

canoe

focus



February 2008
No. 170, £2.00

BROOKBANK

CANOES AND KAYAKS.CO.UK

- Competitive group rates
- Hire Service Centre
- Huge demo fleet
- Full range of Sea Kayaks for hire
- Mail order & Online catalogue
- Massive stock of Sea Kayaks, White Water kayaks and Open Canoes
- Courses & Trips

New Premises for Carlisle Canoes
 Carlisle Canoes is moving from 1st February 2008, a bigger better showroom easy to get to, 2 mins from Junction 44, M6

info@brookbankcanoes.co.uk
 www.brookbankcanoes.co.uk

canoeexpo

The UK's Largest Canoe & Kayak Show
 16-17 February 2008
 www.canoeexpo.com

Package Deals

Our speciality - You tell us what you need and we design the package to suit.

Sea Kayaks

Full range of composite and plastic boats PLUS all the accessories to get you out there. We also demo and hire for most occasions.

Web and Mail Order

All our cataloged products can be delivered, its so easy, just order on line and wait for your new kit to arrive!

Whitewater

You need the best kit to get the most out of the river, our team of staff will help you choose the right gear for the trip.

Open Canoes

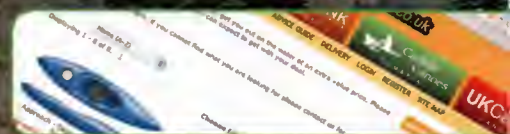
We have the largest range of Open Canoes in the country, from Old Town, Mad River, We no nah, Novacraft, Venture Canoes & Pelican.

Kayak Fishing

From your first strokes in kayak fishing we have the equipment to set you up for your first catch.

Gift Vouchers

Vouchers available at all our stores, perfect for that loved one.



BROOKBANK

Mail Order Hotline Tel: 0161 474 1499

PERTH

Brookbank Perth
 Unit C12/13 Inveralmond Grove
 Inveralmond Industrial Estate
 Perth, PH1 3UG
 www.brookbanksotland.co.uk
 01738 622 723

NEW LOCATION

CARLISLE

Brookbank Carlisle
 Unit F7, Kingmoor Park
 North, Carlisle, Cumbria
 CA6 4SP
 www.carlislecanoes.co.uk
 01228 531 703

LANCASTER

Brookbank Lancaster
 Unit 8, Lansil Industrial Estate
 Caton Road
 Lancaster, LA1 3PO
 www.ukcanoes.co.uk
 01524 388 850

WARWICKSHIRE

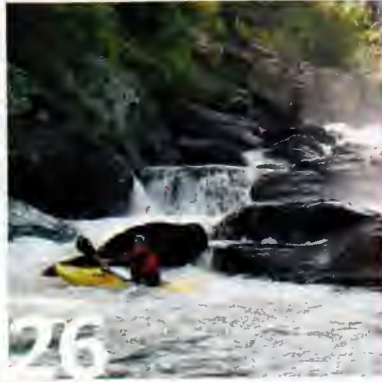
Brookbank Warwickshire
 Park Farm Estate
 Compton Verney
 Warwickshire, CV35 9HJ
 www.paddlesport.co.uk
 01926 640 573

STOCKPORT

Brookbank Stockport
 Unit 23, Meadow Industrial Estate
 Water Street, Stockport
 Cheshire, SK1 2BX
 www.brookbankcanoes.co.uk
 0161 474 1499



22



26



32



34



41



48



52



60



62



82

REGULARS

- 5 Comment by CEO Paul Owen.
- 6 Competition calendar
- 8 News
Including member's offers and competitions.
- 16 Obituary
Oliver J. Cock MBE.
- 30 BCU files
Who's who in the BCU: Ray Hudspith.
- 38 Rivers Access Campaign
- 41 Canoe trails
Northern Ireland special on the official CANI canoe trails of Lough Erne and the Blackwater River plus Lough Neagh.
- 46 Access
- 56 Letters
- 58 Youth
- 64 BCU region and club news
Including club focus on Burton CC.
- 68 BCU photo competition
Winners for November and December and the overall winners for 2007.
- 70 Paddler's gear
New paddling kit and reviews.
- 72 Classified advertising

COMPETITION

- 18 Fiona Jarvie interview
- 20 Flat water
Nottingham's flat water academy.
- 52 Devizes to Westminster
DW's 60th anniversary preview plus new marathon rules for 2008.

FEATURES

- 22 United States
The pure nirvana that is the Grand Canyon.
- 26 Madagascar
WW expedition of the red island.
- 32 United Kingdom
Coaching children with learning difficulties.
- 34 Nepal
WW kayaking coaching for beginners.
- 48 Norway
The 24 hour sun experience.
- 60 India
Young people running the Zanskar Gorge.
- 62 United Kingdom
The Spirit Dancer canoe arrives from Canada.
- 82 Norway
European paddling escapes.

Canoe & Kayak Insurance from E&I[®]

- Ⓜ Monthly Premiums
from £2.80
- Ⓜ 10% online discount
- Ⓜ Online quick quote
and Instant cover
available



www.eandl.org.uk/cf

This scheme is underwritten by the Equine & Livestock Insurance Co Ltd (registered in England & Wales no. 294940) which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority no. 202748 Regd address Thorpe Underwood Hall, York YO26 9SS



WHITewater

The Canoe Centre

From flat water to white water
From recreational to competition
6,000 square feet of paddler's paradise
All 5 minutes from junction 1 of the M3

Tel: 01932 247 978,
Fax: 01932 241 368,
Email: info@wwtcc.com,
wwtcc.com

Shepperton Marina,
Felix Lane, Shepperton,
Middlesex, TW17 8NS,
Great Britain

Canoe Focus
The official magazine of the
British Canoe Union
18 Market Place
Bingham
Nottingham NG13 8AP
Tel: 0845 370 9500
Fax: 0845 370 9501
E-mail: info@bcu.org.uk
www.bcu.org.uk
ISBN 0953-010X

BCU Enquiries
Above address
President
Albert Woods
Chair
Brian Chapman
Chief Executive
Paul Owen

Annual Subscription Rates
UK inland: £19.00
Overseas: £24.50
Free to BCU members
For subscription, please contact
the BCU on the above contacts

Publishing Contractors
2b Graphic Design
49 Greenfields, St. Ives,
Cams. PE27 5HB
Tel/Fax: (01480) 465081
E-mail:
peter@canoeofocus.co.uk
www.canoeofocus.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
We would like to thank the
following for their articles and
photographs:
Andy Goodsell, Keith Tillen,
Maurice Dybeck, Steffie
Hallensleben, Frank Stevenson,
Fiona Jarvie, Anne Ferguson,
Ross Montandon, Chris Smith,
Hilary West, Kevin Stainthorpe,
Ashley Hunter, Mike McClure,
Colin Graham, Glenn
Summerbell, Tamsin Phipps,
Kevin East, Andy Green, Tom
Hutchinson, Peter Hutchinson,
Phil Hadley, Mike Devlin, David
Leathborough, Howard
Blackman, Julia White, Ray
Hudspith, Beth Ettinger, Dick
Constable, Chris Cooper, Stuart
Briggs, Dave Halsall and Chloe
Nelson-Lawrie.

Front cover photo:
The Zanskar Gorge
Photo: Terry Kinsella

Comment by Paul Owen, Chief Executive

Happy New Year and welcome to February's issue of Canoe Focus

Whether your New Year's resolution has been to get out in your boat more, to try a new type of paddlesport or to support the Rivers Access Campaign more proactively, we wish you all the best in the forthcoming year.

This year's Annual General Meeting (AGM) takes place at 2.30pm on 8th March 2008, at:

The Channel View Centre
Jim Driscoll Way
Grangetown
Cardiff
CF11 7HB

Enclosed in this issue of Canoe Focus are the details of the AGM, which can also be found on the BCU web site.

Member's Directory

Also enclosed in this magazine is the new 2008 Member's Directory, which we hope you will find is an improvement on last year's issue. Details of competition events are regularly kept up-to-date and can be found on the BCU web site under 'News & Events'.

If you have any feedback regarding the new directory, we would like to hear from you. To get in touch email info@bcu.org.uk

Devizes to Westminster

2008 marks the 60th anniversary of the Devizes to Westminster canoe race, which takes place over the Easter weekend. To mark the anniversary we interviewed Brian Greenham, the current K2 record holder (with Tim Cornish), whose time remains unbeaten since 1979.

Beijing Olympics

2008 is also a significant year for our elite sprint racing and slalom paddlers, some of whom will be competing on an international stage to win Olympic medals in Beijing. We will keep you up to date with GB team as and when announcements are made throughout the build up.

BingoLotto

BingoLotto is a new TV game, which will raise money for sport and the voluntary sector, and the BCU is delighted to announce that it will be amongst the beneficiaries of the initiative. The scheme is fully supported by the CCPR (Central Council for Physical Recreation) and the majority of other national governing bodies.

BingoLotto will be a weekly game broadcast on digital TV channels, Virgin1 and Challenge. Tickets will be on sale from outlets around the country and will allow viewers to take part in the BingoLotto game, which has run in Sweden since 1991 where it has raised just under £1bn for charities and sports organisations.

At least 20% from each ticket sold in the UK will be distributed to sport and recreation projects up and down the country. Profits from the show will be distributed to the governing and representative bodies of sport and recreation and will be spent on the grassroots of the sport or on special projects, like infrastructure improvement and capacity building, for which funding is currently unavailable. More details are available on the BCU web site under 'News.'

This year, Canoe England and the BCU are attending a number of exhibition events to promote canoeing. Some of these events include:

Canoeexpo

Stoneleigh, Coventry
16-17th February
Visit www.canoeexpo.com

Boat and Caravan Show

NEC Birmingham
19-24th February
The BCU are at the Boat and Caravan Show along with ACT (Association of Canoe Trades) www.boatandcaravan.co.uk

Bath and West

Shepton Mallet
28-31st May

Game Fair

Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire
25-27th July



A reminder for Canoe England members – during selected times of the year members can take advantage of a 20% discount at Cotswold Outdoor (as opposed to the usual 15% at other times of the year). These 20% periods are as follows:

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

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS MAKE CANOE FOCUS HAPPEN

The quality and variety of news, articles, reports and photographs depend on the submission of material from you. Very few contributors are professional writers and photographers, so don't be put off writing because you have no experience! Canoe Focus is all about canoeist dialogue: a paddler's magazine written by paddlers. **Technical Information:** Contributions preferably as a Microsoft Word file, which can be emailed to info@canoeofocus.co.uk, or mailed to 2b Graphic Design, 49 Greenfields, St Ives, Cambs PE27 5HB. All material is accepted on the understanding that the BCU and its agents cannot be held liable or responsible for loss or damage, although every care and effort is taken to safeguard material. Next Copy date is the 1st MARCH 2007.

Material arriving after this date cannot be included in the APRIL 2008 issue. Canoe Focus encourages contributions of any nature but reserves the right to edit and condense to fill the space available and unless otherwise stated the publishers assume no responsibility for the return of unsolicited manuscripts, artwork or photographs. Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the BCU, its committees or members. The printing of an advertisement in Canoe Focus does not necessarily mean that the BCU endorses the company, item or service advertised. All material in Canoe Focus is strictly copyright and all rights are reserved. Reproduction without prior permission from the editor is forbidden.

Competition calendar

	Start	Finish	Discipline	Event		Start	Finish	Discipline	Event
February	2-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 3 Central - Stratford Upon Avon	March	15-Mar		Coach Update	Suffolk - East
	2-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 3 North - Stockport		15-Mar 16-Mar		Slalom	Under 23 & Junior Selection - Race 1 - Tryweryn - Premier and Div 1
	2-Feb		Coach Update	North London		16-Mar		Marathon Racing	Cam
	2-Feb		Coach Update	Leam Boat Centre - West Midlands		18-Mar		Coach Update	Liverpool - North West
	3-Feb		Marathon Racing	Thameside 1		21-Mar 24-Mar		Marathon Racing	Devizes to Westminster
	3-Feb		Wild Water Racing	Exe - Div B		21-Mar		Sprint Racing	Richmond Sprints
	9-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 2 Ladies - Stratford Upon Avon		22-Mar		Wild Water Racing	Washburn - Sprint - Div A and B - Senior and Junior Selection
	9-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 1 Youth - Luton		22-Mar		Wild Water Racing	Washburn - Classic - Div A and B - Senior and Junior Selection
	9-Feb 10-Feb		Wild Water Racing	Nith - Div A and B - Interservice Champs		22-Mar 23-Mar		Slalom	Grandtully - Premier, Div 1 and 2 - Pan Celtic Cup
	9-Feb		Wild Water Racing	Goyt - Div B		29-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 2 North - Leeds
	10-Feb		Wild Water Racing	Irwell 1 - Div B and Wavehopper		29-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 3 North - Stockport
	10-Feb		Wild Water Racing	National Junior Prize Giving - Burrs Activity Centre		29-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 3 Central - Stratford Upon Avon
	10-Feb		Marathon Racing	Waterside B		29-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 1 Ladies - Coventry
	10-Feb		Marathon Racing	Essex Winter Series - Race 6 - Leaside		29-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 4 South East - Dagenham
	10-Feb		Wild Water Racing	Avonmore Classic - IRL		29-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 4 South West - Bristol
	13-Feb		Coach Update	Manchester - North West		29-Mar		Club Forum	London & South East
	16-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 1 - Leeds		29-Mar 30-Mar		Slalom	Under 23 & Junior Selection - Race 2 - Grandtully- Premier
	16-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 4 North - Stockport		29-Mar 30-Mar		Slalom	Yalding Weir - Div 3 and 4
	16-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 4 Central - Stratford Upon Avon		30-Mar		Club Forum	Southern
	16-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 2 South - Coventry		30-Mar		Marathon Racing	Lincoln
	16-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 4 South East - Dagenham		30-Mar		Marathon Racing	Forth & Clyde
	16-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 3 South - Bristol		30-Mar		Marathon Racing	Tonbridge
	16-Feb		Coach Update	North East - Ashington College, Morpeth		31-Mar		Slalom	Grandtully - Div 4
	17-Feb		Wild Water Racing	Leny/Teith - Open		5-Apr 6-Apr		Sprint Racing	National Regatta - Assessment Race - Holme Pierrepont
17-Feb		Marathon Racing	Thameside 2	5-Apr 6-Apr		Slalom	Marple - Div 3 and 4		
23-Feb		Wild Water Racing	Derwent Classic - Div B	6-Apr		Marathon Racing	Brigg		
23-Feb		Canoe Polo	Div 1 - Coventry	6-Apr		Marathon Racing	Spey Marathon		
23-Feb		Club Forum	North East	12-Apr		Club Forum	South West		
24-Feb		Coach Update	Leicester Outdoor Pursuits Centre	12-Apr 13-Apr		Slalom	Senior Selection - Race 1 & 2 - Zoetermeer, NED		
24-Feb		Club Forum	Yorkshire	12-Apr 13-Apr		Slalom	Matlock - Div 2 and 3		
24-Feb		Marathon Racing	Waterside C	13-Apr		Freestyle	Youth Series - Llangollen		
1-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 2 North - Leeds	13-Apr		Coach Update	Wessex - South West - Weymouth		
1-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 1 Youth - Stratford Upon Avon	13-Apr		Club Forum	Eastern		
1-Mar		Wild Water Racing	Grandtully Sprint - Div A and B	13-Apr		Marathon Racing	Gailey		
1-Mar		Wild Water Racing	National Prize Giving - Grandtully	13-Apr		Marathon Racing	Norwich - K1 Assessment		
1-Mar		Wild Water Racing	Thistlebrig 2 - Div A and B - Youth	13-Apr		Marathon Racing	Fal		
1-Mar 2-Mar		Slalom	Shepperton - Div 1 and 2	19-Apr		Slalom	Senior, Under 23 & Junior Selection - Race 3 - Holme Pierrepont		
2-Mar		Wild Water Racing	Grandtully Classic - Div A and B	19-Apr 20-Apr		Slalom	Sowerby Bridge - Div 2 and 3		
2-Mar		Club Forum	East Midlands	19-Apr		Wild Water Racing	Prudhoe, Hexham, Wavehopper		
2-Mar		Marathon Racing	Royal K1/K2	20-Apr		Wild Water Racing	Nene - Div B and Wavehopper		
2-Mar		Marathon Racing	Weaver Descent	20-Apr		Marathon Racing	Ratho		
8-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 3 South - Dagenham	20-Apr		Marathon Racing	Anker Valley		
8-Mar		Club Forum	West Midlands	20-Apr		Marathon Racing	Calder 1		
8-Mar		Coach Update	Nottinghamshire - East Midlands	20-Apr		Marathon Racing	Maidstone		
8-Mar		Coach Update	Wey Kayak Club - South East	20-Apr		Wild Water Racing	Carlisle, Wavehopper		
9-Mar		Coach Update	Monmoth - West Midlands	26-Apr 27-Apr		Coach Update	Yorkshire - Aldward, near York		
9-Mar		Marathon Racing	Waterside D	26-Apr 27-Apr		Wild Water Racing	Avon - Div B and Wavehopper		
9-Mar		Slalom	Stone - Div 3 and 4	26-Apr 27-Apr		Canoe Polo	BUSA Championships - Hadfield		
9-Mar		Marathon Racing	Northwich Lightning Race 1	26-Apr 27-Apr		Slalom	Oughtibridge - Div 3 and 4		
15-Mar		Canoe Polo	Div 2 Ladies - Luton	26-Apr		Slalom	North Walls Short Course - Div 4		
15-Mar		Wild Water Racing	Dove - Div B	26-Apr		Surf	St Ives Bay		
15-Mar		Club Forum	North West	26-Apr 27-Apr		Marathon Racing	Glasgow-Edinburgh Challenge		
				27-Apr		Marathon Racing	Northwich		
				27-Apr		Marathon Racing	Bedford - K2 Assessment		
				27-Apr		Marathon Racing	Worcester		
				27-Apr		Marathon Racing	Tam Circuit		

Canoe polo : www.canoe polo.org.uk

Canoe sailing: www.intcanoe.org.uk

Flat water racing:

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

Freestyle: www.ukfreestyle.com

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

Slalom: www.canoeslalom.co.uk

Surf: www.bcusurf.org.uk

Wild water racing: www.wildwater.org.uk

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.

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 the competition disciplines DO welcome newcomers to their sport.

Information and contact details for each of the Competition Disciplines are available within the BCU Directory, or alternatively visit the BCU web site (www.bcu.org.uk) and look under 'disciplines' to visit a competition website.

Have we missed any?

