

canoe

focus

Features

Canoe touring and white water in Scotland

Suggested Paddles: Rivers Wharfe and Severn

Scouts big introduction to paddlesport

Anna Hemmings wins sixth World title

Interviews with...

Tim Brabants - World Champion

Fiona Pennie - Slalom Silver Medallist



Expeditions

Open canoeing in Minnesota and sea kayaking Vancouver



Wildwater

Juniors bring home five medals from the World Champs



Member's offers

Win a week of trips and coaching instruction in Scotland



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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@canoefocus.co.uk, or mailed to 2b Graphic Design, 49 Greenfields, St Ives, Cambs PE27 5HB. All material is accepted on the understanding that the BCU and its agents cannot be held liable or responsible for loss or damage, although every care and effort is taken to safeguard material. Next Copy date is the **1st NOV 2007**.

Material arriving after this date cannot be included in the **DECEMBER 2007** 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 publisher assumes no responsibility for the return of unsolicited manuscripts, artwork or photographs. Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the BCU, its committees or members. The printing of an advertisement in Canoe Focus does not necessarily mean that the BCU endorse the company, item or service advertised. All material in Canoe Focus is strictly copyright and all rights are reserved. Reproduction without prior permission from the editor is forbidden.



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Member's Offer

Craft Thermal Tops

We are pleased to announce a fantastic new offer on the BCU e shop.

This product has become a favourite with paddlers and we are pleased to be able to offer this at a special rate of only £15.99 (excluding postage and VAT).

These short sleeved black tops are available in Men's and Women's sizes.



To purchase visit www.bcushop.org.uk

For more information on Craft visit www.craft.se



Welcome to the October issue of Canoe Focus

Firstly congratulations to Tim Brabants for his achievements this season in flat water racing. Tim's World title and silver medal combined with his European title and silver medal, is absolutely outstanding and demonstrates promise for the Beijing Olympics.

Another outstanding performance came from Anna Hemmings for defending her position as Marathon World Champion, winning in total five women's K1 World titles (and one K2 World title).

With the international and national summer months over, the competitive racing calendar draws to a close but that does not stop many of us from venturing out to enjoy the autumn.

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

We have been working hard to make your membership even better value for money. We have negotiated with quality canoe and kayak retailers to offer BCU members a 10% discount on kit and equipment at participating stores nationwide. For a list of participating retailers see page eight of the magazine or the member's area of the Canoe England website.

CALENDAR

Due to the resounding success and the sell out of last year's calendar, we will be launching the 2008 calendar in the December issue of Canoe Focus – just in time for Christmas!

Images in the calendar are from the photo competition entries received from members. Thank you for continuing to send them.

PERSONAL PERFORMANCE AWARDS

2007 sees the launch of the BCU's new Performance Award scheme – the new Star Awards and the new Paddlepower Awards.

This new scheme provides a balanced progression for paddlers, supports them as they move through their sport and, most importantly, encourages them to go paddling. The scheme has been developed around the needs of today's paddlers, with direction taken from the findings of the BCU Paddlesport Review and the BCU Long Term Paddler Development Review.

This new scheme is based on five year's of research and reflects current best practice as defined

by paddlesport's leading experts. For more information see page 50 and also the BCU website which provides more details of both sets of awards and specific Star Award details. Syllabi/trainer and assessor notes are also available on the website www.bcu.org.uk

VOLUNTEER AWARDS

Canoe England will be hosting their first ever Volunteer Awards for 2007. Nominations are now welcome for a number of categories in order to recognise those people who make an outstanding contribution to paddlesport and who often go unnoticed with very little praise. Volunteers, officials and coaches will be recognised for their contribution over the last twelve months at a special awards presentation. The Awards will lead onto the UK Awards where presentations are made to individuals who qualify for the already well established Awards of Merit, Valour and Honour as well as the prestigious BCU Services to Canoeing and Geoff Good Coach of the Year Award (see page 48).

For a nomination form visit the website, call 0845 3709530 or email volunteers@bcu.org.uk

To receive a copy of the volunteer newsletter which aims to inform volunteers of new support material and opportunities or information which may be of interest, email volunteers@bcu.org.uk

2008 AGM

The 2008 Annual General Meeting will take place on 8th March 2008.

The venue will be confirmed in the December issue of Canoe Focus and on the website.

ACCESS

Canoeing welcomes public consultation into coastal access.

The BCU has responded to the Government's intention to improve access to coastal land in England welcoming DEFRA's Public Consultation, launched on Tuesday 19th June.

The announcement is warmly welcomed because the lack of clarity surrounding access to England's coast line is a problem for all water users including canoeists. Where there is public access, it is currently provided by a variety of different mechanisms making it confusing. We look forward to hearing the outcome (see page 36).

NEXT COTSWOLD DISCOUNT DAYS

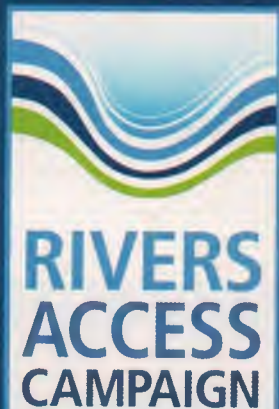
The next Cotswold Outdoor discount weekend is:

- 25-28th October

To take advantage of the 20% discount, on selected products, over these periods (as opposed to the usual 15%) simply quote the code C2114 when purchasing in store, online or by telephone. Visit www.cotswoldoutdoor.com

Rivers Access Campaign

The second reading of the Access to Inland Waters Bill has been pushed back to 19th October 2007. Whilst the Bill is still on the Parliamentary agenda, it presents the campaign with an opportunity to lobby newly appointed Government Ministers in the forthcoming Party Conferences (see page 32).



Competition results

Flat Water World Championships



Tim Brabants, the 30-year-old doctor is crowned World Champion in the 1000m event and wins a silver medal in the 500m.

On pages 22 and 23 we catch up with him, his successes over the past year and get his thoughts on his recent achievements and plans for the future.

Flat Water Beijing Test event

Tim wins both the 500m and the 1000m test events on the new Beijing Olympic course, great preparation for next year.

Flat Water Junior/U23 European Championships

The GB team won four medals at the Championships, held in Belgrade, Serbia Montenegro. Jessica Walker and Amoret King were the first to win a silver medal in the women's 1000m K2 event. Jessica Walker also delivered another fantastic race by winning gold in women's K1 500m event. Bronze medals were won by Jonnie Schofield and Ben Brown in the U23 500m kayak double event and Kristian Reeves in the men's K1 class. Great performances all round from the British athletes to draw the sprinting season to a close (see page 14).

Slalom World Championships

The Championships which took place in Foz do Iguaçu Brazil 18-23rd September, were hugely successful. In the Men's K1 class, Campbell Walsh won a bronze medal and the Women's K1 team also won bronze. The Worlds were also a qualification event for the Beijing Olympics and the Men's K1, the Women's K1 and the Men's C1 all qualified one boat each (see page 15).

Slalom Beijing Test event

The GB team were in Beijing to prepare themselves on the new course. With several top ten positions they will be pleased with a solid performance.

Marathon World Championships



The Championships took place in Gyor, Hungary from the 7-9th September, where Anna

Hemmings successfully defended her women's K1 World Champion title. It is the sixth World title for the athlete – an outstanding achievement. In other categories Jessica Walker won bronze in the junior women's K1 and in the junior women's K2 with Amoret King.

The masters also won a total of eight medals – congratulations to all who competed in tough conditions (see page 20).

Canoe Polo European Championships

The Championships were held at Thury Harcourt, France between 12-16th September. Congratulations to the women's GB canoe polo team who won bronze and the men's team who achieved fifth.

competition calendar

	Start	Finish	Discipline	Event
October	2-Oct	11-Oct	Multi-Sport	Special Olympics World Cup Games, Shanghai CHN
	6-Oct	7-Oct	Canoe Sailing	Draycote
	6-Oct		Marathon Racing	Reading K4
	6-Oct	7-Oct	Slalom	Llandysul, Div 1 & 2
	6-Oct		Slalom	Scottish Championships, Grandtully
	6-Oct	7-Oct	Surf	HP series Final, Newquay
	6-Oct	7-Oct	Surf	HP series Final, Newquay
	6-Oct		Wild Water Racing	Nene 3 (Wavehoppers only), Div B & Youth
	6-Oct	7-Oct	Freestyle	National Ranking, Holme Pierrepont - British Championship
	7-Oct		Marathon Racing	Bollington Cut
	7-Oct		Marathon Racing	River Isla
	7-Oct		Marathon Racing	Chelmer
	7-Oct		Marathon Racing	Elmbridge
	7-Oct		Marathon Racing	Fowey River Race
	7-Oct		Slalom	Stone, Div 3 & 4
	7-Oct		Wild Water Racing	Ironbridge, Div B & Youth
	7-Oct		Wild Water Racing	Awe - Training Release
	7-Oct		Sprint Racing	10km Handicap Race - Lincoln Canoe Club
	13-Oct	14-Oct	Slalom	Tees, Premier & Div 1
	13-Oct	14-Oct	Slalom	Sowerby Bridge, Div 2 & 3
	14-Oct		Marathon Racing	Windsor
	14-Oct		Wild Water Racing	Stone, Div B & Youth
	19-Oct	28-Oct	Surf	World Championships, Mundaka/Bakio, ESP
	20-Oct	21-Oct	Slalom	Llangollen Qual, Premier & Div 1
	20-Oct		Wild Water Racing	Wear, Div B & Youth
	21-Oct		Marathon Racing	Wolfreton
	21-Oct		Marathon Racing	Marlow
	21-Oct		Marathon Racing	Hemel Hempstead
	21-Oct		Marathon Racing	Mersey Descent
	21-Oct		Marathon Racing	Griffon
	21-Oct		Marathon Racing	Richmond
	21-Oct		Marathon Racing	Dee, Highland Series
21-Oct		Wild Water Racing	Sleningford Mill, Div B & Youth	
21-Oct		Wild Water Racing	Lower Dart, Div B & Youth	
27-Oct	28-Oct	Canoe Sailing	Oxford	
27-Oct	28-Oct	Slalom	Yalding Weir, Div 4, Kent & Sussex Open Championships	
27-Oct	28-Oct	Slalom	British Open & Inter Regional Championships, Llangollen	
27-Oct		Wild Water Racing	Usk, Div A & B	
28-Oct		Marathon Racing	Trent K2	
28-Oct		Marathon Racing	Banbury	
28-Oct		Wild Water Racing	Taff Sprint, Div A,B & Youth	

	Start	Finish	Discipline	Event
November	3-Nov	4-Nov	Wild Water Racing	Dee, A & B
	4-Nov		Marathon Racing	Cokethorpe
	4-Nov		Marathon Racing	Essex Winter Series - Race 1 - Bishops Stortford
	4-Nov		Multi-Sport	Tyne Tour
	4-Nov		Wild Water Racing	Tyne Tour, Hexham, Youth Event
	4-Nov		Wild Water Racing	Royal Dee & SUSF Championships, Div B
	11-Nov		Marathon Racing	Avon Descent
	11-Nov		Marathon Racing	Shipleigh
	11-Nov	12-Nov	Wild Water Racing	BUSA Championships Washburn
	11-Nov		Sprint Racing	10km Handicap Race - Lincoln Canoe Club
	17-Nov		Wild Water Racing	Tees Barrage, Div A & B
	17-Nov		Wild Water Racing	North Tyne, Div A & B
	17-Nov	18-Nov	Wild Water Racing	Tour o't' Nord - Northern Championship series
	18-Nov		Marathon Racing	The Yak Exe Descent
	18-Nov		Marathon Racing	Scottish K2 10km Championship
	18-Nov		Slalom	Orton Mere Winter Series
	18-Nov		Wild Water Racing	Tees, Div A & B
	24-Nov		Wild Water Racing	Mersey, Div B & Youth
	24-Nov	25-Nov	Wild Water Racing	Dee, Div B and Army Championships
	25-Nov		Marathon Racing	Ross Warland Canal Challenge
	25-Nov		Marathon Racing	Essex Winter Series - Race 2 - Herts Young Mariners Base
	25-Nov		Wild Water Racing	Irwell National Youth Championships
	1-Dec		Slalom	BCU Slalom Committee - ACM, Holme Peirrepont
	2-Dec		Canoe Polo	BCU Canoe Polo Committee - ACM, Derby
	2-Dec		Marathon Racing	Stour Descent
	2-Dec		Wild Water Racing	Clyde, Div B
	2-Dec		Sprint Racing	10km Handicap Race - Lincoln CC Club
	8-Dec	9-Dec	Wild Water Racing	Nith, Div B & RAF Championships
	9-Dec		Marathon Racing	Essex Winter Series - Race 3 - Barking
	31-Dec	7-Jan	Canoe Sailing	World Championships, Port Phillip Bay, AUS



Where can I view a calendar of the whole year?

Visit the BCU and Canoe England web sites (www.bcu.org.uk) and follow the link 'News & Events'. A full list is available to download in PDF format here.

Canoe polo : www.canoe polo.org.uk

Canoe sailing: www.intcanoe.org.uk

Flat water racing:

Visit BCU, then 'Disciplines' and 'Flat water racing'

Freestyle: www.ukfreestyle.com

Marathon racing: www.marathon-canoeing.co.uk

Slalom: www.canoeslalom.co.uk

Surf: www.bcusurf.org.uk

Wild water racing: www.wildwater.org.uk

Have we missed any?

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



I am new to competition events – what's it all about and how do I enter?

There are many paddlers who may not have thought about the competition side much, but disciplines DO welcome newcomers. The next issue of Canoe Focus will provide more information for those who are thinking of trying a competition for the first time. Alternatively, look in the directory for details the contact person of a particular discipline, or visit the BCU web site (www.bcu.org.uk) and look under 'disciplines' to visit a discipline's website.

Club events

We are aware that there are hundreds of club based events that take place throughout the year. Unfortunately we will be unable to list them all here, however we are very keen to publicise them, we want the BCU web site to become the place people post details of events, email Shruiti Passi: shruiti.passi@bcu.org.uk





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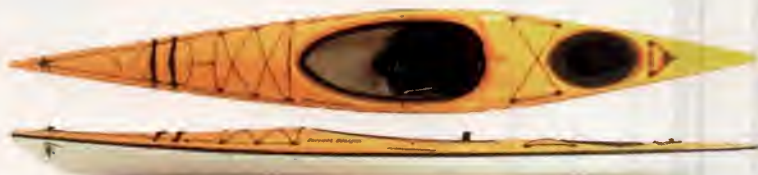
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Ignacio Wenley Palacios, OnKayaks

"An excellent top quality publication with great photography and writing.... I strongly recommend that sea paddlers (UK or otherwise) subscribe and see the magazine for themselves."
Mark Rainsley, www.southwestseakayaking.co.uk

"...words cannot do justice to the quality of your magazine! I am thoroughly impressed by the lay-out, content, quality of paper used, fonts, and photo quality from cover to cover"
Michael Callaghan, Ecomarine Ocean Kayak Centre, Canada



Canoe England members can receive 10% discount at selected canoe and kayak retailers!

Here at Canoe England we continue to seek great deals and discounts that members can benefit from. We look to secure only deals that we think are relevant to members.

We are now pleased to announce that we have negotiated a 10% discount at selected canoe and kayak retailers around the country. For the retailer's contact details visit the Canoe England member's area - www.canoe-england.org.uk

To take advantage of the 10% discount, just show your membership card at the time of purchase.

WEST MIDLANDS

Bear Creek Adventure,
Worcestershire

Joel Watersports, Worcester

Leam Boat Centre, Warwick

Paddle Sport & Wave Form,
Warwick

West Midland Canoe Centre,
Walsall

YORKSHIRE

Fear Gear, Doncaster

Robin Hood Watersports,
Heckmondwike

Wipeout, Sheffield,

Yorkshire Canoe and Kayak,
Doncaster

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Brighton Canoes Ltd, E. Sussex

C & E Sports and Leisure, E. Sussex

Kent Canoes, Kent - Kent Canoes offer 10% discount on boats and 5% discount off kit.

The Family Boat Shop, Surrey

UK Kayaking, West Sussex

Whitewater The Canoe Centre,
Middlesex

EAST MIDLANDS

Desperate Measures, Nottingham

Tradewinds Outdoor,
Northamptonshire

EASTERN

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Berkshire Canoes, Reading

Marsport Ltd, Reading

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Family Adventure Store, Wiltshire

Outdoor Active Ltd,
Gloucestershire

Totnes Kayaks, Devon

Member's offers

Visit the Canoe England member's area:
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15% discount of Lucozade products.



Save over 20% when subscribing to 12 issues of Canoe Kayak magazine.

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10% discount on your first years Boat Insurance with NW Brown.

7.5% discount on Concept 2 rowers.



5% discount on Salamander Tours open canoe tours.

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

10% discount at selected canoe and kayak retailers nationwide – visit the website for details (see left).

Did you know you can also receive discount at the Nene and Trewyern?

Nene – For BCU members its costs £10 instead on £15 per session. If you apply for a user card then the price will decrease further -

£10 to £8 for adults

£8 to £6 for juniors

Trewyern – BCU members get half price discount from £14 to £7

If you have any suggestions for improving the member benefits you receive, please get in touch – we could like to hear your comments.

Email: shruti.passi@bcu.org.uk
or call 0845 370 9512

Craft thermal tops – this top has become a favourite for paddlers and we are pleased to be able to offer this at a special rate of only £15.99 (excluding postage and VAT). These short sleeved black tops are available in men's and women's sizes. To purchase visit www.bcushop.org.uk



Win a week away to Scotland!

We are offering one lucky BCU member a week away to Scotland, worth £680! Courtesy of Kayako Jacko based in Berkshire.

Introduction to trips and experiences

We have carefully selected this wonderful destination for its unparalleled opportunity to learn in a variety of environments. Our coaching programmes have a tremendous reputation that we are extremely proud of. Year on year they just get better and better and after running so many trips we think we know exactly what makes a great kayak experience.

Programme: Kayako Jacko Scotland trips

Destination: Scotland – West Course (based in Roybridge)

Ability level: First taste/intermediate/advanced

Trip duration: Six days

Accommodation: Seven nights 11–17th November

The destination

There is no doubt that Scotland is one of Britain's premiere destinations for white water kayaking, offering a huge range of rivers including bedrock slabs, waterfalls, big volume, and technical gorges, it's all there to experience. KJO operate in the Fort William area which is otherwise known as the white water capital of the UK. With rainfall recorded on an average of 250 days a year, it's easy to see why.

During the week you will be paddling a large variety of rivers throughout the west coast including the areas Glean Spean, Glen Etive, Glen Coe, Loch Lomond and Fort William, rivers will be selected in a way that provides the group with a progressive route to reaching and expanding their boundaries of performance.

Coaching programme

You'll be coached on a progressive range of Grade 2/3/4(5) rivers, depending on first taste, classic or park



For more information visit: www.kayakojacko.com/holidays/scotland.php

'n' huck programme and learning all the skills you need to boat with confidence and control.

Programmes learning emphasis

You will be coaching a diverse selection of skills to suit the ever-changing needs of white water. The week starts with a needs analysis day to establishing your current skill set. You will then set a mutually agreed development plan aimed at developing and refining your skills into a highly efficient and proactive paddler.

Throughout the week, Kayako Jacko professional coaching experience will allow you to achieve multi-goals so as to balance your skill development. You will be working on evolving and refining the four elements of successful performance this includes the following:

- Physical
- Technical
- Tactical
- Psychological

Trip inclusions

- Seven nights accommodation.
- Food (self catering), cooking arrangements will be on a 'take it in turns' basis. Evening meals on the first night and rest day are not provided.
- Special dietary requirements.
- Pre-course preparation advice.
- Coaching and guiding whilst on the river.
- The opportunity to obtain BCU awards (by prior arrangement).
- Course handouts and worksheets.

And loads more!

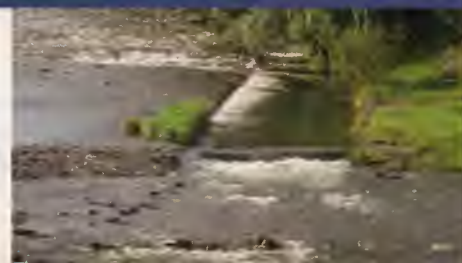


How to enter. For your chance to win just tell us where this river is...

Email your answer to: shruti.passi@bcu.org.uk

To enter by post: send your answers by Shruti Passi, 18 Market Place, Bingham, NG13 8AP to arrive no later than the 17th October.

Please state the answer to the question, your full name, address (including email), telephone number and BCU number. The closing date is the 17th October. Good luck!



Canoe Days Out

www.canoe-days-out.com was launched via Canoe Focus in August 2006 and now, just 12 months later, the site has details of over 120 canoe trips.

Aimed at the type of paddling often typified by open canoes and suitable for paddlers of all ages and skill levels, www.canoe-days-out.com provides helpful information such as how to get there, where to park and put-in, general details of the trip, links to other websites of interest and an album of photos. All trips are indexed by waterway and county and shown on a map of the UK to make it easy to find a trip in your area. www.canoe-days-out.com also encourages paddlers using the site to share details of their own trips via an on-line input form.

Keith Day, who developed and runs the site on a completely non-commercial basis, commented, "Given the current limited access situation, it's particularly important that we share information to maximise paddling opportunities. I welcome many more contributions from across the UK, particularly the north of England, Scotland and Wales which are currently under-represented."

Ivindo and Ogooue rivers Expedition

During August and September 2007 Olaf Obsommer, Nico Chassing and Deb Pinniger will go to Gabon in central Africa to paddle the Ivindo and Ogooue rivers.

The small team are planning to run 600km starting on the Ivindo River at Makoukou and on in to Gabon's principal river the Ogooue all the way to Ndjole.

The Ivindo River flows from northeast Gabon to the southwest, eventually emptying into the Ogooue River, flowing through some of the wildest and most attractive rainforest in Africa. The Ivindo River also boasts some of the most spectacular waterfalls in all of Equatorial Africa. The Ivindo River flows through the newly founded Ivindo National Park and joins the Ogooue River, which is some 1,200km long and is the principal river of Gabon. Its watershed drains nearly the entire country of Gabon (222,700km),

The team will work in conjunction with the Wildlife Conservancy of Gabon looking in to the viability of sustainable and responsible river trips on the Ivindo and Ogooue rivers, as well as establishing the condition of one of Africa's most important river systems.

World Quadrathlon Championships 2007

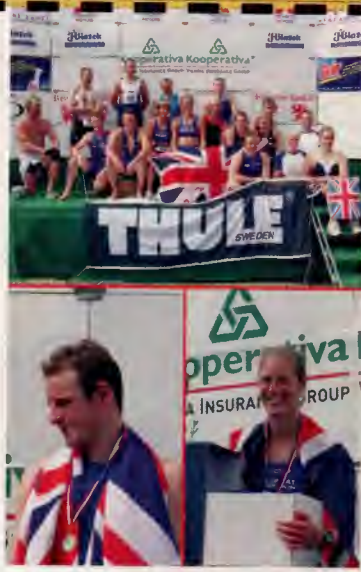
The Great Britain quadrathlon team had a very successful time at the World Championships. The race was held in Sedlcany, Czech Republic and consisted of a 1,500m swim, 7km kayak, 40km bike and 10km run. The team of 15 athletes took seven gold and two silver medals between them.

