

# Canoe

FOCUS

## Suggested paddles Access pull-out

Weekend scorcher on the Severn  
Sea kayaking the Small Isles and...

Uist and Skye

Open canoe sailing on the Ouse

Boating and burritos in  
**Mexico**

April 2006 | No. 160 | £2.00



**Paddler's Gear:**  
News and reviews of  
new kit from books to  
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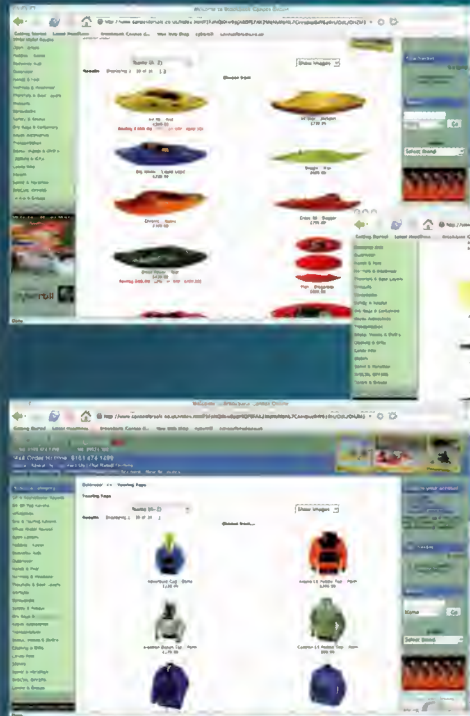


**BCU photo comp:**  
The first winners and a  
selection of entries from  
February and March



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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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## THANKS

**We would like to thank the following for their articles and photographs:**

Mark Anderson, Terry Best, Anne Hounslow, Ian Thomas, Curly Barker, Agnello Guaracino, Glenn Summerbell, John Andrews, Alisa Jackson, Lawrence Chapman, Judy Cockwell, Marc and Emma Musgrove, Robert Yeowell, Kevin East, Alastair Rose, Bart Pauwels, Graham Mulholland, Fiona Jarvis, Richard Claridge, Ruth Holdway, Chloe Nelson-Lawrie, Tamsin Phipps, Sue Hornby and Mike Devlin.

**Front cover photo:** Emma Musgrove on the Micos Slide

**Photo:** Marc Musgrove

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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 it's agents cannot be held liable or responsible for loss or damage, although every care and effort is taken to safeguard material.

Next Copy date is the **1st MAY 2006**. Material arriving after this date cannot be included in the **JUNE 2006** issue. Canoe Focus encourages contributions of any nature but reserves the right to edit and condense to fill the space available and unless otherwise stated the publishers assume no responsibility for the return of unsolicited manuscripts, artwork or photographs. Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the British Canoe Union, its committees or members. The printing of an advertisement in Canoe Focus does not necessarily mean that the British Canoe Union endorse the company, item or service advertised. All material in Canoe Focus is strictly copyright and all rights are reserved. Reproduction without prior permission from the editor is forbidden.





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CHAMPIONSHIPS**

August 24th –  
27th 2006



Canoe Slalom White Water Course  
National Water Sports Centre, Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham





# Comment

by Paul Owen, Chief Executive

## Welcome to the April issue of Canoe Focus

The days are longer and spring is here, which for some makes paddling more enjoyable. Some paddle throughout the year regardless of the conditions and others will be preparing as the competition season kicks off. Whether you enjoy paddling as a pastime, recreation, competitive sport or in a coaching capacity there is certainly plenty to look forward to.

**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.

A selection of the entries is on display in Canoe Focus on page 42 and on the BCU website (Follow links: About Us, 70th Anniversary).

- There are two categories; adults and those under the age of 18.
- Starting from February, a winner from each category will win £25 of prize vouchers.
- The competition runs until 31 December 2006 and the overall winner from each category will win the top prize - a digital camera worth £150!

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.

For an opportunity to win get clicking now!

## Annual General Meeting

The BCU's annual general meeting was held on 11th March, 2006 at Westminster City Hall, London. It was good to see members attend and contribute.

It was decided by vote that EGMs (Extraordinary General Meetings) shall be convened on the written request of not less than 1% of the full individual members entitled to vote and that the EGM would be held at least 40 days after the request.

The minutes of the AGM are on the BCU website for all to view (About Us, Governance, BCU AGM).

## The International Canoe Exhibition

17-19th March, 2006  
The International Canoe Exhibition was held at the NEC between 17th and 19th March, 2006. Anna Hemmings launched a new BCU Supporter Membership which enables supporters of canoeing to contribute part of the membership fee to the following key areas including; Rivers Access Campaign, Young People's Programme and Supporting Volunteers.

## Channel 4 TV celebrities at Nottingham

Paddling launched programme one of the Channel 4 programme 'The Games' live on Friday 17th at Holme Pierrepont Nottingham. Over 1,500 spectators watched a demonstration put on by the local canoe club and by freestyle. Six celebrity women had been training over three months with top World Class Programmes coach Shaun Pearce to learn slalom and then compete against each other in a live 'final' competition.

## Rivers Access Campaign

Early Day Motion 957 - Rivers Access for Non-Powered Craft

With 116 signatures has your MP signed? If your MP has signed the amendments put forward by Martin Salter MP, have you written to him/her to express your concerns over voluntary access agreements? Despite us trying hard over the last 40 plus years to make them work, they are not an acceptable way forward, primary legislation is.

The campaign continues sustained media coverage since the February

Canoe Focus; national radio stations and regional BBC television are still making enquiries. There was also a report on the BBC2 Daily Politics Show. More details on the campaign are in this issue of Canoe Focus and also at [www.riversaccess.org.uk](http://www.riversaccess.org.uk)

## 'Girl Power' Project

This is a BCU/Canoe England Young People's Programme initiative designed to make canoeing more attractive to girls aged eight to 15 years old. Currently, only one in five BCU members are female and there are no women on the BCU board (see page 12).

The project recognises the importance of getting girls into sport from a young age and providing an environment where they stay in the sport. We can only make the sport more inclusive with the help of clubs, coaches centres and volunteers, so if you have any comments or want to learn more contact Heather Corrie:

[HethCorrie@aol.com](mailto:HethCorrie@aol.com) / [youth@bcu.org.uk](mailto:youth@bcu.org.uk)

## Key competitive event dates

- Devises to Westminster International Canoe Race 14-17th April
- Freestyle European Championships, Nottingham, 26th June-2nd July
- Youthfest, Dorney Lake, Berkshire, 9th July
- Under 23 and Junior European Slalom Championships, Nottingham, 25-27th August

## Cotswold additional discount periods

Members currently receive 15% discount on Cotswold products.

Between the following dates, members can receive an additional 5% discount, so 20% in total:

- Thursday 18th - Sunday 21st May
- Thursday 17th - Sunday 20th Aug
- Thursday 23rd - Sunday 26th Nov

For more details on shops near you and the products available visit:

[www.cotswoldoutdoor.com](http://www.cotswoldoutdoor.com)

Happy Paddling!

## Website

We are continuing to concentrate on improving the new website's functionality. In order to help us make the website more user friendly, we would like to hear from you, just email:

[chloe@bcu.org.uk](mailto:chloe@bcu.org.uk)

**Canoe England Members' Area**  
The Canoe England member's area is where members can:

- Renew 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](http://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'.

## IT/email problems

Some members have been experiencing problems whilst renewing their membership on-line. We acknowledge that it has been very frustrating for some members and it has also been frustrating for us not being able to provide the service our members expect.

An intermittent fault on the ADSL line, has caused internet connection problems. In the meantime we are doing all we can to provide alternative provisions whilst BT continue to fix the line (they have had problems identifying the cause).

We are putting in additional lines and upgrading our internet provision in order to give the system more stability.

We are pleased however that, over 600 members have renewed their membership on-line and 800 have joined on-line in the last three months.

If you have tried to renew your membership in the past and received an error message, you may need to clear your temporary internet files on your computer and try again.

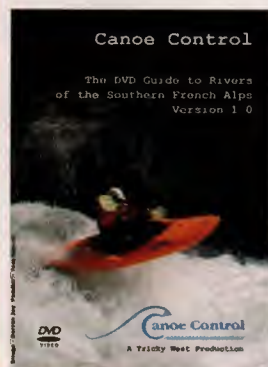
We apologise to those members who have been affected.



## A DVD first

This DVD is unique as it is the first river guide in a DVD format. The guide aims to bring to your living room the lure and majesty of the rivers in one of the world's most popular paddling destinations - the Southern French Alps. A beautiful mountain landscape with a warm Mediterranean climate. Good food, good wine, good beer and an incredible variety of rivers.

Fifteen years of guiding and coaching in this area has given Canoe Control the knowledge needed to produce this guide. The DVD can be bought on line, just go onto [canoecontrol.com](http://canoecontrol.com) for more info.



## Water professionals choose Teva

Teva is sponsoring the English Surf Kayaking team including Peter Blenkinsop and Chris Harvey who will participate in the surf kayak world final in Scotland later this year. Renee Godfrey will also benefit from Teva's range of high performance footwear.

The on-going sponsorship of the GB rafting team will continue for 2006 following the team's performance at the recent IRF World Rafting Championships in Ecuador.

Teva will also be involved in some high profile events during 2006 including Liquid Life, The Peak UK Whitewater Challenge, which will kick off at The Outdoor Show in March, as well as The Big Boat Bonanza.

[www.teva.co.uk](http://www.teva.co.uk)

## PADDLE THIS

### If I can do it, so could you...

**How does a woman in her seventies inspire girls to take up canoeing?**

Just by showing she can still take part, even in 10K races, with participants of all ages. It never occurred to me, a housewife with young children, to do watersports. How did I get into it then? I was the leader of a Girl Guide unit and the girls heard that the scouts were canoeing and wanted to do the same. This was my challenge - I had to learn to canoe before the girls could take part.

I signed up for a weekend's canoeing course and on the second day we had to paddle downstream for about a mile but much to my embarrassment I had to be towed back as I didn't have the strength to paddle against the current.

A short while later I went on a guider's canoeing course for beginners and was amazed when the instructor paddled over to me and said, "You've done this before - I can tell. You aren't a complete beginner!"

Time passed and two of my guides showed great promise as racing canoeists and in their first race won second prize. But it didn't occur to me to take up racing myself.

I carried on canoeing through my fifties mostly in slalom boats and it wasn't till my sixties when I retired from work that I took up marathon racing.

My first stab at the DW happened because of a joke remark in a club newsletter that Jean and Gill were seen to be practising for the DW. When we read it we looked at each other and said, "We'll show them we really can do it". Gill was a novice at the time and I knew very little about racing but with the help of our families we quickly learnt and were delighted to reach the finish at Westminster and receive a medal each, even if it took us nearly 50 hours - as we had a sleep at Henley and again at Teddington. The tideway was glorious very early on a sunny morning with no moving traffic apart from a few canoeists.

## Canoeing cover



Jane Messenger (of the Red Herrings Canoe Club) paddled the length of the non tidal river Thames (147 miles) as part of the safety cover in an open canoe, under the auspices of the Herts Canoe Lifeguards, for that Guinness record breaking intrepid Andy Nation; who was swimming on behalf of the Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow trust.

Andy was advised to end at Teddington lock after only 147 miles - he was only just getting the hang of it by then!

As Andy swam breathing to his right whilst doing the front crawl meant he was going to be swimming in what amounted to be in the fast lane of the 'highway'. His method was to have a pool swimming lane rope with orange then white and then orange balls again having eye contact with the white balls.

Therefore the only safe way was for the front person to face back facing the swimmer thereby having a 360 degree lookout for what I might call bandits (other craft) who got that bit too near for comfort.

Credit must be made to the sterling work of the lock keepers who worked with a smile ignoring the attitudes of some.

[www.thameswim.org](http://www.thameswim.org) - Andy Nation's website where the full story can be told and where one may still donate to this admiral charity currently at £19,000!

**Jane and Dave Messenger**



Two years later Gill did it again and paddled straight through the night and that spurred me on to have another go. At 67 years old I paddled straight through the night with my partner and we finished 50th out of 150 boats in less than 27 hours. We were also awarded the trophy for the oldest crew to finish that year! For me this is my greatest personal achievement but it hasn't stopped here.

My club encouraged me to enter the World Cup canoe marathon race at Stockton-on-Tees. I entered the 65+ category - at the age of 70 - but eventually found myself in the 45+ race, as there were no other women in my age range. The other participants asked how long I thought I would take so I returned the question. When they said three hours, I said I would do the same. The 22 km race took me 2 hours 25 minutes and I was third. So I am now the proud owner of a bronze World Cup medal, which must be quite rare in this country. Again I was surprised when two local newspapers rang to take a photo as I hadn't mentioned it to anyone but obviously someone had!

Since then I've had to overcome breast cancer but managed a 4-mile race just 6 months after my operation. Now here I am at the age of 75, still racing but slightly slower than in my 60's.

So don't delay, take up canoeing today. Don't give up at the first setback and remember: you are never too old to take part.

## Finnish archipelago

Gather your friends and spend your holiday weeks paddling in Finland. Spend your extra business day seeing the country from the sea. Paddlingsfabriken (the Kayaking Factory) operates in a unique archipelago 100km west from Helsinki.

Small protected islands, shallow reedy bays, open sea and smooth granite cliffs are still all within reach with a few paddle strokes. Paddlingsfabriken offers guided tours in English with a local kayaking coach. 300 visitors from more than ten countries have been customers for tours lasting from two hours up to several weeks. Scandinavian scenery is at its best here whatever the season: ice-breaking in January, bird-watching in April, midnight-canoeing in July, and leaf-hunting in October.

Contact: Jöns Aschan, e-mail: [info@paddlingsfabriken.fi](mailto:info@paddlingsfabriken.fi)  
Telephone: +358 400 411992, [www.paddlingsfabriken.fi](http://www.paddlingsfabriken.fi)







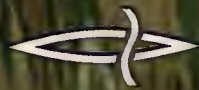
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Model	Length	Width	Weight	Volume	Wt range	Spraydeck
Charleston 14.0	4.29 m	0.63 m	23 kg	31/84 L	130 kg max	R6
Charleston 15.0	4.57 m	0.66 m	26 kg	34/92 L	145 kg max	R5





## British Isles circumnavigation

Sea kayaker, Steve Williams set off on 2nd April from Hunstanton, Norfolk to circumnavigate the British Isles.

Steve, a 44-year-old level 4 sea-kayaking coach, is raising funds by means of sponsorship for the BBC Children in Need Appeal and has gained considerable support not least by Rockpool Kayaks who are providing a kayak for the trip and other sponsors are providing technical equipment. All of this can be seen on Steve's website [www.paddlingforpudsey.co.uk](http://www.paddlingforpudsey.co.uk), as well as an update as to his progress during the trip. See [www.justgiving.com/paddling4pudsey](http://www.justgiving.com/paddling4pudsey) for donations or by sending a cheque made payable to 'Children in Need' to 40 Ansell road, Frimley, Surrey GU16 8DH. Please ensure that you giftaid your cheque or donation to ensure that extra 28p/E is given to the charity.

## PADDLE THIS

### Didn't they have a lovely time?

For the last three years, a canoe session has been run for the visiting youngsters from Chernobyl in Belarus visiting the Dorset area for a month. Their month here is said to increase their life expectancy after breathing our clean air and eating good quality food, which helps to build up their immune system.

This year's session for 'The Children of Chernobyl' was eagerly anticipated by all involved. The youngsters arrived and after being kitted out we were all ready to get on the water in Portland Harbour. We were lucky to have Emma Whitcombe and Georgie helping again this year, and with



the expertise of Will Lawrence, the youngsters were in the best possible hands. Even with the language barrier we soon picked up those who were keen to try anything from standing up in their boats to running across them! Then there was the young girl, who being unsure of the sea, was towed around for most of the session but who we think enjoyed it (she had a huge smile on her face).

The session was completed with the youngsters being rolled, capsized and finally sunk in their boats.

I would like to thank the volunteers, Emma, Georgie and Will for their effort and enthusiasm throughout the session, the staff from W.O.E.C. who contributed towards the cost of the session and to Yak Crewsaver who again

contributed the beanie hats which each of the youngsters received which will come in very handy for their climate back in Belarus.

I hope to run the session again this year as the children do seem to benefit from there new experience of kayaking. If anyone would like to contribute to the cost of the canoe session or directly to the charity please contact me Nobby Cranny 01305 826137 or [nobbycranny@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:nobbycranny@tiscali.co.uk)

## Perception Acadia Scout



composite sea kayaks which will be added to Plas y Brenin's already impressive demonstration fleet. The centre's extensive and diverse demo fleet allows staff and clients at the Brenin to try out boats, which in some cases may have not even reached the market place yet, experiencing the effects of ground breaking new design features and improvements. For more information on the available courses see [www.pyb.co.uk](http://www.pyb.co.uk) and for details on the kayaks visit [www.phseakayaks.com](http://www.phseakayaks.com)

## Kendal to London

Dan and David Bloor are to paddle the 380 miles of the English canal system to raise money for Wateraid. They aim to do it in two weeks.

For more information see: <http://paddleaid.mysite.wanadoo-members.co.uk/> and donations can be made at [www.justgiving.com/PaddleAid](http://www.justgiving.com/PaddleAid) They are looking to see if any manufacturers want any gear testing and would like to donate to the, especially touring kayaks.

Perception Kayaks have introduced a recreational tourer for kids! The growing number of families taking up paddling means that children are looking for the same performance as their parents.

The Acadia Scout brings touring performance and all day comfort to children from seven to 13 years old.

- Features a lower cockpit and freeboard to bring the paddler closer to the water with improved vision and less likelihood of banged knuckles.
- Ergonomically designed to fit a child's body.
- Special light weight construction for easier control on and off the water.
- A low price that will please parents.

For more information on the Perception Kayaks range please call them on 01825 765891 or email [sales@perception.co.uk](mailto:sales@perception.co.uk)

## Kayak shop opens in Devon

Totnes Kayaks has recently opened in Totnes, Devon. Selling a wide range of products from Dag, Drakkar, Bliss-Stick, Lendal, Reed/Chill Cheater, Teva and Peak.

They are one of the first shops in the country to stock Ty Warp paddles, the funky new carbon kevlar blades from Germany. They are also UK importers of Clear Blue Hawaii, stocking the Napali, a totally clear folding sea kayak and the Molokini- a see through open canoe. Tom Morris, proprietor, said "I am trying to stock products that are less well known in the west country to give customers a wider choice." Tom also runs a free pool session to introduce new people to the world of kayaking in a warm and safe environment, and has demo boats for more experienced paddlers.

Totnes Kayaks is open Tuesday-Sunday 10am-6pm. 01803 864300, email: [mail@totneskayaks.co.uk](mailto:mail@totneskayaks.co.uk) or go to [www.totneskayaks.co.uk](http://www.totneskayaks.co.uk)

## PYB gets new 2006 P&H fleet

For many years Plas y Brenin's Canoesport department has worked hand in hand with custom British sea kayak manufacture P&H in a mutual partnership that allows Plas y Brenin to ensure its students use top of the range, well maintained, modern boats whilst at the same time providing P&H with valuable feedback.

The fleet of 20 new roto-moulded P&H 'new style' Capellas and Skye's were accompanied by four specialist



Bob Campbell from P&H Sea Kayaks and Loel Collins, head of Plas y Brenin's Canoesport Department unloading the fleet.





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EURO PATENT PENDING



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## New Foundation Degree

Cheshire-based college Reaseheath is at the forefront of Adventure Sports in the UK and is pleased to announce that former student and top British kayaker, James Bebbington, will be working with them to promote their Adventure Sports courses, especially their new Foundation Degree. James will be attending numerous events with the College including helping out on their stand at the NEC so feel free to ask him about Reaseheath and he'll be happy to help.

James says: "I went to Reaseheath back in 2004 and definitely made the right choice, I would recommend it to anyone interested in doing something a little different to the norm. I did the two year National Diploma in Adventure Sports and found it to be great fun as well as being a really valuable experience. I picked up numerous NGB qualifications, learnt a lot about how the industry works and benefited from many exciting trips away - mountaineering, kayak surfing, climbing - all sorts. Really worthwhile, I would recommend it to anyone who aspires to a life (and work) of adventure"

## Introduction to paddling in the Himalayas

19th October - 4th November

Adventure Whitewater is offering an excellent opportunity to improve your kayaking skills... all in an exotic location, with sunshine and warm water. The great kayaking on the beautiful Seti river, options to try superb rafting on the Bhote Kosi, charming cultural encounters and the range of activities make this a truly inspirational holiday. Do join them on one of their most successful paddling holidays that has yet to disappoint. "I would recommend it to anyone whether you're a novice or experienced paddler. It was great fun!"

For further information please do check out their web site [www.adventure-whitewater.com](http://www.adventure-whitewater.com) or contact them by e-mail [info@adventure-whitewater.com](mailto:info@adventure-whitewater.com) Telephone: 01992 712006

## PADDLE THIS

### Paddle round the pier

The worlds' biggest watersports raffle, 'The Maui Jim Paddle Round the Pier' is to take place in Brighton on Sunday July 2nd. To join in the fun simply raise some sponsorship money - every £20 raised and handed in on the day gets a prize ticket: £20 = 1 ticket, £40 = 2 tickets etc, the more you raise the better your chances! With literally hundreds of prizes on offer from canoes, surf-skis, surfboards, wetsuits etc, everybody stands to be a winner.

With sponsorship direct from Hawaii, premier sunglass manufacturer Maui Jim brings with it the true aloha spirit, essential to the PRTP. The charity benefactors for the 2006 Paddle Round The Pier will be the RNLI, Surf-Aid International and the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Sick Children's - Rocking Horse Appeal. The opportunity to present a demand for clean seas/rivers will also be taken with possibly the biggest demonstration of support in the area ever witnessed.

Within the huge marquee will be live bands, the prize draw, and for the first time a vintage surfboard auction. All this along with exhibition stalls, BBQ and lots of Maui Jim give-aways throughout the day, plus there will be free CPR lessons to those interested (something that we all should know). The main tent will also be bordered by a separate children's marquee with face painting and a children's entertainer etc and the Maui Jim hospitality tent.

As in the past, the mass Paddle is fun for all watersports enthusiasts and is not a race. Details for the Maui Jim Paddle Round the Pier, the Perception Kayaks Pier Challenge, the Pier to Pier Race, The vintage surfboard auction and all other events on the day can be found on our website up [www.paddleroundthepier.com](http://www.paddleroundthepier.com) - or call event organiser Dave 'sandals' Samuel on 07876 773923. Email: [home@sandalsurf.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:home@sandalsurf.fsnet.co.uk)



## OBITUARIES

### Ron Canning



Ron Canning must have been one of the oldest active paddlers in the UK. In anything like normal weather he was out with friends from the Worcester Club twice a

week, paddling a five-mile trip at a steady pace and maintaining a conversation on whatever topic his mates chose to raise - motorbikes, aircraft: he flew Blenheims and Ansons for Coastal Command - or the doings of his three daughters and their progeny. He was a good listener too, and a reader with wide-ranging interests.

He was introduced to canoeing by Dick Waterhouse and was well known in coaching and marathon circles when living in Kent; sailed a Klepper Aeriuss; set a record for circumnavigating the Isle of Thanet; when he wasn't paddling he earned a reasonable living as a driving test examiner.

Ron was out with his usual group on the 18th January 2006. It was a fine warm day, and he took his slalom boat up to Bever and back without any problems. It was his first trip for several weeks; the cold weather had been getting to his lungs and hadn't wanted to risk it. He gave it a miss the next Wednesday, for that reason. On Thursday 26th, at about 3pm, he suffered a severe heart attack. He was immediately taken to intensive care and died after about 24 hours unconsciousness. His wife Pam was with him shortly after he collapsed, and two of his daughters joined her, with the third coming from Australia.

