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focus



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UNION**

December 2007
No. 169, £2.00

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Sandra Hyslop
Amoret King

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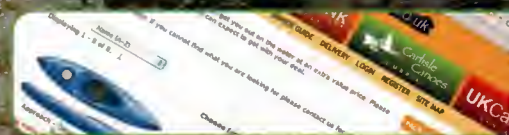
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British Canoe Union
18 Market Place
Bingham
Nottingham NG13 8AP
Tel: 0845 370 9500
Fax: 0845 370 9501
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BCU Enquiries
Above address
President
Albert Woods
Chair
Brian Chapman
Chief Executive
Paul Owen

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For subscription, please contact
the BCU on the above contacts

Publishing Contractors
2b Graphic Design
49 Greenfields, St. Ives,
Cambs. PE27 5HB
Tel/Fax: (01480) 465081
E-mail:
peter@canoefocus.co.uk
www.canoefocus.co.uk
www.2bgraphicdesign.co.uk

Canoe Focus Enquiries
Above address
Editor
Peter Tranter
01480 465081
Assistant Editor
Debbie Colt
Advertising Sales
Anne Egan:
01480 465081

Design
Richard O' Donovan
Contributors
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following for their articles and
photographs:

Andy Goodsell, John Anderson,
Sandra Hyslop, Amoret King,
Martin and Janet Gillespie, MS
Bailey, Ocdt Love, Jenny Long,
Steve Bowens, Nicky Ward,
Martyn Williamson, Glenn
Summerbell, Graham Dore, Sue
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Ray Hudspeth, Sam Stephenson,
Miranda Churchill, Dick
Constable, Debbie and Tony
Canning, Gordon Hulmes, Dave
Halsall, Shruti Passi and Chloe
Nelson-Lawrie.

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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 canoeists, not 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 it's agents cannot be held liable or responsible for loss or damage, although every care and effort is taken to safeguard material. Next Copy date is the 4th JAN 2007.

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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



Comment by Paul Owen, Chief Executive



Welcome to the December issue of Canoe Focus

In this, the last issue of the year, we look back on our activities and look forward to 2008, an Olympic year.

Thank you for the support of all members and especially to the unsung heroes – the volunteers. We will acknowledge the efforts of as many as possible in the new year when we announce the winner of the National Volunteer Award.

I am delighted that we have secured £1.6m of funding from Sport England for new club and coach positions. The regional coaches will be starting work in the new year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Alan Edge for his 22 years service to the BCU.

His commitment, enthusiasm and sense of humour made an enormous impact to all areas of paddlesport. We wish him luck in his new role as Performance Director of GB Wheelchair Basketball.

Have a wonderful seasonal break, happy paddling and see you in 2008.

Please note that the offices are closed over the Christmas break from Friday 21st December 2007 until Wednesday 2nd January 2008.

It is with sadness that I must report the death of two inspirational members



Oliver Cock

Oliver Cock, the BCU's first National Coach and considered as the founder of coaching, passed away just short of his 96th birthday. The funeral was held on 31st October at St Paul's in Woldingham, Surrey.

We will be running an article celebrating the life of Oliver Cock in the next issue of Canoe Focus, so if anyone has any memories that they would like to share please do get in touch and email shruti.passi@bcu.org.uk

John Liddell

John Liddell, one of the six kayak paddlers on the 1976 Dudh Kosi Everest Kayak Expedition, passed away on the 29th September 2007. John, originally from Solihull, Birmingham was a founding member of Warwick Kayak Club. John went on pioneering trips to the Grand Canyon, the Austrian Alps and British Columbia. His passion for paddling and adventure was inspiring (see page 14).



Our condolences go to both families.

This year's AGM is 8th March 2008 in Cardiff – details of the venue will be in the next issue of Canoe Focus.

competition calendar

	Start	Finish	Discipline	Event		Start	Finish	Discipline	Event
December	1-Dec		Slalom	BCU Slalom Committee - ACM, Holme Peirrepoint	February	10-Feb		Wild Water Racing	Irwell 1 - Div B and Youth
	1-Dec		Canoe Polo	Div 2 South - Coventry		10-Feb		Wild Water Racing	National Junior Prize Giving - Burrs Activity Centre
	1-Dec		Canoe Polo	Div 4 Central - Luton		10-Feb		Marathon Racing	Waterside B
	1-Dec		Canoe Polo	Div 3 South - Bristol		10-Feb		Marathon Racing	Essex Winter Series - Race 6 - Leaside
	2-Dec		Canoe Polo	BCU Canoe Polo Committee - ACM, Derby		16-Feb		Wild Water Racing	Dart Sprint - Div A, B and Youth"
	2-Dec		Marathon Racing	Stour Descent		16-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 1 - Leeds
	2-Dec		Wild Water Racing	Clyde, Div B		16-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 4 North - Stockport
	2-Dec		Sprint Racing	10km Handicap Race - Lincoln CC		16-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 4 Central - Stratford Upon Avon
	8-Dec		Canoe Polo	Div 2 North - Leeds		16-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 2 South - Coventry
	8-Dec		Canoe Polo	Div 2 Ladies - Stockport		16-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 4 South East - Dagenham
	8-Dec		Canoe Polo	Div 3 Central - Stratford Upon Avon		16-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 3 South - Bristol
	8-Dec		Canoe Polo	Div 4 South East - Dagenham		16-Feb		Coach Update	North East
8-Dec	9-Dec	Wild Water Racing	Nith, Div B & RAF Championships	17-Feb		Wild Water Racing	Dart Loop - Div and B - South West Champs		
8-Dec	9-Dec	Coach Update	National Coaching Conference - Holme Pierrepoint	17-Feb		Wild Water Racing	Dart Middle - Div A, B and Youth"		
9-Dec		Marathon Racing	Essex Winter Series - Race 3 - Barking	17-Feb		Wild Water Racing	Leny/Teith - Open		
15-Dec		Canoe Polo	Div 4 North - Stockport	17-Feb		Marathon Racing	Thameside 2		
31-Dec	7-Jan	Canoe Sailing	World Champs, Port Phillip Bay, AUS	23-Feb		Wild Water Racing	Derwent Classic - Div B and Youth		
5-Jan		Canoe Polo	Div 2 Ladies - Stockport	23-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 1 Ladies - Leeds		
6-Jan		Marathon Racing	Frank Luzmore K2	23-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 1 - Coventry		
12-Jan		Canoe Polo	Div 2 North - Leeds	23-Feb		Club Forum	North east		
12-Jan		Canoe Polo	Div 3 North - York	23-Feb		Coach Update	Leicester - East Midlands		
12-Jan		Canoe Polo	Div 4 North - Stockport	24-Feb		Club Forum	Yorkshire		
12-Jan		Canoe Polo	Div 3 Central - Stratford Upon Avon	24-Feb		Marathon Racing	Waterside C		
12-Jan		Canoe Polo	Div 2 South - Coventry	1-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 2 North - Leeds		
12-Jan		Canoe Polo	Div 3 South - Dagenham	1-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 1 Youth - Stratford Upon Avon		
12-Jan		Canoe Polo	Div 4 South West - Bristol	2-Mar		Wild Water Racing	Grandtully Classic - Div A and B		
13-Jan		Marathon Racing	Essex Winter Series - Race 4 - Sudbury	2-Mar		Wild Water Racing	Grandtully Sprint - Div A and B		
19-Jan		Canoe Polo	Div 3 North - Stockport	2-Mar		Wild Water Racing	National Prize Giving - Grandtully		
19-Jan		Canoe Polo	Div 1 - Coventry	2-Mar		Club Forum	East Midlands		
19-Jan		Canoe Polo	Div 4 South East - Dagenham	3-Mar		Wild Water Racing	Thistlebrig 2 - Div A and B		
20-Jan		Coach Update	Burton - West Midlands	8-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 3 South - Dagenham		
20-Jan		Coach Update	Derby East Midlands	8-Mar		Club Forum	East Midlands		
26-Jan		Canoe Polo	Div 1 Ladies - Coventry	8-Mar		Coach Update	Nottingham - East Midlands		
26-Jan		Canoe Polo	Div 4 Central - Luton	8-Mar		Coach Update	Nottingham - Wey - South East		
27-Jan		Coach Update	Devon & Cornwall - South West	9-Mar		Coach Update	Nottingham - West Midlands		
27-Jan		Marathon Racing	Waterside A	9-Mar		Marathon Racing	Waterside D		
27-Jan		Wild Water Racing	Thistlebrig 1 - Div B and Youth	16-Mar		Marathon Racing	Royal K1/K2		
27-Jan		Wild Water Racing	Taff 1 - Div B and Youth	15-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 2 Ladies - Luton		
27-Jan		Marathon Racing	Essex Winter Series, Race 5 - Chelmsford	15-Mar		Club Forum	North West		
2-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 3 Central - Stratford Upon Avon	15-Mar		Coach Update	Suffolk - East		
2-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 3 North - Stockport	17-Mar		Wild Water Racing	Dove - Div B and Youth		
2-Feb		Coach Update	North London	21-Mar	24-Mar	Marathon Racing	Devizes to Westminster		
3-Feb		Marathon Racing	Thameside 1	29-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 2 North - Leeds		
3-Feb		Wild Water Racing	Exe - Div B and Youth	29-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 3 North - Stockport		
9-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 2 Ladies - Stratford Upon Avon	29-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 3 Central - Stratford Upon Avon		
9-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 1 Youth - Luton	29-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 1 Ladies - Coventry		
9-Feb	10-Feb	Wild Water Racing	Nith - Div A and B - Interservice Champs	29-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 4 South East - Dagenham		
9-Feb		Wild Water Racing	Goyt - Div B and Youth	29-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 4 South West - Bristol		
				29-Mar		Club Forum	London & South East		
				30-Mar		Club Forum	Southern		
				30-Mar		Marathon Racing	Lincoln		

January 2008

February

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.canoepolo.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?
 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 Shruti Passi: shruti.passi@bcu.org.uk



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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.

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- Joel Watersports, Worcester
- Canoe Kayak Trader, 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

LONDON AND SOUTH EAST

- Brighton Canoes Ltd, E. Sussex
- Kent Canoes, Kent - Kent Canoes offer 10% discount on boats and 5% discount off kit.
- The Family Boat Shop, Surrey
- UK Kayaking, West Sussex
- Whitewater The Canoe Centre, Middlesex

EAST MIDLANDS

- Desperate Measures, Nottingham
- Tradewinds Outdoor, Northamptonshire

EASTERN

- Nucleus Watersports, Clacton
- Reeds Of Cambridge, Cambridge

SOUTHERN

- Berkshire Canoes, Reading
- Marsport Ltd, Reading
- Riverside Central, Oxford
- Woodmill, Southampton

NORTH WEST

- Brookbank Canoes, Cheshire

CUMBRIA

- Carlisle Canoes, Carlisle
- UK Canoes, Lancaster
- Windermere Canoe Kayak, Bowness-on-Windermere

SOUTH WEST

- Cheltenham Canoes, Cheltenham
- Cornwall Canoes, Newquay
- Family Adventure Store, Wiltshire
- Kayak and Paddles, Plymouth
- Outdoor Active Ltd, Gloucestershire
- Performance Kayaks, Weston-Super-Mare
- Totnes Kayaks, Devon

Member's offers

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.



15% discount at Cotswold or 20% off on selected dates (see page 11). Visit member's area of the website for details.

15% discount of Lucozade products.



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



Exclusive 10% off Sunsail holidays to Turkey, Greece and Antigua.

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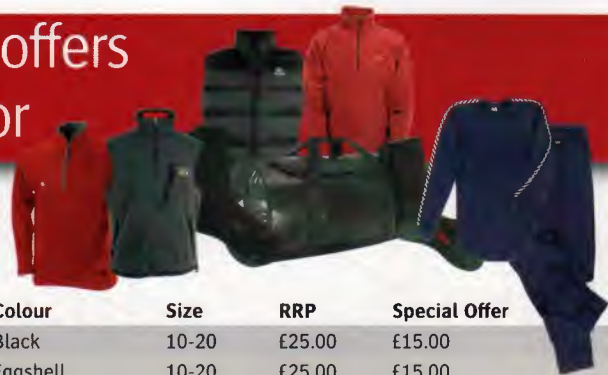


Receive a £5 discount on Dr Samantha Stears book, 'Fuelling Fitness for Sports Performance'.

Pre Christmas special offers from Cotswold Outdoor



To purchase visit www.cotswoldoutdoor.com or visit your nearest store'



Brand	Description	Colour	Size	RRP	Special Offer
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Craghoppers	Miska Microfleece (W)	Eggshell	10-20	£25.00	£15.00
Craghoppers	Miska Microfleece (W)	Blush Red	12-20	£25.00	£15.00
Craghoppers	Miska Microfleece (W)	Light Damson	10-20	£25.00	£15.00
Craghoppers	Miska Microfleece (W)	Latte	10-20	£25.00	£15.00
Craghoppers	Corey Microfleece (M)	Black	S-XXL	£25.00	£15.00
Craghoppers	Corey Microfleece (M)	Brick Red	S-XXL	£25.00	£15.00
Craghoppers	Corey Microfleece (M)	Navy	S-XXL	£25.00	£15.00
Craghoppers	Corey Microfleece (M)	Frog	S-XXL	£25.00	£15.00
Mountain Hardwear	Windstopper Vest (M)	Charcoal	S-XL	£80.00	£45.00
Bridgedale	Endurance Trail 2 Pack (U)	Navy/Petrol	S-XL	£20.00	£12.00
Mountain Equipment	Couloir Vest (M)	Black	S-XL	£80.00	£50.00
Mountain Equipment	Couloir Vest (W)	Black	10-16	£80.00	£50.00
Mountain Hardwear	½ Zip Sweater (M)	Espresso	S-XL	£70.00	£49.00
Mountain Hardwear	½ Zip Sweater (M)	Chilli	S-XL	£70.00	£49.00
Helly Hansen	Lifa Midweight Twin Pack (M)	Navy	S-XL	£60.00	£30.00
Mountain Equipment	Wet and Dry Kit Bag 100L (U)	Black	One Size	£80.00	£45.00
Mountain Equipment	Wet and Dry Kit Bag 70L (U)	Black	One Size	£60.00	£35.00

competition corner

Did you know you can also receive discounts 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

We are offering two lucky BCU member's the following prizes...

1. A buoyancy aid courtesy of **Yorkshire Canoe and Kayak** based in Doncaster. (visit www.yorkshirecanoe.co.uk)

AND

2. A £75 kit voucher at **Canoe Kayak Trader** based in Warwickshire (visit www.canoekayaktrader.co.uk)

All responses will be entered in our prize draw and a winner will be picked at random! The closing date is the 1st January 2008.

Good luck!



For your chance to win...

All you have to do is tell us what you think of Canoe Focus magazine! We love to know what you think of the magazine - what you don't like about the magazine and what bits you like the most.

To enter and to complete the survey visit <http://BCU.CanoeFocusSurvey.sgizmo.com> (There is also a link on the BCU homepage)

The last issue's winner...

Congratulations to **SEAN HEWLETT** who won a week away to Scotland in the last edition for correctly identifying the photo as the River Exe, Tiverton at the Exe Descent start in Devon.

Win a Reed Chillcheater thermal set

www.chillcheater.com



This magazine contains the Reed Chillcheater catalogue and members are entitled to a 15% discount on the prices listed.

Simply quote your membership number when you order. The offer ends at the end of January 2008.

We are also giving away a Reed Chillcheater Thermal set (see left). For your chance to win answer this question:

"Where is the Chillcheater head office based?"

Email your answers to shruti.passi@bcu.org.uk

A winner will be picked at random at the end of January 2008.

For more information on Reed Chillcheater visit - www.chillcheater.com

BCU Prize Winner: Transpire Fleece Base Layer Top and Trousers

Simon Osborne, sponsored paddler 'pop out' Penryn Mawr tidal race 2006. Picture Johan Wagner-Escape Kajak Center.

EXHIBITIONS

The BCU will not be attending the Outdoors Show this year, following the expiry of their contract and following feedback from members and trade, they are reviewing their exhibition strategy.

The BCU will attend the new 'Canoexpo' event as they are very interested in the format and the fact that it is specifically designed for paddlers. (February/Stoneleigh)

The BCU are talking to other show organisers for the 2009 season and hope to provide further information early next year.

MOLITOR CANADIAN CANOE

The Family Adventure Store have taken delivery of the Molitor Canadian canoe which was hand crafted at Old Town's works in Maine, USA. It is the only such canoe currently available in the UK and is constructed of hand formed planks and internal ribs secured by thousands of minute brass pins, all protected by a clear, hard external resin finish.

Says partner Terry Sinclair "This craft makes a great centre piece in the show room and we would encourage anyone with an interest to come and take a look. While it is for sale at around £4,700 we would be a little sad to see it go and we may well request visiting rights! They are going to the Old Town canoe works in Maine to research exactly how these beautiful craft are made, and hope that gain a greater understanding of the people, history and culture relating to Canadian canoe manufacture.

While such a bespoke open canoe as the Molitor may be out of reach for many of us, there are many modern options with a pedigree which can be directly traced back to such traditional origins such as the Old Town Charles River, based on one of their designs from about a hundred years ago but with the durability and cost benefit of modern polymer technology, or the classic Prospector design which is manufactured by amongst others We-No-Nah.

www.familyadventurestore.co.uk

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- BCU members can receive 10% discount at this retailer

Keeping Tom afloat



Teenage racing canoeist Tom Hide (17) has been named London Regional Winner of the 2007 OCS Young Sports Person Awards. Last year Tom represented GB at U16 and U18 and was selected for the BCU World Class Programme at the end of the season. He started this season with a win in his first national trials 1,000 metre singles race, and a second place at 500 metres, and is pushing hard for a place at the Junior World Sprint Championships.

The OCS Young Sports Person Awards celebrate sporting achievement and support young athletes across the UK. Apart from Tom, there will be eight other regional winners, and a disabled winner, each of whom will take home a cheque for £2,500, and a 'Young Star', who wins a £500 award.

On the day OCS will announce one overall winner, who will receive a further £10,000-worth of support over three years – with £2,500 of that going to their club or school.

The OCS Award is, quite literally, going to help keep Tom afloat: "I was really happy when I heard I'd won, because it should make a big difference. I can now get a new boat – a one-person kayak. I've grown out of my boat this year – this is the last year that I could stay at the size that I'm at." And Tom's ambitions? "Next year, I hope to medal at the Junior Europeans. The following year, hopefully I'll be joining the senior programme, and be part of the England sprint racing team."

To build up his strength, endurance and fitness, Tom trains in the swimming pool, on the running track and in the gym, and training on the water at either end of the day – up to ten sessions per week. OCS chief executive Chris Cracknell explains, "OCS, although a large international company, is still a family firm, and we pride ourselves on a decade of searching out talented young athletes who could really benefit from a boost in the early stages of their career. Tom is following the development pathway of a world class athlete. We hope this Award will help him on his way to the Olympic podium."

Broxbourne – canoe slalom Olympic site

The Olympic Delivery Authority announced that, due to the risks of contamination issues at the planned Spitalbrook site in Broxbourne, Hertfordshire, an alternative site nearby, also in Broxbourne, is being considered as the potential replacement venue for the canoe slalom events. Given the suitability of the site and its similarity to Spitalbrook, the current outline venue designs could largely be transferred and accommodated to the new site.

David Higgins, Chief Executive of the ODA, said: "Although the Spitalbrook site investigations are still continuing, the initial results indicate that the cost of cleaning up the land for this venue would be prohibitive given budget and time restrictions.

We will continue to look at the Spitalbrook site but it is prudent to develop robust contingency plans at this stage. Venue designs continue to be developed so that a planning application can be submitted once the site discussions are completed. We are on track to complete the venue for test events in 2011."

The investigations are likely to continue until the end of 2007, for more information visit www.london2012.com.

Conger fishing with Ocean Kayak

A flotilla of colourful kayaks lined the shore at Mudeford Spit, Dorset for the latest kayak fishing demonstration day supported by Johnson Outdoors UK. Following the day there was also going to be some serious kayak fishing because Richi Oliver of Extreme Kayak Fishing had organised a week long conger hunt. "People are coming from all over the country to take

part," said Richi. "The event was promoted by the web site 'Anglers Afloat' and has proved so popular that next year we'll have to book double the accommodation!"

For the demonstration day, which was also supported by Crazywater, a wide range of the latest Ocean Kayak models were on display. Fully rigged fishing kayaks were on show and there was plenty of advice for anyone who wanted to get started in the sport. "This sort of event allows us to bring the sport to the general public and it's been unbelievably successful," added Richi. "There's been lots of interest from people watching, plus the opportunity for anybody to take up a paddle and have a go."

The idea for the conger hunt came to Richi following the success he had catching them in the area last year. Other kayak fishermen were keen to have a go and he saw it as a great way to promote a sport he's passionate about. "The appeal of kayak fishing

to me is the tranquillity and freedom it gives you," said Richi. "You can usually launch your boat free of charge and car-top it without the need for trailers. It can be a one-man operation – or you can go out fishing with a load of buddies." During this hunt the congers will be released back into the sea after being caught.

The Prowler 13, the Capar, the Drifter, the Yak Sport, the Malibu Two and the Scupper Pro were just some of the Ocean Kayak sit-on-tops available. One new fishing kayak in particular was attracting a lot of attention - the new and very fast Prowler Trident™ 15. It has a roomy cockpit, excellent stowage facilities and is packed with features including the first ever Sonar Shield™. This provides storage for a fishfinder in an enclosed pod and the cover then acts as shield to protect the fishfinder when it is operational.

www.johnsonoutdoors.co.uk





British Airways ban on sporting equipment

The BCU joined forces with the BSA (British Surfing Association) and the RYA (Royal Yachting Association), on Tuesday 6th November, to present a petition to David Davies, MP for Monmouth, urging British Airways to overturn its decision to ban a selection of sporting equipment from its flights, including canoes, windsurfs and surf boards.

Paul Owen, Chief Executive of the BCU comments, "The decision by BA will restrict much of our canoeing activities and our ability to use waters abroad as preparation for international events. It will limit the opportunities for canoeists to go abroad for charitable and recreational purposes. Canoeing is a fantastic sport with huge benefits and is enjoyed by so many, which is why it continues to be such a popular and rapidly growing sport and the announcement by BA will hamper its activities. We have our own petition on the BCU web site and we have requested a meeting with the CEO of British Airways."

An "Early Day Motion" (EDM) has now been raised in Parliament to gain support for the petition amongst MPs and the BCU, RYA and BSA are urging everyone involved in these sports to contact their local MP and get them to register their support for the motion.

If you wish to contact your local MP and ask them to support the motion you can find their contact details by visiting www.theyworkforyou.com. The EDM number is 136 and details can be found by visiting <http://edmi.parliament.uk/edmi/>. If you wish to sign the BCU petition visit the BCU homepage www.bcu.org.uk

Eddystone Challenge revisited

This challenge for offshore rowers was opened up to kayaks a number of years ago. The race is simple, out round the light and back again to Plymouth – 24 nautical miles (28 statute miles). To finish within the seven hour time limit is an achievement.

It was on this reef a little over 300 years ago that the first ever offshore lighthouse was built, to be washed away with builder and crew in the great storm of 1703. The next, a wooden structure, burned down in 1755, killing the keeper. Then came Smeaton's Tower, the first modern lighthouse (1759). That was taken down in the early 19th century (and re-built on Plymouth Hoe) because the rocks beneath showed signs of cracking.

When I first saw the current lighthouse (built in 1822) it had an air of tatty desolation – adorned at the top with torn netting, its granite masonry stained with age. Each of these building blocks is dovetailed into its partners four ways, to produce an immensely strong and resilient structure, locked in three dimensions. I have wondered when much of everything else is gone, these lonely towers might still be standing, a testament to a maritime nation.

I completed the challenge in a home built Greenland kayak replica, in 5 hours 51 minutes, an average of 4.1 knots. I was buddied up (as the safety rules insist) with the long suffering Ray Helmer, who was in a

much faster boat, and could have won the kayak event if he hadn't had to wait for me.

The event is held inside the breakwater if the wind is above Force 4, or the organisers are not satisfied with the sea state. All boats need to carry the kind of kit usually stowed by sea kayakers, and in addition a VHF radio. Support is arranged through a network of six safety boats, in two-mile zones between Plymouth breakwater and the Eddystone light, all connected by VHF radio, and backed up by two RIBs. Kayak paddlers not in doubles need to travel in pairs or larger groups.

There is a time limit and you will be turned back by the organisers before reaching the light, if it's clear you won't get there in three hours or thereabouts, and there is an overall seven hour limit on the race.

There's no doubt that fast sea racing kayaks can compete on equal terms with off-shore rowing boats. This year the race was won in 3hrs 57 minutes by Breton rowers in a modern four man craft. Couldn't that be bettered by a kayak – six knots or more over 28 statute miles? There are details of the challenge and an entry form on the Mayflower Offshore Rowing Club web site:

www.mayfloweroffshorerowingclub.co.uk; hope to see you there in 2008.

CHRIS PEASE



COTSWOLD
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Cotswold Outdoor – 20% discount dates announced for 2008

Following the success of the 20% discount periods for members, we will be continuing this popular offer in 2008. Here are the dates to put in your diary. During these periods you can receive 20% off Cotswold Outdoor products*

- 6-9th March 2008
- 15-18th May 2008
- 7-10th August 2008
- 6-9th November 2008

To take advantage of the discounts quote code C2114 and present your membership card when purchasing.

At all other times, members receive a 15% discount on Cotswold Outdoor products.

For more information on Cotswold visit www.cotswoldoutdoor.com

25th anniversary of the first Cardington slalom

1ST AND 2ND SEPTEMBER

It was in 1972 the concept of providing an artificial canoe slalom course as an adaptation of a land drainage structure was put forward by the local Bedford canoeists. Locations at Bromham and Kempston (both upstream of Cardington) were considered, but problems of access prevented the development proceeding. Subsequently the Cardington Lock area, some 2.5 km downstream of Bedford, was proposed as a suitable alternative since it was necessary to build a sluice to replace an existing damaged structure and to increase the sluice capacity at Cardington.

Anglian Water was joined by the Sports Council (Eastern Region) and other relevant agencies in discussions on the project, but it was not until the end of 1978 that progress became possible. In conjunction with the BCU's

advisors on artificial courses, Anglian Water's Great Ouse Division Engineers drew up a design for the course and work commenced early in 1981 and completed during July 1982.

In celebration of the 25th anniversary of the first Cardington slalom, Mike Carter and members and friends of Viking KC ran a ranking Division 3 and 4 event, followed by an open Grand Prix on Saturday and a ranking Division 2 and 3 event on the Sunday. Paddlers enjoyed the fine weather and competition, for details of the results go to www.canoeslalom.co.uk.

Following the Saturday event, the prizes were presented by Mr. Ken Trollope, the Secretary of the BCU Slalom Committee, and following the Sunday event, The Mayor of Bedford, Mr. Frank Branston presented the event prizes and made a special presentation to Mr. Mike Carter in celebration of

running his 50th slalom events in the UK as the named organiser.

It was good to see so many faces from the past on both days. Let's hope the next 25 years see more developments and improvements so that Cardington continues to thrive. www.vikingkayak.co.uk

MIKE ELKINS
SECRETARY, VIKING KC

The photo shows the Mayor of Bedford and Peter Parker VKC (member and first in officials event) with Mike Carter VKC (organiser) in background



Morgan Stanley Awards

Tim Brabants, has been nominated as a Morgan Stanley Great Briton of 2007 in the Sports category. Morgan Stanley Great Britons is an annual awards programme that recognises and celebrates outstanding British achievement over the past year. To vote for Tim visit www.greatbritons.org

Calum Johnston Scholarship Fund

The Calum Johnston Scholarship Fund has a grant to a promising young athlete in Canoeing. Bethan Latham, 14, has been recommended for the award by the BCU to assist in her dream of being an elite athlete and in recognition of her achievements over the past year.

In November 2005 14-year-old Calum Johnston died suddenly after a short illness. Calum was a fantastic and energetic teenager who loved life and sport. He was a good rugby player and a popular member of Moortown RUFC where he captained his team. Calum's family have since created the sponsorship fund to help other promising young athlete's in his memory.

The NGB's of each of Calum's favourite sports, athletics, canoeing and rugby, were asked to nominate 14 year-old candidates for consideration of the award. On an annual basis (until 2012) with the involvement of Calum's mother, father, brother and sister, one or more talented 14-year-old sports people will be identified and provided with support to help achieve their potential. Last year's recipient was Amoret King.

This year's recipient Bethan, from Keighley, West Yorkshire has entered the Canoe Slalom scene in an impressive way. Following her recent performances, including making the Premier Division at the age of just 13, she has been highlighted by the BCU as a key athlete to watch at junior level over the coming years.

The Calum Johnston Scholarship Fund is administered by the Youth Sport Trust. The Fund has so far raised over £14,000. More information please contact Eugene Johnston at johnsfam4@ntlworld.com

Olympic sprint racing athlete **Ian Wynne** has set a remarkable new **World Record*** crossing the English channel in a sea kayak. **Ian (29) smashed the previously held record of 3 hours 21 minutes 54 seconds (held by Ian Tordoff GB) and stormed into Calais in a new record of 2 hours 59 minutes and 6 seconds.**

This was Wynne's first attempt at breaking the channel crossing record, since recently retiring from the Olympic sport of sprint racing in the K1. Not only did he beat the previous record but he beat it by a truly impressive 22 minutes - an outstanding effort!

The initial race day (from Dover) was aborted in favour of racing on Friday 5th October when the tide times were better. The English channel is one of busiest shipping channels in the world and due to the heavily regulated shipping lanes an experienced support boat negotiated obstacles including enormous liners and also helped to navigate the route.

Ian Wynne commented, *"It was very different from short distance of sprint racing that I have been used to, but I enjoyed the challenge."*

The crossing was completed to help promote health and well being and to also demonstrate what is possible when people live a healthy and active life style. Ian is currently trying to promote himself as a performance coach and enable others to achieve their dreams and goals.

Ian Wynne, from Kent, thrives on challenges. He won an Olympic bronze medal in the Men's K1 500m kayak race, despite experiencing a freak ankle injury the night before the final race in Athens 2004.



Channel record smashed

Olympic medallist Ian Wynne sets new world record crossing the channel in a kayak – smashing the previous record by over 20 minutes!



So what is the next big challenge on the agenda for Ian Wynne? Well Ian says he is unsure, but also says that he would certainly welcome suggestions! Email chloe.nelson-lawrie@bcu.org.uk

The crossing was supported by

www.hopespinalwellness.co.uk

The boat used was a Surfski which is designed for open ocean racing and commonly used throughout the southern hemisphere where sea races are very common and well supported, something Ian would love to help develop and promote here in this country.

As yet the attempt is not verified by Guinness World Records as the team has to submit the independent witness reports and photos for verification. However there is no reason to suspect otherwise, as a registered cross channel swimming association pilot boat was used and their regulations were strictly followed.

Blackwater canoe trail launched



For those searching for peace and tranquillity in the Northern Irish countryside the Blackwater canoe trail will certainly deliver. This 20km trail was officially launched in November.

The River Blackwater is an ideal venue providing a trail of 20km for Canoeing enthusiasts of any ability. The river lazily meanders

through the beautiful countryside of counties Armagh and Tyrone, flowing gently into Lough Neagh, from where the options are endless. There are two official campsites on the route, one of which; Coney Island is steeped in history with its motte and ancient round tower.