A newcomer on the world circuit, Dan Corner, put in an outstanding performance by taking men's overall gold. He surprised everyone as he left Podborsky (previous World Champion) in his wake. Dan ran the fastest 10k of the day, and went on to win convincingly. Andy Byatt after taking the lead in the swim and the kayak, dropped back into third place on the bike and after a tussle on the run just missed out on a bronze medal which went to Thoralf Berg. Helen Parkinson was as impressive as ever, going into the run in second place she very quickly went into the lead, to retain her World Championship overall gold. Jean Ashley in and amongst the thick of all the women also had a super race taking the veteran 45 gold for the third year running.

Dan Corner, Andy Byatt and Joe Andrews won gold in the men's team event leaving the Czechs to silver and bronze to Germany. Helen Parkinson, Jean Ashley and Claire Batterham took silver in the ladies team event, just missing out to the Czechs who took gold but in front of the Germans who took bronze.

There were plenty more great performances from the squad, and more medals from the age groupers: gold - Keith Lings, vet 45; gold - Peter Hart, vet 50; gold - Sarah Benjamin U23 and silver - Simon Lawrence vet 40.

This put GB on top of the world and proved their strength and depth throughout the team.



October volunteer focus

Across the country, volunteers are making outstanding commitments to paddlesport. Without the coaches, officials, committee members, administrators and helpers the sport could not exist as it does today. A special thanks goes to all volunteers and this section will provide the opportunity for clubs, centres and committees to say a special thanks to their volunteers.

Name: Mick Nadal
Club: Nottingham Kayak Club

Mick Nadal's love for paddlesport has shown in his dedication to coaching for Nottingham KC. Although being contracted for eight hours each week at the club, Mick has thrown himself back into volunteering and now spends an additional 30 hours a week coaching on a voluntary basis.

Having been involved in kayaking and canoeing for 35 years, Mick returned to the sport after taking a break to concentrate on a career in teaching. During his break, Mick's health went downhill: "As a result I became overweight and unfit. Being out of shape had a significant impact on my overall health and I began suffering with chest pains and breathlessness" said Mick.

Now coaching around 30 people at the club, Mick has not only contributed to a change to the club but has turned his life around to lose over three stone and can now paddle and race like he used to 30 years ago.



"Getting back into canoeing and being a coach again has changed all my priorities" said Mick. "I now take care of what I eat, how much I exercise and my general well being much more. My quality of life has improved dramatically... It has made a real difference to what I can do on a daily basis and in the future."

Mick's commitment to Nottingham KC hasn't gone unnoticed with a new influx of members from young to old joining to take advantage of the more structured sessions. Some paddlers who he coaches on a regular basis certainly wanted to show their appreciation to Mick: "His constant dedication and care make him a fantastic coach" say Beth Walker, Shobhanaa Seth-Kapoor and Sarah Nash.

Mick is a fine example of the many dedicated and committed volunteers that encourage others to get involved in the sport at all levels and it looks like he might be coaching for a good number of years yet after stating: "Canoeing is the kind of sport you never really retire from so I hope to be involved for many more years."

Many thanks to all the volunteers in paddlesport. Let Canoe England know about volunteers in your area for the chance for them to be recognised in Canoe Focus and receive a special gift of thanks. Email volunteers@bcu.org.uk or write to the Volunteer Coordinator, British Canoe Union, 18 Market Place, Bingham, Nottingham NG13 8AP.

Breast cancer campaign

Sigg have exclusively designed a pink drinks bottle for Breast Cancer Campaign month this October and are donating £1 from every sale to aid breast cancer research.

And the reason why: One woman in nine will be diagnosed with Breast Cancer in her lifetime - that's over 41,000 women in the UK each year... and around 13,000 will die.

Sigg, the Swiss manufacturer of lightweight aluminum bottles, is proudly supporting the campaign and around the neck of each bottle hangs a useful tear-off collar with advice on how to be breast aware.

So, whether you're using your drinks bottle in the gym, on a day trip out, at your desk at work or when canoeing, it's satisfying to know that you're demonstrating your support for breast cancer research and promoting awareness.

Priced £14.99 (rrp), the Sigg drinks bottle can be bought online at www.breastcancercampaign.org or, to find your nearest high street stockist, call 0116 234 464.



PGL's 50th anniversary

Canoeing was at the heart of PGL's 50th anniversary celebrations in Ross-on-Wye. The company is still based there where Peter Gordon Lawrence started his business with canoe trips down the River Wye in 1957. It has since expanded to 26 centres in the UK and Europe, offering 50 different activities.

One hundred staff and guests took part in a commemorative paddle down the river and contributed to the 250 attendees at the anniversary event. A plaque was unveiled by four ladies who were student nurses in 1957 and members of Peter Lawrence's first group. His sister was the canoe cook and she was also present.

Three more recent paddlers came to celebrate their PGL connection. Sue Hornby, BCU Development Manager, was first attracted to canoeing whilst working for PGL in Ross. Helen Barnes first picked up a paddle on a PGL holiday and is now Irish number one K1 Slalomist and world record holder for Eskimo Rolling. Jenny Long works in PGL HQ and the England number two in surf kayak and off to the World Championships.



Do you recognise them?

Dave Manby is re-releasing the Mike Jones 'Canoeing down Everest' film on DVD. Included in the DVD will be bonus tracks including the 1981 World Cardboard Canoe Championships and in this film are these two kids. Dave would like to track them down and invite them to the DVD's launch party. If you know who they are, please contact Dave at dave@dmanby.demon.co.uk

Dates and details.

Where: Bridge End pub, Llangollen.

When: 10th November 7.30pm onwards

Several members of the original team will be there.

The Exe Descent

Exeter CC is sad to announce that it no longer will be involved in organising the Exe Descent. This decision has not been taken lightly and is the culmination of a number of factors.

Several years ago we undertook a full risk assessment on our event and it has been noted that in many ways we have not been able to satisfactorily mitigate the risks.

As a small club we have had to rely on other clubs from the area to assist especially with the provision of safety cover. This invariably means that volunteers are being asked to stand on a river bank in November, often in the water and certainly in the cold and often wet weather. It has noticeably been more difficult in recent years to obtain this sort of help, indeed in recent years we have been badly let down when groups who had promised assistance withdrew at short notice.

We estimate that we need somewhere in the region of 80 to 100 people to man the various 'hot spots' along the river as well as somewhere in the region of another 40 people to assist as

marshals and traffic stewards, to say nothing of the actual organising team.

The main members of the organising team are not prepared to put themselves in the 'firing line' and think the risks are far from justifiable. Last year a simple capsizing incident at the Flower Pots Weir resulted in awkward questions being asked about safety in our local newspaper! All this when the water levels have not been that high and we worry what might happen if we have higher water levels.

Away from safety it has become more difficult to organise the event as the areas around the start, the finish and along the course have become more developed and in places very overgrown. Many of the weirs which have always been the attraction of the event are becoming worn and damaged and in some places are now downright dangerous.

We are also concerned that the general level of paddling ability is somewhat decreasing. Whilst we have always attracted some very competent and capable

paddlers but the success of our event has also attracted a number of paddlers who should never be on the water. Again we worry what might happen if the water levels should be high.

Over the years the Exe Descent has been very good to Exeter CC and we are grateful to all those clubs and organisations that have supported us over the years as well as to the various companies that have sponsored our event.

Should you require to paddle the Exe, please note there is an agreement and that before paddling you should contact the Access Officer. Mr Adam Box, Roydon, Alexandra Road, Crediton EX17 2DZ sending a sae.

DENNIS WALLS



In the footsteps of Eric Shipton

This October two Argentinean brothers will attempt the Patagonian crossing for the first time without external support; from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean, along more than 660 kilometres of fjords, lakes and ice-caps.

In their double kayak they will first navigate the Chilean fjords to penetrate the southern Patagonian Ice Field along the Jorge Montt glacier. Next they will pull the kayak as a sledge across 330km of snow and ice to reach Upsala glacier. Finally, and paddling again, they will cross Lake Argentino and descend the Santa Cruz river to the Atlantic Ocean.

The route follows the journey made by legendary explorer Eric Shipton in 1960 '61, although the fact he approached the ice by ship is what makes this expedition, using a kayak, a unique crossing from Pacific to Atlantic.

Pablo Basombrio works in the travel industry in London, originally for Cox & Kings and now for Specialised Travel. Currently living in South London, Pablo has been preparing for the expedition by taking kayak sessions at Richmond CC, as well as walking with a 15kg rucksack whilst pulling a sledge made out of car tyres around Bushy Park.

Juan Basombrio is an insurance broker in Argentina with a passion for mountaineering.

"We have been training and preparing for this challenging expedition for two years now," said Pablo Basombrio, who is still appealing for sponsors to help with the costs of the expedition. "The biggest challenge is likely to be the weather, which in this area is often described as the worst in the world. Winds easily surpass 100km per hour and temperatures fall well below sub-zero. Added to that the challenge posed by giant crevasses hidden by the snow, and it is easy to see why this region is so under-explored." Telephone: 07986 877974.

Email: Pablo@findelmundoexpediciones.net
www.findelmundoexpediciones.net

Curly Barker

Chairman BCU Canoe Polo Committee
Polo player, referee and official

As chairman, I help steer the committee that is responsible for the running of all aspects of national and international canoe polo in Britain. Including the running of the National League system and the GB teams.

What you have done in the sport

Over the years I have competed in all Divisions of the National League system, being lucky enough to win Division 1 twice. I have competed in more international tournaments than I could possibly remember and won more than a few.

I have coached and assisted with teams and individuals at all levels, and as proud to help a new local youth team win Youth Division Two, as I was to have helped a national (GB) team to win at the World Championships.

As a referee, my claim to fame is that I have refereed all the Men's World Championships finals that GB have not competed in (which automatically excluded me!) and also the Men's World Games final in Duisburg in 2005.

Your interests

Canoe polo... it has been and is just about all consuming for me.

How you got in to canoeing

I first went canoeing in the scouts, but got much more serious about it when I started to paddle at university which is where I was introduced to canoe polo.

You views on the future of the sport

It is very difficult to guess the future for any minority sport, but it is fair to say that polo induces a huge enthusiasm amongst its participants. The availability of facilities being the only pre-requisite for an exciting game. The fact that polo is now part of the World Games Olympic recognition, which would change the worldwide funding status of the sport overnight. Also its inclusion in the British Universities Sporting competition means that a whole new level of participants have been introduced to canoe polo. The BUSA polo event is the largest polo event in the UK and has had over 85 competing teams in recent years.

View on access etc

For polo, the major issue is that historically it has been played indoors in swimming pools in Britain. The rest of the world regards polo as an outdoor sport and the ever increasing costs of pools are going to force us in GB to see it the same way. This means the breaking of a 40 plus year habit but in the longer term, I think we will see massive benefits in the accessibility of polo to a wide kayaking audience.

Curly Barker. Photo by Glenn Summerbell



Jim Rossiter

- a lifetime devoted to canoe racing

Jim Rossiter retired from the Marathon Racing Committee in August having been a member of the committee for 38 years and the International Team Manager for Marathon since 1972.

His interest in the sport was kindled as a Scout in Caterham, Surrey. He was amongst a group of scouts that formed a team to compete in the Devizes to Westminster canoe race. From that he developed an interest, indeed a passion, for flatwater racing but in talking to him it is clear that he was interested from an early stage in more than just his own personal achievement. He will, if pushed, admit that he reached a standard that would be equivalent today to Division 6, maybe 5, but it is the huge energies he devoted to the benefit of others for which he is rightly recognised.

From out of the group of Scouts arose the Wey Kayak Club and throughout the whole of the WKC's history Jim Rossiter has been a key participant in driving the club forward. In the early years it operated from a number of locations but in 1972 a permanent home was found at the Guildford Waterside Centre where the WKC is still based. For many years the facilities at the centre were shared with the local cycling and sub-aqua clubs. From humble beginnings and through the hard work of many members of the club over the next 30 years and more WKC grew into one of the best kayaking clubs in the country with well qualified coaches (Jim is a level 4 racing coach) with some unenviable successes in both sprint and marathon.

One of the club's greatest successes has been off the water with the completion of a new multi-functional building for the Guildford Waterside Centre opened in 2005 with boat storage, gymnasium, kitchen, bar and meeting rooms. It was the culmination of 15 years hard work and, from my knowledge of Jim, considerable persistence for him and his colleagues. The Waterside Centre is a separate charity of which Jim is chairman. The sub-aqua club remains a partner in the centre together with Samson, the Multi Sclerosis Therapy Group

which uses it daily as its therapy centre. Many people will have been involved with the new centre but amongst them is Jim and it is a fitting legacy to his hard work and initiative.

The other stage on which Jim has played is the Marathon Racing Committee and, in particular, as its international team manager. He joined the MRC in 1969 and initially was race records officer. He was appointed international team manager in 1972 and has held that position continuously until this summer. In the early years there was no ICF structure for marathon racing and teams attended the events put on by the federations in each country, such as the Tour de Gudena and the Sella race. Transport to these international races and to training camps was invariably courtesy of the "Tuck" buses – a local mini bus hire company to which Jim refers rather nostalgically remembering the multiple canoe rack perched on the roof of the mini buses.

In due course with lobbying from the British camp by Jim, Alan Laws and others, the ICF Marathon Committee was formed and with that World Cup competitions started in 1982 followed by the World Championships held in Nottingham in 1988. His role as team manager has been a major part of life for Jim and for his wife, Jill who has given him great support throughout. He freely acknowledges that it has given him the opportunity to travel widely around the world and has been a great experience and honour. It has also given him a huge number of friends all over the world. There have been many GB successes over the past 35 years – indeed, 88 medals in the World Cups and World Championships since 1982.

A lot to look back on but as the highlight he picked out Ivan Lawler's gold medal at the third World Championships in Brisbane in 1992 and Anna Hemming's double gold at the 9th World

Championships held at Stockton-on-Tees in 2001. Jim was co-organiser along with David Enoch for the 2002 World Championships and for the World Cup event held the year before. For his work on these two events Jim was awarded the BCU Award of Merit and received plaudits from other teams for way in which the World Championships had been organised.

The Marathon Racing Committee is indebted to the dedication Jim has given willingly to the team manager's job but what does he look back on with satisfaction? Firstly, that Robin Belcher and Tim Cornish, who were juniors in some of the earlier GB international teams, are now established members of the ICF Marathon Racing Committee representing Australia and South Africa. Secondly, that over all the years, nobody missed their plane or ferry.

Jim was awarded the BCU Award of Honour at the National Championships this year in recognition of his service to canoeing. It was well deserved and he will be missed on the MRC. Jim's last event as the GB Team Manager was at the 15th World Championships in Hungary this September where the team finished fourth in the points table with eight top ten placings from the 14 races in which he competed. He would have been enormously happy that the ever impressive Anna Hemmings helped sign off his term of office with a gold medal - her fifth Ladies K1 World Championship win.

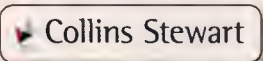
And the future? Well there is plenty to keep him busy at Wey and the Waterside Centre and, oh yes, with the London and South East Regional Committee another body on which he has served for many years as Marathon

Representative. Then of course we won't forget that Jim remains willing to take international teams abroad from time to time in future.

A lifetime devoted to canoe racing and there is much more to come, I am sure.



A lot to look back on but as the highlight he picked out Ivan Lawler's gold medal at the third World Championships in Brisbane in 1992 and Anna Hemming's double gold at the 9th World Championships



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OC1 at the Worlds

We received a ticking off for excluding OC1 from our World freestyle report in June!

OC1 freestyle, the slightly eccentric form of freestyle boating, also made an appearance at the World Freestyle Championships in Ottawa this year. The competition was run on the Buseater wave, a 12-foot monster that pulses and surges, threatening to swallow unsuspecting paddlers whole, capable of sending even the most buoyant boats to the bottom of the river.

OC1 freestyle boats, whilst still affectionately known as 'bathtubs', are a far cry from the open Canadian canoes we see running rivers. The specialised canoes boast planing hulls, rails and slicey ends. Combined with their short length, they allow paddlers to attempt to huck ends and throw aerial moves. Despite these adjustments the open cockpits mean the freestyle boats quickly fill with water, becoming

heavy and unwieldy. When trying to throw them around on a wave, this presents a serious challenge. The boats of choice at the Worlds this year were the Esquif Salsa and Robson CU Fly.

In the run-up to the championships, GB OC1 paddler James Bradley joined the team for training on the Waikiki wave, proving his skill with one blade on the huge rapids of the Ottawa river, including dropping

nonchalantly into the Grade IV Coliseum rapid. With the mighty Buseater running for one training day only, James braved the wave and became one of the first paddlers ever to surf Bussy in an OC1.

Come competition day, only six countries put forward team members to participate in the OC1 event. The preliminary rounds saw fantastic runs from Paul Danks and

Jeremy Laucks who both pulled off spectacular Pan-Ams, assuring their places in the final. Two more paddlers joined them with solid high-scoring runs, leaving the remaining five to battle it out for the fifth place in the finals. Due to Buseater's temperamental nature, timing is everything if you want to retain the wave. James had an unlucky final run as the monster wave greened out underneath him meaning he was unable to pull off any moves. As a result he didn't quite make the final cut.

On finals day the five finalists proved OC1 freestyle is far from dead, linking blunts, spins and roundhouses, moves that would have been unheard of in these boats a few years ago. First place eventually went to Germany's Stephan Paetsch who emerged from a closely contested battle with Canadian Paul Danks and USA's Jeremy Laucks to take the title.

The OC1 boaters' gutsy display certainly upholds the old open-boating claim of 'Half the Paddle, Twice The Man'.

Contributed by Anne Corbett and James Bradley



James Bradley
Photo: Peter Meares



Stephan Paetsch
Photo: James Bradley

A fantastic four medals at the Junior Flatwater Championships!

From Belgrade, Serbia Montenegro – a great end to the sprinting season!

Jessica Walker (17-years-old) and Amoret King (16-years-old) were the first to win by capturing silver in the women's 1000m K2 event. In fifth place at the 500m mark, the GB girls had an excellent pick up in the second half of the race to cross the line behind the Polish boat and two seconds ahead of the third placed Danish pair.

GB coach Miklos Simon who has been working with the pair since May this year comments, "The girls raced very a very smart race today, I am very pleased with them." National junior coach David Coulson was also naturally delighted said, "This is a great result for the girls and is reward for the hard work they have put in".

Jessica Walker also delivered another fantastic race by winning gold in Belgrade women's K1 (kayak single) 500m event. Jessica was determined to win a gold

medal and after the race said "I knew I was going to win today". It was perfect weather conditions for racing. Her winning time of 1.54.6 is a new personal best and indicative of how this talented athlete has progressed under her coach Miklos Simons. Leading at the halfway point, Walker had already overtaken Junior World Championships bronze medal winner, Ukraine's Mariya Vasyevska, and Austrian opponent, Ana Roxana Lehaci, as she led the rest of the field home.

Jonnie Schofield and Ben Brown also won a bronze medal in the U23 500m kayak double event. In their favoured lane next to the grandstand, they gave everything as they hauled their boat over the line in third place behind Hungary and Latvia. Twenty two-year-old Jonnie Schofield (from Lancashire) has only very recently switched from wild water racing to the Olympic sprint racing. In wild water racing, Jonnie has won an array of medals including gold at the European Championships in May. In his first ever sprint World Cup Jonnie bagged seventh place in the K2 (Kayak double) 500m event alongside 21-year-old Ben Brown (former Junior Marathon World Champion). The pair have dominated over the 500m distance in the domestic selection regattas held in April and June. A great way to end the season for this new crew!

Another bronze medal was won by 18-year-old Kristian Reeves in the men's K1 class. He had a very strong race and was in second place with 60 metres to go

but was just pipped by the Portuguese European 1000m champion, Fernando Pimento for silver, Barry Watkins of Ireland won gold.

Great performances all round from the British athletes to draw the sprinting season to a close.



Above:
Jessica Walker and Amoret King.
Left:
Jon Schofield and Ben Brown.
Photos: BCU World Class Olympic Programme

A fantastic result for GB



David Florence

Slalom World Championships, Foz do Iguassu, Brazil, 19-23rd September

GB win two Bronze medals and qualify three boats for the Beijing Olympics.

The key slalom event of the season, the World Championships took place between 19-23rd September and GB won two Bronze medals, whilst qualifying three boats for the Beijing Olympics next year (one boat per class can qualify).

To open the competition, the Women's K1 team consisting of Fiona Pennie, Laura Blakeman and Lizzie Neave fought for a medal and took the Bronze.

In the Men's K1, Campbell Walsh battled amongst the best paddlers in the world and stormed to third position, despite a two second penalty for touching a gate. This did not phase Walsh who stayed focused for the remaining section of the race and took Bronze in a time of 189.34. The winner was France's Sebastian Combet (186.25) followed by Germany's Fabian Doerfler (187.90).

Also in the K1, Nottingham's Richard Hounslow came in behind Campbell's time to take fourth place (190.83), his best result in a World Championships yet. Huw Swetnam very slightly missed the final and came twelfth in a time of 95.62. In terms of qualification for

Beijing, in the Men's K1 class, the top 15 places qualified a boat (one boat per class per nation) so GB have successfully qualified one boat for next year's Olympics.

Fiona Pennie achieved seventh place in the Women's K1. It was a strong performance by Pennie who was in eighth place after the semi-finals. She used her raw strength and technical ability, delivering when it mattered and managed to pick up the pace enough to climb one position after a clean run. Fiona's performance also secured GB a boat in the Women's K1 at the Beijing Olympics.

In the Men's C1, David Florence was up against the best and most experienced canoeists in the world, he achieved fifth place (196.49) and Stuart McIntosh achieved eighth place (201.48). The winner was Slovakia's Michal Martikan (192.87) and France's Tony Estanguet came in second place (194.23).

The athlete's performances mean that one boat in the C1 class qualified to Beijing.

Unfortunately in the C2, GB did not make the finals and no boat qualified for Beijing. However, the C2 crews will have another opportunity to fight for GB's representation in the Olympics, in the European Championships next May in Krakow, Poland.

The GB team have a lot to feel proud about after the World Championships. The competition was fierce, but a superb proportion of GB athletes made it to the finals. Perhaps more importantly two medals were won and GB has secured its representation in the Men's K1, the Women's K1 and the Men's C1 classes in Beijing next year. Congratulations to the team – there is certainly much to look forward to in the next twelve months!