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

Goodsell: andy.goodsell@bcu.org.uk

Club events

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

andy.goodsell@bcu.org.uk



pyranha

Bring your fleet / club boats **bang** up to date in 2008 with the market leading Pyranha Master TG / TG Lite



hard wearing hull and moulded in features
- a low maintenance package ensuring a long life for your club

optional skeg system
- easily deployed
- more control when lowered and more manoeuvrability when raised



optional adjustable backrest
- for increased comfort and support

sliding or full plate footrests
- fully adjustable
- easy and quick customisation for the full range of paddler sizes

KEY FEATURES

Innovative design

- suited for use on calm or easy moving water
- confidence building handling and stability for the novice paddler

2 sizes

- smaller TG designed specifically for younger paddlers
- suits juniors through to adults

2 specs

- affordable fleet use or individual performance and comfort
- you chose the spec and price that suits your usage

Fleet specific

- innovative features with the modern novice paddler in mind
- why learn to paddle in a kayak that was designed when your dad was 10!

Berkshire Canoes
Bournemouth Canoes
Brookbank Canoes
Brookbank Canoes Scotland
Brighton Canoes
Carlisle Canoes
Cheltenham & Gloucester Canoes
Cornwall Canoes
Desperate Measures
Herefordshire Canoe and Kayak
Kayaks North West
Kayaks & Paddles
Kent Canoes
Marsport
Nucleus
Outdoor Active
Paddle Sport
Robin Hood
UK Canoes
Up & Under
West Midlands
Woodmill

Reading
Bournemouth
Stockport
Perth
Brighton
Carlisle
Cheltenham
Mid Cornwall
Notttingham
Orcop
Runcorn
Plymouth
Widham
Reading
Clifton-on-Sea
Berkley
Weymouth
Heckmondwike
Lancaster
Cardiff
Walsall
Swaythling

011 9474411
011 02 621754
0161 474144
01738 62723
01273 51700
01224 531923
01242 27644
01748 65676
0115 904615
01421 80655
01928 710770
01752 400707
01737 306450
01164 445912
01256 012144
01851 761050
01752 446543
01724 442543
01752 400800
02920 776571
01722 420017
02947 343990

www.berkshirecanoes.co.uk
www.bournemouthcanoes.co.uk
www.brookbankcanoes.co.uk
www.brookbankcanoes.co.uk
www.brightoncanoes.co.uk
www.carlislecanoes.co.uk
www.cheltenhamcanoes.co.uk
www.cornwallcanoes.co.uk
www.desperatemeasures.co.uk
www.hearfordcanoe.co.uk
www.kayaknorthwest.co.uk
www.kayakspaddles.co.uk
www.kentcanoes.co.uk
www.marsport.co.uk
www.nucleuscanoe.co.uk
www.outdooractive.co.uk
www.paddlesport.co.uk
www.robinhood.co.uk
www.ukcanoes.co.uk
www.upandunder.co.uk
www.wmcc.co.uk
www.woodmill.co.uk

Contact your local Pyranha dealer for more information and to arrange a demo

www.pyranha.com

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

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

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

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

WEST MIDLANDS

Bear Creek Adventure, Worcestershire
Joel Watersports, Worcester
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

If you have any suggestions for improving the member benefits you receive, please get in touch – we could like to hear your comments. Email: chloe.nelson-lawrie@bcu.org.uk or call 0845 370 9500

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 web site.

15% discount at **COTSWOLD** or 20% off on selected dates: 6-9th March; 15-18th May; 7-10th August; 6-9th November

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.

10% discount on your first year's boat insurance with **NW BROWN**.

7.5% discount on **CONCEPT 2** rowers.

5% discount on **SALAMANDER TOURS** open canoe tours.

CRAFT THERMAL TOPS – This top has become a favourite for paddlers and we are pleased to be able to offer this at a special rate of only £16.49 + p&p.

These short sleeved black tops are available in men's and women's sizes. To purchase visit www.bcushop.org.uk.



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

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.

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



Competition corner

We are offering one lucky BCU member the following prize...

A large, plastic (Super Scrappy) Shred Ready helmet, courtesy of Whitewater The Canoe Centre in Shepperton www.wwtcc.com

Winners will be chosen at random.

There will also be a link to the survey from the BCU homepage.

Good luck!



For your chance to win...

To win simply visit <http://BCU.MembershipSurvey.sgizmo.com> and complete the survey before 29th February 2008.

Three bright stars for the future

The second National Talent Orientation Camp, organised by the Youth Sport Trust saw three young canoeists receive awards from the Sport Minister Gerry Sutcliffe and Dame Kelly Holmes.

The camp saw 75 future British Olympic hopefuls in five sports enjoying a unique insight into exactly what it takes to become the best, from January 5-8th.

The camp, held at Loughborough University, featured some of the country's top 14 to 17-year-olds, who have been identified by their sport's governing body as having the potential to make it as elite athletes in canoeing, rowing, cycling, sailing and triathlon.

A number of Olympic medallists and world champions, past and present, worked alongside the young hopefuls during the four days and held a question and answer session to offer expert advice.

14-year-old canoeist David Bain from Chester, said: *"The National Talent Orientation Camp has been absolutely brilliant because we've got to meet other young people from different sports and worked with elite athletes who have inspired us and made us even more determined to get to the Olympics and hopefully win a medal."*

Dame Kelly Holmes, who played a leading role in putting together the programme for the camp, said: *"It's been an incredible four days at the National Talent Orientation Camp and something which I'm sure will stay with all these youngsters for the rest of their lives. By giving these young performers the opportunity to gain a unique sight into the life of an elite sports performer, we believe when the times comes for them to make life-changing decisions around their education and career, they will be in a much stronger position to make the right choices and achieve their full potential."*

"For the athletes, the camp combined high quality training sessions with workshops on ability and determination, keynote speeches on education and

lifestyle planning, advice on drugs-free sport, command tasks led by the armed forces and a higher education marketplace.

"For the first time the camp, which has been developed in partnership with UK Sport and the national governing bodies (NGBs) of the five sports involved, offered workshops on how schools can support their talented pupils during their development and also an opportunity for parents to get tips and advice on supporting their offspring."

David Bain

Canoeing

Nominated by their team manager and athlete tutor from a different sport.

David has shown determination to succeed, and gave 100% in all sessions, and made an effort to speak to people at all opportunities. He has not stopped asking great questions, during workshops, training, meals and in passing.

Michael 'Mikey' Wilson

Canoeing

Nominated by all team managers.

This young athlete has outstanding leadership qualities which come from his constant unfaltering energy. He leads by example and has a unique personality which allows others to come out of their shells and develop their self confidence. He is striving for team success in a totally selfless way, with outstanding courage and has been a complete asset and ambassador for this camp.



David Bain



Michael "Mikey" Wilson



Jessica Collins

Jessica Collins

Canoeing

Nominated by both a canoeing coach and a coach from another sport.

Throughout the camp Jessica has been very polite and actively gone out of her way to understand other athletes' sports. Always seeking to learn new things she has been an ambassador for her sport of sprint canoeing.

EVENTS

UK River Rescue Symposium

Heading this fantastic event will be Franco Ferrero, the author of the benchmark book 'White Water Safety and Rescue'.

Canoe Control is hosting the symposium at Llangollen 8-9 March. There will be indoor and river workshops, presentations, speakers including Allan Ellard, Peter Knowles, Rob Hind, Ray Goodwin, Dave Manby, Alli Marshall, Dave Luke, Bob Timms, Stuart Woodward amongst others and a paddlers question time. The action will be presented by some of the most respected trainers and river runners of today's modern paddling world. On Saturday evening a full bar will be available which will be separate to the main conference hall. For all the information for this great event go to www.canoecontrol.com

Doggy Paddle Sunday 11th May 2008

19 mile recreational paddle 9-30 to 10-30am start time. Kayak/canoe the beautiful stretch of the River Avon/Leam (Grade 1, portagable weirs).

The trip takes you from Royal Leamington Spa, through the spectacular grounds of Warwick Castle and Charlecote Park, ending in historic Stratford-upon-Avon. All sponsorship money raised goes to the Guide Dogs for the Blind.

Visit www.doggypaddle.org.uk, email info@doggypaddle.org.uk, or send a stamp addressed envelope to Connel Williams, 135 Cublington Road, Leamington Spa, CV32 7AP.

Axe Vale Canoe Club

River Axe canoe race Sunday 2nd March 2008

This popular race is an excellent introduction to canoe racing and also provides a challenge for the more experienced paddler. All classes are open to paddlers with disabilities.

The race starts five miles south of Axminster at Whitford Bridge M/R 263953. The river Axe twists and winds its way through the Axe Valley for four miles before opening out onto the estuary, with a further one mile of racing to the finish at Axmouth Harbour. Separate classes and age categories allow for fair competitive racing and there are medals for all classes. Free refreshments are available to all competitors.

Race Details:

Booking in: 9.30-10.30am Whitford bridge

Briefing: 10.30am

Race Start: 11.00am

Finish: Axe Yacht Club, Axmouth Harbour

Contact john.martell@btinternet.com

BCU representation at the School Sports Partnership Conference

Members of the Paddlesport Participation Programme team attended the two day conference held on 28-29th November at the International Conference Centre, Telford. This was a perfect occasion to showcase and discuss the many new initiatives launched by Canoe England and the BCU to the delegates from County Sports and School Sports Partnerships attending.

The conference was opened by the Rt Hon. James Purnell MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport with two distinguished guest speakers: Joe Simpson from 'Touching the Void' fame and Roger Black MBE, individual and team Olympic Silver medallist, delivered the keynote speeches on each day respectfully. Each of these speeches was inspirational in different ways but with a clear message:

- Our instinct to survive and the innate strength we have within us to succeed.
- Understanding the dynamics of becoming a champion.
- How to dream a dream, set goals and take the necessary steps to fulfil one's potential.

The event allowed the BCU team the opportunity to network with many of the Partnership Development Managers and School Sports Coordinators from partnerships around the country to discuss the issues around sustaining existing, and creating new school club Links with BCU accredited clubs and approved centres. Emphasis was placed on how the BCU are planning to engage with young leaders and volunteers in paddlesport through the 'Step into Sport' scheme, and promote this to BCU clubs and centres.

Many of the delegates, who are also in many cases BCU coaches, had the opportunity to clarify coaching issues following the introduction of the new coaching and personal performance awards. Examples of some of the resources available on the BCU E shop were also on show including the hugely successful Paddlepower and Cross Stream Challenge support material.

The next major conference where BCU will be represented will be the Sports College conference, again at Telford on the 31st January and the 1st February. This conference will bring together key post holders working in and around sports colleges, academies with sports related specialisms, local education authorities along with county sports partnerships, other national governing bodies and other sports professionals. **Below:** Stuart Briggs, Central England, Senior Development Officer, discusses coaching issues with a delegate at the School Sports Partnership conference.



CANI's Paddlefest



Paddlefest 2008 is the Canoe Association of Northern Ireland's major event of the year. This year it's taking place on March 14th to 16th at Bushmills Outdoor Education Centre, on Northern Ireland's seriously picturesque north coast. The location, which also happens to be the home of a rather fine whiskey, is minutes away from some of the top surf spots in the UK and the coastline provides for spectacular sea kayaking.

The annual festival began several years ago as a serious coaching weekend to allow coaches to build up their skills. However, since then it has expanded its appeal to include paddlers of all levels and abilities. There's still plenty of top-flight tuition going on. This year the organisers expect around 100 paddlers to take part and they'll have the services of more than 20 coaches from all over the UK.

Over the course of three days, paddlers can join workshops on everything from paddlesport

fundamentals to whitewater safety and rescue. They expect – and get – world-class surf coaching from members of Northern Ireland's very successful surf kayak team. There are courses in open boating, river-running, freestyle, canoe polo and the list just goes on... and on.

But if you're thinking it all sounds terribly grown-up, this year's list of events also includes something the organisers refer to as 'partyfest'. Also bearing in mind the location's other claim to fame, you can sure of some great 'craic' over the weekend.

It's a reflection of the growing popularity and size of the event, that this year a number of leading UK retailers are coming along with many goodies.

For more details and booking forms, you can visit the CANI web site at www.cani.org.uk. If any other retailers would like to get involved they can contact Ashley Hunter, who is CANI's coaching Development officer on 08702 405065, or E-mail him at cdo@cani.org.uk

What has Canoe England ever done

This is a phrase we often hear from staff at centres, so here's an example of what Team Central recently did for centres in the West Midlands.

At a recent coach update Phil Ascough, our RCO mentioned that a few of his centre staff had missed this update as they work weekends, so we arranged a midweek visit where we would give them an update on the new scheme, Star tests, Paddlepower etc.

Phil Ascough being highly efficient as ever, had spread the word to other local centres and what I imagined as six of us sat round a table drinking coffee and chatting about paddlesport, had grown into a full blown coach update with over 30 coaches in attendance!

There were staff from at least three local education authority centres, one or two privately owned centres, and even some club coaches who found that a midweek date suited them.



The day followed a fairly standard coach update programme with a keynote speech outlining the position on all the changes, followed by a chat about Paddlepower then Cross Stream Challenge. What coaches said they found most useful was that the whole day was delivered with a bias towards professional outdoor centre staff.

Everyone seemed to get something positive from the day, and the presenters were in a position to answer most of the questions relating to specific issues.

Word has spread and we are looking to do another 'midweek' in the spring. Drop me an email if you want to join us.

So next time you are wondering what Canoe England ever do for you, have a chat with your PDO or SDO and see what they CAN do.

PHIL HADLEY, PDO WEST MIDLANDS, CANOE ENGLAND TEAM CENTRAL. EMAIL: Phil.hadley@bcu.org.uk **07771 620745**

Coastal Spirit

New dates for 2008 are now being advertised and if you haven't visited their web site recently, an online brochure and a photo gallery of previous expeditions and courses has been added. The owner, Roger, has found that a huge advantage of being a small company is they can be highly flexible and respond to what people want. Each group size is also a maximum of five, which works well for personalised coaching and guiding.

A winter skills programming has recently begun with the idea of sustaining and developing what individuals have gained during the summer, so rather than being rusty when spring arrives, your skill level has increased and you are ready for the summer. Each day runs every 4-5 weeks, so this also provides a different way to learn and soak up the information over a longer period of time.

We can offer BCU members 10% off one and two day courses and 5% off five day courses when a booking is made and a deposit paid before the end of March. Promotion code CF08 needs to be quoted when booking.

See us at this year's Canoxpo on the 16-17th February in Coventry
www.coastalspirit.com

February 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: Andy Dancer
Position: International official

International paddler to international official
Previously the focus has been on coaches and volunteers within clubs, which to some may appear to be the most obvious route into volunteering within the sport. But for Andy Dancer, who started canoeing at the age of ten, his passion for the sport has led him through all kinds of roles culminating in the role of Chief Referee for polo.

Most officials, regardless of their role or discipline, would tend to agree their contribution to the sport often goes unnoticed with very little acknowledgement or appreciation, but it is the officials who are the backbone to the competitions which enable paddlers to excel and compete in their sport. "It's a thankful task in many ways" explains Andy about being a polo referee. "If you get the decisions right then you are just doing your job. If you make a mistake then it's your entire fault! Having been through many years of training daily and devoting my life to the sport, I can appreciate the frustration for the players."

Since starting canoeing at the age of ten, Andy moved to slalom and competed for GB as a junior and senior in C2. His move to volunteering started through organising slalom events as well as qualifying as a section judge, joining the slalom committee and qualifying as a coach: "I've enjoyed coaching within the club and I hope soon to see some of the juniors that I've coached start to beat me around the pitch!" Andy explained. And, as if that's not enough, Andy was a founding member of Cherwell CC, Banbury eleven years ago.

With his interests moving towards polo over the last ten years, Andy followed what seemed like a natural progression to being a polo referee and is now qualified to UK Grade 1 and holds the ICF Polo Referee's qualification. "Polo is a self-refereed sport," explained Andy. "As players on the team gradually started retiring, I eventually decided it was about time I took my turn and went out to get my refereeing qualification."

From being an international paddler to being an international referee, Andy has enjoyed refereeing at the World Championships in 2006 and the European Championships in 2007. Andy may well go unnoticed by some with very little praise or thanks, but his love for volunteering in polo is clear and is very quick to praise his team of referees: "I have a fantastic team of senior referees who help out with courses and assessments".

Are you interested in becoming an official?
Andy and his team are working hard to tackle the travel and time issues associated with qualifying as



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.

a referee. As Andy explains: "trying to get my qualification, particularly the higher levels, was hard – not just practising and getting to the right standard, but trying to find courses and assessments. I ended up travelling all over the country to find the right people with enough time to help me." In his role as chief referee, Andy and his team are introducing a way for people to start on the refereeing ladder with assessments being held at regional club sessions to minimise travel.

Another project which the team have targeted is to increase the respect for polo referees at all times by the players on the water. With previous experience as a paddler, Andy understands the frustration from players when referees make a decision which appears: "Having been through many years myself of training daily and devoting my life to the sport, I can appreciate the frustration for the players of having their hard work spoilt by a poor decision from the referee. That drives me to review the decisions I've made and try to learn from every game in exactly the way the players do."

If you would like more information on refereeing in polo, please email Andy Dancer chief-referee@canoepolo.org.uk. For other disciplines, please contact the relevant committee or contact volunteers@bcu.org.uk



L to R: Janet Cartwright (Left) – award recipient Girlguiding UK, Bobby Charlton and James Rossiter – BCU award recipient

45th annual Torch Trophy trust awards

His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent presented the annual Torch Trophy Trust awards at the Army and Navy Club at Pall Mall in London.

Sir Bobby Charlton, President of the Trust, congratulated all the award recipients and thanked them for their devotion to their sport.

The awards are presented annually to nominations from sports governing bodies, including able bodied and disabled and youth organisations to recognise grass roots voluntary work for sport in clubs and community initiatives. This year, 20 sports volunteers were presented with their awards in recognition of outstanding voluntary work.

Janet Cartwright Huddersfield was nominated by Girlguiding UK

Janet has been a volunteer leader with Girlguiding UK for over 23 years working with Brownies, Guides and the senior section, as well as being the County Water Activities Advisor for 15 years.

More than 20 years ago Janet qualified as a kayaking instructor and went on to become a Level 3 coach. Janet runs numerous courses for both children and adults, as well as coaching adults from beginners through to Level 2 coach awards so that they can share their skills with even more people.

As the County Water Activities Advisor, Janet has given thousands of girls, young women and adult leaders the opportunity to experience water activities. She regularly organises 'water days' including canoeing and kayaking for up to 300 guides at local venues as well as organising training sessions for leaders so that they can gain the awards of the BCU. Janet is totally dedicated to her sport and Janet's nominating body describe her as a true unsung hero.

