstructive permit systems. For example, the River Dart access officers in Devon receive far more requests for access to the best stretches than they can accommodate. All the weekend permits for the Upper Dart are taken up during the summer, months before the winter canoeing season starts. This leads to some canoeists accessing the river without permits, endangering the access agreement itself. Fundamentally there is a huge unmet demand for canoeing - most canoeists who are aware of the access situation will not paddle on waters where there is no access agreement.

- Useful to let them know that for example in Wales, where there are 300 rivers, only eight access agreements have been created. Access agreements are entirely dependent on the goodwill of riparian owners; in most cases this option is not even open for discussion. Fifty years of effort by the BCU has produced very little progress. From over 66,000kms of rivers in England and Wales without a public right of navigation, only 812 kilometres of highly restricted access has been negotiated. Some agreements are for just a few days each year adding very little opportunities for canoeists and other potential river users.
- The BCU agreed with the Government that they would look at the voluntary agreements via four pilot studies the Environment Agency are undertaking. However, they have grave concerns over the effectiveness of them. There are concerns over the cost of the four pilots, not only in terms of time but in actual cost. Hundreds of thousands of pounds have been spent to potentially gain about 70kms of water out of over 66,000kms of rivers where there is no access! The rivers chosen for the feasibility study are not exactly attractive options for the canoeist.

Is this approach a feasible or practicable strategic solution?

PADDLE THIS

Where is your Favourite Paddle?

The BCU like to compile some favourite paddles which highlight canoeist friendly car-parks, café's, local shops, pubs, B&Bs, garages so that others can support them. We could also highlight canoe clubs where you are welcome to visit to use their facilities, camp overnight or just to leave your canoes/kayaks safely as you visit the local area.

There are many walker friendly cafes (removal of muddy boots often required... understandably) but there are many friendly places that we go to too.

With this information we are looking to further develop canoe trails around the country and actually provide information via the web and in leaflet format. The paddles need to be on water that has an access agreement on even if its only for a few days per year and as we gain greater access we will open it up to include trails etc all around the country.

Contact Chloe at the BCU or e-mail: chloe.lawrie@bcu.org.uk

Example

- Starting place... car park... set down point... café and access to water.
- Things to see en route... including places to eat/picnic.
- Finish venue... egress point... car park... toilet facilities etc... cafe etc.
- Pangbourne to Reading on the River Thames – 6 miles (short tour).

Pangbourne OS Map 175

Meeting place – grid ref 636767 next to Adventure Dolphin Centre. (Adjacent to Whitchurch Toll Bridge, currently 20p per car if you come in to Pangbourne that way).

Park in the public car park there (don't forget to pay your parking dues).

Lift your canoe over the fence (you can go through the gateway) and then straight across the open field (public access). There is a really easy put-in with lots of room to get ready.

Paddling downstream after about three miles you will come to Mapledurham Lock. Here there is an easy portage and a friendly lock keeper. If you are in a big group he will let you go through the lock. There are toilets at the lock and in the summer there is a tea shop. Canoeists are very welcome here. There is a good grass area where canoes can be left.

Going on downstream after another two miles on the right there is the Berkshire Kayak and Canoe Shop adjacent to Reading Marina which is the outskirts of Reading. After another mile you come in to Reading. There is a huge grass area on the Reading side (south bank) where portaging is easy. If you paddle all the way down the field (known as Thames Promenade) you will come to Reading Rowing Club. (Grid ref 709747) Exit the water here. The car park is only 50 or so metres from the water. Toilets are available in the car park.

Behind the rowing club is a small café which is open in the summer but if you want a really hearty meal walk toward the Holiday Inn Hotel and then cross the road where you will find the Gorge Café. It has very interesting décor but serves a wide variety of food from huge cooked breakfasts to sandwiches. (Partly great after a paddle on a cold winter's day!)

(Reading Canoe Club is on the north bank, the club is not open all the time but contact them via their website to see if their facilities can be made available. www.reading-canoe.org.uk)

If you intend to continue your journey downstream you can portage Caversham Lock and carry on down past the mouth of the Kennet and Avon Canal on to Dreadnought Reach. (This is at the bottom of the A329M in Thames Valley Business Park Grid ref 737741) There is car parking available here as well as a canoe shop (Marsports Ltd, need to check their opening hours) where you can purchase canoeing bits and even an ice cream.

There are public toilets available. Here you can also find Wokingham Canoe Club. (www.wokinghamcanoeclub.co.uk). This extra part will add another mile and half to two miles to your journey.

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Fish River canoe marathon

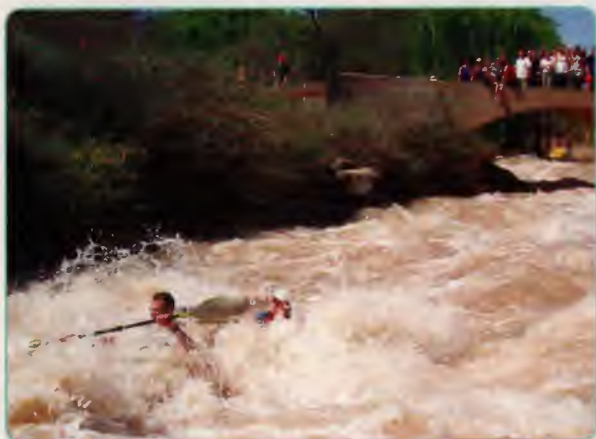
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Cradock, Eastern Cape of South Africa

In 1982, 52 K1 boats entered the First Fish River Marathon, 37 of these finished the 83.9km race, the winner in a K1 with a time of 6:04:22.

On 1st October 2005, 471 K1 and 532 K2 boats finished the now 82km course, the winning K1 broke the record with time over the two days of just under five hours. How sport moves on.

Below: Keiths flyover – my nephew Stuart Rawlinson took me down as a tripper on the day before the race – spot the white hat in the back of the K2!



The Fish River is actually a dry riverbed for much of the year and only flows in times of rain or with releases from the Grassridge Dam.

I was lucky enough to be in one of the K2 boats starting in the first batch of 60 boats after all the K1 boats had been set off. Boats are lined up in the shallow water at the edge of the dam, paddlers start 50m back and have to sprint to the boat before heading off across the dam, round a buoy 500m out and then on another 1.7km to the dam wall. Here was the worst part of all for me – jump out (chest deep in water), scramble out to portage the boat up and over the dam wall and carrying for 0.7km over rocks, thorns, mud etc. I wished I had been more prepared for that – my legs just about gave out and sadly our jog had to slow to a walk. The sprint across the dam tended to spread people out a bit but the put in after the portage was a huge bunfight – boats and paddles and people everywhere. No need for splash covers yet as the next compulsory portage was only another 0.5km on. Again quite an experience getting out and in again at speed in unknown depth - but learning fast!

The upper stretches of the river are reasonably narrow with many overhanging willow trees and thorn bushes and reeds along the banks. All very beautiful but potentially rather tricky, running through inaccessible farmland and bush. A real hazard is the 'Toastrack' a low level bridge with many pillars less than a paddle width apart with only about three foot clearance. I was told there have been a few smashed noses and wrapped boats here. Fortunately for me

my pilot Dave Rawlinson (an SA veteran marathon champion) knows the river extremely well and despite an unplanned bump into one of the pillars and a slide into the opening next to the one we had planned to go through, we ducked low, braced hard and came through upright and relieved that the boat was strong.

The next portage we opted to do was at 'Keiths flyover' Only about 20% of competitors will attempt this rapid as a capsize here means a hairy swim and generally damaged boats.

There really was never a dull moment in the following two and a half hours, an exhilarating series of rapids at Soutpans drift following the weir there and another tricky bridge, two more compulsory portages and a number of smaller drops, weirs and rapids.

Left: We finished the 36.8km of day two in 2:33 giving an overall time of 6:04 and 188th to finish – 10th mixed K2.

All the while I was grateful to be upright in our boat as many around us were swimming or emptying out on the banks.

As the river got wider and shallower and the rapids less frequent I was increasing glad of my times spent on the canal at Queen's Head. Only at that stage did the thoughts of technique (thanks Phil) really kick in and allow me to pull what little of my weight there is to reach the end of day one in a very respectable time of 3:31 for the 45kms. A very welcome boerewors (South African sausage) roll and soup (not to mention ice cold beer and poweraid drinks) were given to all competitors.

Day two

Day two started on the river, again in batches, with the K1 boats setting off first. We had qualified to be in the first K2 batch again – the day was hotter than day one (30+) and it was a real relief to get soaked once again on the get out for the first portage after only 0.5km. My biggest surprise was when Dave disappeared over a vertical 6ft wall with the front end of the boat and obviously expected me to follow him (this is still the portage!). I felt as if I hesitated for ages but somehow slid down the wall and continued on into the knee deep mud below to get back into the boat. (I don't like boggy mud!). Now slotting back into paddling, enjoying the rapid at Baroda Bridge and knowing that the main obstacles come near the end we went steadily on.

I guess it wouldn't have been a complete experience without one swim! This happened for us and many others at the bottom of a steep chute at Marlow weir. So many swim here that there are a team of lifeguards on duty to ensure safe exits from boats. Others chose to portage rather than wait to shoot the weir – often a much quicker option! We jumped back into a very water logged boat as we couldn't actually get to the bank with so many others emptying out – and I just used the foot pump very hard to empty out the water. The real classic weir of this race is the last one at Cradock – we chose not to wait for what would have been about 30 minutes to shoot this one – again only one boat is allowed down at a time. With our last portage done (I was improving hugely by now) we tried very hard to catch the K2 in front of us on the last 3.6 km to the finish – again good training at the time trials – but failed by about one boat length!

This for me was such a wonderful experience. I had said I would love to try it a couple of years ago and my brother-in-law said he would be willing to take me in a K2 in 2005. I am extremely grateful to fellow Shrewsbury Canoe club paddler Victor Edwards who trained with me in his K2 on the River Severn and also did the event this year. Also, at the beginning of the year I joined Shropshire Paddlers to get some experience in narrow racing boats, hints on technique and some time trial work, not to mention a few unintentional capsizes! Thank you to everyone there who have encouraged and helped my paddling develop. Most of all, my family deserve thanks big time too – for the hours of paddling they have put up with and the trip out to South Africa that was my 50th birthday present.

Here's to many more adventures – I would recommend the Fish any day. (www.fishmarathon.org.za tells you all!) ●

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Ripon Explorer Scouts, Morocco Expedition



Left: paddling out to the reservoir
Below: a hill hugging village



been told about their hospitality to strangers. We had expected to carry full packs however, when the offer came to load our kit onto mules, there was no hesitation in emptying our packs. Poor mules!

During the next four days we trekked in some of the most stunning scenery you can imagine. Bright red sandstone rock exploding from lush green fields, deep blue skies and snow capped mountain peaks, constantly attacked our visual senses. Mohamed spoke reasonable English - as well as Berber, Arabic and French - and was able to talk about his country as the Explorers listened with interest. How his people, the Berbers were about 35% of the population and predominantly lived in the mountains while the remaining 65% were Arabs and city dwellers. He also mentioned that many mountain people were exempt from paying taxes, but received none of the social benefits. But now the younger generation wanted some of the trappings of city-dwellers, so attracting the eye of the taxman. No doubt this will erode the independence of the Berbers.

The first night of our trek was in basic gîte d'étape accommodation with mattresses of the floor, cold water for washing and basic toilets (hole in the floor). The second night was spent in tents in a 2,000m mountain pass. Here the toilet was behind whatever large rock you could find and washing was done in the small stream. The third night was spent in another gîte d'étape. But this one had a Hamman (the Moroccan equivalent of a Turkish bath).

High altitude snowball fight

Our Berber guides and muleteers did all the cooking and putting up tents. The food they provided was traditional Moroccan, predominantly fresh fruit and vegetables with small quantities of meat, all of which was quickly devoured by nine hungry teenagers. Being a Muslim county our guide and muleteers would occasional stop and pray to Mecca. During the trek we passed through a few mountain villages. The people were shy, but friendly. Always returning a wave with a friendly "Bonjour". However, they didn't like having their photo taken.

At the highest part of the trek (2,500m) the Explorers found a small patch of snow and had a snowball fight. But when we rounded the next corner, our muleteers had found a bigger patch and gave the Explorers a good beating.

The trek finished in the village of Imil under the shadow of Mt Toubkal (4,167m), the highest mountain in North Africa. Our guides and muleteers had been excellent and knew how to deal with young people, which helped make the trekking phase a great start to the expedition.

Hide and Seek

Nine Explorer Scouts and four Leaders from Ripon in North Yorkshire completed a two week trekking and kayaking expedition in Morocco. They raised over £11,600 towards expedition costs and trained hard to acquire the skills needed to paddle the 'Hidden River' in the Middle Atlas Mountains.

I was already a Level 2 coach so was able to do much of the kayak training myself. After a lot of time and effort from many people the Explorers gained the required kayaking skills - BCU 3 star as a minimum and the canoe safety test - with most paddling grade 2 water before they went. They also did the Junior Lifesaver Plus first aid course. This training also counted towards their Duke of Edinburgh Awards. They already had good walking and camping skills as part of normal scout training.

We flew into Marrakech and booked into the Hotel Imouzzer which was a low budget, basic, £3 a night job: clean, safe, secure and ideal for our needs. Hamish normally puts his clients in hotels at \$40 a

night, but I had wanted cheap and simple; something with an 'expedition' feel. And this hotel was ideal.

After about four hours sleep we were woken at 5am with the call to prayer from the numerous loud speakers on the Youssef Mosque. After a 'petit dejeuner' on the hotel roof, we had a short walk to our pick-up point for the first part of our expedition; five days trekking in the High Atlas Mountains.

Mohamed and Mohamed

The first Mohamed was in charge of the minibus company. The next Mohamed was in charge of the trekking company. He gave a warm welcome and offered us mint tea under the Juniper trees. We had



A well deserved rest on the trek



Camping at 2,000m



A Moroccan village

Banana hammocks

We arrived back in Marrakech late afternoon and, checked back into our hotel, dumped our rucksacks and went straight out to the Hotel Tazi – one of only two places in Marrakech which sold beer. But this was not our main reason for going. We were meeting Hamish and our river guides and they happened to be where the beer was! Our next adventure was about to begin.

We were up early the following morning with the 5am call to prayer. Hamish and our river guides (Clive - deputy river guide - from England, Bret from New Zealand and Koki from Switzerland) took us to the food markets in Marrakech. The meat was fresh, particularly chicken and rabbit. The Explorers were fascinated to see our chickens bought alive, then passed to the shop next-door where they were be-headed and put through the de-feather machine! Having completed the shopping in the morning, we had free time to explore Marrakech and the souks before helping pack the Land Rovers and trailer later that afternoon.

The loo with a view

With an early start the following morning we set off in two hire Land Rovers and Morris (Hamish's Land Rover) plus trailer. It took six hours, much of it driving through heavy rain, to reach the 'Hidden River' in the Middle Atlas Mountains which were shrouded in low cloud. Our first sighting of the river was a narrow gorge with fast moving, muddy coloured water. Hearts started beating faster and most started to have second thoughts. Another hour on the 'road' - requiring 4x4 vehicles - we arrived at our first night's camping area. After unloading, Hamish explained the camp set up: All water (collected from the river) was to be filtered and iodine added; hands must be washed with antiseptic soap before eating, handling food and after going to the toilet. Hygiene was paramount. The toilet was placed well away from the camp area and always with a spectacular view when seated!

The camp set-up was very efficient. The Explorers helped prepare food, cook and washing up. Cooking was done on gas and open fires. The meals ranged from spaghetti bolognese, pizza and chips and tortillas to apple crumble and stir-fry. We slept in tents and lived in two sets of clothes for five days: One set for kayaking and the other for the evening. All equipment went on a raft paddled by Hamish.

The river was wide and flowing swiftly. We would be paddling predominantly alpine grade 2 and 2+ with sections of grade 1 and 3 in between. We paddled in groups of four with a river guide. Probably for the first time in their lives, Explorers (and Leaders) were truly pushed physically and mentally to their maximum and taken outside their comfort zone. Kayaking skills were tested to the full, with many of them taking a swim during the first few hours: Several started rolling in moving water for the first

time. Towards the end of the first day we suddenly found ourselves paddling through the narrow gorge, seen the day before. Once everybody had got through without swimming they realised it wasn't as hard as they anticipated. Not long after that we were at the second night's camp. At this point it was possible to drive Morris to the opposite bank. However, after this, we would be committed to running the river, as vehicular access would not be possible. Two of the leaders decided their kayaking skills were somewhat lacking so Hamish put them in a 'ducky' (an inflatable raft for two).



Hamish in the gear boat

Hamish and his guides were happy with everybody else's paddling skills, so allowed them to continue in kayaks. This was the point of no return and Hamish reserved the right to either cancel the trip or put more people in 'duckys'.

The rock hugging ducky paddlers

During the next four days we paddled the Hidden River under the guidance of Clive, Bret and Koki. Their manner, approach and technical skills soon gave the team confidence in their own ability and ensured nobody came to any real harm. At grade 3 sections most people portaged but the better paddlers were allowed to run them. At a couple of points we all had to portage because of dangerous undercuts. During day three we practiced white water rescue techniques and 'rescued' Clive from a rock in the middle of a grade 3 rapid. Overall there were no major problems. Several people took swims and ended up with a few cuts and bruises.

By mid morning on day five the water became much more mellow. We paddled through narrow gorges with towering red rock some 300 feet high. By lunchtime we arrived at the reservoir. The last four hours were spent paddling 5km against a headwind to reach Morris, which was pre-positioned on the far side. This was by far the hardest part of the trip. We were hoping for a motorboat tow but this had not turned up. To make the paddle even harder, the equipment raft had sustained a puncture in a front section earlier that day - so we pushed the ducky under the front bow. This meant a very hard, slow paddle for Hamish and other volunteers. However, by 4pm we had all completed the Hidden River trip. We were the first youth group to kayak the river. Credit has to go to the young people and leaders who took part in this expedition as they proved that they could push themselves beyond their own expectations. They had made a commitment the previous year and saw it through to the end.

We arrived in Marrakech later that evening and booked back into the Hotel Imouzzar. The following day we hired a minibus to Essaouira, a coastal resort, for the last two days. A beautiful resort that provided an ideal way to finish off what had proved to be a highly successful expedition. On Saturday 17 April (day of departure), our pre-booked minibus was waiting for us at 4am to take us to the airport and the 14-hour journey back to Ripon.



Clive having a play

The Adventure Continues

Most of you will think that this is the end of an expedition. However, a year has now passed and it still affects people's lives. Those who went in 2004 have matured noticeably and are more confident. Many are now Young Leaders in various Scout Groups in the District. Several have taken up kayaking as their main sport and now paddling grade 4 rivers.

Two are training to become Level 2 BCU coaches. I have become a Level 3 coach. Like all expeditions of this nature it will be many years before the true benefits are really seen or appreciated. I personally benefited from doing expeditions. I am the product of an Operation Raleigh expedition, which gave me the confidence and skills to help develop young people today. I am now organising another expedition to Morocco in April 2006 for 11 Explorers. This expedition will be a continuous 11 days of true wilderness travel – six days trekking to the put-in point and then five days kayaking to the reservoir. ●

Philip Oakley, Ripon Explorer Scout Leader



Preparing pizza



Oops!

FACTS : INFO

For further information about organising a similar expedition or to other worldwide destinations with Hamish and his crew, contact him at www.waterbynature.com. Hamish's dedication and commitment to making this expedition happen was second to none, and without his help it would not have been the success it was.



Mercury

Captain James Cook spent twelve days in Mercury Bay in November 1769. After observing the transit of Mercury, he named the bay after this planetary event.



Smile Hole in Mercury Bay



Double Bay, Mercury Bay

With all due respect to Cook and the world's astronomers: what a disappointing name. Considering Cook had just named the Bay of Plenty, I think he should have been more inventive to truly reflect Mercury Bay's diversity and beauty. I suppose 'The bay of plenty more' would have been unsuitable.

Encompassing a marine reserve, great beaches, estuaries, caves, islands and more caves, this area is an absolute delight for anybody, in any weather. In particular, the northern side of the bay is a kayaker's haven; riddled with caves, tunnels and great rock gardens. Launching from Wharekaro/Simpson Beach, point your kayak north east and start exploring. Just before Double Bay is the first

of the big caves. Make sure your head torch is handy 'because this cave is huge. Caves, tunnels and great rock gardens continue along the coast interspersed with easy landing beaches (depending on swell

direction). If you are planning a one-way trip, the next road access is Matapaua Bay Road. This road is extremely steep leading down to the beach and may not be suitable for all vehicles. Paddling around the headland another 5

Harbour or Purangi Estuary. On a high tide you can easily get lost up the Whitianga Harbour for a full day. Follow the Waiwawa River and reward yourself with a nice cold beer at the Coroglen Tavern. Just

don't forget what time the tide changes! Purangi Estuary is located at the eastern end of Cooks Beach. This is quite a small estuary, but really sheltered and a great option for new paddlers or families. Flaxmill Bay and Front Beach provide more sheltered paddling and are great areas to explore. Heading east from Flaxmill Bay brings you past Shakespeare Cliffs. Keep an eye out for small waterfalls high up in the cliffs. Around the next corner is Lonely Bay. Looking like something off a



Rock formation, Flaxmill Bay



kilometres will bring you to Opito Bay with easy landing and good road access.