Laura Blakeman



Campbell Walsh

World Championship results:
Athlete profiles:

Campbell Walsh:
Stuart McIntosh:
Dave Florence:
GB canoeing:
UK slalom:

www.foz2007.org.br
www.worldclass-canoeing.org.uk/wcp/406-1-slalom-athlete-profiles.aspx
www.campbellwalsh.com
www.stuartmcintosh.co.uk
www.davidflorence.com
www.worldclass-canoeing.org.uk
www.canoeslalom.co.uk

RESULTS

- Men's K1 (kayak single)**
- 1 FRA Sebastian Combet
 - 2 GER Fabian Doerfler
 - 3 GBR Campbell Walsh
 - 4 GBR Richard Hounslow
 - 12 GBR Huw Swetnam (semi-final result)

- Women's K1 (kayak single)**
- 1 GER Jennifer Bongardt
 - 2 SVK Elena Kaliska
 - 3 CZE Stepanka Hilgertova
 - 7 GBR Fiona Pennie
 - 22 GBR Laura Blakeman (semi-final result)
 - 27 GBR Elizabeth Neave (semi-final result)

- Men's C1 (canoe single)**
- 1 SVK Michal Martikan
 - 2 FRA Tony Estanguet
 - 3 AUS Robin Bell
 - 5 GBR David Florence
 - 8 GBR Stuart McIntosh
 - 39 GBR Colin Radmore (semi-final result)

- Men's C2 (canoe double)**
- 1 SVK Hochschorner/Hochschorner
 - 2 FRA Luquet/Luquet
 - 3 ITA Benetti/Masoero
 - 14 GBR Dan Goddard/Nick Smith (semi-final result)
 - 22 GBR Adam Marshall/Andrew Marshall (semi-final result)
 - 26 GBR Tim Bailli/Etienne Stott (semi-final result)

TEAM EVENTS

- Women's K1 (kayak single)**
- 1 GER Jennifer Bongardt/Mandy Planert /Jasmin Schornberg
 - 2 CZE Stepanka Hilgertova/Irena Pavelkova/Marcela Sadilova
 - 3 GBR Fiona Pennie/Laura Blakeman/Elizabeth Neave

- Men's K1 (kayak single)**
- 1 GER Fabian Doerfler/Alexander Grimm/Erik Pfannmoeller
 - 2 FRA Julien Billaut/Pierre Bourlaid/Sebastien Combet
 - 3 CZE Ivan Pisevcj/Vavrinec Hradilek/Lubos Hilgert
 - 7 GBR Campbell Walsh/Richard Hounslow/Huw Swetnam

- Men's C1 (canoe single)**
1. FRA Tony Estanguet/Pierre Labarelle/Nicolas Peschier
 2. GER Jan Benzien/Nico Bettge/Lukas Hoffmann
 3. CZE Stanislav Jezek/Tomas Indruch/Jan Masek
 7. GBR David Florence/Stuart McIntosh/Colin Radmore

- Men's C2 (canoe double)**
1. CZE Jaroslav Volf/Ondrej Stepanek, Marek Jiras/Tomas Mader & Jarsoslav Pospisil/ David Mruzek
 2. FRA Cedric Forgit/Martin Braud, Pierre Luquet/Christophe Luquet & Damian Troquet/Mathieu Voyemant
 3. SVK Pavel Hochschorner/Hochschorne, Peter Skantar/Ladislav Skantar & Thomas Kucera/Jan Batik
 4. GER Marcus Becker/Stefan Henze, Felix Michel/Sebastian Piersig & Kay Simon/Robby Simon
 5. GBR Timothy Baillie/Etienne Stott, Dan Goddard/Nick Smith & Adam Marshall/Andrew Marshall

Notes on Olympic qualification:
Only one boat per nation, per class counts, even if more than one GB athlete make the criteria. China automatically qualify one boat per class.

Canoe touring and white Scotl

What memories
are made of...

Above: moonlight paddle. Below: Paul Yardley and Steve Gorman at Peebles



water in and



It started a few years ago when Paul Yardley moved to Peebles just south of Edinburgh to work for Scottish Water. I have known Paul for many years and had both worked for Quest in Great Langdale back in the 1980's as instructors in a multi-activity centre. As the Tweed flows through Peebles and there is a brook that runs past his house and in to the Tweed, Paul decided that it would be a good idea to paddle from his front door to the sea, great! Time was running out for us to do this as he, his wife Kim and young family were emigrating to Canada in the near future so we fixed a date that we could both get passes out from our respective wives and started to plan the trip which took all of five minutes. We had allowed three days to do the trip as Paul had to be back at work for the following Tuesday. Steve Gorman takes up the story...

I arrived in Peebles late on the Friday night with two Nova craft prospectors on the roof and all the gear stuffed in to the back of the car. Saturday morning, the weather was very settled if a little cold as it was February. The brook had enough water to paddle with a bit of scraping along the way. I think the locals found it quite amusing seeing people and boats fighting their way down past the local shop, most having a little chuckle to themselves when they found we were from south of the border.

Before setting off no decision had been made as to how far to travel on each day so even though we had dropped a car off at Melrose Cauld (wear), 37km down river we still weren't sure how far we would get. Because of the cold temperatures, there were pockets of mist floating on the river and every now and then it was so thick you were swallowed up by it, which was very atmospheric.

At around 23km you go through an old slalom course at Ashiesteel Rapids, which liven things up, a bit and then the various Caulds again added yet more excitement. We ate lunch in the boats and so continued to make progress. It was quite relaxing watching the fantastic countryside slip by whilst you put your feet up and had a bite to eat and something to drink. Before we knew it we had arrived at the car, however, after a short discussion it was decided to continue on hopefully making Kelso before dark.

We had passed many fishermen on the journey down and had had some interesting discussions with them. There had been no conflict of interest





memories to go with them. As a teacher I can only hope that those I introduce to outdoor pursuits in its widest form can gain half as much pleasure from it as I have. As a teacher it is good for pupils to see you as a person that has interests and hobbies outside of the classroom, as well as you, the teacher, seeing another side of the young people you take away and introduce to experiences which makes for a far more interesting time back in the school environment.

I am going to miss our little adventures as Paul moves to Canada but life does move on. I may still be able to get the odd pass out but it may need to be for more than a few days here and there. Who knows I might even get that Canadian canoe trip I keep promising myself. ●

After each successive rapid you have a chance to relax and take in the beautiful scenery before you are made aware of the next bit of excitement and the need to concentrate on the job at hand.

between us and at no time did we feel that we had caused them any problems, in fact we had been able to tell them where we had seen fish as we paddled down and let them know how successful others were fairing further up river.

The Markerstoun rapids proved to be the best on the river with quite a tight exit but both of us managed to negotiate them with a few shouts of joy as we went through. As the journey continued and the darkness started to creep in we knew it was time to get off the river. As we passed Floors Castle we could see the lights of Kelso in the distance and then hear the roar of the large Cauld. It was decided to call it a day. Pulling off the river I asked a local if we could leave the boats in his garden whilst we got the bus back to Melrose to collect the car which he was more than happy for us to do.

The next morning setting off after dropping a car at Berwick we shot the Cauld which was a little trickier than expected but still great fun. As we approached Coldstream the village looked very impressive perched above the river as it sweeps around to the right. The river gets a lot wider the further downstream you are which made it increasingly difficult to make headway due to the strong winds.

As our planning had not included any research into tide times we were very fortunate to find that it was in as we approached the Union Road Bridge. It was getting late in the day again and thoughts of being benighted started to form in our heads, however, before long the train bridge and then the lights of Berwick came into view which buoyed our flagging spirits. The paddle across the bay to the parked car was quite memorable for the swell that was rolling in. Once ashore, boats fastened to the car roof it was time to relax and think about what to do with our now extra day.

A LITTLE MORE PACE

Both of us had enjoyed the trip down but were very keen to get on to something with a little more pace to it so after a night camped again at Kelso, a few beers to celebrate and a good meal, it was decided that we should travel across country to take a look at an old time favourite of ours: the Boarder Esk Grade 3-4.

The excitement starts straight away with an excellent rapid below the road bridge at around Grade 3+, although it seemed a little easier than this.



The river was at a very good level and proved to be the right choice for the day. After each successive rapid you have a chance to relax and take in the beautiful scenery before you are made aware of the next bit of excitement and the need to concentrate on the job at hand.

THE CHICKEN SHOOT

The main section of difficulty is Hollows Mill Rapid that is 3-4 and very big particularly in open boats. The chicken shoot was running but we opted for the main line. Going down it was like being on a white knuckle ride, the exit being particularly interesting. The boats filled up with water from the standing waves which made them difficult to control but it was fun all the same. It was one of those smiles all the way days where everything seemed to go right. The river provided a huge amount of sport for us both to play on with enough adrenaline filled moments to make it exciting without us being gripped silly. Although this section of the river is quite short, 10km, it is still well worth doing especially in the condition we found it in.

It is trips like this that have helped me to put many of life's little problems in to perspective and has given me many years of shared experiences and

The River Tweed is 156kms or 97 miles long and flows primarily through the Borders region of England and Scotland. It rises on Tweedsmuir at Tweed's Well near where the Clyde, draining northwest, and the Annan draining south also rise and drains the entire Borders region. Its lower reaches mark the Scottish border with England for 27kms near Berwick-upon-Tweed. The Tweed is one of the great salmon rivers of England and Scotland.

Major towns through which the Tweed flows include Peebles, Galashiels, Melrose, Kelso, Coldstream and Berwick-upon-Tweed, where it flows into the North Sea.



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Six for Anna

Anna Hemmings wins gold in the Marathon World C



ANNE HEMMINGS K1

It was a memorable weekend of racing for Anna Hemmings as she retained her World Champion title in the women's K1. It was Anna's sixth World Championship title, five of which have been in K1. Her win this year was extremely close with seven countries all close to the finish line but it was Anna who surged forward determined to grab gold in a time of 1.55.59! Defending her title as World Champion is a fantastic accomplishment for the 30-year-old from Surrey who made a dramatic comeback to the sport two years ago after taking time off and bravely overcoming Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. Anna paddled exceptionally well considering the heavy rainfall in the previous days, the river rose over three metres in just three days! With the portages flooded Anna, who is renowned for breaking away from the competition at the portages, had to change her tactics.

ANNA HEMMINGS/LOUISA SAWYERS K2

The following day in the K2, Anna went out to win a second gold with her partner Louisa Sawyers. The start of the race was tough, with the boat getting stuck in trees, due to the swelling river, despite their best efforts to rejoin the leaders the pair could not make up the minute they lost and the duo came fifth. It will be a disappointing result for both Anna and Louisa who were very capable of winning the race, but the challenging conditions will also be a learning curve to the pair. Louisa Sawyers is the current double Junior World Champion in Marathon Racing, for K1 and K2 winning both titles in 2006. Louisa, the 19-year-old from Weybridge is also in the senior squad for Olympic discipline of Flatwater racing and is an essential member of the K4 crew. Anna has also made a successful entry on the Flatwater scene competing in the European and World Championships achieving two top ten positions!

JESSICA WALKER AND AMORET KING

Anna Hemmings was not the only athlete to win a medal, Jessica Walker (17-years-old) from Middlesex won bronze in the Junior K1. She also won bronze with Amoret King (16-years-old) from Reading in the Junior K2. Jessica recently won gold in the Junior and U23 European Flatwater Championships and she and Amoret won silver at the same championships. This is a fantastic result for the young paddlers who have had an incredibly successful season!

The GB team achieved eight top ten finishes in the 14 events in which they competed and was fourth overall in the points table! This has been a truly inspiring World Championships with significant achievements for all of the athletes!

Masters Marathon World Championships Gyor, Hungary

hampionships! A total of three medals won by GB!

Selected Results

K1 Women

1. Anna Hemmings, GBR, 1.55.59.331
2. Renata Csay, HUN, 1.56.06.705
3. Mara Santos, ESP, 1.56.17.589

Junior K2

1. Zsolia Dira/Zomilla Hegyi, HUN, 1.26.53.692
2. Marcela Krauzova/Martina Vichova, CZE, 1.27.52.810
3. Amoret King/Jessica Walker, GBR, 1.27.58.546

Junior K1

1. Zomilla Hegyi, HUN, 1.34.18.325
2. Eszter Havas, HUN, 1.34.20.473
3. Jessica Walker, GBR, 1.34.20.473

For the full list of results visit: www.gyor2007.com/eng.html
Anna Hemmings: www.annahemmings.com
Marathon Website: www.marathoncanoer.org.uk

Marathon paddlers over a certain age made their way out to the World Masters Marathon Championships in Gyor, Hungary. The British had a strong entry with clubs such as Worcester, Chester, Norwich and Reading fielding relatively large teams.

In a very wet, windy and cold Gyor, the GB Masters team had a lot of success. The K1 races were held amidst some of the most atrocious weather conditions but the GB team and supporters were out in force. Overnight heavy rain had swollen the amount of water and increased the flow in the river but we were still out there. Taking the very narrow turns around the islands, into the flow and the head wind with great care, the competitors took not only the weather conditions but the beach portage in their stride. The oldest competitor out on the course was an 80-year-old from eastern Europe!

The competition in each class was incredibly strong and competitive. Old sparing partners were out to see if they could still go faster than so and so from another country. Tactics were planned and re-planned. The racing was a pleasure to watch particularly the beach portage where people made up or lost positions depending on their skill of getting in and out of the boat. (How do they stand up in a racing kayak to climb in and out?)

As with the World Marathon Championships the Spanish and Hungarians had very strong teams providing a lot of the competition and taking quite a few of the medals.

Men's K1

Stuart West, gold, (Worcester) 35-39
Melvin Swallow, gold, (Chester) 55-59
Brian Greenham, bronze, (Reading) 55-59
John Talbot, bronze, (Worcester) 65-69
Stan Smith, gold, (Worcester) 70-74

Women's K1

Wiki Daniels, silver, (Reading) 30-34
Sharon Colley, silver, (Hereford) 34-38
Susan Gray, silver, (Reading) 40-44

Masters day two

Having rained very heavily over night and all day the day before, dawn broke with no rain but it soon started again! The area of the tents and race registration was like a quagmire!

Day two is K2 day and the first race started at 8.30am. The K2 men set off in their various age groups. The K2 women and C2 men all started together. The river had noticeably risen overnight and continued to do so as we paddled around. The conditions were better for racing as there was no wind or rain and the sun even came out for a few minutes! The higher river even made the beach portage easier too! The competitors had to dodge the debris that was floating around on the course including complete tree trunks! The river is actually dammed so the flow does change direction depending on the dam opening etc.

K2 Women

30-34 years: Wiki Daniels (Reading)/Ali Pendle, (Norwich) gold
35-40 years: Sue Gray (Reading)/Sharon Colley, (Hereford) gold
40-45 years: Sue Hawthorn/Jane Moran, (Worcester) silver
40-45 years: Gail Battison/Tamsin Phipps, (Reading) bronze

K2 Men

45-49 years: Melvin Swallow/Andrew Kelly, silver *
45-49 years: Roy Fieldus/Adrian Henson, bronze
50-54 years: Dyson Pendle (GB)/Svenning Jorgensen, (Denmark) gold
55-59 years: Chris Skellern/James Parker, silver
60-64 years: Tony Nolan (GB)/Carmelo Gpmez Sanchez, (Spain)
(*Melvin raced down with the youngsters!)

Masters competitions are great fun. We catch up with friends from all over the world and enjoy the racing too! Why not come along and join us next year? We will all be in Tyn, Czechoslovakia.

For results

www.gyor2007.com/masters/results.pdf
www.gyor2007.com

PINDAR



2007 – a magnificent seven for racing World Champion Tim Brabants

What a season Tim Brabants has had this year, winning seven medals, three of them gold, in five major competitions... and all this before a double gold at the Beijing test event.

We look back at the season, man, his achievements and his aspirations and ultimate goal of winning gold at the Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008.

After having a year career break, the 2006/07 season and the pre-Olympic year, was a bit special for Tim Brabants. The 30-year-old doctor originally from Surrey, is always focused on winning and delivers when it matters most.

Tim Brabants is the current World Champion over the 1000m distance and Silver medallist over 500m. He is also European Men's K1 (kayak single) 500m Champion and European silver medallist in his more familiar distance, the 1000m.

And if you look back into Tim's achievements you will also see that he has a few more titles to his name:-

- Olympic bronze medal winner from Sydney 2000
- Worlds fastest 1000m time – Olympic Games, Athens 2004 – finishing 5th in the final.
- 2006 – World Championships silver medallist
- 2006 – European Champion 1000m

So here are the highlights from his extremely successful season of racing, the target event was always the World Championships and Olympic qualification event in August.

The season kicked off in May/June with the World Cup Series followed by the European Championships and then the World Championships.

World Cup Series

This season, Tim set his sights on 'doubling up' in both the 1000m and 500m events. He medalled in the K1 1000m event in the first two but then grabbed a bronze in the 500m distance in the final of the three-regatta series in France – a great confidence boost for Brabants.

During the series it became clear to see that Adam Van Koeeverden would be Tim's key adversary in the major races.

World Cup 1 – Zagreb, 4-6th May

Results: 1000m

1. CAN Adam van Koeeverden, 3.34.581
2. NOR Erik Vera Larssen, 3.36.221
3. GBR Tim Brabants, 3.37.301

World Cup 2 – Szeged, Hungary, 17-19th May

Results: 1000m

1. CAN Van Koeeverden Adam, 3.27.639
2. HUN Benko Zoltan, 3.28.371
3. GBR Brabants Tim, 3.28.821

World Cup 3 – France 2nd June

Results: 500m

1. CAN Adam Van Koeeverden, 1.39.8
2. SWE A Gustaffson, 1.40.2
3. GBR Tim Brabants, 1.40.5

European Championships – Pontevedra, Spain, 28th June-1st July

With growing confidence, Brabants was set to defend his European Champion title in the Men's K1 1000m event and despite winning his heat a whole five seconds ahead of his competitors, he lost his crown to Norwegian Erik Veras Larsen. However that was a momentary blip on the radar as he went on to win gold the next day in the 500m event, his second medal over the 500m distance during the season so far.

Results: Flat Water Racing K1 1000m Men

1. NOR Veraas Eirik Larsen, 3.39.179
2. GBR Tim Brabants, 3.40.342
3. HUN Zoltan Benko, 3.41.742

Results: Flat Water Racing K1 500m Men

1. GBR Tim Brabants, 1.42.653
2. SWE Anders Gustafsson, 1.42.905
3. POL Marek Twardowski, 1.43.450

World Championships – Duisburg, Germany, 9-12th August

With the warm up of the World Cup and European events, Tim was set for the challenge of racing in both the 1000m and the 500m events, in the key event of the year – the World Championships.

Both races were incredibly close but medals were always in his sight as battle was rejoined with Canadian Adam Van Koeeverden.

No-one will forget the in the 1000m race. It has been described as the battle of the greats. Everyone can remember great sporting duels of our time be it either recent or latter day - Muhammad Ali and George Foreman rumbled in the jungle in Zaire; Ayrton Senna and Nigel Mansell showed that speed and guile matter at Silverstone, Federer and Nadal rolled with it on the tennis court clay of Roland Garros in Paris. The race between Tim Brabants and Adam Van Koeeverden was talked of in the same breath. Anyone who witnessed this contest saw the lead change four times and was treated to an ultimate sporting memory. Tim was determined to take gold and take gold he did.

The next day in the shorter 500m final Tim was again up against the Canadian Adam Van Koeeverden, this time it was even closer and Tim very marginally missed out on gold (1.36.279) winning the silver medal in a time of 1.36.607 a good achievement given that this was the second quickest race in history.

The World Championships were of extra significance this year because it was a qualifying event for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. Tim's top positions secured Great Britain's representation in the 1000m and 500m events in Beijing next year; a fantastic result for Brabants and Team GB.



r GB's sprint bants!

Athlete Focus



Tim Brabants

Performance Director John Anderson commented, "Just fantastic, I knew he would win" and when asked how it felt to be World Champion Brabants said, "I always knew it would be difficult out there I am really really pleased" and he went on to commend his adversaries in making it such a hard race.

It was a truly inspiring performance by the man and indeed a successful world championships for the GB team as a whole.

Results: 500m

1. CAN Adam Van Koeverden, 1.36.279
2. GBR Tim Brabants, 1.36.607
3. POL Marek Twardowski, 1.36.661

Results: 1000m

1. GBR Tim Brabants, 3.40.113
2. CAN Adam Van Koeverden, 3.40.675
3. NOR Erik Veras Larsen, 3.41.60

The final event for the year was the pre-Olympic test event in Beijing, which gives the event organisers the opportunity of a 'staged run through' before the main event next year, and gives the athletes a taste of the facilities and environment in which they will race in 2008.

Beijing Test event 23-26th August

While Canadian Adam Van Koeverden decided to miss this event out, Tim repeated his performance of the Worlds, but went one better by winning gold in both the 1000m and the 500m events, which will certainly boost his confidence and preparation for the Olympics next year.

Results: Men's K1 500m

1. GBR Tim Brabants, 1.37.786
2. AUS Kenneth Wallace, 1.38.041
3. FRA Sebastien Jouve, 1.38.408

Results: Men's K1 1000m

1. GBR Tim Brabants, 3.33.882
2. NZL Ben Fouhy, 3.34.510
3. NOR Eirik Vearas Larsen, 3.34.554

A double gold medal brought a fabulous end to a great season.

Complementing consistency

So what has brought about such consistent success in 2007? In a BCU World Class interview, Tim's coach Eric Farrell (who was awarded the Mussabini medal at the SportsCoach UK 'Coach of the Year Awards in 2004), was asked what has moved Brabants on from being a contender to a consistent medallist?

"After Athens (2004), Tim took a sabbatical to focus on his career as a doctor and I think that helped him, because when he returned he was more focused than ever" said Farrell. "He decided that he would like to give the 500m event a try so we looked at that distance and reviewed the training we did. We looked for gains in the areas of power and strength endurance and that really made a marked difference in his 500m performance and I think that has also helped in the last part of his 1000m racing. You could see that at the end of his 1000m final in Duisburg, when he took a lead over Adam in the last 60m."

Yet the gap in the medal collection that both Brabants and Farrell are now seeking to fill in 2008 is in that exclusive Olympic domain – and the biggest prize – the **GOLD** medal.

1 How did you first become involved in kayaking?

My mum took me to Elmbridge Canoe Club in Weybridge for a week long 'come and try it' course in the school summer holidays back in 1987. It was a great way to start and from there, I never looked back!

2 What is it about kayaking you like so much?

Initially, I most enjoyed just being on the water with all there is to see whilst paddling. Things like the wildlife and scenery. As I started to get introduced to racing, I was bitten by the bug and started to really enjoy competing and progressing through the ranks.

3 Were you instantly drawn to flatwater racing?

Elmbridge is a flatwater club and there isn't really any opportunity to do any other canoeing disciplines in the area so naturally, that is what I started to really enjoy. It is a very easy and cheap sport to get involved with at any age with options to progress to whatever level you choose. With two main disciplines of sprinting or marathon racing, both with several ability categories, there is something for everyone.

4 When did you win your first race?

I cannot remember exactly when I won my first race unfortunately. I think it probably was a Division 9 marathon race when I was about 12 years old.

5 Did you join a canoe club?

See question 1!

6 What is your typical day's training?

A typical day starts with the first session on the water at 7:30am which will last 90 minutes to two hours. Some days this will be followed with a running session or swimming. The afternoon session consists of either another paddling session or weights. Around this will be plenty of eating good quality foods for recovery, sports massage/physio, sleep and rest!