This initiative follows on from the successful Lough Erne Canoe Trail launched in May 2005. Both trails have been developed by the Countryside Access and Activities Network (CAAN) and the Canoe Association for Northern Ireland (CANI).

www.canoeni.com will be launched in conjunction with the trail. The new web site will provide an interactive source of information for tourists, enthusiasts and novices who wish to find out more about canoeing in Northern Ireland.

The venue for the launch was The Argory, a beautifully kept National Trust property in a truly fine setting overlooking the River Blackwater. It is one of the nine designated access points which are clearly marked on the innovative waterproof trail guide which is an essential tool for paddling the trail.

The Trail certainly continues an exciting era for Canoeing in Northern Ireland and will be enjoyed by the local community and tourists.

The Canoe Trail evolution will continue into 2008 with upcoming launches of Lower Bann, Lough Neagh and Strangford Lough Canoe Trails.

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TOTNES KAYAKS ACADEMY

Have you progressed through your club this year and been left wanting more? Then Totnes Kayaks may have the answer! Their new academy is offering you the chance to advance your paddling on a number of one day sessions including introduction, moving or advanced white water, flat, moving or sea safety and rescue and rolling/playboating.

Owner Tom Morris explained that since the start of Totnes Kayaks two years ago he has seen a lot of paddlers enjoying club paddling during the summer months but who then want to advance their personal skills in safety and rescue, rolling or white water in the winter when clubs cannot offer as much. By starting the academy using Level 5 inland coach Lee Pooley Tom says he can now offer this opportunity using the fabulous rivers and coasts around the South West.

Rolling/playboating courses start at £20, whilst the one day safety and rescue and white water courses start at £40. Numbers are kept at four to six per course. To get involved and progress your paddling this winter give Tom a call on **01803 864300** or email mail@totneskayaks.co.uk

EVENTS

London and SE Annual Consultative Meeting Saturday 26th January

Wey Kayak Club, Surrey, 0930 for 1000am.

Essential for all: 'A Time to Listen' sponsored by the region. Lunch provided in the afternoon, ACM followed by a presentation and discussion on the proposed changes to the structure and organisation of the BCU and finishing around 1500. We hope to see as many members as possible there.

Paul Newman, Hon Sec

paulnewmanpaddlesport@blueyonder.co.uk

'Dudh Kosi – Relentless River of Everest'

A presentation by Dave Manby
Keswick, Jan 14th. Staveley, Jan 15th

Dave Manby was a member of the original 1976 Dudh Kosi expedition – the film of which, won some 25 international awards and changed people's perception of 'canoeing'. Dave went on to explore many wild rivers around the world, developed white water rafting in Turkey, and explored the spectacular rivers of the Zagros mountains in Iran. Dave talks a little about the Dudh Kosi trip and some of his adventures since.

Keswick talk is at the Labour Club Hall. Bar open 7.30.p.m, talk at 8.00pm. Admission on the door £5.00, students £2.50. No advance tickets.

Information 017687 73686. Staveley talks are on Tuesday evenings at the Hawkeshead Brewery Hall, Staveley. Talk at 8.00pm. Bar open before and after. Adjoining Wilf's Café will be open for meals beforehand. Tickets £5.00, students £2.50.
Information 017684 80084

All Profits go to Cumbria Canoeists funds that support access and conservation work on local rivers and training of voluntary coaches.

www.cumbriacanoists.org.uk

www.davemanby.com

Obituaries

John Liddell



John was originally from Solihull, Birmingham and started kayaking at school at Ellesmere College in Shropshire. It was at Ellesmere that I met John. He was one of the founding members of 'Warwick Kayak Club', a

loose break-away from Birmingham CC which Mike Jones, Rob Hastings, Richard Knight and a few others formed in the very early 1970s. Mike and John were both on the first British trip to the Grand Canyon and pioneering trips to the Austrian Alps with Mick Hopkinson, Allan Hall and a few others running the Leizer, Oetz, Inn, Sanna, and other rivers in the Alps. John made one of the very early repeat runs of the infamous 'Inn Shoot' above Landeck first run by Mick Hopkinson in 1971.

These forays to foreign rivers led to the 1976 Everest Expedition where John was a core member of the team with Mike Jones, Mick Hopkinson and Rob Hastings. (Roger Huyton and I were late additions) that was filmed by Leo Dickinson and Mike Reynolds for HTV and shown on prime time on Boxing Day 1976. The team was re-united in 1978 for our attempt on the Braldu River that comes off K2 the world's second highest mountain. (It was on this trip that Mike Jones drowned).

The last time I went paddling with John (apart from a brief spin down the Dee at the 25 year on reunion in Llangollen in 2001) was in 1981 when he joined Pete Knowles organised trip to British Columbia. This provided a marvellous 'bookmark' to end John's paddling career; on the last day on the last river we ran – the Thompson River – John went to see what happened on the "other side of the island"; he re-merged at the end of the island swimming with his kayak in two pieces and a huge grin on his face!

The huge grin was because John had discovered sailing and ocean racing became his new passion and there was no time for little boats anymore! This new love led to Ocean Racing and culminated in flying to Australia with a couple of friends, chartering a yacht and competing in the Sydney to Hobart race last year.

John, however, married Susie whom he had met when she was working at Dudley Road Hospital when Mike Jones was doing his houseman year. He died on September 29th and leaves Susie and two children.

DAVE MANBY

Christopher Allan Brooke



It is with deep regret that I inform members of the death of Chris Brooke 56, after a long battle with cancer. He passed away on Friday 2nd November at home with his family around him.

Husband to Barbara Brooke, father of Michael and Gareth Brooke and a proud grandfather to Oliver.

Whilst trying to write this I realised what enormous effect Chris has had on so many people's lives; friends soon led to more networks of friends, all saying what a inspirational man Chris was. This was never clearer than after his first amputation back 1999. He was amazingly quick to get back in a boat and back on the water coaching and leading.

Being initially trained as a mechanical engineer he was able to put these skills to use designing and building weird and wonderful solutions to 'problems' to help lead a normal life.

Chris 'retired' in 2004 after more surgery however Chris being Chris seemed more busy than ever. His retirement meant he had more time for coaching and getting involved with many paddle sport projects, including developing the Castleton Water Activity Centre in Rochdale, plus becoming technical advisor for other centre's and youth projects. Again his contribution to these was enormous and he will be sorely missed.

Over the years I saw Chris grow and develop both as a coach and skilled paddler. I've watched him work with groups and no matter how wet and cold no matter how much his leg was giving jip, he never complained. He was an excellent role model for trainee coaches.

Chris Brooke a role model, an inspiration a true friend. Thank you. Or as Chris would probably say with a big grin a thumbs stuck up "Christmas...."

TERRY HAILWOOD

SINGLE PADDLER KICK-STARTS HIS LOVE LIFE!

An acquaintance of mine was totally obsessed with paddling (I will call him Bill to preserve his privacy). Bill and his mates headed out with their kayaks at every possible opportunity. Over the years, his circle of friends was always very male orientated and the occasional girlfriend never seemed particularly interested in the sport and relationships were always short-lived. As his kayaking friends paired off, married, had kids, Bill was always hopeful that he would meet a girl

as keen as himself on kayaking. Of course that never happened.

Still single, unattached and now into sea kayaking, Bill had reached his 30s. It was then he discovered DateActive, an online community for singles who are interested in active pursuits. So he signed up and started to chat to a few people. To cut the story short, after meeting with several people from the site he and his new girlfriend are enjoying kayak outings together.

He still uses the site from time to time, not for dating, but just to find different and equally as enthusiastic paddlers. Posting his profile and photos on DateActive cost him nothing, and when he started to chat to others, for less than the price of a romantic meal for two, he had unlimited use of the site for a month! DateActive are currently offering a free month membership to readers of Canoe Focus magazine. After you have created your profile, simply contact DateActive quoting the reference 'Canoe Focus offer' requesting that your free membership is activated.

DECEMBER DEALS

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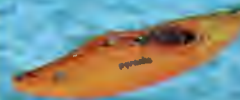


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John Anderson

Interview with John Anderson - GB Canoeing Performance Director



John Anderson took time out of his busy schedule to talk to us about his job, what the highlights this year have been and about Beijing.

AS PERFORMANCE DIRECTOR, WHAT DOES YOUR ROLE INVOLVE?

I am ultimately accountable for all aspects of the BCU World Class Olympic Programmes (WCOP). I look after the staff, the recruitment of new coaches, the support staff and also help to get the best out of people. I have responsibility as the budget holder, allocating lottery funding across the programmes. I have daily contact with UK Sport and the BOA as the main agencies that support our programme. The main focus of my role is to support athletes on the programme to reach their full potential and to be successful in their canoeing careers.

WHAT IS A TYPICAL DAY LIKE?

No two days are the same, at the moment we are running the slalom podium reviews.

The months of September through to December are spent reviewing and planning for the next season and it is also a time to focus on the winter training programme. The spring and summer months from April to September are the main competition period and the focus is very much on the international calendar. This week I have been attending a UK Sport Coaching conference, next week we have overseas training camps, so each week is very different.

WHAT IS THE BEST PART OF YOUR JOB?

A good aspect of the job is the variety and working with talented people. However the best part by far is seeing athletes that you have been working with over a long time, succeed. It is a very rewarding feeling.

WHAT ARE THE WORST PARTS OF YOUR JOB?

There are not that many parts of the job that I don't enjoy. The least enjoyable part is spending time in long meetings that do not focus on the athletes.

WHAT HAVE THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS YEAR BEEN?

Tim Brabants achieving world champion status, it is the first world champion Great Britain has had in flatwater racing for 20 years, so that was a really incredible moment.

There were also fantastic results in slalom. Between slalom and flatwater we won gold, silver and bronze medals at the Senior World Championships in 2007.

The under-23s and juniors have also had one of their best seasons ever, with some great performances, which bodes well for the future.

HOW ARE THE PERFORMANCE TEAMS PREPARING FOR BEIJING?

We currently have a World Class Programme in place, so only minor changes will be made to ensure our preparation is absolutely right. The annual reviews at the end of October and beginning of November are a time when small adjustments are made – narrowing the focus to Beijing 2008. The coaching staff and the support staff working with the athletes in both Olympic disciplines are totally focused on supporting our athletes to improve their performances. We have highly motivated and talented coaches working for the BCU and their motto is "leave no stone unturned" as they search for the extra one per cent improvement that we need. I feel very fortunate to work with such a dedicated group of people.

I UNDERSTAND YOU HAVE BEEN TO THE BEIJING SLALOM COURSE, HOW DOES IT COMPARE TO OTHER COURSES?

Each course is very different, for example Atlanta, Athens and Sydney all had very distinct courses and so has Beijing. It is technically difficult, but we are very pleased with it. Fortunately the Beijing course is similar to the course in the Netherlands and as the Beijing course is closed from now until April 2008, our athletes will be maximising their training time on the course in the Netherlands.

IS THERE A LOT OF COMPETITION FOR PLACES IN THE OLYMPICS?

For the first time ever, only one boat in each of the four classes in slalom can qualify a place in the Olympic Games. It is tough for the athletes because in this year's world championships, five GB athletes achieved top ten positions and in any other sport athletes with this level of ability would also get to compete in the Olympic Games, but in canoeing the spaces are limited. The same overall numbers of athletes remain in the canoeing competitions at the Olympic Games but the IOC (International Olympic Committee) wants more nations to take part and they have restricted the number of boats that nations can qualify. Flatwater racing is just as tough and the IOC has introduced a quota system to ensure worldwide continental representation. In Europe, which is the dominant continent in world canoeing, this makes it increasingly difficult to qualify.



Photos from the Beijing slalom course



WHEN IS QUALIFICATION FOR THE OLYMPICS?

Global qualification (not athlete selection) took place at this year's Flat Water Racing World Championships in Duisburg and at the Slalom World Championships in Brazil. This was the first round of qualification where approximately 70 per cent of places were allocated.

The second round of qualifications, known as continental qualification (for us this means Europe) will take place during the second weekend of May 2008 for slalom in Krakow, Poland and the weekend after in Milan for flatwater.

WITH SO MUCH TRAVEL INVOLVED FOR ATHLETES AND TEAMS, IT MUST BE A QUITE SOMETHING TO ORGANISE THE LOGISTICS?

Yes, logistically it is a massive job. This year there were over 180 'events' (this includes training camps and international competitions) spread over the senior, under 23 and junior teams for slalom and flatwater racing. So for each of the 180 events all arrangements have to be made for the athletes and the coaches. Fortunately, we have excellent office and admin support and the team managers John Macleod (slalom) and Alan Williams (flatwater racing) work very hard behind the scenes to make it work successfully.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD?

Yes, although our Podium Programme is focused on Beijing, the World Class Programmes also have two academies that support young athletes who have a focus on the London Olympic Games. The London Olympic Games will present our sport with a wonderful opportunity that will help shape our sport for several decades after 2012. We must do everything that we can to ensure that we (the BCU) maximise all the opportunities that will arise when the UK will become the centre of world sport.

FINALLY, CAN YOU GIVE US ONE INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOURSELF?

In January 2008 I will have been working as PD with the BCU for ten years and have been a member of the BCU since 1974! (time has really flown by quickly) My two son's are active in canoesport with Grant a member of the GB downriver racing team and Robbie playing canoe polo: I enjoy spending any spare time that I have supporting them in their canoeing activities.

CHLOE NELSON-LAWRIE



**Tim Brabants
nominated for Great
Briton of the year -
Please vote!**

Tim Brabants, has been nominated as a Morgan Stanley Great Briton of 2007 in the sports category. Morgan Stanley Great Britons is an annual awards programme that recognises and celebrates outstanding British achievement over the past year.

Tim Brabants is a flatwater canoeist and trained medic by profession. Having won bronze at the Sydney Olympics he suffered disappointment in Athens. After taking 2005 off, he came back in fighting form in 2006, winning a gold at the European Championships in the K1 1000m and a silver at the World Championships in the same event. This year he narrowly missed out on an historic double at the World Championships in Duisburg. Having won the 1000m on Saturday he was pipped to the gold in the 500m by Canada's Adam Koeberden, but remains determined to go one better at next year's Olympic Games in Beijing.

Career highlights

2007 Gold Pre-Olympics

(Beijing) K1 500m

2007 Gold Pre-Olympics

(Beijing) K1 1000m

2007 Gold World Championships

(Duisburg) K1 1000m

2007 2nd World Championships

(Duisburg) K1 500m

2007 Gold European Champion

(Pontevedra) K1 500m

2007 2nd European Championships

(Pontevedra) K1 1000m

2007 3rd World Cup 3

(Gerardmer) K1 500m

2007 3rd World Cup 2

(Szeged) K1 1000m

2007 3rd World Cup 1

(Zagreb) K1 1000m

2006 Silver World Championships

(Szeged) K1 1000m

2006 Gold European Championships

(Racice) K1 1000m

2006 7th World Cup

Duisburg K2 1000m

The winner will be announced at an awards dinner in January 2008.

To VOTE visit the website:

www.greatbritons.org/awards/nominals/

For more information on Tim Brabants visit his website:

www.timbrabants.com



David Florence (C1)

WOMEN'S FOCUS

medal winners from 2007

HIGHLIGHT ON AN OUTSTANDING YEAR FOR FEMALE CANOEISTS

This has been an outstanding year for competition medals. Of the total 103 medals that have been achieved, over 45% were won by women. This compares to 2006 where in total 34% of medals were won by women. Specifically in the World and European Championships this year, over 40% of medals were won by women.

In this feature we highlight the female World and European Champions and all of the female medals winners from international competition this year.



We also take the opportunity to chat to two young talented paddlers to find out more about what it takes to be a medal winner – Sandra Hyslop (Wild Water Racing Junior World Champion) and Amoret King (junior sprint racing medallist) took time out of their busy training schedules to speak to us.



ANNA HEMMINGS

World Champion
Marathon

Age: 30-years-old
Hometown: London
Club: Elmbridge Canoe Club
Occupation: Full time professional canoeist and motivational speaker

Medal/s won 2007: World Championships – gold medal, Women's K1



SANDRA HYSLOP

Junior World Champion
Wild Water Racing

Age: 17-years-old
Hometown: Hexham, Northumberland
Occupation: Student
Medal/s won 2007: Gold in the World Championships in the Women's K1 Classic event

JESSICA WALKER

Junior European Champion
Sprint Racing

Age: 17-years-old
Hometown: Hampton, Middlesex
Medal/s won 2007: Gold in Junior European Championships in the Junior Women's K1500m event

Silver medal in U23 and Junior European Championships in the Junior Women's K2 1,000m event

Two silver medals in Junior International, Piestany, Slovakia, in the Women's K1 1000m event and the 3000m event

Two silver medals in Junior International, Piestany, Slovakia, in Women's K2 500m and Women's K2 1,000m

Bronze medal in U23 and Junior International, Bochum, Germany in the Junior Women's K2 1000m event

JUNIOR TEAM CHAMPS

World Champions
Wild Water Racing

Gold medal win for:
Hannah Brown,
Olivia Churchill and
Sandra Hyslop
In the Women's K1 Team Classic event

OTHER WOMEN MEDAL WINNERS FROM 2007

SLALOM

Lizzie Neave

Club: Stafford and Stone
Medal/s won in 2007:
World Championships – Bronze medal, Women's K1 team
European Championships – Bronze medal, Women's K1 team
Pan American Championships – Gold medal, Women's K1 team

Fiona Pennie

Club: C.R. Cats
Medal/s won in 2007:
World Championships – Bronze medal, Women's K1 team
European Championships – Bronze medal, Women's K1 team
Pan American Championships – Gold medal, Women's K1 team
World Cup 1 – Bronze medal, Women's K1
One interesting fact: Mother was an international flatwater sprint paddler.

Laura Blakeman

Club: Stafford and Stone
Medal/s won in 2007:
World Championships – Bronze medal, Women's K1 team
European Championships – Bronze medal, Women's K1 team
Pan American Championships – Gold medal, Women's K1 team
One interesting fact: I built a house to live in, in the garden of my previous house.

Hannah Burgess

Club: Kingston Kayak Club
Medal/s won in 2007:
U23 and Junior European Championships – Silver medal, Junior Women's K1 team
One interesting fact: I had flying lessons for a birthday present one year.

Alice Spencer

Club: Salisbury
Medal/s won in 2007:
U23 and Junior European Championships - Silver medal, Junior Women's K1 team
One interesting fact: My favourite food is lasagne.

SPRINT RACING

Abigail Coulson

Club: Reading
Medal/s won in 2007:
World Cup 1 - Silver medal, Women's K2 – 500m
One interesting fact: My K1 500m personal best time is 1min 51.9 (July 06).

Lucy Wainwright

Club: Nottingham
Medal/s won in 2007:
World Cup 1 - Silver medal, Women's K2 - 500m
One interesting fact: I competed in my first international regatta for Fladbury CC as an U12 in Belgium.

Rachel Cawthorn

Club: Wey KC
Medal/s won in 2007:
Youth Olympic Festival - Silver medal, Women's K1 – 500m
Youth Olympic Festival – Silver medal, Women's K1 – 1000m
Youth Olympic Festival – Silver medal, Women's K2 – 500m
One interesting fact: I started canoeing in 2004 at Wey KC with Mark Hoile on a Talent Identification Programme.

Louisa Sawers

Club: Elmbridge
Medal/s won in 2007:
Youth Olympic Festival – Silver medal, Women's K2 – 500m

Claire Spencer

Medal/s won in 2007:
Junior International – Bronze medal, Women's K1 – 1,000m

Hayleigh Mason

Club: Nottingham Kayak Club
Medal/s won in 2007:
U23 and Junior International – Silver medal, Women's K1 – 500m
U23 and Junior International – Bronze medal, Women's K1 – 1,000m

MARATHON

Sharon Colley

Club: Hereford KC
Medal/s won in 2007:
Masters World Cup – Gold medal, Women's K2 – 35/39
Masters World Cup – Silver medal, Women's K1 – 35/39
One interesting fact: In 2002 represented Wales in Commonwealth rowing team, winning silver in lightweight quad sculls.

Susan Gray

Medal/s won in 2007:
Masters World Cup - Gold medal, Women's K2 – 35/39
Masters World Cup – Silver medal, Women's K1 – 40/44

Sue Hawthorn

Club: Worcester Canoe Club
Medal/s won in 2007:
Masters World Cup - Silver medal, Women's K2 – 40/44
One interesting fact: I also love windsurfing.

Jayne Moran

Club: Worcester Canoe Club
Medal/s won in 2007:
Masters World Cup - Silver medal, Women's K2 – 40/44
One interesting fact: I have identical twin daughters who have competed with the GB kayak team as Juniors.

Wiki Daniels

Club: Reading Canoe Club
Medal/s won in 2007:
Masters World Cup - Silver medal, Women's K1 – 30/34
Masters World Cup – Gold medal, Women's K2 30-35
One interesting fact: I write the software for Hasler races (the HRM) and for the Devizes to Westminster.

Ali Pendle

Club: Norwich Canoe Club
Medal/s won in 2007:
Masters World Cup – Gold medal, Women's K2 30-35
One interesting fact: Restoring an old house in Northern Spain with husband Dyson.

Gail Battison

Club: Reading
Medal/s won in 2007:
Masters World Cup – Bronze medal, Women's K2 – 40/44
One interesting fact: I am one of three generations in our family that drive Morris Minors.

Tamsin Phipps

Club: Reading Canoe Club
Medal/s won in 2007:
Masters World Cup – Bronze medal, Women's K2 – 40/44
One interesting fact: I am an arctophile... a collector of teddy bears.

CANOE POLO

Zoe Anthony

Club: Aberfan Canoe Club
Medal/s won in 2007:
European Championships – Bronze medal, Women's team
One interesting fact: I met my husband whilst 'hill swimming' in the Brecon Beacons.

Ellie Bridgstock

Medal/s won in 2007:
European Championships – Bronze medal, Women's team

Ginny Coyles

Club: Friends of Allonby – Liverpool
Medal/s won in 2007:
European Championships – Bronze medal, Women's team
One interesting fact: My favourite food is Cadbury's Dairy Milk.

Philippa Grayson

Medal/s won in 2007:
European Championships - Bronze medal, Women's team

Kathryn Grieves

Club: Friends Of Allonby Liverpool
Medal/s won in 2007:
European Championships – Bronze medal, Women's team
One interesting fact: I have studied a Masters in exercise and nutrition and am starting my new job in a week!

Sarah Kirwan

Club: Friends of Allonby
Medal/s won in 2007:
European Championships – Bronze medal, Women's team
One interesting fact: A Duck's quack doesn't echo.

Lianne Studley

Club: St. Albans Canoe Polo team
Medal/s won in 2007:
European Championships – Bronze medal, Women's team
one interesting fact: I am an identical twin.

FREESTYLE

Fiona Jarvie

Medal/s won in 2007:
World Championships – Bronze medal, Women's K1
One interesting fact: I am appropriately named the weather witch - wherever I go paddling the water is pretty much always at the wrong level.

Emily Wall

Club: Loughborough Students CC
Medal/s won in 2007:
European Cup 3 – Silver medal, Women's K1
One interesting fact: I auditioned for X Factor once!

Flic Meares

Club: Arun Canoe Club
Medal/s won in 2007:
European Cup Series – Silver medal, Junior Women's K1
European Cup 2 – Silver medal, Junior Women's K1
One interesting fact: I love kayaking!

Claire O' Hara

Medal/s won in 2007:
World Championships – Silver medal, Women's K1 – Squirt

WILD WATER RACING

Jessica Oughton

Club: Soar Valley Canoe Club
Medal/s won in 2007:
European Championships – Bronze medal, Women's K1 – Sprint
One interesting fact: I am currently living and training in Valstagna, Italy.

Olivia Churchill

Club: Royal and Worcester
Medal/s won in 2007:
Junior World Championships – Gold medal, Women's K1 – team
Junior World Championships – Bronze medal, Women's K1 – Classic
Junior World Championships – Bronze medal, Women's K1 – Sprint
One interesting fact: I play the Tuba.

Other medal Winners (Under 18)

Amoret King – flat water racing
Claire Kimberley – Slalom
Hannah Brown – Gold team medal, wild water racing
Prudence Blyth – Bronze team medal, canoe polo

Athlete Focus



Sandra Hyslop

Since starting canoeing at the age of 10 on the River Tyne, Sandra has enjoyed the wide variety offered by paddlesport. Starting off as a general purpose wildwater paddler she progressed to river racing, slalom and freestyle. Now she mainly trains for river

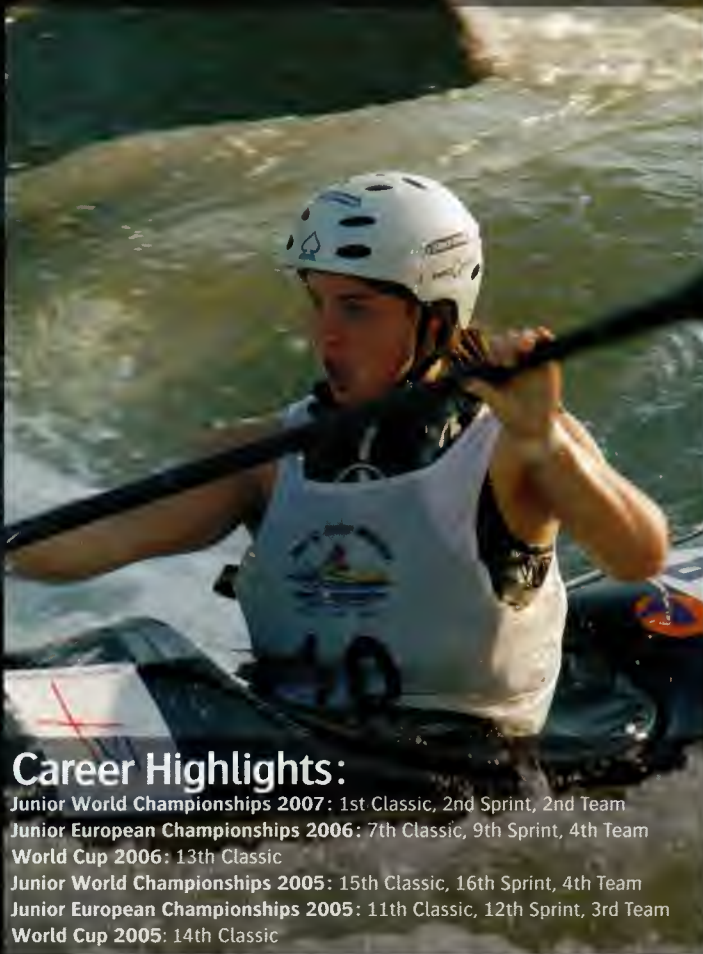
racing but enjoys participating in the other disciplines when she can.

Sandra has been on the GB junior team for river racing since the age of 15 and has made great progress thanks to the help of coaches Michael Mason, Neil Stamps, Alan Tordoff and Nigel Jones. Sandra is a member of the TASS (Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme) and would like to thank Colin Blackburn for his help in administering the award. Sandra would also like to thank Onyx Group and Tyne Valley Insurance for their financial help this year.

Vital Statistics:

Paddles: Una by Speedart. Legend wildwater paddles

Supported by: Onyx Group, Tyne Valley Insurance, my parents!



Career Highlights:

Junior World Championships 2007: 1st Classic, 2nd Sprint, 2nd Team

Junior European Championships 2006: 7th Classic, 9th Sprint, 4th Team

World Cup 2006: 13th Classic

Junior World Championships 2005: 15th Classic, 16th Sprint, 4th Team

Junior European Championships 2005: 11th Classic, 12th Sprint, 3rd Team

World Cup 2005: 14th Classic

More about Sandra...

HOW DID YOU FIRST BECOME INVOLVED IN KAYAKING?

During the original Foot and Mouth outbreak in 2000 when most of the countryside was restricted and we couldn't go walking and caving, my family and I took up canoeing as a way to keep fit whilst enjoying the outdoors.

WERE YOU INSTANTLY DRAWN TO WHITE WATER?

Yes, the thrill of whitewater kayaking always appealed to me much more than flatwater paddling.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT KAYAKING YOU LIKE SO MUCH?

The adrenaline rush you get from big rapids, the peace and tranquillity of the river and the sense of satisfaction you get after a hard training session.

WHEN DID YOU WIN YOUR FIRST RACE?

I think it was the 2003 Perception Wavehopper Challenge race at Prudhoe.

DID YOU JOIN A CANOE CLUB?

Yes. I've been a member of the same club for seven years.

WHAT IS YOUR BEST CANOE TRAINING?

It depends a lot on the time of year and what week, but generally, a river session along with either weights or cross training such as running or cycling.

WHAT TYPE OF DIET DO YOU HAVE TO COMPLETE?

I just eat a balanced diet and avoid too much junk food.

ARE YOU NATURALLY COMPETITIVE?

Very!

WHAT IS THE HIGHLIGHT OF YOUR CAREER SO FAR?

Winning the Junior World Championships Classic race this summer, and following it up with a gold in the team race the next day with team mates Olivia Churchill and Hannah Brown.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE TOUGHEST MOMENTS AND HOW DO YOU KEEP YOURSELF MOTIVATED?

Winter training when it is cold and dark. I stay motivated by thinking of how nice and warm I'll be paddling abroad in the summer, and how it will all be worth it come race day.

WHAT IS IN THE PIPELINE FOR 2008?

The Junior European Championships on the Adda river in Italy, and the Junior Pre-Worlds in Switzerland. Unfortunately I miss the senior competitions due to A level exams.

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR ULTIMATE GOAL TO ACHIEVE IN KAYAKING?

To go and paddle some of the biggest whitewater in the world.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO UP AND COMING WILD WATER PADDLERS?

Just get on and paddle as much whitewater as possible and enjoy every moment of it. If your serious about it, train hard and it will pay off.

WHO IS YOUR SPORTING HERO?

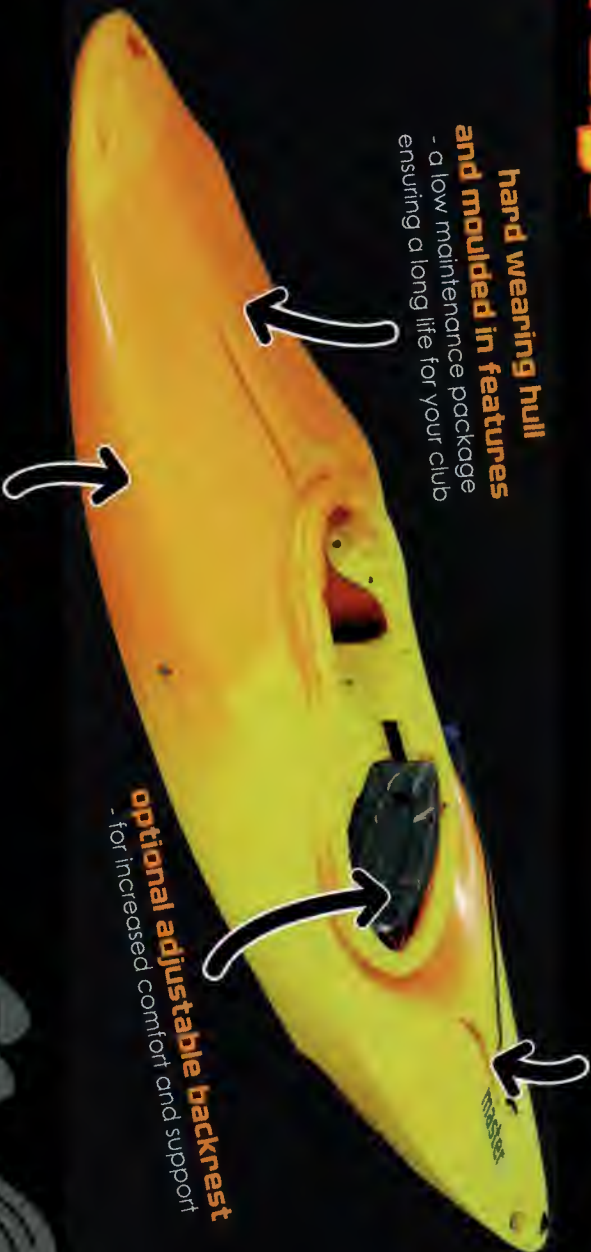
I don't have a specific hero, but I have a great respect for athletes such as Lance Armstrong who overcome huge setbacks to succeed.