For a more sedate paddle, explore Whitianga

postcard, it's a great place for lunch and as the name suggests there's usually nobody there. Just be warned, high above you is a very popular look out site.

If only Cook had traded in his cutlass for a waka. I am sure he would have found a suitable superlative to name this great piece of New Zealand's coastline. ●

THANKS

Many thanks to Karen Knowles for writing the story. The article has been reprinted by courtesy of 'New Zealand Kayak Magazine'.

Mercury Bay is the area highlighted in red.



Shakespeare Cliffs, Mercury Bay

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Women's International Class

1 Devon Barker	USA EAST
2 Brigitte Egan	IRELAND
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Grand Master's International Class

1 Ross Fulcher	USA EAST
2 Kim Sprague	USA WEST
3 Dennis Judson	USA WEST

Master's International Class

1 Dan Crandall	USA WEST
2 Jock Young	SCOTLAND
3 Gary Adcock	ENGLAND

Men's International Class

1 Darren Bason	ENGLAND
2 James Hawker	ENGLAND
3 Jim Grossman	USA WEST

Junior's Open

1 David Speller	JERSEY
2 Galen Licht	USA WEST
3 Christopher Hobson	N. IRELAND

Women's Open

1 April McEwen	USA EAST
2 Jamie Cooper	USA WEST
3 Martine Law	SCOTLAND

Grand Master's Open

1 Ross Fulcher	USA EAST
2 Rick Starr	USA WEST
3 Wayne Waddington	USA WEST

Master's Open

1 Matthew Radis	USA WEST
2 Dick Wold	USA WEST
3 Neil Kahn	COSTA RICA

Men's Open

1 Jonny Bingham	N. IRELAND
2 Neil Baxter	SCOTLAND
3 Darren Bason	ENGLAND
4 James Hawker	ENGLAND

In December's Canoe Focus, we highlighted the success of the English and Northern Irish teams. As the magazine was being printed we received the amazing story of Jersey's David Speller. Read on...

The Jersey surf kayak team has once again confirmed its status as one of the top teams in the world. At the recent world championships the team continued its six year run as one of the top four teams in the world. Team Jersey were also the only British team to have made the finals.

With the ludicrously expensive fiasco of getting our kayaks from the freight agent behind us (that's a whole other article) we got down to training at the competition site for a whole three days at Esterillos Oest on the Pacific coast of Costa Rica!

The Individual Championships kicked off the event and Jersey paddlers fared well in the varied surf conditions with most of the surfers advancing to the second round.

By the semi final stages it was only the masters, juniors and ladies categories that had Jersey paddlers remaining. Chris Ollivier advanced to both the Masters finals while Tim Rowe had to be content with his fifth place. David Ollivier also dropped out of the junior event at that stage as did Ailsa McDougall from the ladies both settling for fifth places! David Speller advanced to the final heats of both the International and Open classes!

The team event began again in varied surf conditions. At one point in the team event one of the organisers was heard saying "Jersey are rocking this contest"; after the men had three heat wins and a second place in a row.

On the final day the waves didn't go the way of the Jersey surfers. Chris Ollivier continued his heat winning runs but with too many third and fourth places from the rest of the team, Jersey slipped into fourth place in the final stages. At the closing ceremony when they were called to collect their fourth place trophies, Team Jersey were acknowledged as the "Biggest little team in the world."

The Jersey paddlers had their best successes to date in the individual championships. Chris Ollivier was man of the team, surfing more heats than anyone, with his unbeaten record in the team event heats. He went on to win his way into the finals of both the Masters International Class (long kayak) and the Masters Open Class (any kayak) with long rides, radical cutbacks, floaters and great crowd cheering

cover ups. But in both finals his wave magnet seemed to be on the blink, as although he rode the waves in his radical Ollivier style he did not get the best waves of either heats and was placed fourth in both finals.

Not so for David Speller, Jersey's newest member of the team and the youngest paddler at the event. Surfing a kayak since he was 12 he always had a fear of paddling to the back of the break with the big guys. Although a very technical paddler, without the bottle to take on the big waves he was unlikely to achieve much in Costa Rica unless the waves were small. With much encouragement from his team mates especially some verbal help from Ailsa McDougall, Jersey's

top lady kayak surfer, just four weeks before the team left for Costa Rica he made it out to the back of the break on a big day in St Ouen's Bay. With that accomplished he realised big waves were so much more fun.

Speller, who was a last minute entry to the team as one of our other juniors could not make the trip, learned a huge amount watching the best kayak surfers in the world during the training days and at the start of the contest. With these new fine tuned skills he surfed his way into the finals of both the Junior International and the junior Open classes. Taking on the favourite, USA's Galen Licht, he went on to surf great waves in both finals. But it was not until the closing ceremony that his success was announced.

At the closing Ceremony he was crowned International Class Junior World Champion and five minutes later the

results of the Junior Open Final were announced and Speller became a double world champion. Speller was also presented with a trophy for being the youngest competitor at the championships! A fantastic start to his international surf kayak competitive career!

We had a great time in Costa Rica! The people are friendly the scenery stunning and the weather was great (largely).

Thanks to Alvaro (Toca) Gonzales and Neil Kahn in Costa Rica, and the World Surf Kayak Association and committee members under the leadership of Rick Starr (USA), Joey Hall (USA), Andrew Hawker (England), Stuart McGlinchey (Jersey), Pete Blenkinsop (England) and Neil Baxter (Scotland) for running an excellent event.

The next world Surf Kayak Championships will take place at the famous Mundaka wave in 2007. Details on the www.wska.org website. 2006 will see the Surf Kayak World Cup! Check the website for details soon. ●

Stuart McGlinchey



THANKS

Team Jersey would like to acknowledge the help of:

Condor and FlyBe for their help in getting our boats to San Jose.

Jon at AEA Design

Tina at Oasis

Sea Specs Palm Equipment International Ltd

Transvalair and Platinum Air Cargo Jeff Le Marquand

Deuche Bank for sponsoring the air freight of our new junior David Speller's boat.

Cadem Ltd, Education Sport and Culture and all the private individuals who have given so generously to help us in our bid to regain our world title.

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Results

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Mens

- 1 Friends of Allonby Liverpool
- 2 Viking (Derby)
- 3 St Albans
- 4 Meridian A (SE London)
- 5 Dragon (Wales)
- 6 Meridian C (SE London)
- 7 Hull Mariners (East Yorkshire)
- 8 Pennine (West Yorkshire)

Ladies

- 1 St Albans
- 2 Friends of Allonby Xclusive (Liverpool)
- 3 Aberfan (Wales)
- 4 Dragon (Wales)

Youth

- 1 Meridian (SE London)
- 2 Viking (Derby)
- 3 Aberfan (Wales)
- 4 Blakedown (Kidderminster)



Above: Viking's Martyn Williamson pips Pennine's Chris Quinn to the ball.



FOA Xclusive's Catherine Greaves and St Albans' Fran Ciancio lift the pace in the Women's final

The 2006 National Canoe Polo Championships were held in conjunction with the London Boatshow at the ExCeL Centre in London's Docklands. The excellent venue provided spectators with an ideal setting in which to watch the top eight men's team, and top four women's and U18 teams battle for top honours.

Youth

The defending Youth champions, Meridian, comfortably placed themselves in Sunday's final with substantial wins over the Aberfan, Blakedown, and Viking teams on Saturday. Viking had a more challenging time securing their place in the final, beating Aberfan by only one goal and losing 1-4 to Meridian before defeating Blakedown 6-3.

Meridian quickly seized and maintained control of the game, despite excellent goalkeeping and fighting spirit from

Viking. Meridian had three shots blocked after winning the sprint before Greg Hockey put Meridian in the lead, and Alex Grant secured a second goal for Meridian three minutes later. Will Borrett won the sprint for Meridian again in the second half, and after keeping the ball back with occasional drives into the zone, and two blocked shots, Jack Robson scored for Meridian three minutes into the second half. Pressure on Viking allowed Meridian to steal the ball back, and after a few more changes of possession Oliver Thompson scored to make the score 4-0 to Meridian, retaining their title as Youth champions.

Aberfan took third position, leaving Blakedown in fourth.

Ladies

In the preliminary rounds of the ladies games, it was immediately apparent that FOA Xclusive and St Albans would be battling it out for the top two positions. After each winning their first games, against Dragon and Aberfan respectively.

In the final, the ball changed possession rapidly during the first few minutes of the game before a dangerous push right under the goal gave St Albans a free shot, which they quickly slotted into the goal to take the lead. St Albans managed to maintain control of the ball despite a strong zone and increasing pressure from FOA, leaving the score at 1-0 to St Albans at half time. A start infringement gave the advantage to FOA, but a rushed long shot missed its mark, and St Albans quickly used this advantage to score, pulling them up to 2-0. Four minutes later, Ginny Coyles scored for FOA, bringing the score to 2-1. Although pressure from FOA pushed St Albans right back into their own half, and managed to gain them possession, St Albans immediately went five-out onto them, and managed to hold FOA in their own half until time ran out. This secured a St Albans' 2-1 victory.

Aberfan took third position with Dragon finishing fourth.

The start of the Men's final and Shane Kinsella takes the ball for FOA, from Viking's Martyn Williamson



Champs

Open

During the first two days of the Championships, the eight qualifying men's teams played numerous games to determine what final positions they would be competing for.

Penine and Hull Mariners had a very close play-off for 7th and 8th positions with Hull winning 1-0, whilst the play-off between Meridian C and Dragon for 5th and 6th positions was even closer, going into unlimited Golden Goal extra time after ending in a 3-3 draw before Howie Whitaker managed to secure the winning goal for Dragon.

In the first semi-final of the Championships, Meridian A competed against FOA Liverpool for a place in the final. This game saw the ball changed possession rapidly due to a number of kayak, paddle and obstruction fouls from both teams, as well as a solid defensive zone from FOA, and very aggressive 5-out play from Meridian A. FOA eventually came out as 3-1 winners.

The second semi-final saw Viking pitted against St Albans. Viking immediately took control of the pace of the game, characteristically slowing it down and passing the ball around safely with occasional fast drives into the zone, while St. Albans maintained a strong flat three zone. However Viking turned a 1-0 half time lead into a commanding 4-1 win.

Meridian A met St Albans to play for third and fourth positions which St Albans won 4-3.

In the Open final, Viking faced a very strong FOA



Viking and Meridian Youth teams face up to each other in the final.

Liverpool team. After a number of attempted shots were stopped, a shot from right under the goal was blocked with a paddle foul, giving a penalty shot to FOA. They failed to capitalise on this advantage, however, and with three minutes the score was still 0-0. FOA then managed to pick up a dropped ball, and Ramsay Bayne scored, leaving FOA 1-0 up at half time. Viking held the ball in the second half, after an initial drive after winning the sprint failed to create a scoring opportunity, trying to create a significant opening before attempting to shoot. FOA later managed to pick up a loose pass and score to pull up to a 2-0 lead. Viking was now under pressure to shoot; loose passes and missed goals meant that the ball changed possession a number of times. Pressure from Viking failed to secure them the ball, and FOA broke away to get another goal with only 30 seconds remaining, making the final score 3-0 and taking the title ●

Article: Laurel Oettle. Photos: Glenn Summerbell



FOA's Stuart Moffit slips the ball past Neil Parker of Meridian.



Will Borritt (Meridian C) takes on Shane Kinsella from FOA.



Gallin Montgomery from Viking Youth shields the ball from Blakedown's Ross Umitt.

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Siberia

11th May

"The Russian Ambassador will see you now." My travelling companion Rich and I are due to fly to Mongolia in 18 hours. In that time we have to pick up our money, buy four weeks worth of food, waterproof all of our maps, solder sockets to our solder panel, say goodbye to our grannies and get a haircut. But we'd much rather be having tea with the Russian Ambassador.

"So tell me," he says politely, "how long is the Amur?" 4,400km I tell him. "And how long do you expect your journey to take?" About four months. "And have you ever attempted such a journey before?" Well, we once spent seven days on a river in Turkey. With that, the Ambassador roars with laughter. We laugh too, but more out of hysteria than politeness. I start to feel sick.

15th May

We're sitting in a cavernous office in Ulaan Baatar, having afternoon tea with a colonel in the Mongolian border guard service. Afternoon tea, it seems, is all the rage in diplomatic circles. "So why," he asks us through an interpreter, "do you want to cross into Russia by river?"

I explain our aim to kayak the Amur River from its source high in the mountains of northern Mongolia all the way to its mouth on Russia's Pacific Seaboard. Following the blue squiggles on a map with my finger, I trace the river's two main tributaries: the Gerlen is the longest, but it heads southeast into China and so far we've been refused permission to set foot in Chinese territory. Our only option is to follow the Onon, which heads northeast, directly into Russia.

The problem is that foreigners are only allowed to cross into Russia on the Trans-Mongolian Railway, 500km to the west. "And how long do you expect this journey to take?" the colonel enquires suspiciously. Four months, I tell him confidently. More hysterical laughter. He must feel sorry for us, because he agrees to discuss our case with a visiting Russian General. I still feel sick.

19th May

The 300km drive to the river takes us two days by jeep, but we're still 80km from the source. Gal, our guide, has assured us that we'll be able to hire horses to take our kayaks, food and equipment the rest of the way. At the end of the track there's no sign of another living being, let alone a horse. "Ah," Gal nods knowingly, "that's because there aren't any horses this far upriver."

22nd May

With no horses to help us on our way, we have to come up with a suitable alternative. Our kayak trolleys last less than a minute in the deep bog on either side of the river, so we rig up a makeshift harness to drag our kayaks upstream through the shallows. It seems like a great idea at the time, but we soon get cold feet. The water temperature is a fraction below absolute zero. On one of the river's more circuitous loops we pass within shouting distance of the Russian border, but all I can think about is the chaffing between my legs. It's the same with the wildlife: we've been told these hills are teeming with bears, but I'm too busy pouring Mycil down my shorts to worry about being eaten alive. After four days of wading upstream for nine hours a day, we've covered just 40km. Still, at least we can start paddling tomorrow.



Sunflower and barbed wire (Siberia)



Expedition equipment (Siberia)

23rd May

"I think we should keep going upstream for another day," Rich announces nonchalantly over breakfast. Bastard. He's right of course. Although the river's now little more than a stream and the shingle banks are only inches deep, in the main channels the water is still deep enough to warrant going higher still. Nine hours later we reach the confluence of two tiny streams just 30km from the source. They're too narrow and too shallow to kayak individually, but together they should provide enough water to float us all the way to the Pacific Ocean.

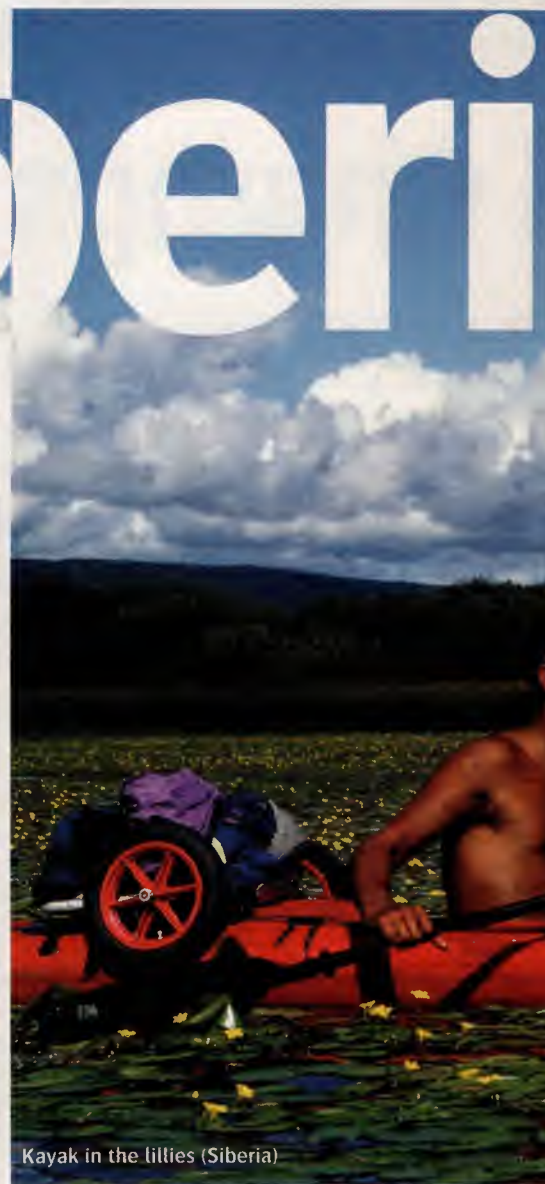
31st May

After eight days of paddling ten hours a day we camp on a secluded beach just 10km short of the border. At least, we think it's 10km short; it's hard to tell from our maps exactly where Mongolia ends and Russia begins. We'll just have to head for the duty-free lounge and hope for the best.

1st June

We can't find the duty-free lounge, just kilometre after kilometre of dense forest. Anxious not to cross into Russia unwittingly (or, for that matter, illegally) we pull up on a beach to discuss our options. The way I see it, we can either keep going as far as the bridge just beyond the border, or we can ask directions from the heavily armed guards barrelling down the riverbank towards us.

After an anxious couple of hours, an officer finally arrives, all starched sleeves and aviator sunglasses.



Kayak in the lillies (Siberia)

"Welcome to Siberia," he says gravely, in heavily accented English. I half expect him to add "I've been expecting you, Meester Bond." It soon becomes apparent that this represents the very pinnacle of his linguistic skills, but it doesn't seem to matter; minutes later, we're whisked off to the nearby border post, where the good captain serves us tea and cakes, and presents us with a good luck card signed by all his personnel. After driving us back to the river, he proceeds to take an enormous, steam-driven video camera from the back of his jeep in order to film our imminent departure. Thinking I should say something poignant as we push off, I plumb the depths of my night-class Russian before giving a rousing cry: 'To the sea!' I yell, holding my paddle aloft in triumph. Only much later do I discover that what I actually said was: 'To war!'

2nd June

We estimate it'll take us a month to reach the 2,000km section of river which forms the Russia-China border. Bitterly disputed for centuries and the scene of armed conflict until the later 1980s, it's still considered off-limits, even to Russians. For their part, the Chinese authorities have so far refused us permission to paddle on Chinese side of the river. For now, all we can do is continue our journey as far as the border and hope they have a change of heart before we get there.

20th June

Day 28. Stopping at a small village called Sretensk to rest and re-supply, we're approached by a leather-clad biker called Viktor. He doesn't believe we've

an odyssey



Kayak in the mist (Siberia)

come from Mongolia, but when we tell him we're on our way to the border he becomes positively enraged. It takes me a few minutes to realise that he'd not angry with us, but with the border guards, who he promises will shoot us on sight. 'They'll be made heroes, with medals from Moscow,' he thunders, slapping his chest, 'but you will be dead.' And with that, he moulds his hands around an imaginary machine gun and sprays our chests with an impressive volley of spittle.

Needless to say, it comes as no surprise when the authorities pay us a little visit the following day. Five different authorities to be precise. Their lapels bear an array of badges and letters – police, MVD, FSB, FFGS – and they're all demanding to know who we are and what we're doing in Sretensk. MVD, I know, is the latest acronym for the KGB; I have no idea what the other letters stand for, but I'm guessing they're not health inspectors. Taking a deep breath, I force a smile and make them an offer they can't refuse: "Tea, anyone?"

23rd June

It takes us the best part of two days and some protracted phone-calls to Moscow to convince the local authorities that we are who we say we are, and that we have permission to be on the river. Even then, it's only a matter of time before we're stopped again, this time by two policemen in a battered speedboat. One has a dark, standard-issue moustache, while the other sports a no-nonsense haircut and a bulging holster on his hip. They demand to see our papers. After a minute or two, they hand them back. They tell us not to go

anywhere, before gunning their boat's engine and carving back upstream. We're in canoes, they're in a speedboat, and the river is flanked by dense forest as far as the eye can see. Where on God's great earth, I wonder, are they expecting us to go?

So we sit on the riverbank and wait, cursing Pistol Pete and his moustachioed amigo. We curse their boss, their boss's boss, their grannies, and even, I'm ashamed to say, their children. Which is ironic, really, because when they return, that's exactly who they bring with them. From a distance it's hard to make out who the extra passengers are. Only when they get closer does it



FACTS :

Paul Grogan travelled to Siberia with the support of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust, which every year helps to fund around a hundred worthwhile travel projects all over the world.

No formal qualifications are required, but applicants must be British citizens resident in the UK. Grants usually cover a stay overseas of 4-8 weeks, though longer periods may be considered. For a list of categories and information on how to apply, go to www.wcmt.org.uk.

The name Siberia comes from the Altai word sibir, meaning 'sleeping land.' Essentially, the region comprises most of Northern Asia, and as such its statistics defy comprehension: it makes up one twelfth of the earth's landmass; it straddles no fewer than seven time zones; and from east to west it measures over 6,000 miles, or one third of the northern hemisphere. But it's perhaps best known for its weather: for seven months of the year, the entire landscape freezes solid, with temperatures regularly dropping to -40°C. In the summer, all but the top few feet of this landscape remain frozen in a rock-hard layer of permafrost that can be hundreds - even thousands - of metres deep. Not for nothing have Russians dubbed Siberia 'the land east of the sun.'