Ron is pictured on the Severn when in flood, February 2005. He had his 90th birthday a few months later.

Robin Powell

### Sarah Ball



It was of great sadness to hear of the death of Sarah Ball on the 22nd January. Sarah died in Italy doing what she loved, being in the outdoors with friends. Sarah had through a short

window of time given me an insight into her passion for paddling and made me jealous of it. Whether chasing sea kayaks up an estuary or open boating on Windermere, to Sarah paddling and the outdoors was her life.

"I was fortunate to consider Sarah not only a work colleague but a friend and with her at the start on her journey. Developing canoeing and spending many happy occasions in both kayak's and canoe's with Sarah on and in the water. When Sarah left Low Mill early summer 2005 she was missed as a colleague. She always threw herself into every project giving it her full enthusiasm."

Terry Hailwood

Her real passion for Canoe developed from her first canoe symposium in 2002 in the Lakes and she attended every one since. On all our adventures we where swept along by Sarah's passion, from biking round Grizedale to boating on the Tay. Her passion for introducing people to the outdoors brought her to the English Symposium in 2005 with a cavalcade of friends ready to be introduced to canoeing.

Sarah leaves behind a huge group of paddling friends from Brathay and throughout the Lakes, Yorkshire at Low Mill Outdoor Centre and Swaledale Outdoor Club and throughout the UK. She will be sorely missed in our lives. Our thoughts are with her family and her partner Haydon. Gareth Field, Terry Hailwood and Brathay Tech Team





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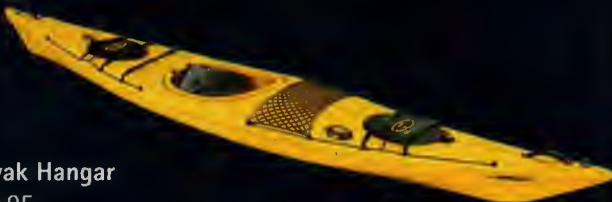


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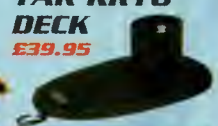
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## Sea kayaking in Cornwall

Last August The Manor House Activity and Development Centre near Padstow in North Cornwall opened its doors to BCU members and their families for a great week of kayaking and outdoor activities. This year they have partnered up with Skalybax Sea Kayak Adventures to offer sea kayaking tuition and short expeditions around the Cornish coast addition to the surf, general kayaking and other outdoor activities offered last year.

Groups, individuals and families will be accommodated in The Manor House and will have the opportunity of enjoying individualised activity programs. The Manor House provides bespoke courses and holidays for all ages and group sizes; guests will have the choice of participating in outdoor activities like sea cliff climbing, surfing, cycling, in addition to the sea and surf kayaking.

Skalybax, an expedition centre specialising in sea kayak tuition, expedition training, and sea kayak sales, is based near Falmouth and offers sea kayaking expeditions, both in British and foreign waters throughout the year.

Activity programs will be confirmed in advance of the trip and may include different activities for different members of the family or group. Full board accommodation is offered at a discounted rate for BCU members, their friends and families throughout August. Spaces are expected to be limited, so if you are interested you would be advised to contact Lesley, Steve or Jeff as soon as possible.

For information please call Lesley or Steve at The Manor House on 01841 540346  
[www.manoractivitycentre.co.uk](http://www.manoractivitycentre.co.uk)  
 or Jeff Allen from Skalybax on 01326 375963

[www.seakayakingcornwall.co.uk](http://www.seakayakingcornwall.co.uk)



## PADDLE THIS

# 'Girl Power' project



**Exciting action images, encouraging self confidence in sporting ability and involving groups of girls – this is what the 'Girl Power' project revealed as the key ingredients to get girls involved in sport.**

The project, which is a BCU Young People's Programme initiative (Canoe England), is designed to make canoeing more attractive to girls aged eight to 15 years old.

**STAGE ONE**, now completed – identified what made girls of this age interested in canoeing. One of the key findings was that a critical mass of girls in a group/club makes it more likely that girls remain in the sport. The next steps are Stage two and three and this is where we need your feedback.

**STAGE TWO** – In order to tackle this, 'Girl Power' plans to help eight to ten canoeing centres/clubs attract groups of similar aged girls. The design and production of a brand and tool kit to help interest girls in canoeing courses is underway and will be available early this summer.

**STAGE THREE** – Continued development of the research process to ensure girls ideas are incorporated into canoeing through the 'Girl Power' project.

### Did you know?

- Only one in five BCU members are female.
- There is only one woman employed as a performance coach in the BCU.
- There are no women on the BCU board.

### Supporting Research

In a longitudinal analysis of adolescent girls', socialising agents which was defined as participation of significant others and encouragement and satisfaction with sport ability were the most influential factors in participation in physical activity. This has been confirmed in small surveys and discussions with girls, coaches and club organisers in canoeing. And is also in line with 'listening to tomorrow's athlete' Norwich Union survey which found one in five secondary school girls say "my friends don't do sport, so I don't either". A recent study, 'Refining measures of

adventure recreation involvement', reported that women are less likely to continue involvement in kayaking than men.

"We created the GirlPower project recognising the importance of getting girls into sport from a young age - and also wanting to provide clubs and centres with the information to provide the best environment and coaching to encourage and develop female paddlers. We are grateful to DCMS and Sport England for helping us to fund the project and I am really excited that with Heather's work and expertise we will soon bring the project to reality"

**Sue Hornby – BCU Head of Young People's Programme (Canoe England)**



### The Future

The 'Girl Power' project aims to provide an avenue for girls to effect change in canoeing. Trends, fashion and girls' priorities change, to attract and keep young people in paddle sport their voice is essential. We want young people to own this project, via a virtual community or space, we therefore intend to apply for funding or obtain sponsorship to establish web space for this project. If anybody can offer help please get in touch.



A similar project in sprint canoeing in Australia concluded that 'clubs need to be more involved'. The project will only be successful if everyone who is involved in canoeing gets involved from; canoe clubs, centres, coaches, volunteers and of course all you girls!

Your experience counts so why not contribute, we would love to hear your comments. You can keep updated with the project by reading future editions of Canoe Focus.

**Email or phone me, Heather Corrie or the BCU Young People's Programme (Canoe England) at [HethCorrie@aol.com](mailto:HethCorrie@aol.com) or BCU Young People's Programme (Canoe England) [youth@bcu.org.uk](mailto:youth@bcu.org.uk). Tel 0115 982 4220**

## Put yourself in the picture

Canoeists hopeful of making the 2012 Olympic Games have been offered an opportunity to have their profile raised on the road to London.

Photography student Craig Howe is looking for youngsters who are aiming for the Games as part of a long-term project which will document their quest by means of a series of portraits. Each canoeist taking part will receive copies of their images to use in sponsorship-raising activities and for self-promotion.

The photographs will be taken against the backdrop of the area around the future Olympic venue and Howe also hopes the portraits will form an exhibition or a book to coincide with the Games themselves.

"By including the regeneration of the Lea Valley, I hope to produce a body of work that will consider the transition taking place for both the area and the individual" said Howe. **For more details, phone 07767 343 898 or e-mail: [c@craigghowe.com](mailto:c@craigghowe.com)**



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It was an early start for someone like me. Up at 6am, pack and ready to go for 7am and hopefully at our hotel in Bridgnorth for 10am. That would give us a couple of hours to get ourselves sorted and on the Severn by noon just north of Ironbridge.

All went to plan, until whilst unloading the Dag touring kayak at Ironbridge – Mark dropped his end whilst getting it off the roof rack and the stern end hit me square on the head – bloody sore! Those cartoons are true when they show those rotating stars!

After the bash on the head, we donned our helmets as we knew that a mile after our entry we would be paddling through the Jackfield Rapids.

We had found a suitable car park with an entrance to the river and entered the Ironbridge gorge by the side of some abandoned machinery.

Inscribed by UNESCO as a World Heritage site in 1986, the Ironbridge Gorge is of universal significance for its unique role in the development of the industrial revolution which originated in Britain in the 18th century and later spread across the world.

However, the gorge is a splendid attraction in its own right. Nature has reclaimed most of the former industrial sites, leaving us with a unique and beautiful wooded valley. The gorge is now a maze of footpaths, bridleways and country lanes. It is hard to believe that this area was in what was known as 'the black country', due to the amount of industrial soot and smoke.

### The Iron Bridge

Ten minutes later and we were paddling beneath the world's first cast iron bridge which was built in 1779. The Bridge had a far reaching impact on local society, the economy and bridge design. Artists and tourists came from far and wide to see Abraham Darby's construction. Another five minutes later and we pass under the white suspension bridge that is now used for bringing the traffic into the town.

### Jackfield Rapids

Past the bridges, the next feature of note is Jackfield Rapids. These used to be grade 2, but following stabilisation work on the south bank in 2001 they have become more difficult reaching grade 3 or 4 in some levels when the river levels are higher. There is now a stopper and a difficult wave train for the less experienced. Land left to inspect and left again just below the rapids to dry out, which is also the landing point for the Telford CC campsite who are the riparian owners on this small stretch of river. The Dag touring kayak I was paddling wasn't too suited to this but we managed to clear the rapids after hitting a large boulder without too much incident to the cheers of a large group of freestyling youngsters.

From that point it was a gentle glide into the Shropshire countryside where the river enters into the quiet and peaceful Apley Forge. This stretch of the river is surrounded by woodland where Kingfishers are regularly seen. The weather on the weekend was glorious with unbroken blue skies and a hot unrelenting sun which demanded we slapped on a liberal amount of sun block.



# A scorcher on the Severn

Our next stop was the Woodbridge Inn, a large pleasant pub on the banks of the river at Coalport Bridge where a couple of bottles of ice-cold beers really hit the spot.

It is best to keep to just one or two beers and keep your concentration though, because of the large number of anglers along the river, some of whom are well camouflaged. Mark and myself ran into a couple of lines only seeing the bobbing bait at the last moment. However, with the exception of a group of half a dozen fishermen, everyone seemed happy as we gave them a wide berth.

### Bridgnorth Bridge

After 13 or so miles of magnificent countryside and near silence we drifted into Bridgnorth that was founded in 912 by King Alfred's daughter, Ethelfled, and was to be our destination for the night. It's here that the river is wide and very shallow and where both of us simply hopped out of our boats and towed them to the bank wading through six inches of water. The landing point is excellent underneath the medieval bridge and just a couple of hundred yards from my car.

We started from here six hours before, putting



Our entry into the Severn beside some dis-used machinery





The magnificent Iron Bridge

The Severn is Britain's longest river that rises in the Cambrian Mountains and finally empties into the sea in the Bristol Channel.

It is the unspoilt state of the Severn that gives a paddler some of the best journeying river to be found in Britain. The few populated areas along the river do not intrude and lack of riverside properties in the upper sections gives a 'wildness' feeling which is not easy to achieve in central England today.

Drifting into Bridgnorth



both kayaks onto Mark's car whilst leaving the other conveniently parked next to the river in the local council car park. The plan was simple: when finished, put both kayaks on my car, climb in and pick up Mark's car from Ironbridge and return once again to our B&B in Bridgnorth.

Except – I had left my car keys in the glove compartment of Mark's car in Ironbridge! Mark was remarkably quite reasonable in his laid back response, I however, just wanted to kick myself to

death there and then – couldn't believe I had been so stupid! Perhaps it was the knock on the head I received from the kayak earlier in the day!

So a taxi ride, 15 quid and thirty minutes later we were back at Ironbridge picking up Mark's car. We had locked the kayaks together close to the car park in Bridgnorth.

However, my aptitude for making a fool of myself didn't end with the keys. The taxi driver obviously couldn't fit the paddles in his taxi - so I came up with



A reminder of the area's industrial heritage



In robot mode



Looking down on the wild Rapids



The ferry at Hampton Loade



The Woodbridge Inn



The river does become shallow in places!



Magnificent scenery dominates stretches of the river for miles



Journey's end at Upper Arley

the bright idea of hiding them under my keyless car. The idea worked fine as they were still there when we returned, I however forgot about this as I eagerly jumped in and started the car. It was only after

engaging first gear and hearing the crunch of fibreglass that I did remember! With a heavy sigh, I got out of the car to inspect the damage. I was fortunate: the wheel had only cracked one of the

blades and it was a resounding testament to the toughness of the Ainsworth blades that we finished the weekend with no paddle problems.

We loaded the kayaks up and enjoyed wine and beer plus a great meal at the Severn Gastro Pub and Hotel, which was our B&B on the outskirts of Bridgnorth. Donna and David who own the place made us both feel very welcome and David, who is a chef, cooks a great steak!

### Day two

The next day we abandoned the buoyancy aids and helmets in the hot sun as the river from Bridgnorth to our finishing point at Upper Arley is very gentle and for the most part relatively shallow. Soon after leaving Bridgnorth the silence resumes with the exception of the Severn Valley Railway which appears as the Hogwart Express in the Harry Potter films.

The steam engine was very elusive as each time we heard the puffing of the engine I was ready with camera in hand. However, the train always seem to be in the middle of the forests or behind something and I never managed a good clean shot. There were other distractions though, as we came across two very attractive women in bikinis rowing a boat. After a lengthy discussion on this and that and whatever else came to mind we left them alone and paddled on. Then on the other extreme was the six abusive fishermen who shouted "ignorant bas\*\*\*\*s" even though we were as far over from them as possible with paddles out of the water.

The sun was making us both very hot again and so we had liquid refreshment on our mind when we came across the Hampton Loade passenger ferry. It isn't a P&O affair but a small wooden contraption guided by ropes. However, it serves its purpose very well and the ferryman told us where to beach the boats and the pub was up on the hill next to a campsite 500 yards away.

All I can say is the beer was OK if drank from a bottle – the food and the pub though was another question altogether. From sticky carpets to food drenched in fat that smelt like it had been re-used from the last century – it was a thoroughly unpleasant experience! It's a pity the abusive anglers were not downstream as we could have happily directed them to this drinking hole with no guilty feelings!

The next couple of hours were spent very enjoyably drifting for the most part. Time though, seems to move fast though when in relax mode and sure enough we approached Upper Arley where we had left Mark's car earlier in the day.

It is a very easy and convenient get-out as we beached on the quay 25 yards from the slipway where the car was. Upper Arley is one of those delightful small villages left behind in time, what our American friends would call 'quaint'. The village was known to the Saxons as Ernley – 'the clearing where eagles live' – although the eagles were likely to be buzzards and are still present today.

All in all – a fantastic weekend with cracking weather, a great B&B and majestic scenery. This section of the river has something for everyone looking for a relaxing weekend and beginners will find it quite easy too. Thanks to Donna and David at the Severn Gastro and to Mark for being such good company. ●

**Peter Tranter and Mark Anderson**

### ACCESS

The public right of navigation existing on the Severn gives everyone the right to navigate from Pool Quay, near Welshpool, to Stourport. From Pool Quay to Stourport the river is generally hazard free, with the exception of Shrewsbury Weir and the rapids at Jackfield and Eymore. From Stourport to Gloucester, British Waterways are the navigation authority and a licence is required. The right of navigation, however, does not give the canoeist the right to cross privately owned land or launch a boat without landowner permission.

BCU River Severn Access: 01743 365022

### B & B

**Severn Gastro Pub & Hotel**  
 Knowle Sands, Bridgnorth, Shropshire  
 Tel: 01746 763424 Fax: 01746 768507  
 Email: Lodgerobin@aol.com



# Big year for freestyle



With the European Championships being held at Nottingham and a packed schedule of domestic and overseas competitions, 2006 is going to be a big year for freestyle.

By the time you read this, everything should have kicked off at the end of March with the Hurley Classic. This brilliant annual event will have something for everyone, including a masters and youth event, coaching by Kayakojacko and giant plasma screens. The main freestyle event will feature world champions past and present and promises to be a cracker.

Following the success of last year's youth freestyle programme, Fiona Jarvie, Mike Laing and Matt Tidy have put together another summer's worth of superb events. So if you want to have a go at freestyle then why not give it a try – you may be a world champion in the making. For further

details please contact Flea Jarvie at [Fiona.jarvie@ukfreestyle.com](mailto:Fiona.jarvie@ukfreestyle.com) and see pages 48 for youth freestyle events.

As this year's main event approaches, most of the GB freestyle team have been training at Hurley and Nottingham under the watchful eye of team coach Pete Catterill. Some however, have managed to escape the cold for some big water action on the Nile in Uganda. Wherever they have trained, they will need all their skills when they come up against Europe's best paddlers in this year's blue ribbon event – the Eurochamps at HPP.

With Freestyle one of the fastest growing disciplines in Europe and the emergence of countries like the Czech Republic as a real force, home advantage will count for very little. That said we do have great chances of getting gold medals.

Nottingham's resident over-achiever, Jen Chrimes, is back in town after her world tour and she's ready for action. Other

paddlers including senior's Ed Smith and Flea Jarvie plus juniors including Flic Meares and Sevan Artoonian. Not to mention our brilliant squirt boys and girls and our world renowned OC1 and C1 paddlers, will be ready to take on Europe's best. This event looks like being the paddling highlight of the year.

Along with the main event there will be a 'Festival of Kayaking' including the 'Big Cup Video' contest, come and try sessions, big air comps and parties galore. So come along and see what you've been missing. Check out [www.peakuk.com](http://www.peakuk.com) for all the details.

If you want to head over to Europe this summer then the popular Euro cup series will be in full swing. Brits Ed Smith and Flic Meares came out overall winners last year so they will be hoping to repeat their achievements.

Keep your eye on [www.ukfreestyle.com](http://www.ukfreestyle.com) to catch up with all the results and catch the next installment of freestyle news in the next edition of Canoe Focus. ●

**Terry Best**

**Main photo:**  
Fiona Jarvie training on the Nile

**Below:**  
Jon Best and Ed Smith in training on the Nile.  
**Photo:** Fiona Jarvie



## PADDLE THIS: Events 2006

### Team Training

HPP		15-04/16-04
HPP		13-05/14-05
HPP		17-06/18-06
HPP		24-06/25-06

### UK Events

National Student Rodeo Outdoor Show/	HPP	10-03/12-03
Indoor Freestyle Champs	NEC Invitational	17-03/19-03
Hurley Rodeo	Hurley Weir	25-03/26-03
Youth Freestyle - Nene Cardiff Harbour	Nene	03-06/03-06
FreeStyle Ramp	Cardiff	24-06/25-06
Youth Freestyle - Teeside	Teeside	16-07/16-07
Boulters Rodeo	Boulters	22-07/23-07
Youth Freestyle - Boulters	Boulters	22-07/22-07
Youth Freestyle Final - Notts	HPP	02-09/02-09
British Freestyle Champs	HPP	07-10/08-10

### European Events

Euro Cup	Augsburg - Germany	05-05/07-05
Lyon	Lyon - France	09-06/11-06
Euro Cup	Plattling - Germany	16-06/18-06
Wave and Wheels - Quicksilver	Bremgarten - Swiss	16-06/18-06
European Champs/ Kayak Festival	HPP	26-06/02-07
Euro Cup	Thun - Switzerland	18-08/20-08

### International Events

World Cup Ottawa	Canada	01-09/03-09
World Cup Blacks NY	NY State USA	07-09/09-09
World Cup Rock Island	Tennessee, USA	14-09/16-09



# Slalom changes gear

There are changes afoot in canoe slalom. There's a mood change, an air of determination from the organising committee.

What's more, there is even a clear plan. Canoe Focus takes time out to understand why there is a change in the air.

Firstly talking to Graham Mulholland, an ex-Slalom premier paddler, who is now coordinating a PR sport development plan.

## Change of gear?

The infrastructure behind Canoe Slalom has stood still for a number of years in the UK. Believe it or not, we have been in the top five viewing figures at each of the previous Olympics, and our world class performance programme is recognised to be one of the best run in UK sport.

With this however there is very little 'back up' supporting this sport which is a crime. Over the past ten years we have missed various opportunities to make progress at all levels.

## We now have three main areas to concentrate on:

- Infrastructure improvements
- Developing competitions and making competitors feel like customers.
- All levels having access to the main committee'.

Anne Hounslow, a long-standing Slalom supporter, is now Chair. We ask why the sudden change?

"We have a very exciting sport, its fantastic fun to both watch and take part in, but the volunteers running the sport, at all levels, need to be recognised and shown clear focus on how they can help to make a difference and be rewarded.

"Part of these developments are that we now have a lot of projects in the run up to 2012, and making sure that these work well is a priority. We must ensure that the correct supporting measures are all in place now so the sport can continue after the 2012 London Olympic games. Our first objective, however, is to make the competitors feel like customers; 'putting the paddlers first'. If this goes well, the rest will follow."

## The rest?

"Yes, in the Richard Fox era, everyone had ambitions to paddle in the top two divisions, as these were real 'events' that most, not all but most, paddlers dreamed to be in. Rightly or not lottery money has changed some of this and so the committee now has to change too; but we must continue to support all of the lower levels through clubs and key individuals/ volunteers who can help our sport.

"We must aim to run 6-8 internationals between now and 2012 to enable us to say thank you to the volunteers, so please come along and support Canoe Slalom at the first international U23's Junior championships, August 24th - 27th 2006.

"We are aiming to give a new generation of paddlers something to aim for and to dream to be part of. Working from top internationals into premier & division one events and up from division four & three events. We will capture people's imagination, in turn revitalising the sport.

"The first task however, has to be 'putting paddlers first'; this hopefully will break down negativities about the committee and help focus a new team that will run our sport day to day, also improving our sport

"This new strong team running Canoe Slalom will make changes, maybe a few mistakes along the way, but for the first time in a number of years we want to make a difference. We want a stable sport up to and beyond 2012."

Exciting times are ahead. ●

Anne Hounslow

## PADDLE THIS: Slalom calendar April/May

### April 1/2

**Canolfan Tryweryn, P/1, Premier Race 3**  
Graveyard Site, Gwynedd, Dee Valley Racers. Division 1, Saturday Only  
Canolfan Tryweryn Graveyard Site, Premier Race 3, Gwynedd, Dee Valley Racers

Junior Selection Semi-final/final. Classic Format, Sunday Only

e-mail: [james@fron-isaf.freemove.co.uk](mailto:james@fron-isaf.freemove.co.uk)

**Yalding Weir, 3/4 X Double**, Kent. Hastings and District Canoe Club

e-mail information available: [dave@perception.co.uk](mailto:dave@perception.co.uk)

### April 8/9

**Grandtully, Pan Celtic Cup Plus**, Invitation event for Premier and Div 1 Paddlers, Scotland

SCA Slalom Committee £10 entry fees apply for Invitation Event Saturday Only.

**Sunday only Grandtully 1/2**, Perthshire, Scotland, SCA Slalom Committee

e-mail: [candj.brown@btinternet.com](mailto:candj.brown@btinternet.com)

**Oughtibridge 3/4 X Double**, Yorkshire. Sheffield Canoe Club

e-mail: [h.pashley@btopenworld.com](mailto:h.pashley@btopenworld.com)

### April 15/16

**Grandtully, Premier X Double**. Races 4 and 5, Perthshire, Scotland, CR Cats

Junior Selection over both days. First Race Saturday Classic Format

Second Race Sunday Classic Format, e-mail:

[briankinniburgh@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:briankinniburgh@tiscali.co.uk)

**Marple 3/4 X Double**, Cheshire. Manchester Canoe Club

e-mail information available:

[marple1@manchestercanoeclub.org.uk](mailto:marple1@manchestercanoeclub.org.uk)

### April 22/23

**Matlock 2/3 Open X Double**, Derbyshire, Matlock Canoe Club.

First Race Saturday plus teams, second Race Sunday no teams.