Thank you Sandra for taking the time to give this interview.

Photos: Miranda Churchill

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Athlete Focus



Amoret King

Amoret King, one of the top GB junior girls in flatwater racing, competes nationally and internationally as part of the GB junior squad in both sprint (500m, 1000m) and marathon (eight or 12 miles). At the National Sprint Regattas, Amoret races in girls A, and in

marathon she races in Division 4 against men and women of all ages. In 2007 Amoret, still an under-16, achieved medals at World and European Championships in K2 with Jess Walker.

More about Amoret...

HOW DID YOU FIRST BECOME INVOLVED IN CANOEING?

I first became involved in canoeing when I enrolled in a beginners course. The course was taught in plastic closed cockpit boats, but the more streamlined lightning boats soon caught my eye. Once I had been hooked by the need for speed I continued to train more and more regularly at the club, and started to compete at local races. I started off in the lightning races at the local marathons, then I graduated to divisional races spending a lot of valuable learning time in crew boats with club seniors, and finally I started to find myself at the front of races instead of the back.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT THE SPORT THAT YOU LIKE SO MUCH?

Canoeing is great because it's so versatile. There are so many ways to enjoy canoeing that if your enthusiasm should wane for one discipline it's almost certain that you can find something else within the sport that will suit you just as well. I love the different perspectives you get when paddling; exploring outdoors and being close to nature. Aside from that I find that flatwater racing provides a huge range of challenges ranging from technical to physical. I love the rewarding feeling of self improvement which comes after a hard session.

YOU ARE STILL AT SCHOOL AND DOING EXCELLENT RESULTS. HOW DO YOU BALANCE SCHOOL AND TRAINING?

It's a bit of a balancing act to be honest, but not impossible. Training and studying are both time consuming, which can pose problems. The time-management skills and self-discipline provided by attempting to juggle the two, however, are definitely worth having.

WHEN DID YOU WIN YOUR FIRST RACE?

I think I probably first won a race when I was around ten – most likely in Division 7 or 8. I spent quite a long time clawing my way forward from the back. I consoled myself that it made things much more interesting to have to fight for a position rather than, as was the case for some of my clubmates, having an easy win. It's a bit of a cliché but at that time it was really the taking part that was most important. Before long, however, I began to systematically target and and try and overtake the club veterans. I guess that's really how I got my first tastes of success.

WHY FLATWATER RACING?

I went into flatwater racing initially because this is the predominant discipline at my club, but I think I probably would have gravitated towards it had this not been the case. Flatwater racing is for me the most exciting branch of canoeing. It is demanding in terms of speed, endurance, strength (both physical and mental) and technical proficiency. This makes it, to my mind, a very rewarding sport to train for.

WHAT DOES YOUR DAILY ROUTINE BE OTHER THAN CANOEING?

When I am not canoeing I spend my time working for my A-levels, socialising with friends, playing dodgy Damien Rice covers with my guitar and wasting time on the internet.

WHAT IS A TYPICAL TRAINING DAY LIKE?

A typical training day would be likely to involve three sessions. Training varies depending on the time of year and the proximity to racing events. This time of year I am likely to do a paddling session before school. This would usually be around an hour in length, which makes for some cold, dark, early mornings! After school I might do a half hour run, followed by an hour and a half doing weights in the gym. Most of my training is done at my club with the training group led by my coach David Coulson. That said, I try to train with Jess Walker and Anna under the guidance of Miklos Simon.

DO YOU EVER GO OUT PADDLING WITHOUT IT BEING A TRAINING SESSION?

I don't often get a chance to go paddling recreationally (as opposed to as part of a session), but that is ok as this way it remains an enjoyable novelty! My training group recently had a nostalgic 'fun session' splashing about in the closed cockpit boats again, and I sometimes allow my mum to haul me round in an open boat while I relax and sunbathe.

WHAT ARE YOUR BEST RACE ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR?

This season has brought me my best achievements in the sport thus far. In sprint racing I was lucky enough to race at the Junior World Championships in Czech Republic, and at the Junior European Championships in Serbia. I raced in the 500m and 1000m K2 with Claire Spencer and Jessica Walker respectively. In these boats we were placed fourth (1000m) and fifth (500m) in the world. I also managed to win a silver medal with Jessica Walker (who is the current K1 500m European champion) in the 1000m K2 at the Europeans. The following week Jess and I went on to race K2 at the Marathon World Championships in Hungary where we won a bronze medal. Participating in these events was awesome and has inspired me greatly as it gave me an opportunity to see both the talent and dedication evident all over the world in this demanding sport.



WHO IS YOUR GREATEST SUPPORTER?

My greatest supporters (and personal taxi service) are definitely my family, the various members of which can often be seen congregating on the bank shouting words of encouragement in my direction. My school is very supportive in encouraging me and allowing me the flexibility to attend international and training events – though I always have to make sure I catch up with my studies afterwards.

WHAT IS YOUR ULTIMATE GOAL IN THE SPORT?

My ultimate goal has to be to race and be successful in the Olympics at 2012 or beyond. I doubt that you can be a young person in sport today without aspiring to go to the games in London! I may not get there at once. I may not get there at all, but I can't imagine ever stopping trying. After all it's better to strive and fail than not to try and to regret the missed opportunities forever.

WHICH CLUB IS YOUR FAVORITE AND HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN THERE?

I have been based at the same canoe club for the duration of my canoeing career so far. I am very lucky to have high quality coaching available on the spot, and have really benefited from the structure of coaching and support services that operate locally. The club is a great place with a really diverse membership from novice to elite. Training means I never lack for a social life, and I can rely on the support and facilities to help me in my bid for world domination.

Thank you Amoret for taking the time to give this interview.

Photos: Kristin King



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The story behind the Hasler Series



Pulling a loaded klepper across the mud at Pointe aux Oiseaux

OPERATION FRANKTON (THE COCKLESHELL HEROES)



Night paddle: Thorne and Ross
Photo by OCdt Love

The story of Operation Frankton, better known as the Cockleshell Heroes after the 1950s film of the same name, is led by the then Major 'Blondie' Hasler.

Operation Frankton was a kayak raid on German merchant shipping in Bordeaux harbour in December 1942. Of the ten Royal Marines who embarked from the submarine HMS Tuna, with the aim of sinking the shipping, all but two were either drowned or captured and shot. The BCU Hasler finals are named after Blondie Hasler and the winning trophy depicts a military and civilian canoeist standing together.

The re-enactment

In April 2007, 11 Officer Cadets from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, together with a small number of permanent staff and sea kayak instructors, followed the same route taken by Hasler and his party in 1942. Kayaking is a recognised military adventurous training activity that helps to build self-knowledge, an understanding of how people behave under pressured and unfamiliar situations and practice decision-making and team work. The trip

combined the benefits of kayaking with what was effectively a water born battlefield tour.

Little or no sea experience

The vessels used were kleppers, successors to the specifically designed 'cockles' used by Hasler and his team. Kleppers are two-man military kayaks that are remarkably responsive for their size, sea worthy and capable of carrying tremendously heavy loads. In essence nothing more than a rubberised canvas skin stretched over a wooden skeleton, the boats can be packed away and carried in a couple of bags. The officer cadets trained with these boats over the three months before the exercise, including two sea training weekends on the south coast. Most of them had little or no sea experience before embarking on the exercise and two of them no kayaking experience at all. This preparation and the thorough planning they carried out laid the foundation for what was a gruelling but very successful exercise.

The intent was, as faithfully as possible, to follow the same route taken by Hasler. The party used

military equipment and were self-sufficient throughout carrying four days worth of water, rations and all necessary stores. Starting a few miles short of the original coordinates, the kayaks were dropped off in the Bay of Biscay north of Montalivet and paddled up the coast and into the Gironde estuary. This route took the party through one of the tidal races encountered so fatally by Hasler's party but, unlike them, we knew it was there, had more sea worthy boats and did it in daylight! After around five hours paddling the party arrived at the first laying up point (LUP) at Pointe aux Oiseaux on the west bank of the Gironde. Here we had the privilege of meeting Madame Baudrey who, as a young girl, had met Hasler during the raid. Now the local mayor, the Officer Cadets met Mme at the same spot she had met Hasler on that cold December morning in 1942. The occasion brought back a flood of memories for her and she told the story of how her father, surely at the risk of his own safety, had warned Hasler of local German patrols.

Brutal two-hour haul

Catching the tide the next morning required the fully laden and back breaking heavy kleppers to be dragged across 1,500 metres of mud flats to the low water mark. This brutal two-hour haul left everyone exhausted and the paddle that followed was something of a respite in contrast, taking us across to the east bank of the Gironde to the second LUP at Port des Callonges. However, at the start of the crossing we were hampered by dense fog, which reduced visibility to around 100 metres and made navigation a real challenge. The river is approximately 5km across at this point and was the longest ferry glide that many had done.

Following a short stop at Port des Callonges the next stretch of the route was paddled at night. Starting at 0300hrs on the third morning, to everyone's relief the mud flats only extended around 200m over which the boats slipped easily. With little ambient light, navigation was again difficult. In the dark, two of the kayaks collided with one of the navigation buoys and capsized but, despite the difficult conditions, everyone responded extremely well and both kayaks were recovered and bailed out with crews back in and paddling again within five minutes. The wet training we had enjoyed in the cold of December proved its worth.

The party next stayed on the Isle de Cazeau for their third and final LUP. (The original party had a fourth LUP opposite the dock at Bassens.) Luckily, the weather was warm and dry and allowed some much-needed time to dry kit, repair boats and have a good meal. Not the perfect idyll though; the island was something of a swamp and it transpired that we were sharing our billet with a number of voracious mosquitoes, some noisily mating frogs and a community of hale and hearty rats!

Day four saw the final leg of the expedition into Bordeaux harbour where, at slack water, a wreath was laid to those marines and locals who died as a consequence of the raid. On the falling tide the party paddled back north and extracted at Segonzac where, in 1942, Hasler and the few remaining survivors began their over-land extraction to Spain.

After the war Hasler went on to found the Single Handed Transatlantic Yacht Race after a bet with his friend Francis Chichester. The Hasler Trophy was presented by Lloyds Underwriters to commemorate the raid of the so-called "Cockleshell Heroes" and has been competed for since 1957. Major Hasler died in 1987 and Bill Sparks died on 30th November 2002, only ten days short of the 60th anniversary of the raid. In 2003 the Marathon Committee decided to inaugurate a new trophy named in honour of Bill Sparks, which goes to the highest placed veteran in the highest division at the Hasler final.

M S BAILEY
LIEUTENANT COLONEL

Despite the terrible losses, the original raid was regarded as a success. It badly damaged five merchant ships, proving to be something of a boost to British morale in what had otherwise been a disastrous year and made the Germans feel vulnerable in areas previously considered secure.

The trip covered approximately 75 miles and was made possible by the generosity of members of Frankton Souvenir, an Anglo-French organisation that keeps the memory of the raid alive, (www.royalmarinesregimental.co.uk/histcockmain.html) for more information, who provided much advice, friendship and practical support. Thanks must also go to our sponsors, Northrop-Grumman, Selex and Terralogic (www.op-frankton.com) who provided communications and tracking equipment. This was a unique and rewarding experience and one from which everyone, instructors and students alike, learned a great deal.



Hasler finals 2007



James Treadgold and Amoret King
Photo: Kristin King

For this year's race at Pangbourne the formal work of preparing for the event began a full year earlier, in September 2006, with the first meeting of the organising committee. Many people gave generously of their time and ideas, and throughout the year of preparation the club was fully supported by the expertise of the BCU Marathon Racing Committee.

Finally, the weekend of the race dawned and over 60 eager volunteers from the club assembled early to start preparing the chosen site at Beale Park, near Pangbourne. So many jobs to do, but everyone knew what their role was: site preparation, portage preparation, booking in, car marshals, mounting the PA, boat checks, turn and portage marshals, start, pre-start, pre-pre-start (!), and finish, the computer caravan, and the runner (Nathan on his bike). There were also swing bridge operators, as there was a public footpath bridge which blocked the put-on area from the main race area and, last but not least, Kathy Barrow made 550 sandwiches in one day, ably assisted by husband Ian.

As the tents, marquees and portaloos went up, so the competitors started arriving from all corners of the UK, many opting to camp on site the night before. People mixed together readily and, as is the case with so many canoeing events – so many different accents, such a variety of ages and so many families!

Sunday started early, with Janet and Vicky booking in, Gill and Sue running the computer caravan and Jim attempting to sell commemorative race tee-shirts with market-trader style patter through a megaphone. With nearly 500 people to book in and hundreds of boats to check and line up, the logistics were stretched to the limit, but did not snap. The only queue longer than that to the checking in tent was that to the neighbouring burger bar.

It was great to see so many people who had spent all year qualifying for this race now lining up to start. In division 9 there were over 50 starters spread out across the Thames, jockeying for position under starter's orders. The eldest on the start line being in their mid 70's, the youngest aged 13; in how many other sports do people separated by over 60 years of life experience race as equals? And so the racers were off. Some, like Janet the booking in co-ordinator, fell in at the start, her head more on race organising than racing.

And so the fun and confusion started. All competitors gave their all, many did well, others did less well who often had creative and amusing reasons for their lack of success, the writer included. At the same

time, the results co-ordinators had to cope with lost boats, lost numbers, lost people and confused numbers. With so many racers, some level of chaos was inevitable; but everyone, without exception, was helpful and understanding.

Then came the serious racers from the higher divisions. Hundred of cheering spectators were there to watch highly competitive athletes portage in often dramatic fashion. At this level, it is an exciting and absorbing spectator sport.

Suddenly, it was all over the race results were posted, trophies awarded, speeches made and winners applauded.

Everyone was very kind about how well Adventure Dolphin had hosted and organised the event. As a club we were delighted that it had gone so well, it was just a shame that our racing results were not as good as in previous years. Perhaps, like Janet on the starting line, our minds were too much on other things.

With all the competitors departed, the volunteers remained to tidy up and to reflect on the day. Stephen and Alex were the boys allocated to collect turning buoys that were bigger than the boys themselves.

With the site cleared in record time and the last volunteer left for home, we knew that the training now had to start for the new season. For the Southern Region, this first race would be at Henley and all would be there hoping to qualify for next year's final, at Burton-on Trent. So what else is Burton famous for we mused, as we were already starting to prepare for the event in our minds.

MARTIN AND JANET GILLESPIE

What is the Hasler Series?

The Hasler Series is based on a divisional system and is competed throughout the season (September to August) on a regional basis. It is at the heart of marathon racing in Britain with over 100 clubs competing in some 60 or more races each year. Races, organised within regions, are held over distances of approximately four, eight and 12 miles depending on competitors' ability. Promotions and demotions from one division to another are based on performance to ensure that competitors of similar ability race against one another.

Clubs compete on a regional basis to qualify for the final which is held each September hosted by one of the racing clubs. The Hasler Trophy is awarded to the club that gains the most points at the final.

Lightning start
Photo: Mike McTaggart



Geoff Saunders Trophy

Another series of races, which cumulates at the Hasler Finals, is the Geoff Saunders Trophy. The competitors take part in Lightnings and year on year the numbers taking part has risen phenomenally.

A Lightning is a stable, single, racing kayak for juniors aged from eight to 12 years. It is an excellent boat, in which children can develop basic paddling and racing skills before moving into full sized racing boats. It is used in competitions at both sprint regattas and at marathon races.

The Lightning Series is generally run alongside the Hasler Series and races are held at most of the regional Hasler races. Races are over distances of approximately two miles and are organised on an age basis in four separate classes – for boys and girls under ten and boys and girls under 12 years. The Series is an ideal way to introduce children to racing.

Points are awarded to each competitor and the Geoff Sanders Memorial Trophy is awarded at the Hasler final race each September to the club that has gained the most points based on regional races, plus the race held at the Hasler Final.

TAMSIN PHIPPS



Results

Hasler Finals 2006-07

Just the top three clubs	
Elmbridge CC	224
Wey KC	224
Reading CC	209

Geoff Saunders final

Leighton Buzzard CC	170
Shropshire Paddlesport CC	95
Norwich CC	89

The full results can be found at www.marathon-canoeing.org.uk



Portage
Photo: Mike McTaggart

World Surf Kayak Championships!

THREE BRITISH TEAMS REACH FINAL IN SPAIN

October 2007 saw the World Surf Kayak Championships take place in the Basque region of Northern Spain. Although 17 countries attended this year's championships, only nine managed to field a full team, which includes short and long boat categories for men, juniors, ladies, masters and grand masters. The event is run with heats of four competitors in a timed surf for 19 minutes with a panel of judges watching from a judging tower. The competitors are scored for a maximum of ten waves in the 19 minutes and are scored on the take-off, the number and success of manoeuvres on the wave and the length of ride.

TEAM EVENT

The team event was run over two rounds and a final. After the first two rounds surfing at Bakio and Mundaka, in conditions that varied from short steep beach breaks to the long rides of Mundaka, four teams made it through to the final day. England, the local Basque team, Jersey and Northern Ireland all secured a place and were all determined to win!

The finals were held at Mundaka, at the mouth of the river Gernika, which can be a seriously intimidating, barrelling wave. Paddlers and support teams were noticeably quieter on the final day than they had previously been as nerves set in. Conditions varied through the day as the tide dropped and rose again around the Mundaka sand bar that caused the wave to throw its lip and barrel at amazing speeds.

The Basque team quickly took the lead showing their local knowledge of the Mundaka wave and this lasted until after the last heat. The Basque team had comfortably won with Jersey and Northern Ireland placed joint second and England fourth just two points behind. To break the tie for second place the organisers look back to the number of first places that were achieved through the final day heats, but both teams had the same number! Therefore Northern Ireland just pipped Jersey at the post as they had just one more second place than Jersey. A nail biting time for all as the counting went on! The previous world champions, USA West, did not make the final day, although they did well in the individual events.

In the individual competition, which was mainly held on the beach break at



Chris Harvey

Bakio, British teams also did well with positions in the final four for women's long and short boat (Jersey's Ailsa McDougal), master's long boat (England's Gary Adcock), men's long boat (England's Darren Bason), master's short boat (England's Simon Hammond), junior's long boat (England's Phillip Watson), junior's short boat (Jersey's David Speller and England's Sam Davenport) and open category (Jersey's Chris Harvey), grand master's short boat (Wales' Phil Carpenter).

POSTPONED

Four of the individual finals (master's and open short and long boat categories) were postponed until the day after the closing ceremony due to a lack of surf. This was a welcome decision as the day dawned with brilliant sunshine and the biggest, cleanest waves of the championships. We were all treated to Bakio at its very best! Eight foot plus waves peeled towards the rocks on the river end of the bay giving spectators, photographers and film crews a fantastic view of what was probably the best ever final of a surf kayak championships. An exciting sport to

watch and participate in, the world's was an event not to be missed and training has already begun for the 2009 World which will be held in Peniche, Portugal when we hope it will be a British team who will come home with the coveted first place in the team event!

This year's world championships showed that the UK has some of the most talented surf kayakers in the world and as a committee we are keen to encourage newcomers into the sport and share the expertise of our competitive surfers.

If you are interested in learning more about surf kayaking or would like to compete in your own region then please get in contact with the surf kayak committees via e-mail committee@bcusurf.org.uk

Competitions go on all over the UK and abroad all year and details can be found at www.bcusurf.org

JENNY LONG
 England Surf Kayak Committee
STEVE BOWENS
 Chair BCU surf committee
 Photos courtesy of
www.alluringlight.co.uk

David Speller, from Channel Islands team (new junior short boat world champion) paddling a long boat



Below: World individual short boat prize giving (left to right) Edu Etxeberria (Basque), Chris Harvey (channel islands), Sean Morley (USA West) and Rusty Sage (USA west)





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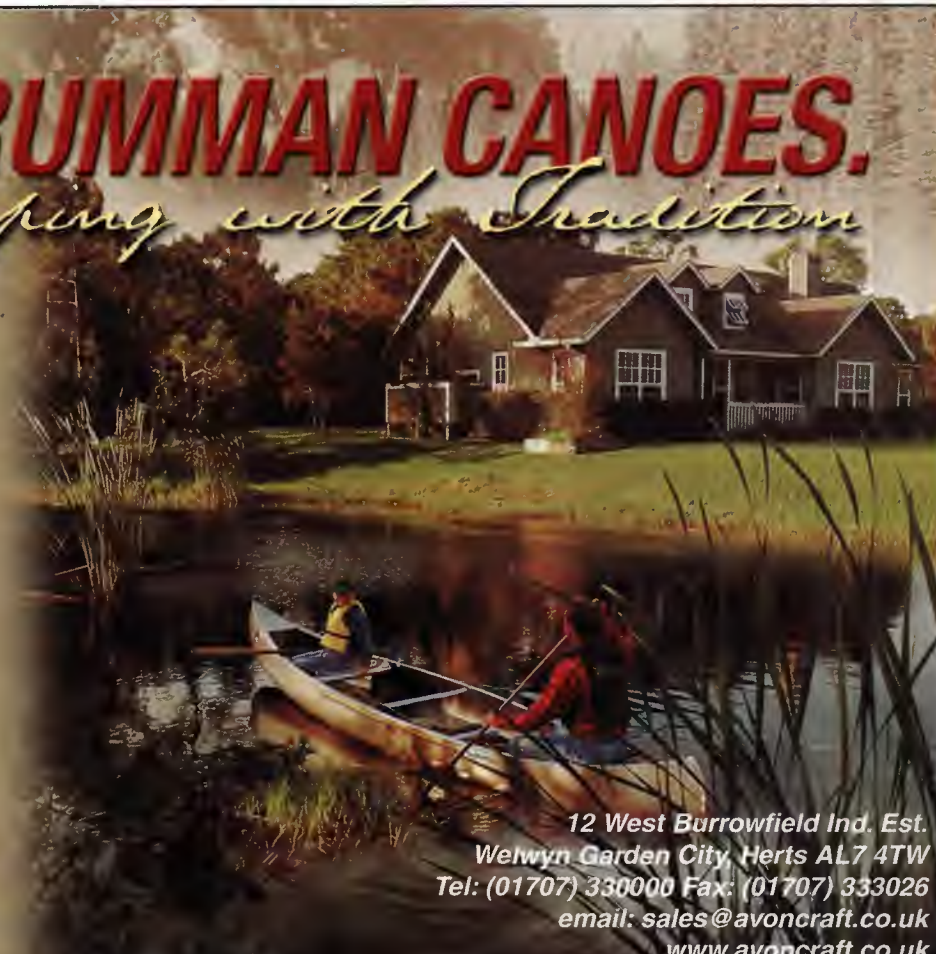
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GB Women kicked off the tournament by playing the Dutch where the women secured a convincing 5:0 win. The next two games saw a 5:0 win over Poland and a 6:0 win over Sweden. At the end of the day GB played Italy with a final score of 2:2, which saw GB winning the first round on goal difference.

Thury Harcourt, France – 11-16th September

Lianne Studley determined not to lose the ball. Photo: Glenn Summerbell



Round two consisted of GB, Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain with Germany being their first game of the day with an exciting 4:4 shoreline. Next up France, where in the last few minutes of the game GB took control and rattled home some impressive shots securing a 6:3 win. In the last game of the day GB demolished Spain 9:0.

The Semi Finals were set: Germany v Italy and GB v France. The GB team defended very well against a mobile

GB played Italy in the play off. It is always difficult to pick yourself up after a semi-final defeat and play well enough to secure a third place win but all credit to GB as they secured a 5:0 win for the bronze medal. Hopefully the jinx of the Dutch has been well and truly forgotten and the team can learn from mistakes made throughout the week and season and move onto the World Championships better and stronger.

May I take this opportunity to thank Paul Lineham who has helped with coaching and Lynn Knowles must be thanked for the unenviable job of being GB women's referee. Thank you to supporters who travelled the long journey to add their voice to the thousands who turned out to watch an array of exciting polo matches. See you in Canada!!

The team selected to represent Great Britain was Ellie Bridgstock, Pru Blyth, Ginny Coyles, Phillipa Grayson (captain), Lianne Studley, Kathryn Grieves, Sarah Kinwan and Zoe Anthony.

French attack and with less than a minute on the clock at 1-1 was it better to play for a draw and go into extra time or was it better to go five out and finish the game! No doubt much discussion will take place between spectators, players and coaches as to which was/should have been the correct call... unfortunately on this occasion it resulted in the French taking a break and scoring with too little time on the clock for GB to respond.

European Canoe Polo Championships

For further information and results see www.europolo2007.com

The organisers of the 2007 Europeans must be congratulated on a well planned, thought out and efficiently run tournament. The standard of facility and provision for the athletes was on a par with the World Games.

The men's GB's group contained Portugal, Ireland and Russia. All three group games were played on the initial day of competition. GB struggled to overcome Portugal 2-1, capitalising on Irish errors and breaking in numbers to win 8-1 and thrashed Russia 15-1. They went through to the second round along with Ireland and went back to the hotel happy with a good days work.

Alan Vessey in action. Photo: Glenn Summerbell



The second round group brought GB, the Swiss and last years World Championship finalists, France, and Italy together. GB carried on from their first round performances beating Switzerland 3-1, however the second game ended 2-1 to France, leaving GB having to beat Italy in the morning to guarantee a semi final place.

Another good performance from the British wasn't enough. Similar to the French game, several missed chances and the British pushing for a winning goal at 1-1 allowed the Italians to get away on the break. A final score of 3-1 to Italy left GB third in the group and playing off for 5-8th. GB met Ireland for the second time in the championship and won 8-5 in a scrappy game. Next was Spain, another team that had narrowly missed out on the semi finals. The winner would take 5th place, little consolation to GB. Another hard fought end-to-end game resulting in GB 6-5 winners.

Fifth place was a huge disappointment to the team who had high hopes for a medal after a good season and such excellent results in the first round. It left the team with a lot to think about and what might have been.

Finally thank you to Alan Venables who did a lot of running about on behalf of the Coach and players to assist in the smooth running of the team's tournament. Thank you to supporters who travelled the long journey to add their voice to the thousands who turned out to watch an array of exciting polo matches. Thank you to Peak UK who provided us with a new set of buoyancy aids for the tournament.

The team that competed at the championships were: Alan Vessey, Danny Bowles, Tom Baston, Barney Connell, Peter Meakin, Martyn Williamson, Stuart Moffitt and Nick Archer. Coach: Andy Petrie

Articles by
**BY NICKI WARD, GB SENIOR WOMEN COACH
MARTYN WILLIAMSON**



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EXTREME ALASKA

PADDLING PRINCE WILL



Having requested that we “say hello to the bears” on his behalf, Gerry’s parting advice was that we should avoid cooking bacon in our tents, Graham Dore takes up the story.

Above: (L to R) – Black bear on the foreshore, Bald eagle, ‘River’ Otter with catch



There was a handy driftwood tree trunk on the beach for leaning against and hanging kit on - all this with the pristine Bainbridge glacier and a spectacular range of snowy mountains as a backdrop.

A IAM SOUND



Above: Earthquake damage at Pakenham Point
Left: Approaching the head of Blackstone Bay

We were left alone, the four of us, with a huge pile of kit literally tipped out (Gerry had agreed to look after our bags) on the top of a small beach on the west side of Elrington Island, near the outer reaches of Prince William Sound. Our jumble of kit included all of the parts needed to assemble our two folding Feathercraft K2 sea kayaks, paddling and camping gear and all the food and fuel we reckoned we would need for 19 days out on the water.

It was early evening when we were dropped and we soon had a brew on, assembled our boats, erected our tents and were cooking our meal for the evening. The weather was fair and things were looking good. That night, being hyper-sensitive to any noise that might conceivably be a bear during the early part of our trip, I was woken by whales (presumed to be humpbacks) blowing in the little bay in front of our tents – amazing!

The weather was still fine and calm the next morning so we departed our drop-off beach and headed for

the open water. We soon saw some humpback whales at a fair distance and also a group of sea otters. We saw them in a wide variety of waters from the open water to some of the more secluded and narrow channels. They seem to be pretty hardy creatures as we also saw some, apparently lounging afloat, right up close to the tidewater glaciers, where the water temperature is not much above freezing. They are somewhat larger than the more familiar river otters, and love lying on their backs with their heads and toes sticking up out of the water, often with their young resting on their bellies. Sometimes they would approach us for a closer look when we passed near to them, turning themselves towards us and rising up higher in the water for a better look.

Before turning back inshore and heading for the more sheltered waters of the sound we visited Procession Rocks to take a look at the boisterous sealions crowded on the outcrops. They were always playful, leading us to be a little wary of them, though they never seemed to be wary of us at all!

Our second night's camp was an absolute classic, with ample tent space on a huge flat area behind a stony beach. There was a handy driftwood tree trunk on the beach for leaning against and hanging kit on – all this with the pristine Bainbridge glacier and a spectacular range of snowy mountains as a backdrop. This really was setting the scene for campsites to come since the camp spots throughout were of an excellent standard. We used the 1:100,000 National Geographic Trails Illustrated topographic maps (sheet 761 covers all of the western sound) which have dots marked at suggested kayak landing places. Generally (but not quite universally) these locations were good for a night's camp. Another invaluable source of information was Paul Twardock's book 'Kayaking and Camping in Prince William Sound'.

Black bears

We did our best towards bear-sensitive camping throughout the trip, only throwing caution to the wind on occasions when we were on very small islands a little way offshore which had no reason for a bear to visit. It was reassuring to know that,

throughout the area of our travels we should only expect to see black bears and not the 'braver' (as one paddler we chatted to put it) brown or grizzly bears. Hanging 19 days worth of food up the spindly trees on offer at many of our camp spots was not a practical option so we generally opted for storing all our food in driesacks a little way from our tents, boats and cooking area. We tied the whole lot to something like a bush or tree stump and fixed our bear bell to the top in the hope that we would hear if something interfered with our precious pantry in the night. We cooked away from our tents and disposed of any scraps of food, used toothpaste etcetera in the sea. Thankfully we had no problems.

At only two places did we spend two consecutive nights and in one of these, towards the end of the trip, I saw a black bear just a few hundred yards away from our tents during the day preceding our second night there. We discussed the option of moving but decided to stay put. All of our other bear sightings (there were four others) were of bears, which were ashore while we were afloat. Each time, as soon as the bears became aware of our presence they ambled off, which was reassuring!

They say that in Prince William Sound you should expect two wet days in every three. On arrival we learned that the weather had already been good for a week so we expected the worst and that it would break as soon as we started our paddle. On the contrary we enjoyed a spell of nine continuous days of amazingly good weather at the start of our trip. Almost every morning we would peer out of the tent to see clear blue skies, or maybe just the odd bit of cotton wool cumulus.

Noticeably cooler

The air, and particularly water temperature was noticeably cooler in the vicinity of the tidewater glaciers we visited. When the weather did finally break we had a couple of days of very wet weather. The wind picked up for a time giving us an exciting four-mile crossing of the Wells Passage. The cloud was low and the air very damp; we began to wonder if we were going to have a holiday in two halves and that we would have forgotten all about the heady



Interesting brash in Icy Bay

fine weather days at the start of the trip by the time we reached the end. We did get some more wonderful days though, and I guess weather patterns were more 'normal' for the area after the bonus spell of prolonged good weather.