Border guard phone (Siberia)



become clear that they're not a pair of border bigwigs at all, but a little boy and girl of perhaps eight or nine. Clambering cheerfully onto the bank, Pete holds out a plastic bag, telling us it's a present from the kids. Inside is a jar of ice-cold milk and a loaf of warm, freshly-baked bread. There isn't any humble pie in there, but if there was, I'd happily eat it whole.

30th June

Day 43 might well be our last day on the river. We approach the Russia-China border with a due sense of trepidation, not sure whether we'll be allowed to



Kayaks on gunboat (Siberia)



Drag to the source (Mongolia)

continue. At the first border post we come to, no-one seems surprised to see us, but we have to wait for an officer to be summoned.

After a tense half-hour, one of the guards asks us if we'd like anything to drink. Earlier, I entertained vague hopes of arriving at the border to find a well-stocked bar complete with comely serving wenches, but instead we have to make do with tea in a tent. Eventually, though, even tea isn't enough to take my mind off the job in hand, so I ask what we're waiting for. "For the rain?" one of the guards suggests, with a shrug. 'And then what?' I say, hoping I've understood him correctly. 'And then you can continue,' he shrugs again. 'But what about the border,' I ask. 'You can

continue,' he repeats, matter-of-factly. We later learn that the Chinese authorities have finally relented to our request to travel along the border section of the river, on the understanding that we don't paddle in Chinese waters or set foot in Chinese territory.

14th July

Taking advantage of a full moon, we set off at dusk for a spot of night paddling. For some reason, it never even occurs to us that paddling at night along one of the world's most sensitive border zones might not be such a good idea. Even half a mile from the Russian bank the moon feels like a spotlight. Adjusting our eyes to the light we glide past watchtowers that are trees and trees

that are watchtowers. Only when mist starts to rise from the water do we begin to relax. All night we glide through the inky waters before making camp at dawn. Three hours later we're woken by two gunboats roaring down the river towards us. They try to land opposite our campsite, but it's too steep, so instead they pull into an eddy downstream. We pack up our tent as slowly as we can, frantically trying to come up with a plausible explanation for how we've managed to cover 40 km without being seen by a single guard.

When we finally set off, I still don't know what I'm going to say, and the knot in my stomach is fast becoming a noose. In the end, I decide to play the mindless optimism card and hope for the best. As we paddle past, I chirp a cheerful hello, acting as if this is the third run-in with gunboats we've had that morning. In reply, the men on the boats just wave back, clearly a little stunned. I hold my breath, waiting for a shout to break the spell, but it never comes. The end of our journey is no longer nigh, and I promise myself there and then that I'll never do anything naughty again.



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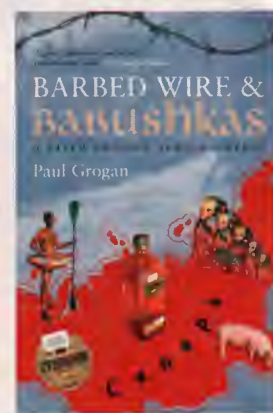
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Steppe campsite (Mongolia)

12th August

Day 81. After five weeks on the Russia-China border, it's with some relief that we finally leave the watchtowers behind. Badly in need of a break, we head for Khabarovsk, a cosmopolitan city just downstream of where the border section comes to an end. The city's waterfront is so busy it's difficult to find somewhere to land. Everywhere we look there are children splashing in the water and bikini-clad girls sunning themselves earnestly on the beach. So much so, in fact, that it's difficult to know where to look, especially when we realise that everyone is looking at us. I feel like James Bond without the Lotus.

24th August

After 100 days on the river we're finally arrested. Two policemen help themselves to our hotel room and inform us that Komsomolsk is a closed town. We show them our documents, but they insist that we have to pay a fine if we want to leave. We're about to protest, until we realise that it works out at about \$6 each. Glasnost, it seems, has yet to reach this far east.



Log cabin and kayak (Siberia)

5th September

We're just a day from the end of the river and I'm bored out of my tiny mind. To pass the time, I flick through my Russian dictionary and realise, to my horror, that I've been introducing myself as Pol for the last three months. Literally translated, Pol means sex. "Hi there, Sex Grogan here, glad to meet ya!"

6th September

Although we reach the mouth of the Amur River today, we decide to paddle out into the estuary for one more day, just to make sure. To prepare for our day of triumph, we stop off at the port town of Nikolayevsk to look for somewhere to spend the night, but we only make it as far as the harbour, where we're invited on board a riverboat for some fish soup and lashings of cheap vodka. Six hours later, we're not even sure what continent we're on, let alone what river.

7th September

We plan to be on the water for 9am, to make

allowances for the incoming tide. By 11am, Rich is still lying in bed, unable to move. When we do eventually wheel our kayaks back down to the river at noon, Rich discreetly parts company with his breakfast by the side of the road, but it doesn't seem to help. The waters of the estuary have been whipped up by a stiff westerly wind, and as our boats bounce up and down in the choppy swell, I start to feel as green as Rich looks. Journey's end, we decide, is a small and probably very muddy island out in the middle of the estuary. Thankfully, the tide seems to make little difference to our progress, and we reach our goal after just five hours of paddling. And so it is that our 4,400km, four-month journey comes to an end. Of course, I'd like to be able to say that I feel a due sense of joy and elation, but instead I just feel hungover and slightly sick. ●

Paul Grogan

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Journey to the whispering River

The water was cold and it gripped my chest like a vice but it was the power of the current that was sweeping me downstream that was truly awesome. A couple of strong strokes and I was able to feel the bottom but the unrelenting pressure of the water kept taking my feet away as I struggled to gain the solid ground. The cold water was starting to sap my strength.

With a desperate mixture of swimming and crawling I at last floundered to the bank, grabbed my towel and rushed shivering to my tent to get dry and warm. After ten days in the wilderness this was the only way of washing but it was worth it, fifteen minutes later I felt refreshed and my body was glowing.

It seemed an age ago, when we, a disparate group of Europeans, had put on at the headwaters of the Big Salmon River in the Yukon Territory of Canada. Since then we had paddled 150 miles, learnt to swiftly put up our camp, light a fire and get the coffee on. We could read the river, negotiate the twists and turns round log jams and shoot moderate rapids in our heavily laden canoes; we had come together as an efficient unit that could move through the wilderness with ease. Damn it we could even catch fish to feed ourselves! The group consisted of three Germans, two Swiss and three English, the age range was 25 to 67 and the language around the camp fire was a mix of German, English and Swiss/German. Every member of the group had paddled previously but the majority had never paddled on swift moving water before but where better to learn canoeing skills.

We had had encounters with eagles, moose,

beaver, wolf and otters, plus a grizzly come through the camp. We had stood in the quiet, cold of the northern nights to watch the aurora borealis with its haunting luminescence dancing across the inky sky. We had bush-whacked through the forest blazing a trail to the tops of mountains and cliffs to get a view of the area we were paddling through and we had successfully fished the river for salmon and grayling. One day we had met a couple of local hunters who had said that we were the only group of people in a 50 miles radius. They were off

Continued on page 30



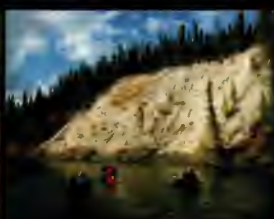
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Pictures courtesy Dave Halsall & Sue Crawford



down river to shoot a moose and butcher it for the freezer; considering the size of a moose their freezers must be of epic dimensions!

Days consisted of having breakfast at 7.00am, breaking camp, paddling, lunch, paddling and then stopping to put up camp again on another gravel bar by the river. The pace was leisurely which gave us time for fishing, swimming and relaxing around camp. Toilet facilities were a trench dug away from the river with the paper being burned in the fire. We practiced 'no-trace camping' and washed mainly in cold water from the river, which was then disposed of in a hole, dug in the ground

well away from any water course. In a effort to discourage bears all food was placed in airtight containers, the kitchen waste burned, when cleaning our teeth we spat into the fire and all toiletries and suntan lotion were removed from our tents to the kitchen.

There is always something satisfying in traversing a river from its source to its ultimate demise in the sea or another river. For me it gives a feeling of completion; I have seen the river grow from a stream and have followed its history as it moves down from the mountains. It took us ten days to travel the 150 miles from Quiet Lake, Sandy Lake, Big Salmon Lake, down the

Big Salmon River to the Yukon River. It seemed ridiculous that with just two days to go and a rendezvous with our pickup we had another 71 miles to travel.

After the swim in the Yukon and feeling its urgency to get to the sea knew that the 71 miles would be quite an easy paddle. With the river travelling at over seven miles an hour we could even just sit in the boats and we would be there in ten hours.

On the river next day the Yukon whispered to us; the strong, fast current moving the coarse sand grains along the bed of the river creates a noise that is quiet audible but the shape of the canoe amplifies the sound. Constantly with us and variable in volume the river generally whispered but sometimes roared as we paddled the last days of the trip on the Yukon River to our get out at Carmacks. ●

Story: Dave Halsall. Photos: Sue Crawford

FACTS & HISTORY

The Yukon Territory is located in the north west of Canada and borders Alaska. It is twice the size of the UK with a population of 33,500 and 80% of the area is classified as wilderness. The Yukon River is approximately 2,000 miles long and is the fifth longest river in North America.

My preference for the time of year is at the end of the season when there are a lot, lot less biting insects and the trees are turning colour to give a stunning backdrop to any paddling trip.

The Klondike Gold Rush, the most famous gold rush in history, took place in just the two years of 1897-98. By 1899 \$50 million dollars worth of gold had been mined (multiply by 20 for today's prices) mainly by amateur stamperders who flooded into the area from all over the continent. A hundred years ago the area was busy with people and boats moving on the river. Since then the Yukon Territory has reverted to a quiet, unpopulated wilderness beloved by the adventurer and explorer.

The poems and writings of Robert Service capture the essence of travel in northern lands. Robert William Service was born on January 16, 1874 to a Scottish bank clerk and the daughter of an English factory owner. At the age of 15 he followed his father into the banking business, but in 1896 he emigrated to Canada and eventually obtained a posting in Whitehorse in the Yukon Territory in 1903. He was inspired, as he tells it, by his surroundings. "It was Saturday night, and from the various bars I heard sounds of revelry. The line popped into my mind: 'A bunch of boys were whooping it up' and it stuck there. Good enough for a start". He travelled in Europe and purchased a villa in Brittany. During the First World War he served in an America volunteer ambulance unit and became a war correspondent for the Canadian government. With the outbreak of the Second World War he escaped from Poland to Hollywood where he lived in exile until the end of the war and his return to France. Though he never returned to the Yukon after he left in 1912 it remained a part of his life until his death in 1958.



INFO :

Dave Halsall lives and works in North Yorkshire canoeing with groups and individuals mainly in the Lake District and Sweden. He also works at Dallam Community College working primarily on the training and assessing of canoe and kayak coaching awards. He may be contacted on mtorafiki@hotmail.co.uk www.yesnet.yk.ca/schools/carcross/ourstory.htm www.americaasyoulikeit.com/



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As I pondered the week's forecast from the kitchen comfort zone I reminded myself how I had been looking forward to our centre's first kayaking expedition. Winds from a mere Force 5 to gale Force 8 left me a little stunned as I waited for the group of young two star paddlers to arrive. Living and working on the Jurassic coast means the variety of quality sea kayaking is plentiful but with the predicted strength of wind, the choice of venue would be critical if we were to get on the water at all.

The first morning was spent being blown along Wareham river, a usually mellow amble transformed into an 'avoid being blown onto the moored yachts competition' on the way there and a head down battle on the way back. With the group not deterred, we surfed in the afternoon in the sort of wind where an empty kayak gets moved along the ground as if it is auditioning for a part in poltergeist 4. Despite my 'worst weather venue' card already played on the first day I began to look forward to the days ahead.

The next morning began with a skills and games session on high tide using the lee of local cliffs to shelter a narrow strip of beach. This was adequate for some slalom competitions, polo, stroke work and a rolling clinic. We returned to the centre jubilant.

By this stage I had begun to get to know the group and they started to bond as a team. Joe, the compulsive talker, became the target for the majority of the team's jokes but was protected by his powerful grin and quick wit. Sarah, the only female who had seemed so shy, was now demonstrating the 'can can' in her spray deck. Ben was already sharing his philosophy on rash vest hygiene, stating that if it needed a wash it would get up and walk to the laundrette and Oliver was attempting to convert the young playboaters into the pleasures of sea kayaking (I was already convinced). The afternoon was spent at Castletown on the Isle of Portland, a short down wind leg to hide behind the Mulberry Harbours. These two towering concrete blocks that provided shelter during the war now sheltered us from the relentless wind. Jonathon was first to attempt to break into the wind blown current, a bold move that resulted in a swim. This ended a short session in challenging conditions leaving the group tired but still in good spirits.

The following day was the river trip. We headed to the Exe confident that this was the day which would be least affected by 'the windiest week of the year.' At the get in, I stood looking at the highest level I had seen, wondering what I was going to tell

the group who had just endured the two hour drive and were itching to experience their first white water. After checking a few locations we launched and stayed at Bickleigh. The weir provided opportunities to build basic skills while challenging the variety of paddlers. Michael, the oldest member of the team, whose sunglasses seemed permanently welded to his face excelled with some confident playboating. George attacked rapids with gusto although his spirits were knocked when after a short swim where he lost his flask. Luckily the flask was found at the bottom of his boat the next day much to George's delight (until he tasted the contents). By the end of the session some had surfed, many had swum and all had progressed. I was satisfied that we had made the right decision and once again proved that you do not need complicated plans and long stretches of water to achieve your goals.

Levels were high and on return the group were impressed with the quality of photos taken. Sarah who was growing in confidence daily, now had a photo showing only the top of her helmet in a torrent of white water.

Day four and the group were beginning to bond too much – I became the butt of the jokes! My choices were questioned and I couldn't steal the groups hatch covers and excess food with the same authority I had got away with on Monday. All this confidence building is fine I thought, but have I gone too far? At last the wind eased a little and the surf improved. With the group starting to exude courage



e 8



and skill we had a fantastic surf session run by Ed Long, assisted by Tom Wright with myself as team photographer.

The afternoon's paddle up the fleet allowed the group to ascend the famous Chesil beach and witness what a week of strong south westerly winds can do to the sea state. We watched the huge rollers crash up the steep pebble beach and taught the students how the fleet was used to test the bouncing bomb.

The final day was my personal favourite, using the high cliffs at Studland as a natural wind break we paddled along to Old Harry Rocks. The sea stacks and archways are a real kayaker's playground. We could play in the gaps where foaming surges of water were forced through

allowing students to access conditions usually reserved for elite paddlers in relative safety a few metres away from calm water.

In all, I was chuffed with the week. We had terrible weather but managed to get on the water every morning and afternoon in different locations. The students made huge progress experiencing rivers, sea and surf and many are now hooked. The centre's philosophy is to use these adventurous activities as a vehicle in developing personal characteristics such as empathy, communication, confidence, independence, co-operation and the ability to recognise and manage risk. ●

JC Walker



RETURN TRIP

We will be running another course in the 2006 October half term. Anyone interested can call on 01305 784927 or email woec@dorsetcc.gov.uk

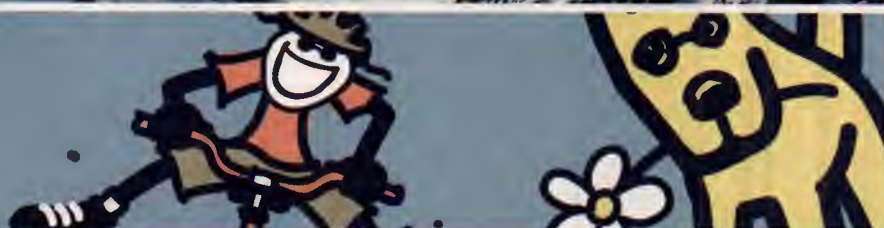
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A good start to the trip_ at the bottom of the Alamedin



A typical Kyrgyz get on



Inspecting an interesting drop on the



A long walk in



Dave boofs on the Arashan

In November 2004 notices were placed on a number of popular UK kayaking websites asking for UK based students who were interested in taking part in a whitewater expedition which was to be organised and completed entirely by students. Several keen students responded and a 'selection' event of sorts was held in North Wales just before Christmas. Aided by perfect river levels and the indispensable and seemingly infinite knowledge of the one and only Dave Manby, expedition boater of legendary proportions. A fantastic few days were had culminating with a team of nine eager paddlers, a chosen destination and to top it all off a dollop of excitement and anticipation. So it was that we had seven months to plan a month in Kyrgyzstan.

Planning for the expedition was done primarily via a 'members' area on our website (www.kayakstan.net), which was the only realistic way of doing this given that the team members were spread throughout the country. In the months leading up to the expedition, maps were sourced, trucks were booked, and advice was sought from anyone and

everyone. We knew of only three previous groups that had been paddling in Kyrgyzstan along with a whole bunch of Russian rafters, all of whom proved to be useful and helpful in sharing knowledge. Preparation was made all the more interesting by the small matter of the country having a revolution in the months leading up to the trip, the team decided that it would take more than a revolution to spoil their summer and carried on regardless.

One possible obstacle that threatened the team was that upon arriving at Heathrow the team had only met up twice since Wales; the student rodeo and an expedition first aid course.

The scenery seemed to become increasingly dramatic, unspoiled and beautiful as we travelled through the country

Somewhat surprisingly given the long distance nature of the organisation, we had all the kit we needed and a few nifty gadgets to make expedition life a bit more bearable. After some sweet talking and cunning weighing

techniques we had all our boat and gear on the plane; nothing was going to stop us now.

After being collected at Bishkek airport by two immense six-wheeled army trucks followed by a quick visit to the markets to stock up on essentials like food and axes, it was off to the mountains to find some rivers. A vague plan had been formulated based on

tan

Everyone knows that all students are lazy work-dodging layabouts who spend all day watching daytime television and eating frozen pizzas, so how did nine students from seven different UK universities actually manage to complete a month long expedition in Kyrgyzstan despite having only seven months to plan it and being spread out all over the country? Read on...

the information we had which involved looking at some rivers close to Bishkek before investigating the multitude of valleys feeding Lake Issyk Kul and then heading south for some bigger volume action on the mighty Naryn and its' tributaries. The team wasn't entirely sure what we would find, were we too late? too early? Would the rivers be too steep? too flat?

We weren't to be disappointed, the first river we investigated, the Ala Medin, provided us with two days of good continuous grade 3 and 4 paddling with a committing gorge and some tricky moves to warm us up. After some more exploring and a brief return to Bishkek to collect our ninth member (who got himself misplaced en-route from Delhi – bloody students!), it was time to head towards Lake Issyk Kul, stopping on the way for a surprisingly exciting bigger volume run on the Kerkermeren River.

As for the country, none of the group had visited anywhere in Central Asia before, and we weren't sure what we would find there. Kyrgyzstan is an Islamic country and was formally a part of the Soviet empire, both of these influences are evident when travelling through the country and they combine to form a

unique and enticing atmosphere. The scenery seemed to become increasingly dramatic, unspoiled and beautiful as we travelled through the country and further into the Tien Shan mountain range that runs through central Kyrgyzstan. The people we encountered were, for the most part, amongst the kindest and most hospitable any of the team had encountered in their previous travels around the globe. Always offering a cup of chai and some bread and butter, never asking or accepting anything in return. The lucky were given a warm place to sleep on a cold night and the unlucky, a bowl of fermented mares' milk, a local favourite to be tried once and never repeated! The teams' sense of wonder at this incredible country only seemed to grow as the trip wore on.

Making our way along the south shore of Issyk Kul was where having two trucks came into it's own, the team split in two and hopped past each other exploring the steep glacial rivers feeding the lake. The rivers we found were generally low volume, steep and of a much more continuous nature than commonly found in the UK. Whilst most of the rivers we paddled in this area were grade 3 to 4+, their continuous nature meant that they were much more demanding than anything of this grade would suggest. The quality varied with some being barely worth paddling and others proving to be gems, the Barskoön and the Jetti-Öghüz were personal highlights.

Living on pasta and tinned tomatoes

After a quick stop in Karakol the team headed over a particularly high (and cold) pass, pausing only for truck repairs and snow boating, in order to reach the Sary Jaz river and its tributaries. Upon negotiating the pass we were confronted with a ghost town that had apparently once been home to several thousand people and a thriving tin mine, this somewhat interfered with our plans of buying fresh bread and meant a few days of living on pasta and tinned tomatoes. The reason we had come to such remote and inhospitable (although beautiful) parts was the lure of the Sary Jaz River. We had heard several tales of this remote river that flows into China and although the prospect of a ten day walkout over mountain passes had deterred us from paddling the bulk of the river, the maps that we had acquired showed several potentially interesting sections and tributaries. Some punishing walk-ins found us some beautiful tributaries whilst an equally punishing drive produced only several kilometres of braided flat water. So mixed results there.