7 Are you naturally competitive?

When training at Elmbridge, everyone paddles in groups of different abilities. If you win a training effort against other people, it's a bit like winning a race. That's how I think I developed my competitive side, always wanting to go faster and faster to move into better and better training groups.

8 What is the highlight of your career so far?

I think winning the World Championships in the K1 1000m this year has been a real high point for me. I have been racing in K1 over 1000m for a very long time at International level and been in the top five for almost as long. Probably my absolute highlight was winning the bronze in the K1 1000m at the Sydney Olympics in 2000. This was Britains first ever Olympic medal in flatwater racing and there is something very special about an Olympic medal I think.

9 How are you preparing for Beijing 2008?

Preparation will follow a very similar program to the 2007 World Championships training. My coach Eric Farrell, has coached me for the past 14 years, so he knows me well and what training I need to go fast! I went to Beijing after the World Championships this year to race in the pre-Olympic regatta on the Olympic course. China is an amazing place and it was a great opportunity to get a feel for the acclimatisation to the heat, humidity and time difference. It really is a world class course and I'm very excited about racing there for the Olympics.

10 What would be your ultimate goal to achieve in flatwater racing?

My ultimate goal had been to win a gold medal at the Olympic Games. After the season I've just had, taking a gold and silver at the World Championships, I think my ultimate goal now is to take two gold medals at the games!

11 What advice would you give to up and coming flatwater paddlers?

It doesn't matter how high you are aiming, commitment and passion for what you are trying to achieve are the two most important qualities to have. It is easy to simply go through the motions and pretend to yourself you are committed to training etc. The people who are achieving what they want to achieve are not necessarily those with the most talent, they are those who want to win the most and are willing to put the effort in that is required to win.

The four canoes glided quietly over the still, dark lake waters, surrounded only by forest, rock and sky. Here, there was no sign of human interference. No droning vapour trails, roads, pylons or human noise. The forest was pristine, uncut for over forty years. The water in the centre of the lake was safe to drink without treating. We were on a nine day trip in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, Minnesota. Peter Thorn tells all.

The BWCA is west of the Great Lakes, merging seamlessly into the Quetico National Park of Canada. The 'land of ten thousand lakes' would take a life time to explore, but we were taking a leisurely fifty mile circular trip to link just some of them. Not so leisurely in fact, as there were nineteen portages; the canoes and all equipment had to be carried over rough trails, testing the strength, fitness and good humour of nine friends, mostly in their late fifties. Our knowledge of the BWCA came from group members who had worked, thirty years ago, at 'MOBS', the Minnesota Outward Bound School. This still operates; introducing young people to a beautiful wilderness while helping them develop team skills and determination. However, we were on holiday, strengthening old friendships, escaping from the daily grind and determined to do the trip before arthritis sets in.

DEAD BY 40

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the 'voyageurs' set out from Lake Superior westward, starting with the nine mile 'Grand Portage'. Using 25-foot canoes they paddled for up to 18 hours a day, stopping briefly every hour for a drink and a smoke. They carried goods to trade for beaver pelts, which they packed into 90lbs bales, carrying at least two of these each at a portage. They ate one meal a day, snacking on pemmican at other times. Most died of the life style by the age of 40. By comparison, we were mollycoddled. The 'Duluth' packs weighed up to 60lbs, though progressively less as we ate our way through the provisions. The Kevlar canoes weighed 45lbs, and towards the end of the trip some members could manage a pack and a canoe for a shorter portage. These portages are measured, rather



Trip to the North Woods



quietly, in rods. If you are old enough you may remember rods, poles and perches, all names for about five metres, or the length of a normal canoe. The portages varied from five rods to 340, mostly on reasonable footpaths but sometimes steep and rocky. It's worth walking with a buddy and resting when

you feel like it. At one point we had quarrelling red squirrels running round our feet.

The BWCA was set up in 1967 and has an extensive website. No habitation exists there now, having been progressively 're-zoned'. Engines are not allowed. Access is by permit for multi-day trips. The base for many trips is Ely, northwest of Duluth. This little town has a great flavour of rural USA, with huge pick up trucks, smoky bars and friendly restaurants. An English accent is quite a novelty.

We used a local outfitting company who picked us up from Minneapolis/St Paul airport, accommodated us in a bunkhouse on arrival and lent us a minibus to go into Ely to eat. Their lakeside location was idyllic. They supplied us with all equipment and a highly organised set of provisions. We should have specified some smaller packs, as doing the portages twice was not a problem. The weight of the big 'Duluth' packs was too much over rough ground for some group members.



BLACK BEARS

Campsites are identified on excellent waterproof maps, supplied as part of the package. The sites have a regulation fire grate, some flattish camping areas and an earth closet 'dunny', discreetly placed. All seemed to have fantastic views. The permit system prevents areas becoming overloaded, and on some days we saw no other groups. There was plentiful dry fallen timber, which needed finding and cutting up. Care was needed to avoid poison ivy. The ethic of camping in these areas is to 'leave no trace' so a meticulous clean up was done, with some dry firewood left for the next visitors.

This is a wild area where hunting is not allowed, so black bears, moose, deer, otters, beavers and bald eagles can all be seen. We were lucky enough to see all of these except moose. In fact, on the first night a black bear silently visited the site, passing close to a couple going to sleep under a bivi sheet. All food and

oods



trash bags have to be hauled up to be suspended from a tree overnight, as bears are partial to anything vaguely edible. These smaller black bears are not considered dangerous, unless with cubs. At one more remote site, we watched a Bald Eagle catch and eat



This is a wild area where hunting is not allowed, so black bears, moose, deer, otters, beavers and bald eagles can all be seen.

a fish. Early next morning we were woken by someone apparently lobbing large rocks into the water. This turned out to be a pair of otters, splashing to scare fish towards their partner. On another site, as we swam, a mother otter and two cubs swam within three metres of us, peering suspiciously, but continuing on their way without alarm.

As for the canoeing, the Kevlar canoes made a huge difference, being easy to push along and feasible to portage without assistance. Local fishing and drinking paddlers really struggled with their heavier aluminum craft. The area can experience strong winds, whipping up quite a chop on longer reaches. We had only one really windy day, and stayed in camp, reading, swimming and eating. We took 12 litres of wine with us in boxes, plus various spirits, so good cheer deprivation wasn't an issue. The lake water in August is refreshing but limpid. Early morning swims were fantastic, with mystical light, mist on the surface and comparatively warm water. The shores were invariably rocky, often slippery, but in many cases you could jump or dive directly into deep water. The whole area was once covered by a massive ice sheet, grinding down the granite, leaving thin soil and bare rock. Trees grow slowly, with arctic conditions in winter. The area is famous for its 'bugs', and early season trips can be unpleasant. August was a good time, with maximum water temperatures, few biting insects and good daylight. It was dark by 9pm.

HEN PARTY

After eight days of seeing very few people, our last day was busy. At 'Billy Goat' portage, a steep and rocky route, we met eight 'bachelorettes'. Three were soon to be brides, one pregnant, and this was their 'hen party'. Decked in bridal veils and sashes, they hauled their packs and canoes in fine style. At the route end, at Mudro Lake, we met the 'Chainsaw Sisters' at their log cabin bar, where cold beers were enjoyed until Caleb arrived from Packsack to take us back to hot showers and the nearest steak house. ●



For these trips you do not need advanced paddling skills, though a good level of general fitness helps. We chose a modest target distance as we were not on a 'mission', and wanted to still be friends at the end. To get there, we flew Icelandair, as it was the cheapest way to get to Minneapolis, stopping over in Reykjavik for four days. That's an expensive place, but worth the visit for the whale watching, waterfalls, hot springs etc. Our excellent outfitters in Ely were Packsack www.packsackcanoetrips.com, who worked that bit harder for our business.



Recovery and out of season training



INTRODUCTION

Canoeing places large physiological demands on the body, necessitating the development of both the aerobic and anaerobic energy systems in addition to the strength and power properties of the muscle.

A strong relationship exists between canoeing performance and the physiological attributes of an individual athlete. Therefore optimal performance is very much dependant on the quality of your training programme, including the manipulation of several variables; training frequency, duration, intensity and rest/recovery. The ability to effectively manipulate training throughout the course of one year, or a number of years, is termed periodisation.

range from nine months to four years dependent on the athletes long-term goals/developments.

TRAINING PHASES

The periodisation of training typically involves a preparation phase (general and specific), competition phase and transition phase. The breakdown of training into such distinct phases allows the coach to structure and progress the intensity, duration and frequency of training accordingly to maximise the physical and technical development of the athlete throughout the year. The 'off-season' or winter training period therefore covers both the transition and preparation phases.

The number of weekly training sessions will inevitably vary between beginners (3-5), experienced athlete's (6-8) and top athlete's (10-12 +). When planning the training it is important to remember that an athlete's adaptation to training is dependant on the balance between the overall training load and recovery.

NUTRITION

No matter what your competitive standard, in order to achieve the quality of your training and maximise adaptations (positive changes to the body that result in gains in fitness), it is essential that you consume a diet that matches the demands that you are placing on the body. It is a well accepted concept that diet can significantly affect performance, both positively and negatively. Therefore, a good nutritional strategy should be an essential part of every athletes training schedule.

The key nutritional strategy of supplying enough energy (and at the right time) from the key macronutrients (carbohydrate, fat and protein) does not change, except for appropriate manipulation depending on the volume and timing of training completed. Specific individual requirements such as making weight, optimal body weight and/or body composition should be approached in conjunction with a qualified nutritionist/dietician. The key nutritional tips include:

- Carbohydrate (pasta, rice, bread and cereals) is your fuel of choice and should therefore compose the majority of your diet. Your body only has a limited capacity to store carbohydrate and therefore intake guidelines include:
 - **Immediate recovery following exercise (0-4hrs):** approx 1g per kg of bodyweight
 - **Moderate-duration/low-intensity (1-3hrs):** approx 5-7g per kg of bodyweight
 - **Moderate-heavy endurance training (2-4hrs):** approx 7-12g per kg of bodyweight
 - **Heavy-very heavy endurance training (4-6hrs):** approx 10-12g per kg of bodyweight
- The importance of protein, vitamin and minerals in the diet has long been recognised, however, if you are consuming a well balanced diet of sufficient energy intake then it is likely that you are consuming these nutrients at the recommended levels.
- Drink fluids at a rate that closely matches sweat rate (i.e. the amount of sweat lost per hour during training and competition) and thus minimises the loss of body weight. It may not always be possible to drink enough to prevent a loss of body weight, but the amount of dehydration should be limited to no more than 2% of body weight (approximately 1.4 litres for a 70kg man).

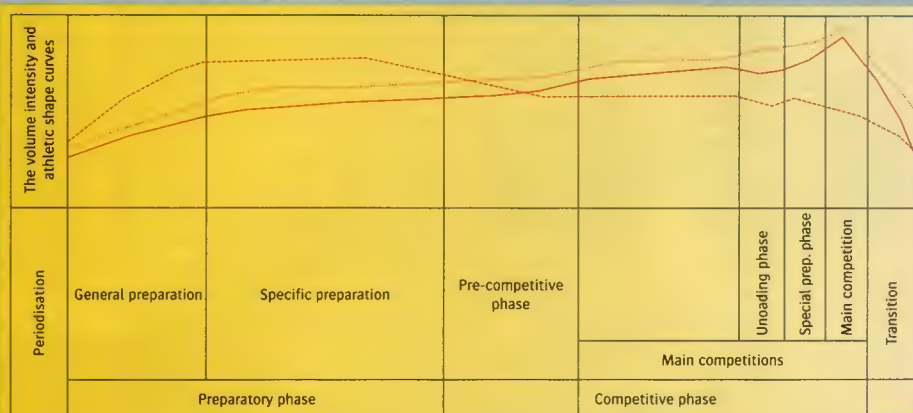


Diagram 1: A mono-cycle annual plan adapted from Bompa (2)

PHASE

Transition

OBJECTIVE

Period of active rest utilising leisure activities to allow recovery and regeneration to take place. This is both mental and physical.

General Preparation

Typically the longest period of the year with a high volume (duration and frequency) of work and a gradual increase in the quality (intensity) of work. Emphasis is placed on general endurance, improvements in mobility and strength and technique.

Specific Preparation

General preparation maintained whilst canoeing specific training is increased. A period of high quantity and quality of work.

Table 1 Training phase objectives

PERIODISATION

Periodisation is the method of planning periods or cycles in training, in which the training specificity, intensity, and volume changes within an overall training program (1). Its objective is to manipulate training accordingly so that the athlete is then able to maximise performance in major competitions as a result of peak physical condition (2).

Traditionally periodised programs divide the training program into specific time periods, typically according to the number of competition periods. The largest cycle (known as the macrocycle) is characteristically a year in duration (see diagram 1), although Bompa (2) suggests that this phase can



SUMMARY

In order to develop the physical attributes necessary to be successful in canoeing, it suggested that training should be periodized accordingly, based on the identified 'major' competition(s). The periodisation of training typically includes an 'off-season' period that covers the transition phase from the previous season and the preparation phase of the new season. The basic aim during the 'off-season' is to develop a strong aerobic base via the completion of both continuous and interval based training. Nutrition remains a vital part of the training programme throughout the training year, but should reflect the frequency and volume of training completed during the various training phases.

NICK MORGAN, LSSA SPORT SCIENTIST

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2. Bompa, T.O. (1999). Periodisation: Training and Methodology of Training. Human Kinetics, Champ IL.

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Athlete Focus



Fiona Pennie

Twenty four-year-old slalom paddler Fiona Pennie won a silver medal in last years World Championships, the last time a woman won an individual medal in the worlds was Lynn Simpson over ten years ago in 1995.

At the time of press Fiona will be competing in this year's

Worlds Championships in Foz Do Iguassu, Brazil on 8th-23rd September, her mind will be set qualifying a boat for the Beijing Olympics and medalling.

The determined and gutsy paddler has lots of talent and plenty of focus so we took time out to meet her and find more about; how she got into canoeing, a typical days training her career highlights and hopes for the future.

Vital Statistics

Date of birth: 09.11.1982
University: Nottingham
Coach: Shaun Pearce ex-World Champion in men's kayak, Tacen, Yugoslavia 1991
Slalom since: 1992 but played in boats since a few months old
Hometown: Cotgrave, Nottingham
Marital status: Single
Height / weight: 169cm/70kg
Occupation: Full time athlete
Class: K1 Women
Club: C.R. Cats
Paddles: Double Dutch Kinetic on Powercrank Shaft
Supported by: Team Visa, Nomad, Peak UK



Career Highlights:

2007 European Championships: Slovakia, 10th and 3rd in women's team
World Cups: Prague, 3rd, Tacen 9th, Augsburg 9th Overall 4th
2006 World Championships: Prague, 2nd
European Championships: Argentario 7th
2005 European Championships U23: Krakow 3rd
2001 World Cup: Prague 10th
2000 Junior World Championships: 3rd
World Cups: overall Junior World Cup Champion

More about Fiona...

1 How did you first become involved in kayaking?

My mum, Maureen Pennie (nee McClure) was a champion flatwater sprint paddler and I first sat in a boat when I was a few months old. A few years further down the line, I started paddling my very own boat, an orange 'Inn Minor' which gave me the worst fibreglass rash ever! In 1991, when I was eight, I did my 1 Star which I passed, but I did it again the very next year just for fun as I was too young to move onto my 2 Star!

2 Were you instantly drawn to slalom?

Donald McKechnie, a member of C.R. CATS, instructed my second 1 Star course. He invited me to take part in a taster slalom that was going to take place in Alva. I went along and really enjoyed it. Of course I had to try out some flatwater as well; I don't think mum would have allowed me not to! I did a few of the Kirkcaldy Canoe Club regattas and took part in their winter series of handicap marathons on the Union Canal in Linlithgow, but slalom was always my main discipline.

3 What is it about kayaking you like so much?

Everybody says it must be great doing something you enjoy full time and travelling all over the world with it. And it is, but it's harder work than some may think! Granted it's better than sitting behind a desk 9 to 5! But I love the new challenge of every course and trying to be the fastest on it. When things start to go well, it just flows and paddling almost seems effortless which is a nice feeling to work towards!

4 When did you win your first race?

Phone a friend! Apparently I was promoted to Div 4 in September 1993 when I was ten, having won the Comrie Div 5 Slalom.

5 Did you join a canoe club?

I joined Perth Canoe Club in the winter of 1992 and was helped mainly by Richard Rogers who my mum had taught to paddle! At the time, the club was involved with some slalom and canoe polo. In a polo boat, I was a little whippersnapper who paddled right up on top of the big boys' boats! As my slalom training became slightly more serious, I joined C.R. CATS where I was taking part in sessions twice a week.

6 What is your typical day training?

Each day is slightly varied depending on what sessions I am doing due to the time of year and what intensity the training is that week. However, a typical day would usually consist of my alarm going off at 06.45 (because I take 15 minutes to actually get out of bed!), then getting down to the course for 08.00. Morning sessions are usually whitewater sessions, just over an hour long, doing anything from technique to full runs to VO2 sessions. Afterwards we sometimes have video review of the session and then I usually have 101 jobs to go and do as well as eat some lunch before my afternoon session! I have weights sessions three or four times a week depending on the time of year. Afternoon sessions are usually either weights, a painful session on the flatwater or some short and technical work on the whitewater. And of course, around all this (just for the physios out there), I enthusiastically and passionately do my physio exercises!

7 Are you naturally competitive?

In a word, OK three words, very much so! I can make a competition out of anything!

8 What is the highlight of your career so far?

Winning the BCU's photo competition for the month of June! It would have to be my silver medal at the World Championships in 2006. After



a difficult season of racing, things came together for the worlds and I had four runs where I had little to complain about. I was just amazed that I managed to hold it together right through until the final!

9 What have been the toughest moments and how do you keep yourself motivated?

Getting a frozen spraydeck on when I was a wee girl! It needed four grown men and a flask of coffee to get it on again for the afternoon session! Breaking my arm in the summer of 2003 wasn't such a great thing and it took four months of tearful physio sessions four times a week to get me back on the water! I went through a difficult patch prior to the Europeans in 2006 where everything was just going wrong. Poor World Cup results meant I wanted to prove myself but I ended up trying too hard and just got worse and worse, beating myself up for anything. A few last minute changes turned me around just in time for the Europeans and onto the worlds. I guess when sessions are tough or when you get into troughs like that, you just have to remind yourself of your ultimate goal and why you are doing it.

10 How are you preparing for Beijing 2008?

Top secret! Well at the moment, I'm only thinking about getting to Beijing 2008 in the first place! That's the hardest part as a GB K1 woman with only one boat place available for the games in each category. I think my first port of call will be taking a drill to every K1 women's boat on the boat racks at selection in Holland next year! As I am writing this, we are actually in Beijing, training at the new Olympic course – it's a tough one! Tomorrow I'll be racing in the 'Good Luck Beijing' test event. We have another two week training camp here in October and then the Olympic team will spend a month here in May and June as well as the time immediately prior to the Olympics. Other than that, I have monthly, five day training camps on the Dutch Water Dreams course in Holland throughout the winter to prepare for two of the races that make up Olympic selection in April, the third race being in Nottingham.

11 What would be your ultimate goal to achieve in slalom racing?

Ultimately, I want to consistently paddle well and be one of the best in the world. Of course it would be nice if this included a few more of those shiny things at championship races and an Olympic one would be good too!

12 What advice would you give to up and coming slalom paddlers?

When I was younger, I did nearly every sport under the sun. Legendary Scottish coach, John Brown thinks that this always helped with my general fitness for paddling even if I didn't manage to get into a boat that often. Other than that I would say just get out there and get the miles (or should I say waves) under your belt (or rather boat)! I flung myself down Grandtully when I was tiny and eventually I learnt not to swim! But all the whitewater made me stronger and gutsier. Most slalom clubs do weekly coached sessions – get involved! I did a lot of judging at higher division races when I was younger just to get experience on the big stuff in a race situation. For junior paddlers: talk to Mum and Dad nicely! Sweet-talking goes a long way and I don't think I would have got to where I am without mum and dad's taxis taking me to every training session and race available!

For more information about how the GB team performed in the World Championships visit: www.worldclass-canoeing.org.uk

Thank you Fiona for taking the time to give this interview.
Photos: Dave Leathborough

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Adventure in Croatia

From its source in the Italian Alps to its mouth into Danube, the Drava river flows through different areas, changing its own appearance and that of it's surrounding. It is cut up by many dams and reservoirs and gyved by concrete embankments in Austria, Slovenia and partly in Croatia, too. Despite this, downstream of the last dam in northwestern Croatia, the Drava becomes an old, wild river again. Gvido Piasevoli describes the journey.

My friend Ogi and myself decided to explore one such wild river. Friends drove us to the dam, where we launched ourselves into the river and the adventure began.

The river current is weak downstream from the dam, but soon it becomes faster and paddling is made easier. Our speed was 4 knots, with no paddling and it was only necessary to steer the canoe, taking care of any suspicious wrinkling of water surface in front of us or the branches of numerous trees, uprooted and deposited by the river.

After 11 miles we approached the mouth of the Mura River, the Drava's left tributary. There you can see a



Above: First camp



Far left: the start - see you 155 miles downstream

Middle left: a young White-tailed Eagle

Left: where are we now?

great gravel bar, a popular local beach and a holiday resort, on one side, and Veliki Pažut marsh, zoological reserve on the other side. We pitched our tent on low gravel bar in the middle of the river. Water level is low in this period of the year, but if the upstream dam lets a greater amount of water through, the level rises very fast! Therefore, in order not to lose the canoe, we moored it firmly to the tent.

The next day passed by slowly descending down the river and exploring the surrounding channels and backwaters that are choked with dense vegetation. Our next overnight was on the bank of one of those channels, where a small holiday resort was situated. It was abandoned, but still with some comforts of civilisation, such as drinkable water. It was the ideal combination of civilisation and nature – flowing water, but no asphalt or crowds – only bird song, soft grass and deep shade. And in the morning, when I peeped out the tent, the first sight I saw were two storks, searching for breakfast in the grass.

OAK FOREST

We had breakfast, too, and then we moved to paddle upstream, which is a very hard task with such a strong current. Luckily, we do not have go very far as only several hundreds of metres upstream there is an edge of a typical lowlands oak forest. Such forests are characteristic of low-lying humid habitats of middle Europe, however, most of these are being cut down. It is an extraordinary experience to enter such a primeval forest. We wanted to wander through it

but we had to carry on as we only had a week. From time to time we passed near the high, sheer banks with colonies of Sand Martins. Black Storks and Purple Herons. We didn't succeed in seeing rare Little Terns, but the sight of White-tailed Eagles catching big carp from the river was almost common.

In the sunset we approached the Križnica area, with a village of the same name, which is compressed between meanders of the present Drava river bed and the remnants of the old river bed. The shape of the former river bed is unbelievable and typical at the same time – like an open hand with five fingers. Nowadays the river bed is completely different with this example revealing that the river is alive and continual changing. The Križnica area operates as an island. It doesn't communicate with Hungary and the connection with Croatia is a picturesque pedestrian hanging bridge and an old traditional ferry-boat without engine, but slowly run by river current only.