Donna Hawkins, Kempshill Cottage, Alma Road, Tideswell, Buxton, SK17 8ND

### April 28/29 & May 1

**Bala Mill 2/3/4 X Double**, Gwynedd. Ormskirk Scouts Canoe Club.

Ken Cunliffe, 8 Ludlow Drive, Ormskirk L39 1LF

### April 29/30 and May 1

**Special Selection Race & UK Championships for Senior, U23 & University Teams**

Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham, BCU

Slalom Selection, The Elms, Adbolton Lane, Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham, NG12 2LU

Event Format: Saturday Race 1: 2 aggregated Runs, Sunday Race 2: aggregated Runs top 50% through to second Runs, Monday Race 3: 1 Run.

### May 6/7

**Fairniee, 2/3/4 Open X Double**, Borders, Scotland, Selkirk Canoe Club  
Allan Dickie, New Cottage, Hartwoodmyres, Selkirk, TD7 5HA

**Wagon Lane 3/4 X Double**, West Yorkshire, Bradford & Bingley Canoe Club

Anne Howarth, 30 Gladstone Street, Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 1PT

**Royal Air Force Championships**, Llandysul, South Wales, RAFA

Chris Moore, RAFA Organiser, 28 Sqn, RAF Benson, Wallingford, OX10 6AA

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### May 13/14

**Seaton Park 3/4/Open X Double**, Aberdeen, Aberdeen Kayak Club

e-mail: [faircracs@aol.com](mailto:faircracs@aol.com)

### May 20/21

**Orton Mere, 3/4 X Double**, Cambridgeshire, Proteus Canoe Club

e-mail: [slalom@proteuscc.co.uk](mailto:slalom@proteuscc.co.uk)

**Yair Pool 4 Short Course**, Borders, Selkirk. Selkirk Canoe Club. Sunday 21st Only

Jim McPherson, 17 Hillview Crescent, Selkirk, TD7 4AY

### May 27/28/29

**Llandysul 2/3/Open**, Carmarthenshire, Salisburys Canoe Club Saturday 27th Only

Yvonne Brooks 'Babbling', Bourne Gardens, Porton, Salisbury, Wilts, SP4 ONU

**British National Under 14/16/18 Championships**, Llandysul Canoe Club.

**British National Veterans' Championships**. Sunday 28th Only

e-mail: [canoesue@hotmail.com](mailto:canoesue@hotmail.com)

### May 28/29

**River Loddon 3/4 (Sandford Mill)** Berkshire. Reading Canoe Club

Coaching, Practice and Teams Sunday 28th Individual event Monday 29th

e-mail: [riverloddon@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:riverloddon@hotmail.co.uk)

### June 3/4

**Langham Farm 3/4 X Double**, Somerset. Frome Canoe Club

Richard Carter, 12 Dorney Close, Westbury, BA13 3RZ  
Dogs by arrangement only

**Alva 3/4 Open X Double**, Stirlingshire, CR Cats Scottish Schools Championships Saturday only

e-mail: [briankinniburgh@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:briankinniburgh@tiscali.co.uk)

**Hatfield Water Park 4 & Open**, Yorkshire. Green Star Canoe Club

This will be an inter disciplinary event aimed at Novice/Intermediate Paddlers on flat water, e-mail:

[esther.mathews@btinternet.com](mailto:esther.mathews@btinternet.com)

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



# BUSA slalom

Teesside, 18-19th February

Teesside white water course was the setting for the BUSA slalom event for the second consecutive year. A couple of hundred competitors from university clubs as far flung as Bath and Dundee had journeyed to the North East to put their slalom skills to the test. Abilities and experience varied enormously - from freshers, who had only been in a boat a handful of times, all the way through to competitive Division 1 and Premier paddlers. The 18 gate course had been designed carefully to be challenging enough for the experienced slalom paddlers, whilst at the same time giving all those new to slalom the chance of getting through most of the gates upright!

The fine weather made for a good atmosphere with supporters and spectators lining the course. 'Happy Eater' proved a popular place for spectating - the gates here were without doubt the trickiest on the course, resulting in a number of swims throughout the weekend. The teams of experienced slalom paddlers made it look too easy, with completely clean runs from all three paddlers. Not all teams were so well coordinated however, with team members getting in each others way, and some teams struggling to get all three paddlers across the finish line - let alone within the within the required 15 seconds of each other! At the end of the first day of competition, Newcastle had edged into a slight lead in the University tables.

Saturday night and it was party time, with a Cowboy and



Indian themed social. Much fun was had by all - highlights included a couple of canoe 'costumes' from Durham, a dance floor competition involving a stick and much contortionism - and, inevitably for a student event, the odd drinking game!

Day two started with the ladies runs, followed by C1, C2 and men's team runs. A few of the C2 entries clearly had never been in a C2 before - survival was the aim here, achieving the gates simply a bonus! Eventually, Newcastle was declared the winning university team, just ahead of Loughborough and Durham.

Andy Hadfield and Lizzie Neave of Loughborough were winners of BUSA gold medals in the Men's and Woman's K1 events respectively. Both the men's and the mixed team events were won by Nottingham, who also had success in the C2 event, with Fraser Florence and David Backhouse. ●

## Thanks

Friends of Durham Canoeing would like to thank all of the event sponsors - Palm, Lendal, Ainsworth, Pyranha, Green Slime, Liquid Blue Clothing, Lomo, Reed, System X, KayakoJacko and Suzy - for their support through the donation of prizes. In addition thanks also go to Four Seasons for all their assistance in the hosting and the setting up of the course, without whom the event could not have happened.

By Ian Thomas  
Newcastle University CC and Ex-Durham University CC

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RESULTS

Youth League Division 1

Team	Points
Meridian Youth A	33
Viking E	32
Meridian Youth B	30
Aberfan Youth	21
FOA Youth A	20
Yorkshire Youth	8
Blakedown	6



Luke Morris of Aberfan turns the ball away. Photo: Agnello Guaracino

Youth League Division 2

Team	Points
Meridian Youth C	29
Tees Tigers Youth	24
Nomads	22
Cherwell	20
St Albans	15
Viking	10



Will Borrett rides the tackle from Jack Robson. Photo: Glenn Summerbell

Open Division 1

Team	Played	Points
Meridian	3	9
Viking A	4	8
St. Albans	4	8
Viking B	4	8
Dragon	3	3
FOA Liverpool	0	0
Peninne	0	0
Meridian C	0	0



Claire Griffiths of Aberfan works hard. Photo: Agnello Guaracino

Ladies Division 1

Team	Played	Points
FOA	4	10
St Albans	4	9
Aberfan	3	7
Meridian	3	6
Dragon	3	5
Woodmill	3	3
Banba	0	0
Manchester	0	0



Tom Baston on Dave Sanders. Photo: John Andrews

# Canoe polo national leagues

## Youth Divisions 1 and 2

It is very much hoped to have a Division 2 North and South next year, to encourage more teams to enter, as some youth teams genuinely find the long drives challenging.

Youth Division 1 was very closely contested and it is fair to say that any of the top three teams could have won it. At the final tournament on the 4th of March at Luton, Meridian Youth A, just pipped Viking at the post.

In Division 2, Meridian Youth C, did tend to have the upper hand, though it was very pleasing to see the new entrants Tees Tigers, coming in a very creditable second.



League Winners, Meridian Youth A: 1 Lewis Jones, 2 Aimee Robson, 3 Lucy Fry, 4 Greg Hockey, 7 Dan Robson, 11 Jack Robson. Photo: Glenn Summerbell

## Open Division 1

The new season kicked off at Coventry on 28th January, with five of the eight teams attending. The first game of the night was a surprise result and saw a good up and coming young team in Viking 'B' beat St. Albans 4-3, which put a dent in their season straight away. Up second was the recent runner up in the National Championships, Viking 'A' playing Dragon who had lost Paul Hammond in the close season to Meridian. This finished a convincing 6-1 to Viking.

2004 League winners and last year's runner up Meridian,

who now had Curly Barker coaching rather than playing, started with a good disciplined display against St. Albans coming out 3-0 winners. Viking 'A' beat their 'B' team 8-1, St. Albans picked up their first win against Dragon 7-2 before the biggest game of the night Meridian vs Viking 'A'. Both teams were well organised and chances limited with Meridian eventually came out winners 3-2. Viking 'B' then beat Dragon 7-4 but then lost 9-1 to Meridian. Last up was St. Albans and Viking 'A' which St. Albans played a lot better in and won 2-1.

So it's early days but Meridian have already put a gap between themselves and possible candidates Viking 'A', who will need to show how good they can be over the next few months to stay in the running. With last year's League Champions and just crowned National Champions, FOA Liverpool, starting in March along with newly promoted Pennine and Meridian C it will a hard battle at both top and bottom of the league.

## Ladies Division 2

The season started at Coventry on 21st January, with quite a big tournament with all the top four teams from last year all having to play each other to see who could gain an early advantage. Current National Champions St Albans started the tournament off beating Dragon 4-2. But they couldn't keep it up all night, losing 5-4 to Aberfan and a very close game against FOA finishing a draw 3-3.

Last years' league winners Meridian had a mixed evening of results, having a convincing win against Woodmill 10-1 and a couple of very close games followed, after being down they managed to pull back to draw with FOA and with St Albans conceded a goal in the dying seconds to lose 3-4.

Newly promoted Woodmill were back once again into the top league but had a disappointing night, losing all their games. Final results after the first tournament see FOA at the top both in points and on goal difference. With newly promoted Manchester and Banba competing at the next tournament in March.

**Alan Vessey, Pip Grayson, Jane Borrett, Fran Thomson, Ros Martin**

## 26 hour cancer challenge

Following the success of Cancer Challenge 24-hour canoe polo in 2004, the record-breaking canoe polo match returns – this time with the aim of being bigger, better and longer!

Two years ago canoeists raised over £17,000 by playing canoe polo continuously for 24 hours. This year, the event returns, only for 26 hours, on 9-10th June starting at 6pm on Friday night and continuing throughout the night until 8pm Saturday at Hatfield Water Park, Doncaster.

All money raised will be divided between Cancer Bacup, Macmillan Cancer Relief, two charities that help make life easier for those with cancer, and The Ellen MacArthur Trust, the famous sailor's charity which brightens the lives of young cancer and leukaemia sufferers by taking them sailing.

The original event was inspired by the keen canoeist, Ruth Holdway, who was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Disease, a type of lymphatic cancer, aged 23. Since Ruth was unable to paddle whilst having treatment, the University of York graduate recruited her friends from York University CC to help raise money for cancer charities and to raise awareness that cancer can strike even fit, healthy young people at any time.

To make the event a success, Cancer Challenge is looking for over 200 canoeists to take part. In order to keep the game going paddlers will be continually subbed on and off after

about 20-30 minutes on the pitch over the 26 hours. Qualified referees are also required and additional help is always welcome.

As well as individual sponsors and fundraisers, Cancer Challenge is also appealing to canoeing companies to sponsor the event, whether it be cash, sponsoring T-shirts, the pitch or donating either one of the major prizes or supplying a raffle prize etc. All sponsors will be recognised on the website and within the canoeing press. Trade stands can be set up in return with prior arrangement.

For more details on how to take part, make a donation or sponsor the event can be found on [www.cancerchallenge.org.uk](http://www.cancerchallenge.org.uk) or by contacting Ruth Holdway [ruth@cancerchallenge.org.uk](mailto:ruth@cancerchallenge.org.uk) or 07815768360.





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# Australian Murray Marathon

27-31 Dec 05

Victoria, Australia

The Australian Murray Marathon is one of the longest annual canoe races in the world, covering a distance of 404km in five days. The event runs from Yarrowonga to Swan Hill in the heart of Victoria, Australia. The event is owned and organised by the Australian Red Cross raising over £150,000 this year.



So what else was there to do between Christmas and new year in Australia but go canoeing? In a moment of madness the entry was sent off and then began the several weeks of training on the Murray River in Albury Wodonga on the New South Wales and Victoria border.

The 404 km is split into 92, 93, 78, 62 and 76km legs with four checkpoints on each day where paddlers can revive and relay teams change crews. It was some of these

checkpoints where the recommended equipment of a 10 metre piece of rope would come in handy as the banks of the river are steep and muddy, making access by support crews to their paddlers somewhat challenging. An additional hurdle for the support crew was the lack of shade as the days heated up and the relentless flies. Temperatures started off at a cool 30 °C peaking on day five at 48°C. The race attracts several hundred entries from individuals completing the full distance to K4 relay crews.

The first two days were sedate, I had no idea what to expect as the furthest distance I had ever paddled in one hit was Waterside B which coming in at 32km, which was way short of 92km. There was always a party atmosphere at the checkpoints and finishes with more people in the water than in boats. At the end of each day there were stories of hyperthermia, severe blisters on all parts of the body, dehydration and wrist injuries. I got off very lightly with only three small blisters on my hand and a slight case of tendonitis. By day three I thought I had conquered my worst enemy,

boredom. The flies at least distracted me from the fact that I had another two days to go. Paddle steamers livened things up at the end of day three as we paddled into the historic port of Echuca.

We received advice from the race organisers that should we see snakes crossing the river they should be avoided, do not panic or hit them! The thing to remember about being in the bush in Australia is that just about everything can in some way harm or kill you, depending on your physical disposition. Probably the most challenging times during the long haul were the times when I was covered in flies, despite paddling down the middle of the wide, winding river. Wearing zinc cream kept the sun off but the flies on.

Day four started with me being spun off the start but I had my revenge as that crew 'blew up' after 30km and I didn't see the culprits again until the start of the final day. Day five and I couldn't quite believe that I had only 76kms to go. The first two legs were nice and short but the third leg was 25km and I was passing paddlers resting on the banks who had flown past me earlier, they had run out of food and drink. This was probably the hardest leg of all, knowing that you are nearly finished but the temperature on the river was already up to 45°C by late morning with a hot strong head wind. It was hard to pace the fluid intake with no landmarks to give me an idea of how far I had to go. A lot of boats used GPS but I preferred not to know how far I had to go or what my speed was or wasn't.

The final leg, oh joy of joys, the thermometer was hitting 48°C and clouds of gnats were dotted across the water in the last 20kms. I jumped on the wash of a school relay crew for the last 10km and they updated me every few minutes with how many bends in the river there were to get to the finish line. It was something to occupy the mind. The last bend and there ahead was Goat Island and hundreds of people after 76km of nothing but gum trees, high river banks and the brown expanse of the Mighty Murray. After 36 hours and 29 minutes, I may not have broken any records but I now know that I can spend almost a working week in my boat covered in flies and zinc cream. ●

Alisa Jackson





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# Days on the river lead to gold

Canoeing expeditions are on the increase, but few have the chance to complete such a range of canoeing expeditions and East Anglia is the ideal venue for these.



Bridge Sollers



Arriving at Hoarwithy

For the last seven years The Ashley School Award Unit has been running canoeing expeditions across Suffolk and Norfolk. This year there has been an exciting development as we have run our first gold expedition using the River Severn for practice and the River Wye for qualifying.

Over the years any of the local rivers and broads have been used for expeditions, but we now have a pattern in place to enable consistent progression through the awards different levels.

At bronze we used the River Waveney from Gillingham to Oulton Broad. At silver we used the Waveney from Stone Bridge to Shotford for practice and the River Stour from Sudbury to smallbridge downstream of Bures for qualifying. We have also used the rivers Ant and Bure from Irstead to Buxton.

This year we ran a gold practice on the Severn from Glanhafren upstream of Welshpool to Cressage downstream of Shrewsbury and a recent gold qualifying expedition on the Wye from Byecross above Hereford to Monmouth.

The award unit is mainly for pupils from the Ashley School, a special school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. All pupils attending the school have a statement of special educational needs. Within this, pupils have a myriad of special needs ranging from those on the autistic spectrum to those with a low IQ and many from poor homes. Other members of the unit include pupils at one of the local mainstream schools; these youngsters also have statements of special educational needs.

Using canoeing as a mode of travel is ideal for our youngsters. The navigation is not as tough by canoe as there is less route choice. Food and weight considerations are also easier as the youngsters are not carrying the load on their backs. However, canoeing requires considerable training for youngsters to reach the correct level for the expedition. This work is mainly completed after school on Oulton Broad. Youngsters count this work as their physical recreation, another section of the award scheme. Open canoes are mainly used as these are excellent for loading with equipment and require team work to paddle successfully, some two person kayaks are also used.



Hampton Bishop



Lorraine at Lower Lydbrook

This mode of travel is also very versatile for the Award and youngsters. Last year an 18 stone youngster completed the bronze award expedition when the group paddled two rafted together. This year the same youngster had grown so much in confidence and skill level that he was able to complete his silver award expedition in a canoe paddled by one of his peers and himself. He displayed very good leadership skills and contributed well to the overall success of the expedition by the whole group.

On the recent gold expedition, the independent assessors from the wild country panel praised the skill level, team work and overall ability as exemplary.

Day one saw the group paddle from Byecross to Hereford. They easily shot the small rapid at Monnington Falls and progressed well to camp at Hereford Rowing Club.

Day Two was the hardest day as this was one of the longest days and it was also very hot. They finished their nine hour paddle in soaring heat at Hoarwithy.

Day Three started early as we were expecting more sun, but instead it rained for most of the day. The group visited Ross-on-Wye and went to the top of Goodrich Castle, before camping at Lower Lydbrook.

The final day saw a welcome return to sunshine as the group paddled through Symonds Yat on their way to Monmouth. Needless to say they all slept on the way home.

One of the group commented "I would do it all over again if I had the choice I loved all of it". This from a youngster who found the expedition really hard. Just goes to show how much they all got from the experience.

This work is an integral part of the school's Outdoor Education programme which includes three half days of outdoor education during curriculum time, a week in Wales at the excellent CMC centre, a week in Thetford as the lead partner with three local high schools and Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme run at lunchtimes and after school. Since Easter we have facilitated 204 pupil nights out either at camp or a residential centre and over 1,000 nights over the last five years. Through this work we aim to develop self confidence, team working and independence skills. ●

**Lawrence Chapman**

## FACTS :

To find out more about the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme visit [www.theaward.org](http://www.theaward.org)  
To find out more about The Ashley School, visit [www.ashley.suffolk.sch.uk](http://www.ashley.suffolk.sch.uk)

**Special thanks to:** Local land owners and Scouts who offer their support by allowing camping on their land. If you are a land owner next to a river please consider allowing small expeditions to camp. All the Volunteers who help to run the Award Unit in their own time. The Broads Authority Sustainable Development fund. The Local Network Fund





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Uist

# New horizon

24 cylinders of medical oxygen and two weeks supply of catheters and dressings might not be top of your kit list as you head for the water this year. But as the roof rack straps tightened around my kayak and the boot closed on a groaning car full of kit, my paddling adventures were about to begin...



Uist



Skye



Skye



Uist

Far from the familiar white water rivers of southwest England, I watched in awe as the sun rose over the mountains of Kintail. Against all the odds I had arrived in north-west Scotland. As waves formed and broke across Loch Duich I wondered what excitement the next two weeks would bring. Long term illness and disability brings many insecurities, challenges and difficulties, but behind a paddle, surfing on the breaking waves I knew I could find the freedom to dance and soar and to fly away, if only for a short while from the baggage that tries in some measure to tie all of us down.

With a last longing look at my short white water kayak, I stepped into the unknown and sat for the

first time in a sea kayak. Stretched out before me was five metres of unfamiliar red plastic, dotted with hatches begging to be opened and eagerly swallowing my entire Level 3 inland coaching equipment with half the day-hatch to spare.

Out with the tool kit and Suresh set to work, deftly applying his expertise to transform my basic kayak into the deluxe model with electric windows, air-conditioning and power steering (well postural support, pressure relief and all the adaptations I needed to paddle effectively anyway...). And out onto the waters of Skye to test

drive my new craft in superb surroundings. Watching with envy as Karen, Adi and other experienced sea kayakers carved elegant turns, gliding effortlessly through rippling water, I thrashed around in hopeless attempts to stay upright and control my kayak. Looking like a flustered fish out of water I tried in vain to apply my well-honed river skills to this long and unwieldy boat. Despite my best efforts however I soon discovered that limited strength and techniques practiced in a short river boat need modification and adjustment to work on open water in a sea kayak.

So the process began, under the expert guidance

For every vista of beauty there is an unforgiving seascape, for every sheltered cove, there is an exposed headland and choppy swell.



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Uist





of coaches, helpers and new-found friends, of turning this river kayaker in to the beginnings of a salty sea dog. I learnt about rudders, and skegs and how to turn on an outside edge (not so far different from playboats after all... but it was hard to sink the back end!). I learned to dodge jellyfish when I rolled, and to identify seaweed. To predict the tides and to modify my white water power strokes into forwards paddling that settled with the rhythm of the sea, sustained and effective, interacting with the endless shifting of wind, waves and environment.

**World of possibilities**

I learned that a pump can empty a kayak as well as inflate wheelchair tyres, that a leash can hold your paddle in a rescue as well as take a dog for a walk. But most of all I learned that paddling on the sea opens a world of

**INFO :**

The trips were run by Scottish based charity, Interventure, in conjunction with the John Muir Trust. To find out more about Interventure's inclusive adventure experiences visit [www.equaladventure.co.uk/interventure](http://www.equaladventure.co.uk/interventure) Judy is a supported Level 3 Inland Kayak coach who paddles with PaddleOn! canoe club near Bristol. She is also paralysed from the waist down and has various medical conditions including seizures and severe allergic reactions.



**THANKS**

My thanks to all who made my sea kayaking Interventure experience possible: to Suresh Paul ([www.equaladventure.co.uk](http://www.equaladventure.co.uk)) for his vision, belief and lateral thinking – not to mention his jokes and design expertise. To Karen Darke and Adi Disney for showing me how it should be done. To Viv, whose empathy and determination helped me not to give up at the first hurdle. To Simon Clooney, Cailean Macleod ([www.peakwavecoaching.com](http://www.peakwavecoaching.com)), Tim Pickering ([www.adventurehebrides.com](http://www.adventurehebrides.com)), Tracey Clooney, Sinead McCann, Don Harding and all the team for patience, inspiration, superb coaching, and repeated first aid... Thanks guys for opening up a whole new world of sea kayaking and for turning problems into possibilities!



possibilities, a world of shifting patterns and ever changing moods. For every vista of beauty there is an unforgiving seascape, for every sheltered cove, there is an exposed headland and choppy swell. It is a world that touches the senses, sharpens the intellect and heightens the emotions.

**Skye and North Uist**

Together we explored the waters of Skye and North Uist, experiencing the joy of cruising on glassy calm water, the thrill of riding on a breaking Atlantic Ocean swell. We revelled in the confusion of standing waves, battled with the unrelenting winds, learned the grace of surfing effortlessly into deserted beaches, before playing in the ever-changing features of a tidal stream. We watched as the clouds shifted and the seals moved in to play – diving in patterns, joined by the terns, gulls and sea eagle, fighting with nature for survival.

And so it passed. Two weeks of sea paddling. A voyage of discovery, of challenge not just to my paddling skills, but to my attitudes, assumptions and to my experience of wilderness. As I sit in my playboat, practising tail squirts in my local play-wave, listening to the heady chatter of friends paddling nearby, my thoughts are of Uist. Far away in the outer Hebrides. Geographically remote and yet inextricably linked – just one more part of this sport we call paddling.

Chronic illness and disability have made me an unlikely kayaker. But Karen and her team at Interventure proved that the improbable is possible by taking me, and others like me with various disabilities and none on a voyage of sea kayaking discovery. What I saw and experienced proved beyond all doubt that with appropriate support paddlers with and without disabilities can push the boundaries of personal skills, coaching and expeditioning beyond what anyone could predict or expect. ●

Judy Cockwell

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# Boating and Burritos in Mexico

As ever we consulted our group of paddling friends prior to taking the decision to travel to Mexico. The general consensus was that it was going to be a logistical hassle and that we'd get shot/robbed/tied to a tree/all of the above. Never ones to shirk a bit of a challenge we decided to go anyway.