After exhausting the possibilities in this part of the country (without paddling into China), we headed back over the pass to Karakol with its plentiful surrounding rivers and lively nightlife. The Arashan

The reason we had come to such remote and inhospitable (although beautiful) parts was the lure of the Sary Jaz River

River was a real trip highlight, beginning with a relaxing dip in hot springs to ease a few aching heads before negotiating the eight hours of relentlessly steep and demanding river ahead of us and climaxing with a must-boof four metre drop. This

was a river that left everyone buzzing and chattering for the next few days as we headed south to the Naryn River.

The Naryn River is the largest in Kyrgyzstan and drains the entire Tien Shan mountain range before flowing into Uzbekistan. The Naryn provided us with an epic five day multi-day paddle and some great



James on the Kekermere



Chong Kemin



Making friends in the Arashan valley



Powerful water on the Kekermere



Rob commits to a tricky move on the Kichi Naryn

quality high volume whitewater as well as all manner of shenanigans involving locals and horses. Shortly before the town of Naryn, the river is joined by the Kichi Naryn (small Naryn) which is ironically almost the same volume as its larger brother. With its incredibly committing gorge and much-bigger-and-steeper-than-it-looked-from-the-road rapids, the Kichi Naryn was a firm favourite of the team and one of our most exciting paddles.

For the final few days of the trip the team split; four went north to the big volume Chu and Chong Kemin rivers and five heading to investigate the steep little river flowing from the Song-Köl Lake at 3,000m and joining the Naryn at 1,100m that we had spotted on the map. The two groups met up again in Bishkek to exchange stories and one last slap-up meal before saying goodbye to our indispensable drivers and interpreter at the airport and preparing for the inevitable arguments with airport staff about boats, weight limits and excess(ive) baggage charges. The flights home were quiet, with everyone contemplating the amazing people, landscapes and paddling that had formed such an unforgettable experience. One team member, due to a booking mix up, was left with an 11 hour stop-over at Moscow to recount his memories.

All in all, the trip was a success; the team had some great paddling (about 20 paddling days over the month), explored some new places, documented some new rivers and all returned in one piece. In total we had just three swims, one lost paddle and one broken boat. Not bad for a bunch of workshy students. ●

David Fairweather

Chong Ashuu Pass



A future paddling star



No turning back now, the deep committing gorge of the Kichi



A traditional Kyrgyz yurt



When the trucks cannot go any further... it's time to walk



Crossing the Naryn. Slowly



No let up on the Chong Ak Suu



Phil hard at work on the Chong Kemin



FACTS : TEAM AND SPONSORS

British universities kayaking expedition to Kyrgyzstan 2005 - www.kayakstan.net

Team Members and their Universities were: Phil Carrivick (Durham), Tim Burne (UCL), Rob Tuley (Imperial College), James Crookall (Nottingham), David Fairweather (Surrey), Graham Fairweather (Strathclyde), Phil Higgins (Teesside), Martyn Sollars (Teesside), Wouter Wynberg (Durham)

Thanks to all who assisted the team, especially BCU expeditions board, Desperate Measures, Sweet Protection, Boulder Adventures, Sea Specs, Nike ACG, Halina Imaging, thamesweirproject.co.uk, unponsored.co.uk and associated universities.





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Old meets

Located at the northern tip of Africa, Morocco is a melting pot like no other, Africa meets Europe, old world meets new world and the Sahara meets the Atlantic.

Words by: Jon Haylock and Lou Owen
 Photos by: Jon Haylock and Paul Ellis



It's a strangely wonderful place, its colours are fantastic if not faded, its smells eye-wateringly pungent and its scenery dramatic if not comical (imagine a tree with ten goats in its branches). It's a jilted paradise a place full of such stark contradictions you wonder how it doesn't tear itself apart. To fully appreciate Morocco you'll need to prepare your senses for an onslaught of harsh realities, stunning sunsets and colourful locals.

The country is a sparse moonscape dotted with olive trees, shrubs and the odd cactus, populated by a surprisingly friendly and welcoming bunch of folks. I lost count of the number of times, a small child in perfect English said "welcome to Morocco" I'm fully aware they were after a few dirham but never the less it was nice.

The food much like the people is a fantastic fusion of Arab, French and African cuisine. Dishes such as couscous royal, and chicken tagine often headline the menu – if



you're offered an avocado smoothie go for it, but be wary of the interesting sauce you might get with rotisserie chicken – it might be it's gizzards!

A large majority of travelling surfers, as we did, end up in Tagazoute - a dusty one road town, that to be honest is not the most attractive place on the planet.

With plenty of good cheap restaurants, a few surf shops,

and ample places to stay it basically has all you need to survive for a while. On closer inspection Tagazoute has a hidden charm, probably enhanced by the numerous world class point breaks right on the doorstep, where 60 second rides are not unheard of.

It's quite tricky to decide where to spend five weeks surf kayaking – there's no Stormrider guide to surf kayaking! (There's an idea!) The last thing you want to do is turn up with your boat on your shoulder and not be able to get in the water. The Gods were smiling on us, Morocco had it all, punchy reef breaks, reeling right hand



points and forgiving beach break barrels. At times it was a little tricky getting in without losing fins and chunks of boat but with a bit of help and timing it's possible.

Considering it was reported to be the worst season in ages, we were continually surprised by the quality of the surf and the hospitality of the Moroccan culture.

I was prepared for a degree of hostility towards my choice of craft, as all surf kayakers are used to at home. In reality, I came across very little negative feeling; most guys in the line up were curious and had a certain level of mutual respect (I even managed to give a few lessons!). Perhaps my choice of travelling and surfing companion, a 6ft 4, 20 stone gentle giant has something to do with it.

You won't go wrong if you approach the surf and surfers, with the respect they deserve – don't drop in and smile! Ensure you take along a bold head, a fast kayak, and a good selection of fins to make the most of the surf on offer. ●



HANDY HINTS

- Arabic is read from right to left (not that this will really help).
- Savour the delights of an Avocado milkshake from Aftas in Tagazoute.
- Hash is not legal in Morocco.
- Just because a girl is wearing a veil, doesn't mean she won't wave and blow a kiss.
- Flash the lads at the beach a few fags and a smile - you'll have a friend for life and your car will go untouched.
- It's customary to put your hand on your heart after shaking hands.
- Be wary of the gorgeous girls in the clubs, they're most likely ladies of the night (or lady-boys!)
- Smile and plead ignorance when you get stopped by the cops and you might get off with a not so subtle backhand.



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Pyrenean experience

White water paddling on a shoestring budget



Ten members of Wiltshire Youth CC took their first expedition abroad to the Pyrenean Oriental region in the south of France.

Hiring a minibus and towing a kayak trailer we crossed the channel using the Poole-St Malo fast ferry. Our route down through France was via Renne, Nantes, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Perpignan and our destination Argelas Sur Mer.

Accommodation

Two luxury six berth chalets which were our base for a week and within easy reach of some excellent white water rivers such as the Tech, Tet and Aude. The region and rivers were all well known by the organiser/leader Michael Hill.

Most of the rivers in the region are ideal for introducing paddlers to moderate white water, with grades to suit all abilities plus no access problems, hot sunny weather 20c-30c and warm water – paddlers heaven!

Day 1. River Tech. Ceret barrage to Le Boulou, 10kms, Grade 1-2, low volume easy introduction whitewater. A pretty descent between tree lined banks, small shoots around islands.

Alternative. River Tech. Can Partere to Arles sur Tech. 6kms, grade 2. Narrower than above, fairly continuous gradient, narrow shoots between islands.

Day 2. River Tech. Emelie Le Bains to Ceret Barrage. 10kms, Grade 2-3. More exciting, one fall needs inspecting, many play spots, rock gardens and small ravines.



Alternative. River Igly. Caramany to Latour de France. 12kms, grade 2-3. Lots of small drops and weirs.

Day 3. River Tet. Prades to Marquixanes. 8kms, grade 2-3. Prades Venue for slalom site in the area. Almost continuous grade 2 for 2kms then dangerously runs into a forest, best portaged left on original river bed. From then on bouncy run down to Marquixanes the last 2kms continuous grade 2-3 Playboaters paradise. Finish in a reservoir.

Day 4. Villefranche-de-Conflent to Prades. 6kms, Grade 3-4. Fun begins almost immediately into sheer sided gorge grade 2-3 for 2kms one fall at end grade 3+ then flat through 3m narrow gorge from here to Prades continuous grade 2-3. Very scenic, a brilliant paddle.

Alternative. River Tet. Olette to Villefranche-de-Conflent. 12kms, Grade 3-4. Two or three portages around barrages, never a dull moment, continuous grade 3 Grade, 4 Trees. Ravines give a sense of isolation.

Alternative. River Tech. Arles sur Tech to Emelie Le Bains. 5kms. Grade 2-3. Large bolder fields narrow drops, one portage, pop out city, very scenic.

Day 5. River Aude. Nantilo Hydro station to Axat. The Gorge of St George. 6 kms, Grade 2-3. When hydro station is releasing after 11am full on big volume grade 3, one weir shot river right. Fantastic scenery.

River Aude. Axat to St Martin-Lys. 4kms, Grade 2 continuous, big volume.

River Aude. St Martin-Lys to Trou du Cure. 3kms,



Grade 4. Roller coaster ride on water, big holes and stoppers especially the final fall. Incredible scenery, 300m vertical canyon. Unforgettable.

Alternative. River Tet. Rodes to Ille sur tet. 4kms, Grade 4 for 2kms then grade 2. Below this section the river Tet offers several kms of Grade 1 with occasional rock barrages which are shootable with sufficient water levels.

The best time to paddle the above rivers is in the spring snow thaw, Easter to Early June provided snow has fallen on Pyrenees during the winter.

On the return journey we chose a different route towards the Massif Central stopping near Montpellier to paddle the River Herault Gorge from north of St Guilhem le Desert to Devils Bridge, 4km, Grade 1-4.

Fascinating rock formations, very narrow shoots vertical walled canyon, real sense of isolation. This gorge should only be undertaken when water levels are low to moderate as in high water it would be a dangerous due to the many siphons.

This was our final paddle in the south of France and our journey home passing over the highest motorway bridge in the world at Millau will never be forgotten.

Return journey home via Clermont Ferrand, Bourges, Tours, Le Mans, Rennes, St Malo. ●

Ann Hill



INFO :

Costs involved on the expedition

Mini bus hire including insurance: £780
 Fast ferry. Poole to St Malo return: £680
 Diesel: £250
 Hire of two luxury chalets: £280
 Food for 10 people: £250
 Road tolls: £90
 Miscellaneous: £170
 Total: £2,500
 £2500 Divided between ten persons: £250



Those taking part in the expedition were as follows. Michael Hill, organiser/leader; Andrew Lloyd, finance/rescue practice dummy; Kevin Duddy, swimming expert/crash test dummy; Martin Croucher, cameraman/suicide route specialist; Danny O Gorman, yellow play machine; Craig 'cartwheel' Cooke; Orry 'I'm not paddling that' Nunn; Timothy 'I'm not paddling today' Hill; Dan 'young gun' Palmer; Tracy 'and Ive got the bruises to prove it' Palmer.



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CLOSING DATE 28TH FEBRUARY 2006



COMPETITION ENTRY FORM

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- [B] a bookery
- [C] a bakery

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 3 : 4 :

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[PHOTOCOPIES OF THIS FORM WILL BE ACCEPTED.]

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Minquiers sunset



Channel Islets Circuit

As the summer holidays came closer and the surf became small ripples on the shore, I found myself studying the charts once more, in search of a small adventure. Having been to Les Ecrehou before, I was keen to return. This seemed a logical starting point. Keen to explore the reefs of Les Chausey and Les Minquiers, I decided on doing a circuit that would incorporate all the islands. To add mental and physical challenge I decided to do this over four days, without stopping on any other land. It soon became apparent that I wasn't going to find someone with a similar sadistic approach to life to accompany me, so as I have done for many years, I decided that a solo paddle would take the trip to another level.

After careful preparation, triple checking my navigation and psyching myself up for the mental challenge, I was ready to begin (all be it a bit frantic the day before)...

Day 1 (Guernsey - Les Ecrehou) 27nm

In order to have slack water during the most remote part of the crossing, and a slight push towards Les Ecrehou, I aimed to set off from Bordeaux harbour at 4:00am. I wheeled my boat down to the pier where Steve and Simon were waiting to see me off.

After a couple of photos, I set off into the darkness of the Little Russel with my headtorch illuminating my deck. With only a slight northerly flow, it was easy paddling to the north of Herm, by which time, the first of the dawn light was beginning to light up the sea. Visibility was good and I could make out Sark. I headed north of Sark and after a total of 2 hours paddling I was just NE of the harbour and ready to begin the biggest crossing of the day, to the reefs of Les Dirouilles and Les Ecrehou.

The way ahead was quite misty with only about six miles visibility. This meant that for at least half of the way I couldn't see Jersey or the reefs. I paddled on my bearing, confident that my navigation was accurate and I would see the reefs in a few hours. Droopy eyed from the late night previously, I carried on, stopping every hour to take on water and food. As the hours ticked by I settled into a strong pace and was pleased to see the heads of Les Dirouilles reef by 10:00am. The tides over these reefs are very unpredictable and I observed about six complete changes in the direction.

With tide approaching low water, the main reef of Les Ecrehou was almost completely exposed. With over a mile of dry rock and sand bars ahead this was really stunning scenery. I headed to the north east side, to paddle through the shallows, and up a channel that runs next to the main island, Marmotier. I landed at the bottom of a huge shingle bank at

11:00 and began the laborious task of emptying my boat so that I could carry it up. I spent considerable time fishing in the channel but with no success I settled for my pre-cooked spaghetti and tuna dinner before hitting the sack.

Day 2 (Les Ecrehou - Ile Chausey) 25nm

After a really good night sleep, I got up at 6:00am feeling refreshed and ready for the day ahead. The mist was much thicker than day one, but I was confident that it would slowly burn off. The paddle ahead was fairly long, but with a good tide on my back and confident I would maintain a good pace I was sure I would make good time to Iles Chausey. I paddled south off the reef and it wasn't long before it disappeared into the mist, so with no land visible at all, I was fixed on my compass. I checked my chart and felt sure I was well ahead of schedule. I paddled over to the closest beacon (Petit Anquette) an hour ahead of schedule and been paddling at nearly five knots.

I was pleased with the progress but by allowing for three hours of drift, not two, I had ended up over a mile west of my target. I adjusted my next bearing slightly and paddled on into the mist, which was beginning to thin, so I had three to four miles visibility. Despite paddling at a good speed, I was surprised to see a cardinal buoy after only 90 minutes. I assumed that I was well ahead and had reached Les Ardentes. As the tide carried me past I took a quick snap, then turned to see NE Minquiers ...Minquiers! that's well off to the west!

I quickly got out the chart and was relieved that I was only a couple of miles off course. After some checking on the chart I continued on a new bearing to take to Les Ardentes buoy (three miles). After 30 minutes the buoy appeared through the mist. I arrived at the buoy at about 12:00, still more than an hour ahead of schedule. I managed to open my back hatch and reach for my fishing gear. I set up my feathers and dropped the line. I was close to giving up after 15 minutes when I felt a bite. I reeled in and was just about to pull the mackerel in when it wriggled loose. Enthused I tried again and almost immediately caught another and managed to get it in this time. About five minutes later I caught two more and then carried on due south towards Iles Chausey.

The islands came into sight at 1:30pm and it wasn't long before I was paddling among some of the most spectacular reefs and sand bars I had ever seen. For miles around small islets poked above the surface. As I got closer to Grande Ile, I couldn't help feel a little disappointed to see dozens of yachts and tourists all over the place. I headed for the western end, where the chart indicated a sandy beach. I rounded a small headland to see a beautiful sandy



Finished

into the mist once more. with only two to three hours paddling ahead, I was looking forward to having plenty of time to relax on Les Minquiers.

As I approached the two hour mark, I was a little anxious that there was still no sign of the reef. However, with trust in my navigation I was confident that it wouldn't be long. Sure enough after another ten minutes the small islands began to appear through the mist about two miles ahead. I paddled into the small natural harbour on the east side of Maitresse Ile and was greeted by a Frenchman doing impressions of a seagull! A long slipway meant an easy portage, but I had to empty the heaviest items from my boat, making a few trips up and down. After setting up a quality bivi just above the high tide mark, I spent the remainder of the day exploring the small island, eating the other two mackerel and sleeping. I was relishing the opportunity to relax but conscious that the next day would be very hard and I had to get as much energy as I could, so after watching a spectacular sunset and trying to take in the enormity of the reef I prepared for an early start and hit the sack at 9:00pm.

This reef has got to be one of the most amazing places I've been, the size and remoteness is awesome and the scenery endlessly changes with the rising and falling tide. I am sure it won't be long before I return.

Day 4 (Les Minquiers - Guernsey) 37nm

After a restless night, I had a quick brew, fired back the last of the weetabix, packed up camp and was ready to leave by 5:00am. With 37nm ahead of me I planned to take the first leg easy. The weather was much clearer but there was a force 3-4 wind from the NW. Wind against tide made for a tiresome paddle towards Jersey, with the boat stalling on most waves...so much for taking it easy to start with.

Thankfully, after a couple of hours the wind began to drop and Jersey steadily got bigger. I made it to Corbiere in just over three hours, so I was pleased with the progress. However, I was feeling quite tired and Sark was only just visible on the horizon, so my spirits were a little low. I had a ten minute break bobbing off Corbiere, then carried on up the west coast of Jersey. After another quick break to take on water and food just to the NW of Jersey, I was ready to make the crossing to Sark.

Having had the tide on my back for the last few hours, I knew the remainder of the paddle would be hard, pushing the tide. I began ferry gliding and managed to find the energy to put on a good pace. This stretch was really challenging mentally, as Guernsey began to appear on the horizon, I felt pretty demoralised to see how much further I had to go. Sark didn't seem to get much closer very quick and with a pain in my left elbow and a touch of cramp in the stomach, every stroke required determination. Despite this, I maintained a good speed and made the crossing to Sark in 2 hours 50 minutes, by which time I was feeling exhausted and looked a wreck (check out the photo). Guernsey has never looked so far from Sark and it took some effort to get going on the last stretch. It was a ferry glide across to Herm, but the Little Russell was slack, so last two miles were very straightforward. I pulled back into Bordeaux at 15:00 after ten hours in the boat, very tired, but very pleased that i'd completed the circuit. A swim, bath and beer later I found myself thinking of what to do next... what's wrong with me! ●

Chris Harvey

bay, which looked ideal for setting up camp. I glided onto the shore and after a quick swim, managed to pull the boat up the sand (much easier than emptying the boat). I set up a good bivi then was just about to have a sleep when I noticed three dodgy looking characters wandering towards me. It turned out they were Jersey paddlers (Kevin Mansell, Tom, Chris) - they'd paddled from Les Minquiers. After a few cheap jokes, they suggested we head to the bar. We met up with Pete (another one from the other island), then went for a drink... or two, three or four! After a bit of grub we wished each other well and I returned to the now deserted beach where I made a fire and cooked one of the mackerel I'd caught. Pleased with a good day I went to sleep looking forward to an easy paddle to Les Minquiers.

Day 3 (Ile Chausey - Les Minquiers) 11nm

I woke early, conscious that the tide was dropping and I would have to leave earlier than expected to avoid a long carry to the sea. I got up at 6:45am and after a quick breakfast, hurriedly packed up camp and dragged the boat down to the water's edge, which was rapidly moving further away. I paddled out the bay and sent a text message to confirm my departure. I soon reached the edge of the reef and paddled off



Les Ecrehous



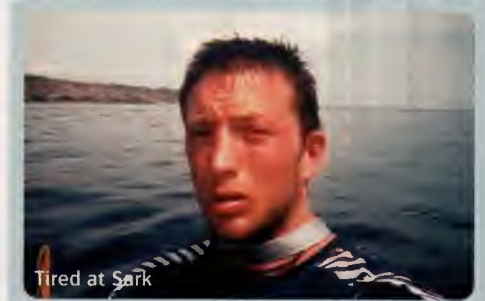
Les Ecrehous bivi



Les Minquiers



Les Minquiers bivi



Tired at Sark

Letters

You know who you are!

Having arrived home after a great weekend on the Gower at the BCU Surfest I felt suitably satisfied in that I'd passed the assessment I was on, had some good waves despite the bad weather and felt that I'd been party to organising a fun weekend of surf training and assessment for all concerned - a total of around 45 individuals plus coaches - and all at the bargain price of just £30 per course.

Little did I know that this pleasant feeling was going to be soured the very next day when I'm contacted by our host to say that a number of books had been stolen from their library by one or more of those very participants I had spent hours working to get the event of the ground for, as well as spending the weekend with. To say I was disappointed would be an understatement. I've worked for the governing body of canoeing within Wales for over two years now and am used to taking the flack with very little praise or support but hey I'm a big boy I can take it, but to think that a fellow paddler could stoop so low as

CONTRIBUTION DETAILS

Email: peter@canoefocus.co.uk

Post: Canoe Focus Letters, 49 Greenfields, St Ives, Cambs PE27 5HB

to steal books from a centre hosting one of our events really left me feeling gutted. The irony of it being that one of the books stolen - Chris Sladdens Welsh rivers - the WCA has made available to be downloaded for free from our website!