Both Križnica and the whole Drava River are known as an excellent fishing site, where many fishermen can be seen along the Drava banks. They camp for several days in tents or small wooden shelters and they eat fish they catch. Wood deposited by the river is excellent for the fire under the kettle, in which they pitch fish and vegetables and proceed to cook an excellent spicy fish soup. The fishermen are very hospitable and like to chat with passers-by in a canoe. However, be careful! In their supplies they have a lots of wine and beer, which they like to share with their chance travellers.

After Križnica Drava gradually slows down and becomes a typical lazy and slow lowlands river where we had to paddle hard to arrive in time. It is really unbelievable that you can paddle almost 155 miles down a river in the heart of Europe, with almost no settlements to pass through – the city of Osijek is the only settlement situated on the river.

KOPA KI RIT NATURE PARK

Our journey was almost at its end, but another extraordinary experience was waiting for us – Kopa ki Rit Nature Park. Rit developed on the site where the Drava meets the mighty Danube and it is a mosaic of forests, lakes, reed beds and channels, very rich with bird, mammal, fish and amphibian species. Water is supplied through the channels from the Danube and the Drava. We entered the park through the 'back door' – the channel that connects it with Drava. There are no organised tourist trips in this remote and hardly approachable part of the park and genuine nature lovers can be totally relaxed in the primordial environment of ancient marshes. White-tailed Eagles, Black Kites, Marsh Harriers, Cormorants and Herons were flying above us with grebes and ducks swimming on the water surface. A Roe, which came to drink on the bank, was looking at us curiously and big carps were splashing occasionally on the calm water surface.

Next summer we must snatch at least two weeks vacation. The Drava will wait, I am sure. ●

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Ultimate Wild Water BBC 1, August 21st

Did you see BBC Presenter Kate Silverton trying her hand at white water canoeing as well as sea kayaking and taking on the Bitches?

The BBC profiled the programme as "Ultimate Wild Water – Kate 'actionwoman' Silverton embarks on an adrenalin fuelled journey of discovery through Britain's fastest flowing rivers and most turbulent seas."

She was able to experience the surf on the north Cornwall coast. Kate conquered not only strong currents, huge waves and white water, but also her own worst nightmares of open water. The footage was excellent and it showed that canoeing was both a challenge and a joyful experience. The filming took place at various locations in England and Wales.

We were impressed by her determination and courage but wanted to make her aware that there was more to the sport than that which she had experienced as well as the fact that the access situation is truly dreadful. We e-mailed this to her very early the next morning.

Dear Kate Silverton

May I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your determination and courage for the wild water programme for BBC1 last night.

May I just say that kayaking covers a huge range of activities from a simple paddle on a flat river to the exhilaration that you experienced. It's a healthy active pastime and canoeing is the most popular watersport again this year. Over 1.5 million people canoe/kayak each year BUT did you know that the enjoyment of canoeing is not available to more as 98% of the rivers in England and Wales have no right of access, unlike Scotland where the Scottish Land reform Act of 2003 has enshrined the right of access. Quite rightly with these rights come responsibilities. Please see www.riversaccess.org

As you like endurance and a personal challenge how about taking part next Easter in the world famous Devizes to Westminster canoe race? It is known as the canoeists' Everest as it is so challenging – 125 miles non stop! I have completed it several times and it is both a physical and mental challenge. One I am sure you would enjoy. There is more information here www.dwrace.org.uk

Good luck with your kayaking and do continue it, as it is such a great sport and truly an activity for all.

Kind regards

Kate did get the e-mail as she mentioned who had sent it and the fact that the DW race was suggested. She cannot have avoided reading the information about access though.

Coastal access... 'Unlocking our coasts'

The sun shone and the media turned up on August 9th when we went to Brean Down, north Somerset to put on a display to say that we wanted the coasts to be unlocked for all. The influential alliance (which included representatives from Canoe England, Equestrian Access Forum, British Caving Association, CCPR, CTC, International Mountain Biking Association UK, Open Spaces Society, Ramblers' Association and the YHA) and the National Trust hosted a successful event to highlight the fact there was just one month to go in the government's consultation on improving access to England's coastline. Natural England has the Coastal Access consultation (it will be completed by the time you read this as it closes on 11th September) and we were there to put pressure on them to say that we want a coastal zone and not just a coastal footpath as it would help many more people enjoy the English coastline.

As canoeists we also need clarity and access to our shores so we can be assured that by landing we are not 'committing trespass'. Some of the best parts of our coastline are only accessible by canoe/boat/swimming as many of the beaches are private and access to them for the public is not available by land but we need to know that we are able to land there and a coastal zone would provide this clarity.

The Coastal Access Corridor is Canoe England's preferred option because it:

- Promotes health and well-being by allowing people access to a more complete coastal experience.
- Provides access to enjoy a whole range of recreational activities that would be restricted if access was simply given to a coastal path.
- Includes measures to improve and conserve biodiversity along the English coast, allowing for adaptation as our coastline changes.
- Gives clarity of access to the land and shore from the sea.
- Guarantees permanent rights on foot to responsible recreation for all.

Raising the profile – party political conferences 2007

The Rivers Access Campaign will be 'displaying' outside each of the party political conferences this year. We want to remind people that the access situation affects millions of us and it has to change. We will also be reminding them of the Public Access to Inland Waters Bill currently still in Parliament.

The aim of the activity is raise the profile of the campaign and to inform MPs and party supporters, plus other lobbyists of the issue, the campaign and our ultimate aim. We will remind all that the current level of access to water for canoeists and other water users is not acceptable and that primary legislation is required.

We will be at

- Labour Party conference – Bournemouth .
- Conservative Party conference – Blackpool.
- Liberal Democrats conference – Brighton.



The leading recreational and conservation organisations who together represent over four million people have been campaigning to see a permanent right of access to a 'coastal corridor', which should extend from the mean low water mark to a point inland, and include areas such as beaches, foreshore and cliffs. Other options on the table include voluntary arrangements and a footpath around the coast which wouldn't give us the permanent right to explore, wander along the beaches and cliffs, swim, climb, kayak, surf and do our much loved seaside activities. Reliance on voluntary measures for implementation may also result in a patchy network of access agreements and will be difficult to manage with the public naturally wanting to explore further afield.

Bob Slee from Palm also came down to support us. Brean Down is not too far from the Palm factory and he brought us some kayaks to use. As it happened the tide was not in our favour on that day but Bob and others were able to talk to the journalists, National Trust and Natural England representatives to continue to remind them that access to the coast is vitally important for our very rapidly growing sport. Bob and the Rivers Access Campaign also took the opportunity to press home the case for access to our inland waters too. A big thanks to Bob Slee and Palm for all their support.

Add your pressure to help the Rivers Access Campaign

After a shuffle around at the top of the government, it is suggested that there may well be a general election shortly, so even more than ever, we need you to assist.

In the not too distant future the political parties will be setting up their own manifestos and we need the resolution of the access to inland waters issue to be in there too. This will ensure some kind of commitment from them to resolve this huge inequality.

We are going to write to all the key movers and shakers in the political parties to re-emphasise our case. These will be the MPs in each of the parties who are involved in, or are a spokesperson, for example health, education, sport, environment, rural affairs and human rights.



Perhaps your MP is one of these 'movers and shakers'?

To find out if they are visit...

www.parliament.uk/directories/directories21.cfm

This will lead you to the information concerning the government and the opposition.

- Her Majesty's government.
- Departments of state and ministers.
- Alphabetical list of HM government.
- Her Majesty's official opposition.
- Liberal Democrat Shadow Cabinet and Parliamentary team.
- Democratic Unionist Parliamentary team.
- Ulster Unionist Parliamentary team.
- Plaid Cymru/Scottish National Party Parliamentary teams.

And you can just follow the links from then on.

Letter writing and posing suitable delving questions are extremely useful ways of enabling you to find out the understanding and commitment to the rivers access issue. These days you can often e-mail your MP directly which means that if you have access to the internet you have a direct route to your MP!

"If you have access to the internet you have a direct route to your MP!"

Why not go along and see your MP at their 'surgery'. This provides the opportunity to explain the situation further and to obtain

greater understanding and support for a change in the rivers access situation. The visit will also be a very interesting experience and it will remind them that their constituents are real people with real issues and that they are voters too!

Canoeing has so much to offer and can benefit us all if we have access to our inland waters by assisting with improvements in:

- Health and fitness.
- Obesity levels.
- Anti social behaviour.
- Outdoor education... (there is an Outdoor Education Manifesto).
- School/club links to assist youngsters back in to sport and physical activity.
- Personal and social development etc.

During the last election campaign we were made aware that many of the campaign supporters were asking the candidates about their views on the river access situation when they met with them. This was happening on doorsteps all over the country. We need to do this again but even before the election is announced.

If you would like an outline of a letter please do e-mail info@riversaccess.org and we will e-mail you a template. There are also some on the www.riversaccess.org website which can assist.

Please let us know how you get on. We **CAN** and **WILL** make a difference.

A COUNTRY WITH ACCESS!

What a pleasure it was to go to a country where canoeing is not only one of the major sports but has no access problems. Whilst assisting with the World Marathon Canoeing Championships in Gyor, Hungary, we took the opportunity to see how canoeing was portrayed there. Open most guidebooks about Hungary and what you will see is that towns and villages offer the opportunity for hiring canoes/kayaks and beautiful tours on the rivers/lakes. What a difference to here in England!

Hungary has a strong tradition in competitive canoeing, particularly flatwater and marathon racing and their recent world championship successes in those disciplines support this, but it is an extremely popular recreational activity as well. All the canoe clubs we visited, even in small towns, were huge. They were not only for competitive training but also for recreational activities. Whilst the World Championships were taking place at the canoe club in Gyor, minibuses with trailers filled with children were transporting open canoes and smaller kayaks

for canoeing on another nearby river, as that stretch was only open to the World Championships competitors. The range of canoeing activities and opportunities, because they have access to their inland waters, is incredible.

Talking to some of the locals, they were so enthusiastic about canoeing and where one should go and what one could see. They were full of advice as to what you must not miss... Imagine that here! It would be lovely to say come to England and paddle our beautiful rivers and lakes and revel in our history and rolling countryside. It was so hard trying to explain to them that we could just not canoe on the rivers and lakes in England. It was such an alien concept to them and of course we were not able to justify why this is the case.

The fact that all other European countries, which are members of the EU (and in fact those who are not!), have access to their inland waters just highlights the truly ridiculous situation in England and Wales!

What else are we doing?

Well, we are off to 'display' at the party political conferences... but more of that in the next edition of Canoe Focus.

Rivers Access Campaign...



The campaign has a new poster. The concept is that when you go to a conference/concerts etc, you get different grades of access and one is 'access all areas'. So we have taken this concept to say 'Access All Areas' for us too! It is designed to show that opening up the inland waters is for all. It has the symbols on it just to show for example who would benefit from greater access and this includes people such as anglers, swimmers and wildlife enthusiasts. The posters are available from info@riversaccess.org.

With very grateful thanks to Andrew Quick (www.kayakcapers.co.uk) for all his help and support in developing the poster.



Kayaking at the



Splash! kayak team
One of the first groups on the water



Over the summer of 2007 over 32,000 scouts, from every Scouting nation in the world, descended on the UK to take part in the 21st World Scout Jamboree. This Jamboree would be extra special – celebrating the centenary year of Scouting after the first experimental camp by Lord Robert Baden-Powell in 1907 on Brownsea Island.

Splash! was the home of the water activities for the Jamboree with a full programme of - kayaks, bellboats, sit-on kayaks, open canoes, traditional raft building, pulling boats and dinghy sailing. Situated at Alton Water, near Ipswich, our aim was simple: to provide an action-packed water activity day for every participant. Over our eight programme days we provided water activities for around 4,000 participants per day!

But, let's start at the beginning... Splash formed in 2005 for a trial run of the World Scout Jamboree when the UK hosted the European Jamboree. After a huge success providing water activities to over 8,000 participants we set our

sights on smashing any known record for the number of people taking part in water activities! With over a year's planning behind us, a small core team of staff arrived at a deserted Alton Water in early July 2007. This would be our home for the next four weeks – In a tent!

Over the coming days a small team of volunteers worked hard to build the site ready for the 800 instructors to arrive. Often fighting the wind and the rain we worked hard to get the site ready. One moment you could be pegging the fiesta tents into the ground, the next holding on for dear life as strong winds worked against us! After a few days work the main infrastructure

was on the site: marquees, fiesta tents, toilets, fences, offices, containers, but most importantly – the showers!

Once the build was almost complete, I could focus my attentions to my main job – providing kayaking for 600 participants a session, two sessions a day, for eight programme days!

The first few days started by unloading the four lorry loads of kayaks and sit-on kayaks! TekSport have supported the jamboree from an early stage and produced nearly 400 kayaks and 100 sit-on kayaks in custom Jamboree colours. Add this to the 200 plus kayaks kindly loaned from Scout groups around the UK and it was an amazing sight seeing these lined up along our beach! We then worked on filling three 20ft storage containers with over 650 kayak paddles, 650 Jamboree buoyancy aids and 600 helmets! The numbers are too staggering to imagine!

Three days before the start of the event, the 120 strong kayak instructing team descended upon the site to begin training. The kayaking team was a truly international group with members attending from Ireland, America, and Canada to name but a few. The training was a chance to develop coaching techniques alongside personal paddling skills. We worked through the BCU 3 Star scheme and the Canoe Safety Test to provide all instructors with a common grounding. Sessions including warm-

World Scout Jamboree



Another group get ready

up games, dry-land coaching, and kayak games supplemented the main training. The majority of the training was devoted to developing instructor's visual demonstration skills.

Although English was the predominant language at the Jamboree, we would be faced with participants from India, China, Africa, Iraq and many other countries. It was important that the instructors could visually communicate safety instructions; a task which took a lot of practice! Could you demonstrate dry land paddling or the capsize drill to 14-year-olds from China who did not speak any English? The instructors did an amazing job and passed the intensive training program with flying colours... now for the arrival of the participants!

The first morning – 550 participants arrive at 10am to take part in kayaking!

After a year of planning, this first session was the test. I had run kayaking for groups of 90 participants at the Lincolnshire Scout Jamborees and 120 participants at EuroJam, but no one has ever provided water activities for nearly 600 participants! Would it all work? Yes! With every instructor raring to go the morning session ran like clockwork. We managed to get everyone on the water within 30 minutes and the instructors took them off to have a fun packed two hour kayak session. My only criteria for success would

be if every participant left with a smile on their face, which they did!

Kayaking world record?

The afternoon of day two saw what surely must be a new world record, 573 participants and 121 instructors on the water at the same time. What an amazing sight! Never before has anyone seen 694 kayaks on the water at the same time!

The sunshine and smiles continue!

The instructors provided a welcoming atmosphere for all participants; jokes, smiles, and plenty of singing! One morning they could be instructing a mixed group of girls from India and boys from Iraq, the next, participants from Chile and Peru – Instructors soon learned to adapt to every new situation! With the sun remaining for all eight programme days we managed to introduce nearly 9,000 participants to kayaking. It was amazing to see teenagers from all over the world taking part in kayaking. The Chinese girls who spoke no English but loved every second on the water, the Americans who preferred using sit-on kayaks upside down, and every participant who had never seen a kayak before – kayaking at Splash was such a huge success!

Steve Newton (Gonzo)
21st World Scout Jamboree Kayak Coordinator
www.stevenewton.me.uk

- 580 kayaks (373 provided by TekSport)
- 140 sit-on kayaks (98 provided by TekSport)
- 650 buoyancy aids
- 600 helmets
- 140 kayak instructors
- 16 kayaking Sessions (two sessions a day for eight days)
- 573 participants on the water in our largest session!

Add to this the 121 instructor kayaks – 694 kayaks! Surely a world record for the amount of kayaks on the water at any one time!

- Nearly 9,000 participants introduced to kayaking during the event!

Thanks go to:

- The Splash! management team for all their hard work organizing the event.
- TekSport for producing custom kayaks and sit-on kayaks for the jamboree.
- All the Scout groups for loaning equipment to the jamboree.
- Anglian and Alton Water for the venue.
- The Splash! instructors – without you this would not have been possible!
- The participants who made the event so worthwhile!

<http://eng.thejamboree.org>

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY – STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR WATER RELATED RECREATION PILOT SCHEMES UPDATE

The pilot schemes are centred on the Agency's South West, Anglian regions and Wales with the objective to produce a more strategic approach to planning recreational access to inland and coastal waters. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has commissioned the schemes in England for the Agency to lead a steering group to include Government Office, Sport England, Natural England, the Development Agency for the region, and British Waterways.

The first stage of this 12 month project was a series of consultation workshops with stakeholders in late April and early May. Summary reports of these events and a general overview of the project is available from the link www.brighton.ac.uk/waterrecreation/consultations/htm. The project is due to report in March 2008.

As reported more fully in the June issue of Canoe Focus, workshops were to gain an overview on current and future provision, demand and participation; and social and environmental impacts.

Canoe England representatives highlighted the overall impact of the restrictions and uncertainty of access to water. Other factors raised were: protecting water recreation from restrictive legislation and planning guidance; the loss of prime riverside clubs/centres to development schemes; how paddling supports a range of government agenda for health, education, social inclusion, and economic issues; lack of access often entails extra travelling.

Canoe England maintains that any strategy based on a list of rivers and waters, zoning, and the proven weakness of voluntary access agreements would not satisfy paddlers. It can only perpetuate the restrictive access to water.

Environment Agency report - Putting pilot voluntary Access agreements in place

In October 2006 the report findings (also known as 'Brighton 3') were released at Bungay, Suffolk on the River Vaveney where an access scheme was opened, as one of the four rivers in the study. From the three other schemes, the River Mersey scheme opened later that month and the Rivers Teme and Wear have not had access arrangements put in place.

The North East Region of the Agency are continuing the work of the University of Brighton on the River Wear in and around Durham against a stiff local resolve that rejects canoe access agreements and canoeing on the river. On the River Teme no more has been heard following comment by Canoe England that the conditions of use set out in the proposed agreement are unsafe and unacceptable.

Twelve months on, the Agency is planning to review the schemes and outcomes to draw conclusions that will be of particular interest in respect of the Rivers Wear and Teme. Meanwhile, Canoe England continues to dispute the findings by this research that found in the vast majority of cases, approaches to securing access by voluntary agreement are successful.

Access to the Coast DEFRA Consultation

Over the last month the Access Development team has been collating Canoe England's response to the DEFRA proposals to improve access to the English coast.

DEFRA required that this consultation was submitted by the end of September the 11th 2007. The full consultation document and our response can be found on the Canoe England website, for those that don't want to read the full documents I have attempted to summarise them.

The DEFRA consultation is designed to find out what support there is across England for creating access to the coastline of England, this access is primarily intended to be on foot, but the scope of the consultation does allow other means of access to be raised.

If there is enough support for access to the coastline of England, DEFRA will then take a view on which of the four proposed methods/options of access it should recommend to Government to put forward as a Parliamentary Bill.

In brief these options are:

1. To use existing Highways legislation to create a Public Right of Way around the coast. The advantages of using this approach are that it would use existing legislation, and it would be easily defined and shown on the ground. The main disadvantage is that as Public Rights of Way have legally defined position and are mapped, they are not easily moved so should something happen to the route such as coastal erosion it could take many months or even years to legally resolve and to get the route open again.
2. To use the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 to map the location of coastal access. The advantages are very similar to Public Rights of Way, only this time it is an area based approach, and so could cover a wider area of land next to the coast. Again the main disadvantage is that because the land would have a legally defined position and would be shown on maps, should something happen that affected the mapped area then coastal access could be denied for a considerable period of time, theoretically up to ten years as that is the

review period for the terrestrial access mapping which came out of CROW.

3. To use voluntary access to create permissive access. The main advantage of this approach is that as it would be by permission of landowners and land managers, it could be put in place now using existing systems and schemes such as DEFRA's Higher Level Stewardship scheme. However, there are several major flaws to this approach, the most significant of these is that it would only take one landowner or manager to say **no** and you would be left with at best a detour inland, assuming you could get agreement from the next owner, or in the worst case scenario, no where to go and no way around.
4. To create new legislation to enable an unmapped coastal access corridor. This is the option which Canoe England and the majority of other user groups have agreed with, it is also the option recommended by Natural England who are DEFRA's principle access advisers. This approach has the advantage over options 1 and 2 as although it would take new legislation to enable it, it would once created be in the form of words, the phrase being used at the moment is a Coastal Zone, which might extend from low water to a point above high water and which could include new areas of spreading room along the coast, which would enable people to spread out. Potentially there are many advantages to creating this form of access, although intended for land based recreation the knock on could allow improved access to the sea itself as well as coastal estuaries. The principle disadvantage is likely to be the time and money required getting this option into legislation, it is highly unlikely to go through unopposed.

As I have already said Canoe England is supporting Option 4, we won't however be able to watch quietly from the sidelines if this proposal goes forward to become legislation. Not only are there many wins for us to be had, there are also potential losses if we take our eye off the ball for a moment; to say that the next few years should be interesting is a major understatement!

ANDY GREEN, HEAD OF ACCESS, CANOE ENGLAND

Great Glen and Caledonian Canal access update

GENERAL

The route across the Great Glen of Scotland, which uses Lochs Ness, Oich and Lochy, as well as Telford's Caledonian Canal, is a great favourite, and probably the most paddled in Scotland. The expedition is used for club holidays, sponsored paddles, and D. of E. Gold Award expeditions. The attention of paddlers in England and Wales is respectfully asked to be drawn to the updates below, due to increased traffic on the route, and to help keep the good reputation of paddlers as travellers genuinely interested in protecting the environment.

ACCESS

It would be very helpful if paddlers did obtain a Licence (FREE) from British Waterways (BW) before they embark on a trip, as this gives them two information booklets (which are extremely useful) and the ability to pay a deposit for a key to open the toilets and showers provided en route. For enquiries, please use BW at the main Inverness office on 01463 725500. BW are not seeking to control paddlers, but early warning for lock keepers, especially of large parties (more than six), aids the movement of shipping. Furthermore, traffic on the canal is increasing, a fact we should all applaud, as it helps to keep this very precious waterway open. Larger ships now use the system, and the passenger ship 'Lord of the Glens' is a sea-going boat, only just fitting into the locks. It can throw up a large wake on passage at speed through Loch Ness.