EVENTS

Student Safety Course

Regarded by many as the highlight of the kayaking calendar, this year's BCU Student Safety Camps in Scotland will be on the 20-22nd and 23-25th of March.

Based in the Spean Bridge area, the courses cover all you need to know about running a safe and fun trip on the river and are staffed by top-notch, progressive folks who know what works in real situations. Each course is split into intermediate and advanced, meaning you get to work at your level. All this for the truly bargain price of £80 pp. To book a place or for more information on course content, call Tom on 01248 354553, 07811 829865 or email bcustudentsafety@mail.com.

You young trendy things can also check out the Facebook group at:
www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=7032717207

Exeter Leukaemia Funds

20th Anniversary

1-8th June

Looking for 20 people to canoe 20km a day for four/five days to raise £20,000 for ELF.

Two person open canoes. Starting in Norway, crossing over into northern Sweden to Hotagen River. Canoeing 20km a day with some portages around dams. Water mostly Grade 2, rivers open into wide mirrored lakes flowing through tranquil and unspoilt wilderness of ancient forests.

Camping each night on remote islands in hammocks or tents. At this time of the year it's almost 24 hour daylight. Good chance of seeing local wildlife... reindeer, moose.

The challenge is open to anyone, novice to experienced canoeists. To take part participants need to raise £1,500 each. Contact: 0800 043 2509 or email claire@intrepid-expeditions.co.uk

2008 canoe polo ACM

24-25th May

The canoe polo ACM will be held during the 2008 Canoe Polo Club Championships at the Hatfield Water Park, Doncaster. Full details will be published closer to the event. For further information please contact

secretary@canoepolo.org.uk or visit:

www.canoepolo.org.uk

Plumpton College open day

Saturday 10th May

10.00am-5.00pm

Wide variety of trade and charity stalls and individual demonstrations at stands.

Free entry for 16s and under.

Entry: £5 adults. £3 senior citizens.

Plumpton College. Tel: 01273 890454

www.plumpton.ac.uk



Thury-Harcourt, in Normandy, is a small town where canoeing features greatly. The town stands on the River Orne, and for many years the local canoe club has flourished. In their honour, the town council has created this floral display in the main street. Photo: John Griffin

Mohawk Canoes in UK



Mohawk Canoes have been making high quality Royalex boats in the USA for over four decades, now these boats are soon to be available in the UK.

The launch of these boats will take place at Canoexpo at Stoneleigh Park Coventry on the 16-17 February, where a good representation of their touring,

white water and solo boats will be displayed.

With six tandem touring, four solo and twelve white water canoes this is an impressive line up. The Novas and Intrepids are high volume touring boats with the Sport 14 being a wide beamed flat bottomed boat for those that require stability, with the more sporty Odyssey 15T finishing off the tandem touring line up.

The Solo canoes are ideal for smaller people or children with the Odysseys complimenting the range with their higher volume and carrying capacity.

White water canoes start with the Maxim, a fun playful solo boat, the Probe is available in four sizes, the Viper in two sizes, the XL in three sizes, the Rodeo and the Shaman finish the line up. All these white water boats can be fully outfitted with saddle, thigh straps and floatation and the Probes can be outfitted with a three position saddle so they can be paddled as a solo or tandem boat.

The Mohawk Canoes are being imported into the UK by AcolocA Ltd who will outfit the boats whilst High 'N' Mighty will be handling the distribution to dealers.

The Outdoors Show

14-16th March

NEC Arena, Birmingham

The canoe pool is back by popular demand. Traditionally one of them most spectacular features at the show the canoe pool is always a big attraction for complete beginner and experienced paddlers alike. You'll be able to seek advice from experts and purchase the latest gear from leading suppliers. But canoeing is just one of the many draws that gets visitors flocking to the show.

The experts from PADI will be hosting the Dive Zone' which includes a huge diving pool.

One exhilarating new feature set to send pulses racing and the adrenaline flowing will be the totally unique 'Skymasters' climbing competition.

The Outdoors Show will also welcome a wealth of names and personalities in the outdoor world to talk about their fascinating experiences and challenges. Climbers, explorers and TV personalities such as Kate Silverton, star of the BBC's Ultimate Wild Water.

The Gear Showcase, hosted by Trail magazine will entertain the crowds with a cocktail of catwalks, showcases and explanations on their latest and most innovative gear.

Volkswagen will be bringing their indoor beach festival to the show. With a cocktail of live music, more action, and a complimentary smoothie to help you enjoy the events unfolding around you.

For a chance of winning one of our 15 pairs of free tickets simply tell us where the show is held:

- London
- Manchester
- Birmingham

Email your answer to chloe.nelson-lawrie@bcu.org.uk or post to: Outdoors Show Comp, 18 Market Place, Bingham, Nottingham NG13 8AP. Competition closes on 29th February.

If you are unlucky in our ticket giveaway, you can still take advantage of our special advance booking offer of £20 for two adult tickets (a saving of £12 compared with the on-the-door price) or £36 for four adults – just quote FOCUS when booking on-line at www.theoutdoorsshow.co.uk or call 0844 415 4418.

2 tickets for
£20 Book Now
and Save £12!
Quote FOCUS



make your escape @

THE  Ordnance
Survey®

OUTDOORSSHOW

Supported by **THE**
INDEPENDENT

14-16 MARCH 2008 NEC BIRMINGHAM

World Theatre

Get inspiration from celebrity speakers such as Kate Silverton, star of the BBC's Ultimate Wild Water.

In association with **THE**
INDEPENDENT

Volkswagen Festival:

Workshops and adventure sports talks from surfing to canoeing - kick back with a fruit smoothie & enjoy the atmosphere.



Commercial
Vehicles

Urban Adventure Rat Race

Your team of 3 in an action-packed race through Birmingham: abseil down buildings, climb urban structures & canoe to win!



Canoe Lake

Have a go canoeing and kayaking and get the real feel on the lake with expert tips & advice.



Plus world class climbers in the Ford SkyMasters Challenge,
expert bikers on 120 tons of mud & dirt and many more 'have a go' activities

Book now @ www.TheOutdoorsShow.co.uk or call 0844 415 4418

Tom Hide

As reported in the December issue of Canoe Focus, teenage racing canoeist Tom Hide (17) won the London region of the 2007 OCS Young Sports Person Awards as the magazine went to press. Pictured is Tom receiving his 2007 award with 1000m K1 World Champion Tim Brabants and awards ceremony host Clare Balding.



Own web site

Wadebridge Canoe Club who took part in the River Camel clean up in the december issue (page 66) would like to point out that they have their very own site: www.wadebridgecanoecub.org

BCU job opportunities

Sport England Club and Coach Fund

With the support of Sport England, the BCU (Canoe England) is looking to expand its club and coach framework. We are seeking applicants for the following posts: Regional and Local Club Coaches within various Sport England regions, plus an Administration Assistant. For more information visit BCU web site: www.bcu.org.uk

Paddlers welcome

One reader has sent us their photographic memories to show that some areas of the world positively encourage paddlers to take part in their favourite sport in sensitive ecological areas. Local government officials in Monterey, California are keen to share their coastline and their spectacular kelp sea forests with all types of sports and pastimes.

Where else in the world are kayakers and canoeists encouraged to take part in beautiful surroundings?

Now, Monterey Bay is a marine sanctuary



The same natural wealth that made Monterey Bay famous for plentiful sardine fishing is now part of the nation's largest national marine sanctuary. The goal of the sanctuary is to protect marine life while allowing people to use and enjoy the ocean. Now, people come from all over to play and work in the bay - divers, kayakers, fishermen and scientists.

Photos: Maureen Dobson



Services to Canoeing Award



British Canoe Union presentation of 'Services to Canoeing Award' to Bob Ottley.

On Sunday 13th January 2008, Albert Woods, President of the BCU, presented Bob Ottley a special 'Services to Canoeing Award' in recognition for over 40 years contribution to promoting and developing the sport in the South West region. This is the first award of its kind to be made to a member of the BCU in the UK.

The presentation took place at the clubhouse of the Axe Yacht Club in Axmouth Harbour. The event was very well attended with friends and fellow canoeists coming from all over the country to see Bob receiving this award. There was even someone who had travelled from Holland with a special message from the Dutch Canoe Association.

Bob Ottley 65, who lives in Chard, Somerset has been paddling for over 40 years. He is a long-standing member and senior instructor at Axe Vale CC, Devon. He has also been actively involved with the regional BCU and Open Canoe Association and has served on their management committees.

This award recognises a great many accomplishments; highlights include:

- Introducing over 1,200 primary school children in the Axe Valley, to the sport of canoeing through annual 'taster days'.
- He has overseen the development of the Axe Vale CC by helping to secure funding for facilities and raising money for equipment

and has helped numerous members over the last 35 years develop a love and enthusiasm for the sport.

In conjunction with the Open Canoe Association, Bob has for the last 19 years been running the annual open canoe weekend, which attracts canoeists from all over the country and Europe! Through this event and other regular training courses, Bob has coached countless number of Instructors ensuring the continued development of the sport nationally and in the region.

Bob was one of the forerunners of paddlers who put sea paddling with Canadian canoes on the map. His sea trips have included tours of Lands End, The Lizard, The Bristol Channel, Cape Cornwall and many more covering over 4,000 sea miles.

In the mid-90s, Bob underwent major surgery and treatment for cancer. He was back on the water within 12 months raising money for the hospital in Taunton where he received his treatment with an epic paddle from Birmingham to Taunton, involving a crossing of the Severn Estuary.

Unfortunately the cancer has re-emerged, but this has not dampened Bob's generous and indomitable spirit.

Obituary: Tom Shenton

Tom was a well-known figure in paddling through the late '50s and '60s when he achieved a number of significant 'firsts'.

Tom's paddling career began with the Royal Marines in 1956. 1957 saw him paddling the Devizes / Westminster race with Paul Farrant (who went on to become Britain's first World Slalom Champion). Two years later with Stuart Syrad they became the first paddlers to break 24 hours for the DW. During a posting to Malta in '62 Tom took the opportunity to paddle around the Island in a K2 with Jacky Edmonds and achieved a time of 8 hours, 55 min.

In 1963 a posting saw Tom back in London where he took to sprint racing at Royal Canoe Club. A year later in '64 he narrowly missed selection for the Tokyo Olympics. He went on to win the 1,000-metre National K2 championship with Alistair Wilson and won a silver medal in Berlin in a record time for a UK K4 - 1,000m.

Marine duties took Tom to Singapore where he paddled around the Island in just 12 hours in a homemade K1. The publicity gained from this resulted in an annual event taking place which has continued since.

On returning to the UK Tom took to coaching in sprint disciplines, particularly juniors and became a member

of the International Canoe Federation selection panel and manager with the junior team until his retirement from the Special Boat Service in '76.

His subsequent careers were split between diving activities in the offshore industry in India and the North Sea and security work with high profile celebrities, including George Harrison following the assassination of John Lennon.

These changes of career took Tom away from paddling, something he deeply regretted, but following his involvement in the 'Dog's paddle along the DW course in 2003, was inspired to buy a new touring K1. Sadly he only managed to put it on the water two or three times before cancer took hold of him.

His funeral was held in the Christchurch Priory, and was attended by a large contingent of former Royal Marines, and paddlers of his generation.

Tom made a considerable contribution to flat water racing providing some lasting foundations that have resulted in continuous progression of standards in flat water disciplines.

Tom was a quiet and self effacing man who was appreciative of the simplest acts of kindness. A man that has made a great contribution to our sport.

Daphne his wife of 51 years, son Paul and daughter Tracey will sorely miss him.

PAUL SHENTON AND BOB O'KEEFE

GREAT Deals

CAGS



Gul Vapour
~~WAS £119.00~~
NOW £99.00



Nookie Zone
£179.00



Nookie Airhead
£139.00



Peak Freeride
£110.00



Palm Vertigo
£74.95



Peak Deluxe
~~WAS £135.00~~
NOW £99



Yak Osprey
£119.00



Yak Kaross
£29.95

PFD'S



CSR MK1
~~WAS £24.95~~
NOW £19.95



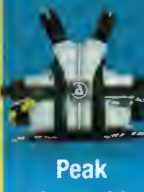
Kaikora Tour
£109.00



Yak Koast
~~WAS £79.95~~
NOW £59.95



Palm Symbient
£69.00



Peak Riverguide
£99.00



Yak Descent
~~WAS £79.95~~
NOW £59.95



Yak Kallista Legacy
£45.00



Yak Vent
£65.00

HELMETS



Jobe Hustler
£29.95



Predator Shiznit
£49.00



Predator Sidecut
£39.95



S'R' FMJ
~~WAS £99.00~~
NOW £50.00



Sweet Rocker Halfcut
£129.00



Sweet Strutter Petal
£129.00



WRSI
£54.95



Yak Kontour
£34.95

ACCESSORIES



CJB Boat Trolley
£59.00



Immersion Research
£39.95



Nookie Amara Gloves
£14.95



Palm Freestyle Kevlar Sock
£18.95



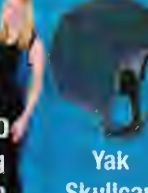
Peak Paddle Mitt
£15.00



Peak Headcase
£15.00



Peak Neoskin Pants
£39.00



ROHO Long John
£45.00



Yak Skullicap
£9.95

SIT ON OFFERS



Pack 1

- Perception Scooter Beach
 - Yak Kalister Legacy PFD
 - Carlisle Day Tripper Paddle
- ~~WAS £368~~
NOW £325



Pack 2

- RTM Loco
 - CSR Mk1 PFD
 - Carlisle Day Tripper Paddle
- ~~WAS £333~~
NOW £299



Pack 3

- Feel Free Moken
 - Yak Koast PFD
 - Carlisle Simply Magic Paddle
- ~~WAS £718~~
NOW £629

PACKAGE SECTION



Starter Pack

- Pyranha Master TG Club
 - Yak Fabric Deck
 - TNP Paddle
- RRP £400
OFFER £360



River Pack 1

- New Dagger GT Max W'Water Spec
 - Palm Classic Deck
 - Werner Rio
- RRP £749
OFFER £659



River Pack 2

- Liquid Logic Remix
 - Playboater
 - Shock Deck
 - Carlisle Carbon W'Water Paddle
- RRP £878
OFFER £779

Packages are our speciality - don't see what you're after, just ask!

Robin Hood Watersports
www.roho.co.uk

**152 LEEDS ROAD
 HECKMONDWIKE
 WEST YORKSHIRE
 WF16 9BJ**

**MAIL ORDER HOTLINE 01924 444888
 ONLINE SUPERSTORE www.roho.co.uk**



Oliver J. Cock MBE



Oliver with his dog Vicky at Polzeath in 1957.

All photos: Frank Stevenson

Oliver Cock was the first BCU National Coach and subsequently the first Director of Coaching.

Oliver was awarded the MBE and his autobiography 'I Paddled My Own Canoe' was released in 2001.

Oliver passed away just short of his 96th birthday in October.

Verdon Gorge 1956



One of a kind

I first met Oliver in the late 1950's when I was a teenager and a member of the infant Reading Kayak Club (now the Reading Canoe Club) after I had been introduced to slalom by the Chalfont Park Canoe Club. I became the club's representative on the slalom committee and this is where my association with Oliver took off. He was one of a kind.

I recall joining him and two others on a trip to an event somewhere in the north possibly Grandtully. We travelled from his home in Henley, in his Humber Super Snipe Station Wagon (I think) in which the back end was decked out with a platform so that folding kayaks and gear could be stored underneath and two passengers could sleep on top with their feet sticking out over the tail board. This was obviously a long drive and we were able to change driving teams en-route. He towed a small caravan with a fold down roof, which was not quite as elegant as the modern versions. As rumour has it, he had the Calor gas stove removed so that he could use his faithful Primas stove in its place.

Another trip that I joined with him was to the World Slalom Championships in Spittal, Austria, in 1963. We travelled in his, now, mobile caravan. I cannot remember what make it was, it was not a VW, but similar size. Travelling with us were Julian Shaw and his wife. I was very honoured to accompany the team on their practice run down the white water river racecourse,

which finished up down the slalom course. A great experience for me. This photo was taken at one of the surfing weeks that the Slalom committee organised at Polzeath. On one occasion when I was there, huge surf was running and he persuaded me to go out in one of the canvas Eskimo kayaks so that he could do some filming with his cine camera. No video in those days. I set out with fear and trepidation and battled out through the surf until I got thoroughly trashed and survived. Confidence boosted, I then went and presented him with some nice loops, double loops etc. I never did get to see the film.

I had a break from canoeing in the late 60's so our ways parted, but he is a character I will never forget. Oliver was one of a kind a great asset to canoeing and in particular to slalom and I feel honoured to have had this acquaintance with him. I am sure others closer to him will have a lot more to say.

Still Paddling.
KEITH TILLEN

Chief adviser

Perhaps my first memory of him was when I was head of a village college in Huntingdon in about 1965. We had the first covered heated swimming pool in the area and this wiry expert was able to demonstrate canoe skills before a large and bedazzled school audience. Visits like this, plus a keen staff led to the formation of our school canoe club, which in the following years, built boats (PBKs and then fibreglass ones) and explored many of the local waters on weekend treks. A 10 to 15 mile trip was the norm and usually there were no currents to help, on the Nene and Ouse.

But my main work with Oliver was via our small company Explorer Films (a partnership with fellow schoolmaster and photographer Peter Halket). Oliver was our BCU chief adviser on the series of CANOE/CRAFT films that we made between 1972 and 1974.

The films were strictly basic and aimed at the absolute beginner and they did quite well in their day.

With visits to his home to check over the drafts, Oliver made sure we toed the party line!

However, even in those days, it was easy to get it wrong on some of the finer points of safety and with standards ever changing you could soon be out of date. But the films sold well and helped those at the bottom end of the sport.

Our making of those films followed on a four year run with the Royal Life Saving Society when we made some very popular definitive training films for their awards. Interestingly, only last month the RLSS discovered some these prints and I have since made DVD conversions for any historic interest among their members.

Sorry, I have rambled. But it all began, as so many things did, with dear Oliver.

**MAURICE DYBECK,
EXPLORER FILMS**

Made the impossible possible

Oliver Cock started engineering at university in North East England. Towards the end of his university time he met a young German engineer who now lived in England and who had trained in Germany as a white water paddler. Oliver encouraged this young man to make canoes in south England and that was the start of one of the first if not the first ever folding boat manufactories in England.