At Icy Bay, one of our many out and back side trips, we picked our way up through the brash to a large flat gravelly area within a mile of the face of the 'Icy'

tidewater glacier. En route we looked into Nassau Fjord and the Chenega Glacier but the density of brash ice in Nassau looked impossible, particularly for us in our folding kayaks. At our planned Icy Bay camping place we soon noticed bear poo on the beach but agreed it did not look particularly fresh. We made camp at this spectacular setting and settled down for the late afternoon and evening.

While we were there, the glacier thundered and growled spewing more and more ice into the fjord. By evening it looked as though we might have an unscheduled prolonged stay at this site as the ice in the fjord continued to thicken. There was no accessible supply of water at this place that we could find bar a powerful glacial stream which was laden with 'loose bowel' inducing sediment. Anna did find a dripping rock which would produce a pan enough for a brew for two in about half an hour but this was hardly a reliable source. Exit behind the beach was blocked by steep cliffs in one direction and impenetrable scrub in another. There was also a good spattering of snow banks right down to sea level but melting snow for water was not an option because we had not calculated our fuel supply to cover that.

In the morning we looked out at the fjord and doubted we would get out but decided to try our luck anyway. We broke camp, packed and just managed to pick, bump and squeeze our way a few hundred yards to a small headland which was causing a constriction for the brash wanting to exit the fjord. After this (seeing beyond the waters visible from the camp) the ice thinned and we were OK.

Information and advice

Access to Prince William Sound is pretty straight forward with a good choice of flights to Anchorage and then a rickety and rather slow but very scenic train ride to Whittier, courtesy of the Alaska Railroad Company. There is also the option to get to Whittier by road if you choose to hire a car or take the bus. Whittier is an ice-free deepwater port originally established by the US military. I can't say I would recommend the place as a tourist attraction per se apart from it being an excellent and accessible jumping off place for the western sound. There are plenty of options for doing a round trip by kayak from Whittier without going to the expense of a boat drop off. Away from the immediate vicinity of Whittier we found the waters to be fairly quiet regards other boat traffic and, for that matter, other paddlers, particularly towards the more open waters to the south where we started our trip. Having said that, we were quite early in the season and the level of traffic would be expected to hot up later in the year. Another bonus of an early visit is that rainfall should statistically be lower; Paul Twardock gives a useful table of precipitation statistics in his book showing variation throughout the season for at several places throughout the sound.

For those who do not own or do not wish to use folding kayaks there are several kayak rental businesses in Whittier and some, if not all, of these also offer organised trips under leadership.

For simple boat charter we would recommend Gerry Sanger of Sound Eco Adventures – Gerry was very helpful and efficient. There are obviously other boat operators in the sound, some offering the kind of kayaking trip where you return to the boat (a larger vessel) at the end of each day for a shower, a meal and a bed for the night.

Obviously these would only be of interest if you were happy to turn your back on the rewards of the true 'wilderness experience'. My parting advice if you plan to visit; watch out for the asymmetric tides, the night time high water is generally larger than the one in the daytime so you need to be wary of this when making camp. We got hold of a tide table but there was still much deliberating, measuring and even setting the alarm in the middle of the night at a couple of places when the tides were building towards springs!



The drop-off





Peter and Sarah Mackay resplendent in Feathercraft,

Throughout the rest of the trip we visited a number of similar tidewater glaciers but we were always careful to make camp on the open water side of any restriction which might cause the brash to back up!

On the subject of tidewater glaciers, although there are many, many glaciers throughout the sound, most of these are no longer tidewater (i.e. no longer calving ice directly into the saltwater). The glaciers in the area are all receding rapidly. At the Nellie Juan glacier we camped on an area that would have been under the glacier in the 1930s but which is now well over a mile from the face of the glacier (which incidentally is still tidewater and is well worth a visit). You have to be a little wary when leaving kayaks on the beach near a tidewater glacier (or even camping close to the high water level) since a big ice fall can give rise to substantial waves. At Blacksands a huge

chunk fell off the Barry glacier and caused a breaking wave of around three to four feet in height to come rolling onto the beach on an

At Blacksands a huge chunk fell off the Barry glacier and caused a breaking wave of around three to four feet in height to come rolling onto the beach on an otherwise completely calm day!

otherwise completely calm day! Not what you want when you are packing a boat at the water line, especially when you remember that in some places the wave might be carrying chunks of brash. Thankfully this happened about half an hour before we packed the boats!

Mosquitoes

I think Alaska upholds a fairly widespread reputation as having a mosquito problem, not to mention other biting insect pests. The worst mosquito problems, though, are an inland phenomenon. Being fairly early in the bug season at the end of May and the first couple of weeks in June, we were blessed with virtually bug free conditions at the start of the trip and only relatively few bugs at the worst times nearer the end.

In 1964 the Prince William Sound area was hit by a devastating tsunami tidal wave. The original Chenega village - a 'first nation' Indian settlement - was destroyed and tens of people (about a third of

the population) lost their lives. The old village is now a sacred site for the Chenega people and outsiders are not allowed to visit. The re-sited village is situated further out in the sound, not far from where we started our trip. As it happened, neither place were particularly close to our chosen route so we did not visit or pass close to them. A tinning factory, the ruins of which we did visit briefly, was another casualty of the disaster. Several people lost their lives here and the badly damaged factory was abandoned after the disaster. The most evident legacy of this event is the lines of dead trees, which remain on many of the lowest lying coastal areas.

We covered something in the region of 275 miles by kayak over 18 days on the water. For our efforts we were rewarded with truly spectacular snow, ice and forest mountain scenery, predominantly benign paddling conditions and fantastic and plentiful wildlife. All in all, we had a first rate trip and would recommend the sound as a great kayaking venue. ●

Assembling the boats



Another great camp



Writing the Captain's Log at 11pm in shorts!





SUE HORNBY

Head of Development for Canoe England

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

My current role is Head of Development for Canoe England. It's a newly created position in which I am responsible for five key areas/teams –

- participation,
- coach development,
- access,
- facilities,
- volunteering and equity.

My responsibility involves leading the team and developing a framework for delivery to help the BCU achieve our key objectives and targets. Put simply – through our work we are aiming to develop structures and support for current paddlers and to encourage more people to start, stay and succeed in paddlesport.

WHAT DOES YOUR AVERAGE WEEK LOOK LIKE?

I really feel that I am only just starting to flex my muscles in this role – and each week can be very different. Recently I have been traveling round to meet and talk to our Regional Development teams. Last week I was in Leeds, Bingham, Birmingham and Leicester – but thankfully not all weeks are like that! This year a lot of time has been spent on Child Protection – working to the 'Safeguarding and Protecting Children Standards' and updating our documentation. I usually spend one or two days in our offices at Bingham – and they are usually packed with meetings and I try to have at least one day working from my home office. In

the development team, quite a few of us work from home – which is great – but it does mean that you never leave the office!

HOW MANY HOURS A WEEK DO YOU SPEND ON CANOEING MATTERS?

Well as a BCU employee it certainly isn't 9-5! I guess on average I work a 45-50 hour week. As a volunteer I am currently coaching at my club – and that is about three hours a week.

WHAT DID YOU DO BEFORE YOUR CURRENT JOB?

I first started working for the BCU in 1997 when I worked part time as a Paddlesport Development Officer in LSE region, in 2000 I took on the role of Head of Young People's Programme. Before working for the BCU I worked freelance – this included coaching the RYA Women's Olympic squad, Coach Education and tutor training for scUK.

LIKES AND DISLIKES AT WORK?

We have a fantastic group of people working in the development team and I really enjoy working with them. It's been great developing some of our new initiatives like 'Paddlepower' – but the best thing is seeing it working. Seeing the young people enjoy canoeing through one of our initiatives.

As for dislikes – emails has to be at the top of the list. Coming home from meetings and having 60 emails to answer! I really feel it stifles creativity and communication – on the other hand it is useful! On a similar theme – IT when it doesn't work!

YOU'VE JUST RETURNED FROM THE DRAGON BOAT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS – WHAT TRAINING DID YOU DO AND HOW DID YOU GET ON?

I was paddling in the GB Premier Women's team – and averaged 11 sessions a week training of weights and paddling specific stuff. We got a silver medal in the 1000 metres and bronze in both the 200 and 500 metres. We managed to set world records – but Canada and China managed to edge us out from our target of gold medals. The 1000 metre race was amazing and one I will never forget.

HAVE YOU WON OTHER MEDALS AND WHICH DO YOU REMEMBER MOST?

In total I have been to ten world championships for WWR (Wild Water Racing) and Dragon Boat Racing and from that come away with eleven bronze, six silver and two gold medals. Certainly winning the World Championships 500 metre race in China was top of the list for best experiences in competition – standing on the podium and hearing the national anthem was just fantastic!

WHAT TYPE OF PADDLESPORT DO YOU LIKE AND WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR BEST EXPERIENCES IN CANOEING.

Wow – that's almost impossible to answer! I've been paddling for 36 years and managed to work my way through most canoeing disciplines. I started recreationally – did lots of surfing and white water stuff – then got into competition – slalom to WWR – then to sprint and marathon. In the last ten years I've been doing more single blade paddling but also have started running rivers again in great places like Nepal and India. In the future I want to do more sea kayaking. This is the great thing about our sport – the sheer diversity means there is always something new to learn and experience. I've had the most amazing experiences that have shaped who and what I am now but I guess top of the list must include being on the River Frazer Expedition in 1981 – it was a real honour to join the team and complete a first descent of this stunning river. Winning my first world championship medal in 1979 in the WWR Worlds in Canada. Training a crew and competing in the Women's Molokai Outrigger Canoe Race in Hawaii.

ANY FINAL COMMENTS

I think once you have learnt the skill of a paddle – it is a passport for so many different adventures, challenges and experiences. However, most of all it can provide a life time of enjoyment in this most amazing sport.

"This is the great thing about our sport – the sheer diversity means there is always something new to learn and experience."



'The best sea sea kayaking magazine on the planet'
Marsha Henson, Sea Kayak Georgia

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Ignacio Wenley Palacios, OnKayakers

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Wilderness, mountains, glaciers

Sea Kayaking in the Pumalin National Park, Patagonia, Chile

To most people, the name Patagonia is an evocative invitation to an adventure. Certainly Bruce Chatwin, which resulted in his first and probably most famous book, 'In Patagonia'. John Mottram takes us

The origin of the name – Patagonia – is still disputed but what is clear to anyone who can read a map, is that Patagonia is very big. In effect it covers an area similar in size to Western Europe and reaches to both sides of the Andes mountain range in Argentina and Chile.

To the uninitiated, Patagonia means wilderness, mountains, glaciers and space without people.

It was thus with a very open mind my daughter Ruth and I first met our guide Juan Federico Zuazo Fernandez, at our Hotel in Puerto Varas in the north Patagonian area of Chile. I had been in regular email contact with Juanfe, who is the owner and principal guide of Yak Expediciones (www.yakexpediciones.cl), for almost a year. I had found their website from an earlier advertisement in Canoe Focus and he had put together a week long sea kayak expedition for us, in the Fjords of the Pumalin National Park.

We left our hotel early the following morning for the four-hour drive via Puerto Montt and a ferry crossing, to the small seaside fishing village of Hornopiren. The drive itself was quite spectacular with clear views of the three major volcanoes in the immediate vicinity, Yates, Osorno and Calbuco. Later in the afternoon we finally set off paddling south in the Comau Fjord heading for the small fishing village of Cholgo about a four-hour paddle.

It is very reminiscent of the fjordland area of South Island in New Zealand, with trees and foliage stretching right down to sea level.

The weather was reasonably fair with light winds and small waves, this enabled us to settle into a good rhythm and to start to enjoy the scenery and to appreciate the area that we would be exploring for the next six days. It is very reminiscent of the

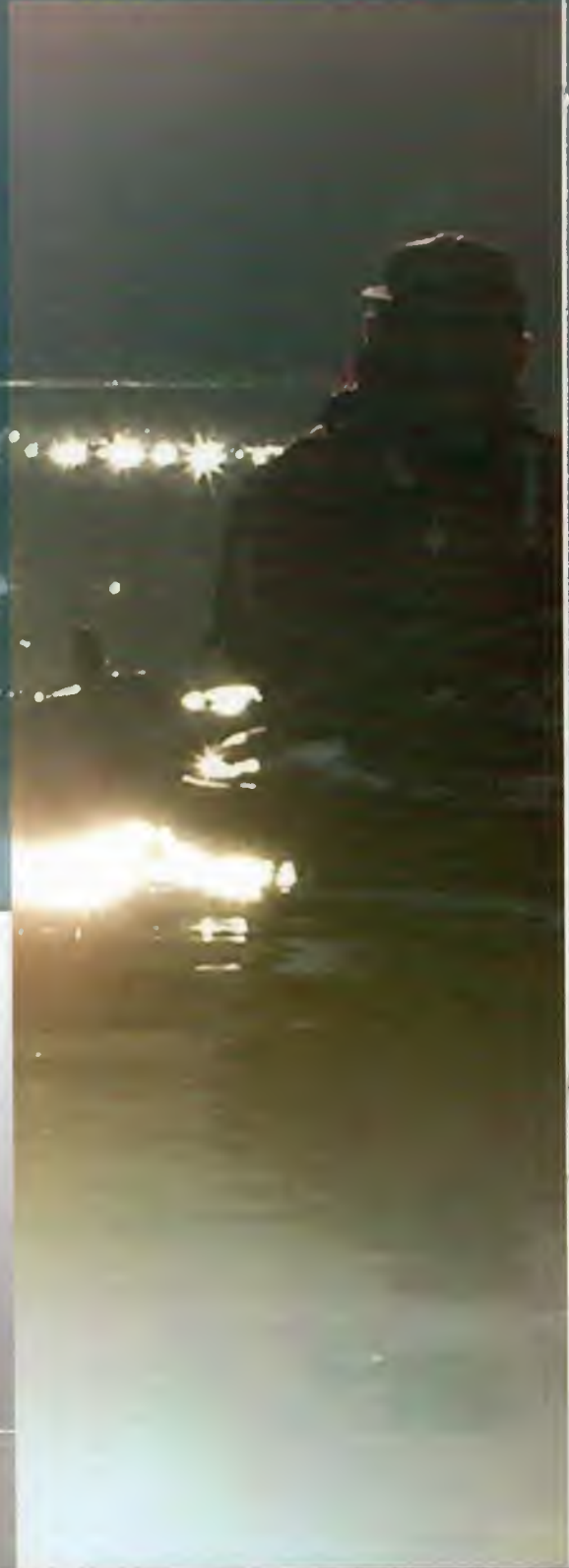
fjordland area of South Island in New Zealand, with trees and foliage stretching right down to sea level. Although the high mountain peaks, many containing snow or small glaciers,

created a different character. There are no roads in the area and everything has to travel or be transported by sea.

Hosted by a local family of 'Colonos'

The weather turned very wet and we were quite thankful that for our first night we were to be hosted by a local family of 'Colonos' or local pioneer settlers, in their small wooden house. We were welcomed warmly although no one in the family spoke anything but Spanish. The lady of the house, well into her seventies, prepared a traditional supper and together with about 12 other members of the family we ate heartily and afterwards slept in one of the two bedrooms.

Juanfe has built up a strong network of local people who offer hospitality, accommodation or other support and who in return benefit from the extra



John and Ruth paddle early morning in Fiordo de Quintupeu

John with Ruth in background in the main Fiordo Comau

ers and space without people

Chatwin thought so back in 1972 when he was inspired to journey south to Argentina, a trip
p the story...

cash. It is certainly a wonderful experience to be able to live with local fishermen and to be able to appreciate the harshness of their daily lives. The village electric generator only supplies electricity between 8pm and midnight for example, but as with us, no one is turned away or refused basic hospitality.

With our second day came bright skies and settled weather as we continued south and entered the beautiful Quintupeu fjord where we were to spend our second night. This fjord is perpendicular to Comau fjord but it has a fascinating history. In 1914 the Royal Navy won a major engagement against German naval ships off the Falkland Islands. One of the German ships, the Dresden, escaped from the British and after a few adventures spent some time hiding in Quintupeu fjord. The area around Puerto Montt was settled by German émigrés in the 19th Century, and as a result there was no shortage of local settlers of German origin prepared to assist the fugitive ship. Eventually the Dresden was forced to capitulate and was later scuttled by its crew, off the Chilean coast.

Our third day started early with superb sunshine and a very calm sea. The fjord area is similar to other areas in that it tends to generate its own microclimates. Frequently the days start calm and settled but with the distinct possibility that winds or squalls would pick up in the afternoon producing some quite challenging sea kayaking conditions.

Juanfe told me that Cahuelmo actually means in the local Indian dialect, place of the Orca, as the killer whales are attracted by the presence of the sea lions.

We returned to the Comau fjord, which has lately become host to several 'salmon farms'. This modern development rather cuts across the lives of local fishermen as well as creating some disquiet regarding the impact on the local maritime environment. It certainly does not provide any local employment as we heard that most of the maintenance staff is recruited from the cities and not the villages.

Place of the Orca

We continued our journey south before entering the Cahuelmo fjord. Throughout our trip we had already seen a lot of different local wildlife including dolphins and penguins but the entrance to Cahuelmo fjord also contains quite a large sea lion colony. Indeed Juanfe told me that Cahuelmo actually means in the local Indian dialect, place of the Orca, as the killer whales are attracted by the presence of the sea lions.

Mr Douglas Tompkins, a US citizen and founder of North Face and Patagonia outdoor clothing companies, now owns a vast amount of this area personally. It is a somewhat controversial issue, although Mr Tompkins has stated his desire to



The almost hidden entrance to Fiordo de Quintupeu

Paddling the river Cahuelmo near to the hot springs



Ruth paddling Fiordo Comau en route to Porcelana



John and Ruth return to Hornopiren on fishing boat



donate all of the land to a non-profit, nature conservation organisation. Time will tell.

The hot springs come straight out of the ground and then fill a number of bath shaped pools that were built or carved out of the rock by the local Indians, many years ago. The temperature of the water being controlled by small water channels dammed with sods of earth, all very eco-friendly and the area is an absolute magnet for all kinds of wildlife.

Roughest conditions

Our fifth day would be the longest paddling day and as it turned out, the one with the roughest conditions. We returned to the entrance to Cahuelmo fjord and continued south in Comau fjord. After four hours we stopped for lunch with another local fishing family at the small village of Huinay. The wind strengthened considerably in the afternoon and a challenging two hours of paddling took us to our final destination at Porcelana, where there are more hot springs.

We had covered almost 120 kilometres of paddling in wonderful surroundings. Juanfe had organised an unforgettable trip in one of the most beautiful areas in the world. Juanfe is the proud holder of a number of BCU qualifications that he obtained at one of the sea kayak symposiums that he has been able to attend, his future ambition is to visit the UK to attend the symposium in Anglesey or in Scotland.

For our return we were collected by another of Juanfe's contacts, on his fishing boat for the five-hour trip back to Hornopiren.

All of the equipment and food for the trip was provided and mostly prepared by Juanfe. It would be possible to organise and arrange this trip by yourself but I would not advise it for a number of reasons.

There is no comparable search or rescue organisation in the area, everything is organised and done by the local fishermen – local knowledge is essential. The Police and Chilean Navy

Information

John and Ruth Mottram paddled with Juan Fernandez of Yak Expediciones.

Yak runs regular sea kayaking trips in and around the Pumalin Park as well as to the Glacier San Rafael. They are prepared to organise personal trips, to hire out equipment and to provide any advice.



representatives in Hornopiren are meant to co-ordinate or supervise any kayaking expeditions in the area, indeed Juanfe kept in daily contact with the local Police by radio, any outsider not knowing the language or procedure could come unstuck. Finally, local knowledge of the prevailing sea conditions, as in most sea areas, is a crucial factor in keeping out of trouble and having an unforgettable trip for the very best of reasons. ●





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opening up our inland waters for all**

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Public Access to Inland Waters Bill 2007

Second Reading - Friday 19th October. The Bill was 'Not moved' but we shall not be moved from our aim.

Due to the amount of Parliamentary business left at the end of the last session the Bill was not read for a second time so in effect it has run out of time for this Parliament. The new session has now begun with the Queen's Speech and so we being again.

Since the Bill was written and first presented in Parliament it has been very much updated with top legal advice to save us from any elephant traps. It is intended to put the new Bill before the next session of Parliament. We have gained a lot more support from members of Parliament and in the Lords too (MEPs are also interested in taking the matter up too).

To go alongside the Bill we have developed a draft Access Code which supports the new Bill and is again very much based on the Scottish Outdoor Access code but reflects English Law.

Remember the Prime Minister's speech? Well he ended up by saying things are worth fighting for... too right Mr Brown, that is why we will continue to press for public access to our inland waters. Access to inland waters (supported by an Access Code) will be a right for all members of the public.

REMEMBER...

The Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Rt Hon Mr Hilary Benn has announced that the government would be using legislation to create better access to the English coast.

Now that we have CRoW (Countryside rights of Way Act) for land and access to the English Coastline will be set by primary legislation it is time to sort out the final anomaly that of public access to inland waters.

There will be new letters on the Rivers Access Campaign web site which you can use/adapt to send to your MP. We will put up another EDM shortly so do watch out for that too. Please help us to keep the pressure up and to remind all that we are here and are not going to go away until the access issue is satisfactorily resolved.

Strength to change Britain –

Gordon Brown made his first speech as Prime Minister at the Labour Party Conference in Bournemouth. Listening carefully to his words, his aspirations link in to those of the Rivers Access Campaign.

He used the words "This Country" and "our country" frequently throughout his speech... well this is how we feel. If Scotland's population and visitors have the rights to use their waterways with responsibility then why shouldn't the rest of "this country"?

He stated that he has not forgotten the words of his father who said, "treat everyone equally with respect." This is what we are after too, public access to inland waters. Rights with responsibilities for all.

Getting your message to the PM:
www.number10.gov.uk/output/Page3.asp

Fax the PM:
020 7925 0918

Write to the PM:
10 Downing Street,
London,
SW1A 2AA

To read a letter from a passionate paddler requesting Gordon Brown to consider the case for access to waters visit
www.riversaccess.org

Speech by Rt Hon Gordon Brown MP

He said he stands for a Britain, "where because this earth is on loan to us from the future generations, we must all be stewards of the environment." This is how we feel too. That is why we work to support the environment through river clear ups, wildlife watches etc, let alone the fact that we are a carbon emission free activity.

He talked of the, "next stage of our country's long journey to build the strong and fair society." and that "no injustice can last forever."

He ended up by saying things are worth fighting for. We agree, if you want to let Mr Brown know how you feel about the lack of access, he can be contacted by following the details in the panel.

Party Conferences Raising the profile of the campaign

Liberal Democrats Brighton

A warm day greeted us as we set up our presence at outside the Conference. We had not been there more than five minutes when one of our MPs, Vincent Cable, came by and stopped for a chat. He knows all about the campaign as he is visited regularly and has spoken up for us too. But he was also pleased to see that, as they say, we not only 'talk the talk' but 'walk the walk' as well.

We had a lot of interest from MPs, delegates and even the security men who were amazed that we have such an appalling access situation. You couldn't miss us – we were there with our banner, kayak and in canoeing kit.

With thanks to Trevor Strauss who came to help us. He engaged one of the Liberal Democrat Lords so well that he has come back to us asking for more information and mentioning that he has already spoken up for the issue in the House of Lords!

Labour Party Bournemouth

We were outside and inside (on the Boating Alliance stand) at the Labour Party Conference in Bournemouth getting the message across.



Chloe Nelson-lawrie, Andy Green and Michael Graham

Outside there was Allen, Chris, Andy, Rosie, George and Ian. They were standing by the campaign flag handing out leaflets and talking to the MPs and delegates. We knew how successful they were being as people came in and specifically sought us out to find out more.

George found the well known fishing MP and, dressed in canoeing kit, proceeded to inform him that it was not only canoeists who would benefit from public access to inland waters! Needless to say the MP said he could not agree.

Many of the security people and the police talked to us as well. They said that they were canoeists too and how they had experienced the lack of access and thought that the situation was totally unacceptable.

A discussion with Ed Milliband (who has the responsibility for co-ordinating the Labour Manifesto) was perfectly timed. Minutes

after talking to us he was interviewed on Radio 4's PM programme about issues to be put in to the Labour Manifesto. He said that he had been approached by several individuals with different issues, one of which was people wanting to use lakes for boating and a right to roam on the rivers!

Mr Miliband was incredibly receptive and really took note of what we had to say. He was actually quite shocked to hear how difficult access to our inland waters is.

Conservative Party Blackpool

RAC supporters were out in force.

Over the two days there were mixed reactions from MPs and party members. Some offered words of encouragement and others said "you will never get rivers access".

Ed Milliband with Tamsin Phipps



2007 – Some highlights of a busy year

JANUARY

Dr Des Turner MP calls to say he has a slot for a ten Minute Rule Bill. We draft the Bill and it is first heard on January 24th. Second reading set for 23rd February 2007.

The Public Access to Inland Waters Bill (2007) gives everyone (non-motorised users) statutory access rights to and along most inland waters.

Work commences with a like minded group of organisations to agree the way forward for coastal access and develop a strategy to present ideas to Natural England.

Roger Revell sets up an Access to Rivers Petition.

FEBRUARY

Press Release issued calling for Natural England to introduce a permanent, multi-user, right of access around England's coastline. The Natural England board meets on 21st February to thrash out its policy on coastal access. The Ramblers' Association, BCU, BMC, British Caving Association, CTC, CCPR, Equestrian Access Forum, International Mountain Biking Association UK and the Open Spaces Society join forces to lobby for inclusive access rights along the coast.

Second Reading of the Bill – Public Access to Inland Waters postponed.

"Some things in life are fairly certain and the fact that there is a right of navigation on the Avon is one of them." The Reverend Douglas Caffyn – A programme by the BBC which showed that there is a 1664 statute giving the right to get on the river wherever they want.

MARCH

Very successful Outdoors show at the NEC for the Campaign. Thousands of signatures of support collected.

Views about angling very much misrepresented in the Sunday Telegraph Press release sent out in response giving our view.

Breakfast BBC took the access story, with an interview from Exeter at Haven Banks. Campaign had many, positive responses from all around the country as a result of the TV coverage.

Meridian TV filmed a group from Poole Harbour Canoe Club on the river Frome in Wareham about access to rivers.

Met with Roger Williams MP (Liberal Democrat Environmental Spokesman) to press the case for access.

Halifax MP Linda Riordan visited Halifax Canoe Club on the 25th March to hear more about the campaign from Roger Blanchard, Access and Environment Officer for the club (below).



APRIL

Met with Barry Gardiner MP to try and find a way forward. Again reinforced the fact that voluntary access agreements are not the solution – new primary legislation is. His view was that the government would not consider primary legislation there must be alternatives (still waiting for the suggestions!).

Met with Dr Des Turner MP and Martin Salter MP. Martin was full of bluster and asked us not to continue with the Bill. He agreed to look at an access code and bring interested parties together. We are still waiting!

MAY

Letters sent out to all MPs reminding them what we are campaigning for and asking for support for the Bill.

Second reading of the Bill put back to June 2007.

JULY

Open letter sent to Gordon Brown in his new role as Prime Minister pointing out the anomaly which exists between England and Scotland.

The Outdoor Swimming Society joins the Campaign.



AUGUST

Brean Down Press Day, Somerset, 9th August. Outdoor organisations demonstrate the need for a coastal access corridor. Coast lovers (including the campaign) unite at Brean Down to promote a permanent right of access to the coastline and to express support for a coastal access corridor in England.

SEPTEMBER

Lesley Quinlan (LRA) and Tamsin Phipps discuss Access issue on BBC Radio Essex.

OCTOBER

The anniversary of the EA report piloting voluntary canoe access. Canoe England continues to press the case for new legislation akin to the Scottish Land Reform Act.

Public Access to Inland Waters Bill 2007, Second Reading, 19th October. The Bill was 'Not moved' but we shall not be moved from our aim. Due to the amount of Parliamentary business left at the end of this session, the Bill was not read for a second time so it has run out of time for this Parliament. The new session begins with the Queen's Speech and we begin again.

NOVEMBER

Went up to the Tyne Tour. It was great to see hundreds of canoeists over the weekend having fun on the waters near Hexham. One of the additional benefits that greater access will bring to communities (apart from health, participation, and personal development) is that of the amount of money that goes in to the local economy.

Many meetings with MPs. Planning the strategy for the new Parliament. Continued discussions with other organisation about support for the campaign.

It has been a very busy year and we do thank you for your continued support of the Campaign. Here's to an even more high profile in 2008 as well as more success in our pursuit of legislation to give us all access to our natural heritage. Keep up to date with the Campaign at www.riversaccess.org

JUNE

Consultation paper on improving access to the English coast issued by DEFRA. The consultation paper followed consideration of Natural England's report 'Improving coastal access, Our advice to Government' which was submitted to DEFRA at the end of February 2007.

RAC spoke to the Parliamentary Waterways Group about the access to inland waters issue.

Interesting letter which is in fact letter of the week in Angler's Mail (5/6/07). It is titled 'Keep rivers for ALL – not just the select few'. The campaign has used this letter to promote the fact that it is access for all. The writer bemoans the fact that rivers are not being fished because mortals cannot get on them to fish. He even says "who gave out the divine right to say that naturally created rivers, and river angling could be turned in to a privatised industry?"

River Wye

Glasbury to Hereford – three day trip (59km)

Well it's been some time now that I have harboured a desire to travel down a river, camp wild along its shores and embrace adventure, whilst being self contained – just for the hell of it. So I did some research, pleaded my case and got my good friend, Andre to come along for the paddle. I assured him it was easy, and no prior experience was needed. I mean how else do you get someone to paddle nearly 60kms down a wild river in winter? The massive canoe strapped to my car completed the cool look we were striving for.

We left early on Wednesday, 14 February for the river Wye, in South Wales, and apart from a small detour courtesy of the latest satellite navigation gadget, there were no other mishaps.

Day 1

Start Glasbury paddle to Whitney-on-Wye – 16.5km (2.5-3 hours)

Camp facilities:

toilet, basin, shower.

Mr. Huxtable. Tel. 01497 831669

Whitney toll bridge

On left just before wooden bridge, steps pay £3 each at toll bridge if you arrive before 5pm, otherwise he will collect in am. A pub is within walking distance.

Anyhow, after parking and changing next to an occupied police car (politely, mind) we launched without a hassle. The weather was perfect and all I paddled in for the afternoon was a Helly Hansen thermal vest and buoyancy aid. There was even a need for sunglasses as we meandered down this age old river. All went well for the first 2kms, until we clipped some shallow rocks, turned sideways and nearly broached. I must say it is hilarious now, but at the time, we had just set off, needed to make 16 kms before dark to an unknown campsite, and were almost at one with the fishes. Anyhow, we adjusted the trim, changed seats and set off with renewed vigour. Quite close to dusk,



TWO SOUTH AFRICANS ARE OUR GUIDES ON THE WYE IN FEBRUARY

"Anyway, we set off to paddle from Glasbury to Whitney-on-Wye with all our gear, including a mini BBQ, charcoal and some light wood in watertight barrels. After stopping off to gather some essential provisions, namely food and alcohol, we got to the river at about 15:00. This in itself was quite entertaining, when we tried to buy food supplies at a Wilkinson store in Abergavenny. I say adventurous, since it is a store that sells mainly pet food, or garden supplies, and all in bulk, but then how are two South Africans to know this! We did look a bit suspect trying to find the food section!"

we chose to scout a rapid before plundering on, and through experience we made it unscathed. However we were shortly summoned to the bank by a slightly bedraggled Kiwi female, I say bedraggled since at first we actually thought she was slightly inebriated, as she was quite frantic, barefoot and screaming at us from the side! Anyhow, she asked us to look out for her canoe, which had not ten minutes previously been capsized by two people she had rented it out. These same two were also trying desperately to look interested but I did have a slight feeling that they weren't really bothered, since they were shivering in their wet jeans, and close to hypothermia, kind of told me so!