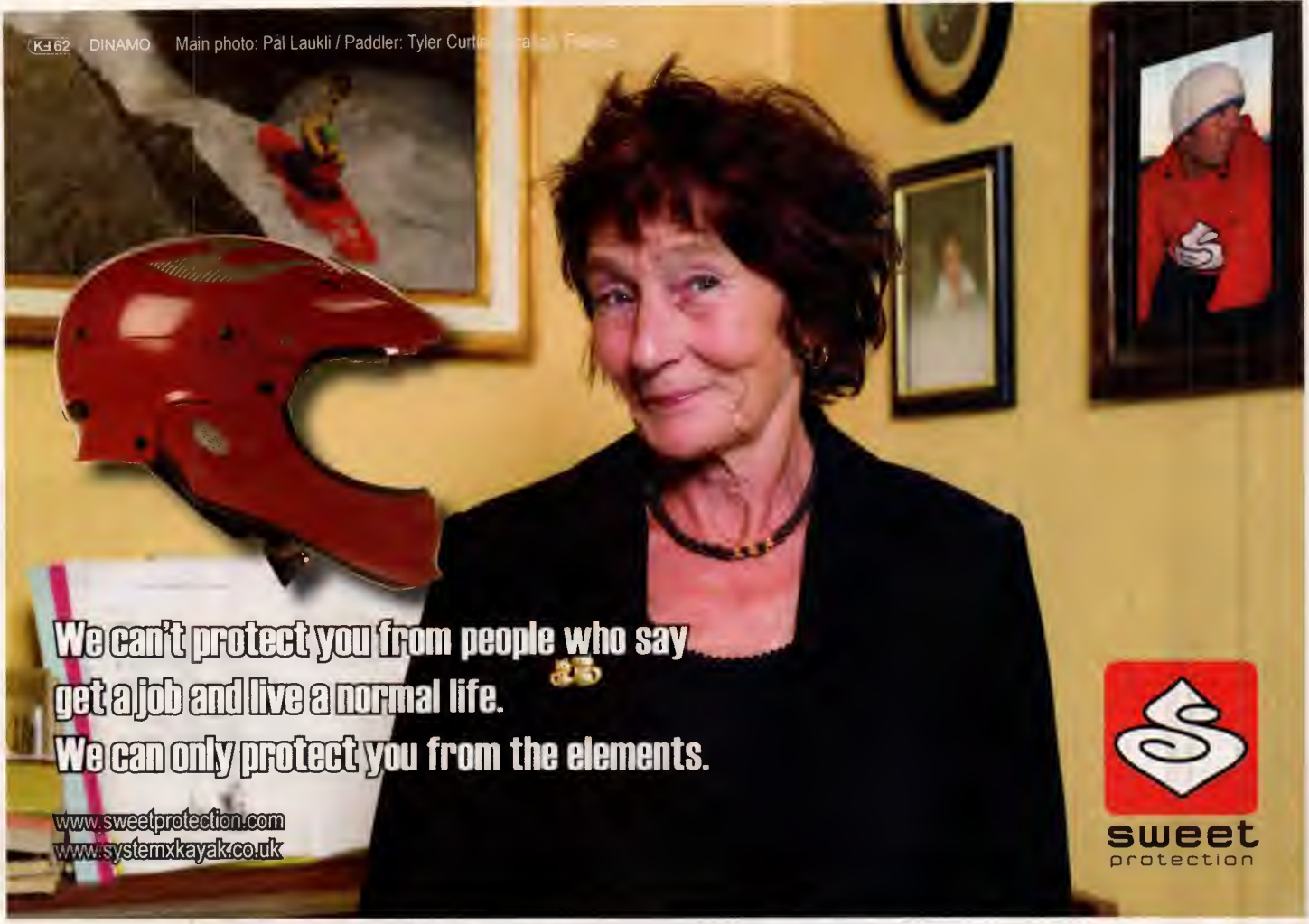
SAFETY: In the poor weather this summer, there have been at least three rescues by the Coastguard boat based at Drumadrochit on Loch Ness, mainly due to inexperienced paddlers not realising how bad the water conditions can be on the loch. In one incident, two paddlers in sea kayaks were back-looped! You as readers will probably realise the possible hazards, but your friends, work mates, those doing a sponsored paddle etc, might not.

CAMPING: Sadly, the camp site at Dochgarroch, on the canal south of Inverness, has now closed. Many people wanting to start or finish at Inverness now go to the main site at Bught Park, which in not on either the canal or the River Ness. The site on the north side of Loch Ness is now refusing to take tents, being renamed the 'Loch Ness Caravan Park' (a national trend we are afraid). This has led to paddlers suddenly having to decide to cross Loch Ness, for which good conditions are required. From Foyers northwards, there are plenty of wild camping possibilities, but **please** remember the Scottish Outdoor access code and camp responsibly.

If you are planning a trip, say next summer, have a great time, and plan ahead!

EDDIE PALMER, NATIONAL ACCESS CO-ORDINATOR, SCA

KJ 62 DINAMO Main photo: Pál Laukli / Paddler: Tyler Curtis / Photo: Franke



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RIVER WHARFE

Otley to Arthington Viaduct

OS map No. 104

Six miles easy Grade 1 plus weirs.

Get in just west of Otley, from the dead-end side road at 190 453. Having skirted Otley on the bye-pass and gone straight on the A65 (towards Ilkley) this is the first right turn in front of the big chimney. Then immediately left.

Good parking with our new age traveller friends. Park as close as you like to the river which is accessed from a pedestrian footpath (part of the Otley Link to the Dales Way). It's about 20 metres down a path with a few steps carrying or lowering your boat as you go.

The first mile is a gentle warm up into Otley, which you will see coming when a bridge comes into view. Before you get to the bridge, look out for a chain which is sometimes looped across the

river. This is not normally a hazard, as it is high enough to duck under. It marks the upstream limit for the rowing boats you can hire in the next section.

Once under the bridge you will see the public jetty on your left. This is a good place to hop out in high water to inspect the next hazard which is Otley weir. Shoot it to the left. In low water you may struggle to find enough to slide down and if you do you will need to do some pushing and shoving in the 100 metres below the weir. For this reason this stretch is best done with a just a few inches of rain water spate. This weir is a monster in flood. But worth seeing.

Enjoy the next stretch which is simple Grade 1 and once under a pedestrian footbridge the river returns to its normal slower pace. From the weir in



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

Otley it is three miles to the next weir in Pool. This is simply shot again over to the left and if you had to push in Otley you will again here. Another ¾ of a mile takes you under the Pool/Harrogate Road bridge (look well downstream and you will see the impressive finish in the shape of the Viaduct). You will want to go left under the bridge then across to the right to find the deeper channel. A good play

spot comes in another ½ mile, where Riffa beck joins from the left and some pipes in the river bed form a simple play wave where you can practice ferry glides. Reccy it first, as some easily avoided metalwork will show if it is low. This takes the form of some stakes which secure the pipework.

Cruise round a long right bend and the surprise finish (considering how big the get out viaduct is) is in front of you. If you have had enough then the get out is over to the right just before the viaduct. If you have had a bit of rain to help you down, then you will want to shoot under the viaduct over on the left and to play.

You will have shuttled a finish car to park under the viaduct at 263 455. The cars are about 100 metres away and although the path is good it is up a short incline.

The finish is the very end of Warren Lane and is at the cross roads of Creskeld Lane (down from Bramhope) and the Harewood/Pool Valley road the A659.

This is a normal summer night or half day paddle for White Rose CC, details of which may be found at www.whiterose-canoecub.org.uk or email mail@whiterose-canoecub.org.uk for further details. **Dick Constable**



River Severn

Haw Bridge to Tewkesbury Lower Lode and return

Approximately 11 miles.

One of the problems of paddling the Severn is access; the banks are high and normally muddy with few over bridges or near by roads. This paddle starts at the Haw Bridge Inn, which is on the left hand (west) side after passing over the Haw Bridge on the B4213. Head south out of Tewkesbury on the A38, after approx three miles turn right onto the B4213 signposted Ledbury, the bridge is approx 2.75 miles from the A38.

There are floating BWB pontoons with ramps which act as moorings for the inn, there are about four parking places on the road plus the inn car park. Please check with the proprietor before using their car park. Launching from the pontoons is straight forward.

Paddle upstream under the Haw Bridge, this a modern structure built in 1961, which replaced a much older

bridge that was unfortunately demolished by a tanker barge heading downstream empty. You will be paddling against the flow which varies considerable depending on recent rain fall; big spring tides can also spill over the weir at Gloucester and affect water levels on this section of the river. After passing more pubs over the next 4.5 miles you will see a rowing club on the right hand bank, just past here is a slipway and a public area, I think a ferry operates from here in the summer months. The Lower Lode back stream forks off to the right just past here, you can continue on the main river to the Upper Lode Lock and start your return journey from there. A much more interesting paddle is to take the Lower Lode which winds its way into Tewkesbury for about a mile, ending abruptly at an old mill and a large weir. In the time we had we were unable to find



an easy exit point so we retraced our paddle to the slipway back at the junction with the main river for our lunch stop. For the return trip you should have the assistance of the rivers flow. If you have the time and a thirst, stop for a drink at the Haw Bridge Inn, especially if you used their car park.

Four of us did this paddle in early November 2006, and despite a strong SW wind which made the return journey

very interesting it was still most enjoyable.

BCU membership sticker allows navigation of the River Severn. The Pearson & Son River Companion 'Severn & Avon' is an excellent guide book. OS Map 150 and the free 'Canoeist Guide to the River Severn' from the Environment Agency, also covers this section of the river.

Robert Yeowell

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ACCESSORIES

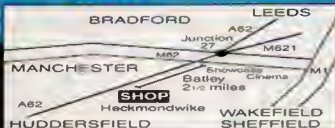


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RETURN TO KAYAKING

Basingstoke and Deane CC have started running a programme of introductory canoe and kayak sessions for adults. Participants have put their newly learned skills to the test with a paddle down the scenic Basingstoke Canal from Odiham Wharf.

The programme provides training in the basic techniques of canoeing and kayaking, with journeys on the Basingstoke Canal to test those skills. The eight intrepid adults who have decided to try out canoeing have already learned forward paddling and turning techniques. The Sunday paddle on the canal gave them the opportunity to try out the club's touring kayaks, which were purchased this year with an 'Awards for All' grant. These are long straight-running craft that have given them the chance to paddle a longer distance without struggling to keep on line, which can be a problem with shorter boats.

The course has continued through September, with training at the club's weekly meetings at Queen Mary's College swimming pool. By spreading the training between the canal with plenty of space and the warm, clean water of the swimming pool it will be possible to provide good environments to learn a wide range of techniques and skills.

This course has been supported by a grant from Sport Hampshire and IOW under their 'Return to Sport' scheme and the club are hoping to run a similar course in the spring of next year. Coaching for the course has been provided by BCU qualified coaches on the club.

For more information please visit www.badpaddlers.org or phone Hazel on 01256 362921. For other 'Return to Sport' opportunities please visit their website www.returntosport.co.uk



EQUIPMENT NEEDED

Rhyl High School CC in North Wales with the help of the Sports Council for Wales' new 5x60 initiative has established a new and exciting canoe club exclusive to the school.

As you can imagine interest throughout the school is high. In order for the club to strive forward and become more accessible to pupils of all ages we are desperately on the look out for more equipment. If any clubs or individuals out there are looking to sell or donate any 'nearly new' or second hand equipment which you think may benefit our club we'd love to hear from you.

Please contact Andrew Lewis on 07768 558770 or email: Andrew.lewis@denbighshire.gov.uk

More Community Club Development Programme funding to be announced shortly?

Canoe England (CE) is expecting an announcement to be made during the late autumn by Sport England (SE) and the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) as to whether a further CCDP funding stream is to become available.

CCDP's 1 and 2 have put over £3,000,000 into community canoe clubs over the last five years. If there is to be a new funding round, dubbed CCDP 3, funding will be available between April 2008 and March 2010 for canoe club capital projects that qualify and can reach Stage 2 (Award of grant) within the period.

Although two years sounds a long time, planning permissions and other consents can take longer. In order to be ready, CE is putting together a portfolio of clubs for submission to SE by Christmas.

If your club has a capital project, for example, a canoe storage building, extensions etc will you please send a simple email expressing your interest to Chris Hawkesworth, Planning and Facilities Manager at chris.hawkesworth@bcu.org.uk. Further details on www.bcu.org.uk

Free courses for voluntary club coaches

The outdoor education department at South Devon College are running the new BCU/UKCC coaching and star award courses and with every programme there will be the opportunity for free places for any voluntary coaches or people aspiring to coach.

All courses will be delivered by Lee Pooley, Level 5 Inland Coach and Gary Peverill Aspirant Level 5 Canoe Coach. Outdoor Education Programme Coordinator Lee Pooley says "As a college we are committed to helping the community and being able to provide the opportunity to voluntary coaches free courses is our way of supporting the BCU and local clubs".

Courses scheduled:

BCU/UCKK 4 star inland kayak course - 10-14th Dec
BCU/UCKK 5 star inland kayak course - 17-20th Dec
BCU/UCKK Level one coach course - 17-20th Dec
BCU/UCKK Level two coach course - 13-17th May 08
BCU/UCKK 3 star sea Course - 3rd-7th Jun 08

For more information or an application form please contact: Lee Pooley on 01803 540461 or email: lee.pooley@southdevon.ac.uk

YORCIE NEWS: www.yorcie.org.uk

Yorkshire's own regional canoeing information and events

You'll remember the June floods! One of the casualties was that Sheffield CC lost their slalom site. However, with a magnificent display of true Yorkshire grit the club has rallied its members and created an even better site. Well done Sheffield CC. The Regional Development Team was able to assist with a small cash helping hand and we wish them continued success with their backbreaking toils. The regional team are happy to support other similar problems if you let us know them.

Another casualty of the floods was the abandoned 'Loads of Money' talk. Louise Tideswell (who runs fund raising company Plan4Sport (www.plan4sport.co.uk) was true to her word and ran a free search. Seven clubs had sent representatives to the meeting and these clubs have now received the search results, which detailed a total of 127 sources. The lowest return was 16 and the highest was 25. That means that besides the well known sources like Community Club Development Funding, The Lottery, Sport England, etc, as many as 22 more sources are waiting for your club to tap into.

On about the only day in June that it didn't rain, The Aldwark Scout Water Activity Centre opened its doors to celebrate its 40th birthday. Derek Oliver (chair of the original management team) gave a riveting and wry address to helm mark the occasion. A splendid plaque was unveiled and thanks given to helpers.

And there's more...

I'm pleased on behalf of the Washburn Committee to report the following news. Barring any hitches the planning

application for the 'in river work' is now logged with Harrogate Council and due to be undertaken in 2008. Much of this £100,000 is funded by CCDP 2. The new lease which runs out in 2008 is now finalised and awaits signatories. The Wood yard is in the process of being bought and will provide car parking and much more scope for further developments, such as the restoration of tracks, better access and a shuttle bus! Permission has been secured to use Thruscross reservoir for any flat water events including race training, sprints, canoe sailing etc. With only the last cruise of the year left, on the 7th Oct (contact White Rose CC for details) and WWR on Nov 10th and 11th, you'd best get yourselves there so you can remember what it was like! But please remember to check the YORCIE info line before you travel 0845 833 8654.

More news from the river banks...

Some of the access and egress points, for the River Holme (Nr Huddersfield) are currently being 're-secured'. This gem of a river is good white water and help can be obtained from the newly enlisted apprentice Local Access Officer Mike Robson tel 01924 527886 or mike.robson23@ntlworld.com who is lending Barry Gray a hand.

In the last edition I incorrectly gave you a shortened version of Access Officer Paul Lister's, email address. It should read access@yorcie.org.uk. Paul can easily be contacted on email or ring 01944 758463 or 07751 767067 at reasonable times please. With your help, your local stretch of river, or favourite trip could be on the web. Have a look at www.sharemyroutes.com and see what I mean. And don't forget to run the R. Wharfe this winter.

Coaching continues to role out all the new changes both for UKCC and Star tests. Coaches are opting into the new scheme and receiving re-validation training. If this has so far passed you by it may well be that you haven't asked to be emailed within the Yorkshire regions coaching team. Minutes of the last meeting and details for the next (2008) can be obtained by emailing Janet at paul@pcartwright.freereserve.co.uk or tel. 01484 603126. (If you don't have email, please ask Janet to post you the information) If you are currently trying to obtain a coaching course and having any difficulty or want a tailor-made course to suit you, your group or club, then please contact your LCO. If you aren't sure who your LCO is, then contact me. The date and content for the 2008 Aldwark Coachfest will be advised soon.

If you want to have your event added to YORCIE please send Kate an email to webmaster@yorcie.co.uk please put 'web' in your subject. The Regional Team are here to help. Our next meeting is 29th Oct. If you'd like to know more, receive regional info, come to a meeting, or would like one of us to come to yours, then please contact Jon at jdakey@aol.com

A great deal has happened in the region in the last 12 months and it would be nice to have your support at the regions ACM. This is again at Ossett Cricket Club and will be at 7.30 on Tuesday 27th November. All the news and crack will be accompanied by cow pie n' mushy peas. A vegetarian option of mushy peas and paper plate will also be available.

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Ultimate series

Was it just me or was this an extreme way of promoting an activity? The Ultimate Wild Water experience, which was on BBC 1 on Tuesday 21st August seemed to go against all we strive to do as coaches. It showed the sport as extreme and only extreme; therefore anyone watching this may feel that kayaking is therefore inaccessible at a level other than this.

Or could it increase the amount of people just buying a boat and solo paddling with out enough experience or back up. If in this programme, there were other paddlers around her or obviously there were safety teams standing by why cant this be portrayed in the programme. This would hopefully show how much more there is to taking on challenges like this.

As a coach trying to encourage people to get involved in kayaking I feel that we all do a lot of work to help the new paddler to find there own interest within paddlesport and at there own level.

Don't get me wrong am enjoying watching this series and it is always nice to get more outdoor sports on the television, but after watching this episode I came away feeling that the whole ordeal had just put Kate Silverton off ever getting near a kayak again, and how many other people I wonder.

Were the BCU invited to be a part of this episode? If they had been I wonder what may have been different.

GRACE JONES

No unfortunately the BCU were not invited to be part of the episode. We have received mixed feedback - both positive and negative regarding the television programme.

So I am being demoted!

Despite working hard from 1996 through to now, gaining progressive Star awards in CCK and reaching CCK Coach Level 2 status and despite teaching 1, 2 and 3 Star and assessing 1 and 2 star over a number of years now... from 1st Sept 2007 I can only assess 1* as I do not have a 2 star in Open Boating. My interest is in CCK, not open boating.

Also, I have run and assisted with 1* and 2* CCK courses for members of Maidstone CC and local Scout groups for a number of years now. Please be aware that I have cancelled the course I had planned at Maidstone CC for the weekend of 8th and 9th September

2007 (and will not plan subsequent courses for the time being) as, according to the BCU website and the last issue of CODE magazine, the new Star Test Syllabi come into force from 1st Sept 2007. This, despite the fact that, at a coaching update day at Seven Sisters Country Park, Exeat, Sussex, that I attended in March 2007, it was said by your officers running the day, that due to delays with the new syllabi and coach re-training, the existing star tests would continue beyond 31st August 2007.

Not only that but even now, the new syllabi are still only available in draft form and I do not see coach re-training programmes in place to bring existing coaches in-line with the new requirements by that date. I will only re-start the courses I run when the syllabi are non-draft, when I understand what is required of me, when re-training (if required) is available to me and hopefully when you allow existing L2 coaches to continue to assess 2* CCK with current qualifications.

On this issue BCU... you are an utter disgrace. You do not appreciate the hard work existing coaches put into the sport for the benefit of newcomers to this great sport of ours (as well as the benefit we bring to yourselves by way of new memberships) and you are making it impossible for volunteer coaches in a position such as mine to continue. Your attitude seems to be "No problem, given a few years a brand new wave of coaches, trained to the new requirements, will be there to replace current coaches, so why should we worry about it."

In your poorly planned haste, have a care you are not "Throwing the baby out with the bathwater".

Yours Sincerely

NORMAN BROOKS CCK L2

Firstly, thank you to Norman for taking the time to make comment on the changes.

We would however wish to make the point that after some five years of review and research, the outcomes reflect current best practice as defined by paddlesports leading experts and not the thoughts and reflections of one or two individuals. In many different ways, coaches throughout the BCU have had an opportunity to be involved and to comment towards the collective view, via paddlesport review, coaching questionnaires, focus groups, forums and consultations as well as the BCU's Long Term paddler programme. Indeed the Star Award developments have come via discipline technical groups and the

resultant administration from the BCU national source group, an amalgam of technical, discipline and home nation input. Far from being developed in haste they have been subjected to much consideration.

The focus towards a generic introduction and canoe and kayak activity at 2 Star is seen as a positive development in ensuring a broader introduction to paddlesport along with opportunities for novice paddlers to benefit, at an appropriate stage, from a variety of experience. That many paddlers will then go on and specialise is acknowledged, however, they will do so with a more balanced and appropriate range of varied practice and transferable skills. Let's remember that specific practice creates specific performance and that paddlesports is far from specific.

Of course all developments require challenge, both in terms of re-training, up-skilling and by way of individual buy-in to what may be a very different philosophy! Indeed this latter issue can be the most challenging aspect of change, particularly when one is quite comfortable where they are at present. Is it not positive, however, that the BCU is moving forward and evolving our sport, its approach to coaching and coach education. Moving with the times, providing more opportunity and more challenge will make paddlesport more attractive to more people. To see that we have to think 'outside the box' or is it that we should be thinking 'outside the boat'!

Evidence suggests that once coaches and paddlers get creative and stop seeing the access to boats issue as an issue they get very excited by opportunities never before taken and the learning that comes with them.

Far from throwing the baby out with the bathwater lets think of it as 'cresting the wave of opportunity'

Anglers versus paddlers

While agreeing with everything in Canoe Focus on the subject of Access, I am worried that concentrating too much on abuse towards paddlers may put some people off exploring our rivers. Having paddled more than 10,000 miles on England's canals and rivers, I can count the occasions when I have received abuse without taking my socks off. Walking down the street one can be insulted; should we stop doing that? There will

always be a very small proportion of the population who are just gratuitously nasty.

As you rightly say, it's not anglers versus paddlers. I've paddled through a mile of fishing match in North Oxford and received nothing but politeness, the idiots who shout and throw stones are not real anglers; if they were not on the waterside they would be doing same thing in the streets or shopping centres.

I regularly paddle the River Cherwell for about eight miles upstream of Banbury and 10 miles downstream. It's very rare to encounter anybody; their reaction is always surprise, followed by friendly interest. The riparian owners are mainly farmers who have better things to do with their time than harass people in small boats.

The 'Suggested paddles' section is the best thing ever to appear in Canoe Focus; I can't wait to get on to the Mersey. If it is still in print, 'West Midlands River Guide for Canoeists' by Mike Nicholls and Mike Hubbard is inspirational, a touring paddlers bible. In these times we need more of the author's can-do attitude.

Anyone interested in a jolly on the Cherwell (November to April only because of the weeds and the right sort of rain) can contact me at ajones@bonesy.fsnet.co.uk once the computers working again.

Yours sincerely

CHRIS JONES

The access issue is not one of anglers versus paddlers and we try to highlight the collaboration and positive aspects of the sports. In fact many anglers use canoes or sit on tops to fish, so they are lots of similarities between both sports. I'm glad you enjoyed the Canoe Trails and if anyone has any more to share please do get in touch shruti.passi@bcu.org.uk.

Access error

I would like to draw the attention of your readers to an error in the open letter sent by Ms Phipps to the Rt Hon. Gordon Brown. Referring to the River Tweed, she stated that 'English law can make use of the river a trespass.' In fact use of the river, on both sides of the middle line, from the highest point at which it become navigable is allowed by virtue of the Vienna Convention 1815.