I sincerely hope that the individual or individuals concerned reads this and feels suitable shameful and if they have any self respect will consider reimbursing the WCA the price of the books that we had to replace. Money that could have been spent on similar future events although unfortunately probably not at Rhosili as they may have burnt our bridges for us there.

Sid Sinfield
National Development Officer
Welsh Canoeing Association

The Serpents Tail

A quiet ripple
As paddle blade cuts a glassy surface
All is tranquil, placid, peaceful
While passing cows chew the cud to a lazy rhythm

But lo, a quiet murmur begins to underpin
The soporific atmosphere
Which rapidly amplifies to a rumble and a roar
As a fragile craft draws inexorably nearer to a mad, serpentine torrent
That lies in wait for all who approach
Whether they be readied or be in glorious oblivion of their fate
Fast, the magnetic flow begins to pull
The hull towards a gorges gate
Steerage now a dreadful struggle
Against the stupendous forces of an aqueous foe
Ever onward, downward, plummets
Fragile courage and trembling knee
Fraying every nerve and sinew
In desperate contest to re-gain
Control amongst the tumult of a white water hell
Sudden drops, jagged rocks
Twists and turns on every side
Under currents, boiling boulders
Stopper waves of savage suction
And the cavernous gape of an open mouth

Beneath overhanging, over-powering cliff
Inducing an over-compensating panic
'Til shattered balance leads to
Cold shocking, plunge numbing
Wide eyed immersion into icy pool
As lungs fight stoppered mouth
And limbs fight shaft and blade to re-coordinate
Into lifesaving Eskimo roll - or not!
And then, just as suddenly as it began
The roller coaster ride is over
As, at the base of the Serpents Tail
The comforting arms of a wide sweeping eddy
Embrace and breathe life into exhaustion
And hug exhilaration into submissive calm
Cossetting the trembling, the cold, the saturated
The swimmer and whooping survivor alike
Some to give up brave adventure forever
Others to return again to heady waters
Once more to inject another adrenaline rush
Into bold circulation
Oh trip inducing, deadly venom!
Norman Brooks

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Help the British Canoe Union celebrate its 70th Anniversary 1936 – 2006

Get clicking and send in your photos!

The BCU was set up in 1936 to send a team to the Berlin Olympics, since then the organisation has grown considerably and the range of canoeing opportunity has grown tremendously. As part of celebrating the British Canoe Union's 70th anniversary this year, we are inviting you to send us photographs of what canoeing means to you; photographs which you think represent the diversity and appeal of canoe and kayaking.

- The competition is free to enter and open to all.
- There are two categories; adults and those under the age of 18.
- Starting from February, one photograph from the two categories will be chosen each month to win prize vouchers.
- A selection photographs will also be published in Canoe Focus, displayed in a dedicated section of the BCU website and will feature in a planned canoeing calendar.

For an opportunity to win prize vouchers or a camera worth £150 get clicking now!

Competition Rules

By entering the competition The British Canoe Union will be entitled to use your photograph to promote canoeing, without needing to obtain your permission. By submitting your photograph/s you agree to grant the BCU a perpetual, royalty-free, non-exclusive, sub-licensable right and licence to use, reproduce, modify, adapt, publish, translate, create derivative works from, distribute and exercise all copyright and publicity rights with respect to your photograph/s worldwide and/or to incorporate your photograph/s in other works in any media now known or later developed for the full term of any rights that may exist in your photograph/s.

By submitting your photograph/s to BCU, you warrant that your photograph/s is/are your own original work and that you have the right to make it/them available to the BCU for all the purposes specified above; and does/do not infringe any law.

We will only accept images as taken and will not accept any image that has been re-mastered or which are montages.

The British Canoe Union will not be able to return any images.

Wherever used, we agree to credit your images to you.

We reserve the right to crop the images as we see fit.

This competition is open to UK residents only. Overseas entries will not be considered.

Collective Editor's announcement of the winner is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

The prize(s) must be taken as stated and cannot be deferred. There will be no cash alternatives.

The BCU does not accept any responsibility for late or lost entries due to the Internet. Proof of sending is not proof of receipt.

No responsibility is accepted for ineligible entries or entries made fraudulently.

This competition is not open to employees of the BCU, any person directly or indirectly involved in the BCU or the running of the competition, or their direct family members.

The BCU reserves the right to cancel this competition at any stage, if deemed necessary in its opinion, and if circumstances arise outside of its control.

Where photos of people are submitted, you agree to having the consent of those people wherever possible and if applicable (i.e. members of the general public). If children are featured the consent of their parents/guardians is needed.

Prizes unclaimed after 28 days will be deemed to have been forfeited and the BCU reserves the right to either offer the prize to the entrant whose name is next drawn at random, or to re-offer the prize in any future competition on the BCU.

Entrants will be deemed to have accepted these rules and to agree to be bound by them when entering this competition. This includes entries made via email.

We reserve the right not to publish images that are submitted and to edit the comments that accompany the image. The site editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

Prizes

Monthly prizes

Each month one photograph will be picked from the two categories (one of these photographs will be used in the calendar)

Adults: win £25 worth of Cotswold vouchers

Under 18s: win £25 worth of WHSmith vouchers

Overall Winner

At the end of January 2007 an overall winner from both categories will be chosen

Adults: win a digital camera worth £150

Under 18s: win a digital camera worth £150

How to enter

Send your digital photos in jpeg format via email to chloe@bcu.org.uk

Or post your photos on a CD to: Chloe Nelson-Lawrie, British Canoe Union, John Dudderidge House, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5AS

Remember to label your photos and to provide contact details that include your name, address, telephone number and age.

Closing date

The closing date for the competition is **31st December 2006.**

The overall winner will be chosen by a panel of BCU representatives and announced on **Wednesday, 31st January 2007.**



YORKIE NEWS

Happy new year, I hope you all get as wet as you want and to get it as often as you want it to happen! There's a resolution for you!

Many, many thanks to Frances Petchy. As some of you will know, Frances is about to hang up her rubber gloves and enjoy retirement and we wish her a very long and very full one. Since 1973 when the campsite at Sleningford Watermill opened, it's been central to the regions' paddlers. The whole spectrum of the sport has been enjoyed there whether beginner or expert, competitor or recreational, individual or coached groups, all have come to regard it as the centre of the Yorkshire hub. And all agree that the reason it was so enjoyable was made possible and kept possible by Frances. On behalf of the thousands of us you have helped, thank you.

We also wish the Spirit of the Mill lives on care of the new managers Trish and Peter Scott. Good luck to you. Also many, many thanks go to John Sturgess for his years of achievement through his devoted support to slalom paddlers and in particular the regions' youths. John has been spotted with stopwatch, wellies and clipboard on every riverbank that comes with a slalom pole and will be sorely missed. Thank you John.

Welcome and congratulations to our new PDO, Gareth Fields. Gareth has taken over from Len Hartley and again looks after both sides of the Pennines. He may be contacted on 07738 185885 and gareth@bcu.org.uk

Thank you (and a lot more) to David Longley (West Yorkshire CC) who at the regions ACM managed to commute a life sentence as the regions Treasurer to just nine years. The "and a lot more" refers to when David was also acting regional secretary for a time when we were without.

And a very warm welcome to Debbie McDonald who at the ACM very kindly volunteered to take over as Treasurer. Debbie will already be known to many of you, as she is also treasurer of the regional Coaching scheme. Debbie may be contacted at debbie.MCDONALD@somfy.com

After the ACM Chris Hawkesworth briefed the meeting on the potential for a new canoe centre to be created at Manvers Lake, Wath on Dearne. This

exciting possibility is available to any club groups who want to get involved. An open meeting will be held as soon as there is some detail to brief, so to register your interest and to be kept informed please contact Keith Saunders on all@saundersfam.free-online.co.uk or 01226 752903

Coaches please note that the spring event is being hosted at the pool session of White Rose CC on Sunday evening 12th March, from 6pm at Fearnville Sports Centre Oakwood Lane, Leeds. The first bit until seven will be 'wet or watch' in the pool and will feature or very own RCO Ian Scott run a session entitled 'Rescues – lets all sing off of the same hymn sheet'. The entertainment carries on at 7.20 (in the bar upstairs) when England Coach Sven (sorry) Richard Ward, will bring us up-to-date on the evolving work so far for UK coach certificate. The last part of the evening will be handed back to Ian for our normal spring meeting of Yorkshire Coaches. Details of all this and more can be obtained from our regional coaching Secretary Janet Cartwright at paul@pcartwright.freeserve.co.uk or 01484 603126.

Short notice I know, but use this same contact for Paul Cartwright if you need a Coach Level 3 Kayak & Canoe Training or Assessment course, which is being run at Ingleton on 17th/19th February, cost £120 to include good indoor accommodation and fully catered. 07745 399493 and water@wyscouts.org.uk

The next regional team meeting (to which all clubs are encouraged to send a representative) is in Leeds (just off of Regent St) at 6.30pm on Monday 27th February, directions, notes of previous meetings and an agenda are all available from our secretary Jon Dakeyne at jdakeyne@aol.com

The region's new website www.yorcie.org.uk now carries details of all 32 events for 2006 running on the River Washburn the first of which is February 26th, but don't forget to check the YORCIE info line to confirm on 0845 833 8654.

For more details please look in the Yorkshire pages of the 2006 BCU yearbook. **Happy 70th birthday BCU.** Dick. dickconstable@canoeists.co.uk PS. One of our RCOs Ian Scott has got married to Carole. We wish them all the best for the future. Thank you.

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My next decision was how to get there. There were three options really fly, drive or train. The train was a stupid price and flight involved a bit of hassle so I opted to drive.

I regretted this a little as it was after a long ten hour plus journey that we eventually reached Roybridge. It had been dark the last two hours of the journey and we were glad to get there. It wasn't long before the others in our group arrived. Introductions were made and we headed off to the pub for food and a welcome pint. This looked like a good start to the week's vacation.

The group consisted of six paddlers, plus our two coaches from Kayakojacko, the company who had organised the trip.

Day one: Spean Gorge

The first morning briefing gave details of the format for the week and how things would work. It set out signals, group controls, timings and meal arrangements.

The river for the day was predominately grade 3 with a few grade 4 rapids and one grade 5 'Witches Cauldron' this being a nasty undercut section. With only the river Dart under my belt, I was convinced that this drop was gonna bite my bum. The others in the group had the same idea as me, so after a tactics discussion with the coaches we opted to portage this section. The rest of the river was relatively easy and I enjoyed the paddle. The most memorable section, which we all laughed at over a beer, was a fairly tight section with a two-foot drop on it. The group got a bit out of shape here and after a couple of us got back looped. The remainder of the group ploughed their way through us, resulting in a bit of carnage.

Over dinner we had a group debrief where everybody got involved and discussed the merits of the day. Dinner and debrief became a formula for the week as in this relaxing environment the tongue definitely worked best.

Day two: Middle Etive

The morning briefing today told us that the paddle was to be the Middle Etive. I had heard of this run and knew it was one that would be challenging. The coaches emphasised that although sections of this river were grade 5 it was all set piece with short and easy to protect rapids. This coupled with water levels being fairly low would allow a perfect learning experience.

The Etive seems a pretty short run at only 3km but with eight drops in all it can take a day to run.

First drop, Triple falls. Talk about throwing yourself in at the deep end. We took a good look on the briefing for this one discussing rescue and safety as well as the lines we would take. The coaches would discuss our options rather than tell us the direction; they wanted us to make a decision. Dennis went first and set a smooth untroubled line on the first drop. This inspired confidence into me. Karen next. No problems here. Chris followed Karen. My turn, line up, paddle, keep focused and here I go. A few cock-ups on the way but got through by the skin of my teeth. The video review later revealed I actually made a good line.

From there on in the intensity of the river was pretty constant. We only portaged one grade 5 drop, 'Crack of Doom' the name alone is too scary and anyway we wouldn't have had enough plastic to repair the boats from the damage the jagged rocks was sure to do. The last drop was the famous 6m waterfall. We watched Jacko run the dogleg and all chose to run it



I hadn't been to Scotland paddling before but had heard the white water was good so decided to get up there and see what was what.

Above: Karen Gulley on the third stage of Triple Drops on the Etive

"Long and Winding Road" - View from the put in on the Roy



Day three: Findhorn

Can you believe this? It's just taken us an hour to get to this river in the middle of nowhere. We stop to ask this cyclist for directions, he sticks his head through the window and says, "Hello Jacko". I think they were from the same tribe! Nice relaxing day after yesterday. No major rapids only grade 2/3 for about 6k. We all tuned up on our river running skills today. There were a few good play features for tail squirts and eddy line

straight off the rock. What a blast, it was time for whooping and celebration. The last drop must have lifted all of the groups confidence because we decided to have a look at the Allt a' Chaoruinn. Alas we ran out of daylight before we could run it. Phew that was lucky.

The evenings briefing was quite a serious one. Emphasis was placed on group responsibility and keeping line of sight, following dinner Dennis did a lecture on safety equipment and it's use. We all learnt a lot today.

Glen Etive - The road to the main run on the Etive





meet before setting out on their pre-expedition training climbs. An enjoyable beer and a light snack rounded the day off nicely.

Day five: Roy Gorge

They must have thought we were all feeling fit today. The briefing described an idea to paddle the upper, middle and lower sections of the Roy. The upper was a little dry so we got in at Roosters tail and did the Gorge and lower sections.

All of us took it in turn to lead the group, which was good because the river had some great sections on it. I got to scout and then describe a line to the others; this proved way more difficult than it sounded and the group asked for lots of clarification. Portaged the grade 5 drop "Head Banger". Dennis and Nige ran this and the group used the exercise to practice communication and pre protection over this 150 meter 3 stage rapid. Glad we missed the upper section because by the time we got off at Roybridge most of us were shattered. A short walk back to our accommodation though meant before too long we were back at base enjoying a snack of cheese on toast and a cup of coffee.

The evening de brief today went through the incidents of the day and explained the decision making process for the actions that followed. I found this particularly useful as it gave me new ideas whilst endorsing some of the conclusions I had already come to. This developed into a bit of scenario planning and somehow the whole thing took three hours.

Last day: River Pattack

The morning briefing today revealed we were to do a new river for everyone. The access agreement provided a welcome spark of optimism in this normally difficult process of our sport. Dennis called the estate manager and was given the access codes to get through the security measures of the estate the river is located on. Then we drove up to the put in and unloaded our vehicles. No stress just a few friendly waves, lots of care of the environment and a nice river to finish the week off on. This was mainly grade 3 with a couple of 4's in the gorge section. We all had a go at leading the river again. This was good

because we had to get out and scout more drops. Bruce entertained us all at the end by getting vertically pinned above the final drop and Jacko demonstrated his rescuing skills getting boat and paddler sorted with

almost drill-planned accuracy.

The day finished with personal debriefs and action plans to use to assist your ongoing progression. Well that was not quite the end; of course we had more food and a few beers.

I've been to Scotland before with work but never had chance to see its real beauty. When you're in the highlands you can feel so isolated from the rest of the country especially when you're paddling down through some of the gorge sections. The views on and off of the river are truly magnificent. We saw plenty of wild animals including otters and big highland stags.

Thanks to the entire group for mucking in and making it such a good laugh. ●

Graeme Laycock

manoeuvres. It was a great day. During today I really got a feel for how the coaches were working, they paid particular attention to keeping a relaxed mood and this was demonstrated through language and actions. I realised the efforts both made to talk with each person and ascertain just how well things were going. As we got off the river Jacko explained the debrief method for today. He wanted to use a WWW (what went well), EBI (even better if) tool and the journey back to base was to be our reflective time to work out three of each of these.

Over dinner we did our debrief and the focused approach certainly kept things more concise which was good as following this both coaches worked through river reading and positioning skills using charts and table based models (mobile phones, salt and pepper shakers etc). They had done plenty of this on the water but with no distractions lots of things started to become much clearer.

Day four:

Today was supposed to be a day off to do our own thing. The group though had different ideas and easily managed to get our coaches to provide a playboating day. Forty-five minutes drive and we found some good play features on the Orchy. A tidy little creased wave produced opportunities for paddlers to practice spins and cartwheels.

On the way home we visited the famous Clachaig public house where many of the climbers used to

Both coaches worked through river reading and positioning skills using charts and table based models (mobile phones, salt and pepper shakers etc)



Falls of Pattack



Fall on the Roy



Dennis Newton on the top of the Garry old schooling it in his 'Mighty Topo'



Liam Flemming just above the take out on the Garry

INFO :

We had a tremendous week and I would totally recommend going to Scotland paddling and using Kayakojacko www.kayakojacko.com if you need a co-ordinated and coached trip. Also very worthwhile getting the SCA guidebook that offers loads of river options www.canoescotland.com.

What's your passion?



Gareth

our new PDO talks about his passion for canoeing – so we thought it would be great to know what you like about Paddlesport? Let us know your 'passion' and why – there are prizes for the best answers and we'll put you in the next edition of the mag! Email youth@bcu.org.uk and don't forget to include your name, age, address and your club or who you paddle with. The Competition is open to anyone aged 18 or under.

Why not make 2006 the year to try out something new? If you need help to access different types of boat then contact your nearest PDO in the meantime why not... Smurf the surf... see a change on the sea... hop over the waves in a Wavehopper... go for speed in racing... stagger and spin in slalom... play ball in polo... boof the stopper in a playboat... pose and rip in freestyle... do it with a single blade in a canoe... but above all have fun!

YouthFest 2006

Sunday 9th July at Dorney Lake, near Eton Berkshire

This is your opportunity to paddle on the 2012 regatta site for canoeing and rowing. It's a fantastic location – not to mention the activities - so pop the date in your diaries now!

The day includes the Bellboat National Championships, Lightning and open canoe races, Xstream Challenge, polo golden shot, flat water freestyle, ergo challenges and the opportunity to try out different boats. For more details go to the youth pages of our web site at www.canoe-england.co.uk or email youth@bcu.org.uk or call 0115 982 4220 to request an information sheet.

Tiverton by Aimee Croucher aged 8

I finally plucked up the courage to go thanks to my dad persuading me after an accident when I capsized at the Nene, but really I went because I like kayaking.

On Friday it was quite boring getting packed after



school, but then after having tea we finally got to the centre and got all our stuff packed ready to go.

It was fun passing Glastonbury tour on our way to Tiverton. When we arrived I was excited.

Saturday morning started with a breakfast of Coco Pops and a really salty bacon sandwich, which was yucky. Then we finally got to the River Exe and started paddling on fast water. I really enjoyed it with my friends Katy, Bethany and Robyn until we arrived at Tiverton Town Weir where we were all too scared to shoot it but all the bigger paddlers did.

The next Weir, 'Walronds' was scary as well but I went down it after rafting up with Mike so I felt a bit safer. Then we got out and left the oldies to continue on over Broken and Bickleigh weirs, they even went out in the afternoon to paddle over Bolham and Salmon ponds weirs. In the evening we all went to a pub and had a game of skittles.

On Sunday us little paddlers went for a quiet paddle and games session on the Grand Western Canal while the others repeated the Bolham to Tiverton section so they could play on the weirs. Then we returned to have lunch and tidy the centre before going home.

PADDLE THIS

New PDO for Yorkshire and the North West

Gareth Field started working for the BCU in December – so we asked him to tell you a bit about himself.

I have been involved in boating since my early teenage years – firstly at my school canoe club – where I paddled my prized Mirage up and down the Avon. Then joining Leamington Spa CC, where my boat got longer and skinnier, and I went faster and further. The addiction took hold and I chose my university as to where the best boating could be found. Three years of paddling the finest rivers and surfing the best beaches in North Wales (even entering a few slaloms in my spud!) confirmed my paddling addiction as a life long passion.

Out in the real world, working in outdoor centres kicked off my career in and around boats. I worked my way around the UK, England, Scotland and Wales and had many experiences playing around in different boats. Again my boats got longer, but this time fatter too - and of the open variety. From Wales the chance to work in Maine (USA) appeared, paddling long skinny boats that curled up at the ends.

That summer over it was back to the UK for a couple of years working in Cumbria interspersed with trips to paddle short boats in Norway and open boats in Portugal as well as throughout the UK.

Now I find myself with a new challenge as the Paddlesport Development Officer for Yorkshire and the North West. It's a change of job style but what continues is the ethos of developing young people. If I can help you make paddling become the life long passion of any young people then I've done my job.

Please contact me on 07738185885 or gareth@bcu.org.uk



2005 Wavehopper Championships

Slenningford, River Ure

This was a new site for the Wavehopper Championships and the campsite along side the river made for an ideal site. There is also a road running through the campsite so boats could be ferried upstream easily by trailer which saved a lot of work carrying heavy boats at the end of each run.

After a week of rain the river was running at quite a high level and upon inspection on the Saturday it was decided to run the lower section of the main rapids only. This provided a challenging section of river with some big water rapids to run at first followed by a small rapid before a flat water sprint.