After finishing his studies and having achieved his degree, Oliver started his career as a wine merchant in the family business. He spent a lot of time outside the country mainly in Portugal.

Oliver liked white water paddling and in the 1950s he encouraged young people to have contests of white water paddling in England.

In the '50s he discovered a young canoeist of whom he believed was an exceedingly good white water paddler. It was Oliver who made



the impossible possible for that young man to get a training in the Royal Marines. And how right he was! That young man later became the world champion of white water paddling, which was such a surprising thing to happen that there was not even the national anthem ready to be played.

Because one of Her Majesty's Ministers in the late '60s wanted our young people to enter sports, a big sports centre was founded in London and one of its sections was paddling. As there were changes in Oliver's business he took the opportunity to become a canoe trainer for several years of his life. Many people were taught canoeing by him and through them, sports teachers passed his knowledge and skills on even further.

After his retirement he continued his interest in canoeing almost to the end of his life.

STEFFIE HALLENSLEBEN

Commanded respect

I was saddened to hear about Oliver several weeks after he had passed away. I first knew of Oliver in 1948 at the Chertsey Camping Club site, headquarters of Thames Group of the Canoe Camping Club where he was chairman.

Oliver often toured in a folding caravan or with a single pole tent together with his 'Tyne' folding canoe and always with his dog 'Vicky'. He was proud of his driving skills, a member of the 'V' Veterans Club and commanded respect wherever he went. He often performed the Eskimo roll including the top hat trick of keeping his hat dry at our Chertsey regattas and later formed the 'Rolling Circus' touring several venues.

In 1950-1 the first 'slalom' was held at Shepperton on the Thames, 1952 Marsh Lock was 'discovered' and in 1953 Lakeland CC held their first wild water test on the River Leven. Not many people in the early fifties had white water experience, so in 1956 Oliver invited seven friends to canoe the French Durance and Verdon rivers and gorges.

As he imported wine, our first stop was through the gates of Chateau Gris in the village of Nuits Saint Georges to stay the night after a great meal with many 'courses' of wine.

On to the river Durance in the Alps, at that time it was Grade 4-5 with our folding canoeing. My own canoe was smashed over several rapids. We then went further down to the Verdon Gorge. In those days it was a great adventure. Oliver was always filming with his cine camera and the trip is

recorded on video alongside his teaching films in the BCU library.

Oliver was also a national coach to the BCU and with his own rolling experience organised advanced surf and rough watercourses at Bude and later Polzeath.

This led to a team of canoeists very able to do well at slaloms. A new folding slalom canoe was designed by Jack Spuhlar, one of our top slalom paddlers to compete against the German models. Just a thought – a folding canoe would cost you about £20 and a paddle £2 in the '50s.

One prominent team member was Paul Farrant of Chalfont Park CC and Oliver now living at Wargrave on the Thames was able to give Paul personal training for skill and fitness. The end result came in 1959 when the British team and many others travelled to Geneva in Switzerland for the World Canoe

Championships. I was lucky to see Paul become world champion.

A few years later – all too soon – Paul died in an accident and his folding canoe given to the BCU and lodged in a Museum warehouse at Gloucester.



A couple of years ago, Oliver asked me to recover and renovate the canoe for exhibiting in the Henley Boating Museum. With two friends we found and bought the canoe back, fully restoring the framework. The forgoing is just a few recollections; very much more could be said.

Oliver was a great inspiration and pioneer in this country in those early years, without a doubt the Canoe Camping Club the BCU and canoeing generally have lost someone that has done so much for a very popular sport.

FRANK STEVENSON

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

'Already the most prominent sea kayaking magazine, Ocean Paddler is revered by its legendary contributors and its visual panache, and is set to function as the Holy Scriptures for anyone that worships paddling at the altar of the British style.'
Ignacio Wenley Palacios, OnKayaks

'Words cannot do justice to the quality of your magazine! I am thoroughly impressed by the layout, content, quality of paper, fonts, and photo quality from cover to cover'
Michael Callaghan, Ecomanne Ocean Kayak Centre, Canada

Subscribe today from just **£35** using the promotional code 'BCU' or if you're a coach, subscribe from just **£30** using the code 'coach'

www.oceanpaddlermagazine.com

Athlete Focus



Fiona Jarvie

Fiona Jarvie is a two times bronze medal winner in the Freestyle World Championships of 2005 and 2007.



More about Fiona...

HOW DID YOU FIRST BECOME INVOLVED IN KAYAKING?

I started at Reading University Canoe Club, initially I wanted to join a windsurfing club, but there wasn't one, so I figured (despite not knowing what a canoe/kayak was) the canoe club would be the next best thing.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT KAYAKING YOU LIKE SO MUCH?

Meeting so many people on the river, going to places I wouldn't see if I wasn't kayaking; the adrenalin at the top of a new rapid, or at the beginning of a competition ride; the feeling of achievement when successfully completing a rapid, or landing a new move; getting air on huge waves.

WERE YOU INSTANTLY DRAWN TO FREESTYLE?

I paddled with the Uni club for three years and only did two or three white-water trips a year and then a two week trip to the French Alps every summer. I didn't start freestyle until I had left uni and got my own car – I then discovered Hurley Weir was only 15 minutes away from where I lived, this was the start of my playboating.

WHEN DID YOU WIN YOUR FIRST COMPETITION?

I honestly can't remember! Shamefully I didn't write stuff down – I just assumed it would be something I wouldn't forget! From looking at my results page on my web site (www.fionajarvie.co.uk) it seems 2003 was a 'vintage' year with eight national wins. I do remember I wasn't very good at the first couple of competitions I entered in '98, but then went on to achieve a fifth place in the pre-World Championships in New Zealand later that year. The first few years I competed I mainly made the GB team because there wasn't much competition for the number of ladies places (something which has definitely changed in the last couple of years). My kayaking really started to improve after I spent two months in the United States with a boat that was finally suited to my power/weight in 2002.

DID YOU JOIN A CANOE CLUB?

Only the university one – the majority of us stayed on in Reading after leaving university and continued paddling together for some time so I never needed to join a separate club.

WHAT IS YOUR TYPICAL DAY TRAINING?

I generally just go paddling at Hurley and do a bit of mountain biking/going to the gym to keep fit, rather than train directly. However, leading up to this year's World Championships, when I didn't have too much work on (I'm a primary school supply teacher when I'm not boating), I would do a couple of sessions at Hurley working on new moves and reviewing the video in between to see what I needed to do to improve. Then two to three times a week I'd do an hour in the gym interval training and/or weights.

ARE YOU NATURALLY COMPETITIVE?

Yes, very. I think it stems from losing to my brother so often at family games!

WHAT IS THE HIGHLIGHT OF YOUR CAREER SO FAR?

Several: winning a bronze medal at the Worlds in Australia 2005 (and being so close to winning silver); winning a bronze medal in the Worlds this year in Canada and second place at the World Cup event on Garburator Wave in Canada, 2006.

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR ULTIMATE GOAL TO ACHIEVE IN FREESTYLE COMPETITION?

I would like to win a World Championship or World Cup competition before I retire, I've been gradually getting closer, so maybe next time!

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO UP AND COMING FREESTYLE PADDLERS?

Keep having fun as you definitely don't want to do it for the money (you'll need to take up slalom for that)!

THANK YOU FIONA FOR TAKING THE TIME TO GIVE THIS INTERVIEW.



systemX

2008

Product

Information

Guide



Pick up a copy at your local dealer or
download at www.systemxkayak.co.uk



Competition

Flat water academy blossoms at Nottingham



It was a biting cold day during December as a group of athletes comprising of six men and three women assembled close to the flagpole at the National Water Sports Centre where the Union Jack was clinging to its lanyard for dear life. *"At the end of the day, that's what it's all about – to win medals for Great Britain"* said one athlete, looking upwards to the flag. The men then set about getting into their canoes and all paddled off confidently – just 21 days after first being introduced to this most unstable of canoeing craft and single blade paddle, while the women set out from the pontoon in their kayaks to complete a 500m time trial, the fastest of them cracking out a time of 2 minutes 12 seconds (after six months in the sport).

This group, known as the Fast Track Group (canoe and women's kayak) – was the output of a very busy summer for BCU World Class programmes.

Recognising the lack of depth in the canoe and women's kayak squads (four and three medals up for grabs at the Olympic Games) and with a burning mission to contend for medals in all classes at the 2012 London Olympic Games, GB Canoeing teamed up with UK Sport over the summer of 2007 and embarked upon a talent search initiative to find athletes who may have been involved other sports, and who may just be suitable for canoeing.

UK Sport led a high-profile talent recruitment campaign called 'Sporting Giants – London 2012' which was promoted by a number of high profile sports people such as Sir Steve Redgrave. It had much media interest with TV, newspapers and internet spreading the 'word' and application details. Thousands of young people made the journey to Manchester, Nottingham, Bath and Bisham Abbey to complete a series of tests which would determine some aspects of their potential to excel at the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Physiological testing

Out of this trawl over 200 men and women were then invited to separate testing days, specific to the sport of canoeing at the National Water Sports Centre in Nottingham. This included physiological testing and, for the men, their ability to adapt to a canoe. From

this process, twelve women and ten men were invited to complete a 'Confirmation Phase' lasting five weeks (men) and nine weeks (women) based at the National Water Sports Centre.

Said Tom Marshall (18) from Bristol *"I remember when I got the call to say I had got through. I was stripping wall paper at*

the time and I couldn't believe it! I thought – this could change my life!"

Mario Santos Costa (19), a former semi-professional footballer from Stevenage said, *"I couldn't believe it. I just decided to give up my job as a shop fitter for the five weeks of the confirmation phase. I knew this was a one-off opportunity and I just had to take it"*.

And so they came... including Angela Hannah from Loughborough, an ex-Zimbabwe hockey international, Victoria Towers, a Staffordshire swimmer of national standing, Richard Jefferies – a rugby player from the Isle of Wight and Matt Jump – a rower from Northwich.

Impressed

Anne Ferguson (Project Manager) said, *"We had a really diverse group of young people aged 18-25) from different sports, cultures and locations all assembling here. The thing that bonded them most was their desire for sport, training and the will to progress through to the next stage. Their attitude towards training was outstanding – an 'anything is possible' mentality was really evident."*

Russell Jones and Steve Train were equally impressed with the level of progress made by the canoe group.

Matt Sollars – a former back row rugby player said, *"When I first saw the 'pencil boat' (top line canoe racing boat) I thought it was ridiculous. Then there were these two juniors flying by in them and I thought... I have no chance."* How things change. The canoe confirmation phase reached a conclusion on 3rd December and six men including Matt have been offered a place in the transition phase of the Canoe Academy. These athletes are now in the process of making that same move to Nottingham that four women completed in September when their confirmation phase concluded and they moved to train full-time with Mark Hoile, the fast track women's kayak coach.

The confirmation phase was, without doubt, a challenging time for some. *"We knew the pressure was on, all of the time, said one athlete but then that's what it's about, performing under pressure."* The transition phase has brought a different set of challenges. For some, it's about leaving home for the first time, for others it's for making career and lifestyle changes.

Victoria Towers deferred her physiotherapy degree to allow her to follow this opportunity. Joe Hoyes, who had great support from his work to complete every session of the confirmation stage, has swapped full time for part time employment in the fitness industry to make the commitment.

Matt Jump – a full time technician with Ford, said, *"I had a decision to make about leaving a structured career. I want to go to the Olympic games with a GB vest on – it's not up for debate!"*

The path to competing for GB is still far on the horizon and it is getting closer every day. All of the athletes are very realistic about sport – they know there are no guarantees, yet they are all inspired. As Richard Jefferies put it *"It's out there – we just have to take it – I know we can make it"*.

And as Mario Santos Costa walked off talking about where Steven Gerrard would go on the wall of the bedroom of his new flat, maybe, just maybe, when 2012 arrives, Costa will be on Gerrard's wall. ●

ANNE FERGUSON



Angela Hannah



Mario Santos Costa



Matt Jump

LENDAL

We are all unique...



...why shouldn't your paddle be!

Our range has over 3000 configurations,
create the perfect paddle for you!

www.lendal.com

Fig. 1 Lendal DNA Strand



JOHNSON
OUTDOORS
THE SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE



Pete Astles, Sally Ormand and Jenny Chrimmes enjoy a Colorado River mud bath

The Grand Canyon needs no real introduction. In places it is a mile deep and several miles wide. The Colorado River is a natural wonder in its self starting in the spectacular Rocky Mountains and flowing through to the Gulf of California. Despite being in the desert there is still plenty of wildlife to share our trip with. Soaring above are 287 types of birds, 88 mammals, 26 species of fish, 58 kinds of reptiles and amphibians and 1,500 types of plant. So we were certainly going to treat the canyon with the up most respect.

After 15 hours of travelling we arrived in the cool frosty town of Flagstaff. Here we would pack our clothes tents and kayaking equipment into dry bags ready for the journey down the Grand Canyon. The town of Flagstaff is reasonably big and forever growing in population. So with our last few days in civilisation we found ourselves drinking coffee in enormously well stocked book shops, eating pancakes the size of bus wheels at roadside diners and of course, taking advantage of the fantastic exchange rate purchasing outdoor equipment by the arm load, maps, shoes and jackets. The real trip hadn't even started.

Being America everything was big - the trucks were enormous and when crossing the road you couldn't help but feel intimidated by these monsters of metal. Even though we only spent a few days either side of the trip in Flagstaff, somehow certain members of the group found themselves getting into situations, which can only happen in a country where they serve 12 types of toast, and eat biscuits with gravy for breakfast. This involved Hoopla and Dave being chased by the Flagstaff University Football team after openly suggesting that American Football is like rugby but for wimps. In addition to this the same day Dave returned to the hotel in a police car after getting and being rescued by a charming lady police officer. Hoopla's convincing tactics to get a student discount off a big purchase at the University store went something like this "Do you have a student discount card?" the young lady asked Hoops casually. "Not at the moment as I haven't started university here yet and don't have my card. I am from England you see. I am off down the Grand Canyon and am planning to come to Flagstaff to study". Hoops said his plan was bombproof.

"Ohh, wow England, in Europe right? What course are you on?" asked the excited sales assistant. "Ermm just a biology course," Hoops spoke casually. "Me too! What aspect of biology?" Hoops had no idea. "Microbiology biotechnology it's a great course". Hoops waited for a response. "I haven't heard of that one". Slightly disappointed she bagged Hoopla's purchase, gave him the very generous student discount, wished him a "nice day" and then tottered off into a back room, perhaps to find an atlas.

The sun rose impressively over the tops of Marble Canyon to send us off from Lee's Ferry, along with beaver and condors with their impressive nine and a half foot wing span we were now in their playing field, we had to play by the Canyon's rules and respect the wildlife that loiters within it. With enough food for 16 days in the Canyon plus all our belongings we needed for a group of 13 we set off down the Colorado River. Away we went, away from traffic and city centres, away from underground subways and fast food outlets.

Marble Canyon

The Grand Canyon itself doesn't start until day three but the warm up act of the Marble Canyon puts on a good show, colours of red stone and a bold blue sky accompanied by green emerald water. Why would anyone want to be anywhere else? Like any river trip you find yourself slipping easily into a simple routine. We would rise early at 6am each morning and pack our belongings, eat breakfast load the rafts and then away we were, mere gypsies on the river. The river journeys its way down the canyon through the walls layered up over millions of years, rock compressed down, Tapeats Sandstone containing almost 100 percent quartz. Bright Angel Shale and Red Limestone, just to name a few. Around each bend more colours were created and layers that would look down on you as you ride the tongue of green water. It seems hard at times to take it all in; your eyes don't seem to be wide enough to absorb the majestic sized walls rocketing upwards to meet the sky. Side canyons, inviting themselves to meet the Colorado River, would only break the canyon walls. Small streams plummeting over rock ledges providing fantastic power showers. Elves Chasm, a picturesque fall situated a short walk from the river or Deer Creek, a spectacular fall cascading out of the

It was a grey October Monday when our group of 13 individuals boarded a plane to Phoenix, Arizona. We were to spend 16 days paddling self-supported down 226 miles of the Colorado River that winds and twists its way through the Grand Canyon. For most of us we had been waiting eagerly for a few months and that seemed far too long but for Pete Astles of Peak UK it had been a 13 year wait for the permit to come through. (I would just have been a five-year-old tot at the time!) Ross Montandon takes up the story...

rocks. Longer walks including a great fun Matkatamiba Canyon. This involved canyoning through the narrow creek, scrambling through the tight stream, as it meandered deeper and deeper into places that produce countless layers of reds and oranges. But one of the most rewarding walks is Havasu Creek, a Garden of Eden. We followed the turquoise river to Beaver Falls. It would not be surprising to find Adam and Eve sunning themselves and talking to snakes. A beautiful blue river with perfect reds and lush green vegetation a pure nirvana.

As for life on the river the days rolled on by with fun bouncy rapids and calm sections to enjoy the surroundings. The Grand Canyon provides spectacular beauty such as the Redwall Cavern, a cave the size of two football pitches (I think that might be American football) and the view from the South Rim. Of all the things that mankind can produce - fine jewellery, fast cars and fancy clothes, nobody can create something

Below: David Humpleby takes in another majestic view

URE nirvana



(L to R): Peter Montandon takes the hit on Crystal guided by David Leathborough; Pete Astles absorbs the scale after a canyon walk; A natural mirror on the morning of day two at Soap Creek camp



Your eyes don't seem to be wide enough to absorb the majestic sized walls rocketing upwards to meet the sky

Below: Hoopla and Bryony the circus is in town



so large in scale and so mesmerising to gaze at, to wonder and to marvel. When the sun decided to leave us we would be rewarded with a fantastic night's sky.

The canyon walls casting shadows, like giants sleeping. A darkness so great that all we were aware of was the presence of the walls of the canyon. By 8.30pm the group would produce satisfying yawns after another fantastic day on the river. The nights were dry and predictable in lack of rain. So much that by the second night we had abandoned the outer layer of the tent. By the third night we had abandoned the whole tent altogether, sleeping with the view of the stars and moon. Like a grand performance the stars darting across the sky like gymnastic fire flies as they streak across the black back drop. Propelling with marvellous zest, until the moon casts its light across the sky. You would often wake up thinking that someone had left the bathroom light on.