We looked for it along the rest of our trip, but it wasn't to be seen. As the light began to fade in earnest, we finally found our landing point, or so we thought! We were in the right area, just not on the right side of the river

and a little further downstream from where we were supposed to be. We quickly paddle slogged upstream, and ferry glided under the old railway bridge to river left, and our camp site as the dark settled over us. I say this with trepidation, since our camp site, was literally a patch of grass next to a toll bridge, with running water and a toilet. Nothing else. Ray Mears would have been in his element with us. We soon had our tent pitched, a great fire going, well a smoky flame at least!

The BBQ meat spicing was well handled by Andre, and my home made flat bread and a few beers rounded off a nice evening for us.

Day 2

Paddle from Whitney-on-Wye to Preston-on-Wye – 26km (5 hours)

Pub address: Ploughfields, Preston-on-Wye, HR2 9JT

Camp: (camp site) Mr. J. Price, New Court Farm. Tel: 01981 500349. No facilities, only a pub a mile away – Yew Tree. Tel: 01981 500 359. Camp site sign on right after Monnington falls near electric lines (£3 a night each).

Day two dawned and with a five hour paddle from Whitney to Preston-on-Wye ahead of us, we set about breaking camp and repacking. We soon found that the mild day had some wind in store for us. The weather itself was fine and sunny yet again, but the wind just seemed to come at us from all angles, except from the rear. Paddling was hard going, and at times we were paddling to a standstill in the middle of the 75 metre wide river. We also made plenty of stops for dry firewood that was in abundance, and by the last third of the day's paddle, we had both just about had enough. We saw a lot of sheep, some grey heron and lots of long, straight, mundane grass banks on this second day. The only excitement came when we approached the most daunting rapid of the trip, only to realise after we had passed the landmarks, that the water levels were so high, the rapids

had been washed out. A blessing in any weary paddler's book. Our second campsite was even more basic, if that's possible. We had a grass verge and nothing else, not even beers for the night. I was glad to have researched where the nearest pub was and had soon procured a bottle of brandy and some cans of coke, even if it did involve a two mile walk. As dark came over our little campsite, we sat and watched our wood supply dwindle as we chatted long into the winter's night. By 9pm we were ready for some shuteye.

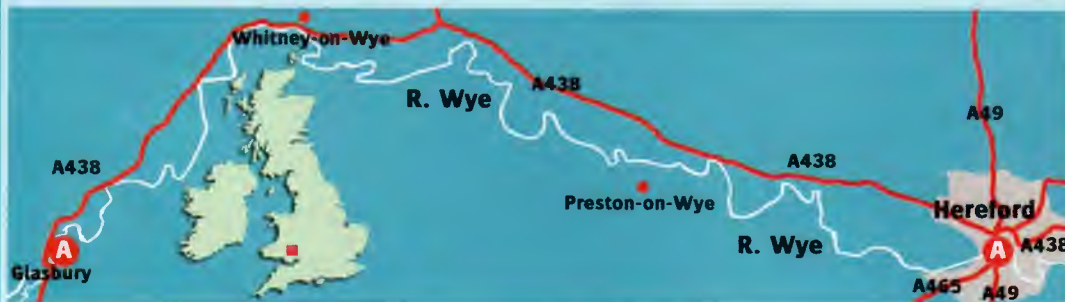
Day 3

Preston-on-Wye to Hereford – 16.5km (4 hours)

Finish in Hereford at around 2:30/3pm

Bus transport back to Glasbury: 01452 527516

Day three woke us with some heavy sounding rain against the tent. As so often is the case when you sleep in a tent, the sound is always more intimidating than the actual weather. It was hard drizzle rather than a pelt, but nevertheless we packed in record time, since we only had 20kms or so left to paddle to Hereford, our finish point. The rain wasn't always heavy, but it was incessant! We soon found a steady rhythm and just kept going, even passing by the odd fisherman having his morning tea. Due to the unpleasantness of the weather, we didn't stop to take photos, eat or drink. We just kept our head down, and paddled. After two hours, we knew we were near the end, as we began to see groups of fishermen and lifebuoys along the banks of the river. We



Boa Island

Solo circumnavigation



reached the end after paddling under the old railway bridge in Hereford, and none too soon either. We managed to haul our canoe and kit over a locked gate and into a deserted courtyard. I do not recommend anyone else does this, since the owner was not impressed to find a five metre canoe in his parking space! It would be prudent to pull out before the bridge on the river left, at the Hereford Canoe Club, although you best ask them as well! Since we knew we had a two hour wait for the bus to shuttle us back to our start point in Glasbury, we had some lunch at a local pub, in front of the open log fire. Arriving back at the car, and being from South Africa, it was a blessing to see the car undamaged and not broken into, even though it was parked outside a public amenity.

In all, a good three day trip and I look forward to paddling more rivers with friends. One feels a completely different aspect of travel, and you are reminded that nearly 60kms on a river, might only be 15kms by car, but the adventure is far greater. I had not paddled this section of the river before, and Andre had not paddled a canoe. He never got his feet wet once, and my Wellington boots were infallible. We were also relying on a map and route card that was produced in 1994. I made sure that I only told him this after we had launched! I think we made a tremendous success of the trip, and both thoroughly enjoyed life away from the rat race for three days, as well as generating numerous war stories! Well done Andre and thanks for the great company, Scotland anyone?

DONOVAN SMITH

Boa Island is the largest inland island in Ireland. It sits in lower Lough Erne, which is in County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland and since 1927 has been accessible, at both ends of the island, by road bridges. A main road, A47 from Belleek to Omagh, runs across the length of the island. The distance around the island is 20 kms measuring its coast line. I didn't intend cutting any corners so I thought this would be the paddling distance.

The day before my intended start I reconnoitred the start and finish from the jetty at Brockagh Point which is also where you can take a ferry across to Lusty Beg Island. I paddled 20 minutes each way. The next day Trish dropped me off and I set off at 11am with an estimate of six hours to get round.

I decided on a clockwise direct which meant heading west and into the wind for the first leg. Lough Erne is a big expanse of water and as I left the shelter of Lusty Beg the water was choppy. Luckily I was heading mostly into the wind which makes handling easier. As you near the west end of Boa Island the way forward is confusing. I consulted the map and GPS to determine my position. Looking at the map you would think that you could pass under the A47 on the east side of Inishkeeragh, however, the road bridge is to the west with a picnic site symbol next to it on my map. I had checked this part out by car the day before so it wasn't too difficult to work out from the water.

I rounded the west end and had a brief conversation with a man tending his motor boat at a jetty on Inishkeeragh. He said that in straight line to reach the east end of Boa Island just head for the wind mills. I wasn't going to do that as I intended hugging the coast line but the wind mills kept appearing and disappearing as I round the various points. I found a pull in for my first stop of the day marked Mullans on my map. I had been on the go for two hours with just over a quarter of the trip done. At this rate it would take me eight hours! As I headed east the wind started to blow and sky became very dark. The wind was on my back creating some waves which did speed my progress. However, as I approached Rossgole Point Inner these waves were hitting me side on as to get around the point I need to head north! Just before the point I chickened out and clambered out to walk the kayak round some very rocky bits. I was now very wet as sometimes my shorts were in the water and the waves kept bashing in from the west. I knew once around the point all would be OK so I pressed on and as soon as I got the wind on my back I got back in. The wind then sped me east to Portinnode Bridge where I again passed under the A47. As I

rounded the point to head west again, I found a sheltered jetty to rest up and eat before the final push.

I had made good time with the wind so was now up on time but I knew this last stretch would be into the wind. Luckily the various islands south of Boa afforded some shelter from the west wind and the waves. However, I was outside my lowly comfort zone going around Gubbakip and used all the shelter I could get in the bay to its west. The final stretch was sheltered by Lusty Beg Island and after a brief chat with the ferry man I arrived at my start and finish point just before 4pm.

The journey time of just less than five hours was OK for a solo paddle; I think six hours would be more suitable for a group. The best parts for me were along the south side of the island, with good views and on the day I paddled more sunlight. On the north side it was very dark and I found the various wire fences projecting out into the lake ugly. The main hazard is the wind which can cause large waves.

HAPPY PADDLING FROM BOB MOSSOP



Technical bits:

I was paddling an Esky 13 touring kayak using a set of split paddles. The map I used was the Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland, Lower Lough Erne, Discoverer Series, Sheet Number 17 at 1 to 50,000 scale. I also carried a GPS which I use for walks and an Expedition 4 Compass by Silva. I used information relating to the Canoe Trail on Lough Erne from the Northern Island Tourist office. (Canoe Trail web address: www.nicanoeing.com)

Grid References: Start and finish 108 625 (Don't forget to change your GPS to the Irish grid!)



The canoe trails have been submitted by BCU members. The BCU have not carried out risk assessments and cannot take liability for any accidents, damage or loss of property whilst paddling on these trails.

TO RUSSIA WITH LOVE

I'm standing up to my knees in snow on the other side of the world about to embark on the first kayak descent of the River Lyutoga. It's about minus five, there are mini icebergs floating past me heading down the fast flowing water, I'm about to paddle a kayak which was in vogue 15 years ago, Phil Hadley couldn't help thinking, 'How did I get here?'

It all started Christmas 2005 with one of those 'out of the blue' phone calls.

"Yes, I'm a BCU Coach"

"Yes, I'm happy to work abroad"

"Where???"

The "where" was Sakhalin, an island off the Eastern coast of Russia, my job was to train some of the employees of a European owned leisure centre how to coach paddling.

The guy on the other end of the phone, Phil, enquired as to whether I could coach canoe or kayak, I do both which was kind of fortunate because

Phil had no idea what boats he had got, as

they were in a container under fourteen feet of snow!

Next problem was that he wanted me out there early Spring and my diary was looking pretty hectic, the only time free was Spring Bank holiday week, and this was free for a reason – I had quite a few paddling trips already booked for this year, Alps, Canada, Finland and Spring Bank was my chance to earn brownie points with my wife by taking her away for a few days without a boat! Time for some careful negotiation! My wife is not only the most wonderful person I've ever met, but also the most tolerant, and with little more than a shrug, agreed that I should go.

There is no direct flight from Birmingham to Moscow, so a change first in Frankfurt, then on to Moscow, this was going very well! I had to change airports in Moscow, but had three hours, so no pressure, or so I thought! I got into Sheremetyevo Airport about 20 minutes late, no problems, then joined the passport check queue, or rather crowd, I have never seen anything quite so disorganised in my life. To cut a very long story short, it took over an hour to clear immigration, my transfer had left and I got the scariest taxi ride ever across to Domodedovo Airport. They haven't quite got to grips with e-tickets yet so I'm running from desk to desk trying to find my paper ticket, I got to the desk with 25 minutes to spare for the girl to look me in the eye and say "Nyet!" If you

do much travelling in Russia you better get used to that one. I then had to get past numerous other "Nyet"s to rebook for the next day, and then find a hotel for the night. Welcome to Russia!

Horror stories

So after an unexpected night in Moscow I board the worlds longest internal flight, Moscow to Yuzhno Sakhalinsk, nine hours aboard a Russian airliner, I had heard all sorts of horror stories about flying in Russia, there's an air crash every three days, the airhostesses are ex-shot-putters, etc. Luckily these stories did nothing to stop me having a very pleasant flight and I was soon in the capital city of Sakhalin -

Yuzhno Sakhalinsk.

Because of the delay in Moscow I only had three days in Sakhalin, so was very keen to get started that day and soon met my students and sorted out what kit I had. Kit was reasonably good, Old Town 158s, half decent paddles, BAs, throw lines, drybags – not bad!

First obstacle to overcome was the language, three of the students had pretty good English, one or two knew a little English the rest could only say Hello! I talked one of the guys, Alexay, into being an interpreter. On a coaching processes course years ago I learnt the concept of thinking carefully about what you want to say before you speak, talking through an interpreter is the ultimate test of that particular coaching skill. I soon got into the swing of saying half a dozen words, letting Alexay translate whilst I carefully thought out the next six words of wisdom.

Luckily we had access to a very nice swimming pool in the leisure complex, so we were soon J stroking lengths, and practising pivot turns at the ends, very civilised! My next little challenge was to learn names, Russians don't seem to have much choice when it comes to given names so I had two Alexays, two Igors, two Evgenys as well as Dmitri, Maxim, and the identical twins Nadia and Nastia.





Left: the gang; above: Nadia and Nastia; right: Alexay





They were all quick to learn, which was good, as we had lots to do! Next day I wanted to get out on some open water, so we ordered transport and met early for a prompt start. One remnant from Soviet days is the never ending bureaucracy and I was about to have my first taste of it. First of all the driver has to have a bit of paper stamped, then the van has to have an authorisation slip, each boat has to have a registration, this was all in order – we were good to go, except we didn't have the right bit of paper for the trailer!

Not to be outdone we ordered a seven and half ton flatbed, that arrived with a Hyab crane, we wouldn't need that, but it was useful to tie our canoes to. Then we couldn't go north, because as a foreigner without the right bit of paper, I wouldn't be allowed through the police checkpoint, but no problem the guys new of a lake not far away, no police checkpoints, only army ones – no problem!

We arrived at Tankova Lake, and it was very pretty, snow capped mountains all around, this was perfect.

The group started getting changed; I'd mentioned warm, waterproof clothes and suitable footwear. Suitable footwear ranged from fake designer slip on patent shoes with silver buckles, trainers, army boots covered in black bin liners and gaffa taped up the leg to thigh length waders. As I gave out the BAs I made sure that Nadia and Nastia, who had turned up in identical clothing, even down to match baseball caps, had different coloured ones, that really seemed to confuse them, and as soon as I turned my back they were matching again, it was all a little surreal!

A tank testing lake

I set off to do my first demo, the water was very shallow, as I got about twenty feet from the bank I was still only in six inches of water, I couldn't find anywhere deep enough to get the paddle in. I asked Alexay why the lake was so shallow and he explained that this was a tank testing lake, it was deep at the other end, and may be safer at that end because the tanks drive through the shallows very fast. I did a quick dynamic risk assessment, moved the group to the deep end, and kept a careful eye out for anything with a turret!

"Anything else I should know about Alexay?"

"No Phil, no problems, only bears, always watch out for bears – they will eat you!"

The truck came and picked us up in the evening, and we did the whole thing the next day, and the next, over the three days we got most of the students a 2 Star and CST, and the three with the best command of English even did Level 1 Coach, no problems with tanks or bears.

Everyone had a great time while I was there and were keen to book me for a return visit, Sakhalin



I asked Alexay why the lake was so shallow and he explained that this was a tank testing lake

has a similar climate to Siberia – long extremely cold winters, so the canoeing season is quite short. I suggested getting a fleet of kayaks for the swimming pool, these were duly ordered and a return visit was planned for November.

November came and I found myself once again on my way to Sakhalin, no problems in Moscow this time, I flew in and out of the same airport. I arrived in Yuzhno and was surprised by just how cold the biting wind was as I walked across the airport apron, there was two feet of snow everywhere, glad I'm not boating in this I thought.

Phil was there to meet me with Elena, I got my luggage from the 'Nyet' lady and we set off to drop my bags at the hotel. Then Phil dropped the bombshell – no kayaks! Although being sent seven weeks ago from the UK, they were either still in transit somewhere, stuck in customs in Vladivostock, or simply 'disappeared'

What was I going to do now?

I managed to borrow two old kayaks, a Mountain Bat and some spurious Ace boat from the boss of the estate who used to paddle quite a bit, but these boats hadn't been used for years, in fact no one has really kayaked in Sakhalin, from what I could gather.

A 'who can roll first' competition

So the plan was to teach the students how to paddle kayak, give them some teaching points and drills so at least when/if the kayaks showed up they could get on with it. First session in the pool, about twenty Russians turned up all wanting to learn to roll, I managed to put some off until the next day, and then tried to teach some skills first before it degenerated into a

it was very visual/kinaesthetic coaching, and Igor became the first native resident of Sakhalin to roll a kayak!



'who can roll first' competition, they are a very competitive nation!

I ended up running rolling sessions every evening, about the third one a chap called Igor showed up on his own. Igor speaks no English at all, my Russian by now consisted of hello, beer, thank you, goodbye! I suppose that talking sometimes gets in the way of teaching a motor skill like rolling, it didn't that night – it was very visual/kinaesthetic coaching, and Igor became the first native resident of Sakhalin to roll a kayak!

So what to do with the rest of my time in Sakhalin, the trailer had it's paperwork sorted, but then the hitch was the wrong one, then the lights wouldn't work, long story short, we ordered a big box bodied truck and set off to Izmenchivoye, an inland lagoon off the Sea of Okhotsk. The guys had been practising and were keen to get assessed for 3 Star, although it was cold to start with, the wind was dropping and the sun was quite strong. This was looking OK.

The guys got changed and then handed round a bottle of Vodka, I stopped them and explained that although I respect their culture, as BCUC coaches they can't be seen to be drinking vodka at 10am before getting on the water. They looked very sheepish, apologised profusely and put the vodka back in the truck, then returned still apologising about the vodka and handed round a bottle of cognac – it's still work in progress with that issue!

The guys were doing really well with their 3 Star skills and only had to demonstrate rescues; I was a little concerned about this as the only thing stopping the water from freezing was the fact that it was seawater. They had a bit of a debate in Russian, looked a bit sheepish again round the back of the van, then stripped down to their boxers to save getting their clothes wet. You can't knock that for enthusiasm!

So that brings me back to standing on the banks of the Lyutoga about to paddle from Ogoniki to Petropavlovskoye, try saying that after a few vodkas or cognacs. Although this is almost undoubtedly the first kayak descent of this stretch of river, the guys I'm leading have done it a few times before in canoe, and as it's a lovely little Grade 1 bumble with a couple of Grade 2 rapids, I'm sure that it will be paddled many times when that container full of kayaks finally arrives.

Sakhalin is a truly fascinating place, mountainous with lots of snow, there must be some phenomenal boating to be had out there, you just need to be aware of the 20 hours to get there, all the bureaucracy, the police checkpoints, the military checkpoints, the shockingly bad roads, the bears, the tanks, the salmon poachers (they'll shoot you!), the cold, oh and the vodka! ●

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Funding and increased charges for inland

waterways users

Hard on the heels of the 12% increase in registration charges set by the EA for each of the next three years; British Waterways (BW) are following suit with proposals to increase licence fees by approximately 9% per year in real terms for the next three years, (a compound increase of nearly 33% overall).

The hikes have been triggered by DEFRA's reduction in funding (Grant in Aid - GIA) allocations to navigation authorities that is linked to their mismanagement of payments to farmers. A further factor is the government's Comprehensive Spending Review tightening of public expenditure and calls for the need to restore levels of GIA have so far failed.

The fact that on the BW system there were 268 million visits by the public compared with some 31,000 licensed craft is not lost on users; who are stressing there is an imbalance with an increased burden of funding a public amenity shared with the wider community. A similar case can be made for the EA navigations. The social, health and economic benefits of waterways are widely recognised and users are pressing for funding to be sought from other agencies ie Regional Development Agencies, and government departments responsible for these areas.

Navigations

Wye Navigation Advisory Committee

On 7th November, committee members rejected the proposal by the EA to introduce craft registration and charges to harmonise the River Wye with other EA navigations. Canoe England is represented on the committee and joined with other members in a majority vote of 8:6 to reject the proposal. Members stressed the Wye cannot be compared or harmonised with the other EA navigations as unpowered rather than powered craft were in use and queried how could registration be policed. Other concerns related to the impact on recreational tourism if registration were introduced.

The matter has been referred back to the EA.

Environment Agency update –

Putting pilot voluntary access agreements in place

The Environment Agency (EA) have finished their project for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) delivering canoe access pilots on the Mersey, Wear, Waveney and Teme, in October 2006; and are now evaluating what can be learnt from the first year of the agreements. The EA's update reports:

River Waveney – We are already hearing positive comments from both anglers and paddlers. The Broads Authority is looking to create access on the river from the bottom of the trail we created to the start of their navigation.

River Teme – discussions are taking place between paddlers and owners on amending the existing agreement.

River Mersey – we are hearing reports on the Mersey of increased use, with the rugby clubs who agreed to allow paddlers to use their car parks now looking to set up canoe clubs sharing their wider facilities.

River Wear – In Durham, our officers are working to consolidate the verbal agreements that were put in place for the Wear on the section around the city.

Canoe England comment on the update:

R Waveney – the pilot scheme has been superimposed on an existing access agreement introduced in 1999/2000 by a partnership comprising the BCU, local authorities, East of England Development Agency and EA. The arrangement regularised the long standing custom and practice of paddling on the river.

The lower end of the trail between Ellingham and Geldeston Lock is already part of a canoe trail promoted by and posted on the Broads Authority web site.

The access pilot scheme has brought no real changes to the custom and practice for paddling.

R Teme – Canoe England Access Department, West Midlands access team, clubs and paddlers report no discussions with either the EA or their consultants. The conditions of use set out in the initial draft of the agreement are considered unsafe and unacceptable.

River Mersey – North West region have provided feedback to the consultants saying, the scheme clearly demonstrates a staffing resource is required to create this type of agreement using the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) dedication process. Such schemes are likely to go beyond the means available to the voluntary sector.

The portages and information boards etc helps bring the paddling experience to a wider audience.

There is increased participation but no means of measuring the level of greater activity.

The scheme provides more certainty of the right to be on the water, but access to the water remains inhibited'.

* The scheme could be an exemplar of open access, but it is disadvantaged by:

- access points through locked premises requiring pre-arrangement to unlock resulting in less inhibited than 100% availability with time restrictions
- access and egress arrangements etc not fully taking into account advice from local paddlers and the consideration of the range of water levels.

In respect of how the new access has effected others, paddling activity has provided added public interest to the river and attracted visitors to the nature park.

Economic benefits. The Rugby Clubs at the access points from the sale of refreshments and the local canoe shop may have gained from paddling activity.

River Wear – the EA and Canoe England are in receipt of a letter from a solicitor representing riparian interests that

lodges an objection for a canoe access agreement and paddling below Durham. The expectation is for no further progress to completed the pilot as planned unless the objection is withdrawn.

The EA has fuelled local objections to paddling and frustrated the long standing custom and practice of paddling sections of the river above and below Durham. Access to the river around the Durham peninsular remains open.

Further comment will follow when the evaluation report is available from the EA.

Inland Waterways Advisory Council (IWAC)

IWAC is an independent statutory body created in April 2007 to provide advice to government, navigation authorities and other interested persons on matters it considers appropriate that are relevant to Britain's inland waterways. IWAC was established by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) and is supported by DEFRA and the Scottish Executive. It is the successor body to the Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council (IWAAC), created in 1968 to give advice on the amenity and recreational use of canals and rivers managed by British Waterways. In England and Wales, IWAC's remit covers all of the inland waterways.

IWAC have issued a report 'The Inland Waterways of England and Wales in 2007 - What has been achieved since the publication of Waterways for Tomorrow in June 2000 and what needs to be done'

It reports on progress in implementing the policies contained in the June 2000 policy statement 'Waterways for Tomorrow', published by the then Department for the Environment, Transport and Regions. The Council says that although overall the progress has been encouraging, it is concerned that the waterways still do not have settled funding arrangements.

Significant for canoeing, the report makes reference to the BCU and canoe access saying "The BCU insists that it will not be possible to make voluntary agreements in the more difficult locations and that the only solution is open access legislation on the Scottish model."

A series of 17 recommendations to government includes the key points:

- DEFRA should make no further attempts to negotiate voluntary access agreements for canoeists but should re-examine the possibility of giving the same right of access to canoeists in England and Wales as already exists to those in Scotland.

And for water recreation as a whole:

- Government should establish an inter-departmental committee for the inland waterways of England and Wales. This should be made up of representatives of those government departments with lead responsibilities for environmental improvement, regeneration of local economies, heritage, recreation, planning and transport. The purpose of the committee would be to ensure that government policy for the inland waterways is carried through by all relevant departments of government.
- In partnership with IWAC and the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities, the DEFRA should take the lead in the new inter-departmental committee to produce a new and up-to-date policy statement for the development of the inland waterways of England and Wales. This statement should give due attention to climate change, environmental improvement, public health and community cohesion.

For the complete report refer to: www.iwac.org.uk/reports

THE FIRST SIX MONTHS

Although it doesn't feel like it, almost six months has passed since I started with Canoe England. During this time the access team has been involved with numerous discussions, debates and consultations, as well as political party conferences.

At the party conferences I was struck by the dedication of volunteers, this is something I have always been aware of but like many other things in life, I sometimes take for granted. Standing around in the cold and the wet and being paid to argue your case is quite different from volunteering and doing it for free. So once again my thanks to Chris, Rosie, George, Allen and Ian at Bournemouth, and to Michael at Blackpool.

Thank you also to all the other volunteers out there whose help is vital to our work but who often go unrecognised.

In going through existing policy documents, strategies and position statements, it seems to me that except for a few adjustments here and there to reflect the current situation that they are mostly fit for purpose. However, what I do believe needs to be done, is

for them to be made more visible and if possible they should be made easier to read and understand. I say if possible because in some instances, the language is legally based and changing this, would also change their meaning. As all of our printed literature is in the public domain, there are some things which for reasons, I am sure you understand we want to keep to ourselves for now.

One of the goals I have set for myself is to meet up with all our Regional Access Officers, and as many of our Local Rivers Advisors and Coastal Access officers as possible. I would also like to go to other regional events whenever I can. I believe that it is important for as

many of you as possible to be able to put a name to a face and more importantly for you to be able to put your views across to me as well as for me to be able to earn your trust. And finally so that I can pass on some of the information that we need to keep to ourselves.

ANDY GREEN
HEAD OF ACCESS
CANOE ENGLAND

Rosie and Chris



Salmon under threat

Our native salmon are facing uncertain future – but recreational water users including anglers, canoeists, rowers and small boat users can help to protect them.

It is always thrilling to see wild salmon leaping up weirs and waterfalls as they return to their spawning grounds. But a parasite spreading through Europe could destroy the population here.

The parasite (Latin name: *Gyrodactylus salaris*) is less than half a millimetre in size and barely visible to the naked eye, but it can cause severe damage to salmon, and often results in the death of affected fish. It is now widespread in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, and has also been found in France, Germany, Portugal and Spain.

Thankfully the parasite has not yet been found in the UK but experiments have shown that our salmon would be killed by it, so it is really important that it is not introduced from Europe. It is possible that even one parasite imported to an previously unaffected river could cause an epidemic in a very short time.

The main threat is from the importation of diseased fish and

controls are now in place to minimise these risks. However, there is also a smaller risk that watersports enthusiasts returning from these European countries could



FURTHER INFORMATION

Environment Agency web site
www.environment-agency.gov.uk/recreation

Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) web site:
www.defra.gov.uk

Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) web site: www.efishbusiness.com

inadvertently carry the parasite back to this country.

The parasite can survive in wet or damp conditions for five to six days on boats, equipment or clothing. Most affected are recreational water users returning with their equipment, or European competitors entering the UK for events, where they intend to re-use their equipment within a week.

If you are returning with equipment used in rivers in the European countries listed above you can help prevent importing the disease on equipment such as keep nets, reels, boats and canoes plus associated items, wetsuits, clothing and footwear by doing two simple things:

- Thoroughly drying all equipment for at least 48 hours. Drying in sunlight in temperatures above 20°C or
- Disinfect by simply immersing equipment in seawater or a salt solution (sodium chloride concentration 3% or more) for a minimum of ten minutes can kill the parasite. All equipment should then be thoroughly rinsed in tap water.

Marine vessels returning from abroad do not pose a risk as the parasite cannot survive in seawater but consideration should be given to tenders or other equipment used in rivers.

Environment Agency – Transport and Works Act Order

Originated by the Environment Agency, the Order is intended to be the means to revise navigation acts without recourse to new legislation, and enable the harmonising and restructuring of boat registration and charges. The BCU along with other boating organisations have been involved at every stage and draft of the Order as a continuous consultation process.

The process has now seriously stalled. DEFRA have been guided by parliamentary counsel to tell the EA they cannot recommend that the proposed Order is made in its existing form. The EA's and DEFRA's legal teams are again in dispute; and subject to the Order, the EA has stated it will continue investigating measures to harmonise the registrations and charges for craft other than privately owned powered types.

Boating organisations have expressed their frustration with the time, costs and resource so far given to this work for over four years, with the prospect it will be continued at some stage.

Volunteer Coordinator

The Volunteer Coordinator for Canoe England would like to offer support and information to club volunteer coordinators. In the coming months, clubs will be contacted to provide details on their Club Volunteer Coordinator.

Club volunteer Coordinators can benefit a club through providing a point of contact to new and existing volunteers, and look at ways to recruit new volunteers as well as provide support to existing volunteers. The National Volunteer Coordinator would like to offer ongoing support to your Club Volunteer Coordinators through a range of resources, knowledge, advice and information.

Canoe England can also support you to recruit new volunteers by promoting your clubs' needs at a county, regional or national level. If you need new committee members or people to help out on club nights or at events, let the Canoe England Volunteer Coordinator know.

To take advantage of the support offered from Canoe England's Volunteer Coordinator or to request more information on the role and benefit of appointing a Club Volunteer Coordinator, please email volunteers@bcu.org.uk

CLUB FORUMS

Canoe England will be hosting regional club forums across the country in Spring 2008 to provide valuable information and guidance to club members and volunteers.

The forums will provide useful information to club members to assist in the running and development of their club. Child Protection will be a key focus to enable club welfare officers to attend the 'Time to Listen' workshop during the afternoon. Other workshops will run throughout the day providing information and advice on key topics.

Places are limited to up to four members per club and workshops will be allocated on a first come first serve basis. Make sure your club doesn't miss out, and sign up now!

For more information and updates on club forums please keep checking the Canoe England web site - www.canoe-england.org.uk. Alternatively contact us direct, email volunteers@bcu.org.uk or telephone 0845 3709530. Information will also be included in our club newsletters.

December volunteer focus

Across the country, volunteers are making outstanding contributions 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: Brian Kelly
Club: Wokingham Canoe Club

High praise for star parent

Clubs and centres should sing praise to the paddlers themselves for bringing in some of the most valuable supporters in the sport – the parents, or otherwise known as the taxi drivers; club fans and backbone to the club. Many parents are lured into volunteering as a result of the many cold and dark nights of training sessions spent watching their loved ones training and learning to paddle. How better to spend that time, but to keep warm and busy by volunteering to help out your local club?

For many clubs, the parents provide invaluable help through the time they volunteer to the club while their 'little ones' are training. One volunteer who did just that was Brian Kelly and Wokingham CC are certainly thankful to his son Anthony for joining the club.

Brian introduced paddlesport to the family during his time working for the RAF in Malta during the seventies. With his children, Brian explored the coasts of Malta which sparked Anthony's desire to join his club when he was older. "When he was out training

I was loitering about feeling very bored so started doing general tidying up to keep my mind occupied," explains Brian.