The day started with some rain which tried to dampen our spirits but the weather soon brightened up and everyone got stuck in to help make the day run smoothly. Thanks must go to all the volunteers who helped with this. The youngsters were very keen and some close racing eschewed. First runs were completed in the morning with most people taking a second run in the afternoon. Interestingly very few people improved on their first runs – perhaps because of a falling river.

Shropshire paddlers once again won the overall prize with 1399 points and had competitors winning a number of events. Other paddlers/clubs came from as far away as

Leighton Buzzard, Blyth, Doncaster, Durham, Burton, Lower Wharfe, Hexham and Halifax. A good effort by all and I am sure we will be using this venue again shortly?

Nigel Timmins



Paddle Power takes off

Frome Canoe Club has always had a commitment to young paddlers and with the growing popularity in the sport and the increase in young members that we were attracting to our club, we felt that we needed a more flexible approach than the traditional One Star afforded, and we needed appropriate kit!

Paddle Power was the answer! This programme is designed to encourage young people (8-11 year olds) to come into the sport and stay in it. It was just what we needed. But our kit was too big for the paddlers we were attracting so we set out to raise enough money to buy a fleet of Dagger Dynamos, junior paddles and small buoyancy aids. Substantial financial assistance came from the Town Council, Frome Youth Council and Western Community Leisure and we are grateful to them for supporting us.

The programme has been a resounding success. In fact its success took us quite by surprise! Our summer sessions have been full to capacity and our young paddlers have had a wonderful experience. Of course the appropriate kit made a big difference, but it is the structure of the scheme that has been the key.

We would like to recommend the Paddle Power programme to you if you have young members in your club and you are looking to provide a suitable introduction to the sport which will allow them to cover all aspects of the sport and to develop their skills to progress into whichever discipline they wish to move. It has worked for Frome Canoe Club!

Pam Dixon

Prize lucky draw

You can find the answers to all these questions on the Youth Pages of our website

www.canoe-england.co.uk

Bring your answers to the Young Peoples' Stand at the International Canoe Exhibition at the Outdoor Show and take part in our prize lucky draw!

1. What is the date for YouthFest and the National Bellboat Championships in 2006?
2. Where is YouthFest being held – what else will be held at the venue?
3. What type of Paddlesport involves a Wavehopper?
4. What age can you start doing the Cadet Leader Award?
5. Who won the Christmas Card Competition 2005?
6. How many awards are there in Paddlepower One?
7. What type of paddling is involved in the Lightning Cup Series?

Name the characters

Have you entered our competition yet to name these characters for our new website? See them in action on the KidZone section of the youth pages and send your competition entries to youth@bcu.org.uk

To get to youth pages go to www.canoe-england.org.uk and click on youth (top of page).



Top canoe clubs

Congratulations to the following clubs who have recently been awarded with the BCU Top Club award and Sport England Clubmark award.

Penzance Canoe Club
Richmond Canoe Club
Itchen South District South Group

If you would like to develop junior and youth activity at your club – then have a look at the youth pages of our web site: www.canoe-england.co.uk



Team UK do

Three days later a team of eight, myself included, had flights booked. Now at this stage I must admit things had happened so fast that I hadn't really had time to tell my girlfriend Lisa. I had also not really had time to check out the links. Upon investigation a feeling of dread settled over me, comments like: "eight hour jungle walk in", "they don't like gringos there", "portage fest", "standard two hour walk in for rivers...", kept appearing. However, the tickets were paid for and I'm from Scotland, and we're apparently made from "girders". So there'd be no crying from me.

Day 1

Six of the team were leaving from Heathrow: Andy Levick, Chris Wheeler, Marcus Holburn, Kevin Francis, Mark Rainsley and myself. Some sterling work from Marcus and Chris saw our boats safely onto the plane with no charge. Two other members of our team, Simon and Ferdinand were meeting us in La Paz. Simon currently lives in the US and Ferdinand is a top dude from Costa Rica whom we met last year.

Day 2

Twenty hours later we landed at the Bolivian capital of La Paz. Now, this is an experience in itself. La Paz is the highest capital city in the world at more than 3,000m. Walking from the terminal to the bus is an effort, never mind trying to load up boats. We had pre-organised two 4x4's and two Bolivian drivers, Renaldo and Gary, who also doubled as guides, negotiators, translators and puncture repairers. When you only have two weeks in a place like Bolivia, logistics can seriously eat up time; so, wheels and local knowledge are priceless.

Now, what's one of the last things you want to do after a 20 hour journey, feeling light-headed, sick and breathless from the altitude? Drive down the 'Road of Death' perhaps? This is the road from La Paz to Coroico and is reportedly the most dangerous road in the world. An average of two or three cars a week fall off the edge. It's a dirt track clinging to a cliff face for 50km between La Paz and Coroico, with a long fall over the edge (1,000m plus) at any given point. Along the road there are regular passing places just wide enough for two vehicles.

Now I'd like to think it's because I'm macho that this experience wasn't unnerving me, but the simple truth is that the thick fog and pitch black of night obscured the view over the edge. Unfortunately they also reduced the view of the road ahead to about 20 feet. Which is probably why we did career off the road, thankfully on the uphill side however. It was going to be one of those trips!

Sometime that night we ended up at 'La Senda Verde', a lodge on one of the few pieces of flat ground in the whole country, for our first night in Bolivia. Given the exciting day we'd had, we were lucky that only one true disaster had struck the team. Chris had left the FHM lifesize poster of Abi Titmuss on the plane... things were looking bad.

Day 3 – Rio Huaranilla, 2hr Grade 3-4, warm up section

Day 4 – Rio Choro, Grade 4-5

We'd done a warm-up day on the Rio Huaranilla, and now decided to tackle our first river with a real Bolivian-style walk in. We had some notes from a previous group that said that the path to the put in was a steep

Bolivia

December 2004, sometime or other... Mark Rainsley sent around an email with some links, along the lines of... "Check out these links, anyone fancy Bolivia?"

The 'road of death'

Rio Palca Canyon



This was a big mistake. Two hours, a thousand ant bites, a few dropped boats, sixteen pints of sweat and one cut hand later (four stitches), we fell out of the jungle at the riverside. Andy Levick was the unfortunate bearer of the cut hand, he had slipped and sliced open the palm of his hand on a rock. We steri-stripped and gaffa-taped his hand and settled down for a much needed 'lunch break' (also known as much needed rest). Twenty minutes later we jumped on the river.

The Rio Choro is excellent. Short technical rapids/drops follow one after the other all the way back

walk for the first 500m, carry on to the orange tree then make your way down to the river, easy!

Steep! They were right, 500m uphill in 30 degree heat carrying a boat and your kit is a nightmare. Then: which orange tree? When we finally decided we could go no further, we set off down a gully to rope our boats down to the river.

One of the locals

Another local

Kevin

The Novice

Simon



would have been there all night as well; if a passing Bolivian grandmother and twelve year old girl hadn't hopped down and shown us how to climb out. So: macho paddlers NIL, wrinkly-granny-with-schoolgirl-combo ONE. And the river? Beautiful. Technical, hard Grade 5, clean lines, amazing box canyons, no portages and a lot of fun.

Day 6 – Rio Unduavi Lower, Grade 3-5+

We got on a kilometre below yesterday's nightmare climb-out, careful to avoid anything that looked like a 'gentle' scree slope. The river was now a mixture of Grade 3 bumble, interspersed with scary hard Grade 5 stuff. I anti-punched a reactionary on a 'punch or die' style drop and as a consequence spent a punishing eight minutes in an air-pocket behind the fall. When I finally got dragged out I realised that the team had not been able to see me for the duration of my 'incident', and had almost given up and gone home... they had only continued to throw lines, because they couldn't think of anything else to do. We were all a bit shaken up and I was quite happy to see the take out.

While we were on the river, Gary and Renaldo had been investigating a sleeping spot for the team. Up a random dirt track they had discovered a secluded 'weekend retreat' style luxury hotel which had just opened for the season. Excellent, day six and we still hadn't had to use the bivvy bags.

Day 7 – Rio Susisa, G4 to 4+ with monster walk in

Day 8 – Travel to Camata region

When we got to the Camata region, preceded by a lovely scenic drive along Lake Titicaca (aka Lake Titmuss), it was about 10pm. We turned up at a random village where the head village elder allowed us the use of their local school house to sleep in. This saw the start of the bivvy bag action.

Day 5 – Rio Unduavi Upper, Grade 4-5+

The get in to this river was great, a short hop downhill from the roadside and at the end of the day we knew where to get out.

The plan - a quick blast down a relatively short section, a quick scramble up the 'gentle' scree slope at the take out to the waiting bus, then off to warm showers and cold beer in the local hotel.

Actual - we had a bit of a faff that day and as a result of the two hour drive to the river we started paddling about 1pm. This put us at the take out around 4pm. At 7pm, three hours later, we were still clawing around the 'inescapable' scree slope (ex-landslide), unable to climb the last 150 feet. We

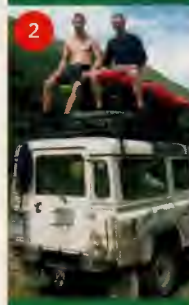


Marcus



Mark

- 1 Simon on Rio Unduavi
- 2 Inspecting the Rio Camata
- 3 Simon on the River Choro
- 4 Lake Titicaca



Andy Ms on the Rio Calaya



Kevin on the Rio Calaya



Chris on the Rio Calaya



Chris on the Rio Camata



Simon on the Rio Camata



Chris on the Rio Unduavi

Day 9 – Upper Camata, Grade 4 to 5

The river looked quite high, it could certainly be paddled lower. Twenty metres down from the put in, the river disappeared around a large boulder and was out of view further on from the road. This was going to be interesting! The 12km section we paddled was full of monster hundred metre long Grade 5 boulder rapids. There were two big portages each taking two hours to scramble around.

Looking down at one rapid, I saw Marcus getting worked in a hole at the top, and Mark swimming out of a hole at the bottom. I started to look for portage options but realised that Marcus and Mark had already shown us where not to go! We took out a mile or so from our agreed take out as another monster Grade 6 rapid disappeared into a gorge. That night we stayed in another random village in another kindly donated school house.

Day 10 – Lower Camata, Grade 5 > 3

Day 11 – Middle Calaya, Grade 5

This was a river we had scouted on the way into Camata and it was absolutely mental. We think it was a first descent and it was a full-on steep continuous boulder dash. The first drop hits you literally a boat-length from the put in at the bridge, and then it's one-man eddies and full-on technical lines for the next three hours.

That night we went back to La Paz to find Andy L (long story, but Andy couldn't paddle after his split hand incident and we had left him in La Paz to do the tourist thing, we hoped he was alright!).

Day 12 – Travel to Rio Zongo/ Camp

We weren't sure how long this river would take, we knew it was 60km long and at least 20km at the end would be Grade 2-3. It was a long drive from La Paz and we made it to where we were going to put in quite late in the day. We decided we would find a spot to put in, camp overnight and start the river the next day. A helpful local informed us in broken English that he knew a spot only 20 minutes walk away, that was close to the river where we could put in. Twenty minutes later upon questioning the get in was "20 minutes away", 20 minutes later again upon questioning the get in was... you guessed it, "20 minutes away". At this point we had to physically hold back Marcus and Simon. We politely asked the local to leave so that we could stop sitting on Marcus, and Simon scouted down a side stream to see if we could get down to the river. Simon returned saying that it was good to go and we made our way down to the river.

We roped, slid and kicked our boats down the gully and emerged from a crack in the gorge wall with 2ft of pebbles to seal launch from. 50m downstream was what looked and sounded like a pretty hefty Grade 5 something disappearing down the gorge, and it was getting dark! Upstream on the opposite bank was what looked like quite a nice camping spot. Doh!

A quick team discussion and a foolproof plan emerged. We would ferry glide across the river, tie off the boats to some trees and then rope, climb and swim our way upstream with our camping kit to the beach! We made it to the beach and set up camp. Mark's petrol stove saved the day as we all tucked in to yet more ration packs.



Marcus on the Rio Camata



One of the locals



Novice on the Rio Choro



When animals go wrong!

Day 13 – Zongo Grade 5-2/3

We woke the next morning, got our kit together, waded back down to the boats and set off downstream. For the next two hours we negotiated big volume Grade 4-5 clean rapids, and then five hours of Grade 3, beautiful waterfalls and awesome scenery. We finished the river that day (yup, all 60km!) and spent the night in a hot jungle town called Caranavi.

Day 14 – Group split!

Some did the Choro, Grade 4-5, some did the Suapi and Coiroco, Grade 3-4.

Day 15 – Scout dodgy no chance river

Back in La Paz, we had found a high altitude river on the map. We were sceptical but figured we would

take a look. We were right to be sceptical; it was dry as a bone. We cut our losses and went back to La Paz. This was our last day, we had tourist faff presents to buy and a night out on the tiles with Gary and his very beautiful 'business partner' (from the Bolivian Tourist Ministry) to prepare for.

The Scores

Overall we racked up: 11 days on the water (out of 13 in the country); nine rivers: four swims: two first descents: seven punctures: eight dodgy stomachs. Did we enjoy it? It was great. I would like to thank the team (for saving me again!) and our guides Gary, Renaldo, and the lovely Senora babe of the Tourist Ministry for a great trip. Thanks also to the BCU Expeditions Committee for supporting the trip.

Written by Andy McMahon, Marcus Holburn and Andy Levick

INFO :

Is there anything else to do in Bolivia except paddle?

There are plenty of other things to see and do in Bolivia besides paddling. Andy Levick ended up on the standard tourist trail after injuring his hand early on in the trip. Here's what he managed to fit in:-

Mountain bike descent of the road of death. This is arguably the most popular tourist trip in the La Paz region, although it's a rather morbid to make an attraction out of the world's most dangerous road! The trip involves a descent of 3,500m down a perilous gravel track with spectacular views of the High Andes (that's if you dare take your eyes off the road). It is not without risks: an average of two cyclists cycle off the edge each year. There are many companies in La Paz that run this trip.

Visited the famous Tiahuanaco archaeological site. This is some of the remains from the ancient capital of the pre-Inca Aymara civilisation. It is the Bolivian answer to Machu Picchu, but without throngs of tourists.

Enjoyed the fascinating high-altitude city of La Paz. It's famous for its colourful street markets, colonial architecture and the indigenous Indian population. Watch your pockets though; pale-faced Brits really stand out.

Visited Lake Titicaca. This is reputed to be the world's highest navigable lake at an altitude of 3800 m and is surrounded by the spectacular snowcapped Andes

Mountain village of Sorata in the High Andes. This is the trekking mecca of Bolivia. It rained all the time while I was there. I am sure it is beautiful in good weather.

Ferdinand attempted to climb Huayna Potosi near to La Paz. You can hire guides in La Paz for this climb. One of the more technically straightforward peaks over 6'000m, though a still real test of endurance due its extreme altitude.

But none of this is as good as paddling.

More details of the expedition can be found at: www.ukriversguidebook.co.uk





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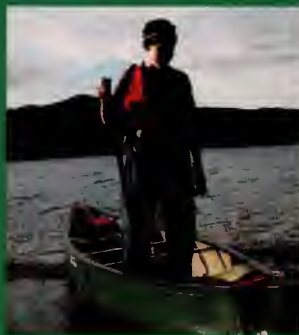
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Instructors/Care Workers Wanted



arnfield care

Arnfield Care requires Instructors and Care Workers for dynamic outdoors based child care teams. We are based in the Peak District, but work UK Wide with young people who present challenging behaviour. Outdoor, craft or art qualified or experienced staff are preferred, but not essential.

What we do require from you is enthusiasm, high degree of personal motivation and an interest in young people's well-being.

Please contact Paul Knowles 01457 860200

Okehampton YHA

CENTRE SENIOR INSTRUCTORS
MULTI-ACTIVITY INSTRUCTORS
Good rates of pay. Residential places. Long season

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTORS
TRAINEE INSTRUCTORS



Okehampton Adventure Centre is a Youth Hostel Association licensed hostel and an activity centre. Due to the continued expansion of our activity programme and being awarded the contract to deliver part of "do it 4 real", funded by the big lottery fund, we are now looking to recruit additional staff for the coming season.

The centre is close to Dartmoor National Park in this beautiful part of the South west, Exeter is 25 miles away by road.

A full range of outdoor activities takes place including rock and wall climbing, gorge scrambling, archery, cycle/mountain biking, Dartmoor walking/navigation and orienteering. Our own water sports centre offers, sailing, kayaking, canoeing, raft building, and surfing and body boarding take place on the Cornish coast.

The centre runs school residential activity programmes, an extensive HND instructor training programme and Public Services courses for a number of national colleges. Family multi activity holidays and a range of courses for NGB awards and general interests for adults throughout the year.

For further information and application contact Activity Manager Kelly Brett 01837 53916 or email okehampton@yha.org.uk

WHITECAP LEISURE

A multi activity centre based at Willen Lake - Milton Keynes.
Staff required for 2006 season.

Experienced Qualified Instructors: BCU Level 2 coach and/or
RYA Dinghy Instructor minimum

Trainee Instructors 6 months apprenticeship scheme:
Training will be given to gain NGB awards. You will need personal skills and desire to teach watersports.

Limited accommodation is available on site.

Interviews week commencing 1st March 06 - immediate start

Contact:-

Whitecap Leisure, Willen Lake, V10 Brickhill Street, Milton
Keynes, MK15 0DS

Tel 01908 691620 email: admin@whitecap.co.uk

River sport instructors/guides required

Nae Limits one of the most innovative adventure sports providers in the UK is recruiting for 2006.

If you are hard working, reliable and a team player with:

Useful Qualifications: SRA/IRF raft guide, Kayak 4/5 *, SRT 1, SPA and or

Useful experience: Rafting, Kayaking, Canyoning/Gorge walking, Rock/Rope work, Team building

We offer attractive staff packages.

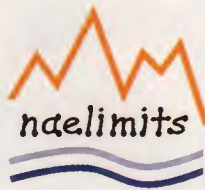
Please send a cover letter with C.V. to

info@naelimits.co.uk

or by post to Nae Limits,

14 The Cross, Dunkeld ph8 0aj

for more info see www.naelimits.co.uk



finesse
LEISURE PARTNERSHIP

**Stanborough Park**

Stanborough Park is a busy RYA and BCU approved centre delivering watersports courses and activities to individuals, schools, colleges and companies. The Centre is situated in a 126 acre country park in Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, close to the A1(M) and M25.

We are looking for energetic people with good people skills to work as part of our friendly team during the Summer Season 2006.

Full Time Seasonal Instructors

£8.71 per hour

April-October (2 posts) and June-September (2 posts)

We are seeking to appoint committed Seasonal Instructors with the motivation and enthusiasm to assist the Chief Instructors lead a great team of part-time and casual instructors. Additionally, you must have the imagination and creativity to assist with the development of the centre and programme.

The successful candidates will have relevant experience of working at a recognised establishment, hold a minimum of two appropriate national governing body qualifications and be able to provide instruction to all ages and abilities.

Hours are determined by the service and will involve regular evening, weekend and Bank Holiday working on a rota basis.

Part Time Instructors

£6.11 per hour

We are seeking to appoint instructors with motivation and enthusiasm to assist with the delivery of the activity centre programme.

The successful candidates should have relevant experience of working at a recognised establishment, hold a minimum of one appropriate national governing body qualification and be able to provide instruction to all ages and abilities.

For a recruitment pack please contact the 24 hr Recruitment Line on 01707 357299 or email: g.devlin@finesseleisure.com quoting job title.

For further information call Ashley Cato on 01707 327655.

Closing date for applications: Friday 24 February 2006.

In partnership
with
Welwyn Hatfield Council
www.finesseleisure.com

an equal
opportunity employer

Heatree Activity Centre

Dartmoor's premier residential outdoor pursuits & Christian conference centre provides multi-activity courses primarily to schools and youth groups. Kayaking, Climbing, Caving, Hi & Lo Ropes, Archery, Moorland Walking, Environmental Education.

Currently seeking committed Christians as:

Trainee Instructors

Voluntary basis for 12-18 months with full-board & lodging and other direct expenses provided. Possibility of transferring to full-time salaried Instructor position on completion. We fund training, relevant awards & qualifications.

Apply with full CV and motivational covering letter to:

Director, Heatree Activity Centre, Manaton, Devon TQ13 9XE

Tel: 01647 221307 Email: admin@heatree.com

The place
to excel

Here at Milton Keynes Council, we've got a reputation for being innovative and progressive - and we aim to look after our staff as well as we look after the community we serve. You can expect some generous benefits here, including a pension scheme, flexitime in many posts and 27 days' annual leave, rising to 31 after 5 years' service.

The Caldecotte Project aims to empower and enrich the lives of young people through a range of outdoor activities. These currently include yachting, canoeing, and windsurfing as well as high and low ropes, climbing and abseiling, and artificial caving.

Short Term Senior Outdoor Education Instructor (April - October 2006)

£16,260 - £19,656 pro rata

Ref: 50011672

Self-motivated and good at motivating others, you will organise, develop, and deliver programmes of land and water-based activities. What's more, you will maintain accurate records, oversee the safety of staff and young people, and assist in the supervision of the adventure store and water-sports centre.

The RYA Senior Instructor qualification will be essential; BCU Level 2 Coach and windsurf instructor qualifications would be desirable. Punctual, hard-working, and skilled at working independently and as part of a team, you will have a flair for working with young people.