Dates and time become meaningless, the only importance to us was who was cooking what and when we could crack open the jar of Nutella. On one evening we beached to our camp as normal but unknown to us it was Halloween and we were sharing our camp with a rather jovial rafting group. They

Below: Ross Montandon enjoying the serenity



dressed up in a gorilla mask and another as a woman to trick or treat us. We handed them a pack of beer, they deserved it for bringing the outfit down the canyon. The night was followed by cheering and whooping, every now and then a bang and a flash of light as they made a homemade explosion with some cooking fuel and a raft pump. The following morning we had ran out of milk for tea so in true British style we exchanged a six pack of beer for powdered milk, a great deal on both parts. These were the only people we saw on our trip.

fantastic bouncy rapids

The Colorado River offered some fantastic bouncy rapids. With a grading system for the canyon, grading from 1 to 10. We kept ourselves occupied with catch on the fly waves even for the rafts. Crystal, Hermit and the exciting Grade 9 Lava Falls. Unlike anywhere else in the world we fell into a routine so perfect that you somehow cannot imagine anything else outside the canyon, the zoom of traffic and the stench of tube stations. Not to mention the confusion of ordering fast food in another country.

Below: Alex and Ross putting it all into scale



Like a grand performance the stars darting across the sky like gymnastic fire flies as they streak across the black back drop

The river miles rolled quickly, it is funny how time still has a habit of passing no matter what time zone. The last night was spent eating random assortments of food relishes and strange things in jars on apparently 'Triscuits' (crackers). A boules tournament and jovial wrestling followed this. Yet another spectacular sunrise saw us packing up for the last few miles of paddling. I longed for the trip to carry on, but at the same time felt great contentment as we headed four miles downstream to Diamond Creek. You could still be anywhere miles away from it all. The Canyon walls where still as impressive as they had always been, big and gladiatorial - not surprisingly GRAND.

The Grand Canyon was a trip of a lifetime no doubt about it. Millions of people will never get to see the canyon let alone paddle down its spine. I felt truly privileged to have been given the opportunity to experience this remarkable trip this makes me realise how fortunate I am to be invited and experience it all. Back home my school friends were sitting exams and filling out forms for university. It seemed worlds apart and I guess they were.

Diamond peak stood high above the river marking the end of our trip. Watching us paddle the green mile back to civilisation.

I have found it very difficult to write this article, words cannot begin to describe the grandeur of the scenery, the isolation, the true natural beauty of our planet, the wonderful comradeship I experienced. This experience was priceless and a privilege and I shall always be grateful to Pete Astles for giving me the opportunity to join him on this truly a trip of a lifetime. Thanks to Dave Leathborough for his superb organisation and to Dave Humpleby and Hoopla who restrained from flipping, keeping our kit and food dry and to the girls whose snuggle helped me recover from cold - but that's another story! ●

WORDS AND PHOTOS: ROSS MONTANDON



Jenny Chrimes punching through Crystal Rapid



hopp4-26
creastute headgear design



Aegis >

< **River Runner**



< **Skook**

www.avoncraft.co.uk

**It's not the destination...
It's the journey**



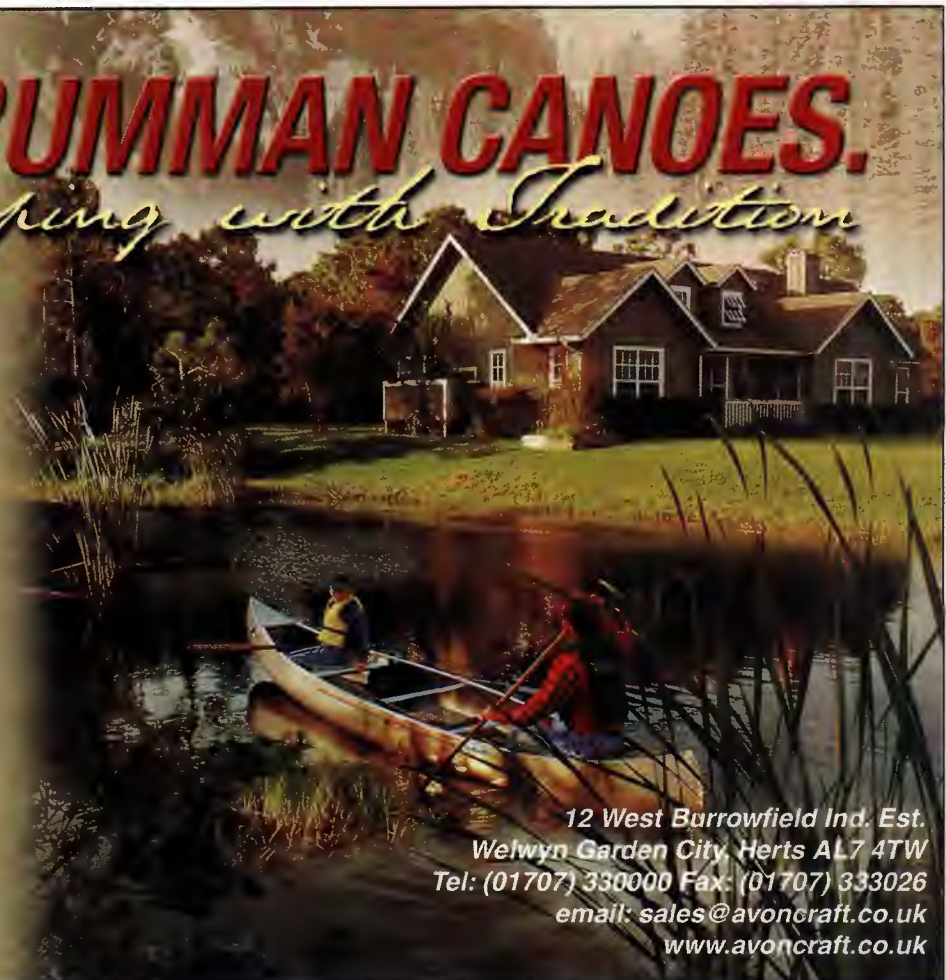
www.prijon.co.uk



GRUMMAN CANOES.

Keeping with Tradition

Using airframe technology
Grumman produce ultra light canoes (from 44lbs/19kg) with unprecedented durability. Take a look at the new 12ft solo and 16ft square stern canoes this year.



AVONCRAFT
ROBERT VARDY LTD

12 West Burrowfield Ind. Est.
Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL7 4TW
Tel: (01707) 330000 Fax: (01707) 333026
email: sales@avoncraft.co.uk
www.avoncraft.co.uk

Madagascar; a land once covered in rainforest and biodiversity, flora and fauna flung on its own evolutionary track as our dynamic earth, once whole, split and separated and created what we now see as continents, and in the case of Madagascar, islands. Now known as the Red Island, this title not only describes the vast and barren landscape one sees as ones plane flies over the central highlands to land in Antananarivo, Madagascar's polluted capital, but also tells a tale of destruction and deforestation. The eastern escarpment drops steeply towards the Indian Ocean and still retains a modicum of its former forests, here the rivers run crystal clear and National Parks struggle to save the remaining trees and the wildlife within. On the west stunning landscapes in the form of huge hills devoid

of life and yet startlingly beautiful, battered by yearly rains which wash the surface earth into huge rivers to be swept into the surrounding seas; red rivers on a red island. Madagascar is a shrinking island, quite literally being flushed away. As a foreigner the solutions are all so simple but there is a harsh reality behind the environmentalism; families are starving, poverty is rife, political struggles have crippled the once respectable colonial economy, warring factions destroyed the infrastructure. And so they burn the grasslands and destroy the forests, always living in the present no thought for the future, because after all, the Zebu herds must eat and be eaten.

Extract from my WCMT report.



Living outside reality:

MY TIME IN MADA

The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust grants travelling fellowships to around 100 people each year, these fellowships provide the chance of a lifetime opportunity to travel abroad gaining valuable knowledge and experience. I was lucky enough to receive a fellowship under the 'special award' category of canoeing, and was further honoured to receive the Mike Jones Award 2006, which works in conjunction with the WCMT.

My project title: to kayak the rivers of Madagascar. I did find myself scared, my wild dreams and enthusiasm had impressed the interview panel, now they expected me to turn them to realities – I had

just set myself a task to explore the rivers on an island 2.5 times the size of the UK. Fellowships range from four to eight weeks and it didn't take me long to realise that I would only scratch the surface in discovering the diverse and remote rivers of Madagascar.

I can now safely admit this without the presence of wood: luck followed me like a faithful dog on this trip. There were three important things for me to consider:

- a) equipment,
- b) information and,
- c) a paddling team.

As luck would have it:

- a) Pyranha sorted me out with a brand new Burn,
- b) Gilles Gautier of madamax.com was on board and,
- c) A group of British paddlers from the Poly Canoe Club just happened to be planning a Madagascan paddling trip, which coincided with my last three weeks in the country. This very quickly led to the natural partnership where I could bring five weeks worth of research and they could bring a team to test it on.

To our knowledge we were the first successful British paddling team to travel to Madagascar. It is our hope that we were the first of many.



My nemesis in the Namarana



Local village president and porters



Gilles Gautier



Cocktails at Mahambo



A beautiful morning in the mountains



The bustling town of Antananarivo



Local woman



Indian Ocean reef break



Luminescent green frog

GASCAR

By
CHRIS
SMITH



Madagascan beauty

A brief summary of my time alone:

I landed at night after an airport sleepover in Paris and a long flight, it was a Madagascan winter but being so close to the equator the air was warm. I was met and greeted by Gilles Gautier; an English speaking Frenchman – this means a lot when you turn up in a French/Malagashy speaking third world country on your own, fighting taxi touts and manhandling a rather large and heavy kayak. He was literally my saviour and continued to be throughout the trip. I quickly discovered that Gilles had effectively been working towards my fellowship aims for the last 20 years; rafting new rivers, training guides and planning recces.

I took two of his team on a gentle river trip, once on the Andromba and once on the Upper Ikopa. They had never kayaked before but Jo and Oliver turned out to be the most able students I've ever had the pleasure to teach. Fear was the only issue – they needed some! In return their knowledge of the local language and customs enabled me to experience multi-day trips that relied on the hospitality of whichever village we found as it began to get dark. Initial reactions were naturally centred on awe and wonder for we were special squared – firstly I was white, not an everyday occurrence and secondly we arrived by brightly coloured plastic things, a completely unheard of occurrence. The adults seemed to accept our presence after they had touched us to prove our authenticity and carefully examined the kayaks. We were wine and dined, well, rum and riced; but either way it was much appreciated. Chicken for dinner was an entertaining affair; first they were chased and caught by a gang kids, and then various squawking options were dangled before us and my finger would decide their fate, an hour later some were still squawking and one was on my plate.

The Andromba presented me with my first serious first descent; we came upon a two tiered 8m fall and the slowly increasing amount of riverside followers suddenly became apparent – they had come to watch a show. There is a bizarre peer pressure when so many locals stand and wait. They radiate expectation and you are compelled to provide. The sensible side of my brain whispered of the lack of nearby first aid facilities but was easily out voted by the overpowering arena-like atmosphere. I named it 'Boof and Burn' though 'Boof or Burn' would have been equally adept.

Beautiful waterfall walk

I borrowed a trail bike and scared myself silly. My intention was to follow up leads from maps, books and hearsay. Discover if roads to get-ons actually existed, whether a scenic waterfall was the next perfect drop and if bridges mapped in 1962 had been destroyed in the recent political struggles. A travel guide spoke of a "beautiful waterfall walk" and so I drove for three hours on rutted roads, walked a further three hours in blistering heat and arrived at what turned out to be a splattering trickle. Beautiful, no doubt, however the average British drainpipe holds more volume. The

Charlie on the Ikopa Tributary



Facts

We travelled to Madagascar like so many before, to explore the unexplored and discover the undiscovered. Unlike so many before us we went in search of white water instead of wildlife and carried paddles in place of binoculars. In total we ran about 150km of new stuff and 50km of repeats, covering:

- The Ikopa (three new days plus a one day repeat of the young guns Dynasty section)
- The Namarona (one day)
- The Matsiatra gorge (three days)
- The Sahatandra (young gun repeat – one day).
- Plus a couple of days surfing and a few other inspections.

I would like to thank and recommend the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust (www.wcmt.org.uk) who funded my 'Exploration of the Rivers of Madagascar' and Pyranha who supported me with a new Burn and paddling equipment. The Poly Boys have Liquid Logic and Lendal to thank for shiny new toys.

If you want to go claim some first descents or maybe just paddle some amazing rivers in a spectacular country then Gilles Gautier (madamax@madamax.com) is your local expert on all things off the tourist track – including rivers!

For more photos, information and the upcoming video see www.thewhitebits.co.uk

The Poly Team: Ali Mckerrow, Charlie Mott, Dan Peel, Frazer Pearce and Matt Simpson (www.thepoly.co.uk)



return journey was equally arduous, all in the name of exploration I would often console myself.

On this bike-trip I went to Ranomafana to explore the Namarona. Ranomafana is well known in Madagascar for its National Park which is one of the numerous protected areas in Madagascar. The Golden Bamboo Lemur is endemic to this area alone and we were lucky enough to see this species, while being one of 57 known Lemur species it is made special by its very recent discovery in 1986. The Namarona runs through this National Park and boasts some fairly spectacular waterfalls which I decided to inspect. In hindsight there should have been more doubts in my mind as I descended a set of ladders to the base of the gorge, access ladders to a barrage below. From here I set off upstream, leaping from boulder to boulder, feeling quite-goat like as I avoided the hugest spider webs I hope ever to see.

I started off keeping my feet strictly dry, but before long one section required a small amount of wading, sticking to the shallows and thrusting leeches and crocodiles from my mind I continued upstream. A successful but difficult cliff face traverse followed by much jungle bashing and spider avoidance left me in a position where I realised the return journey would be difficult. I soldiered on. I tackled a second tricky traverse; my feet relying on submerged holds, fingers on tiny crimps, momentarily I was distracted by small green and black frogs frolicking between my laces. I fell hard and landed deep, head going under. I only thought of one thing, crocodiles: I swam with Olympic speed and dragged myself onto a mid-river tree, caught my breath and realised I would have to enter the water again to reach the bank. My nerves would not stand hanging around and so back into the fire I leapt – a final burst of front crawl, a scramble on to the bank and there I lay, heedless of the land based abilities of crocodiles. Other than this the inspection went well – the falls were very serious falls; steep and technical.

When I had completely gone beyond the point of no return I scared the hell out of a sunbathing French biological research student who kindly pointed me toward the Park Research station with a trail back to the main road. Thank the river gods...

British Geological Society

I joined a British Geological Society expedition on a first descent of the Mangoro; the River was exciting, the team fun and locals friendly. The geologists were doing sediment surveys to discover the content of the earth; while the locals panned for gold, they panned for signs of mining potential. I was with the expedition for five days before I had to leave with the first collection of samples to meet the recovery vehicles and return to Antananarivo in time for the arrival of the Poly Boys. The vehicle I was to meet, a mere three hours walk from the river, crashed into a ditch. The spare vehicle burnt out their clutch rescuing the first. This left me in a difficult situation; my kayak and I were in the middle of Madagascar with 24 hours to get

Chris on the first day of the Mangoro expedition



Crowds on the Mangoro day





to Antananarivo to meet the Poly Boys. Worse still was the complete lack of vehicles travelling the road home which left me only one option – a 70km walk to the nearest bus stop, and two different four hour taxi-bousse journeys. It was a long 24 hours.

I learnt a lot in those five weeks (and esp. those 24 hours) on my own in Madagascar and I think this is one of the many aims of the WCMT; to give people the opportunity to gain learning experiences so that they can bring those lessons back with them and take them through life. I learnt about reaching my personal limits and pushing beyond them, I learnt how to deal with situations when there is no one else to turn too and most importantly I saw how impoverished people can find joy in the simple things that, when there is nothing else, really matter. One thing I remember for sure is I was really looking forward to the arrival of the Poly Boys, both from excitement for the start of the 'real' paddling, and for the companionship of English speaking paddlers. Luck was again with me as the team were not only great paddlers but also great people.

Locals either running in fright or cheering in delight, spearing fish, paddling dugouts (pirogues) and panning for gold

A brief summary of our kayaking adventures:

We had successes; the Ikopa is a large volume river running north of Antananarivo, in 2003 The Young Guns paddled a one-day 'road-side' section of this river. With similar gradient and volume upstream we had high hopes for similar rapids and were far from disappointed. Within a day of the Poly Boys landing we were trekking, floating and dragging our way down a small and empty tributary of the Ikopa. Beautiful sunshine, luminescent green frogs, 15kms and a long slog later; found us descending an incredible set of rocky slides and falls.

This river ticked a lot of boxes; world class, Zambezi style white water; definite portages, tummy fluttering moments and fantastic read and run big volume lines; our first crocodile sighting; a gigantic horde of bats circling over an enormous 100m wide cascading torrent before swooping back to their cliff top tree to hang peacefully; locals either running in fright or cheering in delight, spearing fish, paddling dugouts (pirogues) and panning for gold. It was a first descent experience, which a book would fail to do justice to, let alone two paragraphs. Absolutely incredible.

Bitterly disappointed

Next we travelled south to the Namarona; the river I had inspected previously. I had great hopes for this river; it had reasonable access roads, the distance was feasible and my gradient charts were hopeful. This was the river I had raved about in my notes and emails home and so I was bitterly disappointed

when the entire gradient of the first section was lost in nasty slotty drops; a whole section of the river even disappeared underground through siphons and sieves for a good 500m. At the time it felt as if I had wasted so much time and effort on a poor section of river but looking back it seems more inevitable than not when searching out new runs. It was a group decision to cut our losses and go explore the Matsiatra Gorge, west of Fianararsoa, a river known for its crocodiles.

The Ikopa won on quality of white water, but for a complete sense of isolation and remoteness this gorge trumps hands down. The roads were so unroadworthy that I'll happily classify the expedition as starting from when we left Fianararsoa – Madagascar's second main city. It effectively took us two days to travel the last 60km to the river and we had to camp out in the

middle of an amazing and barren landscape when, after crossing numerous decaying bridges, we came across one that had decayed that bit too far and lay shattered in the river bed. We spent three days on this river while our driver spent three days doing the shuttle: I think we got the best deal.

Lower volume in nature than the Ikopa, we discovered narrow and, in places, creek channels weaving through a fairly consistent gradient. The hills steepened and the gawking villagers lessened, both enhancing a growing sense of entering the unknown. I don't know if the feeling of being the first can ever be recreated, I certainly felt that by paddling this river I had stolen something from it that could never be regained. We had absolutely no knowledge apart from what we could glean from a 50 year old map; this led to maximum levels of anticipation on entering the gorge. On leaving it and looking back at what we had conquered I experienced relief of euphoric proportions, and then later a huge sense of achievement. From here we were amazed and grateful to find our driver had found us, and were happy to simply rest on the long drive back north to paddle a Young Gun repeat and indulge in the beautiful coastline of the Indian Ocean before returning to reality.