The club's treasurer, Osmund Siverston, praises Brian highly on behalf of Wokingham CC: "Brian fixes things that tend to get overlooked or ignored in a communal setting – I often bump into him wandering off, tools in hand, on another DIY mission. He might fix a shower, or clean off the rust and repaint an old set of V bars for the club, or he might just decide to give the club boats a good de-scale and spring clean. He brings seedlings to the club and spends time planting and nurturing pot plants and flowers around the place – I've never seen anyone else care about the little things like that! He is always the first to volunteer to take charge of the car park at our club events, but I've also seen him looking after parking at the Sprint Regatta at Dorney this year and doing the same at some other clubs race's with the bumble reason being 'I just thought I'd see if I could help them'".

After gaining some tips and advice for himself, Brian mastered his own skills in a canoe to develop his

accomplished 'paddling in a circle' to straight line paddling and true to his nature, Brian looked at other opportunities where he could help out the club: "I decided to take up coaching when youngsters used to arrive at the club with no coaches available and went away looking dejected. After retiring in 2004, I now have more free time to do general chores at the centre and coach the junior squad."

Brian's coaching role has grown to helping parents transport boats to events as well as arranging and running evening training and weekend sessions for the young members of the club. His motivation to provide enjoyable sessions means Brian has to work hard during the gloomy cold winter nights to ensure indoor circuits or paddling machine sessions are fun.

Brian's efforts don't go unnoticed by Wokingham CC as Siverston says: "Brian is a very decent person and a real gentleman with a lovely sense of humour, always ready to greet you with a smile and a quick witted comment. Every club needs a Brian if they are to develop and succeed!"



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.

Canoe England Volunteer Awards 2007

Nominations are now closed for the first ever Volunteer Awards 2007 organised by Canoe England. Many thanks to all those who gave their time towards making nominations to show their appreciation to just some of the many hundreds of volunteers, officials and coaches who work hard within our sport.

The response for each category has now provided Canoe England with the hard task to short list in each category and to select those which stand out against all the other nominations. Winners to be announced in the new year with a special presentation to made later in the year. Look out in the next edition of Canoe Focus for more details!

VOLUNTEER UPDATE AND CONSULTATION

Throughout this year, Canoe England have started to develop a support network for new and existing volunteers in paddlesport. With the initial focus being on providing information and news to clubs and volunteers, Volunteer Coordinator Julia White, has developed a number of initiatives to ensure volunteers stay informed.

The volunteer section on the Canoe England web site (www.canoe-england.org.uk) has been set up to provide news and information as well as access to new resources. A monthly newsletter is also emailed to volunteers who have signed up to receive it, and details new developments and news as well as dates of workshops around the country.

Canoe England have also been focusing on the recruitment of young volunteers into clubs through the national 'Step into Sport' scheme. Clubs have been sent leaflets about the 'Step into Sport' scheme and how to take advantage of the hundreds of students who are now embarking on the scheme and looking to volunteer in clubs around the country. Students are also being given bookmarks and leaflets to signpost them to our sport through their school networks.

A National Volunteer Group and a Young Volunteers Group have formed to advise the Volunteer Coordinator in her work and are currently providing ideas and feedback to Canoe England. In the new year, a detailed action plan for volunteering will be drafted and your feedback is also welcome.

If you have any ideas to assist the Volunteer Coordinator to outline an action plan for the coming year, please email volunteers@bcu.org.uk or write to Julia White, Volunteer Coordinator, 18 Market Place, Bingham, Nottingham NG13 8AP

Canoe England
www.canoe-england.org.uk

Step into Paddlesport
Develop your potential through
Volunteering and Leadership

Contract Details:
Email: pesscl@bcu.org.uk
PESSCL Development Officer
Canoe England
18 Market Place, Bingham
Nottinghamshire, NG13 8AP
0845 370 9500

A very big thank you to all volunteers who are contributing to paddlesport – your time is appreciated to ensure your club, centre, paddlers and sport can thrive. Happy Christmas to all paddlesport volunteers!

How does the club get involved?

- ✓ Identify appropriate roles for young volunteers to develop their skills
- ✓ Identify a Volunteer Coordinator to oversee the programme
- ✓ Identify coaches, officials and existing volunteers who can support the young volunteers
- ✓ Ensure all club child protection policies are in place
- ✓ Ensure all personnel with direct responsibilities for young volunteers have been CRB checked
- ✓ Ensure appropriate insurance is in place (Step into Sport students have their own insurance cover)
- ✓ Contact your County Sports Partnership who can put you in touch with an appropriate school
- ✓ Volunteers will be identified
- ✓ Confirm start date and location with the mentor

Do you already have Young Volunteers working within the club?

Contact the teacher at their school or your County Sports Partnership and register them with Step into Sport to enable them to get more benefits from their volunteering.

More guidance is available to assist with Creating High Quality Partnerships for Young Volunteers.

For more information please contact:
Ray Hudgepeth PESSCL Development Officer
pesscl@bcu.org.uk Tel: 0845 3709500



Step into Paddlesport Guide for Clubs

What Roles Could Students Take On
Within our Club or Centre?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>Assistant Officers
Supporting volunteer coordinator
Assistant Treasurer
Media / Marketing Officer</p> <p>Webpages / Newsletters
Updates and design
Club Logos
Promotional work</p> <p>Coaching
Assessing Sessions
Telling them up / cool downs</p> | <p>Behind the scenes
General Administration
Committee minutes
Fundraiser
Assist with Clubwork
Writing development plans</p> <p>Organising Events / Festivals
Club development activities
Out of school hours clubs
Assessing an official
Coaching Schemes
Holiday Schemes</p> |
|--|---|



BCU Club of the Year AWARDS 2008

Be in with a chance to win up to £6,150 for your club!



Nominations are now open to all BCU affiliated clubs to nominate your club for the prestigious title of

'BCU Club of the Year 2008' and the chance to win up to £6,150 for your club!

The winning club will be honoured as BCU Club of the Year 2008 at a special presentation as well as receive a £150 voucher for Cotswold Outdoors.

Two additional clubs will win a £100 voucher to be spent at Cotswold Outdoors.



All three clubs will be nominated for the CCPR's (Central Council of Physical Recreation) Sports Club of the Year (SCOTY) Awards 2008 in association with The Foundation for Sports and the Arts. Clubs who are successful in the 15th Sports Club of the Year Awards will be awarded at a glittering gala dinner in a top London hotel:

First Prize -

£6,000

Two x Second Prizes -

£3,000

Three x Third Prizes -

£1,000

- 1 Does your club encourage more people to take part in paddlesport and set standards to which other clubs aspire?
- 2 Does your club have a proven track record in working with schools, local authorities or other community organisations?
- 3 Does your club have high standards of good practice, safety and governance?

Nominations close on **FRIDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2008**. Please ensure your club has read and fully understood the requirements for BCU Club of the Year Awards before submitting your application.

For more information and an application form please email: volunteers@bcu.org.uk or call 0845 3709530

canoeexpo

The UK's Largest Canoe & Kayak Show

16-17 February 2008
Stoneleigh Park, Coventry



Our Mission

To host a showcase event which celebrates canoeing and kayaking with the enthusiast, newcomer and occasional paddler.

Whats Happening?

Retail exhibition: Thousands of products under one roof from over 100 brands.

Information and advice from organisations.

Providers of courses, trips and holidays on hand to talk to about your next trip or course.

Inspirational and entertaining film shows, slide shows and talks.

Educational workshops and presentations.

Exhibitors at the Show

Advanced Elements	Kayak Carrier Systems	Scotty
Ainsworth	Keen	Sevylor
Aquapac	Kober & Moll	Shred Ready
Aquabound	Lendal	Silva
Astral	Level Six	Sola
AT Paddles	Liquid Logic	Stearns
Bell Canoes	Mad River Canoes	Sweet
Bending Branches	Madyaker	Streamlyte
BlissStick	Malone	Teva
Bushsport	Mega	TekSport
Canoe & Kayak Magazine	Mitchell Blades	TNP
Clear Kayak	Native Kayaks	True North
Cordee	Necky	Turtle Paddles
Craft	Nigel Dennis Kayaks	Typhoon
Crewsaver	Nikwax	Valley
C-Tug	NKE	Venture Canoes
Current Designs	Nookies	Venture Kayaks
Dagger	Northwater	Waterquest
Delta	North Shore	Wavesport
Dermatone	Novacraft	We No Nah
Eckla	Ocean Kayak	Werner
Egalis	Ocean Paddler	Wilderness Systems
Elephant Wear	Old Town	Wild Water
Emotion Kayaks	Originz	Yak
English Braids	Ortleib	
Eskimo	P & H	Organisations/Holidays
Exped	Palm	British Canoe Union
Feel Free	Peak UK	Canoe Control
Fluid	Pelican	Clearwater Paddling
Gerber	Perception	Extreme Care
Glyn Edwards	Pesda Press	Gene 17
Grey Owl	Playboater	Getafix
Gumotex	Polo Zone	Isle of White Sea Kayaking
Happy 2B	Predator	Kara Expeditions
Harmony	Prijon	Kayakojacko
Heritage Kayaks	Pyranha	North Wales Kayak Fishing
HF	Reed Chill Cheater	Paddle 2 Climb
Hobie Kayaks	Riot	PGL
Immersion Research	Robson	Rock and Sea
Islander	Rockpool	Sea Kayaking Cornwall
Island Kayaks	Rough Stuff	Sea Kayak Milo
Jackson	RTM	
Karitek	Salamander	

Plus more to be confirmed



Why Canoexpo?

Shows in recent years have lacked appeal for both exhibitors and visitors alike. As well as being expensive to attend, recent shows also lacked content and atmosphere. Canoexpo changes all that, it promises to be a true exhibition of the latest products and services on offer.

canoexpo



Guest Speakers

Provisional Speakers include: David Fairweather, Franco Ferrero, Leo Hoare, Terry Jackson, Kevin Ashton, Ben Lawry, Danny Mongno, Olly Sanders, Nigel Dennis, Jeff Allen, Pete Knowles, Simon Osborne, Deb Pinniger, Simon Westgarth, Gordon Brown, Allan Ellard and many more to be confirmed.

Presentations & Workshops

- **Kayak fishing** – Outfitting your boat, getting started
- **Whitewater** – Expedition reports, destination guides, safety & rescue workshop
- **Sea kayaking** – Inspirational film and slide shows from around the UK and overseas, paddling technique and dry land workshops
- **Open canoeing** – Workshops and trip reports
- Outfitting your open canoe
- Tarpology - Using your canoe tarp effectively
- White water kayaking in the Pyrenees
- Sea kayaking western Greenland
- Fishing from a sit on top kayak - Getting started
- Expedition planning
- Surfing your kayak - The unwritten rules
- The coaching scheme - How to get started
- Access discussion, What's being done?
- Sea kayaking around Scotland

- Reflections – Sea kayaking
- Understanding tides
- Bushcraft skills for the canoeist
- Fresh fish and icebergs
- Bent shaft canoe paddles
- Low angle v high angle paddling
- Outfitting your sit on top for fishing
- The history of sea kayak design
- Sailing open canoes - The options
- Rio Grande and Easter Island
- Tales From the Thule Bheri
- Technical rope work
- Sit on top kayaks Safety & rescue for beginners
- Canoeing with kids in the Canadian wilderness
- Dry land rolling

Presentations are subject to change



Tickets

Buy tickets in advance on line and get up to 20% off the door prices

Day Ticket : £10.00 on the door

Weekend : £15.00 on the door

Family Day Ticket : £30.00 on the door
(2 Adults and 2 Under 16's)

www.canoexpo.com

Where

**Hall 2, Stoneleigh Park
Warwickshire,
CV8 2LZ**

stoneleigh-park
EXHIBITION AND CONFERENCE CENTRE COVENTRY

In support of Norman

I felt I must write in in support of Norman Brooks (issue 169 Oct 07). I too am an 'old' L2 coach who has been demoted. My husband is an 'old' L3 coach who can also no longer assess 2 Star and can probably assess 3 Star sea but no one seems to know.

We have both funded all of our training and assessments ourselves as we have worked primarily in a voluntary capacity both at clubs and now with the Scouts. We are now faced with the prospect of giving up more time and money (no one else will pay for us) to get back to where we were on 31st August! This I assume is not a big deal for professional coaches whose employers will provide courses or funding. It is all very well to say that members were consulted on this but for people like us the coverage was not extensive enough. We had a baby last year and what with running a Scout troop, having jobs and family commitments etc, this is the first copy of Canoe Focus I have had a proper look at in over a year! This scheme totally disregards the voluntary coaches who often are the lifeblood of the sport.

The other people who will lose out under the new scheme are the children. Many voluntary coaches do not have access to both CCKs and open boats. This is why they don't already provide coaching in both. Therefore many children will never be able to achieve an award in paddlesports because the new awards are so broad. And I know that in my experience kids love to get badges and certificates!

I recognise that I am not going to change things now and that ultimately things will probably improve for the better and changing a large organisation will also bring problems. But I certainly wanted to make it clear that Norman Brooks is not the only one who feels the way he does despite the printed reply being quite dismissive. I hope that if a few of us make a stand then the BCU (and our local branches: CANI, SCA and WCA etc) can help to support your voluntary coaches with updating and transferring so that we can get back out on the water with our groups and have fun doing the thing we all love!

LIZ SMITH

I fully agree with Norman Brooks' letter in October's Canoe Focus. I am a CCK L3 who can teach 1-3 Star but can't assess the new 2 Star due to the lack of old Canoe 2 Star.

Can I teach the 2 Star canoe element – I don't know, the notes fail to clarify this. Our club doesn't have any canoes or coaches that show any interest in teaching them – how do we provide the relevant training. For our recent 'new' 2 Star course, we managed to borrow some canoes and fortunately, a coach looking for a few weeks placement with a London club turned up with his OC L2. The new 2 Star has in my opinion been

downgraded to allow more time for canoe practice, which I feel has ruined a previously good award. The new 3 Star looks to be a much better syllabus, however, there is now a much wider skills gap between the two. Some people want to canoe, others want to kayak and I don't think forcing people to learn/teach both at 1 and 2 Star is a positive development for our sport. Bring back the separate 1 and 2 Star tests, or at least the option for those without the necessary resources.

The new scheme also seems to have been poorly thought out. Most coaches are volunteer club coaches who freely dedicate a generous amount of time and effort to promoting and teaching the sport. In the past, our club have never promoted the Level 1 entry route to prospective coaches as it failed to provide them with a satisfactory level of responsibility or leadership and recommended that they train up to 3 Star standard, at least, and do the Level 2 training and assessment. The minimum level to enter the new Level 1 training is the 'new' (in my opinion downgraded) 2 Star, which could easily be gained within say, three months of starting paddling. Is this the level of paddling ability we want coaching others? To get to the same level as the 'old' Level 2 now takes four days for Level 1 plus an assessment day and three to four days for Level 2 and another assessment, plus a First Aid course and CST. How much is this all going to cost?

The old Level 2 and 3 coach training sessions would have benefited from an extra day each, but to get to the same position as a current BCU Level 2 coach now takes seven to eight days instead of two with two further days for assessment instead of one. That's at least three times the duration and cost. This new scheme is surely going to put off more coaches than it attracts. I enjoy training courses, however, I would think twice about following this extreme route and cost.

I do not remember being consulted, involved or questioned about these changes. As information was drip fed through the CoDe magazine, I have made my comments to the BCU by emails on more than one occasion – which were largely unanswered. The BCU seem determined to make wholesale change to the training and coaching schemes to bring us in line with other sports – surely our sport is unique enough! I have just received an advert for free Level 1 Coach Training in basketball, tennis, field sports etc. You have to pay a £30 administration fee and the courses are all two day, non-residential. How much and how long is our Level 1 Coach Training again?

The BCU seem to have access to plenty of funding for introducing these new schemes, which have taken five years with apparently much consultation, consideration and review by paddlesports leading experts. Is there funding now available to invest in the 'coaches on the water' who deliver these schemes and promote the sport on a regular basis, to be re-trained, up-skilled and generally challenged, to

complete the changes, or is this down to the poor individuals, centres and clubs. If this is 'thinking outside the boat' our sport should be re-named swimming (or drowning).

Sorry BCU, but I fail to see these changes as moving forward, positive or evolving our sport. I seem to remember a good acronym from my old Level 2 training – KISS which you probably know stands for Keep It Simple Stupid – something that this new system is not!

PHIL ATKINSON CCK L3

I read with interest the letter from Norman Brooks concerning the new dual skill requirements (October 2007 issue) and the unsigned non-reply. A reply which, at best, said 'this is a good idea because we say it is a good idea'. It is not a good idea. Patently it is a bad idea.

I was interested because I had written to the BCU (on 13 August 2007) about the same subject. I received a reply (24 September 2007) saying that the BCU is a democratic organisation, that the Star Awards had been 'signed off by the UK Coaching Management Committee where the LCOs are represented via a team of RCOs.' The reply added that 'both kayak and canoe skills at 2 Star... will help you become a better paddler...'. Also if I had 'no desire to form this sound base, you can progress direct to 3 Star.'

If I want to drive a car, I will take a car driving test. If I want to ride a motorbike, I will take a bike test. The same is true of paddling. If I want to paddle an open canoe I will learn how to. If I have no intention of ever paddling an open canoe then why make me do so? Any government which demanded that all car drivers also took a motor cycle test would be laughed out of office. Should all sailors of single-sail boats also be required to be able to handle a spinnaker? For that matter should all paddlers be required to be able to sail!

As for the decision being democratic I find this hard to believe. I have not found anyone who is in favour of it. There are some (well one actually) who can 'see the reasoning behind it' but none who thinks it should be obligatory. And logically it is absurd that I can go direct to 3 Star - by passing the new 'sound base' dual skill requirement.

The effect on coaching has yet to be seen. But it does appear to be illogical that very experienced closed cockpit coaches now have to learn new skills in order to continue to teach exactly the same old skills. Should a French teacher also be required to speak Spanish in order to teach French?

It does seem that the whole idea has been ill considered and under-discussed with those who coach and those who are coached - in other words the membership of the BCU.

It seems probable that the sport will lose coaches and will lose new paddlers as a result. If this does happen the

people who made and pushed through the decision must be prepared to be held to account

It is late in the day, and it will require some pride swallowing by the powers that be, but there is still time to revert to the previous horses-for-courses training needs – if you want to paddle a closed cockpit then you should learn how to. Ditto if you want to paddle an open cockpit.

BILL JOWETT

St Patricks Stream

I've just read Robert Yeowell's suggested paddle, and I must say I applaud his group for canoeing down St Patricks Stream during the closed fishing season.

I and many others pay Cemex Angling x amount of pounds to fish St Pats and I must say there is nothing more annoying than building up a swim using expensive bait only to have it destroyed in five minutes by a group of yelling children in canoes.

This happened to me last weekend and where was their supervisor? They were at the back of the group along with the other adults. As they came down past me I lowered my rod into the water being quite high up on the bank at the time and thinking this would be enough... but no, I was too late, I got caught up on one young man's canoe.

To be fair to the boy in question, he was very good and managed to keep his canoe inline with me so that I didn't lose my tackle etc. It was a shame the others in his group were not so intelligent, they just kept shouting and splashing around, so any fish I did have in the swim were well and truly gone

Eventually the adults arrived and unravelled me, but the damage was by this time already done.

So to all budding canoeists who like to go on the rivers, please spare a thought for the hidden wildlife and of course the fisherman who wait patiently for that one fish to make the rod bend round.

I'm not asking or saying the children should be as quiet as church mice, but to remember the countryside is a quiet, serene place which should be respected by all.

J CAPLIN

I am sorry to hear about your experience. Canoe England provide information and guidance to canoeists on good practice for using waters in an appropriate and responsible manner. Advice is issued in our 'You, Your Canoe and the Environment' leaflet which is sent out in each member pack. The general advice is, be considerate, treat others as you wish to be treated, respect the freshwater and marine environment and follow safety recommendations in order to be seen as a welcome visitor. The full leaflet can be viewed on the BCU web site under News and then Information.

Chloe Nelson-Lawrie -
Customer Service Manager



Has the BCU lost the plot!

As always it was interesting to read the further responses to letters regarding the changes in BCU Performance Awards and Star Awards. However, I have to admit that on this occasion my interest was tinged with a modicum of frustration.

Why? Well for one I'm not sure how many times we have to say that existing coaches are not being demoted and that they will continue to be recognised, subject to coach update requirements, as holding the qualification they have been assessed for. Maybe some coaches will find that endorsed elements they hold on top of their specific award may be subject to change and or the need to re-orientate, however, their coaching qualification will continue to be recognised!

Also, while Norman Brooks' concerns seem to be echoed by a number of supporters, the wider perspective out where things are happening seem to suggest a far more positive future for both our paddlers and our coaches.

Just recently, over a weekend spent in North Wales, I was directly approached on four separate occasions by four separate coaches informing me that they were running new 3 or 4 Star training. Feedback was positive and supportive and in one instance excited and certainly in the case of the 3 Star they were doing so as a follow on to the new 2 Star.

Not being without interest I took the opportunity to sound out some of the students who had been 'subjected' to this supposed trauma to find that they had both enjoyed and felt supported in their kayaking endeavours to have had the opportunity to explore multi boat/single and double bladed activity at that stage of their progression.

Feedback from the first of new Level 1 courses is again very positive and encouraging both from the point of view of the tutors delivering and particularly the students concerned as you will see

from the comments highlighted. Circumstance here suggesting the fears and concerns re unsuitability and downgrading raised by Phil Atkinson may well be unfounded.

The Level 1 provides the perfect foundation to coaching required by those wishing to coach paddlesport either in a club or in a centre and yes the process of gaining Level 2 will take longer in terms of notional hours than the old Level 2, however the new Level 2 at the point of assessment will be a more capable, adaptable and skilled coach, able to perform at a level not dissimilar to the old Level trainee Level 3!

Within the new scheme clubs and centres will be able to do so much more with and gain more support from a coach who has been encouraged to gain the Level 1 or 2 and their 3 and or 4 Star.

All that said I can't help but feel that the cynicism that seems to come from the negative perspective is due to three very specific issues or concerns. That each of these could present a 'real' challenge as we move forward is not in question and need not be problem as long as the issues are identified and in hand, as indeed they are. That they may be an issue for those of us who continue to bury our heads in the sand of yesterday only serves to hold us back from getting on with things.

Let's just ask ourselves why in Phil's experience he can gain access to Level 1 training for free in some other sports. Well because those sports have made the change and have their awards on the UKCC and National Qualifications Framework and are in a position to gain specific funding to make such

offers. The BCU is making progress in being able to make such subsidies as well.

That there is a perception that these sports offer a two-day training for Level 1 may also need some further investigation. A Level 1 in tennis is three days and costs £135 plus registrations, a Level 1 in netball is three days plus home study and session delivery, a hockey award takes the equivalent of two weekends, as does football.

Addressing further some of the other points raised in last months letters and elsewhere...

1. The new coaching system appears to be very expensive and time-consuming process, especially for those in the voluntary sector.

Certainly the duration of training courses in the new system are greater than in the old system. The reason for this being to provide appropriate opportunity for candidates to gain the knowledge and experience to support them in their role. In effect the new courses combine the technical elements of the old system with the coaching process ('how to coach' skills) often missing from those courses.

So there is no getting away from the fact that the courses are longer and that candidates will need to invest a little more time in gaining an award. We should however bear in mind that at Level 1 assessment is included in the four day package and that at Level 2 it will be one day and as such not dissimilar to old system.

Of course longer courses do equate to higher costs, however again the intention here is to ensure that we do provide a differential for volunteer coaches working in clubs and unable or unwilling to travel large distances and pay commercial rates for courses. Indeed the regional networks are being encouraged to provide regional programmes aimed specifically at just such coaches/potential coaches in order that we can run courses at a supported/subsidised level.

The BCU's attention is undoubtedly focused very much to the voluntary view here, as courses will need to be sustainable and accessible. We are looking at funding opportunities to achieve this and notwithstanding will ensure that early courses themselves are subject to support.

2. Why does a coach who's passion in kayak and has no interest in Canoe need to gain experience in Canoe. Especially a volunteer coach.

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



Article by Mike Devlin
Photos by Dave Leathborough

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.

With the above in mind and from the point of view of the coach it is seen as even more important that they have multi – boat experience to share with their students and an appreciation of the transferability of strokes and skills and the nature and value of varied practice in skill development. That said the degree to which we are looking at these alternative experiences (2/3 Star Level) are not unreasonable.

Clearly those who fail to see the advantages and overall benefits of these developments are not looking at things from the point of view of the novice and have a concern only for themselves and a perceived need to go and get into a boat they feel they have no desire to get into. Well they don't – unless of course they wish to assess the 2 Star or become a Level 1 or Level 2 in the new system. And we do recognise that for some existing coaches who have found their niche they will not wish to go back and gain experience in another craft. If that is the case then that's fine for them. Let's not however let the "I can't see the benefit" team cancel out the clear benefits of the new performance awards. With APL routes available, existing coaches who wish to move forward in the new system will be able to do so.

And again we do recognise that for some coaches and clubs access to open boats may be a problem, however, they are out there and while you may not be lucky enough to have boats directly to hand at present, they can often be loaned or borrowed from regional or centre/club fleets.

Also... with respect the canoe/kayak emphasis within the 2 Star Award - The syllabus outlines the elements of assessment that should be assessed in both kayak and Canoe. Philosophically and aspirationally we would hope that training is carried out as per the guidance and in the appropriate craft.

However from a training point of view if a canoe (or kayak for that matter) is not available then there are other ways of exploring 'single blade' (or 'double blade') activity i.e. either an open cockpit kayak that the paddler can kneel in or a sit on top or at the worst a GP kayak that the paddler can sit in and use a single blade.

From an assessment perspective specific canoe elements should be assessed in a canoe.

For further information see:

BCU Paddlesport Performance Awards - Star Award Guidance Notes August 2007

BCU Coaching Awards Level 1 and 2

Both available on the BCU web site or from the BCU office In Nottingham.

Student's feedback from recent Level 1 courses when they were asked to comment on the course content and delivery

"I enjoyed every aspect of the course! I really enjoyed the session planning and learning of other students as well as coaches. I also got my personal level improved loads throughout the week. Games session was good."

"The course was excellent as a whole we got taught a lot about coaching which is definitely needed to be an instructor/coach."

"The focus on coaching technique as opposed to just instruction was great! I particularly enjoyed the cross discipline training."

"I completely enjoyed all of it! I think all the courses should carry on the same way."

"The course was enjoyable, full of enthusiasm and had a great style of teaching!"

"I liked safety rescues and ways of teaching/coaching."

"There was a lot of guided discovery which I found helpful. Also the one-to-one feedback helped me to know that I had to work on."

"The whole course was great! The structure and content worked very well. The coaches fed us the information in manageable and logical chunks."

"The whole course is superb! I wish my initial instructors had had this knowledge to impart from the start – I would have been much more advanced in my personal skills. The assessors – Sam Roberts and Phil Hadley couldn't have been better – knowledgeable, patient and skilled."

"The whole course is superb! I wish my initial instructors had had this knowledge to impart from the start – I would have been much more advanced in my personal skills. The assessors – Sam Roberts and Phil Hadley couldn't have been better – knowledgeable, patient and skilled."

3. Why do those coaches who have been assessing Star Awards for many years, kept up to date via update courses etc, now need to do an additional assessment to perform such tests going forward.

Having made some significant changes to the Star Award scheme it was felt that a degree of quality assurance was required moving forward. In some respects it could have been argued that coaches assessing the Star Awards should have had to re-orientate to the new awards.

In order to take account of the points raised, but to ensure that we were able to take account also of the coach assessor who hadn't kept themselves up to date, a registration process that would ensure currency was the best way forward for the assessment of Paddlesport Start through to 3 Star.

Clearly with major changes to the 4 Star and with this becoming a leadership award many assessors will see this fall outside of their old remit, at least unless they have the appropriate pre-requisite and attend the required re-orientation.

As an exercise, while time consuming, this registration process has proven very interesting in its support of coaches who have kept up to date and are members of the BCU!

4. When will the BCU finalise all these changes? We have seen dates being moved back and back and numerous publications with draft on them.

Changes to the Star Awards are in respect of our more traditional WW kayak, sea, surf, and canoe awards completed. That they sit on the web site with final draft written on them is due in part to the comment stated alongside them that suggests that

they will be subject to a three month review for typo/clarity issues and part due to our inability to make this update due to very recent difficulties with electronic systems.

This will be corrected over the coming two weeks. The further flatwater or touring awards are currently being worked on and other discipline awards may follow.

With regard to the coaching changes – the main time change here has been the change of intended roll out dates from the spring to the autumn for Level 1 and 2. This was due to having to meet three parallel endorsement requirements of BCU, the UKCC and the National Qualifications Framework – this final endorsement hopefully providing for us additional funding opportunities to support volunteer/club delivery.

Level 1 and 2 are now in a position to roll. Level 3 is to be submitted for endorsement in December and will hopefully roll out in late spring.

5. The club have a large stock of 'old' Star certificates. Will the BCU buy these back or accept them if given out in future.

Pass slips for old awards will be honoured only where they are dated prior to the 1st September 2007 and for the standard three months only (30th November)

Any coaches/centres/clubs holding old blank 1 or 2 Star certificates/badges can exchange them for credit within the Paddlepower or Star Awards schemes until the end of 2007. Any such certificates should be redeemed via the issuing home nation office.

6. Does the BCU make, or is it planning to make any differentiation between a volunteer and a professional coach.

In part answered in an early question, however I would comment that any differentiation would be by way of accessibility/subsidy to courses and not in terms of how much time may be required to become a coach. Volunteer coaches are professional too. So may be we should be asking do we make any differentiation between a volunteer and a commercial coach. The answer is yes!

Does the BCU think it's lost the plot? Well the BCU UK Coaching, and home nation coaching committees and associated technical groups do not think so.

MIKE DEVLIN - DIRECTOR OF COACHING





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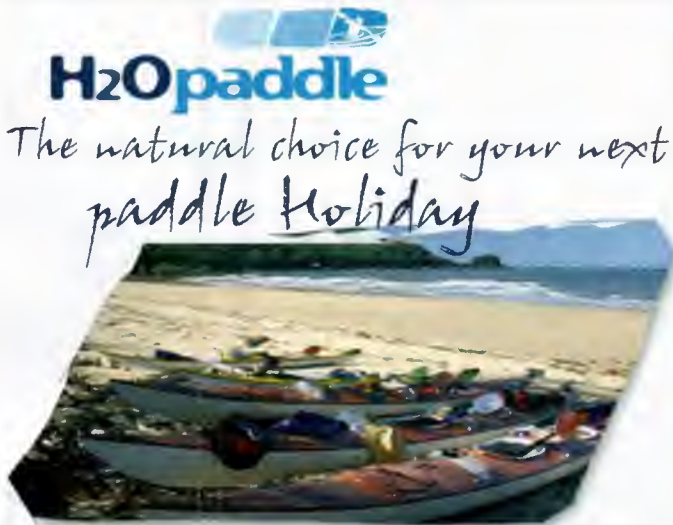


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Wavehopper – development



A Wavehopper development race was run after this year's Shepperton Div 3, 4 slalom on September 22nd. The course was an out and back race course, out towards the Back weir, and finishing back at Shepperton Weir. This innovative race format took most of the 30 paddlers between ten and 15 minutes to complete.

The fastest time of the day was set by joint organiser and wild water racing star Olivia Churchill in 8 mins 37 secs. Special thanks go to Chris, Miranda Churchill and Peter Hargreaves for acting as safety cover for the duration of the competition. Further development races are planned to run at slalom competitions in the coming year.