Short Term Outdoor Education Instructor (April - October 2006)

£14,364 - £16,854 pro rata

Ref: 50015429

This role will give you the opportunity to follow an advanced apprenticeship in outdoor education development to NVQ Level 3. As well as delivering land and water-based activities to groups of young people and adults, you will keep daily records and liaise with staff to meet group needs.

The BCU Level 2 Coach or RYA Dingy Instructor qualification will be essential. A reliable team player, you will have the ability to build professional relationships with young people and adults. Experience of working with groups and individuals will also be essential.

For informal enquiries please contact Bryan Watson on 01908 232042.

To apply online visit: www.theplacetobe.info

For an application form, email: jobs@milton-keynes.gov.uk
Call us 01908 253344 or 253462 (24 hour answerphone).

If you have a hearing impairment and have access to Minicom please phone 01908 252727 (office hours only).
Please quote appropriate reference.

Closing date for both posts: 27th January 2006.

We are unable to accept CVs, unless accompanied by a completed application form.

We are an Equal
Opportunities Employer





TAIN ADVENTURE CENTRE BALLYOONAN, OMEATH, CO LOUTH IRELAND

Instructor's required for 2006 season, for a busy multi-activity centre providing a wide range of activities to schools, youth groups and universities throughout Ireland and the UK.

NGB qualifications required. (BCU, inland, surf, sea and open qualifications can be done on site.)
kayaking, climbing, sailing, safety boat handling, archery etc.

Tel 00(353)429375385 Fax 00(353)429375417
E-mail tainhol@eircom.net www.tainadventure.net

SEA KAYAK GUIDE - TURKEY'S TURQUOISE COAST

Additional guide required May-September 2006, for one-day and multi-day sea kayak trips. Mostly adults, and some families. Accommodation provided. Warm weather, beautiful coastline!

Requirements:

- minimum 1 season experience of sea kayak guiding/instructing
 - clean driving licence
 - good interpersonal skills
 - enthusiastic, self-motivated personality, able to use initiative
- Experience guiding other outdoor activities (eg easy canyoning, mountain-biking) is an advantage.

info@alternatifoutdoor.com
www.alternatifoutdoor.com



We are a multi-activity boating centre situated on the River Thames near Marlow and Hurley weirs. We are seeking staff for the

2006 season either for the full period or on a short term basis between April to the end of September.

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTORS

Competitive salary plus food & accommodation

Applicants must be over 18 and be qualified to BCU Level Two Kayak Coach (other NGB qualifications an advantage)
For further information including application form contact:

Longridge SBC, Quarry Wood Road, Marlow, Bucks SL7 1RE
Tel: 01628 483252 E mail: employment@longridge.org.uk
www.longridge.org.uk

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION



Hard working, multi-talented instructors required to spend the 2006 season surrounded by hills, lakes, crags and rivers. In addition to NGB awards, you will need good humour, a flexible approach and be

committed to developing your skills and career prospects. For an application package send a CV & covering letter to Graeme Chapman, Newlands Adventure Centre, Stair, Keswick, Cumbria. CA12 5UF
email - jobs@activity-centre.com
Web - www.activity-centre.com

Lead an Expedition

World CHALLENGE EXPEDITIONS

World Challenge Expeditions is a specialist in the provision of leadership, teamwork and development training for young people. We require motivated, enthusiastic and experienced individuals to lead our range of educational expedition programmes in the UK and overseas. **UK work paid at min. £81.50 per day plus food and accommodation.**

Over the age of 21 and have at least one of the following?

BCU Level 2 Assessed or higher

ML Trained or Assessed

SPA Trained or Assessed

Facilitation/Developmental experience

Contact us now!

01298 767900

leaderinfo@world-challenge.co.uk

www.world-challenge.co.uk



www.mendipoutdoorpursuits.co.uk kayaking

Mendip Outdoor Pursuits provides a variety of activities for young people, adults and business

We require qualified instructors for 2006 Long and short term contracts are available

Applicants should have two NGB awards and a clean driving licence, although others may be considered

Pay from £240 / week

MENDIP OUTDOOR PURSUITS 01934 820518 tel. 01934 820518 fax. info@mendipoutdoorpursuits.co.uk email.

Contact Jim Hayward

A.A.I.A. Inspected & Licensed

raft build
canoeing
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hill walking
bridge build
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initiative exercises
team development
search and rescue
stretcher lower
orienteering
river trips
climbing
archery
caving

CARLINGFORD ADVENTURE CENTRE

Challenging positions in one of Ireland's most popular Outdoor Adventure Centres

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

for energetic, enthusiastic Instructors with land and/or water based qualifications

level 2 Coach in Kayak/canoe

Sailing/Windsurfing Instructors

Rock-climbing SPA instructors

** Mini-bus (D1) License an advantage

Salary Commensurate with experience and qualifications

Positions to commence early 2006

Interested? - Please send CV with details of experience and qualifications to:

TOM McARDLE, H.R. MANAGER

**CARLINGFORD ADVENTURE CENTRE, THOLSEL STREET,
CARLINGFORD, CO. LOUTH, IRELAND**

TEL: 00353 42 9373100 Fax 00353 42 9373651

email: info@carlingfordadventure.com

web: www.carlingfordadventure.com

SITUATIONS VACANT



SEALYHAM ACTIVITY CENTRE

Our centre is located in a 100 acre, wooded river valley with multi activities taking place with in the grounds and the nearby Pembrokeshire Coast National Park

We are looking for motivated pro-active instructors to deliver our 2006 Programme here at Sealyham. Applications are invited from suitably qualified people. You will be working with a wide range of clients offering an exciting range of activities

Applicants should hold at least 1 qualifications from any of the following organisations
 BCU L2 KAYAK OR CANOE
 RYA INSTRUCTOR
 GNAS COACH
 MLTB SPA
 BSA LEVEL 1
 A CLEAN DRIVING LICENSE WITH D1 IF POSSIBLE

PLEASE SEND CV TO
 ALEC WILLIAMS AT
 SEALYHAM ACTIVITY CENTRE
 WOLFSCASTLE,
 HAVERFORDWEST,
 PEMBROKESHIRE, SA62 5NF
 WWW.sealyham.com
 TEL 01348 840763

Brighton Canoes

Brighton Canoes Deputy manager has just become the manager so we need a new Deputy Manager. Duties include direct sales, purchasing, accounting, web site maintenance, management and anything else needed to keep the show on the road. The right person will be a paddler who is enthusiastic, flexible, computer literate, reliable and capable of managing the company when the Manager is away. Other qualities essential to the smooth running of the company are a good sense of humour and the ability to produce legible joined up writing.

Graduates who cannot write need not apply (we have enough of them already).

An attractive salary package is available for the right person.
Interested - then contact Steve on 01273 513200 / sales@brighton-canoes.co.uk or send your CV and sample of joined up writing to:
Brighton Canoes Ltd
Unit 5, Rich Industrial Estate, Avis Way Newhaven
East Sussex BN9 0DU

ASSISTANT MANAGER

We are seeking to appoint a dynamic person with motivation and enthusiasm to assist the Manager lead a team of seasonal and full time staff to deliver high quality water and land based outdoor education in addition the role will be to help develop new activities and promote the centre.


The successful candidate will hold a recognised teaching qualification or equivalent and appropriate National Governing Body Qualifications. In addition the successful candidate should have experience of managing and delivering outdoor education programmes.

Hours are determined by the service and will involve evening, weekend and bank holiday work on a rota basis.
 Salary: circa £27,600 – £30,000
 Closing date: 22 March Interviews will be held on 31 March

SEASONAL INSTRUCTORS IN OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Qualified multi-activity instructors required for April to October 2006 at this residential centre situated overlooking the tidal Blackwater estuary in Essex. RYA or BCU instructor award essential, plus at least one other skill/NGB qualification to include high ropes, climbing, archery, ATBs. Accommodation available on site. Salary: JNC - £12,918 - £14,538 pa, based on 37hr wk, plus holiday entitlement.
 Closing date: 27 Feb Interviews w/c 13 March 2006

For details and application pack for above posts contact:
Bradwell Waterside,
Southminster, Essex CM0 7QY
01621 776256
info.bradwelloutdoors@essexcc.gov.uk
www.bradwelloutdoors.com



Essex County Council

SITUATIONS VACANT



Opportunities to make a real difference

Based on the River Thames, near Reading, this prestigious, newly constructed centre is seeking 2 enthusiastic and highly motivated individuals. These are new positions and represent a very real opportunity for the successful candidates to develop and deliver an innovative and distinctive water activities program. The Centre hosts the Wokingham Canoe Club, (one of the fastest growing clubs in the country) and the Reading University Canoe club, making it a very busy and exciting place to work.

CENTRE MANAGER (Part-time)

- Strong communication, interpersonal, planning and organisational skills.
- Experience in promoting and representing an organisation to the community and local businesses.
- Proven administrative skills
- Experience in designing procedures and policies to meet current legislative and safety requirements
- Enthusiasm and ability to lead a team of voluntary and semi-professional staff
- Ability and creativity to review the current program and to enhance it.
- Flexible and creative approach to managing an activity centre and maximising usage of the facility
- Ideally a coaching qualification to at least BCU Coach level 2+

We anticipate that this role will require 3-4 days effort per week during the period of April through to September and 2-3 days effort for the period October through to March.

Competitive daily rate, depending on experience, plus a bonus for achieving agreed goals.

CENTRE COACH (Full-time)

- Ideally a BCU level 3 coach is required
- Previous experience and passion for coaching young people
- Experience of working in/with the voluntary sports sector
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
- Flexible and creative approach to coaching

The Centre Coach will work six days out of seven each week during April to October. Works 4 days out of seven for the period November to March.

Salary circa £18,000 p.a. (depending on experience), includes a performance bonus

Sports Coach funding scheme and is part-funded by the DCMS which is subject to funding being available

Email applications in the first instance to:
nickjohnson@hotmail.co.uk
 Closing date for applications is 17th February 2006.



ARE YOU A LEVEL 2 KAYAK COACH? DO YOU HAVE YOUR 3* AWARD? ARE YOU LOOKING FOR WORK?

- Beautiful locations in Devon - **FULL BOARD PACKAGES AVAILABLE**
- Be part of our fab, fun, friendly, fast paced, multi-cultural staff teams!
- Further training and qualifications available - great prospects

For more information call Hazel on 08705 133 773 NOW!
 or email jcajobs@travelclass.co.uk
www.travelclass.co.uk





0121 504 2060
jobs@acornadventure.co.uk
www.jobs-acorn.co.uk



Acorn Adventure is the leading provider in Adventure Holidays. We offer excellent packages including free travel to our centres in Europe, plus free training and opportunities for gaining NGBs. We have centres in the UK, France, Spain and Italy. Contracts available from April to September.

Get in touch

Recruitment department on 0121 504 2060 or
e-mail on jobs@acornadventure.co.uk

WANTED PADDLERS**Activity INSTRUCTORS**

Fun loving
& adventurous...?

Ideally you will hold one of these:
BCU Level 2 Training, SPA Training or GNAS Leader Award.

No qualifications? Then we can provide excellent on-the-job training opportunities. Closing date June 2006

To apply

Visit: www.girlguiding.org.uk
Email: hr@girlguiding.org.uk
Tel: 020 7592 1892



Charity no. 306016

Girlguiding UK**Instructors Required**

Based at the River Dart Country Park
A 90 acre adventure site on the banks of the
river Dart on Dartmoor.

2 full time instructors - contract end March - end October
1 assistant instructor - commencing beginning March -
end September

- Qualifications required - minimum of 2 for instructor:
minimum 2 training for assistant instructor position; SPA; BCU
Level 2 Canoe/Kayak, D1 minibus, Cave Leader, MLTB Walking

Send your CV covering letter to:

Roger and Clare at CRS Adventures, RDGP, Holne Park,
Ashburton, Devon, TQ13 7NP



Adventure International

WE are seeking Energetic, Motivated TEAM Players to join our instructor team. Begin FEB and end NOV 2006. EXCELLENT training opportunities available throughout the season, including personal and coaching awards.

Tel : 0870 7775111

www.adventure.uk.com tracy@adventure.uk.com

Want more than just a job?

We are looking for vibrant, energetic team members to work as canoe and kayak instructors at our UK, French and Spanish centres in 2006.

- Full-board accommodation
- Competitive weekly wage
- Excellent training and qualification opportunities

If you are a competent paddler, but don't currently hold any awards, we offer training and assessment opportunities to help you get qualified.

If you want to do something you love for a living and call some of Europe's most prized paddling locations home, then get in touch now!

Flexible length contracts.
Positions throughout the UK,
France & Spain.



www.pgl.co.uk/recruitment
email: recruitment@pgl.co.uk
call: 0870 401 4411

PGL is committed to the principle of equal opportunities



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Come and see us at the Outdoors Show, Birmingham NEC,
March 17-19 2006

Activity Instructors For Summer Season 2006

Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre, Essex

- Salary: £10,635 - £13,347 pa. pro rata - pay award pending (depending on qualifications)

Grangewaters is a local education authority residential centre based in South Ockendon, Essex. We have opportunities for activity instructors and assistant activity instructors to work on multi-activity programmes. The activities we offer include climbing, sailing, high ropes, kayaking, archery, mountain bikes, abseiling and much more. Our client base is varied and include:

- Schools
- Youth Groups/projects
- Colleges
- Groups with physical and learning difficulties
- Commercial sector

We are looking for dynamic, enthusiastic and self-motivated instructors who work well within a team. Qualifications within the outdoor industry would be an advantage but not essential as training will be provided. If you like working outdoors, working with people and learning new skills this job is for you. Seasonal posts are available from April through to October.

For an informal chat please call on: 01708 855228

To obtain an application pack, please call Grangewaters on 01708 855228/856422 between 9 am-4pm Monday to Friday (answerphone available outside these hours). E-mail grangewaters@thurrock.gov.uk www.thurrock.gov.uk/grangewaters
Closing date: 17th March 2006

SITUATIONS VACANT



www.doncaster.gov.uk



Activity Leaders & Assistant Activity Leaders

£8.12 ph/£6.97 ph, full time Ref: 0506/REC1

Hatfield Water Park Outdoor Activity Centre is a Local Authority residential activity centre that has recently undergone a £1 million refurbishment. We are increasing the range of activities on offer at the centre and for 2006 we are looking for enthusiastic and experienced staff who are capable of delivering exciting and educationally valid activities for schools, youth groups and individuals.

Ideally you will hold a minimum of BCU Level Two Kayak Coach, Powerboat Level 2 and SPA. Additional NGBs would be an advantage and training will be available in obtaining further outdoor qualifications.

For further details contact the centre on Tel: (01302) 841572, Email: hatfield.waterpark@doncaster.gov.uk or visit www.doncaster.gov.uk/hatfieldwaterpark

You can apply online, view further information, job descriptions and person specifications at www.doncaster.gov.uk/jobs

The closing date for applications is 20th February 2006.

Applications from all sections of the community are encouraged in order to ensure our workforce reflects the community. www.sector1.net for more vacancies within this organisation.



INSTRUCTORS IN OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Enthusiastic multi-activity instructors required for the 2006 season at a busy outdoor centre situated on a hill surrounded by woodland and heaths in Essex. BCU kayak instructor award preferred, plus at least one other skill / NGB qualification to include high ropes, climbing, archery, obstacle course, mountain biking.

Salary £11,104 to £13,147 for 37 hour week depending on experience. Spring training course available for suitable candidates. Candidates will need to be 18+ and able to work a flexible week. Limited accommodation is available on site.

We are looking for most of the seasonal instructors to start around May, however there is some flexibility for a staggered start from February onwards. This role could help those interested in a long-term future in this exciting sector gain excellent experience.

For details and application forms for the seasonal instructor post please contact Danbury Outdoors, Well Lane, Danbury, Essex CM3 4AB Telephone: 01245 223342

Email: colin.urquhart@essexcc.gov.uk

Closing date 25th March 2006



SITUATIONS VACANT

A fantastic opportunity to join our world - class team

We are currently recruiting a canoe and kayak coach to work from our new West London base in Kew as a Community Sports Coach. You'll be joining our team of industry leading coaches with specific focus on increasing the coaching opportunities for young people in the West London area.

You will be required to establish relationships with local communities and be committed to professional development of coaching programs for community groups

For a job specification or if you would like to be considered for this position please apply in writing or forward your CV and introduction letter to Andrew Jackson, 81 Lillibrooke Crescent, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 3XL or service@kayakojacko.com or give us a call on 01628 824484

KAYAK JACKO All Ages, All Levels, All Around the world
 Coaching for Excellence



Lea Rivers Trust is the leading environmental charity in East London and the Lea Valley, improving the waterway environment with the active participation of local communities through conservation, education and recreation.

Safer Waterways for London: Training & Development Officer £19,071 + 8% pension contribution

This role aims to promote safe use of a variety of waterways across London including rivers, canals, docks and reservoirs.

We are looking for a dynamic individual with the ability to train and pass on knowledge to a diverse range of individuals and organisations.

The post holder will teach various groups, including schools and community representatives, how to be safe near water. They will also train others to deliver water safety sessions and co-ordinate a wide programme of training, events and activities on the water. The successful candidate needs to have a minimum of 1 years experience in working with schools, youth groups or community groups. Specialist training about waterways and water safety will be provided.

This post is supported by:
 Association of London Government, British Waterways, Environment Agency, Lee Valley Regional Park Authority and Thames Water

For an application pack, please email:
recruitment@leariverstrust.co.uk
 Quoting reference: TDO

Closing date for applications: Wednesday 8th February



Shielbaggan Outdoor Education Centre Instructors required for 2006 season

Situated on the Hook Peninsula on the south coast of Ireland, Shielbaggan enjoys a perfect location for a wide range of outdoor pursuits.

Instructors required in: Kayaking, sailing, rock-climbing, orienteering, archery and surfing.

Competitive rates of pay with time off to do your thing in the rest of Ireland.



Please forward a C.V. either by mail or e-mail to Colin Gibbon, Manager, Shielbaggan Outdoor Education Centre, Ramsgrange, New Ross, Co. Wexford.
 e-mail address: shielbaggan@eircom.net

BRAY
LAKE

Watersports

British
Canoe
Union

AALA

RYA

10 mins
from
Hurley!**Kayaking Instructors & Senior Instructor
Required for 2006... Call Now for details:**

Come and work at one of the countries leading commercial watersports centres. Based close to the river Thames near Windsor, Bray Lake has been providing kayaking, windsurfing and dinghy sailing tuition for over 26 years. With an active watersports club, popular hire fleet and well stocked shop, Bray Lake is a busy and dynamic centre.



01628 638860
email: info@braylake.com
www.braylake.com

MARRICK PRIORY**Outdoor Education Centre**

We require an enthusiastic multi-activity instructor with excellent interpersonal skills. Experience in one or more area of outdoor education is highly advantageous (SPA, BCU Level 2 Coach, LCL, GNAS).

Marrick Priory is a Christian Outdoor Centre set in beautiful Swavedale in the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

Excellent salary package including modern self contained accommodation and NGB training altogether worth over £16,000.

**For information pack please contact:
Head of Centre, Marrick Priory, Richmond,
North Yorkshire DL11 7LD. For details:
office@marrickpriory.co.uk or
tel: 01748 884434**

Whitewave: Skye's Outdoor Centre
Requires instructional staff for 2006 season

Requirements:

Kayaking level 2 coach (essential).
Canoeing, MLTB, SPA, Windsurfing, Archery and
interest/experience in Sea Kayaking (desirable).

**Contact Anne or John at Whitewave:
Skye's Outdoor Centre, 19 Linicro,
Kilmuir, Isle of Skye, IV51 9YN.**

Tel: 01470 542 414. E-mail: info@white-wave.co.uk

situations

vacant

Carsington
Sports &
Leisure

BCU kayaking/canoeing
RYA windsurfing/sailing/powerboating

Instructors required to join an enthusiastic team at our
watersports & mountain bike centre beside 1000 acres of water
in the Derbyshire Dales. Long & short contracts available.

Single activity £11,492, multi activity £12,597, p.a. pro rata

Call 01629 540478 for application

Fingal of Caledonia

Cruising with Activities in the
Scottish Highlands

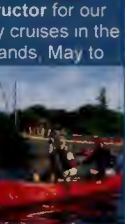


01397 772167

www.fingal-cruising.co.uk/job

We are
looking for a
friendly and
outgoing Instructor for our
activity holiday cruises in the
Scottish Highlands, May to
September

Open
canoeing &
other
outdoor
skills
required.

**Senior Instructors****Required for Whithaugh Park, Scottish Borders
and Carroty Wood, Kent**

The Senior Instructor will work closely with the Activities Manager and is responsible for training and staff development, running a year long training programme, overseeing activities & maintenance and helping to ensure a safe and fun environment for groups.

Requires good leadership and all round outdoor skills with a minimum qualifications of:

Whithaugh Park: Level 3 Kayak or Canoe, SPA and preferably ML.
Carroty Wood: Level 2 Kayak or Canoe and SPA

Barnabas Adventure requires all staff to have a strong Christian Faith and be willing to share it with groups and other staff members through their lifestyle and actions.