Emma on the El Salto

With some close consultation of the Lonely Planet we were able to figure out that we could avoid Mexico City almost entirely and just head straight out to where the water is. So on landing, we jumped on a bus out to Jalcomulco in Veracruz province. This small village is rapidly growing into the major hangout for international paddlers in Mexico and seems very similar to Tena in Ecuador. One obvious difference though is that because most paddlers coming here drive down from the US, there's almost an expectation that you will have your own vehicle, so the very useful Ecuadorian system of fixed prices for river shuttles doesn't seem to have yet been set up.

Jalcomulco offers a number of stretches of the Rio Antigua within easy reach of the town, with the Puente Pescados section running down to the pedestrian bridge in the town. The river also provides a supply of income for the town from the crayfish that live in the river. All the way down you can see what look like small lobster pots poised on rocks in the middle of the river, and there's a distinct possibility of finding a local Mexican surface in the eddy next to you with a swim mask and a snorkel. At the leisurely rate the locals were able to catch these elusive langostinos, it's a wonder they don't starve.

One good stretch we paddled requires a 5am start from Jalcomulco with a 2-3 hour drive in the back of a pick up to get to the put in for the Barranca Grande (big gorge) section. The main stretch of the gorge itself doesn't seem to attract many humans and you might surprise wild donkeys drinking from the river.

The upper section has good water quality until the Rio Sordo comes in from the left about three quarters of the way down. We went back up to check out this creek later and found a good class 3-4 run, but the water itself outshines Nottingham. It's definitely not the place to roll and a litre of coke with a couple of tequilas is mandatory to ward off the Mexican equivalent of Delhi belly.

One of the other attractions of being in an area of possible seismic activity is that there are hot springs that crop up close to the river. Having spent a very cold day in Chile trying to paddle down an Andean ditch to get to a hot spring, we were pleased to find that the Mexicans have done things in style by building a balneario resort on the banks of the lower Antigua.

We were a little concerned about whether we would miss it by not being able to smell the sulphur from the hot spring from the river, but the sight of two large pipes pouring hot water from a pool into

the river indicated that this might be the place to stop. It's worth going up the gate and paying to avoid being hassled by a jobsworth official highlighting that you aren't technically allowed to play polo in their hot pool.

From Jalcomulco, it's also a short drive over to the Rio Actopan, which has absolutely crystal clear water. This short run starts off with a clean three metre rock slide into the put in pool followed by a leisurely paddle.

As with other ready-made paddling areas you have to drag yourself away as it would be all too easy to just hang out in the town drinking. Getting back out required some negotiation with the local bus driver to persuade him to sling our boats onto the back seat of the bus. Across most of Mexico, apart from the major long distance buses which have luggage compartments, it's a case of squeezing the boats in any which way you can. Some drivers will actually fall over themselves to make sure they get your fare by cajoling you to shove the boat into the bus. You can flag down most buses without a problem and get them to drop you off at the side of a river, and pickups happily stop to give you a lift without necessarily asking for a few pesos.



The Queretaro Museum



El Tajin pyramid

One thing is certain with a trip to Mexico, and that's that you won't be losing any weight. You can pick up empanadas from a stall in the road for next to nothing, but they will have been fried in oil that will probably have been used for the last couple of weeks. We couldn't quite find the words to explain the finer points of polyunsaturated fat to the locals.

Making a break for the north we headed up to north of Xalapa to another boating area near Tlapacoyan. There's a rafting company up there called Adventurec who should be able to sort you out with shuttles for the Filo-Bobos river (<http://tinyurl.com/apswk>). We headed up there to try to combine a bit of culture with some river running – the middle section runs right past a couple of ruined Huastec Indian pyramids which you can jump out and explore.

Also in the area are several sections on the Alseseca river which are worth checking out. Getting up there with a bus is pretty easy and sets you right into a short waterfall run that ends at Puente Tablazos. Emma developed a curious facial expression as she dropped over one large drop that I had apparently described as 2m and clean. There may have been some slight error in translation. There's also a section of drops below the 35m Cascada

Tomata which is worth looking into. This area is where you get the feeling that they have the same kind of relaxed attitude to adventure sports as in New Zealand. These guys actually owned a small valley and had strung a zipline across, which I think you might struggle to operate legally in Blighty. We also managed to have a very laid back day of scuba diving in a lagoon where the company just gave us the tanks and told us to get a lift down there off our own back.

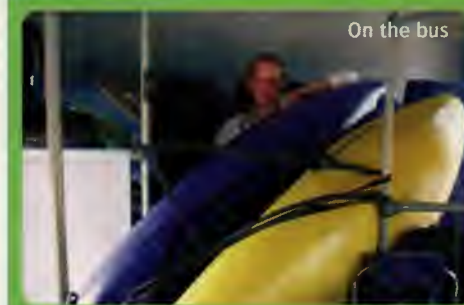
Further north is the town of Ciudad Valles which offers a number of runs with a slightly different character to the ones round Jalcomulco. Up here many rivers are a deep blue in colour as a result of dissolved calcium carbonate which forms rock called travertine. As water drops off ledges, new rock is deposited underneath, which develops a more pool drop character with numerous runnable falls. Many of these drops are actually gradually growing in height year after year. The town itself is a good place to hang out and meet up with boaters. HuaXteca Expediciones are an accommodating bunch if you want to run the Tropaon river, which includes an interesting section called the Puente de Dios where the flow disappears underground entirely for a while ([www.huaxteca.com](http://www.huaxteca.com))

Alternatively you can camp up in the little village of Pago Pago which has the closest thing we found to an aquatic skate part. Within a kilometre you've got several clean waterfalls to run which ends up at a place selling chicken and beer. You really can't fault it. Actually finding the camp in the dark was a little more challenging after spending too much time stuffing our faces.

Further upstream is another nice section of the Rio Valles called the El Salto section, which pretty



the Filo Bobos ruins



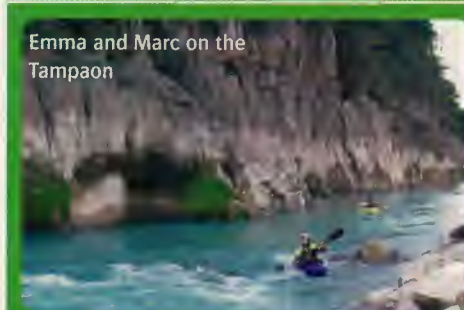
On the bus



A taxi



Emma



Emma and Marc on the Tropaon



Marc on the Tropaon





Marc on the Rio Santa Maria



Emma on the Alseseca

**FACTS**

There are other areas to explore in Mexico that we just didn't have time to get to – the Oaxaca region around Huatulco apparently has some great kayaking but only really works a little earlier just after the rainy season (from September to November). The areas we visited should be runnable up until February timeframe. Companies such as Anna Levesque's [www.watergirlsatplay.com](http://www.watergirlsatplay.com) or Grant Amaral's [www.aguaazul.com](http://www.aguaazul.com) can sort you out with a full week's guided itinerary or instructional course, but if you're travelling independently you're probably best off kipping in Ciudad Valles or one of the hotels in Jalcomulco and organising shuttles from there.

There is also a pretty dated guidebook for Gringos with some curious topo maps that isn't quite up to Pete Knowles standards – you can get it on Amazon (<http://tinyurl.com/9pwsj>). A new one by Rocky Contos covering the Pacific Coast runs in more detail is apparently on the way. The southern state of Chiapas is covered, but everyone we spoke to mentioned that they'd been robbed by a group of locals around the Rio Uscamacinta. We didn't bother.

With a little bit of common sense, Mexico shouldn't need to be any more dodgy than other Latin American paddling destinations and is eminently doable without a car. Flying to Texas, buying a vehicle and driving down would smooth out logistics, but then leaving it unwatched at the top of the rivers might not always be a sensible option. In fact the only major issue we had was when Lufthansa managed to temporarily lose Emma's huck somewhere in Frankfurt. Whether that was because the Mexican baggage handlers had stuffed it full of coke on the first leg of its journey home is something I would rather not dwell on.



much starts with another clean 8m drop and ends in a 50m travertine fall which has been run by a number of folks.

We finished up running the third and fourth canyons of the Rio Santa Maria which is another long day's boating. Although there's a lengthy section of what could be described as dog between the two whitewater sections, the fourth canyon has some interesting drops through huge boulder fields and

ends up with a stunning sight of the Rio Gallinas dropping 105m into the Santa Maria. At higher water the flow of water coming in at right angles actually makes it very hard to continue downstream on the Santa Maria. The climb out of the canyon reminded me of the take out on the Zambezi, but without small African kids willing to run up the track with your boat unfortunately. ●

**Marc and Emma Musgrove**



Emma on the Rio Santa Maria looking at Casada Tamul

**THANKS**

We would like to thank Liquidlogic Kayaks and System-X for their continuing support.



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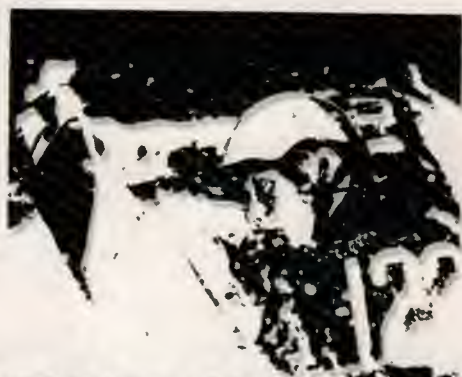


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# Suggested paddles



Where can I go paddling is often the question from new and experienced paddlers. Well, we are campaigning for greater access to the 98% of waterways we do not have access rights on... but in the meantime there are some interesting

paddles around and the following are a few suggestions. Our hope is to offer a variety of suggested paddles as whilst some canoeists are interested only in rapid or white (wild) water rivers, others enjoy competing and there are also many others who enjoy paddling quietly along, exploring and visiting new scenes and developing awareness of nature round them. In our selection of paddles we hope to cover everyone's needs – so this is just the start.

## PADDLE THIS: THE OXFORD CIRCUIT

### General information

O.S. Map 164 and the Geoprojects map of the River Thames covers the whole journey which is about nine miles. BCU membership covers both the Thames and the Oxford Canal.

### The paddle

Start at Port Meadow which is near Wolvercote just off the large A40 roundabout at the North of Oxford. The car park is free and also has public toilets and is next to the Trout Inn (the second home of Inspector Morse in the TV series). There is a height barrier so check before entering if you have a pile of boats on your car roof.

Launch into the back stream and pool by Godstow Bridge and paddle down stream to join the main river below Godstow Lock, beware of the rowing club on the right bank just before joining the main river and also a strong current from the adjacent Weir if the river level is up. The Thames now widens out as it passes the large area of Port Meadow with its views of Oxford. It then narrows as it comes into Oxford passing a boat yard and a foot bridge,

Shortly before reaching Osney Bridge, the lowest on the Thames at 7ft 6ins, look for a junction on your left with a foot bridge over it, you turn here into the Sheepwash channel. This takes you under the railway approaches to Oxford rail station and joins the Oxford Canal at Isis Lock. Turn left into the side stream and portage up a low bank onto the canal just above the lock.

You can now paddle north on the canal for about three miles, portage Wolvercote Lock, and continue under various concrete road bridges carrying the A34 and A40, you will see Dukes Lock ahead. Turn left before the lock into Dukes Cut. As you enter the cut you will see another railway bridge and a shallow entry lock back to the Thames

level, portage this and you are now heading west back towards the River Thames.

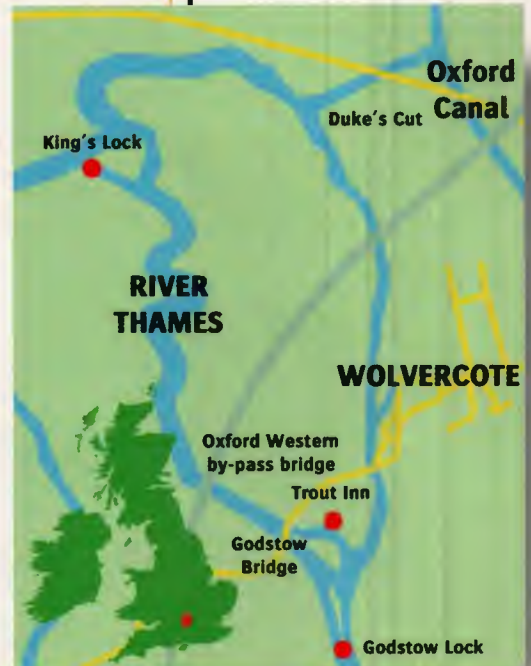
You will reach a Tee junction where the navigation sign tells you to go right for the Thames, but you turn left into the back water called Pixey Mead. A short paddle takes you again under the A34 and on to a small weir on your right and the entrance to a mill on your left, portage on the extreme right of the weir against low concrete piling. Take care climbing down the sloping muddy bank into the lower stream.

The last part of the paddle takes this narrow, shallow back stream with some over hanging trees back to Godstow Bridge. Take the middle arch of the bridge it has the deepest water going over a slight ledge, you are now back at start point at the Port Meadow car park.

This paddle is best done in winter and spring, the area around Port Meadow is very popular with the public in the summer with families swimming and fishing in the pool below Godstow Bridge.

This paddle is suitable for most abilities and ages, the only part that can be a problem is the portage at the weir, the bank to the lower stream is at about 45 degrees and is usually muddy, we have on occasions seal launched, but it is shallow, a safer way is to let the boats down on ropes, and then get in at the bottom.

**Recommended paddle by Robert Yeowell, last completed on 19 February 2006.**



If you have a suggested paddle... please e-mail the text and images to the editor of Canoe Focus: [peter@canoefocus.co.uk](mailto:peter@canoefocus.co.uk) Text is preferable in Microsoft Word format and images as 300dpi JPEGs saved at highest quality.

Access on-line @ [www.riversaccess.org](http://www.riversaccess.org)



## Parliamentary Waterways Group

Waterway Legislation was the topic for the meeting held in the House of Commons on 28 February. Three speakers gave separate views on the difficulties encountered with the law as it exists, currently applied and not in the interests of the users and navigation authorities.

The Reverend Douglas Caffyn who is a student of law, author of "The Right of Navigation on Non-tidal Rivers and the Common Law" and a member of the BCU spoke. The basis of his speech was to show that there are many rivers on which there is a public right of navigation but which at present are not canoed, like the Salisbury Avon and the River Itchen. He also demonstrated that there is no way in which a canoeist can determine or establish where such a right exists.

Nigel Johnson from British Waterways, said the canal system was based on 370 Acts, the earliest dating back to 1424. Some were private acts, haphazardly drafted in an age when today's interpretation presented operational and legal difficulties. Disputes were invariably resolved in the favour of the landowners and impacted on restoration projects that are reliant on ancient powers. He maintained new legislation is required to address the situation.

Dr John Packman for the Broads Authority outlined difficulties for navigation authorities and a series of measures that could introduce new law and changes to existing legislation - Private Bill, Public Bill, Harbour Revision Order, Transport and Works Order and the proposed Regulatory Reform Bill.

Questions and comments from the meeting resulted in the chairman of Parliamentary Waterways Group, Bob Laxton MP, undertaking to take the whole issue to Department Environment and Rural Affairs.

6 March 2006

# Exeter Canal and Exe Estuary

This route gives you a day trip, with a circular route, thus avoiding having to arrange transport or having to paddle the same stretch of water twice.

## General information

Total distance: approximately 12 miles

Suggested duration: one day, circular route.

Our starting point is the Quay in Exeter. Parking is available in the cathedral and quay multi-storey or there is a large car park on the Haven Road side. The cathedral and city centre are within easy walking distance. There are plenty of places to launch on both sides of the river or canal.

Setting off down stream we soon reach the area of Trews Weir. On the left is the Port Royal pub. The weir, built in the 1860s, is shootable at most water levels and when low a diagonal fish run will provide sufficient depth.

The building on the left, known as the Old Match factory (now flats) was built in 1774. Continuing, we pass the city parks nursery. Keeping well to the right (to avoid conflict with property owners) we reach Salmon Pools Weir. A shoot is possible at most levels either down the face or using the diagonal fish run. When the river is high, be aware of the strong holding stopper and tow back, which runs most of the length of the weir. The weir pool and the river below is affected by the tide and is an important salmon fishery. Relations with the fishermen are generally very good and if you ask, then permission will often be given to pass quietly downstream. If necessary a short portage along the left hand bank can be arranged. The river then sweeps around behind some desirable residences and Countess Wear bridge is reached. The Exe was tidal as far as the present position of Head Weir prior to 1282, and ships could dock as far upstream as our starting point. This was changed when Isabella de Fortibus built a barrier at Countess Wear, diverting shipping trade to Topsham, and a canal was built in 1563 to bypass this. At certain states of the tide there are strong eddies and standing waves downstream of the bridge. Below the bridge it is possible to portage along the old Exeter bypass to the canal, but there is an easier portage 200 yards downstream over a narrow neck of land by the sewage works entrance.

The small channels on the left hand bank were the site of a ship-building yard up to the 18th century and ships of up to 600 tons were built and launched here. A glass works was

established in the same area, now called Glasshouse Lane, in the 18th century, using coal mined from the site of the present day university campus.

Back on the river we pass under the motorway bridge, through the mooring and reed beds to Topsham. Here another portage to the canal is possible using the passenger ferry slipway on the right hand bank.

Topsham has all the facilities of a small town, including some very fine pubs. The architectural style of many of the buildings reflects Topsham's former trading links with foreign countries and many are built from materials imported as ballast.

Leaving Topsham, the estuary now begins to widen and the deep water channel starts to meander. The most direct route is not necessarily the quickest, and it is advisable to stay in the deep water channel indicated by the buoys and marker poles.

Eventually the channel sweeps under the right bank and the deep water entrance to the canal at Turf is visible. Disembark onto the 'quay' at a convenient point and carry the short distance past the lock to the wide mooring basin of the canal.

Turf is very isolated and can only be reached on foot or by water. The Hotel remains much the same as when designed in 1823. The large entrance lock has curved gates built mainly of wood. The top gate has two ground paddles and three gate paddles; the bottom one has six gate paddles. All paddles are operated by hand windlasses. The chamber is 122 feet long, but ships of up to 136 feet can be accommodated as the central hand rails on the gates are moveable. The curved sill of the upper gate is 7ft 6in. above the lower, and the average rise is about ten feet, although this can vary as the entrance approach is tidal. Turf is an ideal picnic spot and it may be possible to camp here.

The first section of the canal runs almost straight with the estuary on your right, to a wooden bridge opposite Topsham. Here a footpath from the Swan's Nest Inn at Exminster crosses to reach the passenger ferry slipway. The lock is now abandoned and blocked off.

Further on, near the hazard warning notices, the canal narrows and the curved stones of the entrance sluice to Trews canal are still visible. On the left the tall chimney of the former Exminster Hospital is visible. Beyond the motorway bridge the canal opens out to be almost lake-like. On the left are the remains of a wharf serving the lime kilns which are still just visible in the undergrowth. The canal then narrows again and we reach the crossing point of the old A38, the Exeter by-pass. Here there are two bridges, the old swing bridge and a newer lifting bridge opened in 1971. At Double Locks there is another Inn, dating from 1701. The lock pond is very large, 312 ft by 25 ft. and the gate paddles which let water in and out are operated by wheels instead of hand windlasses. The gates nearest the Inn have wooden balance beams, which came from the mast of HMS Exeter following a re-fit at Devonport in 1940, after the action in the River Plate.

The canal now skirts the edge of the Marsh Barton Trading Estate and away in front is a magnificent view of the city and the cathedral. Just past the Welcome Inn it may be possible to branch right and regain the river, providing the lock gate is open. Alternatively continue into the canal basin, where there are many small boats.

Now the round trip of some 12 miles has been completed. Shorter journeys are possible using the intermediate portages described. Both weirs are shootable, but groups should form their own conclusion and formulate their plans bearing in mind the prevailing conditions and the expertise of the individual member

With thanks to A/S Watersports





## PADDLE THIS: THE TEIGN ESTUARY

### General information

A day trip suitable as an introduction to open water paddling. To get the best out of this area you really need to be there a couple of hours either side of high tide (tide times can be found via a tide book for the area or via the website). The trip can be run in either direction, starting at Teignmouth or Newton Abbot as a one way journey, or possibly as a round trip, starting from either point.

At Teignmouth, there is parking and a launching ramp at Polly Steps, on the North Bank of the Estuary adjacent to the Docks. Easily reached from the Docks access road, (paying car park). Launch from a new ramp which has recently been built by the Teignmouth Harbour Commissioners. Paddle up stream and under the multi-arch Shaldon Bridge. You need an incoming tide here as the current runs at seven or eight knots and is very powerful. Beware the anglers who regularly fish from the bridge.

You now have a choice, you can follow the mid-line of the estuary, but most will want to keep to one or other side. On the right you will pass a number of boat yards before the banks open out to waterside fields. There are some small outcrops of red sandstone rock and one or two waterside chalet type properties, especially prominent is a large house complete with its own extensive grounds right adjacent to the waterside.

On this northern bank is the main Exeter to Plymouth railway and the road from Teignmouth to Newton Abbot is also close by. Continuing along the northern bank, as you come level with a cluster of buildings and a huge car park on the southern bank, you might wish to cut across and take advantage of the Coombe Cellars Pub. Some might wish to return to Teignmouth following the South Bank. Here are moderate sandstone cliffs with splendid houses,

many of which have their own private landing stages and mooring arrangements.

For those wishing to continue towards Newton Abbot, resist the temptation to try the water ski ramp and look out for water skiers, dinghy sailors and windsurfers who come out from Coombe Cellars. On your left are more holiday type chalets and on your right you will see the modern sewage treatment works which as part of South West Waters Clean Sweep Project has made a tremendous difference to the water in the estuary. On the right hiding behind some rushes is the Passage House, another waterside pub.

Pass under the overbridge which carries the dual carriage road from Exeter to Torquay and follow the channel until you arrive at a launching ramp on your left. This is Newton Abbot Quay.



To get to the Quay, from the Penn Inn Roundabout proceed towards Newton Abbot, after about 60 yards you will see a right turn at traffic lights, Follow the road through the industrial estate, and you will find yourself on the quay. There is free parking here but beware thieves and do not leave valuables visible in your vehicle.



# So what has been happening with the campaign?...

Well we are busy pushing the case for access. We have been out and about visiting Local Access Forums making the case to non-canoers and out to BCU Regional Access Seminars, as well as all the usual lobbying. We are happy to come to your region for an access seminar just contact us and we can arrange something.

We are getting articles in and responding to articles in the papers. One of the big debates that has been raised is the fishing versus canoeing chestnut. Well, we believe it to be a complete red herring.

Currently we are all (swimmers, boaters, gorge walkers, waders etc) restricted to using the rivers that have either an ancient right of navigation still existing or have statutory rights of navigation created in more recent times. This restriction also affects anglers.

Many inland waters in England and Wales, especially the smaller and upland rivers, are considered to be privately owned and to canoe or wade in them without permission

could be construed by some interpretations of the law as an act of trespass.

So if you are out walking and decide at the end of your walk to put your hot feet in to the river you have been walking beside if there is no automatic navigation or access rights you could be committing trespass. The same goes for taking the children out to catch stickle backs, allowing them to go on the water in their blow up boat you bought for fun or even riding a horse through the river are just examples of the ways in which you could be considered to be breaking the law.

The Rivers Access Campaign ([www.riversaccess.org](http://www.riversaccess.org)) which is being run and funded by the British Canoe Union is not just about opening up the rivers for canoeists but open up the rivers so there is access for all. Having raised public awareness it is not just canoeists who are calling for the rivers to be opened up. Those calling for greater access range from sports groups, leisure groups, large and small organisations and of course those who think the situation is unjust/archaic and although not water users themselves feel that the situation should be re-addressed.