Yours sincerely,

D.J.M.CAFFYN. (REV'D)

Thank you Rev. Doug Caffyn for pointing this out.

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BCU PHOTO



The winners for July and August (as voted by you) are:

JULY ADULT WINNER:
Rich Crutwell

AUGUST ADULT WINNER:
Gary Tutt

JULY YOUTH WINNER:
Andrew Parry

AUGUST YOUTH WINNER:
Stephen Ashton

The photo competition is still running!
For your chance of winning the 2007
competition get clicking now!

We receive lots of photos of canoeing and competitors, but if you have any photos of the volunteers who often work behind the scenes, contributing their time and commitment to the sport, we would love to see your photos. Please send them in.

HOW TO ENTER

Send your photos in jpeg format via email to chloe@bcu.org.uk or post your photos on a CD to: Chloe Nelson-Lawrie
British Canoe Union, 18 Market Place, Bingham NG13 8AP

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

Please also include:

- the place where the photo was taken (name of river/lake/stream and the location)
- when it was taken (time of the year)

PRIZES: MONTHLY WINNER

A winner will be chosen each month until December 2007. Each month one adult will win £25 Cotswold vouchers and one youth (under 18 years old) will win £25 WHSmith vouchers. Winners will be announced on-line and in future editions of Canoe Focus.

HOW WINNERS ARE CHOSEN

Once we receive your photograph it will be uploaded onto the BCU web site where people can vote for their favourite image by emailing the number of the photograph to shruti.passi@bcu.org.uk

OVERALL WINNER

At the end of January 2008 one overall winner from the youth category and one winner from the adult category will win a digital camera worth £150!

By entering the competition The British Canoe Union will be entitled to use your photograph to promote canoeing, without needing to obtain your permission.

By submitting your photograph/s you agree to grant the BCU a perpetual, royalty-free, non-exclusive, sub-licensable right and licence to use, reproduce, modify, adapt, publish, translate, create derivative works from, distribute and exercise all copyright and publicity rights with respect to your photograph/s worldwide and/or to incorporate your photograph/s in other works in any media now known or later developed for the full term of any rights that may exist in your photograph/s.



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PHOTOGRAPH COMPETITION



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Above: August youth winner: Stephen Ashton

Far right: July youth winner: Andrew Parry

Right: July adult winner: Rich Crutwell

Below: August adult winner: Gary Tutt





Tyne Valley Canoe Club earns seal of approval

The Tyne Valley Canoe Club had plenty to celebrate on Sunday 10th June and over 100 people came along to mark the occasion. The Prudhoe based club, after celebrating 20 years in operation received a firm seal of approval by being presented with Canoe England's Top Club and Sport England's Clubmark awards.

The awards mark the progress of the club in recent years and demonstrate that it is not only a well managed organisation, but meets the necessary standards in terms of health and safety, coaching and a commitment to working with young people.

Before the awards were presented by Susi Gonchu, Tynedale Council's Community Development Officer and Councillor Fiona Hunter the club ran a very successful 'come and try it' session open to the public. Many from the local community came along to try out the new fleet of boats. The club has been successful in winning two grants of £5,000 along with £2,000 from Tynedale Council and £200 from the Prudhoe town council.

Andy Haddon the club's development officer commented, "We are happy to get the Clubmark and Top Club awards that is the kitemark for sports clubs to show that we are well managed and child friendly while operating safely. The club is for the whole community and that is what we are demonstrating with a wide range of activities for people of all ages".

Following on from the 'come and try it' session was a paddle a mile sponsored paddle raising money for the St Cuthbert's Care charity. A report will follow in the next Canoe Focus as to how much money was raised for this event. A BBQ and beverages ended a fantastic day celebrating the clubs success.

The Tyne Valley Canoe club is the third club in the North East region to achieve Top Club.

Congratulations should also go to Anker Valley CC, Pendle Paddlers, Falcon CC and Worcester CC for recently achieving accreditation bringing the total number of Canoe England Top Clubs to 43.

RAY HUDSPITH



Regional canoe polo league com

Clitheroe Canoe Club were proud to hold their first regional Canoe Polo event on Sunday 22nd July, welcoming teams from Pendle, Barrow, Liverpool and Leeds to play against Clitheroe's home grown talent.

There were some great games played throughout the day, with the old Lancashire verses Yorkshire battle being the most bitterly fought.

The club ran competitions for novice and non-league participants as well as demonstration games from Friends of Allonby and White Rose CC.

In the closely contested senior event, Pendle Paddlers eventually took joint first place with their Yorkshire rivals, White Rose Canoe Club. Clitheroe's home team coming in third position.

Clitheroe Canoe Club Juniors went one better to achieve second place in the Youth Event, narrowly being beaten to the title by Barrow.

GARETH FIELD

Isle of Man polo event

By the time we arrived at Liverpool docks to head out to run the first polo tournament on the Isle of Man, we had managed to collect 20 polo boats, a huge array of paddles, helmets and buoyancy aids, all



either inside or on top of my van! With strange looks from the ferry staff and checking we had enough height room, we set off.

By Thursday the reality of what we were trying to do hit us. Creating a pitch on a boating pond, explaining the rules to ten teams and co-ordinating who was playing and when is not the easiest job in the world!

At 18.30 the competition started. With teams ranging in standard from absolute beginners to those turning up with their own boats. The games started with a fantastic long shot scoring the first goal. From then on goals, capisizes and swampings continued with much laughter and banter from the bank and the

Getting the 'speeding' bug

This August I have been touring around my region organising mini sprint regattas for nine clubs using the new Pyranha Speeders. At the events we set up some informal fun sprint regattas.

For clubs that are not involved in racing at all, the boats and the sprinting was really well received. Time trials over a short distance were set up for club members to record times.

Friendly rivalry soon kicked off with people trying three or four times to beat their previous best. Friendly challenges were levied at other paddlers to races.

I visited Friends of Allonby where the polo boys and girls strutted their stuff at how fast they could sprint, the young paddlers of Macclesfield CC showed how well they could crash into each other while still doing some reasonable times. The paddlers at Manchester loved being in boats fast enough to be able to paddle up and down the rapids. White Rose and Duddon CCs got very serious about the racing with eagerness to win showing through normally placid paddlers. Salford Quays Watersports along with Oakwood youth group enjoyed touring round the quays in the boats. Finally the boys at In2gr8 loved racing the coaches to see who was the fastest!

A huge thanks to Pyranha for the loan of the Speeders. Next year a more complete racing series will be running around the North West and Yorkshire. Get in touch with gareth@bcu.org.uk for information.



es to Clitheroe

team members. The standard of the games got better and better as people learned how to pass and play.

Throughout the evening there was a great atmosphere, lots of cheering and from the various supporters. From the two leagues running we ended up with the top two teams from each league. They then played each other for the first to fourth positions.

Results:

- 1st Venture Centre staff team
- 2nd Manx Paddlesport
- 3rd Sams Crew
- 4th John Scotts Allstars

A huge thanks needs to be given to Joe Leach for organising all the teams in the Isle of Man. Also thanks to Dave Reynolds for coming out to referee the games. Also to Friends of Allonby, Duddon Canoe Club and Bolton Youth Service for the loan of kit and Dan Robinson from Real Adventure for the loan of the trailer. Also to Adventurous Experiences and the Venture Centre for their hospitality.

GARETH FIELD

It may have been retirement from teaching, but certainly not from paddling for Martin Snell from the Brier Special School in Kingswinford, West Midlands, where Martin had been teaching for 29 years. The teachers and staff had organised a secret 'whip round' and had raised enough money to buy the Pyranha G3 and paddle. Martin was overwhelmed at the gift and still suspected nothing as pupils carried the kayak, decked out in ribbons and banners, into the school hall on his last day. Martin has been a keen paddler for a number of years and organised paddling sessions for the youngsters with most of them working towards Paddlepower awards. We wish him a very happy retirement, and many pleasant hours in his new boat!

PHIL HADLEY



Cross Stream Challenge

Cross Stream Challenge has been designed around the BCU Long Term Paddler Development Programme, offering something for everyone. It aims to develop and challenge boat handling skills, strokes and moves, whilst blending slalom, freestyle, polo, with a touch of wild water and flat water racing. Its flexibility in delivery focuses on the paddler, not just the boat, enabling paddlers to develop skills based around a predetermined course in managed and measured environment. The challenges will fully open the doors to our sport for all paddlers, providing an opportunity to experience the many different disciplines and helps coaches spot where an individual is most motivated.

How does it work?

There are five starter challenges and a further 20 mover challenges. Each challenge has that little extra that will make a difference just when you really need to make that move happen.

- Team Challenge, designed for two or more to paddle together over the same course.
- Head to Head, some of the challenges will allow two boats (or teams) on the water at the same time. First team across the line is the winner.

Equipment

Any Canoe or Kayak will do; single or double. You will also need five sets of slalom gates and three lines or, five sets of buoys if you cannot hang slalom gates.

Where can I deliver the Challenge?

The challenge has been designed to fit in to a variety of environments. The challenge has the flexibility to be adapted for use on your local stretch of water.

Who can deliver the Challenge?

BCU Level 1 Coach under guidance or BCU Level 2 Coach or above.

The Cross Stream challenge booklet can be ordered through the BCU E-shop or by contacting youth@bcu.org.uk Tel: 0845 370 9520

New team members

We are pleased to welcome the appointment of two new full-time Paddlesport Development Officers.

Rob Coleman: South West region PDO

Jeff Toser: Eastern region PDO

Paddlesport Participation Programme team

National team

Head of Paddlesport Participation Programme:

Howard Blackman

Mobile: 0779 344 2585

Email: howard.blackman@bcu.org.uk

Paddlesport Participation Programme Administrator:

Kimberley Walsh

Tel: 0845 370 9520; Fax: 0845 370 9501

Email: k.walsh@bcu.org.uk

Team North

Senior Development Officer – North

Nigel Timmins

Tel: 01768 480 084; Mobile: 07740 820113

Email: nigel.timmins@bcu.org.uk

PDO North East:

Bobby Timperley

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Email: bobby.timperley@bcu.org.uk

PDO North West & Yorkshire:

Gareth Field

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Email: gareth.field@bcu.org.uk

Team Central

Senior Development Officer – Central England

PDO East Midlands: Stuart Briggs

Tel: 0771 898 2091

Email: stuart.briggs@bcu.org.uk

PDO West Midlands:

Phil Hadley

Tel: 01384 633984; Mobile: 07771 620745

Email: phil.hadley@bcu.org.uk

PDO Eastern

Jeff Toser

Email: jeff.toser@bcu.org.uk

Team South

Senior Development Officer – South

PDO Southern: James Hives

Tel: 0238 031 9815; Mobile: 07834 583 369

Email: james.hives@bcu.org.uk

PDO London & South East:

Andy Gray

Email: andy.gray@bcu.org.uk

Mobile: 07894 396484

PDO South West:

Position is vacant

Step into Sport

Clubmark clubs wishing to benefit from the Step into Sport programme by having young volunteers placed in their club must declare their interest in the coming weeks. Schools will be starting their programme soon and will be looking to Canoe England to recommend clubs. The young volunteers will be mentored through school and can be an asset to any club who are looking for more coaches, officials, administrators of committee members. Please email pesscl@bcu.org.uk or volunteers@bcu.org.uk for more information.

Young volunteers support group

Young volunteers and Cadet Leaders are invited to volunteer to form an advice group to assist the National Volunteer Coordinator. No travel is required and communication would be through email and letters. The group will be asked to comment on leaflets and material which are being designed for other young people as information and to attract new people into the sport. If you are interested or know anyone who would be interested, please email volunteers@bcu.org.uk.

Equity consultation

Canoe England are currently writing a three year Equity Plan and would welcome your thoughts on how the sport can be developed to ensure Paddlesport is accessible to everyone. In order to write an effective plan, we will require your knowledge on the barriers facing individuals from minority groups from taking part in the sport, including females; individuals with a disability or those from ethnic minorities. Email volunteers@bcu.org.uk to help with our plan.

There are already some excellent projects and initiatives occurring within the country to address these barriers and Canoe England would like to hear about these to promote your good work. Any press cuttings or information can be emailed to

volunteers@bcu.org.uk or posted to the Equity Officer, 18 Market Place, Bingham, Nottingham NG13 8AP.

Canoe England Volunteer Awards



Nominations are being received for the first ever Canoe England Volunteer Awards for 2007. The awards will recognise those people who make outstanding contributions to paddlesport and who often go unnoticed with very little thanks and praise.

Many thanks to all of you who have already taken the time to complete the nomination form; an impressive number of nominations have already been received. There are hundreds of volunteers throughout the country making an

outstanding contribution to the sport, so make sure you let Canoe England know about them.

Volunteers, officials and coaches will be recognised for their contribution over the last 12 months at a special awards presentation. The awards will lead onto the UK awards where presentations are made to individuals who qualify for the already established awards of Merit, Valour and Honour as well as the prestigious BCU Services to Canoeing and Geoff Good Coach of the Year award.

Award categories:

Volunteer coach

Unpaid qualified coach who works from entry level upwards whether with young people or adults and who has made an outstanding contribution to a club, centre or community.

Professional coach

Paid qualified coach who works from entry level upwards whether with young people or adults and who has made an outstanding contribution to a club, BCU centre or community. Squad coaches and community sports coaches should be considered for this award.

Young coach/leader

Young person under 25 who has gained their Cadet Leader Award and higher who has made an outstanding contribution to a club, centre or community.

Teacher

A teacher qualified to lead Paddlesport within a school environment who has made a positive impact to the sport and outstanding contribution to directing new members to local clubs and centres.

Official

Recognition of outstanding commitment and service to the sport as a qualified official or referee.

Community volunteer

Elected or non-elected volunteer who commits both time and effort to the club, centre or community throughout the year in one or more unpaid roles/positions.

Young volunteer

Young person under 25 who commits both time and effort to the club, centre or community throughout the year in one or more unpaid roles/positions.

Access

Recognition for the outstanding contribution to improving and preserving access and/or conserving the canoeing environment.

Outstanding contribution

Recognition of outstanding service to Paddlesport. We will consider long service, commitment and contribution to the development of paddlesport. Those individuals without long service should be considered where they have made a major contribution over a shorter period. Those whose gallantry or devotion in bringing assistance to others in an aquatic situation shall also be considered.

This is a great opportunity for your club, centre, or committee to recognise and reward outstanding contributions made to paddlesport by individual volunteers. Who will you nominate?

Anyone can make their nominations for the Canoe England awards on the official form and you are not restricted to the number of people you can nominate. Forms can be found on the Canoe England website in the Volunteers' section. Alternatively please email volunteers@bcu.org.uk or call 0845 3709530. Closing date for nominations is November 30 2007.



PADDLEPOWER SUMMER FLOODS

The orders for Paddlepower have been flooding into the BCU office. Over ten thousand young people have benefited from Paddlepower this Summer.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

At Paddlepower Start there is a certificate which is awarded by the coach. For each award after Start there is a colourful Progress Card

for the young paddler to record their progress and to encourage them to move to the next stage with a BCU certificate awarded on completion of each award.

For more information contact the Paddlesport Participation Programme on paddlepower@bcu.org.uk or 0845 370 9500.



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2007 sees the launch of the BCU's new Performance Awards – the new Star Awards and the Paddlepower Awards

This new awards provide a balanced progression for paddlers, supports them as they move through their sport and, most importantly, encourages them to go paddling. The scheme has been developed around the needs of today's paddlers, with direction from the findings of the BCU Paddlesport Review and the BCU Long Term Paddler Development Review. Basically, this new scheme is based on over five years worth of research and reflects current best practice as defined by paddlesport's leading experts.

As we have previously reported on the Paddlepower Awards, we are now providing information specifically on the new Star Awards.

BCU performance Awards

The BCU Star Awards provide the support and encouragement paddlers need to get out and go paddling. The initial awards are generic, encouraging paddlers to experience the various disciplines of paddlesport available, with paddlers 'specialising' at the 3 Star Award.

The emphasis of these initial awards is to develop personal skills and gain independence; the 4 Star and 5 Star Awards are leadership awards and enable paddlers to lead groups in appropriate conditions.

Star Awards best suit paddlers aged 16 and over.

PADDLESPORT START AWARD

Introductory award designed to encourage and reward the paddler at the end of their first session. Equivalent to Paddlepower Start.

BCU 1 STAR

Flat water award reflecting basic boat control in any type of boat. Equivalent to Paddlepower Passport.

BCU 2 STAR

Flat water award covering a range of kayak and canoe skills. This award reflects fundamental paddlesport skills and understanding of paddle-boat-water interaction. Equivalent to Paddlepower Discover.

BCU 3 STAR

Boat/environment specific award reflecting personal competence as follows:

- **Whitewater kayak** – Paddling moving water, up to Grade 2 as part of a led group.
- **Flat-water** – Paddling open water and un-graded rivers as part of a led group.
- **Open canoe** – Paddling open water in moderate conditions and on simple moving water as part of a led group.
- **Sea kayak** – Journeying in a sheltered sea environment as part of a led group.
- **Surf** – Paddling in small, friendly UK surf conditions as part of a managed group.

BCU 4 STAR LEADER

This award comprises distinct training and assessment elements and demonstrates the ability to lead a group of four paddlers in appropriate locations, in up to moderate conditions.

- **Whitewater kayak** – Leading on river trips of up to Grade 2-3.
- **Open canoe** – Leading on river trips of up to Grade 2 and on open water with winds up to Force 4.
- **Sea kayak** – Leading on short journeys up to moderate tidal water environment with winds not exceeding Force 4.
- **Surf kayak** – Managing groups in up to moderate surf conditions.

BCU 5 STAR LEADER

This award comprises distinct training and assessment elements demonstrating a high level of personal skill and leadership in advanced situations. The Five Star Leader has the skills and judgement to select appropriate advanced trips for paddlers with a range of experience.

- **Whitewater kayak** – Leading on advanced river journeys.
- **Open canoe** – Leading on advanced river journeys and on remote and exposed open waters.
- **Sea kayak** – Leading in advanced sea conditions.
- **Surf** – Leading in remote or advanced surf conditions.

A new 4 Star (and possibly 5 Star) is also being developed that will be designed as a leadership award relevant for paddlers working on flat-water. This will be available later in the year.

All new Star Awards will be available from 1st September 2007

Old Star Awards completed after 31st August 2007 will not be processed.

HOW DO I REGISTER TO DELIVER THE NEW STAR AWARDS?

Complete the Star Award Assessor Registration form and return it to the BCU. This can be downloaded from: www.bcu.org.uk or requested from the BCU (through CE, WCA, SCA or CANI).

WHAT ABOUT OLD STAR AWARDS?

Any old Star Awards will remain valid, however, they will not be transferred into the new scheme. Where a Star Award is a pre-requisite for a coaching award please visit www.bcu.org.uk or contact the BCU for details of acceptable Awards.

Any coaches/centres/clubs holding old blank 1 or 2 Star certificates can exchange them for credit within the Paddlepower or Star Award schemes until the end of 2007.

WHO CAN DELIVER THE NEW STAR AWARDS?

AWARD	REQUIRED COACHING LEVEL	ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
Paddlesport Start	BCU Level 1 coach & above	
One Star	BCU Level 2 coach & above	
Two Star	BCU Level 2 Coach & above	Kayak Two Star + Canoe Two Star
Three Star	BCU Level 3 Coach & above	Limited to relevant discipline
Four Star	A4 Assessor*	Limited to relevant discipline
Five Star	A5 Assessor †	Limited to relevant discipline

* Current Level 3 coaches with 5 Star will be able to access BCU training to deliver 4 Star in their respective discipline.

† New 4 Star Assessors who are also Level 5 Coaches will be able to access BCU training to deliver 5 Star in their respective discipline.

Optional training will be available through the coach update series to help eligible coaches assess the 1-3 Star Awards.

WHAT ABOUT RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION?

Firstly, any coach wishing to deliver the new Star Awards must register with the BCU (see above). Some award courses must be registered with the coach's NGB in advance (see below). The coach must complete a Training or Pass slip for all successful candidates and return it to their NGB with the relevant fee.

	REGISTER COURSE WITH NGB	COMPLETE PASS SLIP AND RETURN TO NGB WITH FEE
Paddlesport Start*	No	No
One Star	No	Yes
Two Star	No	Yes
Three Star	No	Yes
Four Star Training/Assessment	Yes	Yes
Five Star Training/Assessment	Yes	Yes

* For Paddlesport Start coaches complete a Start Award certificate and present it to the student. Certificates are available from BCU.





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It took the flow of 22 billion litres of water, 200 training runs, 25kg of pasta and 15 renditions of Water Racing World Championships which were held in Columbia, South Carolina and Charlotte

Sandra Hyslop



EYE OF THE

The GB team girls K1 Sandra Hyslop, Olivia Churchill and Hannah Brown; boys K1, Michael Sims and Rob Vincent; C2 Jon Hiam and Iain Baker, team manager Bill Lawrenson and coaches Michael Mason and Nigel Jones all arrived in the US a week before the racing started so they could train on the tricky sprint course in Charlotte. Most of the 4.5m long boats had been sent on ahead of time by ship (many thanks are due to the generosity of Palm and Pyranha in their help with this), but one was to be flown. Surprisingly, walking through Gatwick airport with a large bubble wrapped, missile shaped, object didn't cause any concern to the security guards, although it did cause alarm amongst fellow passengers. Checking in and getting it screened caused a few more problems though as river racers don't fit down 1.5m square chutes featuring right angle bends. Eventually the technological approach was abandoned and the boat was unwrapped and hand checked.

In July, the weather in the Carolinas is hot and humid. The team had prepared for this by using the climate chambers at Nottingham and Newcastle Universities, which had highlighted just what was needed to keep well hydrated, in this case drinking around five to seven litres of water a day.

The sprint race was held at the new National White Water Centre in Charlotte. The centre has two main

channels, a short 'competition' channel that is unsuitable for the long wild water boats and the longer wilderness channel which is a pretty continuous Grade 3 down the initial 'freestyle' channel which leads straight into the 'big water' channel. Some features have earned confidence building names like 'Shutdown' and 'Trashcan', whilst food is obviously important with another feature being named 'Biscuits and Gravy'. Later we were to meet 'Burger rock' and 'Cookie monster' in Columbia.

Sandra had already spent time on the course with a helmet cam at Easter, and her experience helped the team make a quick start to their training. Dodging rafts was a familiar experience from HPP, but 26 at a time tested all their skills. The course was fairly easy to get down, but very hard to race quickly and everyone explored the eddies from time to time. The water is fast flowing, the six pumps that were in use could fill an Olympic sized swimming pool in under 25 seconds, so any small mistake was punished without mercy.