Time is an interesting paradox; whatever they tell you it is far from constant. As soon as you realise you don't have much left it disappears all the faster. My final days in Madagascar were like this. I had been living outside of reality and suddenly it wanted to catch up with me, I felt accelerated home. I experienced paradise on the Indian Ocean; our stay in Mahambo was short but could be a story in itself, and then before I knew it I was watching my last Madagascan sunset, saying goodbye to my surrogate family. We were eating our last meal and raising our glasses for our final toast, "To adventure and exploration."

CHRIS SMITH



Ray Hudspith PESSCL Development Officer



Well my job title must be one of the longest in the BCU: Physical Education, School Sports and Club Links National

Development Officer. PESSCL Development Officer for short. The PESSCL Strategy was launched in October 2002 by the government and I have been in post since Sept 2006. I work for Canoe England as part of the Paddlesport Participation Programme formerly the Young People's Programme. The main aim of PESSCL is to enhance the take-up of sporting opportunities by 5-16-year-olds. The PESSCL strategy has predominantly with two main areas:

- School club links,
- Step into Sport

I have been raising the profile of these areas of PESSCL within paddlesport and hopefully creating easier pathways for clubs, schools and young paddlers to get involved in paddlesport, leadership and volunteering.

Club accreditation, although sitting outside of the PESSCL strategy, features heavily with increasing participation and therefore has been a large part of my work load recently.

Other areas I have been working with are around Coaching for Teachers and the Key Stage 3 and 4 curriculums. I will be concentrating more on these areas throughout 2008.

WHAT DOES A TYPICAL DAY'S WORK INVOLVE?

Usually I work from home on my laptop in my dingy little office. I do have a window which I like to look out at the world to ensure it is still turning. I can see my old secondary school from my window where I had my first experiences of canoeing. Occasionally I manage to escape the shackles of my desk, usually travelling on the early train to Bingham where Canoe England offices are situated. It makes a nice pleasant change to be able to discuss work with other colleagues.

WHAT ARE THE THINGS YOU ENJOY THE MOST ABOUT YOUR ROLE?

I enjoy passing on knowledge and experience to others and that is probably why I trained as a teacher. I also take pride in my ability to plan special events and coach. Now my role is more as a facilitator but the end result is the same. I get satisfaction from knowing that the work I do may make a difference to young people's lives and open up opportunities for them.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU DISLIKE ABOUT YOUR ROLE?

The support I get from the Paddlesport Participation team is fantastic as they offer great feedback and ideas that I can develop. The hard part is starting work on an initiative from the early stages and planning out to the end result. Sometimes you go off on a tangent but the team pull me back on track again.

DO YOU PADDLE OR DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN ANY OTHER SPORTS?

I take part in many sports including racket sports, playing (not watching) football with basketball being a particular favourite of mine. I love going to the local climbing wall with my 12-year-old son and friends.

But my passion is, and always will be, canoeing. I have been canoeing since 1973 when I started with the school youth club. I soon progressed to competition while serving in the RAF and discovered the fun of playing the waves - my early experiences of playboating. I thrived on the adrenalin rush. Karen, my wife, also enjoys a paddle and has enjoyed the thrills and spills of whitewater. We even managed to squeeze in a celebratory paddle in a Topo Duo the day after our wedding as part of the Tyne Tour. Now in my later years I paddle with my family for the peace of journeying by canoe or on the open sea.

HOW DID YOU GET IN TO CANOEING?

As mentioned earlier I started at the school youth club. In 1986 I organised a two mile down river race on the Tyne downstream of Prudhoe that resulted in the birth of the Tyne Valley CC. The formation of the club was made possible through the help of a group of local enthusiasts with Dave being elected as chairperson.

WHAT TYPE OF PADDLESPORE DO YOU LIKE AND WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR EXPERIENCES IN CANOEING?

I have competed in slalom, whitewater racing canoe polo and sea kayak racing but did not gain recognition until my entry to the third Bitches Rodeo where I managed a third place in freestyle. After this event I was a regular around the rodeo circuit maintaining my place in the top ten at this time. I was hooked on the fun and camaraderie that was the early freestyle events. My greatest achievement, and one of my most memorable experiences, was selection for the GB team at the 1993 World White Water Rodeo Championships.

WHAT HAVE YOU ACHIEVED IN CANOEING?

I suppose the maddest thing I ever did was to join the same canoe polo team as Colin Hill and discover the dizzy practice of rolling. Colin was working hard towards completing 100 rolls in 2 mins 39 secs to become the World Hand Rolling Champion. We both were very competitive so the gauntlet was laid down when Colin told me he was training for the 1,000-hand rolls record too.

I was inspired to look in the great 'Guinness Book of Records for Eskimo rolls. I discovered that the record for 1,000 Eskimo rolls stood at over 44 mins and 7 secs. I put in many hours of rolling over and over again before and after my day job as a car mechanic, overcoming the problems of boats filling up with water.

I first attempted the record at the 1987 Crystal Palace Canoe Exhibition where I completed the feat in 41 mins 27 sec. Not happy with this time, arrangements were made to try again at Elswick Pool Newcastle in March 1987. Again more preparation was put in and on the day, I completed 1,000 rolls in 34 minutes and 43 seconds while raising £1,200 for Leukaemia Research. The following year a paddle rolling competition sprung up under the direction of David Gent with other competitors going against me for 100 rolls. I was in a spin winning out right against the other competition, managing 2 mins, and 58 secs in front of the crowds. I never claimed this as a record with the Guinness Book. The 100 and 1,000 records still stand and it would be interesting to see someone taking up the challenge!

DON'T YOU GET DIZZY?

That has been the most asked question when I tell people of my achievements. At first my head was spinning after 20-30 rolls but the body adapts. The other problem I was faced with were abrasions from spraydecks and also water flooding up my nose resulting in much sneezing afterwards.

FINALLY CAN YOU GIVE ONE INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOURSELF?

I play my Bodhran (Irish frame drum) as part of a ceilidh band and at gatherings called sessions in the north east pubs.

perception
kayaks

Comfort, control and stability

Whether you're an experienced paddler demanding the highest performance, or a kayaking newcomer looking for a forgiving boat to learn from, our extensive range offers everything you require.

30 years of innovation and passion have streamlined an array of versatile, agile and high specification kayaks. New for 2008 season is our amazing value Club specification, with its robust longevity and comfort the Club outfitting is tuned to the needs of clubs and fleet operators.

Our Classic Line Outfitting is ideal for entry level paddling whilst still maintaining full White Water capabilities. For Creekers, Freeriders, and River Runners the Proline range will surpass all of the criteria demanded by today's paddlers.



BRITISH MADE

01825 765891

www.perception.co.uk

All at sea with Canoes and

On three cloudy, damp and at times windy days last summer, a group of eight pupils aged from 9 to 14 found themselves at Sandsfoot, in Portland harbour, dressed in wetsuits and BAs to have an encounter with paddlesports. They were excited, relaxed and well prepared for their sessions provided by Weymouth Outdoor Education Centre (WOEC). Things looked good. However, three are wheelchair users and one has limited mobility, five have limited communication skills, one uses sign language and all have severe or profound learning difficulties. But in the wonderful world of special education you never know what is round the corner. Fortunately, we have a good relationship with the centre staff, which has worked admirably with our pupils over the years.

instructors allowed the pupils the time and repetition needed to learn. For some pupils these achievements can be fleeting, more about a sensory experience and may relate to social, or communication skills rather than outdoor activities achievements.

Sensory level

Some pupils were learning at a sensory level. They laid in the canoe, being rocked or stilled by the people with them. These pupils moved the boat with their own spontaneous actions, and held sand, seaweed or shells. Expectations for others, was learning to hold a paddle, splash in the water and possibly make the kayak move; some may show that they can repeat and improve on their paddle strokes.

Our preparations meant that Claire adopted a very relaxed approach



It has been a steep learning curve for everyone involved; especially the parents who have shown great trust, letting their children participate. At school we have learned and improved our organisation.

Any activity requires detailed preparation and lots of time. The compensation has been when watching the pupils grow in confidence, self assurance and independence. It has also given the pupils an opportunity in activities where they need a high degree of support and a flexible approach.

In preparation we looked at the photographs from our past visits and borrowed wetsuits, etc from WOEC. The centre manager, John Perham, even loaned us a canoe which we used on dry land to plan the lifting and positioning of the pupils who use wheelchairs.

We concluded that the wetsuits could pose a problem for the pupils with fragile joints and poor muscle tone. Our goal was to maximise the amount of time on the water and reduce pupil anxiety, so they would have a really good experience. We took a cake with us to thank the centre staff for their help and support!

John Perham and Paul Hurrell ran the sessions. Their guidance meant that our pupils had a very positive experience and consequently, made some remarkable personal achievements. Paddling is tremendously motivating!

The pupils were encouraged to start paddling through simple stepped instructions using one or two key words, and demonstrations with gestures, so pupils did not become confused or stressed. The

On each occasion, the pupils with complex needs used a raft of two canoes and had one to one adult support. The pupils who were ambulant were in a canoe raft for the first session. The second and third sessions they used kayaks with a very high staffing ratio made up from the school and a number of 'work experience' students for their sessions.

Indeed, Claire saw the canoe and headed down to it on a mission to get in first. Despite some mobility problems, she was in the boat with minimal help and spent the whole session trailing her hands in the water saying, "OK". At school, her favourite word is "Home"!

Some pupils were fascinated by the feel and reflections in the water, others worked hard to use

Kayaks



Above: Sam made progress – adopting laid back approach! **Below:** Look at me, I'm paddling!

the paddle and move the boat; they concentrated and kept practicing.

Sam began by lounging in the kayak then he sat up and, when handed a paddle, he started to splash it in the water and wave it around. After lots of physical support from a helper beside him, he put it in the water and moved it around. Someone sat on his kayak behind him holding his hands on the paddle. By the end of the session, although still needing adult assistance to move the kayak, he was keeping his hands on the paddle by himself and had also invented his own sign for kayaking!

"My boat's tired!"

Gordon could not get the idea of how to use the paddle saying, "My boat's tired!" but with verbal encouragement he began to move the boat forward. A few minutes later he was heading confidently towards his classmates saying, "Look at me I'm paddling." He even took himself off on a short journey and, in the last session, rocked the boat to tip it over and went for a swim, whilst treating one of the work experience students like a big brother.

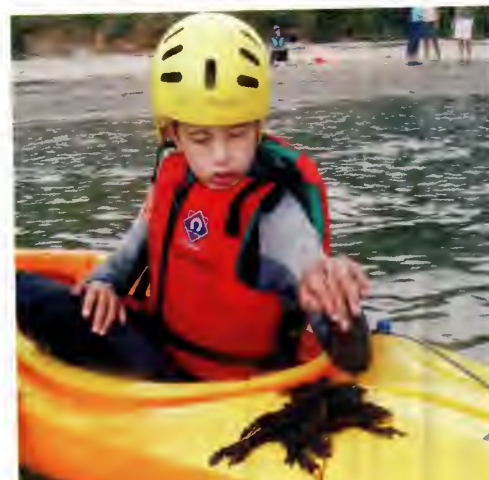
George was very anxious at the waters edge, but once in the kayak he grew in confidence with each session. He tried to work out how to move the kayak in different directions, he worked hard to develop his skills and was proud of his achievements; confidently showing us how he could paddle.

Hugh, who has no spoken language, was able to copy the gestures being made. He also managed to follow



instruction given by the instructor when he was paddling away from him. He was taught to do a sweep stroke by his individual instructor and within a few minutes was able to turn the boat independently as well. Hugh was so determined, that he kept practising until he was confident. He was really proud that he had learned to manoeuvre the kayak independently.

The three pupils with complex needs were pulled along in the canoes by John and Paul, to see how they responded to the change of environment. No one cried or became upset. Alan, who is visually impaired, was very excited by the new sensations, laughing and giggling. As he calmed, he was smiling and his mother was very proud of him taking part. He did not mind occasionally being splashed, and was happy to feel the sand, shells and seaweed. One of the girls, Eve, who dislikes the outdoors be it wind, rain, or sunshine was smiley and happy. She sat on the beanbag in the bottom of the boat and grinned.



Kayaking can be a sensory experience

Keys to successful, 'inclusive' sessions:

- Clear understanding of roles and responsibilities for Centre and school staff – don't leave anything to chance
- A flexible approach to sessions, as anything can happen!
- Prepare the pupils well in advance so that they have as much time on the water as possible. 'Hidden surprises' can cause anxiety for children who need time to understand what it is that they are doing
- Establish good working links with the Centre, with discussion in advance about the pupils' aptitudes and range of need
- A high staffing ratio on both sides, with people who are confident, suitably prepared and equipped, and willing to get wet.
- The pupil achievements may be through communication and social skills.
- Don't forget the cake!



She did not even object to being splashed or to feeling the sand and seaweed.

The staff were given paddles to take the canoe on a journey. They helped the pupils to hold the paddles and together, hand over hand; they used them in the water to make the boat gently move. It was a completely different experience for all the pupils. No one would have been able to do this independently, but with support everyone was able to contribute.

Some of the pupils wanted to help the others on their travels and tried pulling the boat along. Then they went for a swim and tried to get others to join them! ●

HILARY WEST

(Teacher at Yewstock School, and BCU member)

Yewstock School is one of five non-residential Special Schools in Dorset maintained by the Local Authority. Pupil names have been changed to protect anonymity.

Stunning scenery on the Seti River



Making camp on the Seti River



Running 'Tombstone' Rapid on the Seti River



Local's gathering on the bridges of the Kali River



New friends at the Kali take out



Nepal

kayaking for begi



As Kevin Stainthorpe explains, my vision was blurred and those all too familiar mountains confused my senses even further. I was upside down. But unlike any previous experience and the conditions were perfect for setting up and attempting to roll.



The team after practicing river rescues and rope work



nners

led sounds of surface noise and rushing water started to mix together and try to
ences I was not in a state of panic. The water wasn't cold, the river wasn't shallow,



Taking a shower on the Kali

I remembered what I had been taught, I wrestled my paddles forward, tucked, paused to make sure my blade was level and had purchase on the surface, then as I brought the paddle across the surface I gave the now familiar hip flick and in an instant I was bathed once again in warm sunlight as I grabbed some more fresh mountain air. I was elated, the adrenaline was pumping, I was grinning from ear to ear – two weeks earlier I was a novice kayaker and here I was in the middle of a Nepali class III rapid and rolling! Does it get any better than this?

The mix of emotions of those few long seconds are difficult to describe but here I was, in Nepal kayaking something I would have previously perceived as impossible. And now, at the hands of AdventureX and their kayak school I had turned from a novice paddler with only flat water experience to a competent river runner.

It had all started two weeks ago as a group of eight of us stepped from the plane onto the tarmac at Kathmandu's Tribhuvan Airport. Once through customs we were quickly rescued from the commotion and baying taxi drivers by Ben and Jo from AdventureX and whisked off to downtown Kathmandu to our hotel.

Not just for expert kayakers

Chatting amongst the group as we had a pre-trip meal and get together, it was good to see that we were all in a similar position, with little or no previous river experience. It was a daunting prospect booking a trip in a place famed for some of the best and hardest whitewater paddling in the world. As we were to find out as the trip progressed, Nepal isn't just for the expert kayakers, it is also home to vast amounts of easier water, rivers and rapids and combined with spectacular scenery, culture and weather it was to be the perfect place to learn to kayak.

We headed off that first morning to the Trisuli River where we were to spend the next few days. We stayed at a purpose built riverside camp, complete with onsite bar – which, based on the first night of antics in Kathmandu, would probably see its fair share of action too!

We were kitted out with kit and kayaks and even given waterproof bags for all our gear. Then the fun really began. Everyone was allowed to get used to being in kayaks on flat water at first, something everyone needed. Then as we spent more time in the water and over a number of days we progressed through the basics, covering all the flat water strokes and moving water strokes. The first few break ins/outs and ferry glides provided our guides and safety boaters with something to do, but the whole group rapidly progressed. We were taught the basics of rolling and we also had a really good half day practising rescues, swimming and throwing lines to our fellow boaters.

Three-day expedition on the river Seti

And so we headed off for our first real mission – a three-day expedition on the river Seti. The drive was spectacular, the put in even more so! The Annapurna massif looming out of the distance and upwards, some 8,000m into the thin atmosphere that surrounds the peaks at such an altitude.

The raft packed and everybody all set, we pushed out into the flow and into three days of unknown.

Practicing the basics at the beach camp on the Trisuli



The first few kilometres were gentle and forgiving, allowing us to soak up the stunning mountain views. So much so, that we opted for an early camp so we could sit around sipping gin and tonics watching the sunset over the snow capped mountains as our guides began to prepare food for the evening. Day two saw us head into a forested gorge. With no sign of human life, lush rainforest rose from the waters edge high into the surrounding hills and mountains above. We were really on our own – and it was an amazing feeling and place!

Our skills progressed through the day, we were taught new techniques and practiced our rolls. Our second night camped out saw the local villagers join us and share some of their local dances and songs with us.

The Seti finished in a big way, with six or seven class III rapids in the space of a few kilometres. It was a good end to the river, with us building up for the 'big finish'. I think most of us took a swim at some point but powering down and through 'Tombstone' unscathed helped us finish on a massive high!

Final mission

After a brief interlude and a spot of para gliding in the picturesque and peaceful town of Pokhara we headed out for our final mission – five days on the Kali Gandaki River. Again we

Day two saw us head into a forested gorge. With no sign of human life, lush rainforest rose from the waters edge high into the surrounding hills and mountains above

would be self supported, with everything being carried on the raft, leaving us with our empty boats to practice moves, rolls and to kayak ever downstream. To add to the adventure it was a local

festival and hundreds of people packed the river banks everyday to celebrate and prey to this, one of the Holiest of rivers to the Hindu faith. Our days were spent developing skills and running the river and the rapids, waving to the locals and absorbing the whole experience, nights were spent lazed around a roaring campfire sampling the odd cup or two of run punch! Our last day on the Kali was, again, a big one, with four good-sized rapids. The high water and monsoon affects the rivers on a yearly basis so the rapids are constantly changing and one of them was a little bigger than was expected and proved an interesting run. But this is Nepal, not the cold damp UK. And out here, like the seasons, the rivers do change.

To conquer three major rivers in the time we spent in

Nepal was a major achievement for us all. The boost I returned home with will not be easily wrenched from me. I will look at UK rivers and rapids and feel a tinge of sadness that they are not the big warm rapids of Nepal. But at least now I have the ability to run these rivers and to progress my kayaking career.