Successive governments have encouraged canoeists to seek to negotiate voluntary access agreements. From over

### INFO

The BCU also has several publications for sale which can assist with where to go paddling. One of these is 100 Paddles in England. It is available from the BCU Nottingham and via the website e-shop at [www.bcu.org.uk](http://www.bcu.org.uk)





## What can you do to help?

Write to your MP and explain that canoeing and fishing is not the reason for the rivers access issue but that they can and do go together well (Scotland is a good example of this let alone Europe and the rest of the world!)

Write to Martin Salter (Reading West) MP who is pressing the case for voluntary access agreements... (see all the reasons on the right as to why they do not work...) and that fishing is really the only 'sport' that contributes to the economy and social agenda. Well as we all know that is incorrect.

Up-to-date examples of letters you can use or adjust to suit your local needs are now online at [www.riversaccess.org](http://www.riversaccess.org) so please visit the site to use them or pull out information from the article on the right to support your points. **DO NOT DELAY... WRITE TODAY** and don't forget to let us know how you get on. Thank you.

## LRA River Lune (lower)

Chris Cleaver, RAO North West region advises Patricia Green has taken over the LRA post for the lower section of the Lune.

Thanks go to Patricia who can be contacted at: 9 The Drive, Fulwood, Preston PR2 8FF. Tel 01772 654054, email: [patricia.green@btinternet.com](mailto:patricia.green@btinternet.com)

Please amend your yearbook

To find out more about how you can help with access in the North West region, contact Chris Cleaver, Tel 01625 878838, email: [chcleaver@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:chcleaver@tiscali.co.uk)

## LRA Hamble River

Kevan Thomas has taken on the vacant LRA post for the Hamble River, a tidal arm of Southampton Water, Hampshire. Thanks go to Kevan who can be contacted at:

181 Fair Oak Road, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO50 8LQ  
Email: [Thomas@kevan.f2s.com](mailto:Thomas@kevan.f2s.com)  
Phone: Mobile: 07973 253324  
Home: 02380 644313

66,000 kilometres 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 (1.2%) to the 4% of inland waterways with a public right of navigation. Ultimately, access is in the hands of riparian owners. If they refuse to engage in negotiation, there is no way canoeists can make progress. This leads to unauthorised access to rivers and possible conflict. For example, in Wales there are 300 rivers. Negotiated access has been possible on only eight of these.

The BCU agreed with the Government that they would look at the voluntary agreements through four pilot studies which the Environment Agency is undertaking. There are concerns over the cost of the four pilots, not only in terms of the amount of time taken for each agreement but also in the actual cost. Hundreds of thousands of pounds have been spent to potentially gain about 70kms of water out of over 65,000 kms of rivers where there is no access!

Canoeists and other waterway users are the 'eyes and ears of the water environment' and can be relied upon to report pollution problems, assist injured wildlife and undertake river clean ups. The BCU is also a recreational and environmental body which teaches paddlers to care about the environment.

The Government commissioned report 'Water-Based Sport and Recreation – the facts' published in December 2001 established:

- There are 68.310 kilometres of rivers in England and Wales
- 2179 kilometres of these rivers have navigation rights.
- There are over 66,000 kilometres of rivers with **no access**
- Less than 4% of the linear river resource in England and Wales has any public access or right of navigation

Canoes and other small craft (and people) can use narrower waters and in fact the smaller streams often offer the most interesting and challenging water so the true figure for navigable rivers is substantially greater and the percentage available substantially less (2%).

Canoeing is an established, active water sport and promotes a healthy life style, where participating individuals acquire life-long skills, it contributes to their personal and social development

The sport is not socially exclusive and is an affordable means of getting 'on the water' for everyone, especially young people and families. It is enjoyed by all ages, gender, race and ability. Canoeing is a truly inclusive activity – a sport for all and is increasing in participation rates between 7-9% year on year!

The BCU has a huge and very successful youth development programme which reaches many sections of society. This also includes programmes for the disabled (Paddleability). Canoeing has many programmes that reflect our social responsibilities such as working with young offenders and the socially disadvantaged.

We do not believe the access issue to be canoeing versus fishing (please also note that many people fish from canoe/kayaks in this country on rivers as well as the sea and they too want greater access).

We believe that there is enough room for all and fishing and other water sport users are able to use the rivers and lakes in harmony all over the world so why not in England and Wales? Scotland has a long history of the waters being shared by all. The recent (2003) Land Reform Act in Scotland provides an ideal model for how England and Wales could progress in this area of access.

## access for all

Support the Rivers Access Campaign

[www.riversaccess.org](http://www.riversaccess.org)

## Effects of Canoeing on Fish Stocks and Angling – Research and Development Technical Report W266

The research undertaken by the Environment Agency on behalf of the Angling and Canoeing

liaison Group – a group established to encourage communication between angling and canoeing communities – involved consultation with both canoeist and anglers along with independent opinion from a panel of ten experts.

The research found that there is no empirical evidence linking canoeing with damage of spawning grounds and stocks.

## Anglers pay a lot to gain access to rivers. Why shouldn't canoeists pay?

Anglers pay for rivers to be stocked, banks cleared and bailiffs to be employed, as well as for the fish they remove. In fact, The Environment Agency (i.e. the tax payers) contribute an extremely large percentage of these costs. Canoeists need none of these, simply seeking to pass quietly down the river. Ramblers and riders do not pay to access paths or bridleways, so it is argued that access for canoeists should not require payment.

A great deal of revenue is contributed to local economies for accommodation, meals, shopping and fuel, at times of little other tourism revenue.

The philosophical viewpoint that canoeists and other users should have free access to rivers in England and Wales (in the same way that walkers have free access to footpaths) has led to an unfounded and incorrect assumption that canoeists are unwilling and do not contribute to the economy. This is far from the reality. In fact, the BCU spends over £100,000 on annual licences on behalf of members (60,000). With over 1.5 million UK paddlers in total (RYA survey 2005), many of whom purchase licences directly, it is fair to conclude that the contribution to the economy is substantial.

In addition canoeists regularly pay for access to facilities for recreation and competition. Some canoeists would be prepared to contribute more if it meant greater rivers access.

Furthermore, aside from the direct contribution canoeists make, there is also the indirect contribution in terms of expenditure on fuel, accommodation in rural areas.

Numbers can always be disputed but some state that there are four million anglers. In numbers agreed with the Environment Agency recently it was shown that the number of people who buy a rod licence each year is known to be approximately one million.

Whilst there will, inevitably, always be some anglers who should have licences but do not purchase them, the results of the 2001 survey as quoted in 'Delivering Fisheries for our Nations' cannot be used to reliably estimate their number.

The Environment Agency have estimated that about 45% of those who purchase a rod licence fish only in still water. Sea fishing does not require a licence.

Thus the two numbers which may be reliably quoted for freshwater anglers in England and Wales are: 1 million people purchase a rod licence each year of whom about half participate in river fishing. The number of illegal anglers has not been reliably estimated.

In this day and age exclusive and privileged use of certain resources is not acceptable by all and the rivers should be opened up for enjoyment by the general public, which could include use by non-powered craft. ●





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# The Small Isles

After a summer working for "Wild Island Exploration (Rua Fiola)" in the inner Hebrides and running as many of the classic bits of white water the west coast has to offer, Robin and I decided that it was time for a decent sea kayaking trip. I spent my childhood going to Arisaig and Back of Keppoch on family camping holidays and, as it is one of my favourite places in the world, it seemed an obvious choice to try and paddle around the Small Isles. But how far would we get? Neither of us had been in a sea kayak for over 18 months and couldn't really remember much past the fact that you could cruise on flat water at about 6km/h. We arrived at Rhu Point outside Arisaig around midnight, cleared a space in the back of the van amongst all the kit and got our heads down.

## Day 1: Rhu Point - Eigg - Muck - Eigg

We woke early and couldn't believe our luck, the plan was to start with the 12km crossing to Eigg and it was a flat calm. We paddled out on a perfectly still sea in brilliant sunshine getting a nice rhythm going, the only sound the splashing from the paddles as we paddled towards a bobbing group of birds. As we approached we heard a 'whooshing' noise behind us to discover a pod of Minke whales was passing behind us with some porpoise chasing them. We reached the slipway on Eigg pleased by the fact that

round Muck without wasting much time and with me trying to dry off before stopping where we had planned to stay the night in the bay on the NE tip of Muck.

We watched the sun set sipping our red wine out of our thermos mugs, and as the sun threw the Cuillin of Rhum into the most perfect silhouette, we spread our bivy bags out on a small piece of grass and settled down to stare at the stars in our own cocoons as we fell asleep with aching muscles.

## Day 2: Eigg - Rhum - Sanday - Canna - Rhum

The next day dawned bright again and we set off early. Before leaving we had got an up to date forecast telling us that there was a high pressure for the next three days. Part of the reason for the 'big day' was to get around the outermost isles of Canna

the next bay we realised we had been right as a huge fin circled us. We estimated this shark to be around 24ft long (a good bit longer than our 17ft sea kayaks). Though we knew the sharks to be harmless I think both of our hearts were beating faster.

As we paddled on we saw another three sharks who calmly went about their business, occasionally dipping beneath our boats with their huge mouths open, and we rounded the most westerly tip of Canna and were finally heading in the right direction. We set off from Canna as the sun set behind us with a compass bearing set just inland of a bay on the north of Rhum and paddled off in a nice Force 2 as the light faded. The crossing was one of those special ones, at first the sun behind us threw the island ahead into sharp relief before the sun eventually faded allowing

it had taken less than two hours.

We had decided to get to a decent beach on Muck from which we would then be able to paddle back to Eigg easily in the morning. By now a welcome breeze around force 1 had sprung up cooling us down as we paddled off up the south coast. I spotted a small wave breaking on a reef just offshore and I decided to go and investigate. I looked down to examine what the reef was like below I heard a noise and looked up. A slightly bigger swell had picked up to form a decent wee wave coming in from my left side. I was stuck side on and tried with one enormous sweep stroke on my right to pull myself around and through the oncoming wave at the same time. This worked but the wave broke right over the top of me. Robin just laughed. We paddled out

and Sanday and get back onto Rhum in case the weather changed. The 7km crossing to Rhum was soon over and we proceeded up the coast till we saw a decent river for a wash and an early lunch (next to the mausoleum shown on the OS maps). This section of the coast was amazing with lots of sea caves to explore and many photo stops. We eventually reached the NW corner of Rhum and crossed to Sanday and on to Canna.

As we paddled up the coast we suddenly saw a dorsal fin circling in front of us. We stopped for a photo shoot of the small basking shark, joking that maybe its mother was just around the corner. As we paddled into

us to watch the phosphorescence with every stroke. As we got nearer land again we could watch the torpedo like trails left by the seals as they swam underneath us. We pulled the boats up, found somewhere to throw our bivi bags down, had a quick Irish hot chocolate and got some well earned sleep after 60+ kms of paddling.

## Day 3 Rhum - Eigg

I woke first to see a herd of deer playing on the beach below where we were bivied, and left Robin sleeping

Robin



A whale



The Bothy





to have a wee explore around the ruined village and take some pictures as we had decided on a late start. A couple of hours paddle saw us racing the ferry into Kinloch where we had lunch and were able to get a weather forecast at the ranger station. Skye had looked very tempting (more to Robin than myself I think) in the morning but now with a low coming in and the fact that we would just have to reverse the crossing, it was time to add again to the plan. We both had other places to be in three days time so it was decided to head back to Eigg village for the night before doing a long crossing (18km) SE in the morning, and spending the rest of that day and the next paddling north up the coast.

The crossing from Rhum to Eigg was the hardest yet with a Force 3 cross wind and the most chop we had seen so far making us stretch our tired muscles. We paddled on up the coast staring up at the huge cliffs now sheltered from the wind by the bulk of the island. As we paddled I remember hitting those mysterious patches of water where you feel like you are going backwards (am I the only person who feels this?). We rounded the headland into the bay north of the village. We set up camp on a small promontory sticking out into the bay and again lit a fire in amongst the rocks and cooked and chatted as the sun set on the Sgurr. We finished the last of the wine (and I think possibly had a wee dram of whisky as well)

Robin hold my boat while I stood and tried to do my business, what my grandmother would call "bucket and chuck it" with a water bottle, or paddle as hard as I could and try and ignore the watery sounds around me. I put my head down and started paddling as hard as I could. The compass bearing I had was no longer needed as a headland appeared out of the landmass and I kept up my sprint towards it. Robin arrived a couple of minutes after me, wondering why we had had to go quite so fast, but seemingly pleased that his GPS was working for the first time in the trip and had recorded us as having travelled at an average of 7/8 km/h (amazing what a bit of determination can do).

We decided to go inland around Eilean Shona as neither of us had been there, and as soon as we were tucked into the land there was such a change of scenery, instead of the windswept heather and rocks of the islands here we were in the middle of tree lined waterways, feeling the heat and humidity of the still air and listening to the insets buzzing around us. Soon we were back out on what I think of as proper west coast, carrying on round into Loch Ailort and the Sound of Arisaig. We were headed into Peanmeanoch bothy, of which again I had fond childhood memories. The weather was now changing, and instead of the perfect blue skies we had come to expect we had ominous grey clouds behind us. I remember feeling glad we had the bothy to look forward to.

M A P



us. The wind got up and started battering the windows with rain and whistling through the eaves as we lay in our cosy bothy with the dying fire throwing shadows around the walls.

Day 5 Bothy - Rhu point

The last morning of the trip could not have been more different from the rest, forcing us to swap t-shirts and sunglasses for dry-cags and woolly hats. Packing the boats for the day happened in a flash as we desperately tried to stop the rain getting into the dry bags and compartments. Paddling out of the sea loch was hard work as the strong southerly (Force 5/6) hit us side on and the odd larger wave broke over the top of us, but knowing it was the last day meant we could just enjoy the fight. As we rounded the

before once again crawling into our bivy bags and falling asleep out in the open.

Day 4 Eigg - Mainland - Bothy

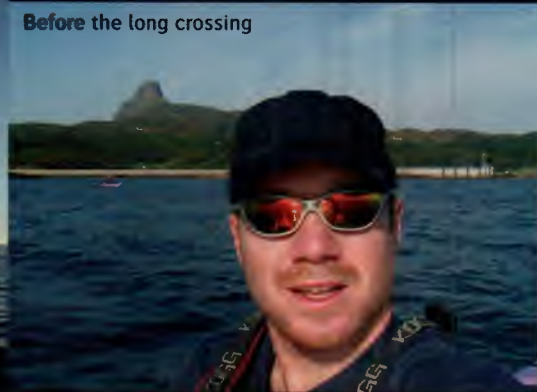
The next day we paddled SE straight into the morning sun with our hats pulled down over our eyes and our sunglasses on. We had opted to paddle straight for the headland between Ockle and Ardtoe about 18kms away. There wasn't much talking that morning and even less when I realised I needed to pee as we approached halfway. The choices were either, have

With tired arms we pulled the boats up the beach and dragged the boats above the high tide line and removing all that we would need, we turned the boats over and made our way to the bothy door as the first drops of rain began to fall. Amazingly we had again fallen on our feet, as we discovered the annual work party had just left leaving stacks of wood for the fire and of course a very clean looking bothy. I made a quick skirt around the beach collecting some mussels, and the night passed as nights in bothies should, sharing the garlic mussels between us while we told stories, talked about what we would both do next, and passed the remains of the whisky between

headland and started to head north the boats started to surf down the waves, at last propelling us in the right direction and pushing our speed up so that at one point we were averaging 9km/h. The final paddle back into Rhu Point left me with a mixture of emotions, glad to see the vehicles were still there, happy to be finished, but sad that the trip was coming to an end.

We were extremely lucky with the weather, the west coast of Scotland in good weather has got to be one of the most beautiful places in the world, and it felt great after a summer of working to a timetable to have no plan and make it up as we went along. ●

Alastair Rose





# North Sea challenge



Sunrise

It was Tuesday, 29th August and we finally left at Oostende with the ferry to Ramsgate. After one year of preparation and after three earlier attempts, we left for what we called the 'North Sea Challenge'; an attempt to paddle 50 nautical miles in sea kayaks from Ramsgate to Nieuwpoort in Belgium.

The first tanker we passed



Our names are Steven Hobert, Tjerk Pillen, Cindy Pillen and myself Bart Pauwels and we are all from Belgium and with one interest: sea kayaking! Because the sport isn't popular in Belgium, we wanted to do a stunt in the hope to get some publicity. The only person before us to make the North Sea crossing was Derek Hutchinson in 1978; so it was in his footsteps that we wanted to follow.

After all the preparation, everybody was keen to get started and knew that apart from physical condition and good weather, we were all going to need a BIG slice of good luck.

We arrived at 10pm at Ramsgate, where we travelled to the harbour and met with the crew of the support boat. We wanted to leave the harbour at 2.30am, meaning we had a few hours left for preparation and a little nap. No napping for me as I was too stressed and so were the rest! Tuesday morning at 02.30 and Steven and I were in our NDK Explorer with Cindy and Tjerk in a Klepper double folding kayak ready for the off.

It was a bright night with a first quarter moon and only a little breeze and we left with a fantastic feeling knowing that we had a trip of more than 50 nautical miles which would take around 20 hours and the elements were with us.

After 90 minutes of paddling we encountered the first problems, I was hearing a surfzone right in front of us! What I suspected happened is that we went right in to Goodwin Sands, it didn't take long and our support boat got stuck, not once but three times! Because of the noise of their engine they couldn't hear the surfnoise. Finally, we had to find a way out for us and the support



Tjerk Pillen having a hard time



Bart Pauwels having even a harder time

boat, meaning we had to turn back towards Ramsgate with the loss of almost two hours. We found the traffic zone to Ramsgate and we stayed in it and left with a bearing of almost 90° heading for the traffic zone.

We arrived at the traffic zone with sunrise at 7am just as planned because we didn't want to make this crossing in the dark.

We had to cross the traffic zone in a straight line and headed from Mid Falls to the Sandettie Bank. Because we had to cross in a straight line we could not compensate for the current that was taking us to the south which took us so far south that we passed the light ship at the southern tip of the Sandettie separation zone. At 2pm we made it through the traffic zone without any problems, in fact we didn't see that many ships at all. The current had taken us

almost to Ruytinghen West just above Calais, now we had to head for Nieuwpoort in a straight line heading 90° east. Now began the hardest part of the trip where we had hours of paddling in front of us in the dark: no ships, no markers, no land, only your compass and the other kayakers. The support boat was only with us when needed, otherwise we were all self sufficient, with food, drinks, emergency equipment, clothing and maps onboard the kayak.

We developed a rhythm of paddling two hours and than stopping for five minutes which worked very well. It was 7pm before we began to see land but we knew from our GPS that we were still a long way from home and more problems began to occur. I started to have stomach problems because of the highly carbohydrate food that we were taking to us plus I also started having

problems with my elbows. By now we had paddling for 17 hours non-stop.

The situation worsened when the wind came up from the east meaning that the last six hours we were going to have to battle a Force 4 wind head-on plus the current was going against us. Fatigue was now starting to play a roll and this along with the stomach and elbow were causing many problems and the idea of giving up started to come to mind.

Darkness came and by now everybody just wanted to arrive as soon as possible. The trip had never been difficult but now being dark, wind against and a sea with five foot waves, being exhausted it wasn't easy. Around 11pm we could see the lights on the pier of Nieuwpoort and arrived at 12.40am on Wednesday after 22 hours and 77 nautical miles of non-stop paddling.

Entering the harbour of Nieuwpoort was a fantastic feeling, where friends came to welcome as well as national and regional television and newspapers.

Everybody made it, it wasn't difficult to do, but it was hard!

**Bart Pauwels (Paul is an active as a coach in Belgium, teaching sea kayaking)**

## M A P







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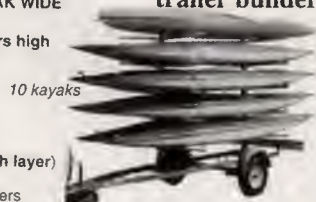
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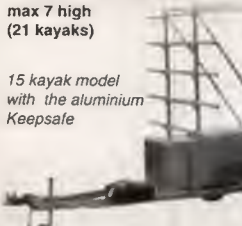
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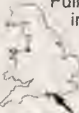
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# BCU 70th anniversary



**Bob Irons.** Location: Derwent Water, Lake District 2005

**Danielle Lucas.** Title: Learning to Surf the Hard Way (with a broken paddle)



**Nathan Wall.** Location: French Alps 2005



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 £25 of prize vouchers worth (Cotswold vouchers for adults and WHSmith vouchers for under 18s).
  - 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.
  - You can vote for your favourite picture by visiting the BCU website, look under 'About Us' for the 70th Anniversary link.
- 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!

Congratulations to the winners for February who are: Bob Irons and Julie Wood. Here is a selection of entries from February/March.



# y photo competition



**Julie Wood** (Banbury and District CC)



**Douglas Miller.** Location: Itchen Southampton

**Eamon Hastings.** Location: Kent



**Robert Martin.** Location: River S Tyne  
Hayden Bridge to Hexham Tyne Green



## Top canoe clubs

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

St Austel CC

Laburnum Boat Club

We now have an incredible 27 clubs that have been accredited for the BCU Top Club and Sport England Clubmark Awards. Well done to all the clubs for this great achievement and to the clubs working to achieve the award.

If you would like to develop junior and youth activity at your club and you haven't yet considered the awards – the have a look at the youth pages of our web site [www.canoe-england.co.uk](http://www.canoe-england.co.uk).

# YouthFest 2006



Sunday 9th July 2006 at Dorney Lake, Berkshire  
Come and join us for a day of fun and excitement! The BCU Young People's Programme are delighted that this year's YouthFest will be welcomed to the 2012 Olympic regatta site at Dorney Lake – near the historic town of Eton. This fantastic venue promises to provide us yet again with another memorable event. We are also pleased to announce that the event this year will be supported by PGL the activity holiday company for young people.

Throughout the day there are lots of Paddlepower events to take part in and you can find more details on the Youth pages of our web site at [www.canoe-england.org.uk](http://www.canoe-england.org.uk) – but in the meantime here is a snippet of what's in store!

First, there's the Bellboat National Championships where teams of eight paddlers compete head to head over 200 metres with prizes for overall winners, fastest uniformed group, school group and youth club group. Teams can enter in U11, U14, U16 or U18 age groups.

Then there is XStream Challenge – limbo or spin and try your boat skills with this great new challenge! Challenge your shooting and ball handling skills in the polo 'Golden Shot'. Or you can try some flips and spins with our freestyle sessions, or go for speed in the Lightning and open canoe racing events. And all through the day you can have a go at the Ergo paddling machine challenge or come and try a different boat out.

Entry forms can be downloaded from our web site or contact Michelle by email: [youth@bcu.org.uk](mailto:youth@bcu.org.uk) or phone 0115 982 4220. Closing date for entries 26th June 2006

## Youth slalom competition

The annual Crystal Palace youth slalom competition this year moved to a new venue - the Seven Islands Centre at Rotherhithe. Over 50 young paddlers from eight clubs battled it out over a tight course to see who would take top honours.

Islington Boat club demonstrated the experience they have gained over the last year with Danny Ward winning the U18 boys, Jodi Markham the U15 girls and George Durde the U12 boys. In the U15 boys Jake Neilen from Herts Young Mariners held off the Islington challenge and Rebeka Cohring from Splash won the U12 girls. Sam Hayes gave a fine performance to take the U18 girls event.

Congratulations to all paddlers and clubs and thanks to all the helpers.