Results

Mens K1

1. Zach Franklin – Shepperton SCC
2. George Durden – London
3. Phil Davies – Tandridge CC

1st Junior – Jamie Lewis – Tandridge Blades

1st Ladies – Mallory Franklin – Shepperton

1st Vet – Richard Hodge – Shepperton

ANDY GRAY

LONDON & SOUTH EAST PDO



Club accreditation developments

What the Top Clubs have to say

We now have 48 clubs achieving the Top Club kitemark with the earliest ones having undergone a re-accreditation process. Carlisle Canoe Club and Bishop Stortford Canoe Club were awarded their certificates earlier this year. This is what they said regarding hitting all of the criteria to gain the award.

Carlisle Canoe Club

“Most things we were doing but the challenge was to document the procedures and policies and what was working well. As the club chairman I felt this was a valid thing to do even though it was a lot of paperwork to do.”

One requirement was for 2 club members to attend ‘Equity in your Coaching’ workshops. “These were found to be informative...”

Bishop Stortford Canoe Club

“From the onset, once it was clear what the club had to do, the club undertook the task seriously.

We were determined that it would not be just another paper exercise and committed to ensure policies and procedures were adhered to.

When following up and ensuring coaches had valid ‘Enhanced CRB Disclosure’ certificates (a very important criterion) it made it easier to persuade coaches this was necessary as part of the TOP Club criteria.”

The Top Club accreditation scheme has been with Canoe England now for a number of years. Having gained the Top Club award, clubs were also awarded Clubmark accreditation. The Top Club award required more stringent criteria than Clubmark therefore many clubs found this harder to achieve.

Ideally, every club with a junior section should aspire to achieve Clubmark status as they should be working at or above the minimum standards set by Sport England. These standards ensure systems are in place in the club to demonstrate safe, equitable and well managed practices with a reasonable programme of activity. Similarly, there are exceptional clubs in England that are excelling in all aspects of paddlesport and it is felt these clubs should be recognised for going that extra mile by offering two higher levels of accreditation; Top Club and Top Club Gold.

Development of an accreditation aimed at ‘BCU Approved Centres’ is coming to the end of its pilot. Many centres are in a strong position to develop a youth section within their environment as they have the infrastructure already in place. They have the capacity to deliver paddlesport activities, schools and youth groups and provide placements for ‘Step into Sport’ young volunteers. Achieving Centre XT status brings with it additional benefits.

Canoe England has listened to what canoe clubs, other sports and regional Paddlesport Development Officers have been saying and are preparing to launch the new levels of accreditation in the Spring.

The four main areas to be assessed during the accreditation process remain the same throughout all three levels of club accreditation and the Centre XT scheme and are;

- 1) The Activity Programme;
- 2) Duty of Care and Safeguarding and Protecting Children;
- 3) Sports Equity and Ethics and
- 4) Club Management.

Surrey Sports awards

Paddlesport was well represented the first annual Surrey Sports award. The event took place at the Royal Holloway University on the evening of 14th October and attended by over 300 dignitaries across all sports in Surrey. Thousands of nominations were received across the 12 categories, so it was particularly gratifying that four individuals representing paddlesport were nominated,

The highlight for canoeing was Jim Rossiter from Wey Kayak Club, gaining recognition for his tireless work and commitment over the years by winning the BAA Gatwick Volunteer for the Year. Our other shortlisted nominees were: Louisa Sawers (Elmbridge) and Rachel Cawthorn (Wey Kayak), photographed below, for the Powerade Sports Personality of the Year and Brian Gandy from Basingstoke Canal CC also for Volunteer of the Year.





Clubmark

The minimum standards that any sports club with a junior section should be operating at.

Top Club

Many of the same criteria and standards as Clubmark but the club are doing that little bit more to demonstrate they are a Top Club.

Top Club Gold

Some of the same criteria and standards as Clubmark and Top Club but the club have clearly demonstrated that they are operating to the highest standards in all four areas of accreditation.

Centre XT

This is the minimum standards equivalent to Clubmark that an approved centre should be operating at, with an emphasis on providing Paddlesport in eXtra Time (XT) for young people. Approved centres applying to achieve accreditation should have most of the criteria already in place through the approval inspections and AALA licensing.

If your club is currently 'Accredited' or 'Working Towards Accreditation' do not worry, as much thought has gone into setting the levels of criteria along with supporting notes for each level. Your regional Paddlesport Development Officer will be able to guide and prepare your club at the right time as to which level your club is able to achieve.

If your club is not accredited but wish to sign up to the award then contact your regional Paddlesport Development Officer or download an application form from the Canoe England web site and join the swelling ranks of over 3,500 sports clubs in England that are Clubmark accredited.

For further information on club or centre accreditation contact Canoe England office or email pesscl@bcu.org.uk

A really 'Mint' day!

If ever there was a spectator discipline in canoeing, then Canoe Polo easily fits the bill!

On Saturday 8th September Tees Tigers based in Teesside headed up a 'Come n' Try Polo' day for Northern clubs. The venue was on the warm-up pool at the Tees White Water Centre, Stockton. The sight of suitably clad youngsters with face masks and helmets soon attracted spectators who were quickly caught up in the excitement of boat to boat, paddle to body tackles. For those under tuition, team tactics steadily improved and some awesome shots at goals attempted. The success of the day is best summed up by one young lady asking "When can we do this again?" Hopefully not before too long!

Thanks to Tees Tigers for putting on such a professional and fun day and to Tees White Water Centre staff for setting up the goals and making us all so welcome.

For anyone wanting to know more about this discipline of paddlesport – which moves inside to swimming pools when the weather turns really nasty - check out the BCU web site on www.canoe polo.org.uk. If you live in the north, then Tees Tigers can be contacted by email tees_tigers04@yahoo.co.uk

**BOBBY TIMPERLEY
PDO NE REGION**

Introducing Jeff Toser

Paddlesport Development Officer – Eastern region



Like many canoeists, it was through joining the Scouts that I was first introduced to canoeing. Growing up next to a branch of the Blackwater Estuary in Essex helped, with the summer holidays spent exploring the salt marshes and dodging the boats from the two sailing clubs.

I have always been willing to try as many of the varied forms of paddlesport as possible, but the one I have got the most enjoyment from has to be slalom. In 1980, my girlfriend gave the ultimatum "give up canoeing or her", so I joined Southend Canoe Club, who had a very strong slalom section.

When not dodging between the poles, I have travelled around Britain and Europe, paddling white water. After much thought my favourite locations are the Dee at Llangollen, having attended numerous Mike Jones Rallies, and the WCA tours, with memories of de-frosting frozen cags and wet boots. As for Europe, it has to be the Eiskanal in Augsburg, with warm sunshine and potent ice-creams.

Having married Helen in 1987, we moved house around the country a lot, still paddling, but not so seriously, until Clive Marfleet persuaded me to finally go and get a coaching award, I did my first Trainee Senior Instructor course back in 1981, and I eventually passed my Coach Level 3 in 1998

Having settled in Norfolk, I have become involved with the Dereham Canoe Group and Wensum Ospreys Canoe Club, where I specialise in liaising between the clubs, and organising trips away looking for white-water. And now as the Eastern Region Paddlesport Development Officer, in this time of change, I look forward to being able to help all the clubs, and other organisations around the six counties, promoting our many varied forms of paddlesport to young people.

To finish, I heard some wise words recently, "I am not a competitive paddler, nor am I a recreational paddler, I am a recreational competitive paddler", which I would like to think, sums me up.

JEFF TOSER – EASTERN REGION PDO

Brentford FC Community Sports Trust – canoeing section

A Brentford based community group has unveiled an incredible make-over to its premises made possible by funding from St George West London Ltd and a £5,000 community grant from B&Q through its 'You Can Do It' awards scheme.

Brentford FC Community Sports Trust was launched as a charitable trust in October 2005. The aim of the trust is to contribute to the physical and emotional development of young people using sport and role models as a positive influence. The award has enabled the trust to establish a kayaking project there that caters for beginners to advanced paddlers of all ages and abilities. Young people are able to take to the water in and out of school time and in the future will be encouraged to take coaching and proficiency awards. The project was

unveiled by Campbell Walsh, slalom Olympic silver medalist, who is supported by B&Q as part of its partnership programme with the British Olympic Association to support Team GB to the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. Campbell had the opportunity to give them a coaching session on how to improve their paddling techniques.

Campbell Walsh, Olympic silver medalist said: "I've really enjoyed visiting Brentford FC Community Sports Trust today. It's been great to see how B&Q's 'You Can Do It Award' has made a difference to the facilities available to the local community. I've enjoyed coaching the young people and sharing my Olympic experiences with them. Who knows one day they could be aiming for the Olympic Games themselves!"

Paddlepower – A BIG thank you



Paddlepower is an exciting scheme that has been designed to meet the needs of young people. It's colourful and youth centred approach.

The orders for Paddlepower continue to flood into the BCU office, with well over 20,000 young people having benefiting from Paddlepower so far this year.

A big thanks to all coaches, clubs, centres and young people who have supported the Paddlepower scheme. For more information on Paddlepower contact paddlepower@bcu.org.uk or 0845 370 9500.

North East slalom returns

Tyne Valley CC held its first slalom for 17 years in September on the Tyne at Prudhoe. Slalom events in the north have depleted over the years and now the North East region are addressing the problem by running introductory level short course events consisting of 12 gates with a simplified method of judging.

Medals and certificates were awarded to winners and runners up with all entries and volunteers receiving an event certificate and a drawstring bag containing lots of useful free items donated by both Northumberland Sport County Sports Partnership and Sport England North East. However, the event could never take place without the most important people - the volunteers who gave up their valuable time to do the hard work before and after the event.

The competitors found the course challenging with a variety of moves demanding speed, skill and manoeuvrability to go through each gate in the correct direction and order cleanly without touching the gates. The weather played its part in making the course more difficult with strong gusts swinging the gates. The rain stayed off and the water levels were perfect for this level of competition.

The event organiser, Ray Hudspith, would like to thank all the competitors, volunteers and organisations who supported the event including Northumberland County Council Country Parks section for the use of the building during the event. The building, park and river is a tremendous asset to Prudhoe and the canoe club and is a fantastic facility for running paddlesport events.



Broadened sea horizons

Nine young members of Pendle, Northern Star, Oakwood and Bolton CC camped at Anglesey Outdoors near Holyhead for a weekend in September.

The first day paddle was from Soldiers Point through North and South Stack to Abraham's Bosom. The youngsters battled through the tide races and round past Gogarth and paddling past Wens Zawn. Afterwards they returned to base for BBQ and watch the sunset.

The second day was too windy for the sea so they paddled to four mile bridge, where they enjoyed a session on paddling sea kayaks efficiently in the wind and played on the jet.

It was an excellent preliminary weekend for the young people to be inspired by sea kayaking, whilst looking to develop into expedition based development work and expanding their horizons beyond the world of river kayaking.



Cross Stream Challenge – If you are looking for new ideas to make your coaching more exciting and inspirational then maybe it is time you had a go at using Cross Stream as a tool. As we coach we are constantly on the look out for new ways to develop paddler's skills though practice without repeating the same drill, encouraging adaptation of the stroke or manoeuvre to suit different circumstances. Many paddle strokes and boat skills can be transferred

from one discipline to another allowing development of core skills such as agility balance and coordination – the fundamentals of coaching.

What must be remembered is that Cross Stream can be used to develop a wide range of skills, the secret is to be flexible and creative with ideas and the

resources and water you have at your disposal.

Many clubs use slalom poles as they are readily available often with permanent training gates in

place. Buoys, floats and markers on the river bank are another alternative.

The Cross Stream booklet, laminated activity cards and certificates (packs of 20) are available to buy from Canoe England's E Shop either individually or as a starter pack consisting of all of the above at a special introductory price.

For more information about Cross Stream contact kimberley.walsh@bcu.org.uk.



HAVING A SPLASH

On a September evening 1st St Peters Sea Scouts and Beavers went afloat at Walpole Bay Pool, Margate. The evening started with the Beavers going out in the three open canoes, the youngsters were able to paddle around the pool with the assistance of a leader in the stern of each canoe. The youngsters practiced their balance by standing up in the canoes and throwing sponge creatures at each other and enjoying some splashing too.

The parents and leaders were joined on shore by Roger Gale MP,

who would have joined in the water activities if it hadn't been for other prior engagements on the evening. Reluctantly the 16 Beavers had to come ashore after an hour to make way for the next group of Scouts.

As it was the last evening of water activities for Scouts for 2007, a 'Parents Have A Go Session' was organised. Thanks to the advanced efforts of the Scout Leader, No.1 a raft was assembled to go afloat, along with two of the groups pulling boats, three open canoes and sixteen kayaks. A

great sight of Scouts and Parents coming together on the water as the sun was setting.

Two out of three of the opens managed to capsize, one three times which was crewed by leaders and the kayaks had their fair share of capsizes while playing ball games and the must have 'raft' game. All who took part enjoyed themselves.

With the sun setting, the groups started to come off the water, everyone thoroughly wet, having had a good time with some of the biggest smiles coming from the parents. A big thank you goes to Chief (Adrian Matthews) who was a major driving force in organising the evening. Who knows maybe this is a first of many.

Written by Paddles (Rob Davis), Skip (Glen Labuschagne), Chief (Adrian Matthews)



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Youth Freestyle Boulders Weir

The Boulder's event, run by Kayakojacko, followed a couple of weeks later than Nottingham. The coaches checked out the padding in every boat, to make sure it wasn't too tight, or too loose, also checking the paddle grip of the paddlers. All of the youngsters were then shown how to do appropriate off-the-water warm-ups utilising movements that are performed once in the boat. Kayakojacko coach Dennis then helped everyone to perfect their cartwheels, loops and even helixes. Interestingly though the paddlers were still off the water and not in their boats. The reason for this was to mentally and physically simulate the movements involved in the moves making it easier to transfer them onto the water where everything happens so much faster.

Once the paddlers reached the water, some took straight to the pour over whilst others practiced their flatwater moves before reaching the whitewater. The coaches were there when required to help paddlers perfect their moves, or learn new moves in the feature.

The competition had a fun feel to it as always, and there was plenty of encouragement from the spectators. Points were scored for everything from side surfing to enders, so even those that had been wary of entering the pour over in the morning had a good go at getting stuck in during the competition to score some points. Occasionally this resulted in a swim or two but, always with smiles, and once they had got their breath back they all got straight back in their boats to give it another go! The top U18s and U15s showed what was possible in the feature and completed many of the top-scoring moves including tricky whus, lunar orbits and split wheels.

Spot prizes and medals were handed out to those who had shown enthusiasm, impressed the judges or scored the most points. As it was the final the results from this competition were added to the results from the other events in the series and the top three out of five results went towards a series ranking. A full list of results can be found on

<http://www.youth.ukfreestyle.com>

The 2008 series will be taking place between April and September with entries likely to open at the beginning of March. Please keep checking <http://www.white-water.org.uk> for details. Anyone interested should contact fiona_jarvie@hotmail.com

YOUTH FREESTYLE SERIES: Nottingham

A series of competitions aimed at all paddlers aged under 18

This year saw over 100 competitors enter, but particularly those who have some whitewater experience who want to have a go at freestyle competition, or who want to get some coaching. Sam Stephenson, a competitor in the under-12s category, was at the Nottingham event and tells us about his experiences...

The sun was almost shining, the water was running, the 'Muncher' was munching and everything was set at the National Water Sports Centre.

Last year it was blowing a gale and freezing cold, but it was clear that the weather was going to be much brighter this year. After signing in, we were subjected to a grilling on our paddling ability and divided up into groups for the coaching.



Islay Crosbie at Boulders Weir

After a short briefing on the day ahead of us, we were soon warming up and getting on the water. Our group headed to the inlet gate wave for some practice. Towards the end of our 20

minute slot, we took turns to do some timed practice runs before moving on down the course. Next up was the Muncher. Having presumed the event would follow the same programme as last year, all our practice the day before had been on the inlet gate. Following the surprise announcement that the second run was to be on the Muncher, we put in some hard practice. After that we headed down to the bottom wave, 'the washing machine'. Having heard some intimidating stories of people being trashed in this meaty stopper the previous year, some of us were a bit more cautious in this hole than others. Nevertheless everyone gave it a go and came out with a smile on their face. After a session on the looping pool, we were ready for lunch.

Soon it was time for the briefing before the freestyle competition. As a change from previous events, the contestants could do their two runs whenever they liked within the two hours of the competition. We chose to get our first runs over and done with, so after ten minutes of watching the other competitors we got in our boats and joined the queue and waited for our 45 seconds of glory.

After Josh, Stuart and I had done our first runs, we all had a short break before heading down to the Muncher. Being second in the queue I was soon paddling towards the stopper. Just before I started my run the judges shouted out to us, saying that if we pulled our spray decks whilst surfing, bonus points would be awarded. So after the majority of my 45 seconds was

over I pulled my deck and got stuck, side surfing in the Muncher! Eventually I capsized, swam and was rescued by some people downstream. What followed then was great fun as every minute or so another swimmer would come floating down the course after pulling their deck in search of bonus points.

Once the freestyle had finished it was time for the Boater X, as usual this wasn't just a normal down river race. The coaches had obviously worked very hard to make this race a special one. This time we were divided up into teams of four, one of which wasn't allowed a paddle. Two plastic balls were then dropped just above the inlet gate and two more just above the looping pool, each team was then timed as they paddled down the course collecting the balls. Many people ended up swimming through the finish line after a failed hand roll or wet encounter with the looping pool.

As soon as everyone had been down the course and had their boats fished out of the water it was time for the prize giving including a surprise 1st place for me, hooray! Josh, Stuart and I all got prizes for swimming and George for an interesting two-man entry move. So everyone from NACC went home with a prize.

A big thank-you must go to the judges for running the whole event, their useful tips and support as well as their judging in the competition. It's a brilliant chance to learn from experts and just gets better each year. Thanks too to parents for the transport!

Sam Stephenson

Caution: Youth committee at work!

Raising large amounts of funding is always an achievement; even more so when the fund raisers are aged between 13 and 18.

Months of hard work by members of the Basingstoke Canal CC (B3C) Youth Committee secured a grant of £4,500 from Hart District Youth Opportunities Fund (YOF) which aims to involve young people in identifying positive activities, and to support them as decision makers and project leaders.

Paul Robinson, Youth Committee Facilitator and nationally qualified youth worker said, "The members of the B3C Youth Committee saw the need for providing equipment for local young people to gain experience on

moving water. With determination and resourcefulness they developed an action plan which they completed on time and on budget. This is a significant achievement and a very real demonstration of youth participation in action."

The Youth Committee invited various suppliers to tender for business and having negotiated an excellent price took delivery of ten full sets of white water spec equipment from WhiteWater the Canoe Centre.

The Youth Committee has also recently been declared a runner-up in the 'Best Young Persons Website' category of the annual Hantsweb Awards which recognises and rewards the best web sites and

internet services in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The web site (b3c-youth.org.uk) has been developed completely by Craig and Annadel Horner (ages 13 and 15).

Clubs with young people-led projects can apply for YOF funding by contacting their local authorities in the first instance.

Photo:

Back row: B3C Youth members. Front (left to right): Ed Ives-Wara (YOF), Sarah Robinson and Josh Bevan (B3C Youth Committee Chair and Secretary)



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MANVERS LAKE LAUNCH



A new watersports venue has been launched by canoeists at Wath-upon-Dearne.

Yorkshire and the Humber region of the BCU met for the first time on the 300 acre Manvers Lake to show the potential for all

forms of kayaking and canoeing on the former colliery site.

The lake is more than 500m across which makes it ideal for the Olympic disciplines of sprint canoeing and will be managed by Manvers CC.

A boat club house will be built to the east in partnership with the regional BCU and completion is expected in 2008. Sport England's Community Development Programme will provide £100,000 towards fitting out the building.

Anyone interested in membership of the new club should email: manvers@yorkie.org.uk



Grant for Basingstoke and Deane

Basingstoke and Deane CC has been awarded a £5,000 grant to buy touring kayaks, which are easier to steer for older, younger and less experienced members. 'Awards for All' distribute money from the National Lottery. The club had decided that now was the time to develop a more general touring kayak programme and to purchase kayaks for that discipline. After discussions with James Hinves, the local Paddlesport Development Officer, the club submitted a proposal that included not only five sets of kayaks and kit but also training.

The new boats have been popular with paddlers of all ages and abilities. Windy weather has limited the number of coastal trips this summer, but they have been used on the Solent, for day trip up the Hamble Estuary, to cross to the Isle of Wight one evening and to explore the Dorset Coast. Recently club members have taken advantage of the settled weather to spend four days exploring the coastline of Anglesey.

Over the winter the club is planning to use the kayaks on monthly trips to local navigable rivers. For more information visit www.basanddeane.org or phone their secretary Hazel on 01256 362921.



Tanya Bocking Memorial Fund



Just over a year ago I was reading an article in the Institute for Outdoor Learning newsletter regarding funding opportunities for personal development within the outdoors.

The Tanya Bocking Memorial Fund was set up by Tanya's friends and family in the hope Tanya may continue to inspire and help support individuals, in the outdoors, as she did through life.

It is aimed particularly at women, who have chosen a career in outdoor education, but, face issues advancing in that career. Whether it be low income, discrimination or lack of support, the fund makes a difference by paying for training and qualification courses that will enable new outdoor leaders to learn, progress and excel in helping others.

Earlier this year I completed my International Mountain Leader, with the help of a grant from the TBMF. This is an expensive process, and as a self-employed freelance outdoor coach this is not as

simple as it sounds. The TBMF will also help towards other career developments such as paddlesport awards. They also helped me realise another qualification, and now feel that more people should know about this fund.

The TBMF receives grants and donations to support others in developing and achieve a career in the outdoors. Throughout her life, Tanya's honest and generous approach created opportunities for herself and others to do exactly this.

For donations and applications please find out more at www.aulld.org/tbmf.htm

The grant panel made up of Tanya's friends and family meet on the first Thursday of March, June, September and December each year. The deadline for applications is seven days before each meeting (next deadline 28th February 2008).

JEN DICKINSON

YORCIE NEWS: www.yorcie.org.uk

First, lets just take a moment...

As we write this edition we have the sad news that the 1st BCU coach Oliver Cock has passed away. Coaches of a certain age (like me) will remember this small unassuming and yet totally engaging gentleman coach, clad in wellies, shorts and cag, armed only with a clipboard, encouraging aspirant coaches (we were Instructors then) dashing about the lake at Scout Dyke. I'm proud to have Mr Cock's signature, as the first entry in my coaching log book. Thank you Oliver.

And for another Oliver – this time Derek Oliver

Having told you in the last edition of Focus that Aldwark had just celebrated its 40th birthday, that elation was followed by the equally untimely news that Derek had also passed away. Both 'Olivers' will be missed.

Help!

The 25th Jan is the RNLI's SOS day and a great chance for canoeists to help contribute to their biggest fundraising day of the year. If you or your group would like to do something special, at a baths session or on a river trip, then please do your bit to help. A free fundraising pack is available by ringing 0845 121 4999 or www.rnli.org.uk/sos.

Limited to extensive physio, following a successful knee op
Access Officer Paul Lister can't currently paddle so he helped some of the Yorkshire Single Bladers (YSBs) with a very

pleasant 22 mile weekend trip on the R. Derwent. Want to know where and how etc? Then give Paul a ring 01944 758463 or 07751 767067 (at reasonable times please) and find out for yourselves. access@yorcie.org.uk

Kate improves the web site

The latest fix is to create a central database, from which we can email out events, with the aim of reducing the multiple emails that we currently rely on to spread the word. All the 250+ coaches who had registered with the Regions Coaching Secretary Janet Cartwright paul@pcartwright.freemove.co.uk are now 'on'. Similarly all the clubs and organisations that the Regions Secretary Jon Dakeyne jakeyne@aol.com circulate are also 'on'. If you would like your news, to go out like this, please contact Kate webmaster@yorcie.co.uk.

And there's more...

The next phase will be to provide the same service to clubs. The aim is to provide a YORCIE based email address for any clubs who want to take up the offer. The idea is that as all clubs have their annual meetings and subsequently change volunteer officers. We are on a constant round of swapping officers and their email addresses. But if your club took up the offer of theyzcanoecub@yorcie.org.uk then when Secretary 'Joe Bloggs' stands down, the same mail can be redirected to Jane Doe who can then take over all your clubs

emails, without having to tell the world of the changes.

Consequently the Regions Directory can show that the email address for 'The XYZ Canoe Club' is the same for ever.

I'm pleased to report that the new 'leading light' for the Salt n' Shakes (YSKs) is Mike Robson tel 01924 527886 or mike.robson23@ntlworld.com. Thank you Mike.

Coaching related diary dates...

The next coaches and get together meeting is on Sunday evening 9th March 7.30 at Fearnville Sports Centre, Oakwood Lane. Leeds.

The date of the 2008 Aldwark Coachfest weekend is April 26-27th. And don't forget that all the coaching news, courses, minutes and dates are on the regions web site at www.yorcie.org.uk

And finally ..

I'm delighted to advise you that in recognition of her tremendous voluntary contribution for promoting canoeing, the Guide Association has nominated JANET Cartwright for the 2007 Torch Award. Wonderful.

Please don't forget that the October edition of Canoe Focus carried the full detail of how you can use the BCU's own volunteers scheme to recognise your nominees. Please use it.

Happy Christmas, Happy new year. Happy paddling

Dick

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RIVER CAMEL

The Wadebridge Canoe Club launched on Saturday, 22 September with a River Camel paddle. Over 50 paddlers took part making this event a truly special occasion for the Camel River community in North Cornwall.

The support for this event was overwhelming and the WCC is reminded how great the need is to involve local people in their surroundings and the celebration of this unique waterway.

Two members of the first Padstow and Wadebridge Canoe Club which closed in the 1980's said, "It was a great day: we recognised paddlers from the first club and were overjoyed that the former youngsters were now part of the WCC and had brought their children to the inaugural launch."

Members of the club took part in the Camel River clean up on 23rd September. The 1st Wadebridge Sea Scouts provided support for this event which formed one of the many activities scheduled as part of 'Clean Cornwall Week' (www.cleancornwall.org).

People took to their canoes and headed out from Oldtown Cove, across to Cant Hill and then upriver collecting rubbish as they paddled. The Sea Scouts accompanied the paddlers and helped collect large drums and removed the rubbish bags from the canoes.

Other groups cleaned earlier in the week, collecting a variety of large items from Polbrock down to Commissioners Quay. Another group braved low tide on Thursday evening and removed a number of trolleys and industrial waste found along the town side of the river from the old bridge to Commissioners Quay.

Items collected varied from a tractor tyre to four shopping trolleys, barrels, plastic bags, three tyres, four traffic cones, plastic bottles, cans, batteries, exhausts, signboards, metal frames, a stuffed hedgehog, glasses, mugs and much more – the event was a great success and while the WCC managed to fill a large part of the NCDC depot rubbish area, WCC members felt that they'd only touched the surface of the rubbish on the river and look forward to making this an annual event.

NCDC Beach Rangers provided litter pickers, gloves, rubbish bags and are sorting through the piles of rubbish collected. Without their support, this event could not have happened.

Hardest part of the clean up: dog mess on the Camel trail verges. Best find: a stuffed hedgehog toy on Cant Hill shoreline reached from a kayak

1st Wadebridge Sea Scouts would like to extend their thanks to all volunteers who kindly helped with the clean up and look forward to working with Wadebridge Canoe Club on future river events.



Contact:
www.ccak.co.uk or call 01208 895 151

RIVER CLEAN UPS

RIVER DON

June the 25th saw the river Don, burst its banks, in many places during its journey through Sheffield. In the previous week continuous heavy rain had fallen over the Pennines to the north of the city and filled all nearby reservoirs to capacity; thereby eliminating the protection, historically, provided locally to the river Don's banks.

Sheffield Canoe Club's Oughtibridge site, normally a calm, picturesque, leafy emerald glade, located just off the A6102, saw raging torrents, violently rampage down the valley, scouring the river bottom and assaulting its sides, completely annihilating the existing Division 3/4 slalom course. Banks totally overwhelmed by the waters volume, power and surge, overflowed, gushing across the flood plain, upon which the club house sits.

SCC currently hosts two national double slalom competitions, in April and September and provides an established, relaxed, friendly, family environment.

Initial investigation of the site after the flood waters had abated highlighted areas of complete devastation and destruction and others that had become extremely dangerous to paddlers. Contorted scaffolding poles and equipment had been carried down stream in the current and were wrapped around uprooted tree trunks, embedded under massive rocks on the riverbed and lodged in the riverbanks at ninety degrees. Debris and detritus littered the banks throughout its entire length; fallen trees lay forlornly at jaunty angles across the water and traversing footpaths. Snapped slalom gate wires lay partially buried in the sediment, twisted and camouflaged by the mud, waiting to trip and whip the unsuspecting passer-by. Amazingly, the river had physically altered its course.

Meanwhile serious discussions were being held by the SCC committee in relation to the feasibility of completing work to make the river course safe in time for the September slalom generated mixed feelings from the committee. River Don official Tony Canning eventually convinced his counterpart Ian Holmes and other committee members that things could, with good teamwork and hard graft, be turned round in time for the slalom thereby avoiding cancellation. The committee finally agreed to ask its members for help and the rallying cry went out.

Thirty plus volunteers responded, young and old alike, signing away their souls on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings to hard labour and tutorials on river engineering. July and August passed with lessons and practical experience for all, in designing/sculpturing dams, building a new slalom course, using as its foundation, an innovative adaptation of the 'Gabion basket system', comprising of filling one ton bags (donated by local buildings suppliers) with small stones in situ, dam construction, in a range of shapes and sizes to retain the now shrinking water levels and accommodate the local wildlife by developing fish passes, systematically re-arranging rocks and boulders weighing anything from a few ounces to a couple of tons, tree surgery and rubbish removal. In a nutshell blood, sweat and tears of laughter.

The river site was re-opened to SCC members for coaching, at the beginning of September. A kind donation from the BCU was used to replace slalom

course wires, which had all either been strained or snapped.

Volunteers were well and truly, physically exhausted, with hardly anyone having escaped some trivial bump, cut or bruise, yet united and victorious at having saved the day.

Saturday the 15th September dawned and was a glorious day both weather and SCC wise, slalom competitors flooded in as usual and were amazed at the amount of change that occurred both naturally and man made on the river.

A day when I realised how proud I was to have been part of a fantastic team of people, who could not only move mountains but shift a bit of water in the competition as well. Many thanks to all the loyal members of Sheffield CC involved.

DEBBIE CANNING
TONY CANNING

RIVER TYNE

Hexham Canoe Club juniors turned out in force on Saturday 29th September for their annual river clean up at Tyne Green. Forty youngsters donned rubber gloves and headed off in open canoes for a two-hour stint on the river.

At the end of the session a hard task faced Mr. Hugo Remnant representing the Tyne Rivers Trust as he judged each team's assorted booty of plastic bags, rags, cans, fishing tackle, golf balls and even a rug and a duvet! Eventually the team who had half a computer hard drive were awarded first prize.

Not only did the youngsters enjoy themselves, but also left the river and its banks a nicer environment for all to enjoy and a safer place for the river's diverse wild life. The event was rounded off by a barbecue for all the youngsters and volunteer helpers both on and off the water.



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The winners for September and October (as voted by you)

SEPT ADULT WINNER
Darryl Ashford Smith

OCTOBER ADULT WINNER
Matthew Thompson

SEPT YOUTH WINNER
David Bowden

OCTOBER YOUTH WINNER
Chris Ripper

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.

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.