Barnabas Adventure offers a competitive salary and training package for all staff

Multi Activity Instructors

Whithaugh Park, Scottish Borders.

Are you looking for a new **Challenge?**

Do you want to share your **Christian Faith** with others?

Do you want to **work in the outdoors** and get paid for it?

Then we have just what you are looking for!

Barnabas Adventure is looking for multi-activity instructors to instruct a wide range of land and water based activities.

Level 2 Kayak essential

Salary £11,000 - £12,500 depending on
qualifications

Interested?

Send you CV adventure@Barnabas.org.uk or
phone 01732 363995

**Surrey Outdoor Learning
& Development**

Highly motivated team looking for new members to start April 2006. Seasonal and full time positions available.

There are several opportunities:

- Thames Young Mariners, Kingston - Water based
- High Ashurst O.E.C, Dorking - Land based
- Henley Fort O.E.C, Guildford - Land based
- Canal Boat Skipper

Candidates should ideally hold the minimum of two N.G.B's covering the following:

- BCU level 2 kayak/canoe coach
- RYA Dinghy Instructor
- SPA, GNAS and walking group leader

It is desirable that candidates have experience in; high ropes courses, off road cycling, climbing walls, raft building, orienteering and problem solving.

The benefits include:

- Some on-site accommodation
- 36 hour week or time off in lieu
- Competitive salary £12k — £17 (pro rata)
- Paid holiday and government pension
- Use of equipment

For an informal chat about these vacancies please contact Rob or Susy on 01372 377239. For an application pack please contact the bookings office on 01372 378647 or email

outdoor.educationcentres@surreycc.gov.uk

Closing Date 21st Feb 2006 and interview dates 4th and 5th March 2006



Assistant Activities Co-ordinator

RNIB New College, Worcester

£20,295 - £24,000 45 hours per week, term time

An exciting opportunity to develop and co-ordinate a challenging and varied programme of activities, primarily based in the local community, which encourages integration of New College students and their sighted peers. Also to facilitate access to the College and its activities programme to students with sight problems in Worcestershire and beyond. You will also help to support the outdoor pursuits elements of the programme and in particular the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. Based at the College, you will be working mainly evenings and weekends to support students in leading an active life. A youth work or teaching certificate is desirable, with experience of organising activities for young people. Conditional to an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check. For an application pack in your preferred medium, please contact **RNIB New College Worcester**, tel **01905 763933**. Closing date **28 February 2006**.
www.rnib.org.uk/jobs Committed to diversity.



RNIB Helping you live with sight loss

Registered Charity number 226227

Haven Banks OEC is seeking

a number of experienced, motivated and enthusiastic instructors to deliver an extensive activity programme to adults and children throughout the 2006 season.

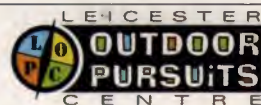
This busy non residential Centre based in Devon, seeks applicants who hold at least 1 coaching qualification, though additional NGB Training will be offered.



Please apply to havenb@devon.gov.uk
or call 01392 434668

OUTDOOR ACTIVITY INSTRUCTORS REQUIRED

Vacancies for 2006 Season



Located on the River Soar, LOPC is a vibrant centre providing land and water based activities to people from the local area and beyond, and is also the home for several canoeing clubs. We need enthusiastic, qualified instructors to join our small but friendly team for the busy summer period for our holiday schemes, group bookings of all ages, team building and corporate training.

Applicants must hold a 1st Aid qualification and at least one of the following: BCU Level 2, SPA, or GNAS. Flexible work arrangements, and great opportunities! The main season is between April and September.

For more information and application details please contact Mark or Angie at: Leicester Outdoor Pursuits Centre, Loughborough Rd, Leicester LE4 5PN
Tel: 0116 268 1426 Email: leicesteropc@btconnect.com
Website: www.lopc.homestead.com

LOPC operates an equal opportunities policy and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

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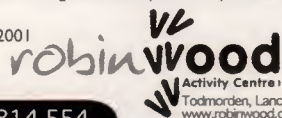
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- ▲ Great staff wages
- ▲ National Training Award Winner 2001

For further details:

bestjob@robinwood.co.uk

Tel 01706 814 554



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



WATERSPORTS INSTRUCTORS IN CENTRAL LONDON

NGB qualified, enthusiastic and dynamic instructors are required for Westminster Boating Base, a busy central London training centre on the River Thames teaching sailing and kayaking. Contracts are available for the forthcoming 2006 summer season starting on the 3rd April and finishing on the 29th October. Instructors with both RYA and BCU qualifications are preferred.

Further training will be available to successful candidates to gain further NGB qualifications including the RYA Safety Boat Certificate. Please visit our web site for further information about our activities.

Please apply by sending your CV, preferably by e-mail, to alan@westminsterboatingbase.co.uk or by post to:

Alan Price, Director

Westminster Boating Base, 136 Grosvenor Road, London SW1V 3JY

Jobs online @
www.canoefocus.co.uk

DEVELOPMENT TUTOR (OUTDOORS)



We use outdoor adventurous activities as part of our personal development programme, to engage London's socially excluded young people and **we want you to join our team**. Activities include: hill walking, climbing and water sports and we want you to extend it further. As the most experienced member of the team, you will supervise and develop junior staff, and take responsibility for the equipment and course programming.

In return we offer: £20,700 or £22,700 depending on experience with the potential to rise, 36 days' holiday including bank holidays, relocation allowance, weekends off to do the things you enjoy, permanent employment benefits such as pension and stability, as well as plenty of opportunities to develop yourself.

Sounds interesting? Visit our website www.fairbridge.org.uk or email london@fairbridge.org.uk or ring 020 7582 9695.
Closing date: 27 February 2006.

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Whinell Forest Near Penrith, Cumbria



At Center Parcs we're dedicated to providing the perfect natural environment for our guests to play, relax and indulge themselves. What makes us the UK's number one choice for short break holidays is that our people are natural too - natural communicators, team players and achievers. If that sounds like you, here at Whinell Forest you'll fit right in. Naturally.

safety.
naturally



Kayak Instructors April 2006 to October 2006, 160 hours per 4 week period

Assisting with the daily duties of our busy watersports centre, you'll be instructing guests as well as helping them to hire crafts, always ensuring that guest safety is paramount. You must possess Powerboat Level 2 and Kayak Coach Level 2 qualifications, as well as being a qualified first aider. You'll be working shifts any 5 days out of 7 including weekends.

Please note that due to the sensitive nature of these roles, successful applicants will be required to apply for disclosure with the Criminal Records Bureau. This disclosure, together with other selection information, will need to be satisfactory to the Company for employment to commence.

Benefits: We offer a great range of benefits including discounted holidays, fetal products and health and beauty treatments, subsidised bus passes and free use of the gym, pool and other village facilities.

For more information and an application pack, please telephone the Recruitment Hotline on 01768 893041 or email workopportunitiesowf@centerparcs.co.uk
Closing date: 17th March 2006 | www.centerparcs.co.uk



See more vacancies and register at

www.hertsdirect.org/jobs

Hertfordshire County Council

Seasonal Instructor

£14,985 - £16,864 pa plus fringe - fixed term 4 to 6 months

Located in the Lee Valley Countryside, Herts Young Mariner's Base specialises in activities for young people, but also offers courses to adults. Our facilities include an on-site lake for windsurfing, dinghy sailing, kayaking, and canoeing and a state-of-the-art climbing wall and caving complex.

A team player with a passion for sport, you will instruct individuals and groups in outdoor and adventure activities and support other staff in the delivery of activities. Ensuring facilities and equipment are safe and maintaining records of sessions will also be important features of the role.

We're particularly interested in hearing from individuals with national governing body coaching qualifications in canoeing, kayaking, dinghy sailing, windsurfing or climbing. Formal or informal experience of coaching or instructing young people will be essential.

An enhanced CRB check will be required.

For an informal discussion please phone Ron Hodgson or Stewart Creswell on 01992 628403.

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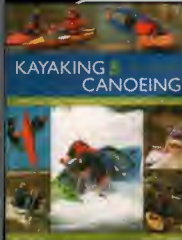
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It's easy... no categories, areas, searches, pay scales etc...

just scroll down the page and pick out the vacancies that interest you, then email THEM directly. keep it simple!



Kayaking & Canoeing for Beginners

A practical guide to paddling for novices

and intermediates

Author: Bill Mathos

Price: £8.99

A big easy to read and well laid out comprehensive introduction to kayaking and canoeing for those at the beginner and intermediate level.

Bill Mathos has spent nearly his entire life in kayaks and canoes and passes his wisdom on with clear, accessible text and how-to sequences.

He provides his expert instruction on the groundwork skills and techniques from getting into the boat to how to roll.

Bill also fully explains everything that is needed within paddling regarding clothing and equipment to choosing your boat.

It's all done with superb photography and illustrations and in an easy to read large size. An excellent book for those looking for an introduction to the world of paddling.

Yak 2006 brochure

Yak have launched their 2006 brochure and website

www.yak-paddling.com. Both are packed full with

exciting new products, guaranteed to wet even the most discerning paddlers palette.

From white water to surf kayaking, expert to entry level, the 2006 range has something for all paddling disciplines and competency levels, and includes some serious pieces of kit.

Combining Yak's attention to detail and with the inclusion of new improved lightweight breathable fabrics, more technical features and the latest in extreme ergonomic tailoring, the 2006 range must be one of their most innovative and technical so far.

To order your copy of the Yak brochure visit www.yak-paddling.com

All pumped up!



Ten minutes and it was done! From two pieces of flat rubber to a fully working, extremely strong roof rack and in less than another five minutes, it was back in its box! Apparently, the Americans and Australians have used this rugged design for their remote terrains for many years and at last someone has had the foresight to bring the idea to the UK.

There are no deserts in the UK, however, there are many reasons why you want to invest in this product. The pictured Mini is a great car, however, should you ever want to install a roof rack to make up for its limited space - you would have to pay BMW £600 for the privilege of drilling holes in the roof to install one and ruin its good looks.

Not so with the HandiRack which was ready for use in less than ten minutes (using the free pump supplied in the kit), the system is held in place using very strong straps that are threaded through the doors and under the roof. Another pair of straps holds the kayak in position just as

strongly as a regular roof rack. When you reach your destination, simply deflate the rack and pop it in the boot.

Another reason is fuel economy and noise. We have a RAV4 with a normal roof rack - however, if you go over 60 mph this introduces a strange humming noise as the wind struggles to get round the obstacle and that's not to mention the extra fuel you are burning with being less wind resistant. Of course you can remove it - but this takes time and storage of the rack itself and lots of bolts, screws etc.

The HandiRack comes in its own toaster sized carrying pouch, takes up to 80kg of weight and can be fitted to just about any two or four door car with a solid roof. To put that in some sort of perspective the HandiRack could easily transport two kayaks.

One quick tip though, before threading the straps through the doors on the underside of the roof - make sure you don't trap the sun flaps, other than that it is a doddle

HandiRack can be purchased online at just £49.99 plus p&p which means you don't have to re-mortgage your house to buy it. To learn about the technical specification or for more information, please visit their website: www.handirackuk.com



Surfing the shark

I came along to help Peter (the editor) out, as he had to review the Dag Shark but faced a problem: he couldn't fit in it comfortably! And neither could another reviewer – so both stood round kicking their heels. Their problem was their size – both over six foot and over 80 kilos in weight, they needed someone a little more petite – me. At 5'8" and only 60 kilos, it was perfect for me.

The molded seat and thigh braces are not adjustable, so be sure you actually sit in one and try it before buying. The foot room was also a restrictive for anything over size 10.

The Shark is an excellent confidence booster for beginners in big water and surf because of the stability and forgiving nature of the design. It is fast with enough bow volume to punch through almost anything and is very easy to roll. It has no edges for good carving and stern squirts well – even if sometimes it can be a little inadvertent. It has a flat tail which for most of the time reacts in a soft manner so you are not forever fighting the tail, which is always off-putting for beginners.

On the negative side, the hull is hard if not impossible to spin and because of the length the manoeuvrability suffers. However, that's all!



The boat comes with the usual features of adjustable footrests, front and back grab handles and the backrest is adjustable too, though it is a little low and perhaps there could have been a little padding on the seat and thigh braces for comfort.

However, on the other hand, it has to be said that this boat has a bargain price of £399.

I would recommend this boat to people who want to learn about whitewater kayaking, river running and surfing from a forgiving and easy to paddle platform. It responds to your moves and anyone will become a better paddler because of it. Try one and you will always keep one around.



PADDLE THIS

Elephant Wear Mammoth spraydeck

In the last couple of months I've been using the impressive Mammoth spraydeck from Elephant Wear on my travels to some of the biggest waves in Canada and Uganda. A new company, they've got their decks right from the word go. From the distinctive colours to the technical tweaks, this deck has it all.

The colours are the first thing you'll notice about the Mammoth, subtle but one to stand out from the crowd. It is in using the deck that you notice the little differences come to the fore. The Mammoth has an extra 'Aquaband', an inch of sticky neoprene at the top of the waist tube, which is sewn slightly conical. It makes all the difference, keeping the skirt up and the water out. It does make pulling the deck on a fraction harder as it rides higher up your torso (where it's harder to reach) but it still fits easily inside the double tubes of the cags I tried (which normally reach the armpits). The extra grip is perfect for hot summer cagless days or for sessions in the swimming pool.

This beast of a deck is made from heavy duty neoprene with Kevlar reinforcement which covers the entire front section of the cockpit rim; the deck is sewn, glued and taped in all the right places and it's been really robust. The

great thing for me is the way the deck is cut; it always goes on with a snap, reassuring me that I'm going to stay dry for my session.

Reviewed by Adam Norfolk

Adam Norfolk is both a member of the GB freestyle squad and the GB white water rafting team. Notably he earned 9th place at the 2005 North American Freestyle Championships at the Garberator Wave on the river Ottawa, whilst on his recent travels.

Elephant Wear spraydecks, thermals and accessories are available from all good kayak shops, visit www.elephantwear.co.uk



Technical

- Drain plug
 - Fix-thighs
 - Toe-clips sporting river
 - Front and rear handles
 - Reinforcement of front point
- | | | |
|---------|-------------|------------|
| Length | 8'9" | (2,70m) |
| Width | 23.5" | (0,60m) |
| Paddler | Up to 200lb | (90kg) |
| Weight | 37lbs | (17 kilos) |
| Price: | £399.00 | |
- www.acoloca.com/fbs

Events

PSM Outdoors Canoe and Kayak show

Sunday 14th May

Sunday 16th July

Display of canoes, kayaks and accessories with demonstration models from Pyranha, Dagger, Perception, Liquid Logic, Mobile Adventure, Yak and Palm to try on the River Wye.

The show is held at the Scout hut and grounds, Glasbury on Wye. For further information call 01497 820022 or see

www.psmoutdoors.co.uk

BCU Polo Club Championships

**Hatfield Water Park near
Doncaster 27/28 May**

Following the successful completion of the recent BCU National Canoe Polo Championships at the London Boat Show, the qualifying round for these teams, the Club Championships, attracts teams from all over the country to compete at this prestigious event.

The format is going to be similar to last year running from 9am Saturday with the finals taking place on Sunday at around 3pm.

Camping and refreshments will be available on site for competitors and supporters.

Full details and entry forms available shortly on www.canoepolo.org.uk

Cumbria canoeists

Programme of talks 2006

Mon 13th Feb Keswick "Nahanni - river of gold"

Tues 14th Feb Kendal "River of dreams"

Sue Hornby

A well know personality and popular speaker, Suzy has represented Britain in several canoeing disciplines and has also paddled down many of the world's great rivers. Tonight she recounts a recent 17 day self-supported open canoe trip down the Nahanni river – a Canadian National Park and World Heritage Site. Roaring rapids, spectacular canyons, the magnificent Virginia Falls (three times the height of Niagara), the beauty of wilderness camping, and of course those friendly, cuddly bears...

Mon 13th Mar Keswick (t.b.c) "Bashing the Becks"

Tues 14th Mar Kendal

Stuart Miller

Keswick Mountain Guide and author of 'White Water Lake District' Stuart Miller became involved in exploring the Lake District becks as a wet weather alternative to rock climbing.

Join Stuart on a trip into this bizarre world of throwing oneself down rocky gullies surrounded by a lump of plastic and how this can lead to travel around the world to visit remote and beautiful wilderness areas.

Keswick talks are on Monday evenings at the Labour Club Hall, central Keswick opposite the Pencil Museum.

Bar open 7.30pm, talk at 8.00pm

Admission on the door £5.00, students £2.50.

Tel 017687 73686 for more information.

Kendal talks are on Tuesday evenings at the Brewery Arts Centre, central Kendal. Talk at 8.00pm. Café and bars open before and after. Tickets £5.00, students £2.50.

Information 01539 795090, www.breweryarts.co.uk

All Profits go to Cumbria Canoeists funds that support access and conservation on local rivers and training of voluntary coaches. Inspiring talks by some of the top personalities in the international paddling world.

www.cumbriacanoists.org.uk

BCU 'Silly Hat' Medway tour

Yalding-Teston-Yalding-sluice weir-

Yalding (10.4 Miles), Sunday 30th April

Celebrate Spring once again with a casual paddle on the Medway in countryside of outstanding natural beauty.

Just to get the event into the right mood we would like all participants to wear a hat... The sillier the better!

Arrangements

Travel to Yalding (Grid Ref 690498) where you can either park on the road just to the north of the bridge or pay for parking in the field just to the south of the bridge.

We will meet at Yalding Automatic Sluices (by The Anchor pub) at 10.15am for a 10.30am start. The aim is to paddle a figure of eight course in four stages. All grades of paddler are welcome.

The tour format has been chosen to provide you with options on distance (with the idea that it will allow juniors to join in) and to avoid shuffling cars (with the exception of the Stage 1 only option).

There will be an entry charge (on the day) of £2.00 per BCU member on production of a current BCU membership card and £4.00 for all other paddlers which provides third party liability insurance up to £2m for the duration of the event.

At the time of writing, it is assumed that the Medway Licence arrangement will still be in place. Non BCU members can obtain Medway River licences prior to the event from The Environment Agency (Tel. 01732 875587). **For further information please contact Norman Brooks on Tel. No. 01634 241350. E-mail: norman.brooks@delphi.com**

Wooden Spoon

19th May

2006 signals the 10th anniversary of the Ford Ranger

Great Lakeland Challenge, which is organised by Wooden Spoon – the charity of British and Irish rugby – and has raised in excess of £1 million for underprivileged children and young adults.

Ford Motor Company is once again main sponsor of the event and will provide Ranger, Galaxy and Mondeo vehicles for use by the competitors and marshals. Up to 40 teams of four – three athletes and a support driver – are expected to head to the Lake District for this milestone event on May 19.

Teams canoe the length of Lake Windermere (10.5 miles) and then cycle 26.5miles over the Hard Knott and Wrynose Pass – involving 1,200 ft climbs at gradients of 1:3 – before climbing England's tallest mountain, Scafell Pike (3,208 ft). And they will endeavour to do all this inside 12 hours!

Last year the 33 teams that took part in the Ford Ranger Great Lakeland Challenge generated a record £183,466. Wooden Spoon uses the money to fund capital initiatives that benefit physically, mentally and socially disadvantaged children and young people and is currently supporting 55 projects throughout the UK and Ireland.

Teams are required to raise a minimum of £4,400. In addition to having the use of a Ford vehicle for the duration of the event, they are supplied with Challenge clothing, a canoe, paddles and buoyancy aids and enjoy two nights accommodation, breakfast and a prize-giving dinner/celebration at the Langdale Hotel and Country Club. Teams also receive advice on how to generate sponsorship funds and publicise their exploits within their own local communities.

During a special training weekend held in the Lake District in April, teams get an opportunity to check their progress and practice some of the elements. They also receive canoeing training, health, nutrition and fitness advice and map and compass tuition.

Call 01889 582889 or email: challenge@eventsunlimited.co.uk for an information pack and entry form.

PADDLE THIS

Freestyle calendar for 2006

Team Training	Feb 18/19	HPP
National Student Rodeo	March 10-12	HPP
Team Training	March 18/19	HPP
Outdoor Show/Indoor Freestyle Champs	March 17-19	NEC
Hurley Rodeo	March 25/26	Hurley
Team Training	April 15/16	HPP
Team Training	May 13/14	HPP
Team Training	June 17/18	HPP
Team Training	June 24/25	HPP
European Champs/Kayak Festival	June 26-30 July 1/2	HPP
World Cup Ottawa	Sept 1-3	Ottawa
World Cup Blacks N.Y.	Sept 7-9	New York State
World Cup Rock Island	Sept 14-16	Rock Island Tennessee
British Freestyle Champs	Oct 7/8	HPP

Please make sure that all these dates are in your diaries.

P.S. this is kayaking & for that reason some of these dates could change at short notice, so please keep your eyes on all of the websites.

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kayaks

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... playtime's
not!



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52 PROJECT

Now available,
Project 45 and 60 coming soon...

Bryan Kirk test paddling Project 52, Buena Vista River, Colorado

v. pro·ject (prə-jēkt) to thrust upward and outward

n. proj·ect (prŏjēkt) an undertaking requiring concerted effort



Brian Jennings, Salida, CO



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