## 100-mile canoe test

26th to 30th May 2006

River Trent, Nottinghamshire

The 100-mile canoe test is a personal challenge which tests skill, determination and stamina over four days of paddling. This year it will be based on the River Trent, Nottinghamshire and for the first time is open to BCU affiliated clubs and centres.

If you would like to help paddlers to complete the test or get your own group involved go to:

[www.clubsforyoungpeople.org.uk](http://www.clubsforyoungpeople.org.uk) for more details. Those that would like to enter should contact Dave Springett on 01455 273951 or email:

[dave.springette@clubsforyoungpeople.org.uk](mailto:dave.springette@clubsforyoungpeople.org.uk).

## PADDLE THIS

### Youth Freestyle Series 2006

Following on from last year's successful Youth Freestyle Series there will be another series for 2006. The dates are as follows:

8th April – Llangollen

3rd June – Nene

16th July – Teeside

22nd July – Boulter's

2nd September – Series Final, Nottingham

The events are about having fun and learning new skills so, as well as the freestyle competition, they will include free coaching, river awareness skills and safety sessions. Also, new for this year, a Boater X competition (where sites allow).

Best three freestyle events of the five will count towards the series' rankings.

Big prizes for the series' winners: Palm Equipment Europe and Squarerock have kindly donated boat and/or kit prizes for the U15s and U12s respectively and other companies are contributing a number of other prizes across the categories.

**Price:** £8 per event, £18 for 3 events or £25 for all five.

**Age categories:** 12 and under; 15 and under; 18 and under (age at 1st Jan 2006).

Pre-entry only by e-mailing: [Michelle.Patrick@bcu.org.uk](mailto:Michelle.Patrick@bcu.org.uk)

For further information visit the website <http://youth.ukfreestyle.com>

or e-mail Fiona at [fjarvie@mail.com](mailto:fjarvie@mail.com)





## Boat and Caravan Outdoor Show 2006

A quick thank you to all the volunteers from the West Midlands who helped give the BCU a presence at the recent Boat, Caravan and Outdoors Show at the NEC.

A new feature this year was an indoor pool dedicated solely to kayaking! Supplied courtesy of the Canoe Village and the ACT, this was very professionally organised by Leam Boat Centre and Canoe Kayak Trader and their devoted team of staff. Special thanks are also due to the volunteers who helped man the pool. Getting a staggering 1,462 members of the public in kayaks (most of whom had never kayaked before!) over nine days was an achievement to be proud of!

The ACT arranged for an opportunity for local schools and youth clubs to gain early entry to the show, to be seen on the pool by the general public as the show opened each day, many thanks to the teachers, youth leaders and young people for making that happen.

Another feature was a lecture/slideshow/question and answer session in the 'Practically Everything Lecture Theatre', this was along the theme of 'Paddling for the Caravan Enthusiast', explaining to the public at the show what a great and varied sport paddling is and how they can easily access it. Thanks to the 'lecturers' who were press ganged into that!

Finally thanks to Tim from West Midlands CC for helping organise things before and during the show, and Brian from the Leam Boat Centre for ironing out one or two little wrinkles! Cheers guys – I'll put you all down for next year.

**Phil Hadley**

## Happy birthday BCU

To celebrate our 70th birthday there will be lots going on this year – so keep an eye out on the website and in Canoe Focus. In the meantime here are two competitions you can enter.

### BCU Photo Competition

Is canoe or kayaking about being with friends, being at a club or is it about taking part in competitions? What does paddling mean to you? Send in your photographs and you could win some exciting prizes!

A selection of the best entries will also be published in Canoe Focus and on the BCU website. One winner from the U18s category will be picked each month and will receive £25 worth of WHSmith vouchers.

The overall winner from the year (February-December 2006) will win a digital camera (overall winners announced in January 2007). A selection of photos may be used in a planned calendar.

To see the entries so far and vote for your favourite photo visit the BCU website (go to 'About Us' and then click on 70th anniversary).

There are prizes to be won, so get clicking and send in your photographs! Remember to include: where the photo was taken, your name, address and age. You can enter by emailing your photo to [chloe@bcu.org.uk](mailto:chloe@bcu.org.uk) or posting it to: Chloe Nelson-Lawrie, Photo Competition, British Canoe Union, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5AS

### Drawing competition

In addition to the photo competition we are also running a drawing competition. We've been so impressed by the drawings and paintings you've sent in for the annual BCU Christmas card competition, we reckon that you're bound to have some great ideas for this. In addition to some great prizes for the winner and runners up – the winning picture

## PADDLE THIS

### Stafford and Stone CC mini slaloms 2006



A record number of entries to the Stafford and Stone CC mini slaloms this year bodes well for the future of British slalom. 169 entries for the first event, with a combined total of 381 over the entire series is the healthiest start line for the pre-season races ever, beating even the highs of the early 1980s. It was good to see a complete mix of abilities from the top of Premier to complete beginners with several paddlers from other disciplines sampling slalom for the first time.

The series of three pre-season races are handicapped to ensure that all categories and divisions have a chance of winning. The ten highest placed paddlers from the three races battled for the top positions in a one-run super-final to end the event.

This year's series was won by Jacqueline Shaw from Ribble Canoe Club, a division two, J16 paddler who handled the pressure of the cheering spectators to put in a time respectable for the division above. Helen Millband, who came into the final in commanding position with two wins and a second place exited a break-out too tight and had to paddle back for a gate, ending her chances of the trophy, finishing equal fourth.

Not surprisingly, given the fact that 50-60 entries at each race were from the hosting club, 13 of the top 15 positions were taken by Stafford and Stone CC paddlers. In joint second place were club members, Natalie Wilson (Div 1) and Mark Proctor (Prem C1). Natalie's result was all the more impressive as last year she came third in the overall rankings as a division 4 paddler, such has been her progress up the divisions. Natalie's younger brother, Michael, seems to be following in her footsteps, as he too made the final having a hat trick of division 3 wins over the series. Aged only 11, his result was remarkable as Michael has only been paddling for the past eight months.

Mark Proctor, a member of the World Class Potential squad, has maintained his position as one of the top junior C1 paddlers, improving only one place from fourth last year. However, he came into the super-final in seventh place behind club member and Prem C1 paddler, Greg Pitt who was lying in third. Greg is one of the 13 SSCC paddlers on the World Class Start programme.

As well as support for the upper end of the sport, Stafford and Stone CC, along with neighbouring clubs Matlock CC, Burton CC and Holme Pierrepont CC are all benefiting from initiatives to encourage more children to do sport at entry-level. Many of the local lower-division paddlers were helped by government-funded Community Sports Coaches and were using junior equipment bought with the help of funding raised by the BCU.

The final event of the mini slalom series was also a ranking division 4 event. Daniel Bird from Walsall CC and Lindsey Furness from Holme Pierrepont CC were both promoted in C1 and K1W respectively based on the men's times. Matt Stevens from Evesham Paddlers, and Daniel Wright and Harry Boardman from Stafford and Stone CC were also promoted in K1.

**Graham Mulholland**



will be printed in Canoe Focus and go on to the BCU website! Competition details are as follows:

- Draw or paint us a picture that you think illustrates 70 years of canoeing.
- Size should be around 150 x 210mm but don't worry too much – if you work to A4 size we can always reduce/enlarge it to fit if needed.
- Colour or black and white – your choice – but must be hand drawn/painted.
- You must be under 18 and it must be all your own work.
- Prize for the winner and runners up.
- Entries must be received by 10th June 2006 – please write your name, age, address and phone number on the back of your picture and include a S.A.E. for return of your picture.

Send your entries to: Michelle Patrick, British Canoe Union, Youth Programme Competition, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Notts, NG2 5AS





# Last of the summer wine

On reaching retirement and with time on my hands, I fell victim to nostalgia, recalling happy boyhood days spent paddling the Great Ouse in a genuine Canadian canoe that my parents purchased when I was ten years old.

So I decided to build one for myself. Unlike Ray Mears, I did not fell a suitable birch and hew it by hand, but chose the design of a 15' 6" Prospector from the Selway Fisher catalogue and had a professional boatbuilder cut the plywood chines and ash gunwales for me. After that, it was mainly straightforward stitch-tape-epoxy and some elementary joinery. The result was very satisfying, although I would have preferred the fully rounded hull of cedar strip construction, but the pension couldn't finance that.

After a successful maiden voyage on the Ouse and an expedition to the Wye, I found myself looking frequently at the jaunty gunter rig illustrated in the Selway Fisher catalogue. I sent for the plans and made the spars, rudder and lee-board, while the sail was professionally cut and sewn. My first attempt at sailing left me buried in a reed bed on a lee shore of Priory Lake, Bedford. I felt in danger of being overwhelmed by the wind and the push-pull rudder was proving difficult, not to mention the wilfulness of various lines that got themselves entangled or slipped out of reach. Slowly, I gained confidence and made modifications to the gear, positioning blocks, eyes and cleats to make operations simpler and more reliable. I felt the leeboard was a clumsy device and took the drastic step of cutting a slot and fitting a

centreboard case, which improved performance markedly. Now it was time to add a jib!

However, there were still many occasions when conditions were too breezy for comfort. I observed a Drascombe Lugger sailing steadily under jib and stern mizzen... which led to the shaping of a second mast and ordering a small sail. The balance of the two sails fore and aft worked well, facilitating safe, leisurely sailing. So now I had a craft that was car-toppable, able to be paddled solo or as a pair, and sailed under various combinations of rig. The addition of an outboard bracket for the smallest available engine completed the canoe's versatility - now a motor-sailor too!

As summer 2005 began, I conceived the plan of a 90 mile sponsored paddle-sail from my home town of Bedford down the Great Ouse to its estuary at King's Lynn. The chosen charity was the British Lung Foundation, as my wife, a committed non-smoker, has suffered for most of her life from the effects of the lung disease bronchiectasis. A family friend who works for Leukaemia Research asked if she could join me, despite having never canoed previously. We organised our sponsorship, put in some training sessions, obtained coverage in the local press, and finally set off (combined age 130 plus), from Bedford Town Bridge cheered on by a group of friends, blessed by a curate and filmed by Anglia television.

The weather was perfect, the river idyllic, teeming with bird life, including kingfishers, and we made excellent progress to St. Neots, where BBC Look East intercepted us for interviews. Buoyed by the exciting prospect of celebrity status, we paddled on to Brampton, just outside Huntingdon, completing 23 miles and portaging eight locks on our first day.

Day two favoured us with bright skies and a following wind, so up with the mizzen! We passed picturesque Houghton Mill, the Hemingfords and St. Ives before entering the broad stretches of the river to Earith, the gateway to the Fens, where the sail came into its own as arms and shoulders began to ache. The Hermitage lock-keeper at Earith made a most generous donation and let us through under spectacular early evening skies to the Old West River, a twelve mile meandering section that is the remotest in the Ouse's whole course. We stopped just short of Streatham, after completing 24 miles and negotiating six locks in the day.

Ely Cathedral whose towers visible for miles, was our first target on the third day. Here the BBC caught up with us for a further progress report. All the way we were being greeted by cries of "Good luck, saw



**Below:** Paddling past the chapel on the beautiful medieval bridge in St Ives.







Paddling around Houghton Mill, a large 18th-century timber-built watermill

you on the telly!" and received donations from people on boats and at bankside watering holes. Incidentally, most motor craft behaved courteously, but a few elderly jobs deliberately speeded up as they passed and looked back to admire the effect on us of their wake: ignorance personified. Beyond Ely the river becomes canalised, but again with a favourable wind and mizzen hoisted we completed the relatively

characterless passage to Littleport in good time.

The weather was becoming unsettled so we made an early start on day four and by early afternoon reached the massive sluices at Denver, which protect the Fens from inundation by the sea, just before thunderstorms brewed up. Now only the final section, 14 miles on the tideway to King's Lynn, remained for the last day.

**FACTS :**

We hope that our final total for the two charities will be approximately £3,000. Apart from the satisfaction of that, we had enormous pleasure in navigating this lovely river and experiencing its subtly changing moods under magnificent East Anglian skies.



Technically, the final stretch was the most demanding as a swirling ebb tide met a strong breeze straight off the Wash, creating turbulent water midstream, spoiling my dream of sailing into King's Lynn. Hugging the bank kept us out of the wind, but lost us the advantage of current and threatened to put us behind schedule. However, we found the right compromise, as we reached our destination only five minutes late, to be greeted by family, friends, balloons, banners and a wide expanse of viscous low-tide mud. Fortunately, the landlord of the quayside pub appeared with a long rope and we and our impeccably behaved craft were hauled up on to the hard, where the champagne party began. ●

**Richard Claridge**

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## Yearbook 2006 updates

October 21-28

Open canoe tour Grade 2 -  
Scotland

A whole week touring the River Spey in Scotland from Loch Insh to the sea. Led by Kevin Jackson, Head of Woodlands OEC Glasbury on Wye. Staying in luxury chalets, the tour includes excellent tuition, optional boat hire, transport to and from Glasbury on Wye, all shuttles and superb full board. Suitable for those with some moving water experience.

Cost - around £240 all in.

Contact Kevin Jackson

Woodlands OEC Glasbury-on-Wye Powys (via Hereford) HR3 5LP Tel. 01497-847272.

Email:

[head.woodlands@sds.theocn.net](mailto:head.woodlands@sds.theocn.net)

## Yearbook 2006 updates

The following clubs were omitted in error

**Southern:** Basingstoke and Deane CC, Miss Hazel Rutland, 3 Ringshall Gardens, Bramley Tadley, Hampshire RG26 5BW. Tel: 01256 881338. E-mail: [hazel.rutland@orpheusnet.co.uk](mailto:hazel.rutland@orpheusnet.co.uk) [www.badpaddlers.org](http://www.badpaddlers.org)  
**Marlow Canoe Club:** Andy Maxted, 5 Keble Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 6BB [secretary@marlowcanoeclub.org.uk](mailto:secretary@marlowcanoeclub.org.uk)

### Amendments

**Norwich Eagle Canoe Club** – Secretary should be Christine Wright.

**Wigan Canoeing Group** – new secretary, Mr Stephen Hitchen 15 Sunny Drive, Orell, Wigan, Lancashire WN5 8LP Email: [stevehitchen1516@aol.com](mailto:stevehitchen1516@aol.com)

**Wychavon Kayak Canoe Club** – Email: [tinburns@clara.co.uk](mailto:tinburns@clara.co.uk), Website, [www.wkcc.org.uk](http://www.wkcc.org.uk)

**Courses South West** – Mark Agnew, address should be: Mountain Water Experience, Courtlands, Nr Kingbridge TQ7 4BN Tel: 01548 550675 Email: [mwe@mountainwaterexp.demon.co.uk](mailto:mwe@mountainwaterexp.demon.co.uk) Website: [www.mountainwaterexperience.com](http://www.mountainwaterexperience.com)

### West Midlands region

The following canoe clubs should be on page 61 under West Midlands and NOT page 64 Yorkshire: Telford Canoe Club, Upton Warren Canoe Club, Wasall Canoe Club, Worcester Canoe Club, Wychavon Canoe Club and Wyre Forest Canoe Club.

### These clubs were placed in to the wrong region in error.

Approved Centres page 152 should read North West and not North East. Dukeswood Centre should be in the Northern Region and not North West. Low Wood Watersports should be in the Cumbria region and not Yorkshire. Adventurous Experiences which is under Southern Region should be in the North West region. Local River Advisor for the Upper Wharfe, Mike Twiggs, new telephone number: 05600 707462.

### Please note the following where omitted in error Notes for racing calendar 2006-07

\* Indicates that this is not a standard race. These may involve Open classes, mixed classes or one race distance for all.

! This race date is provisional. Please contact the race organiser before travelling.

K1 Indicates there will be a Div 1 K1 class but no Div 1/2 K2 class.  
K2 Indicates there will be a Div 1/2 K2 class but no Div 1 K1 class.  
H2006 Indicates a Hasler qualifying race for 2006/07 for the region shown.

H2007 Indicates a Hasler qualifying race for 2007/08 for the region shown.

- 1 13 miles and 3 portages. Shepperton to Richmond K2s only.
- 2 24 miles and 8 portages. Windsor to Teddington. K1s compete for the Eve Watkin Cup. The Bernard Watkin Cup is awarded to the winning team. Open to K1, K2, C1 and C2. Juniors in K2 only. Assessment race for K1.
- 3 13.5 miles and 21 portages time trial. Great Bedwyn to Newbury.
- 4 14 miles and 14 portages time trial. Aldermaston to Reading.
- 5 18.5 miles and 23 portages time trial. Newbury circuit.
- 6 18 miles and 8 portages. Reading to Marlow.
- 7 13 miles and 4 portages on canal from Milton Keynes to Leighton Buzzards, for K2s only. U18, U16, U14, U12 boys, girls and mixed. Senior open for men, women and veterans.
- 8 22.5 miles and 30 portages time trial. Pewsey to Newbury.
- 9 17 miles and 9 portages on canal/river. K1, C1, K2, C2 straight through/relay.
- 10 34.5 miles and 30 portages time trial. Devizes to Newbury.
- 11 54 miles canal, 54 miles Thames and 17 miles Tideway with 76 portages. Non-stop for senior doubles. Junior doubles and senior singles race in 4 stages over 4 days.
- 12 18 miles + 3 portages downstream from Castle Donnington to Nottingham.
- 13 10 miles of tidal estuary on flood tide – can be rough. Divs 1-7 only plus tourist trial. Buoyancy aids compulsory.
- 14 10km and 5km K1 race. Open event with handicap based on Sprint/Marathon rankings.
- 15 Now Sunday only. K1 and K2 veteran class races.
- 16 95 mile circular canal race through the night. K1 and K2 non-stop and relay plus 10 paddler double tourer relay.
- 17 Classic descent from Tiverton to Exeter, 19 miles with weirs and rapids. Over 16 years only.
- 18 15 mile river descent for all boats.
- 19 10.25 miles and 6 weir shoots or portages. Classes for K1/K2 Div1-3 and 4-9, WWRs, C2 racing and touring, slalom and touring.
- 20 12 miles and 5 portages doe Divs 1-3. 8 miles and 3 portages for Divs 4-9.
- 21 4pm start, non-ranking.
- 22 Grandtully to Dunkeld.
- 23 7.30pm start.
- 24 World Cup 1 at Zamora, Spain.
- 25 World Cup 2 at Trenchin, Slovakia.
- 26 World Marathon Championships at Tremolat, France.
- 27 Dunkeld to Perth.

## YORKIE NEWS

### Let me explain outright that it wasn't an obituary for John Sturgess, (Slalom Coach) the only thing that's stopped ticking is his stopwatch!

So, on the subject of correction, some of our regional details in the yearbook (which you received with your February edition of Canoe Focus) need the tipex!

Page 26 in the PaddleSport Development Officers please add that Gareth Field (down as North West) is also our Yorkshire PDO and can be contacted at [gareth@bcu.org.uk](mailto:gareth@bcu.org.uk) tel 07738 185885. If your club caters for juniors and youths and you want any assistance then Gareth is waiting to hear from you.

Jump to page 63 where the Yorkshire entry starts and by and large we think we have it pretty much right (but of course I know you'll tell me if its not!) so just add under the 'Yorkshire Sea Paddlers' compiler Ken Reece that his landline is cheaper for you to ring on 01937 588786. We now have a register of over 50 paddlers and the full programme for 2006 listing all 11 events is on the YORKIE web site at [www.yorcje.org.uk](http://www.yorcje.org.uk) It's after our bit that the errors creep in, so turning to page 68, dedicated to our very own Washburn programme, the feature carries the old web and telephone numbers. In the header. Please delete these and insert [www.yorcje.org.uk](http://www.yorcje.org.uk) for the programme and to ring 0845 833 8654 for info. Again on page 74 the poor old Washburn has again got the 2004 tel no. wrong so again should be 0845 833 8654. If you spot an error that effects our region please let me know. The region's web site continues to grow in popularity and received 18,000 hits last month. If you would like to see your events featured, please contact Kate Wright on 01132 943778 or email [webmaster@yorcje.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@yorcje.org.uk) Better still register with Kate as your clubs web-rep and Kate will take you through how to add your own details direct.

Jumping to events in the summer please note that the first Yorkshire Paddlefest extravaganza is on the 3-4th June at Hatfield Water Park and will be aimed at fun for all and especially Juniors, with events in slalom, polo, sprint and much more.

Progress on the new Manvers paddlesport venue announced in the last edition

(near Wath on Dearne, S. Yorkshire) continues and to date six different user groups have registered a possible interest in the site. It's not too late to show your interest, so please contact our Vice Chairman Keith Saunders at [all@saundersfam.free-online.co.uk](mailto:all@saundersfam.free-online.co.uk) or ring 01226 752903.

Many of us were introduced into this wonderfully diverse lifestyle of canoeing and kayaking through the Scout and Guide associations. If you have the inclination and a bit of time, then you may well now be in a position to put a bit back. If you think you can then please contact John Lucas at [lucasj@btinternet.com](mailto:lucasj@btinternet.com) or 07884 181828 for a chat.

Clubs and groups who travel to the Lakes for weekend trips, might like to make use of an excellent centre ideally placed for the rivers Crake, Leven, Duddon, Creta, etc. It is called Low Bank Ground on the eastern shore of Coniston. It has central heating, good drying facilities and sleeps 32 in rooms of 2-6. Details are available from Wendy on 015394 41314 or try [www.lakelandoutdoorcentres.com](http://www.lakelandoutdoorcentres.com) Remember the Lakes have some excellent access agreements from the 1st November through to the 31st March annually.

Coaches, by the time you read this about 100 of us will have been involved in the Spring Aldwark coaching weekend. If you didn't know about it then it means we probably don't know about you. Please continue to register your emails (or snailmail) details with the regions coaching Secretary Janet Cartwright at [paul@pcartwright.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:paul@pcartwright.freeserve.co.uk) or tel 01484 603126.

You or your club are invited to join any of the regional development team meetings, the next two dates are Monday 24th April in Leeds or Monday 26th June in Roundhay Park (hosted by White Rose cc) and full details are available from Jon Dakeyne, email [jdakeyne@aol.com](mailto:jdakeyne@aol.com) or ring 01132 250984, who can send you notes from previous meetings and directions to the next. Similarly, if you or your club has a request for help or advice on any aspect of our sport, please let Jon know.

DICK [dickconstable@canoeists.co.uk](mailto:dickconstable@canoeists.co.uk)



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email: [wmcc@arrowmcc.demon.co.uk](mailto:wmcc@arrowmcc.demon.co.uk)

West Midlands Canoe Centre Fax: 01922 479096  
 Sneyd Wharf, 401 Sneyd Lane, Bloxwich, Walsall, WS3 2LT  
 web site www.wmcc.co.uk

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 or Tel: 01298 71100





## Letters

### Ear epidemic!

After a great summer kayak guiding in Austria, Spain and Slovenia, I was admitted into Nottingham QMC on the for my left ear to be 'drilled'. Why? Exostoses of my ear canal caused by too much kayaking or to be more precise too much cold water shock in my ear canals. This condition is also known as, 'Surfers ear', 'Swimmers ear' etc. I think we now have the right to call it 'Kayakers Ear' too.

With constant cold water shock the ear canal's natural reaction is to

### CONTRIBUTION DETAILS

Email: peter@canoefocus.co.uk

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

produce bony growths to protect the ear drum. It is not known why this happens, but it is a pain. In my case my left ear was over 80% closed. It reached a point when water got in, it could not drain, so infections occurred.

The bone growth had perforated my ear drum and my friends had got fed up with having to repeat themselves as my hearing has been affected in

both ears (I still need my right ear doing).

My ear consultant seems to be operating on at least one kayaker a month. Many of my friends have already had the operation or need it doing. Yet most people I see kayaking do not wear ear protection. Is this lack of education or the belief that it won't happen to them?