I would just like to say a massive thanks to Ben and Jo from AdventureX for arranging such a superb trip, and for their excellent coaching guidance, and the odd rescue! I will be back for more! 🍀

KEVIN STAINTHORPE

Another amazing camp on the Kali River





- White Water Paddling
- Sea Paddling
- Open Canoeing
- Skills Courses
- International & UK Expeditions
- BCU & UKCC Coaching Awards



01246 870044
 info@plasmenai.co.uk
 www.plasmenai.co.uk

Plas Menai
 National Watersports Centre
 Canoeing Centre of the Chilterns

The National Watersports Centre for Wales

Kayak and canoe training for all levels on the rivers, lakes and coastline of Snowdonia and North Wales.

TOP OF THE RANGE KAYAKS AND CANOES

including - Nigel Dennis, Rockpool, P+H, Pyranha, Liquid Logic, Perception, Mad River and more.

MIKE MAYBERRY KAYAKING



1 or 2 DAY LEARN TO KAYAK COURSES

Designed to introduce you to Paddlesports safely and confidently, providing you with the necessary skills to continue in the sport

1 or 2 DAY IMPROVE SKILLS COURSES

Aimed at further progressing your skills to what ever level of competency you desire and in whichever discipline!

BCU AWARDS TRAINING AND ASSESSMENTS

These awards are the benchmarks for paddlers across the world. 1-4* as well as coach training and assessments

HALF DAY, FULL AND MULTI-DAY GUIDED TRIPS

Half day trips are our most popular for visitors to Pembrokeshire (no experience necessary!), but for the more experienced we also offer full and even multi-day trips.

01348 874699

www.mikemayberrykayaking.co.uk



Pembrokeshire
OUTDOOR
CHARTER
GROUP



The Crowne Plaza, Marlow

Spring Ball

Saturday 19th April 2008

Drinks reception 7.15pm
 Carriages 1.30am

Live band with guest speaker
 Auction

(auction items include personal coaching sessions
 with international kayaking champions)

Tickets available from
**Longridge, Quarry Wood Road,
 Marlow, Bucks SL7 1RE**
Tel: 01628 483252
mags.shelley@longridge-uk.org

Tickets £65 per person
 Tickets include: welcome drink,
 3 course meal
 Half a bottle of wine with dinner

Guest rate for rooms: £99 B & B
www.crowneplazamarlow.co.uk
www.longridge-uk.org
 Registered Charity No. 1121239

Access to rivers petition... finished on 3/1/08

<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/Canoeists/>

The petition calling for access to inland waters has now finished as it has been up on the number 10 web site for one year. We are now waiting for the government to respond to this petition, which was set up by Roger Revell. We are entitled to a reply because of the large numbers of people who signed the petition. Remember that since the petition was set up the government's Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP has announced that access to the coast will be achieved through primary legislation.

So legislation for coastal access, CRoW for land and there is now no excuse for not having legislation for access to Inland Waters, but we need to keep pushing!

What we are calling for is the type of legislation that is a version of the Scottish Land Reform Act 2003. This act is applicable to manually powered craft. The act codifies responsible access to land and water, it protects the environment and activities of all canoeists, anglers, other users and landowners who are all required to adhere to the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. This act gives rights but also outlines responsibilities and covers all outdoor users. The act has been successfully implemented in Scotland so why not else where?

Rivers access talk – anytime anywhere

In the middle of a forest on New Year's Day, whilst walking my rescue puppy with my family, I met and then found myself deep in an intense discussion with a chap who was also walking his dogs. The topic of conversation the Rivers Access Campaign! The conversation started about the lack of respect people have about the countryside (there was lots of rubbish where we were) and then he spotted my BCU top and tried to condemn canoeists and our campaign for access!

However, after a healthy and interesting debate we did agree that more rivers should be open to all (including anglers... he was a fisherman) and that fishing and canoeing have a lot to give and to develop children, including teaching respect for the countryside and the water environment.

This is not the first time I have been asked about the campaign. Questions have come completely out of the blue even when people do not know that I am a canoeist let alone involved in the campaign.

When have you been asked about the campaign? I know of people who have been asked at dinner parties, balls, sports gatherings, in the pub, on trains and aircraft and even abroad in other countries where access is not an issue! The word is out but we need to continue with the push...

**RIVERS
ACCESS
CAMPAIGN**

Web:

www.riversaccess.org

Email:

www.riversaccess.org

Sport England's Parliamentary Sports Fellowship scheme 2007/09

MPs and Peers have been asked whether they would like to take part in the scheme between December 2007 and March 2009.

During this period the MP or Peer will spend seven days with their chosen sport. In return, they will host representatives for three days, to improve their understanding of how Parliament works.

Not all sports have been linked up to an MP but canoeing is one of the few who have. The MP who requested to come and spend time with us is Peter Bottomley MP.

Peter does canoe and owns a couple of open canoes, he has even raced them at sea. Peter Bottomley, as you may remember was the first MP to sign up his support for the Rivers Access Campaign. He also was one of the MPs who jumped in a canoe and paddled past the Palace of Westminster 'phoning his staff so they would come to the window and wave when we did our 'Paddle to Westminster'!

Peter regularly contacts the campaign with bits of information for us and when we contact him and ask for his support or comment he does so with amazing speed. He was also a sponsor on the Public Access to Inland Waters Bill in 2007.

The campaign is looking forward to spending time with him and showing him that there are many rivers where access should be available instantly. We are also hoping to get him out on a few rivers too.

You and your MP

Apart from Peter Bottomley MP there are very few Conservative MPs who openly support the campaign. There are many MPs in other political parties who support us but we need to get the message out further a field to the Conservatives. Do you have a Conservative MP? Have you met them? Do they know that you are concerned about the lack of access to the inland waters for us and others? Whatever your own political beliefs they are your MP and should be made aware of your concerns!

We have been given the advice that if one of the opposition parties takes on the access issue then the government (who within their ranks already have many supporters) are more likely to take note of the issue. And may even act on it!

Even if you do not have a Conservative MP go and have a chat to them or even write or email. It is easy to make contact.

One of the most successful ways of getting your point across to the government is via your own MP. The main concerns of an MP are issues that affect their own constituencies and constituents.

This is one of the places where you can find out who is who!

www.parliament.uk/directories/directories.cfm



rivers access campaign



Rivers Access Campaign links up with the Devizes to Westminster canoe race

The Devizes to Westminster International canoe race is the longest non-stop canoe race in the world. It starts in the quiet market town of Devizes in Wiltshire and finishes 125 miles later at Westminster Bridge, directly opposite the Houses of Parliament in the heart of the capital.

canoeing supporters, John Grogan MP intends to be at Westminster to meet us all at the end of the race. He will support us in the House of Commons through questions, an event and with a new EDM... so visit the web site www.riversaccess.org for information nearer the time.

It forces competitors to dig long and deep into their reserves of physical and mental stamina, which is why the race is often called 'the canoeists' Everest'.

The Rivers Access campaign is linking up with the race to support its anniversary and promote the need to access to inland waters.

It never ceases to amaze people that many canoeists have no access to water near to where they live, so they have to travel miles just to train. Some only have the shortest of stretches of water and go up and down the same section of water hundreds of times just to get the time on the water. This shows sheer determination and dedication.

The Rivers Access Campaign will be promoting the DW Race before, during and after Easter and hopes to be there at the steps in Westminster to meet competitors when they finish. The Rivers Access Campaign Manager hopes to undertake the race too... and is busy training for it. One of our very strong

IS YOUR MP ONE OF THOSE WHO HAVE A CONSTITUENCY SOMEWHERE ALONG THE RACE COURSE?

Please could you write to them and tell them; about the event, its importance and how many more people could take part if only we had greater access. We will also be writing to all the MPs to point out this fact and take the opportunity to underline the benefits of greater access for health, personal development and the rural economy

Please contact your MP and explain:

- What your personal paddling experiences have been.
- What you feel the problems and difficulties are in your local area and also how it affects you nationally.
- Why you feel canoeists (walkers, anglers etc) and non-powered craft should have access to inland waters.
- Public access to inland waters needs to be through new primary legislation - something akin to the Scottish Land Reform Act (such as the Public Access to Inland Water Bill that was put forward in 2007 which emphasises rights together with responsibilities).
- What equality of access would mean to the 2,000,000 people who go canoeing every year.
- What the economic benefits would be to your community (especially if you live in a rural area) if greater access was available (tourism etc).
- Canoeing and other water sports are very much about participation. Providing greater access to the rivers will enable a healthier and fitter nation. Canoeists and other river users are the 'eyes and ears of the water environment' and can be relied upon to report pollution problems, assist injured wildlife and undertake river clean ups.
- Rivers are a superb natural classroom. Given greater access, schools can support the National Curriculum, supporting the government's 'Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto'.

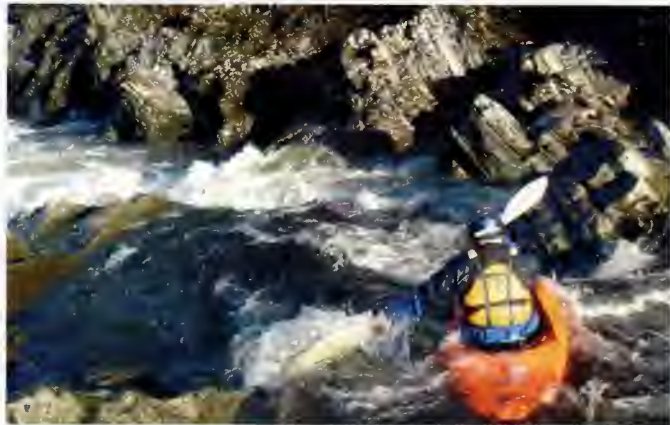


Peter Bottomley MP (middle)

If you want help with letters, or if you have any questions, or would like supporting literature, please do contact us at info@riversaccess.org



New BCU star awards
New UKCC qualifications
Alpine Whitewater
Sea Kayaking Expeditioning



2008 Programme available now!



Guided sea kayaking – throughout the summer
Surf Skills & Leadership
Whitewater Skills and Leadership
Sea Kayak Navigation

Tollymore Mountain Centre is Sport Northern Ireland's National Outdoor Training Centre. As well as the above courses, we provide a full range of coaching and proficiency training and assessment courses. Our full range of courses is available on: www.tollymore.com
Tel: 028 4372 2158, email: admin@tollymore.com



PADDLE THE LOUGH ERNE

canoe TRAIL



T: +44 (0) 28 677 22122
E: info@sharevillage.org
www.sharevillage.org



Welcome to Eddylines Ironbridge.

Eddylines was established in 1989 as a family run business selling canoes and kayaks. We have recently relocated to Ironbridge on the banks of the River Sever. We stock a large selection of canoes, kayaks and equipment by leading manufacturers.

We provide a friendly service and are happy to advise. We have a range of demo boats which our customers can try with free access to water.

For more information and advice please feel free to contact us.



Merrythought Works, Wharfage, Dale End, Ironbridge, Shropshire, TF8 7NJ
Shop: 01952 432 444, Mob: 0777 236 7260,
web: www.eddylines.co.uk email: sales@eddylines.co.uk

If you have a canoe trail... please e-mail the text and images to: chloe.nelson-lawrie@bcu.org.uk. Text is preferable in Microsoft Word format and images as 300dpi JPEGs saved at highest quality.

Lough Erne Canoe Trail – County Fermanagh

Crom Estate to Trory – 28 miles four day trip

Having lived away from County Fermanagh for a number of years I could not wait to return along with some friends from university to spend a few days paddling on Lough Erne.

Itinerary planning was a joy as Lough Erne has its own fully developed canoe trail. The 50km lough canoe trail is the first of its kind in the UK and was launched by the Countryside Access and Activities Network (CAAN) and the Canoe Association of Northern Ireland (CANI) in May 2005. The trail has been well planned out and is complimented by a waterproof guide and web site www.canoeni.com. The web site has an excellent interactive map feature which gave practical advice on everything required including details of campsites, water points, phone numbers etc. It was really useful to have all this detailed information before we started.

As we only had four days available we decided to explore upper Lough Erne – the smaller and more sheltered of the two lakes to the south of the main county town of Enniskillen. The aim of trip was not to cover as many miles as possible but to enjoy what this beautiful part of the world has to offer – no better way than in our two open canoes.

Day 1

Start: Crom (GR 370 238) to Smith's Strand (GR 342 294) six miles (five hours)

Crom Estate: 028 677 38118
Share Holiday Village: 028 677 22122 www.sharevillage.org

We had stayed with my parents in Enniskillen for a night before driving south to our starting point at Crom Estate, which is actually one of the ten access points along the trail. Although there are countless points of access onto Lough Erne these designated access points have been chosen because of the facilities on offer.

We started at around 10am launching from the slipway beside The National Trust Visitors Centre and as soon as we hit the water it was like going back in time. Peace, natural beauty and any number of historic buildings – maintained by the Trust. We spent a few hours exploring these buildings and taking in the history of the area. Crichton Tower on Gad Island, the 17th



Crichton Tower, Gad Island, near Crom.
Photo: the National Trust

century Crom Castle ruins (destroyed in a fire) and the 19th century Crom Castle, which is the private residence of Lord Erne, can all be viewed from the Lough. However our favourite feature was the 19th Century boathouse, formerly the headquarters of the Lough Erne Yacht Club.

The area was really captivating but it was time to move on. Travelling north in very sheltered waters we made good time. We were all amazed how quiet and unspoilt the area was, even though this was the middle of July we passed very few other water users. The ancient woodlands were enchanting; during the autumn, deer can often be seen swimming between the islands but no such luck during our trip. Had we travelled south from here we would have entered the Shannon – Erne Waterway, which leads all the way to Limerick and the Atlantic Ocean – another trip for another day.

It was then time for a religious experience – literally. I had phoned ahead to arrange a short visit to Inish Rath (GR 336 272), which is home to a thriving Hare Krishna community. The island is absolutely beautiful; there is not a blade of grass out of place. We were able to have a look around the temple and sample some of their homemade produce. Our guide told us they have an open day each August during which you can take a guided tour of the island in a classic Rolls Royce! The people we met were great hosts to a truly unique experience but I would recommend phoning ahead.

From there we paddled to our overnight stop at the Share Holiday Village at Smith's Strand (GR 342 294). The centre is Ireland's largest multi-activity centre working for the inclusion of the disabled and non-disabled. The camping facilities were excellent and there was a great atmosphere around the site. That

evening we prepared a feast on our disposable BBQ topped up with chips from the centre's take-away.

Day 2

Start: Share Holiday Village (GR 342 294) to Carrybridge (GR 295 375) seven miles (five hours)

Determined to keep to our pledge to enjoy ourselves we booked onto a climbing wall activity session before we left. After our adventurous start to the day we continued our trip north at about 12pm. We were again treated by another beautiful day with calm conditions meaning the going was good, by travelling south to north we were also being helped by the flow of the from Upper to Lower Lough Erne – although the locals reckoned this was negligible at this time of year it was still of psychological benefit to us.

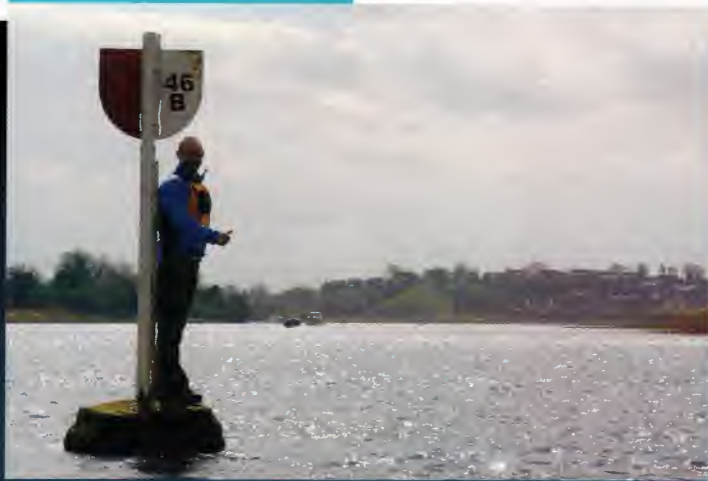
We passed Inishcorkish Island (GR 326 308), which as we were informed by one of the Share Holiday Village instructors is home to a special breed of pig, which they use to make Fermanagh's renowned Black Bacon – eaten by the Queen herself. We didn't venture on to the island as pigs can be vicious creatures and beside we were already sorted for tonight's dinner.

Again on the recommendation of one of the Share staff we stopped at Naan Island (GR 302 319) for lunch. Upper Lough Erne has a vast array of Islands and the canoe trail guide is useful as it indicates where all the jetties and slipways are. After lunch the breeze had picked up so instead of a planned diversion across to Knockinniny we decided to make for calmer conditions towards Carrybridge. We left the relative expanse of Upper Lough Erne and made our way along the river-like section. On the way we passed Belle Isle Estate home to a cookery school, but after last night's BBQ we felt our skills were adequate for what we needed.

On arrival at Carrybridge we set up camp on the north side of the bridge and east side of the river (GR 295 375) as recommended by the guide, had a quick wash in the toilet block and then crossed the bridge to sample the 'craic' in the Carrybridge Hotel – well I did say we were here to enjoy ourselves! We had some pub grub and chatted with local and tourists. The bar / restaurant is a popular stop for hire



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.



Thumbing a lift to Enniskillen

cruisers – a Dutch couple we spoke to had been returning to Fermanagh for the past ten years!

provides an excellent camping facility near to the town – absolutely perfect for touring canoeists.

Day 3

Start: Carrybridge (GR 295 375) – Enniskillen (GR 231 440) ten miles (seven hours)

Day 4

Enniskillen (GR 231 440) to Trory (GR 227 477) five miles (four hours)

Enniskillen is an island town named after the ancient warrior Kathleen i.e. Inis (island) Kathleen so what better way to explore it than by canoe. We spent an hour circumnavigating the town passing the beautiful 17th Century Watergate of Enniskillen Castle. We then continued through the Portora Lock Gates into Lower Lough Erne. After about 1.5 hours paddling we reached Devenish Island (GR 223 468), which was once the centre of Fermanagh's cultural and spiritual life – a monastic settlement was founded here in the 6th century. Climbing the inside of the 81 feet high round tower built during the 12th century was a great way to round off the trip.

We reluctantly headed off to our pick up point on the mainland at Trory (GR 227 477) and loaded our kit up to head home.