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PHOTOGRAPH COMPETITION

September Youth Winner –
David Bowden



October Youth Winner
Chris Ripper



Above:
David Bowden

Left:
Chris Ripper

Right:
Matthew Thompson

Below:
Darryl Ashford
Smith

October Adult Winner
Matthew Thompson



September Adult Winner –
Darryl Ashford Smith



2008 calendar

Unfortunately we are not producing a 2008 calendar containing photographs from the photo competition, because we have not received enough high quality images suitable for printing.

To grow our collection of images and compile a calendar for 2009, images sent into the photo competition need to be as large as possible (five megapixels or ideally more in JPEG format).

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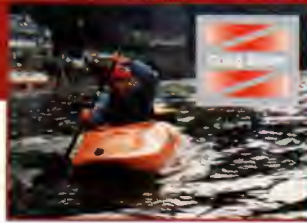
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web site: www.rubberman.co.uk

RUBBERMAN

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SITUATIONS VACANT

**OUTDOOR PURSUITS INSTRUCTOR/
DEVELOPMENT WORKER**

Salary from £11,000 to £15,600 per annum plus bonus

Peak Pursuits are presently recruiting a full time Instructor with an emphasis on water based NGB's although land based NGB's are also advantageous. A full clean driving licence is essential and experience of working with social inclusion would be an advantage.

For more details please contact Paul Ball on 01782 722226 or email paul@peakpursuits.co.uk



**SEALYHAM
ACTIVITY CENTRE**

Our centre is located in a 150
acre woodland river valley with
multi activities taking place with
in the grounds and the nearby
Pembrokeshire Coast National
Park.

We are looking for motivated,
pro-active instructors to deliver our 2008 Programme
here at Sealyham. Applications are invited from suitable
qualified people. You will be working with a wide range
of clients offering an exciting range of activities

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

PLEASE SEND CV TO
ALEC WILLIAMS AT
SEALYHAM ACTIVITY CENTRE
WOLFSCASTLE,
HAVERFORDWEST,
PEMBROKESHIRE, SA62 5NF
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Adventure Okehampton

Vacancies for 2008 Season

Come and work on Northern Dartmoor and the surrounding area, offering a wide range of activities over three different sites. We are looking for experienced staff for our busy 2008 season. We are also looking for trainee instructors as well as offering a senior Instructor position.

Applicants require 1 or more NGB awards from BCU, RYA, MLTE, PCV licence preferable.

For further information and application form please contact Michelle Wood Activity Manager. Phone: 01837 53916 or email: activities@okehampton-yha.co.uk



Outdoor Education Service

STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL OUTDOOR EDUCATION SERVICE

Opportunities at our four well respected residential centres for Assistant Instructors & Instructors

- Salary range: Assistant Instructors £11,907 pro rata
Instructors £12,678 - £15,513 pro rata dependant upon experience and qualifications (subject to job evaluation)
- Posts available from January 2008 onwards - 6-9 month contracts.
- Opportunities for extended contracts for a further 12 months.
- National Governing Body experience/qualifications in Outdoor Activities essential.
- Board and accommodation available whilst at work.
- 37 hour week including one evening duty.
- Generous paid holidays.
- Further training and professional development available.

Contact Shugborough OEC, Shugborough, Stafford, ST17 0XA (01889 881357) for application pack or email janet.buxton@staffordshire.gov.uk
Website: education.staffordshire.gov.uk/curriculum/outdooreducation



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



STUBBERS ADVENTURE CENTRE

Upminster, Essex

Vacancies for 2008 season Instructing staff

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

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

More details on web site: www.stubbers.co.uk

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

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

Or email: bob@stubbers.co.uk

Charity No. 1080941

Arnfield Care Ltd

Instructors/Care Workers Wanted



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

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

Please contact Paul Knowles 01457 860200

Looking for the best Training & Working Adventure?

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

Robinwood offers:

- ▲ Two great locations in the Pennines.
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- ▲ Great staff wages
- ▲ National Training Award Winner 2001

For further details:

bestjob@robinwood.co.uk

Tel 01706 814 554



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Woodmill



Southampton City Council

WOODMILL OUTDOOR CENTRE

Woodmill Lane, Swaythling, Southampton, SO18 2JR

OUTDOOR ACTIVITY INSTRUCTORS REQUIRED FOR 2007/8

Woodmill Outdoor Centre is best known for its specialist canoeing activities. However the Centre also provides a wide range of other activities for both schools and adults. These activities include canoeing, kayaking, climbing, orienteering, high and low ropes courses, archery, raft building, environmental studies and other problem solving activities. The Centre also has a busy Canoe shop.

Woodmill requires Outdoor Activity Instructors to start immediately. First Aid and BCU Coach qualifications are essential and any additional qualifications related to the Centre activities would be desirable.

Staff are required to undertake evening, weekend and occasional overnight duties and therefore must have a flexible approach to working hours.

Pay Scale 4 (£243.00 per week)

For an application form and job description please contact the Centre for more details, If you would like to arrange a visit to the Centre please ring 02380 555993 or e-mail info@woodmill.co.uk.

Instructors Required 2008 Season onwards

Working in a vibrant cliff top residential centre with a diverse client base, situated on the North Cornish Coast

- Broad range of activities in spectacular locations.
- Relaxed and professional approach essential for providing high quality customer driven programmes. Reviewing skills required.



Applicants require 2 NGB awards from BCU L2, RYA w/s, SPA or BSA Driving licence essential, PCV preferable. Send CV to: Rob Bird, Outdoor Adventure, Atlantic Court, Wioemouth Bay, Bude, Cornwall, EX23 0DF, or rob@outdooradventure.co.uk by 12th November
www.outdooradventure.co.uk 01288 361312



PGL is the UK's leading provider of residential activity holidays and educational courses for children.

We're looking for energetic, fun-loving Canoe & Kayak Instructors to share their passion for paddling.

We're looking for:

- BCU qualified coaches
- BCU 3** award holders
- Personally experienced paddlers

Competitive wage, bonuses, full-board accommodation available, BCU training & qualification opportunities, Apprenticeships & more

Flexible-length contracts from Feb 2008+

Activity Instructor, Catering & Housekeeping vacancies across the UK, France & Spain also available

WWW.PGL.CO.UK/RECRUITMENT



0870 401 4411



PGL is committed to the protection of the environment.

We've Got It All



Newlands Adventure Centre is looking for dynamic, exciting and inspirational activity instructors.

YOU GET

- Excellent NGB training
- Free Meals & Accommodation
- Stunning Location
- Average take home pay: £200.00 per week

YOU NEED

- 2 NGBs Minimum SPAM/Level 2 Kayak/Level 2 Canoe
- CRB Check
- Two References
- Driving Licence

INTERESTED

Have a look at our website for information on Newlands. Application packs can be requested online or by telephone.



Have You Got What It Takes?

Newlands Adventure Centre,
Stair, Keswick, Cumbria CA12 5UF
TEL: 017687 78463
WEB: www.activity-centre.com

Activity Instructors

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If so Adventure International wants you!
Come and experience one of the best training packages in the industry. No experience necessary. Short & long term contracts available. Begin March end Nov 2008.

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



Lead, encourage, motivate!

Join Acorn Adventure, the UK's leading provider of adventure camps for schools, groups and families.

We are looking for energetic team players to work as canoe and kayak instructors at our UK, French and Italian centres in 2008. You must be enthusiastic, reliable and friendly with a positive child-centred approach.

You will receive:

- Excellent training and qualification opportunities
- Full-board tented accommodation
- Weekly wages based on qualifications and experience

Positions available from April 2008 to September 2008.

Call 0121 504 2060

jobs@acornadventure.co.uk

www.jobs-acorn.co.uk

wanted!



Canoeists Required South of France; Ardèche Region

- A fantastic opportunity to work in a dynamic, customer focused environment, leading a range of activities including a two day river trip in the Ardèche gorge.
- Ideally you will possess BCU coaching qualifications in canoe and / or kayak and have experience of leading young people in outdoor activities.
- Six month contracts available, from April - September plus full board and accommodation provided on site.
- Opportunities to work alongside experience coaches and improve your paddlesport experience and qualifications.
- Other vacancies are available, such as; Catering, Driving & Client Care roles plus numerous vacancies in the UK, including Instructional roles.

For further information and an application pack please contact:
The Recruitment Team E-mail: info@nstgroup.co.uk Tel: 0845 671 1357



ICC Salcombe

Live and work on our permanently moored ship in the stunning Salcombe Estuary.

Multi-skilled instructors required for the 2008 season; ideally able to teach both Canoeing and Sailing but if you have NGB Instructor qualifications in one and a strong interest and determination to succeed as an Instructor in the other, we would love to hear from you. Additional NGBs an advantage.

Unique environment, competitive wage and long season for the right candidates.

For an application pack, please call 01548 531176
Email: info@icc-salcombe.co.uk
Web: icc-salcombe.co.uk

Activity Instructors For Summer Season 2008

Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre, Essex

- Salary: £11,226 - £14,133 pa. pro rata - inclusive of outer fringe (depending on qualifications).

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

- Schools
- Youth Groups
- Colleges/Universities
- Groups with physical and learning difficulties
- Corporate groups

We are looking for dynamic, enthusiastic and self-motivated instructors who work well within a team. Qualifications within the outdoor industry would be an advantage but not essential as training will be provided.

Seasonal posts are available from April through to October.

For an informal chat please call Adrian Hodges on: 01708 855228/856422.

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

Sessional Instructors Required

£18 per 1.5 hr session
Vacancies for 2008

Located on the River Soar, LOPC is a vibrant centre providing land and water based activities to people from the local area, and is also the home for several canoe clubs. Our users include our After School Club, schools, holiday schemes, colleges, families and corporate training.

We need enthusiastic, qualified sessional instructors to join our friendly team to deliver activity sessions during our main season April to November. Flexible hours 7 days a week.

Applicants must hold a valid 1st Aid certificate, and at least one of the following qualifications: BCU Level 2, SPA, GNAS, NSRA or BFA. An enhanced CRB check will be needed.

For the new season we will also be recruiting a Senior Instructor position. Details will be confirmed.

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



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Hillingdon Outdoor Activities Centre Seasonal Instructors for 2008 season

Kayaking, Sailing, Windsurfing and Climbing Instructors required for a rural non-residential centre to the West of London

Contracts available from March until October
Pay from £225 to £280pw + bonuses
depending on experience and qualifications
Onsite accommodation available

Please send a CV to Neil Maddock neil@hoac.net or HOAC, Dews Lane, Harvil Road, Harefield, Middx UB9 6JN
Visit our website at www.hoac.net Charity No. 1012242



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LLAIN ACTIVITY CENTRE

Job opportunities on the mid-Wales Coast

Join a friendly and enthusiastic team at an expanding centre. Varied activities, diverse client base & favourable working conditions. Season runs from March to late Oct. NGB training opportunities. We are seeking staff for the full season and also for May/June start. Competitive salary plus food & accommodation. In addition to qualifications we require personalities able to bring the best out of clients of all ages & abilities.



Send a CV covering letter to Llain Activity Centre, Llanarth, Ceredigion, SA47 0PZ.
Download an application from www.llain.com/download

E-mail: enquiries@llain.com www.llain.com

horseshoe lake MULTI-ACTIVITY INSTRUCTOR JOBS 2008 - SEASON

Qualified Instructors/Coaches required for our rural Centre in Sandhurst, Berkshire. We're looking for self-motivated BCU/RYA instructors able to work with initiative and enthusiasm to deliver educational and FUN activity sessions and courses

Join our professional team in providing both water and land-based activities
Courses, Schools, Youth Groups, Corporate team-building

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTORS must hold one or more of the following:
RYA Dinghy Instructor, RYA Start Windsurfing Instructor
BCU L2 Coach or equivalent - BDA and GNAS qualifications an advantage

Seasonal Contracts - April to September includes weekend work
Great wages for reliable staff (accommodation available)

Visit our website www.freetimewatersports.co.uk
Contact us: 01252 871808 jobs@freetimewatersports.co.uk
Horseshoe Lake, Mill Lane, Sandhurst, Berkshire GU47 8JW



CHIEF INSTRUCTOR & INSTRUCTOR REQUIRED

From Early 2008

Candidates must hold a minimum of SPA, Level 2 Coach Kayak, Summer ML or WGL and a clean driving licence preferably with D1 (E) Endorsement. The chief instructor must also hold Level 3 Coach Inland Kayak.

The Adventure Centre in Devon predominantly runs Outdoor Education Training Courses and recently featured in the Times Newspaper as being in the top 100 centres in the Country and is the leading development training centre in the South West. The Centre has achieved national status at training quality Instructors for the Outdoor Industry.

For an application form please send your CV and covering letter to: Tim Wiggans, Commercial Manager
The Adventure Centre, Tavistock, Devon, PL19 0HY
Tel : 01822 813130
E-mail: wigganst@kellycollege.com
Check out www.theadventurecentre.co.uk

Work for a professional non-residential activity provider
Long and short term contracts available.
Applicants should have two NGB awards and a clean driving licence, although others may be considered.

MENDIP OUTDOOR PURSUITS

CALL 01934 834877

Kayaking
Raft building
Canoeing
Abseiling
Assault course
Personal development

www.mendipoutdoorpursuits.co.uk/staff



Bowl Water Outdoor Centre has the following vacancies for 2008:

Seasonal Instructors April - October CD/07/257 £19,362 pro-rata (JNC PR point 11)
May - August CD/07/256

Must have RYA Dinghy Instructor and/or BCU Level 2 Coach (min)

Assistant Instructor April - October CD/07/258 £13,299 pro-rata (JNC SW point 1)

Accommodation available.

Excellent opportunities for the right people.

Sessional Instructors are also required. Please call the centre direct for details.

These posts are subject to an Enhanced Disclosure Application to the Criminal Records Bureau.

For an application pack please call the recruitment line on 08458 247 904 or e-mail recruitment.line@kent.gov.uk

For an informal discussion please contact **Richard Retallick, Head of Centre, on 01892 890716**



EXPERIENCE LIFE & WORK IN THE ISLANDS OF ORKNEY

2 OUTDOOR EDUCATION INSTRUCTORS REQUIRED FOR 2008

Salary £12,870 - £14,793 pro rata inc. Distant Island Allowance. (job ref. ED32507)
Posts commence 31st March 2008 until mid October 2008.



Applicants must have a minimum of 2 years experience in the outdoors and must have a current First Aid certificate and have worked in the outdoors for at least 2 years.

Applicants must have at least 3 of the qualifications listed below:

- A Full Driving License inc. 01
- Single Pitch Award
- W.G.L. or Summer M.L.
- G.N.A.S. Archery Leader
- B.C.U. Coach L2 Kayak
- B.C.U. Coach L2 Open Canoe

Applicants must have proven experience of instructing land, water and environmental activities.

All outdoor instructor posts include travel costs to and from Orkney, staff clothing, in-house training and quality accommodation for the duration of the contract.

Closing Date: 1st February 2008

Application packs: Customer Services, Council Offices, Kirkwall, Orkney, KW15 1NY, tel. (01856) 873535 or email: customerservices@orkney.gov.uk

Completed application forms to be returned to the Senior Administration Assistant (Personnel), Department of Education & Recreation Services, Council Offices, Kirkwall, Orkney, KW15 1NY.

Or if you wish to speak to the Outdoor Education Advisor regarding the post, please contact Chris Jex on (01856) 873535 ext. 2414 or email: chris.jex@orkney.gov.uk

Step up to the challenge

Are you outgoing, adventurous and great with kids?



Then this is for you!

Activity Instructors

Ideally you will hold one of these:

BCU Level 2 Training, SPA Training or GNAS Leader Award. However we can provide excellent on-the-job training opportunities and can offer accommodation at all our centres.

To apply:

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



Girlguiding UK

Charity no. 306016

Lakes Leisure Windermere

Instructor Vacancies

• Seasonal Instructor

Join our small full-time staff for the summer. Minimum of 2 RYA or BCU qualifications required, ML and SPA also useful. Candidates with higher level qualifications and appropriate experience may be considered for senior role.

• Casual Instructors

Applications welcome from locally based instructors with RYA, BCU, ML or SPA qualifications, available for work as required.

In addition to qualifications we are looking for personalities able to deal with guests of all ages and abilities. We offer good rates of pay and the opportunity to work with a small, friendly team in a wonderful location.

For further information or to request an application pack, please contact: Kathryn Jackson on 015394 47183 or e-mail k.jackson@lakesleisure.org.uk



UKSA

Senior Kayak / Canoe Instructor needed to revolutionize paddling at UKSA

Candidates should be Coach 3 level and 4* sea & surf, preferably with a sailing or windsurfing instructor qualification, although training will be provided.

For more information and to download an application form visit: www.uksa.org/recruitment

Care to make a difference?

Care UK is an established independent provider of high quality childcare, fostering, special education, psychotherapy and adventurous activities for looked after children in the UK.

We are seeking motivated and committed individuals for the following positions:

At our Children's Homes in the Barmouth area:

Residential Care Workers to work a 2 days on, 4 days off shift pattern. We are particularly seeking individuals with interest and/or qualifications in outdoor activities.

Successful applicants will have excellent communication skills and passion for delivering a high quality service and have an enthusiastic approach for this, at times, challenging but rewarding work. Experience desirable but not essential as training will be given.

We also have homes across Shropshire, Herefordshire and Powys and excellent career development opportunities. We are currently under-represented by female staff in a number of our homes and therefore welcome female applicants.

All applicants must be over 21 (Genuine occupational requirement) and hold a full driving licence.

For an application pack or more information, please contact HR on 01694 724925 or email: lee.pritchard@careuk.com

No agencies please. Closing date: 31st December 2007.

Care UK Children's Services

www.careuk.com/childrensservices

National Referrals helpline: 0844 800 9799



The Old Vicarage Adventure Centre

Vacancies for '08 Season Instructors & Trainees, at a friendly, family run centre

A leading Midlands adventure provider with over 20 years experience, catering for residential and day groups from our own 30 acre site.

Over 20 on site activities including canoeing & kayaking, climbing, hillboarding, archery, horse riding, paintball & lazertag.

The centre caters for beginners through to advanced, including overseas expeditions.

Applicants for the instructors positions must have some N.G.B. qualifications.

Trainees with previous personal experience in outdoor sports an advantage.

For more details or an application please contact the centre.

Tel 01746 718436 email enquiries@ovac.co.uk website www.ovac.co.uk



est 1984



THE OLD VICARAGE ADVENTURE CENTRE

Shaftesbury Young People

We are a long established voluntary child care organisation with a substantial track record of achievement and innovation in providing high quality services for children and young people. We are currently seeking an instructor for our Venture Centre based at Lower Upnor, Rochester, Kent.

Instructor (Education & Training)

Salary £15,906.98

We are looking for a talented and qualified individual to deliver watersports and other adventurous activities, including rock climbing, archery, ropes courses, orienteering, team building games and environmental studies. Priority will be given to those with RYA Dinghy Instructor and/or BCU Coach L.3

The Arethusa Venture Centre provides the following facilities:

- Modern residential on site accommodation catering for up to 108 children from South East London, Kent and Medway
- Extensive climbing complex
- Riverfront position with direct River access
- Own watersports centre in former dock basin
- Indoor heated swimming pool
- Games hall
- High ropes courses
- Field study and recreational facility

Clients include schools, particularly KS2, youth groups etc. Work is also undertaken with special needs groups, underlining our commitment to provide children with challenging and confidence building activities to aid their personal development.

As an Instructor you will facilitate group interaction and activities with children of different ages, backgrounds and needs, and encourage and support them to achieve their potential.

You should have a minimum of 2 years experience of working in an outdoor centre and have at least two relevant NGB qualifications: SPA, BCU, RYA, GNAS, life saving (Bronze or NPLQ), plus First Aid at Work. Priority will be given to those with RYA Dinghy Instructor and/or BCU Coach L.3

You will be working within a highly enthusiastic and committed team of 14 Instructors in a supportive and friendly environment. You will be given opportunities for personal training and development to improve your skills and qualifications and to keep up to date.

For an application pack please email us at recruitment@shaftesbury.org.uk quoting Closing date: 10th December 2007

APPLY
ONLINE!

teach canoeing in the usa

Summer Camp USA offers you a fun and rewarding opportunity to work with kids on a US camp.

- Low upfront costs & competitive salary
- Return flight, food and accommodation included
- Time to explore North America after camp
- Personal placement & expert advice

If you are available from June to August, aged at least 18, like kids and can teach canoeing or other watersports, please visit the **BUNAC** website for more info or to apply.



www.bunac.org/canoefocus
camps@bunac.org.uk 020 7251 3472



Full Time Staff Required

We need committed and hardworking staff to help run our busy activity programme taking disabled and able bodied guests on activities such as canoeing, climbing and sailing in the beautiful Northumberland countryside. An NGB qualification such as SPA, RYA I or BCU L2c would be an advantage.

Phone 01434 250 232 or contact enquiries@calvert-kielder.com for an information pack

'Fantastic guests, excellent pay, great job satisfaction'

Rockley watersports

BCU KAYAK/CANOE COACHES required for work in FRANCE & UK 2008

We are looking for enthusiastic Watersports Instructors for our centres in France & the UK for the coming season. Ideally BCU kayak/canoe Level 2 coaches or RYA Dinghy Instructors, however keen, enthusiastic and committed individuals will also be considered.

We offer competitive rates of pay and an excellent employment package with flexible start and finish dates from March to October.

For further information or an application pack, please contact the HR department on 01202 677272 or email richp@rockleywatersports.com.

www.rockleywatersports.com 01202 677272

Whinell Forest, Cumbria



Great place, great people

At Center Parcs we're dedicated to providing the perfect natural environment for our guests to play, relax and indulge themselves – no wonder we're the UK's number one choice for short break holidays. But our Villages are wonderful places to work too. Join us at Whinell Forest and you'll find yourself in a stunning, unspoilt location with the Lake District on your doorstep. We're looking for people to assist with the daily duties of our busy watersports centre.

Watersports Instructors

Feb 08 to Oct 08, Full-time

For this enjoyable role, your responsibilities will include instructing, assisting guests with the hiring of crafts and lake safety cover. Shifts are any 5 days out of 7 to include weekends. You must hold Powerboat Level 2 and First Aid certificates with at least one of the following additional qualifications: BCU Level 2 Kayak Certificate, RYA Windsurf Instructor, RYA Dinghy Instructor.

Lakeside Assistants

Feb 08 to Oct 08, Full-time

You will ensure lake crafts are maintained in good order, equipment is stored correctly and safety checks are performed. Previous experience in a similar role is not required, but you must have good customer service skills as you will also help guests to prepare for their chosen activity.

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

Aside from the fantastic location, we offer a great range of benefits including pension, discounted holidays, retail products and health and beauty treatments, free use of the gym, pool and other village facilities, incentive and service recognition schemes, annual bonus, childcare vouchers, subsidised bus passes and generous holiday allowance. We have a limited amount of accommodation available.

For more information on the above vacancies and to download an application form and full job description, visit www.centerparcs.jobs

Alternatively please telephone the Recruitment Hotline on 01768 893041 or email workopportunitieswf@centerparcs.co.uk

Closing date: 28 December 2007

www.centerparcs.co.uk



SITUATIONS VACANT

www.surreycc.gov.uk/jobs



Making Surrey a better place

Outdoor Education Worker

£12,789 - £16,452

Dorking, Richmond and Guildford

Ref: 035882/GC/5346

Our highly-motivated team are looking for new Seasonal Outdoor Education Workers to start from April/May 2008 (Bank Staff). We need hardworking, enthusiastic staff to deliver a range of quality outdoor educational activities to young people across Surrey.

These positions will be based at Thames Young Mariners (Richmond), High Ashurst (Dorking) and Henley Fort (Guildford).

Ideally, you should hold some of the following National Governing Body qualifications: B.C.U level 2 Kayak/Canoe Coach, R.Y.A. Dinghy Instructor, S.P.A., G.N.A.S. Leaders Award or a Certificate in Community Boat Management.

It is desirable that you have experience in any of the following: Youth Work, High Ropes Courses, Mountain Biking, Climbing Walls, Raft Building, Orienteering, Problem Solving and Expedition Training.

Closing date: 25 January 2008.

Interview dates: 9 and 10 February 2008.

To apply, please visit www.surreycc.gov.uk/jobs and enter the job title in full, or to request an application form by post, please call 020 8541 9000.



Working towards equality

MEPAL OUTDOOR CENTRE

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Trentham Canoe Club

By Gordon Hulmes

Trentham CC has plenty of reasons to celebrate. In only their second year they have hosted a hugely successful bellboat regatta and outrigger race, have taken delivery of £17,000 worth of new equipment and some of the juniors are already posting some impressive results at the national regattas. Looking to the future, they are nearly on target to complete their fundraising for a new clubhouse to be built next year.

Trentham CC is a flatwater club, based in Stoke-on-Trent. With the area already well served by white water and slalom clubs, TCC focuses on recreational and competitive

flatwater canoeing with opportunities for children and adults of all abilities. As well as the club night each Monday evening, they provide after-school racing sessions. Community Sports Coach, Ruth Holdway, also runs bellboating and kayaking sessions for local school groups and works closely with Staffordshire Scouts.

The club is situated within Trentham Gardens on a beautiful mile-long lake designed by eighteenth century architect Capability Brown. The estate is in the midst of a £100 million regeneration programme, which includes plans to demolish the club's dilapidated club house. Ruth says:

"Canoeing on the mile-long lake is quite special. Being on the water gives a unique view of the historic landscaped estate."

Even before the threat of demolition, storage was becoming a problem due to the club's rapid expansion. This year Trentham CC received grants from 'Awards for All' (a lottery grants scheme for local communities), Sports Relief, the Local Network Fund and the BCU Junior Development Project.

As a result, the club took delivery of £17,000 worth of equipment including a whole fleet of new kayaks for children, adults and those with special needs. They also received paddles, spraydecks, cagoles and even a kayaking ergo machine.

TCC shares the lake with two rowing clubs, Trentham Boat Club and Staffordshire University Boat Club and the three clubs have joined forces, forming Trentham Watersports

Association to raise the massive £272,000 needed for a new club house. The purpose-built building will serve as a clubhouse and storage facility for the canoeists and rowers as well as serving local schools, scouts and the community.

As with so many events this summer, the weather caused problems. The club's first event in June, a kayak taster session, was a washout. With few people passing the lakeside, it was left to club members to try out the new boats themselves.

Saturday 14th July saw the junior bellboat racing. Four boats, each with a crew of eight

plus the helm battled for most of the day over the 500m course. As well as the main event, the juniors also competed in Lightnings, K2s and single seat rowing boats.

The following day was the turn of the adults and the corporate sponsored teams. Twenty teams took part with each team having a minimum of two runs against the clock. The Elected Mayor of Stoke-on-Trent, Mark Meredith, formed a team of cross-party councillors. Before the race, Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Derek Capey said *"Our team of councillors are looking forward to helping Trentham Watersports Association raise funds for their new facilities. Since there are representatives from all the main parties of the council, I'm sure we'll all be paddling in opposite directions!"*

Despite the atrocious weather, everyone seemed to enjoy the day. Even the crew of the passenger boat enjoyed themselves as they tried to soak the Trentham Estate team with a hose. Despite their soaking, the estate staff went on to win the event.

The final event of the summer was held at the end of September with a series of Hawaii-Five O style outrigger races. Three 43 foot long outrigger canoes with their crews of five paddlers plus helm raced over the same 500m course as the bellboat races.

In sharp contrast to the bellboat racing, the paddlers were treated to glorious late summer weather for the whole event. A much drier day for everyone except the one team who managed to capsize their boat.

"Canoeing on the mile-long lake is quite special. Being on the water gives a unique view of the historic landscaped estate."



It was good to see some familiar teams return, clearly not put off by the bellboating. The memorable 'Dirty Oars' team dressed as pirates for the occasion.

Others took the event more seriously, the regular training sessions of the winning team, 'Tough Guys', paid off as they won the senior final with a two second lead over John Court's 'Past and Present' team of slalom and whitewater racers of the past.

The paddlers raised over £1,000 from their bellboat racing and over £900 from the outrigger racing, as well as additional money raised from other events such as a sponsored duck race, where 400 plastic ducks were raced down the river Trent. After a successful and fun summer of fundraising, TCC have met their target and can now look forward to their new clubhouse, which should be completed in time for the spring.

Ruth says: *"Trentham CC is going from strength to strength. From practically nothing a few years ago, we have a lively, vibrant club with over 70 members."* She adds: *"We are really lucky to have the support of the Trentham Estate as the lake is a fantastic venue."*

The results are beginning to show. In September, TCC took a team of juniors to the National Interclub Canoe Sprint regatta in Nottingham. 10-year old Paul Sunderland won both the 500m and 1000m events in the U10



Lightning category, beating paddlers from established sprint racing clubs. The talented young paddler earlier this year also paddled to victory in the J10 junior canoe slalom championships. ●



"Trentham CC is going from strength to strength. From practically nothing a few years ago, we have a lively, vibrant club with over 70 members."

NEW BOATS

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No denying that it is a very handy and rugged tool that could be invaluable for a kayaking weekend away. An excellent locking system ensures full protection during use and the quality feel is enhanced with the stainless steel and Nyglass construction, and titanium grey finish.

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Expect to pay around £60.00
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www.ainsworthpaddles.co.uk



Part one of a series highlighting European paddling escapes for all the family by Dave Halsall



In search of Dali's Inspiration

Salvador Felipe Jacinto Dali I Domenech was born on May 11th 1904 the son of a prosperous notary in the principality of Catalonia. His parents built his first studio in Cadaques and as an adult, he made his home with his wife Gala in nearby Port Lligat. Many of his paintings reflect his love of this area of Spain.

He seemed to inhabit a dream world where objects, people, and animals are arranged in unforeseen and often unexpected combinations; strange figures superimposed on landscapes. His work is distinguished by precise and finely executed draughtsmanship of almost photographic exactitude.

Well that was the hook that got us to book a short break paddling through the rugged coastal Catalan landscape that was the inspiration for much of his artwork.

The area is dominated by the Creus cape peninsula, one of the largest, protected, natural reserves in Catalonia which includes 3,073 hectares of coastal, foreshore reserve. It has a very abrupt coast, with deep waters, and plenty of tiny islands, high cliffs, reefs of rocks and

small hidden bays with transparent water, often only accessible from the sea.

The marine scenery contains spectacular rock outcrops that have been carved by the wind and sea into complicated and fantastic, beautiful forms. Depending on how much sun/wine you have been exposed to they can become images of real or mythical animals. Lions, dragons, camels, eagles and rats can come and go into view and we even saw some resemblances to family members, friends and acquaintances!

Inside the Parc, there are two integral land reserves, which protect the most valued parts: the Creus cape point, with the mythical Creus cape lighthouse, where the film 'The Lighthouse at the End of the World' by Orson Welles was filmed, and Norfeu cape, a place of exceptional geological and biological interest.

The Cape has a great floral diversity with a few endemic species, it is a busy flight path for migratory birds and it is rich in historical/archaeological sites.

Well that's the intellectual stuff but there are also the great, great tappas bars and restaurants to visit in the coastal villages and towns, and locals to meet. We paddled the area in June when the weather was hot enough for us to worry about wearing a hat and carrying enough water for the day. The sea still had a little 'bite' when you went swimming but the area was still very quiet as the tourist season was not in full swing. We would suggest paddling in May/June and Sept/Oct but anytime throughout the winter would also be possible and if you can fit them in take some snorkelling kit.

Ten reasons for paddling in the Spanish north east?

- Extended warm water paddling season
- Short flight = short breaks possible
- Fantastic scenery
- Biodiversity
- Historical interest
- Some areas are only accessible from the water
- Limited tidal movement
- Links with Dali
- Chance to try speaking Spanish
- Great local food and drink

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