Although I have been religiously wearing ear plugs for four years it was too late as the previous 13 had done the damage. The last four months has been agony with non stop tinnitus (a loud constant ringing) and has entailed return trips to the hospital every two to three weeks for check-ups and new dressings due to ear infections (I live in North Wales but trusted the QMC more). Worst of all, I have not been allowed to kayak since – quite hard for someone who tries to make a living from kayak coaching.

I'm making this article short so you read it but I have a little more to say. Kayakers Ear is a natural condition; everybody is at threat if their ears are filling with water frequently. The rapid change in boat designs over the last ten years has increased how wet we get in this sport. Other submersive water sports are well aware of the problem but the message isn't getting through to us kayakers and canoeists.

Just to scare you a little more I will describe the operation, I have to say the NHS were really good. Although not too painful afterwards they have to open up the ear canal by chopping and folding the ear a little, then they need to remove the skin away from the bony growths, drill the bone away like a dentist and then after putting the skin back and sewing up the ear, hope that the ear canal will heal soon, sometimes in six weeks but not for me. It is a little more complicated than that, but you get the gist. I'll be ok in the next month or so and ready for Austria trips this summer. One thing's for sure I will always be wearing ear plugs and an ear wig as the condition can repeat, I hope you will too. There are lots of plugs on the market, Doctor D's in most good kayak stores seem to work for a lot of different ear types. Cotton wool with Vaseline can give a good seal for a while. I have heard some people use blue tack (maybe an emergency option) but you can get some moulded to your ear which I think work best by asking your doctor for an appointment to see an ENT (Ear, Nose and Throat) specialist. Don't be silly get it sorted, I wouldn't wish the alternative on anybody.

Andy Turton

### Free legal advice?

Some twenty five years ago I wrote to Canoe Focus suggesting that third party liability insurance should be included in the BCU membership package. I think this has proved popular and successful. I am now writing to suggest that we extend this to include free legal advice.

A lot of similar membership bodies offer free legal advice to their members. Obviously there have to be limits to this, but members should have the re-assurance, in the event of a legal threat involving their paddling, that they have free legal help and the support of their BCU - certainly in the first initial stages, for example receipt of a solicitor's letter, which can be so worrying.

I suggest that this would cost little but be a real benefit to members.

Good paddling, Peter Knowles

### Poor deal for Dag

I read your review of the Dag kayaks and although you gave them a good write-up (I own Dag kayaks and think they are very good value for your money) I thought you were a little harsh on their web site. Then I realised your mistake the.com website is poor and does not have an up-to-date listing but if you try www.dag-kayak.co.uk you will find a bang up to date website, much better for potential buyers.

It's good to see Canoe Focus testing more affordable boats, everybody knows Dagger and the like make great boats but not everybody wants to spend big money for a brand when other less well known kayaks perform almost as well (or as well as the non connoisseur). So please carry on helping us not so well off paddlers to make better choices when buying new.

Robert Edwards

### One of the best

Dear Peter, I've just read Canoe Focus in one sitting and I think that it is one of the best issues I remember reading. I was particularly impressed by the breadth of paddling interests represented by the various articles. I've been paddling 50 years and a BCU/SCA member for about 40 years so that is quite a lot of reading over the years!

Once again, congratulations on an excellent issue.

Roger Lanyon

### A fairer deal for veterans?

When I was well past the big "six - oh", I moved from rowing to kayaking. Whilst I have been made extremely welcome by my local club, I have been very disappointed by the structure of competitive veteran kayaking. The cynical might interpret it as a recipe to try and ensure that older members are more available to coach and manage clubs, and discourage them from competition (by contrast, the structure for racing the children is excellent and, as I see it, achieves its aim of firing competitive spirit and attracting them to the sport).

Briefly, the existing arrangement is that Veteran A is over 40 and quick; Veteran B is over 40 and less quick. At the National Marathon Championships there were two events for veterans; over-44 and over-54. We are encouraged nowadays to continue active sport into older age. How can this system possibly spur us on?

In rowing, there are three veteran categories below 50 and from 50 onwards there is a new category every five years. In order to allow those increasingly rare individuals in the older categories to have an exciting race, there is a system of handicapping, so that in the event of races not being quorate, they cannot only compete, but also have a real chance of 'beating' the younger one.

Referring to the British Rowing Almanac for 2004, the following selected data is published to illustrate how the system works:

#### Veteran Handicapping Data

##### Standard Times (Minutes)

Age Group	1	4	10	20
A (31+)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
B (36+)	0.01	0.02	0.06	0.12
C (43+)	0.02	0.08	0.21	0.42
D (50+)	0.05	0.18	0.45	1.30
E (55+)	0.07	0.26	1.06	2.12
F (60+)	0.09	0.36	1.30	3.00
G (65+)	0.12	0.47	1.57	3.54
H (70+)	0.15	0.59	2.27	4.54
I (75+)	0.18	1.12	3.00	6.00

(Reproduced with permission from the Amateur Rowing Association)

In order to illustrate how the system works, the organisers of the event have to decide what the anticipated time would be for Veteran A and the handicap accordingly. Thus, (if adopted by the BCU) in the National Marathon Championships, if it was estimated that a 31 year old should take 30 minutes, a 55 year old would take 3.18 (1.5 x 2.12) minutes longer, a 65 year old would take 5.51 (1.5 x 3.54) minutes longer and a 75 year old 9 minutes extra. I see no particular problem with incorporating Ladies; if adopted, the BCU could consult sports' physiologists for a further correction.

Finally whilst I have a captive readership, and writing as one who fell in at the start of the last Marathon Championships, may I commend the notion of "Head of the River Races", which are processional timed events, avoiding the pandemonium of massed level starts and chaos at portages?

Stewart Farquharson





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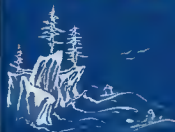
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Applicants should have a good understanding of the value of Outdoor Education, be able to demonstrate practical capability, communicate well with people of all ages and be activity enthusiasts.

Board and single accommodation provided free of charge. Applicants should be over 21, hold some NGB activity qualifications and ideally have previous Centre experience. Excellent opportunities for progressing professional skills and gaining further qualifications.

A current First Aid qualification is required.

For further details and application form contact:

The Centre Director  
Hindleap Warren Outdoor Centre  
Wych Cross  
Forest Row  
East Sussex RH18 5JS  
Tel: 01342 822625  
Email: [admin@hindleap.com](mailto:admin@hindleap.com)



SITUATIONS VACANT

**YMCA**

National Centre, Lakeside

**Looking for a job in the outdoor industry?**

Swing down to see us ... and join our team of experienced and enthusiastic multi-activity instructors delivering Outdoor Education and Personal Development programmes to school and youth groups at our dynamic Centre in the Lake District. Contracts for our 2006 Seasonal Instructors start from early spring.

Applicants must have a minimum one NGB assessment and one NGB training course from the following: Summer ML, SPA, RYA Dinghy Instructor or BCU L2 Canoe/Kayak Coach, plus one season's prior experience of working in the outdoors preferred.

We are also recruiting chefs and general assistants now and for the 2006 season.

For a recruitment pack please contact:

Personnel Manager,  
YMCA National Centre, Lakeside, Newby Bridge, Cumbria, LA12 8BD  
Tel: 08707 27 39 27 Email: personnel@lakesideymca.co.uk

[www.lakesideymca.co.uk](http://www.lakesideymca.co.uk)



SITUATIONS VACANT

**Part time instructors**

required with Level 2 Coach plus minibus D1. Very flexible hours - weekdays or weekends. Minimum age 22.

BOWLES Tunbridge Wells  
**01892 665665**

**Canoe Instructor required for French Activity Centre**

Contact Martin at

[enquiries@activityholidaysfrance.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@activityholidaysfrance.co.uk)

**Looking for the best Training & Working Adventure?**

Rewarding work and great fun instructing exciting adventure activities to 8-12 year olds, including Canoeing, Climbing, Caving, Archery... and many more.

Robinwood offers:

- ▲ Two great locations in the Pennines.
- ▲ An excellent staff training programme, including NGB qualifications paid for by Robinwood
- ▲ Great working conditions, with an average 3 days off per week
- ▲ Good quality staff accommodation
- ▲ Staff residentials and activity events, all organised and paid for by Robinwood.
- ▲ Great staff wages
- ▲ National Training Award Winner 2001

For further details:

[bestjob@robinwood.co.uk](mailto:bestjob@robinwood.co.uk)

Tel 01706 814 554

**robinwood**  
Activity Centre:  
Todmorden, Lancs  
[www.robinwood.co.uk](http://www.robinwood.co.uk)

**THE CHILDREN ARE READY... Are You?**

**Instructors and River Leaders wanted for 2006 - UK and France**

Are you ...  
Highly motivated...?  
Enthusiastic about the outdoors...?  
Professional...?  
Then you could be just what we're looking for

Positions available from January 06 - please contact the Recruitment Team for an application pack

Ideally you will have experience of working with children & young people plus qualifications or training in Canoeing, Kayaking or Climbing (minimum BCU Level 3 canoe required for River Leaders) This could be your chance to **DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT**

**NST** Call: 0845 671 1357

Travel Group e-mail: [info@nstjobs.co.uk](mailto:info@nstjobs.co.uk) [www.nstjobs.co.uk](http://www.nstjobs.co.uk)

**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: [leicesterop@btconnect.com](mailto:leicesterop@btconnect.com)

Website: [www.lopc.homestead.com](http://www.lopc.homestead.com)

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

**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](mailto:alan@westminsterboatingbase.co.uk) or by post to:

Alan Price, Director

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

**KENT CANOE SERVICES SUPERSTORE**

"LONDON AND THE SOUTH EAST'S FINEST CANOE STORE"  
B.C.U APPROVED CANOE SCHOOL

New House Farm, Kemsing Road, Wrotham,  
Kent TN15 7BU Tel/fax: (01732) 886688

Kent Canoes, a leading canoe/kayak retailer in the Southeast, require a sales assistant to support an exciting growing business. You will be a key member of the team not only responsible for direct sales, but purchasing, administration, telephone calls and the general running and care of the shop.

The successful candidate will be enthusiastic, out-going, flexible and reliable. You will ideally have some knowledge of canoeing and kayaking but the ability to learn quickly is more important. You will need to have the competence to work as part of a team as well as on your own. A good level of computer literacy is essential and a clean driving license.

In return we offer a fun and interesting environment in which to work with a salary of £11,000 per annum pro rata.

If you feel you are what we are looking for then please apply in writing to Grant Scamell. Send us your CV and a hand-written covering letter explaining why you feel you would enjoy working and be successful with Kent Canoes.



# Lead an Expedition

World CHALLENGE  
EXPLORATIONS

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**



## 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](mailto:havenb@devon.gov.uk)  
or call 01392 434668



**B.C.U. & R.Y.A**

**Instructors & Senior Instructors  
Required for 2006 season**

AT

**Albany Park canoe & Sailing Centre  
Kingston Upon Thames**

For an application form contact  
Jon or Phill on 020 8549 3066 or  
020 8547 5812

email: [albanyparksb@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:albanyparksb@rbk.kingston.gov.uk)



## Want more than just a job?

We are looking for vibrant, energetic team members to work as **Open Canoe Instructors** at our UK, French and Spanish centres in 2006.

- Full-board accommodation
- Competitive weekly wage

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

Flexible length contracts available

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!



[www.pgl.co.uk/recruitment](http://www.pgl.co.uk/recruitment)

[recruitment@pgl.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@pgl.co.uk)

**0870 401 4411**



PGL is committed to the principle of equal opportunities



## Surrey Outdoor Learning & Development

Highly motivated team looking for new members to start June 2006. Seasonal positions available at Thames Young Mariners, Ham, Richmond, Surrey. Candidates should ideally hold:

- BCU level 2 kayak/canoe coach
- RYA Dinghy Instructor

The benefits include:

- Some on-site accommodation
- 36 hour week or time off in lieu
- Competitive salary £13 500 - £15 000 (pro rata)
- Paid holiday and government pension (optional)

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](mailto:outdoor.educationcentres@surreycc.gov.uk)

Applications will be considered until the end of April 2006.



## Arnfield Care Ltd

**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

## Marwell Activity Centre

**Vacancies for 2006 season**

**Instructors and Support staff**

Required for a busy Multi Activity centre situated close to Winchester. Will be working with both adults and children through a variety of different activities.

Full time and Seasonal residential or non residential vacancies available. NGB qualifications required but not essential for some positions.

Applications by CV to  
Marwell Activity Centre, Hurst Lane, Eastleigh,  
Hants SO50 7NQ

Tel: (01962) 777547

[recruitment@marwellactivitycentre.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@marwellactivitycentre.co.uk)



SITUATIONS VACANT

## Do Camels Eat Fish?



Who knows and who cares?  
But if you have a sense of humour we have a fantastic opportunity for you to join an established team, helping young people to rethink their lives.

### SENIOR INSTRUCTOR

Salary range £12k - £14k dependant on experience

### ACTIVITY INSTRUCTOR

Salary range £10k - £12k dependant on experience

Both these positions are permanent with progression training provided. 37.5 hrs/wk on a rota basis (including some weekends). Accommodation available and uniform provided.

For Job Description, Person Spec and Application Form send your C.V. to Graham Hughes, Pioneer Centre, Cleobury Mortimer, Shropshire, DY14 8JG  
t: 01299 271217 Email: enquiries@pioneercentre.org.uk

### MODERN APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME!

No qualifications or experience? Don't worry, become a Modern Apprentice with a formal training programme. Uniform and accommodation provided too!



## Instructors for 2006 Season at Waterland

To deliver everything from qualification courses to our holiday programme we are

looking for instructors with two or more of the following qualifications:

Kayaking Instructors; Windsurfing Instructors; Dinghy Instructors; Archery Instructors.

Full induction programme; £10400 pro rata; 5 day wk; Season March to October. Apply to Jo on line: [jo@ukwatersports.co.uk](mailto:jo@ukwatersports.co.uk)  
[www.ukwatersports.co.uk](http://www.ukwatersports.co.uk)



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](mailto:employment@longridge.org.uk)  
[www.longridge.org.uk](http://www.longridge.org.uk)

SITUATIONS VACANT

ACORN



0121 504 2060  
[jobs@acornadventure.co.uk](mailto:jobs@acornadventure.co.uk)  
[www.jobs-acorn.co.uk](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk)  
Email: [hr@girlguiding.org.uk](mailto:hr@girlguiding.org.uk)  
Tel: 020 7592 1892



Charity no. 306016

Girlguiding UK

## Adventure International

MAKE A DIFFERENCE!  
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](http://www.adventure-uk.com) [tracy@adventure-uk.com](mailto:tracy@adventure-uk.com)

### River sport instructors/guides required

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

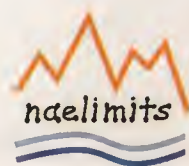
If you are hard working, reliable and a team player with:

**Useful Qualifications:** SRA/IRF raft guide essential, 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. Salary starting from £11000 per annum pro rata based on a six month contract. Please send a cover letter with C.V. to

[info@naelimits.co.uk](mailto:info@naelimits.co.uk) or by post to Nae Limits, 14 The Cross, Dunkeld PH8 0AJ  
for more info see [www.naelimits.co.uk](http://www.naelimits.co.uk)







# Summer Adventure

Needed for Schools  
Adventure Programme;

- ▶ **BCU Level 2 Instructors**
- ▶ **RYA Qualified Instructors**
- ▶ **Reps/Chefs and Support Staff**

Work in  
France, Spain  
or Cornwall



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- ▶ **By Post**  
tjm travel,  
40 lemon Street  
Truro TR1 2NS



## STUBBERS ADVENTURE CENTRE

Upminster, Essex

### Vacancies for 2006 season Instructing staff

required for a busy multi activity centre that provides for a wide range of clients.

All activities are within 130 acre site with 3 lakes. Close to London

More details on website: [www.stubbers.co.uk](http://www.stubbers.co.uk)

Applications with CV to Bob Edwards (Centre Director) at:

Stubbers Adventure Centre, Ockendon Road, Upminster, Essex RM14 2TY

Or email: [bob@stubbers.co.uk](mailto:bob@stubbers.co.uk)

Charity No. 1080941

## Are you up to the challenge?

### IF YOU ARE:

- Dynamic ● Fun ● Caring
- Enthusiastic ● Full of initiative
- Looking for real adventure
- Eager to work with challenging young people
- Flexible and willing to work away from home

### DO YOU HAVE:

- National Governing Body outdoor qualifications and/or
- Childcare experience

Active 8 Care provide high quality respite and emergency care for young people with challenging behaviour. We use a variety of adventurous activities to encourage positive personal development.

All staff teams are highly mobile and operate throughout the U.K. in specialist vehicles

## If so contact us now!

Telephone: 01298 85071 / 01253 721457 / 07971 446775  
or email: [jon@active8care.co.uk](mailto:jon@active8care.co.uk) web: [www.active8care.co.uk](http://www.active8care.co.uk)



# GRAFHAM

water centre

### Senior Instructors and Instructor

If you want a rewarding and enjoyable place to work and to be involved with developing young people then look no further, we are seeking to recruit a number of new staff. Grafham Water Centre is a wonderful site on the shores of one of Britain's largest reservoirs. The residential centre offers activity courses for schools, youth groups and adults. The Centre is open all year round and contracts will vary in length.

For 2006 and beyond we require enthusiastic staff who are able to deliver programmes of exciting and educationally valid activities for schools, youth groups, adults and individuals.

Activities include Sailing, Windsurfing, Canoeing, Kayaking, Climbing and Abseiling, Archery, High and Low Ropes Courses, Mountain Biking and Team Building. NGB qualifications are required although on-site training is given.

This could be the opportunity of a lifetime, whether you are looking for a full time career in the outdoors, experience of working with young people or just enjoy a challenge.

Salaries for Instructors start at £213.49 per week with opportunities for overtime. Salaries for Senior Instructors depend on experience and qualifications. Accommodation is available

Catering staff are also required.

For further information and an application form, please ring  
Christina at Grafham Water Centre, Perry, Huntingdon,  
Cambridgeshire PE28 0BX  
on (01480) 810521

[www.grafham-water-centre.co.uk](http://www.grafham-water-centre.co.uk)



Cambridgeshire  
County Council

## BCU LEVEL 1 OR 2 KAYAK COACHES

### Suffolk

Kids Klub is an established provider of outdoor activity holidays and we are proud of our water sports programme and our paddlers!

If you fancy joining our team of spirited individuals, get in touch now.

We require qualified Kayak Instructors to lead exciting and lively water sports sessions plus other outdoor activities to children and teenagers from all over Europe at our idyllic, rural locations in Suffolk.

Activities Instructors with BCU Coach Status are required for immediate start and seasonal work at our Suffolk based camps. Kids Klub offer a competitive training and employment package to include provision of full board accommodation if required. All staff must undertake enhanced CRB disclosure.

Kids Klub is an equal opportunities employer

Download an application form from our website

[www.kidsklub.co.uk](http://www.kidsklub.co.uk)

Telephone 01449 742700

Email [jobs@kidsklub.co.uk](mailto:jobs@kidsklub.co.uk)



## Multi-Activity instructors required at busy centre on Loch Lomond May-end August

Applicants must have open canoe level 2. No accommodation provided. Hourly rate £6 to £15 depending on qualifications and experience.

Please send cv to  
[info@canyouexperience.com](mailto:info@canyouexperience.com)  
or call 01389 602576.



SITUATIONS VACANT



If you're looking for a new challenge, are passionate about working with young people and would like to help us change lives, then Fairbridge is the place for you.

We offer you permanent UK-wide opportunities, career development, and the benefits of working for an organisation that is highly respected within the voluntary sector.

Applications from all levels accepted. You should hold at least one of the following: BCU Level 2 Coach, SPA, ML.

Get the best of both worlds - city living and outdoor working



Apply online at [www.fairbridge.org.uk](http://www.fairbridge.org.uk)  
E: [recruit@fairbridge.org.uk](mailto:recruit@fairbridge.org.uk)  
Registered charity no. 206807

**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](mailto:info@carlingfordadventure.com)

web: [www.carlingfordadventure.com](http://www.carlingfordadventure.com)

**Would you like the opportunity to work in an amazing location on the West Coast of Scotland?**

Dynamic, Resourceful and Energetic staff needed to contribute to the running of our multi-activity outdoor centre.

We cater for a wide and diverse range of clients, both children and adults.

We require Multi-disciplined and NGB qualified staff in outdoor activities who wish to develop their skills in the outdoors.

Creative cook/chef required for our busy season, along with other in-house staff.

Please send your CV to  
[staff@raasayoutdoorcentre.co.uk](mailto:staff@raasayoutdoorcentre.co.uk)

Raasay Outdoor Centre, Raasay House, Isle of Raasay, by Kyle, IV40 8B

see where you could be working this season at  
[www.raasayoutdoorcentre.co.uk](http://www.raasayoutdoorcentre.co.uk)



**Freelance Residential Care Workers Needed!**

Radical Services are based in the Lake District and have been delivering high quality crisis intervention (Outdoor based) and long-term (Care home based) childcare for over ten years.

Freelance Outdoor Instructors/Care workers can expect excellent rates of pay  
Flexibility and short notice availability is highly desirable.  
Work available from one to thirteen days a month.

Can you say yes to the following questions?

- You have a least one year of residential child care experience
- You hold a minimum of two NGBs
- You can deal with challenging behaviour
- You have a caring personality
- You would like to receive training (NVQ)
- You can work away from home 1-3 nights
- You are over 21 and hold a full clean driving licence

For information /application pack call us on 01768 899998  
Penrith Cumbria



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Please send to [peter@canoefocus.co.uk](mailto:peter@canoefocus.co.uk) or by post with BCU membership number to: Canoe Focus, Members Classified, 49 Greenfields, St Ives, Cambs PE27 5HB. **ADVERTS CANNOT BE TAKEN OVER THE PHONE**  
 Ads are posted on [www.canoefocus.co.uk](http://www.canoefocus.co.uk). It would be of great benefit to us

and to the readers if sellers advise us when their items have been sold on the web. Alternatively, members can post, amend and cancel their own ads on the new BCU website. You will need a password which the BCU will email to you.

**Second Hand Boats [www.aswatersports.co.uk](http://www.aswatersports.co.uk)**

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 Tel: 01934 613612  
 Email: [performance@kayaks.co.uk](mailto:performance@kayaks.co.uk)  
 Website: [www.kayaks.co.uk](http://www.kayaks.co.uk)

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 Sales: [nucleuswatersports.co.uk](mailto:nucleuswatersports.co.uk)  
 Tel: 01255 812 146  
 204 Frinton Rd, Holland-on-sea, Essex, CO155SP

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 Best Service for groups to individuals  
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 The Best Canoe & Kayak Online Shopping Experience

**West Sussex**

**SOUTHWATER WATERSPORTS CENTRE**  
[www.southwatersports.co.uk](http://www.southwatersports.co.uk)  
 Cripplegate lane Southwater  
 West Sussex RH13 7UN  
 Watersports Courses phone  
**01403 732389**  
 For all your watersports equipment look @ [www.ukkayaking.co.uk](http://www.ukkayaking.co.uk)

**Jobs online @ [www.canoefocus.co.uk](http://www.canoefocus.co.uk)**

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



**Paddling with Páramo**

Inspired by mammals' methods of temperature control and waterproofing, Páramo have re-created nature's directional approach to weather protection through the use of durable and renewable modern materials. By directing water to the right place at the right time, Páramo allows you to maintain a steady body temperature and remain comfortable. When wearing Páramo you build up much less water in your clothing system than in garments that are just breathable.