After six days of practice, the team moved to Columbia for the classic race which was run over a 3.5 mile course on the Saluda, a dam released river. In contrast to Charlotte, the course was relatively flat with one very large feature, Millrace Rapids, and a few smaller ones. Due to a water shortage, there

Wildwater racing in Britain does not have the depth of some of the other European nations, but with good teamwork, excellent coaching and dedicated athletes, the GB juniors proved it possible to take on the best in the world and succeed. Combined with Jonnie Schofield becoming European Wildwater Sprint Champion and Jessica Oughton taking bronze in the same event (her first year as a senior), 2007 has been an excellent year internationally. The launch this year of the WWR Academy, which provides a structured development in paddlesport, this discipline is well placed to produce more champions. To find out more information on Wild Water Racing, visit the website at www.wildwater.org.uk



'Eye of the Tiger', but the GB junior team returned with five medals from the 2007 Junior Wild North Carolina, USA in July. Article and photos by Miranda Churchill

Olivia Churchill



TIGER

was only one morning's release for practising the course before racing started. It was certainly busy with nearly 100 athletes from 16 nations trying out different routes down Millrace Rapids. Most involved close proximity to a small but significant rock, or even sometimes going over it – on one's side in the case of a Czech C2 – entertaining the many spectators and causing the locals to christen it 'Wild Water Launch Pad'. The local press had previewed the event including the suggestion that "there is one similarity between watching an auto race and a wildwater race: It can be a little boring if there aren't any wrecks." It certainly wasn't boring.

The Classic race was a phenomenal success for Sandra Hyslop who pulverised the field, winning by an unprecedented 38 seconds. Not only did Sandra win gold, but Olivia Churchill made it two Brits on the podium with bronze, less than a second off silver in a 19 minute race. With Hannah Brown finishing seventh, the girls were then top seeded for the team race the following day. They duly obliged, though not without a scare, being a second slower than the Czech girls when two thirds of the way through the race. However, they managed to pull out a 15 second advantage by the finish line. Remembering the words to the national anthem was a great improvement on the patchy singing of the

previous day! The boys also had good results with Michael Sims 11th and Rob Vincent 15th (both comfortably in the top half of the field) and the C2 was a creditable sixth.

Back to Charlotte for the sprint race. This consists of two runs (almost two minutes each in this case) with the total time being used to determine position. The team race was first and after the first run the GB girls were less than a second down on the strongly fancied Czechs. Unfortunately the unpredictable water proved our undoing, but provided onlookers with the spectacle of a two boat pile-up and the local newspaper with a front page headline! The final day was the individual sprint and it was another double medal success from the British girls. Headed by just Ivana Hrabalova, one of the four Czech girls (three of whom had filled the top three spots at the last Junior World Championship sprint event), Sandra Hyslop won silver and Olivia Churchill another bronze to complete the most successful ever Junior World Championships for Great Britain. Unfortunately Hannah Brown was unable to compete after the previous day's events, but Michael Sims finished 14th, Rob Vincent 20th and the C2 put in a great second run. ●

Hiam and Baker



Rob Vincent



Michael Sims



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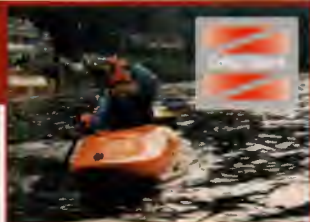
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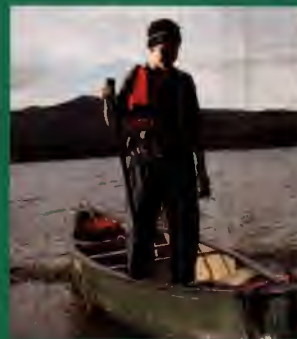
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Marlow
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Tel: 01628 483252
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A trip of contr



We spent six months planning and the same time increasing our paddling, expedition and rescue skills in preparation for the expected unpredictable weather and conditions and isolation of the coastal areas.

As we had been unable to decide on a preferred location we split the trip into two one-week expeditions in two different areas: Clayoquot Sound, out of Tofino on the west coast of the island and a one-way paddle using a water taxi from Port Hardy to explore the wild, isolated coast of mainland BC. Both areas provided outstanding paddling, each of which would warrant much longer trips.

We had contacted local outfitters, booked equipment and planned itineraries in advance. Sea kayaking Tofino (www.tofino-kayaking.com) proved to be very helpful but the equipment rented was old, of poor quality and not to be recommended to UK paddlers. However, we had a useful hour with a local guide to familiarise ourselves with camping spots, wildlife watching (and hazards) and safety information. We finally set off in the early evening sun to our first camping spot for an immediate feeling of isolation. Jet lag disturbed our sleep but encouraged a very early start to the day. We never managed to strike camp and load the kayaks in less than two hours but getting on the water early is the best advice to gain advantage of the best water and wind conditions. Characteristic weather patterns in the area mean fog on most mornings, clearing around the middle of the day to reveal the most stunning scenery; a contrast of high mountains with the remnants of winter snow even in August and lower lying islands with white sandy beaches, rocky outcrops and headlands with a backdrop of beautiful trees.

The wildlife was impressive: thousands of pink, purple and orange starfish clinging to the rocks and large green sea anemone tentacles gently wafting in the still water. By day two the wildlife count included sea eagles, porpoise and finally in the

evening the first sighting of whale spouts. Day three added stunning close encounters with whales, which proved to be slow, graceful and very exciting.

Our route was to be governed by the weather and sea conditions but as both were fantastic we were able to explore the main islands of the Clayoquot Sound; Vargas, Flores, Meares and numerous smaller islands and islets. The most interesting conditions were an afternoon of short choppy waves, another of strong headwind and some long leisurely swell (quite unlike UK swell which is of short wavelength). This swell had travelled all across the Pacific and was lovely to paddle. We averaged 20km a day with a long idyllic day of 36km as the conditions were so good.

The wilderness camping was everything we had hoped that it would be: wild, unspoilt and definitely with wild animals around! No words can describe the first encounter with bear prints. (We saw bears several times but fortunately at a safe distance) Bear precautions are absolutely essential as is immaculate general camp cleanliness as wolves and other scavengers are regular beach visitors. It is essential to have a freestanding tent as most nights we pitched directly on the sandy beach.

We ended our first week setting off in fog to cross the main channel towards Meares Island and Tofino. The fog lifted and the sun shone in the most beautiful ethereal mix of light and dark, bright and swirling fog, land and sea. As we ate fish in a restaurant overlooking the sea in the evening and the sun set we thought that the week would be very difficult to better – but it was.

After meeting the outfitter and having an entertaining time shopping for the week in an excellent supermarket at Thunderbird Mall we turned in early as usual to return next morning to pack our kit into waterproof boxes. After a session with maps

and tide tables we moved kit and boats down to the Government Wharf and loaded them all onto the water taxi. The taxi took us to Indian Cove approximately 2 ½ hours away and back on the BC mainland. We then paddled back to Port Hardy over the next six days. We spent day one paddling further north and were rewarded with numerous whale and porpoise sightings. The sea conditions were lovely enabling us as on other days to stop for breaks pretty much whenever we wished. Lunch comprised bacon butties on every day apart from two as vacuum packed bacon, tortilla wraps and pitta bread keep well.

After breaking camp early to leave Indian Cove we undertook what was expected to be the most challenging day of the whole trip

The fog lifted and the sun shone in the most beautiful ethereal mix of light and dark, bright and swirling fog,

past Cape Caution, along the sweep of Burnett Bay, past Slingsby Channel and on past Skull Cove to Allison Harbour where we were informed that there was a wood cabin to stay in overnight. Cape Caution is so named because of the rock reefs off it and the care required to negotiate it.

Bacon butties

Burnett Bay is a beautiful two-mile long sweep of golden sand open to the Pacific swell and is not recommended for landing with a laden kayak. However as always on this trip the local knowledge was perfect and we landed at the extreme south end of the bay by paddling in close to a rocky headland in about 5cms surf! Bacon butties once more and a fantastic display of bear prints of many sizes in the sand before we set off to catch slack tide across Slingsby Channel. The channel runs 5 kms up to Nakwato rapids which at up to 19 knots are reputed to be the fastest in the world and obviously have a massive effect on the currents in the area. We passed the mouth of the channel with a bit of a slog but were then able to paddle leisurely on for the rest of the day. The swell picked up to two metres but

Islands

An idea set in motion a year previously came to fruition in August 2006 – a trip of a lifetime to wilderness sea kayak with whales off Vancouver Island. Kathy Patching takes up the story.

USEFUL AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Outfitters at Port Hardy: www.island.net/~odysseyk/
Ferry: www.bcferries.com/
Local airline: www.pacific-coastal.com
Environment Canada Weather: http://weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca/canada_e.html
Charts: www.charts.gc.ca
Book: The Wild Coast 2, John Kimantas, ISBN 978-1-55285-786-1, www.whitecap.ca/travel_and_recreation.asp

The paddling group comprised Kathy, Rory, Penny and Ken, thanks to all for such great company.



Kelp beds



Indian Cove – water taxi dropoff

remained easy to paddle and as we headed into Skull Cove gained shelter in the most stunningly beautiful area. Then on to the cabin which was incredibly well hidden on a bluff above the channel with no clue to its existence other than local knowledge. The cabin is owned by a co-operative of people keen to enjoy the wilderness and provides a safe haven for others travelling through. The only wet night of the two weeks was the night in the cabin but another beautiful day followed.

The whales proved elusive

We had a real treat of a lie in until 7am and then paddled back to the Skull Cove area to look for whales and visit a whale researcher who has set up a station on a rocky outcrop overlooking a favoured whale feeding area. William was in and very informative but the whales proved elusive. There were also several volunteers from the Earthwatch www.earthwatch.org programme and a researcher. As we paddled back over the next few days we were treated to wildlife displays (seals, porpoise, whales and Stellar sealions plus amazing bird life), stunning scenery and fabulous paddling conditions. We explored the numerous islands in the channels between mainland BC and Vancouver Island. On our last night we camped in a semi-developed spot (it had a flat area of moss above the beach) and watched seals and otters playing, eagles feeding as the sun went down and the moon rose over our last fire. We paddled back into Port Hardy through dense fog, spot on our scheduled arrival time. The outfitter, Odyssey Kayaks, run by Pat Kervin and his wife, Jackie (www.island.net/~odysseyk/) could not have been more helpful. The equipment we rented was first-class and the boats and equipment were prepared to very high standards. They also advised us on routes, where to eat and even ferried our luggage and us around the small city of Port Hardy. We cannot thank them enough.

Port Hardy is in an isolated area at the northern end of Vancouver Island but is conveniently served by



Wishart Island – morning departure



Burnett Bay – lunch stop

good local air services. If you want wilderness kayaking it provides it all. The wilderness experience comes with risks though, not just from the wild wildlife but also more difficult communications and fewer safe landing spots. You must be able to be self sufficient: we carried a comprehensive first aid kit, 2 VHF radios with Canadian and US channels enabled including the weather channels plus tri-band mobile phone (which only worked when we were close to Port Hardy). Appropriate Charts were a must.

We met very few people but had a most amazing holiday. We will be returning for another trip of a lifetime, this time catching the BC Discovery Islands ferry to Bella Coola on the BC mainland, hopefully getting a wet launch from the ferry to explore the islands and then paddle back to Port Hardy over two weeks. ●

NATIONAL MARATHON CHAMPIONSHIPS

WHAT ARE THEY?

The British National Open Marathon Racing Individual and Team Championships are held each July/August at different venues hosted on behalf of the Marathon Racing Committee by one of the racing clubs. The race this year was held in Wokingham over the weekend of the 18-19th August and run by Wokingham CC.

HOW MANY PEOPLE RACE?

This year the championships attracted over 1,000 entries in singles and doubles, kayaks and canoes. People were of all ages and came from all over the country and Ireland too!

WHAT RACES ARE THERE?

The competition is held in age categories from U10 to over 54 in both canoe and kayak with separate starts for men and women who compete to be national champions. Races are also held based on the same divisional system as the Hasler Series. A trophy called the Spanish House trophy is awarded to the club gaining the most points overall at the championships. It is a much sort after trophy and clubs try and get as many entries in as they can and race very hard to get points. Each person's place in each race gets points for the team as well as giving them the opportunity to win medals and trophies for themselves as well.

The Spanish Galleon is awarded to the club gaining the most points in the Lightning races.

More information on what races there are and what trophies are awarded can be found on the marathon canoeing website: www.marathon-canoeing.org.uk

THIS YEAR'S EVENT

A rather damp weekend saw some excellent racing and phenomenal support for teams and individuals from those racing and their support crews.

The championships are open so competitors do not have to pre-qualify to enter but race in the event according to standard or age depending on which race(s) is chosen.



An unusual way to finish!



Brian Chapman competing at the Championships.

The races are organised so you could race every morning and afternoon! Actually, there were many who did a considerable amount of racing. One of note was Brian Greenham (Reading CC - who still holds the Devizes to Westminster canoe race record... since 1979) who seemed to be constantly on the water racing. He (at 57!) decided to take on the challenge of racing in the younger age range as well as in his age range of 54+ and he took home yet more medals to add to his vast collection!

However Brian was not the only paddler of note as many veteran paddlers (aged 35 plus... many prefer the term masters!) raced in the divisional races and then also competed in the aged based races. Jean Boatman (aged 76) was out there in the Div 9 K2

race pushing Tamsin Phipps around the course - age is no barrier in marathon racing, in fact we think it is actually an advantage especially in terms of endurance!

Out on the course, Brian Gandy, Chair of the Marathon Racing Committee, could be seen racing, as could Brian Chapman, Chair of the BCU. Ian Wynne (Athen's Olympic bronze medallist in flat water racing 500 metres) was out there racing in the Senior Men's K1 assessment race over a distance of 26km. Have a look at the results on the Marathon Canoeing website and you will see many more familiar names from the past and current top paddlers.



Forty-six teams took part in the championships and these are just the top ten teams. The full team positions can be found on the www.marathon-canoeing.org.uk website.

National Championships Wokingham 2007 Spanish House Trophy

Club	Points incl Lightning
Leighton Buzzard CC	1050
Reading CC	886
Wey KC	751
Elmbridge CC	585
Worcester CC	569
Nottingham CC	474
Norwich CC	449
Banbury & District	366
Southampton CC	324
Bradford on Avon CC	295
Richmond CC	288



Above: over 55 K1 Race... a full class and a very keenly fought race!

Left: waiting for the start of their K1 races.



...ing with his wife Margaret at the



Amelia Churnside of Reading Canoe Club getting back in after the portage. She and her partner Jessica Collins went on to become the U16 National Champions.

You will notice that the results show paddlers who although competing in the races have not been awarded points or National Championship status. This is because they are paddlers from Ireland, who we welcome very much to the event, but because it is the British National Championships they are not eligible for National Championship status... but where they win medals these are of course given to them and medals are also awarded to the first top three British paddlers. The Irish certainly gave us lots of really strong competition this year. Thanks to Wokingham CC who organised a really good event. ●



A comment from the Rivers Access Campaign

A family weekend

Whilst watching, and taking part in, the Championships, we were able to reflect on just how popular the sport of canoeing is and also how family and friendship based it is.

Walking back from the car park to the race site one could hear cheers of "Come on mum... paddle harder dad... sit on the wash mum..." Competitors came from all over Britain and Ireland to take part in the event. We did have to wonder where some of them trained due to the lack of access to inland waters and were in awe of their skill on what was (on this occasion) a remarkably choppy stretch of water! Whilst recognising that competitions are not for everyone this does show how popular canoeing is and this is just one aspect of it! Marathon Racing information is at www.marathon-canoeing.org.uk

OCTOBERFEST

Plas-Y-Brenin – 20-21st October

It's that time of year again – autumn is fast approaching and plans are afoot for this year's BCU Student Safety Seminar. The seminar provides an excellent opportunity for students to get top notch coaching from those in the know for a very reasonable price.

As well as sessions on a range of subjects from first aid to trip planning and river safety to transport, there will also be demo boats from Pyranha, demo kit from Palm, marvellous talks from 'Amazing' Dave Fairweather and the Four Borders team about their recent adventures.

To book places call Jim Glover on 0845 370 9500 or email him at james.glover@bcu.org.uk to book places. If you need any info about the weekend as a whole, email Tom Parker at tomparkercoaching@mail.com

DW 2008

Celebrating sixty years of Devizes Westminster

There are just over six months until Easter and the 60th anniversary Devizes Westminster International Canoe Marathon.

For long time paddlers who've always intended to complete DW, newcomers to paddlesport looking for a challenge and serial DWers alike, the challenge is to take part in this historic event.

Devizes Westminster organisers would also like elite paddlers to take up the challenge, with the course record still standing from 1979.

You don't have to know the course to take part. You can get all the information you need about preparing for and taking part in the event from Brian Greenaway's 'The Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race' available from the DW organisers through www.dwrace.org.uk.

So what are you waiting for? DW is fast approaching. Make the decision and start training.



CANOE CAMPING CLUB

Thames & South East Group

14th October, Wey Navigation canal and R Wey from Weybridge

28th October, Godalming and Wey Navigations, Godalming to Guildford

18th November, R Mole from Hershams (near Esher)

9th December, Basingstoke Canal from Woking

The group welcomes individuals and families as guest paddlers. Trips are normally 10-12 miles and suitable for open canoe and kayak ('a shorter half day trip'). A BCU sticker or navigation authority licence is required. Contact: Robin Hickman, Robin@rhickman.freeserve.co.uk Tel 01403 267244

Essex Winter Series

Despite its name, the Essex Winter Series of canoe marathon races is not exclusively for Essex paddlers, nor is its appeal limited to high-performers.

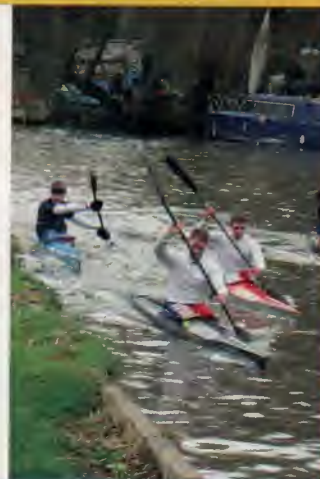
The programme of six marathon canoe races, held during November to February each year, is organised by the Essex Canoeing Association but actually takes place at venues across Herts, Suffolk and east London as well as Essex.

While the series remains popular with serious racers who use it as essential winter training and a warm-up for the long-distance races of the spring, it also fulfils an important role at the other end of the competition spectrum by encouraging beginners and youngsters into regular racing. The ECA welcomes participation by general clubs or youth groups who do not have access to specialist racing craft, to add an extra dimension to their paddling.

Race distances are typically between three and nine miles, and most courses involve portages. Unlike the Hasler marathon races, the competitors race in 19 classes determined by type of boat and the age and sex of the paddlers. As well as racing K1 and K2s, there are separate classes for general purpose boats, touring and marathon C2s, and C1s. Whilst giving the open canoeists and GPs a chance to compete separately from the specialist craft, and the juniors separately from the adults, this arrangement can also be very challenging, as it may require some paddlers to take on a much longer course than they are used to, or can pit them against significantly more experienced participants. In classes where ages/sexes are mixed, there are additional awards

for the fastest girl/lady, Vet and SuperVet (50+) as appropriate.

As well as winning individual trophies on the day, competitors' best five scores across the events are used to award series trophies for each class at the last race – there are perpetual trophies for the class winners and engraved glasses for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd placed paddlers to keep.



The Robin Dromard C1 trophy:

Robin Dromard stepped down as Winter Series coordinator last season. To honour his major contribution to canoeing in Essex, the ECA has commissioned a new race trophy in his name, to be awarded for the best C1 performance over the five mile course. Robin Dromard's association with the ECA stretches back to the early 1970s when it was known as the 'Essex Young Canoeists Association'. Robin, himself a high-kneeler Canadian paddler and passionate advocate of this branch of paddlesport, is seen here presenting the award to its first winner – Richard Crooks of Chelmsford CC in February 2007. Also pictured is Pete Moule, ECA Chairman.

Dates and venues for 2007/08

(Race 1) 4th Nov 2007: Bishops Stortford, Herts/Essex (Stort Navigation)

(Race 2) 25th Nov 2007: Herts Young Mariners Base, Cheshunt, Herts (Lea Navigation)

(Race 3) 9th Dec 2007: Barking, Essex (River Roding)

(Race 4) 13th Jan 2008: Sudbury, Suffolk (River Stour)

(Race 5) 27th Jan 2008: Chelmsford, Essex (River Chelmer)

(Race 6) 10th Feb 2008: Leaside, Hackney, east London (Lea Navigation)

The EWS is also a team event, with groups competing for an overall series trophy. There is also a separate club series trophy (the Dick Grieves Trophy) for the group with the highest-scoring beginner-level juniors.

The series is well-established in the paddling calendar, and for the last three series has averaged a steady attendance of over 100 competitors per race.

Above all, the Essex Winter Series has the reputation for being a

friendly, fun event which brings the members of clubs across Essex and neighbouring counties together throughout the winter months.

More details about the races will be available from the ECA website at www.essexcanoeing.tk or by contacting coordinator Gary Aldam on ews@aldam.org.uk or 01279 755089.

Avon descent

November 11th

The event starts at Stratford on Avon and finishes ten miles downstream at Bidford on Avon with six weir shoots or portages. There are classes for K1, K2, WWR, C2 touring and racing, and touring. Handicaps are applied to even out the kayak classes. The start is at 12.15pm with late entries up to 11.30am. This is an ideal warm up for the Exe Descent or a good day trip for those looking for an enjoyable paddle. Last year well over 100 paddlers took part.

Contact Nigel Wooltorton at Mercia Canoe Club, Unit 1, Coventry Canal Warehouse, Leicester Row, Coventry, CV1 4LH. Telephone 07833 705806 or e-mail merciacanoecub@yahoo.com for details or see our web site www.merciacanoecub.org.uk

Mersey descent race

Sunday 21st October

The course is nine miles down part of the new Mersey Canoe Trail with one sloping weir that may have to be portaged at high flow and 12 small rubble weirs shootable at any flow. Any rudders must be overstem to avoid damage.

There are classes for K2, K1, River Racer, Canadian Double and General Purpose Kayaks.

For an entry form visit our website www.madcc.co.uk, click through 'calendar' and 'racing calendar' to 'Mersey Descent details' or send a stamped, addressed envelope to Chris Cleaver, 39 Cavendish Road, Hazel Grove, Stockport. SK7 6HX.

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Fig. 1 Lendal DNA Strand



Matt Tidy testing the Taupo PFD.
Rauma river, Norway
Photo: Deb Pinniger

New for 2007



Taupo tour

- **Foam:** Unique Flex-Formed Foam is moulded to wrap around the body, offering unparalleled comfort for both men and women
- **Comfort:** Neoprene lined armholes and padded rear waistbelt increase comfort against the skin
- **Fit:** 6-point adjustment with new UltraGlide shoulder system
- **Features:** High-back design removes bulky foam from the lower back boosting comfort in kayaks with high backrests
- **Storage:** Two large, bellowed front cargo pockets with smaller zipped pockets for essentials
- **Hydration:** Compatible with the Palm Universal Hydration Pouch
- **Fabric:** 210D Ripstop nylon 6.6 and 500D Cordura nylon outer shell
- **Colours:** Moss / Olive and Red / Black
- **Sizes:** XS/S, M/L, XL/XXL



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