*"Over the past 5 years, the vast majority of my work has been coaching and guiding open canoeing, including multi-day expeditions. Páramo may be designed for the mountains, but despite the huge choice of specialist canoe clothing available on the market, I much prefer to wear Páramo Waterproofs. Warm, soft and comfortable, not only on calm days on the loch, but also in the worst wind and rain Scotland can throw at us, and on crashing white water. I have recommended Páramo to many of my clients"* **Anna Gordon**

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Our specialist Canoe retailer is is: Kent Canoe Services Superstore, New House Farm, Kemsing Road, Wrotham, Kent TN15 7BU. 01732 886688 [www.thecanoeshop.co.uk](http://www.thecanoeshop.co.uk)  
 For a Páramo catalogue and stockist details ring 01892 786444 or visit [www.paramo.co.uk](http://www.paramo.co.uk) and click on 'where to buy'



**How to enter**

For your chance to win one of the following fantastic prizes simply send a postcard with your full name and address to: Páramo/Canoe Focus Prize Draw, Unit F, Durgates Industrial Estate, Wadhurst, East Sussex, TN5 6DF. The closing date is 1st August 2006. Páramo will collect your personal data to process your entry. Páramo and our sister company Nikwax, may contact you about future products and promotions. If you prefer not to receive information from Páramo or Nikwax, please ensure you indicate this on the postcard.

**Terms & Conditions**

1. Entrants must be over 18 years of age and resident in the UK
2. Only one entry per person
3. The winner will be notified in writing 4 weeks after the closing date.
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6. No purchase is necessary
7. Entry into the Free Prize Draw will be deemed as acceptance of these rules. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.



## Coming Soon – BCU Coaching Handbook

Special offer to BCU coaches  
Following on from the very  
successful edition of the  
Canoeing Handbook we  
introduce the completely new  
BCU's Coaching Handbook. As  
with the Canoeing Handbook  
this work is a collaboration with  
and published by Pesda Press.

Edited by Franco Ferrero with  
contributions by experienced  
world class recreation and  
competition coaches this is a first  
of its kind.

Integrating the 'how', the 'why'  
and the 'what' of coaching, the  
BCU Coaching Handbook will aid  
the paddlesport coach at all  
levels appreciate the role of the  
coach and build the coaching  
process and technical skills to  
assist and enhance coaching  
performance in the paddlesport  
environment.

This is a book that will support  
existing coaches and those coming  
into paddlesport coaching for the  
first time. It will help place the  
theory of the coaching process in a  
practical context delivering theory  
through practice. The BCU  
Coaching Handbook shares the  
experiences of its contributing  
coaches focusing on the 'how'  
skills of coaching (the all  
important coaching process skills),  
alongside the 'what' to coach skills  
of paddlesport.

With sections covering coaching  
delivery, coaching context and  
technical modeling plus  
chapters on coaching practice,  
physiology, psychology, novice,  
intermediate, advanced and  
performance coaching as well as  
coaching forward paddling,  
white water, racing, slalom,  
rolling and the use of video; this  
comprehensive resource is a  
must for every coach's  
bookshelf. It will be a major  
supporting element of the BCU's  
United Kingdom Coaching  
Certificate endorsed coach  
education programme when it  
goes live.

Available May 2006 – Cost  
£19.95 plus £3.50 P&P.

**Special Offer/Advanced Order  
Opportunity for BCU Coaches  
£16.95 plus £3.50 P&P.**

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

# It's going to be fun!



## Mega Neutron

I don't always gel instantly to a new kayak and I have to confess the same was true with the Neutron. My first half hour I was finding it a little bit frustrating. "New boat, looks like an awesome design, why am I not tearing it up?" After reminding myself that I had been surfing a Prowler for almost four years and that it might not quite respond in the same way that the Prowler does I started to relax and let myself follow the natural flow of the boat.

Speed. It likes to go fast. Made a couple of sections on a heavy Portballintrae left hander that I've never made in the Prowler and only seen a few very good boardies make and hold. Its flat hull design reduces the friction allowing that extra bit of zip which just might pull you out of a sticky situation!

That also in turn allows for a slicker top turn with the short tail flashing around above the top of the wave. I have

been particularly enjoying turning back of the pile in smaller waves as the whole boat flicks around and drives out of the pocket in an instant. I would describe my off the whitewater turns as very good but have always felt a little staggered. I love the feeling of power of the pocket turning and driving you away in what seems like an effortless movement.

Bottom turns have become quite dependant on the fins in the Neutron due to the slicker hull. Why not? If you've got them then use them. Positioned slightly further back than in previous surf kayaks allows the nose to swing around more and be more vertical on exit from the bottom turn. My goal in surf kayaking is to be able to snap turn the way a good

surf boarder can and I believe that this kayak is the one that will start to do that.

I did manage to go aerial in my first session but only after a bit of practice. Part of the skill needed to pull of an aerial manoeuvre is your timing out of your bottom turn before heading up to the lip and hopefully skyward. I struggled initially due to the fact that I was coming out of the bottom turn too late not realising the speed I had and shooting up into the pile and missing the pitching lip I was after.

Do I like it? After riding a wave where I pulled clear out of a big barrel before nailing a big air that had the one person who was watch seeing only my hull above the wave I would have to say I liked it! It's going to be fun! Enjoy.

**Jonny Bingham**  
World Surf Kayak Champion  
Contact: 01903 717150  
[www.surfkayaks.com](http://www.surfkayaks.com)



## PADDLE THIS

### The lightest of the light

**Windcheater Jacket - 100% Nylon 6.6 Fabric.**

**80gms total weight with sack**

**Windcheater Trousers - 100% Nylon 6.6 Fabric.**

**68gms total weight with sack**

This fabric is engineered to be 100% windproof, shower resistant and allows moisture to pass freely from the inside keeping the wearer dry. With the maximum thread count, Quantum is the lightest Pertex ever! Reed's Soft Shell Windcheater Jacket and Trousers (separates) are featherweights, offering outstanding strength to weight ratio. They are fast wicking, fast drying and shower resistant. Each item packs up to the size of a small apple. Jacket features include stuff sack attached to jacket, half zip front, lightweight elasticated binding on cuff and hem, drop back styling. Trousers features include elasticated waist and binding on ankle, stuff sack attached to waist inner.

Colours: Black. Jacket Price:

£38.00. Trousers Price: £28.00.

Contact: Reed for a free  
brochure: 01271 815828 or  
[reed@chillcheater.com](mailto:reed@chillcheater.com)





## Pyranha range in full effect



With the Burn now in production the full 2006 Pyranha WW range is ready for your boating pleasure. Why not have a demo in one of the new boats from one of the largest comprehensive and dedicated WW ranges. Also in stores is the new 2006 brochure with all the details of the boats and some cool posters for your wall too.

Not content with all the new boats they have done for this year the gang up at Pyranha have also been pretty busy on the software front. A replacement for the award winning 'fishdeck' has just been launched. Constructed from 4mm Tuftex double sided neoprene with a 4mm superstretch insert over the knees to reduce implosion, while all the seams are all glued and blind stitched then taped for bombproof durability. While the Moulded 'hand grab' on high visibility webbing is there just in case.

Simple sizing rounds it all off, two deck sizes - 'P' for smaller playboats and 'R' for river running/creekin boats.

Meanwhile on the bling front why not slip into the new Pyranha t-shirts for the summer with the new boat logos and that fish hiding somewhere on them. Drop in to your local authorised Pyranha dealer to see the boats and all the other 'stuff' on offer from Pyranha.

[www.pyranha.com](http://www.pyranha.com)



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### MAVERICK



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This is a versatile surf kayak suitable for all sizes and abilities, if you surf once a year or every day you should try this boat out, you'll be amazed.

**Simon Hammond**  
World Surf Kayak Champion



**Special Introductory Price £399**

[www.surfkayaks.com](http://www.surfkayaks.com) Tel: 01903 717150



## Fuss free hygiene

**Matron's Bio Safe Touch Spray** is a powerful waterless hand cleanser where clean water is scarce, that doubles as a surface disinfectant.

The spray kills 99.9% of domestic germs dead in their tracks while offering 100% protection against MRSA, MSSA, Salmonella, E.Coli and Streptococcus on hands and contact surfaces. The Matron waterless cleanser range also includes a hand gel with the same useful surface sanitising agents.

Although a powerful cleanser, Matron is infused with aloe vera and essential oils, leaving hands smooth, soft and moisturised.

Neat stuff!



## Lock it and leave it

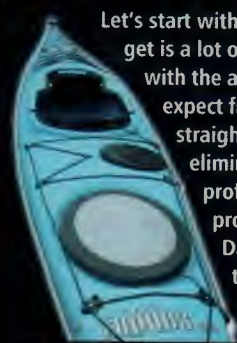
The **SPT Lockable Straps** are the most practical and versatile method of securing valuable camping and outdoor equipment to your roof rack or trailer. The soft and extremely hard wearing woven straps incorporate two hardened stainless steel cables preventing the straps from being cut by any would be thieves.

The extremely strong die cast buckle ensures there is not even the slightest movement or loosening of the straps when locked. Comprised of three lengths ranging from 1.5m to 4.0m the straps can be used for almost any application or in any environment. Recognised by NW Brown Insurance as a suitable locking device to secure a canoe or kayak to a roof rack.

For more information call Avoncraft on 01707 33 00 00 or visit [www.avoncraft.co.uk](http://www.avoncraft.co.uk)



# Dagger Exodus X 16.8



Let's start with the price and it's a good one at £950. What you get is a lot of sea/touring/expedition kayak for your money and with the added bonus of the build quality that you come to expect from Dagger. The Dagger Exodus X 16.8 has a long, straight hull, with the stern and bow rising at the ends to eliminate chop and backed up by a 'triangulated' deck profile which adds both structural and water dispersal properties. I am told that the 16.8 is a re-working of Dagger's Exodus kayak but with a few tweaks with the deck being smoothed off, trimmed down and stiffened up for a better ride. The kayak also features the new standard Dagger dual density hatches, which do not flex as much when paddling, recessed fittings and a comfortable new outfitting system that includes a thigh-brace adjustable ratchet system.

As an expedition boat, it is built for the task from the ground up. The width allows for the feeling of good initial stability and is aimed more at the intermediate kayaker, where the Exodus tracks well because of its long waterline, and it is responsive on edge. The Exodus also carves smoothly and attains a good speed due to the multi chined hull. If exploring overnight or for the weekend, then the three dual density hatches, ensuring a secure dry seal, come in very handy indeed and will serve all your stowage needs with ease. Both the front and rear hatches have plenty of space and are separated from the cockpit by bulkheads keeping the areas and your equipment safe and dry. The outfitting of the Exodus is excellent and includes the newly designed Comfort Fit System™ with a padded seat and adjustable backband, adjustable thigh braces, Yakima sliding rail foot rest system and foam sealed bulkheads. This is topped off with GPS and compass mounting points with web cords criss crossing fore and aft of the cockpit. The Exodus also comes with an overstern rudder, however, this was missing from our test boat.

This is a sleek well made, high-volume plastic kayak that is offered at half the price of a composite without sacrificing the design, comfort, or function with lots of room for all the essentials of a good weekend.

**Tony Cornwell**

Length: 16'11" (5.16 m)  
Width: 23.25" (59 cm)  
Weight: 60lbs (27 kg)  
Max Load: 400lbs (181 kg)  
Cockpit: 34"x19" (86 x 48 cm)

Dry Bow Hatch Volume 4500 cu. in.

Dry Stern Hatch Volume 8500 cu. in.

Tel: 01275 798100

[www.daggereurope.com](http://www.daggereurope.com)



## PADDLE THIS

### Centre School buoyancy aid/PFD

Palm's new Centre Schools PFD has many features that will assist the instructor; it comes with a tough heavy-duty nylon zip and highly visible reflective tape is sewn to the front and back to enable the user to be seen in poor light.

Easily identifiable sizes for quick fitting. Strong, durable fabrics and construction ensure a long life in a centre or school environment. The Centre/sport PFD features the three-dimensional box construction, to ensure the waist belt lies next to the body and prevents ride up. The colour coded chest belt ensures a comfortable but secure fit. Embroidered sizing on the shoulder straps make size identification easier.

Main colour: red/Chilli

Adult: £39.95 Inc VAT. Youth: £32.95 No VAT

Adult sizes: XS/S – M/L – XL/XXL. Youth: One size

Tel: 01275 798100 [www.palm-equipment.co.uk](http://www.palm-equipment.co.uk)





# Prijon Cruiser



First impressions are that this could prove to be a big, weighty kayak that is cumbersome and difficult to manoeuvre. It certainly has presence and Prijon's Cruiser has perhaps one of the largest cockpits that I've seen on a kayak.

However, the eye is simple to deceive and this is apparent when lifting the Cruiser – it is much lighter than it looks! On the water, it again belies its size with good speed and precision with decent handling and tracking qualities. For the beginner and paddlers lacking confidence, the large cockpit will be appreciated as it gives a feeling of freedom and

therefore ease of entry and exit and yet though it is unconfined, it does allow adequate leg contact with the boat for control. Cumbersome it is not!

Don't be fooled though into thinking this kayak is only for beginners, as all paddlers will appreciate the stiffness and glide that comes from the HTP plastic hull. The stability of this hull would make the Cruiser an ideal platform for fishing or crisp photography.

The big cockpit is enhanced for comfort with an adjustable highback seat and sable tooth

footbraces. For storage there is a sealed spacious rear compartment and a net forward of the cockpit to stow smaller items. For safety, the Cruiser has a hard foam compartment in the bow for floatation should the kayak fill with water.

So, not the biggest of specifications but then again it does what it does well, gives plenty of performance and allows an excellent price of £499, which is ideal for first-time buyers or for those wanting a fairly priced fine utility kayak.

#### Tony Cornwell

Length: 14'1" (430cm)  
 Width: 26 3/4" (67cm)  
 Volume: 107 gal (405litre)  
 Weight: 44 lbs (20kg)  
 Cockpit: 43"x20" (110cm x 51cm)  
 Paddler Wt: 110-250 lbs (50-113kg)

Contact: Avoncraft 01707 330000  
[www.avoncraft.co.uk](http://www.avoncraft.co.uk) [www.prijon.com](http://www.prijon.com)

## Full-on protection

Happy-2b have developed another top quality helmet.

To get technical, it's a full cut model constructed of carbon ensuring a lightweight super stiff shell, fitted with a thick PPE liner under a thin layer of comfort foam with gel pads guaranteeing the most comfortable helmet yet!

With total ear protection and a removable chin bar, dual-lock adjustable headband and occipital lock, available in Medium and Large and meeting CE 1385.

Call Avoncraft on 01707 330000

[www.avoncraft.co.uk](http://www.avoncraft.co.uk)  
[www.happy-2b.com](http://www.happy-2b.com)



## PADDLE THIS

### Helly Hansen Hybrid Zip Turtle

Excellent for high energy use in the cooler Spring weather, where you need good moisture management together with extra warmth. The Hybrid Turtle top is a versatile base layer with the following features: Prowool fabric main body for warmth, Lifa fabric underarm panels for enhanced ventilation, deep neck zip to control heat and an active-cut gives all-round freedom of movement.

Make no mistake, this is a good looking piece of kit to be seen in as well, due to the longer back and close to the body fit. Flatlock seams for extra comfort for high intensity movement.

The fabric is non-pilling and odour resistant and like all HH garments, has a very fast drying time.

Available in both Men and Womens style in navy/dusk and black/pewter for men and navy/glacier and black/pewter for women.

Tel: 0115 960 8797 [www.hellyhansen.com](http://www.hellyhansen.com)



## A new range of Ainsworth paddles

Ainsworth have broken new ground in paddle development. A new nylon/composite material that yields 260 Mpa tensile strength. That's over double the strength of nylon 12.

The blade is much stiffer than any other nylon paddles and the shaft is pressed into the blades with hydraulic pressure to a depth of 10cm, ensuring a watertight joint and a continuous feel from shaft to blade tip.

There are four new models in this range and all have unique blade design features...



1. A dihedral blade with spooned outer flanks, gives an amazingly positive feel to the blades. They are absolutely stable in the water when rolling or sculling which is normally very hard to achieve with thin blades.
2. The generous drain angle, not only sheds water quickly but also offers the blade up to the surface of the water at less of an angle and so support strokes are much easier.
3. The high strength of the material means that the blade can be made lighter, and the standard whitewater paddle weighs in at only 1200g. The Sea Tour, with a composite shaft, is even lighter at 1050g.

If all this were not enough, prices start at £45 with a host of shaft variations to fine tune the paddle to your specific needs.

[www.ainsworthpaddles.net](http://www.ainsworthpaddles.net)  
 Tel: 0208 898 4839



## Events

**Doggy Paddle,**

Stratford-Upon-Avon  
14th May 2006

**Event Details:** Charity 19 mile flat water recreational kayak/canoe paddle down the beautiful stretch of the River Leam/Avon. The trip takes you from Royal Leamington Spa, through the spectacular grounds of Warwick Castle and Charlecote Park, ending in historic Stratford-upon-Avon. In aid of the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association.

**Event Contact:**

[info@doggy.paddle.org.uk](mailto:info@doggy.paddle.org.uk),  
[www.doggy.paddle.org.uk](http://www.doggy.paddle.org.uk),  
Connel Williams, 144 Leam  
Terrace, Leamington Spa,  
Warks, CV31 1DN

**Canoe Camping Club****Thames and South East Group**

Spring Touring programme  
Monday 1st May River Wey from  
Weybridge

Saturday 13 May, River Hamble

The group welcomes individuals and families as guest paddlers. Trips are normally 10-12 miles and suitable for open canoe and kayak. A BCU sticker or navigation authority licence is required.

**For further details contact:**

**Robin Hickman,**  
[Robin@hickman.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:Robin@hickman.freeserve.co.uk)  
Tel 01403 267244

**54th Bedford Marathon**

Hasler qualifier event

Sunday 30th April

Venue: Viking Kayak Club, Poynters Boathouse, Batts Ford, Commercial Road, Bedford MK40.

**Car park:** Public car park adjacent to Poynters Boathouse. Access via St. Paul's Square and Horne Lane (mini roundabout) on one-way system. Upstream side of Bedford Town Bridge on the north bank of the river.

**Classes:** Division 3 Singles and 1/2, 3/4 Doubles, 19.5km, four portages. Division 4 to 6 Singles and 5/6, Doubles, 12.5km, two portages. Division 7 to 9 Singles and 7/8, and 9 Doubles, 6.5km, no portages. Lightning Race (singles only), 2.5km, no portages.

**Start:** Div 1/2, 3, 3/4, 4, 5, 5/6, 6: 09:00 - 11:15hrs. 11:55 hrs. 12:15 hrs. Div 7, 7/8, 8, 9, Lightning: 09:00 - 10:15hrs, 10:40 hrs, 11:00 hrs.

**Refreshments:** Light refreshments will be available to competitors.

**Safety:** All division 7, 8, 9 and Lightning Race paddlers must wear BCU approved buoyancy aids and all paddlers under 16 years of age in higher divisions are strongly advised to do so. Changing and shower facilities will be available at VKC.

**Prizes:** First, second and third paddler/crew in each singles and doubles division will receive prizes provided there is quorate entry in division.

**Fees:** Senior: £5.00 per seat, Junior: £4.50 per seat, Lightning Race: £3.00 per seat. Late entries (accepted up to 10:15 hrs) £2.00 extra per seat. An additional fee of £3.00 per paddler will be charged for an event ticket if a current BCU membership card is not produced.

**Entries:** All entries including BCU numbers and individual ranking together with the correct fees payable to Viking Kayak Club must be received by Thursday 27th April 2006 fees by post.

**Entries by post or email (preferred) to Geoff Tilford, 82 Whitworth Way, Wilstead, Bedfordshire. MK45 3DY.**

**Telephone: 07971 856747 Email:**

[geoff.tilford@ntlworld.com](mailto:geoff.tilford@ntlworld.com)

**Newark CC open day**

20-21st May

Want to see what the latest boats and gear are all about? Want to see a fast growing club that offers something for all? Want to develop your existing canoeing and kayaking skills and learn from our experienced coaches and members?

If the answer to any of these questions is "Yes" then why not drop in on Newark CC? We're holding our 9th annual

open day and it's open to all. So, why not come along to see what we're all about, and join us for the weekend and see all the latest kayaks and gear and find out more about what our club can offer you!

This year's major event in our calendar is supported by Desperate Measure and we'll also be joined by a number of other companies such as Teksport, Valley Canoes, KataKanu ([katakano.com](http://katakano.com)) and others.

**For information email:** [info@newarkcanoecub.org.uk](mailto:info@newarkcanoecub.org.uk) or visit [www.newarkcanoecub.org.uk](http://www.newarkcanoecub.org.uk)

**Annual Charity Paddle**

Sunday 4th June

Hereford County Club is again holding paddle on the River Wye between Hereford and Ross-on-Wye with the proceeds going to Hereford County Air Ambulance.

The Paddle will be a leisurely 27 miles with paddlers proceeding at their own pace allowing a maximum of nine hours. Water conditions are mainly slow with occasional simple Grade 2 rapids. There are good launching, landing and recovery site with a half way stop at a field for lunch, shower and bar facilities at the finish.

**Entry fees are £5 per paddler. All proceeds will go to the Hereford County Air Ambulance. Entry and Sponsor forms available on receipt of an SAE from: Jan Davies, 3 Prior Street, Hereford, HR4 9LB**

**Poole Afloat**

Saturday 24th and Sunday 25th June

The south coast's biggest-ever free boating and watersports event, Poole Afloat, heads for its second year promising to be bigger and better. The event, which will take place at Harbourside Park and Poole Quay, has gained momentum on its first year with many exhibitors already signed up for the 2006 event.

The British Marine Federation Wessex and Poole Tourism have joined forces with the Rockley Holiday Park, one of the premier holiday parks in England, who are sponsoring the event.

With an exhibition of the latest yachts, powerboats, as well as dinghies, wind and kite boards; 'Try A Boat' sessions; and, a variety of entertainment, visitors will be able to enjoy an action-packed weekend.

An exhibition village will display the latest marine and watersports equipment and services. Crowds will have the opportunity to purchase from a diverse range of marine products from boats of all sizes including RIBs to motor yachts, clothing, safety gear, to watersports accessories, whilst obtaining information on sea safety and training courses.

As well as boating demonstrations, crowds will also be able to enjoy a schedule of free family entertainment including street entertainment, face painting, and live music.

**For further information about the event or exhibiting please contact Liz Lean PR Ltd on 01202 701828 or email [carol@lizleanpr.co.uk](mailto:carol@lizleanpr.co.uk)**

**PGL sponsor Youthfest**

Sunday 9th July 2006 at Dorney Lake

Come and join us for a day of fun and excitement!

The BCU Young People's Programme are delighted that this year's YouthFest will be welcomed to the 2012 Olympic regatta site at Dorney Lake – near the historic town of Eton.

We are even more pleased to announce that this year PGL are sponsoring Youthfest – so don't miss out.

**Find out more from the youth pages of Canoe Focus or go to [www.canoe-england.org.uk](http://www.canoe-england.org.uk) for details of the event and how to enter.**

**PADDLE THIS****The North Cornwall Classic****Boscastle to Bude Sea Kayak Race**

This inaugural event will take place on Sunday 30th July. The event will include a rescue test in Boscastle harbour, followed by a short sprint out of the harbour mouth and around Boscastle Island. Once the preliminaries are over the main race will start with teams of three racing back along the North Cornish Coast back to Bude via various checkpoints and special stages along the route. Paddlers will need to be confident in the sea environment as the coast line is very exposed.

**The Shoreline Surf Spectacular**

Saturday 22nd April

Black Rock Beach, Widemouth Bay, Bude, North Cornwall

This annual event is as popular as ever. Anyone wishing to enter must get their applications to the organiser in advance. Entry fee just £10 made out to TNT Explosive Sports. Unique format ensures the competitors surf all day. For both events contact: Simon Hammond. Email

[hammond.family@virgin.net](mailto:hammond.family@virgin.net)





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