The island provides an excellent camping facility near to the town – absolutely perfect for touring canoeists

We continued our journey northward towards the county town of Enniskillen in really peaceful river like conditions. About half way along our trip we stopped at Bellanaleck Jetty (GR 236 391). We took a five-minute walk to Bellanaleck village to buy lunch in the local shop and resisted the temptation of stopping for bar food in the Sheelin, which looked very appealing with its thatched roof.

After lunch we continued towards Enniskillen and our campsite at the Lakeland Canoe Centre. We set up camp at the centre, which is based on Castle Island right in the heart of the town. The centre provides a ferry to Enniskillen so we decided to take an evening stroll through the town before returning for an early night. The island

Enniskillen Castle, Enniskillen, County Fermanagh



We had our own equipment and my parents to do car transfers but this can all be arranged through a number of canoeing providers in the area, again these are listed in the guide and web site.

Lough Erne has got to be one of the best touring venues in the British Isles, even as a native of Fermanagh I discovered so much more about the area. The range of places we saw and the interesting people we met made this more than just a canoe trip but an overall experience. We choose to stay at relatively busy campsites and enjoyed the nightlife on a few occasions but if this it not for you do not worry as the guide provides numerous campsites off the beaten track so you can enjoy a wilderness experience.

We only managed two thirds of the Lough Erne Canoe Trail but we will definitely return in the future to explore the area further. ●

ASHLEY HUNTER

Blackwater Canoe

The CANI Christmas paddle

The Blackwater Canoe Trail was launched on 9th November 2007. This was the second canoe trail to be launched in Northern Ireland.

Following the official launch in November – CANI organised a Christmas paddle to be held on 27th December 2007. We weren't sure of the interest there would be for the trip given it was just after Christmas.

The whole trail is about 20km – but has nine access points and this meant that paddlers could decide how far they wanted to go.

On a grey 27th December morning at 9.00am there were already quite a few people gathering. By 9.30am the car park at access point one - Maydown Bridge was already full and the grass was covered in boats.

By the time everyone was ready there were over 30 open canoes at the event as well as a few kayaks.

With over 50 paddlers involved – there was a lot of coming and going and a number of convoys of cars with roof racks going through the village of Moy doing the shuttles. (I think that the locals had not seen anything like it before!)

There had been a fair bit of rain before Christmas and so the water levels were relatively high – with a good flow on



Check this map out interactively on www.canoeis.com and for further information on canoe trails in Northern Ireland.

e Trail

the river. The first couple of kilometres are relatively fast flowing with a few Grade 1 type rapids. About a kilometre below Maydown Bridge, the river splits in two. Richard – our friendly native of the Blackwater told us that the right hand channel was the best – and it is marked on the map as the larger channel.

The right hand channel certainly was the best – but only in terms of entertainment! With a fairly fast flow on the river and a lot of overgrown branches – a few people quickly found themselves victims to the water fairies. Four boats in all were couped and some of swimmers were fairly young. Not all of the paddlers who swam were inexperienced – and there were rumours of one of the most eminent members of the CANI Committee having been seen doing a fine breaststroke!

However, lots of folk were on hand to help put people back into boats and

With a fairly fast flow on the river and a lot of overgrown branches – a few people quickly found themselves victims to the water fairies

get warmed up with spare clothes etc and soon all were on their way again down to access point two at Blackwatertown.

After Blackwatertown the river became much quieter and with a gentle flow and a pleasant following breeze the miles were soon eaten up to access point three – at the village of Moy. Most folk ended up in groups of about half a dozen boats and the craic was great. Lunch was held in a variety of places – some going on to the access point four at The Argory (a beautiful National Trust property dating from 1864) – about 10km into the trip, some stopping at Moy and



Check this map out interactively on www.canoeni.com and for further information on canoe trails in Northern Ireland.

others just getting out on the river bank. Most of the paddlers ended the trip at access point five at Bond's Bridge – but about ten of the more stalwart paddlers completed the trip down to access point eight in Lough Neagh at Maghera Slip.

The day was superb with so many paddlers on the water and had a great feeling of camaraderie. This stretch of the Blackwater is a lovely paddle with plenty of woodlands and rolling farmland. A variety of wildlife was seen throughout the day – however, the close encounter with a pair of buzzards just before The Argory was the highlight for a number of people.

If you plan to come to Northern Ireland to do some paddling – then look up the canoe trails on www.canoeni.com, which provides fantastic information on each of the trails. The Blackwater can be done in a day – and would make a good stopping off point on the way to do an extended trip on Lough Erne.

CANI will be making the Blackwater trip an annual event and are looking at organising annual trips or events on each of the canoe trails over the next year. Keep your eye on the CANI web site for further details. ●

www.cani.org.uk
MIKE MCCLURE

CAAN

The Northern Ireland Countryside Access and Activities Network (CAAN) is an umbrella organisation, which brings together all groups and bodies, which have an interest in, or involvement in countryside recreation in Northern Ireland.

The Network was established in 1999 in response to the publication of Northern Ireland's first Countryside Recreation Strategy in November 1998. It is charged with the strategic development, management and promotion of countryside recreation across Northern Ireland. CAAN's subsidiary company is Countryside Recreation: Northern Ireland, Limited by guarantee with charitable status, the company is responsible for securing funding to enable CAAN to undertake practical countryside recreation projects.



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.

Circumnavigating Lough Neagh

Paddling Lough Neagh, Northern Ireland in three days

The three of us, Colin Graham, Dennis Rice and George Bryans, are long-term members of the Banbridge Kayak and Canoe Club, better known as BKCC. In February 2007 the three of us were kayaking on one of our Saturday paddles when George decided it would be a good idea to paddle the circumference of the largest fresh water Lough in the British Isles.

We started training and doing long day trips on the coast and the loughs in N. Ireland and decided to do the paddle to raise money for a Down's syndrome football club in the city of Lisburn.

History of the lough

Lough Neagh is an amazing sight. It's Britain's biggest area of freshwater at 20 miles long and 12 miles wide. The lough has an average depth of almost 40 feet, which is relatively shallow for its enormous size, has six major rivers flowing into it, collectively drain more than 40% of Northern Ireland and holds approximately 3.5 million million litres of water, which is more like an inland sea. Its sheer size makes it a great place to see wildlife. This large expanse of water is ice-free during winter making it a number one holiday destination for wintering birds escaping the Arctic cold of Greenland, Iceland and Norway.

Day two

The day had finally arrived. We started to place all our gear into the sea kayaks from dry clothes to first aid equipment. At 11am we called the coastguard for the local weather update and to tell them what we were doing for the next few days. Friday's forecast was for clear skies with rain later on in the evening, Saturday dry and low cloud, which made the air pressure high and Sunday being dry with light winds.

So we started to paddle out of Kinnegoe Harbour, a 15-minute paddle to the edge of the Lough. We set out into the Lough and if the weather report was to be correct it was to be an enjoyable paddle to the first of the day's pit stops: Coney Island. We had a light head on wind, which was most cooling. After lunch we were off again and after an hour in the boats we could see some dark clouds heading in our direction. The water was still calm with light side winds and showers of rain to cool us down, however, for the

last two miles the sky darkened and we had a downpour. We finally made it to the end of day one and had covered a third of the trip, which placed the three of us on a high.

Day two

The Lough was very calm (too calm) and with no wind and warm air we could bring the short sleeves out and put the wet gear away. Day two was going to be the hardest (mentally). After paddling for two hours in calm waters and no noise to be heard we got to the small town of Ballyronan. From this point we had to cross the shipping area outside Toome, which is the northern point of the Lough.

As we got to the other side we paddled in and out of the bays trying not to disturb the wildlife. The clouds had lifted and the sun was out and we were getting closer to the place in which we were going to have lunch, stopping at a small jetty in Cranfield Bay. As soon as we got out of the kayaks the rain started, however it didn't stop us from resting and getting some food. The rain calmed and we started off again. So far we had paddled 13 miles and with six miles to go before stopping for the day. As we approached Randalstown Forest we had to ferry glide across the River Main, which was in flood.

Going on around the next corner we could see our destination of Antrim Sailing Club, three miles in the distance. Sometimes the only way to help each other was to break up the time and have a bit of harmless fun on the way.

George led the way into land and thanks to a dear friend of his we could use the facilities the sailing club. The best part of the day was the nice cool pint at the bar (and free too). After two days of paddling we had covered 44 miles in total.

Day three

The morning of day three was not what we wanted. The wind was coming across the lough with a Force 5/7, which was to calm down to a 3/4 later. At 9.30am we set off with the point which we were aiming for seven miles

away, which should have taken us just over two hours. However, after two hours we had 2.5 miles still to go. With the strong wind hitting us on the side it was basically a couple of strokes and then low brace over the waves. I could see a small group of rocks and tall trees on top and thought we could rest behind them for a moment. As I was the closest to the isle I surfed in backwards which I didn't mean to do. George paddled in from the bank and three minutes later Dennis finally landed. At this stage the wind was picking so we kept close to the edge of the lough but we had to paddle out 200 yards to get around the rocks so we could get into the bay. Some people do not believe us when we tell them that the waves at this point were about 10/12 feet. The only fun part after the rocks was to surf into the bay.

Rams Island was in sight and with it being one mile in length it gave us good shelter for a while. We had lunch and



changed into wet gear for the last seven miles and two points with bays. The only thing between the points and the bays was the white water in the lough.

Tolans point was ahead, where on a good day you can paddle the section in 30 minutes but with the weather it took 80 minutes to get back to the entrance of the harbour. The smiles on our faces were full of relief as we paddled the last mile in calm waters.

The whole 70-mile trip took 16 hours 30 minutes of paddling time and three hours in lunch stops.

George, Dennis and I would like to say thanks to all who help in many ways.

COLIN GRAHAM



We used the 1:50000-scale map sheets no.14, 19 and 20 of the Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland

CAAN is scheduled to launch the Lough Neagh Canoe Trail in May 2008. More information on www.canoeni.com



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.

BURTECH TRAILERS FOR OUTDOOR PURSUITS



THE C8, ADJUSTABLE TO CARRY JUST ABOUT ANY KAYAK/CANOE COMBINATION.

THE RANGE OF MTB TRAILERS FOR 10 TO 20 BIKES

CONTACT www.burtechtrailers.co.uk
phone 01492 641 905

TOTNES ACADEMY KAYAKS



Progress your paddling this winter
Call 01803 864300

mail@totneskayaks.co.uk www.totneskayaks.co.uk

CANOE We·no·nah



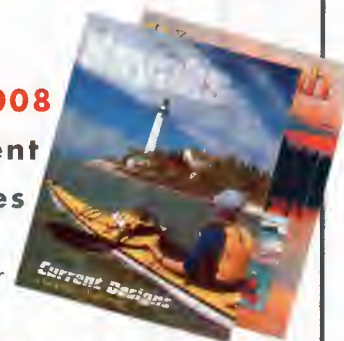
Current Designs



NEW 2008 MODELS from Wenonah Canoe and Current Designs Sea Kayaks IN-STOCK NOW

Call for your 2008
Wenonah and Current
Designs Catalogues

For your nearest retailer
contact



Outdoor ACTIVE

01454 261058

sales@outdoor-active.co.uk
www.outdoor-active.co.uk

Damery Works, Woodford, Berkeley, Glos GL13

Outdoor Active is the UK distributor of
Wenonah Canoes and Current Designs Sea Kayaks

Canoe England position statement on WCA voluntary access agreements

Canoe England understands and supports the WCA's decision not to recognise voluntary access agreements, and to adopt a position of advocacy and expertise. Their revised approach is best suited to their political structure as Wales has a different central and local government ethos to that found in England. Previously Wales have recognised access agreements, but they are now disregarding them in favour of historical precedent.

Research in England and Wales has revealed that prior to 1830, it was generally accepted that the public had a historical right of access to inland waters. Legal opinions since have continued to diminish this position and created a lack of certainty.

Canoe England believes that there is a need to emphasise that the rights to use inland waters are unclear, and that we should make this position clear in our literature. Canoe England maintains that with the current legal situation, landowners are not in a position to deny access to inland water. This situation needs legal clarification and paddlers should be aware of this before deciding whether or not to go onto the water.

Canoe England believes that voluntary agreements serve a useful purpose as they provide best and worst practice examples of how we would and wouldn't like access to inland water developed in statute. Government will almost certainly require models of best and worst practice before they decide whether to legislate, failure to be able to provide this evidence might result in English legislation being delayed. For the most up-to-date version visit the Canoe England web site.

ANDY GREEN, HEAD OF ACCESS, CANOE ENGLAND

Access - Local River Advisors Update

Avon- Bath to Bristol Docks
Gordon Williams, 10 House Close,
Chipping Sodbury, Bristol, BS37 6EG.
Tel: 01454 317135. Email:
gjw.williams@btinternet.com

Alne Northern
Phil Scowcroft c/o Coquet Shorebase
Trust, Coquet St, Amble NE65 0DJ.
Tel: 01665 710367. Email
Phil.scowcroft@coquetshorebase.org.uk

Thanks go to the previous holders of these posts – Alan Gallop and Helen Bradley respectively.

Coquet Northern
Phil Scowcroft, contact as above.

Adjournment debate and meeting with the Waterways Minister

Funding and increased boat user charges for inland waterways

The December issue of Canoe Focus reported hikes in boat license fees for the next three years by British Waterways and the Environment Agency; and boat users stressing there is an imbalance with their increased burden of funding a public amenity shared with the wider community.

Boating organisations and their members have continued to lobby government on the funding issue throughout 2007 to gain an adjournment debate through Michael Fabricant MP in Parliament on the future funding of canals in the UK on Tuesday 11th December. Jonathan Shaw MP, the Waterways Minister at the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs, answered the debate. The debate was well supported and 12 other MPs participated. A series of arguments were put to the minister during the course of the hour and a half debate.

The minister responded he was actively engaging with delivery partners in the process of setting budgets for British Waterways and the Environment Agency. The minister also reported that despite allocations not being announced until the end of February 2008, he expected the budget for British Waterways would now be broadly around flat cash for a three-year period.

The minister commented on the proposed licence fee increases and indicated sympathy for vulnerable boat owners, but argued that boat owners only contributed 10% of the total cost of the waterways and the rest was already borne

by the taxpayer. This was despite arguments in support of the fact that boaters only constitute 3% of users and provide the intrinsic interest in the waterways scene; including provision of waterside property developments with a significant premium, and creating a major tourist attraction for the UK.

Later in the day Paul Owen, BCU Chief Executive, and representatives from other waterway organisations attended a meeting with the minister who re-confirmed the position that flat cash funding for British Waterways looked likely. The minister also confirmed arrangements for British Waterways to borrow commercially to assist the good management of it business. The minister's announcements met with approval.

The minister also announced that he had set up a joint governmental inland waterways committee comprising senior representatives of the departments for transport, business, enterprise and regulatory reform, health, communities and local government, culture, media and sport, and the treasury, together with representatives of the main navigation authorities and the Inland Waterways Advisory Council. This is intended to enable a greater understanding of the intrinsic value of the waterways to the UK as a whole within government and to enable other

government departments become more involved in understanding and subsequently partnering support for the waterways as a consequence.

Thanks go to the Inland Waterways Association for assistance to compile this report.



PARLIAMENTARY WATERWAYS GROUP

Guest speaker on Tuesday 4 December in the Grand Committee Room, House of Commons was John Edmonds, Chairman, Inland Waterways Advisory Council (IWAC). His talk centred on the recently issued IWAC 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'.

The report and mention of some key recommendations were featured in Canoe Focus for December to include:

- Re-examining the possibility of giving the same right of access to canoeists in England and Wales as already exists to those in Scotland (as previously reported).
- A new look at waterways development that factors in climate change, the health agenda and social cohesion and community benefits.
- A government inter-departmental group to broaden an understanding of the funding needs and benefits of waterways.

This last recommendation has already been accepted and implemented by the government. The complete report is available at: www.iwac.org.uk/reports

John Edmonds also drew attention to the general work of IWAC. Currently there are projects to report on the interaction of navigation and wildlife work and the findings are expected to be ready early this year. Funding is an ever present issue and IWAC have commissioned Sheffield Hallam University to determine the value of waterways to the country as a whole and how they can be sustainably funded. The meeting agreed that the present funding arrangements via 'Grant in Aid' does not build confidence for commercial interests and private users.

The next Parliamentary Waterways Group is on 5th February where the guest speaker is Jonathan Shaw MP, Waterways Minister at the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs.

Hayling Trailers *Established 1983*
The UK's canoe & kayak specialist trailer builder

THE TWO KAYAK WIDE TRAILERS
 From 1 - 5 layers high (2 - 10 kayaks)

4 kayaks with 2 GRP boxes
 10 kayaks

FOUR POSTER (From 1 - 4 layers - up to 6 kayaks or 2 Open Canadians can fit on each layer)

The 6 trailers shown here are just a few of the options available. Each trailer is built to suit the customers requirements. Full details in the brochure

2 1/2 Layers and mesh box
 3 layer - Open box, drop tail & PVC cover

THREE KAYAK WIDE TRAILER
 max 7 high (21 kayaks)

15 kayak model with the aluminium Keepsafe

All boxes optional - GRP, Mesh & Aluminium boxes are lockable

THE MARK FOUR One Design
 (6 kayaks or 2 Canadians per layer 4 layers)

optional GRP 'Gearbox'

All models include lights & jockey wheel
 All trailers are hot dipped galvanised
 Full range of accessories including Security Wheel Clamps Number Plates & Straps
 Mail order or collect direct

For free brochure price list & friendly professional service
 Call 023 92 464176
 Fax 023 92 463069
www.haylingtrailers.co.uk

254A Havant Road Hayling Island Hampshire PO11 0LW


Over £70 off the Concept 2 Indoor Rower

As a BCU member you can immediately benefit from a saving of over £70 off the price of a brand new Concept 2 Indoor Rower. Just log in to the Member Benefits section of the Concept 2 website, with your BCU number close at hand and you'll be able to take advantage of this discount.

The Concept 2 Indoor Rower is the perfect cross-training tool for paddlers. It exercises all the major muscle groups; is extremely time efficient - offering large fitness gains in a short space of time; and is kind on the joints - being weight-supporting. For more details call Concept 2 or visit the website.

T: 0115 945 5522 • E: info@concept2.co.uk • www.concept2.co.uk

www.concept2.co.uk

CONCEPT 2 LTD. • VERMONT HOUSE • NOTT'M STH. & WILFORD IND. EST. • NOTT'M • NG11 7HQ

Four Seasons
TEESSIDE WHITE WATER COURSE


 • Water all year round
 • Kayak retail shop
 • Regular course changes
 • On site café & changing
 • Excellent water quality


 • Bunk house cabins
 • Group discounts
 • Loyalty schemes
 • 1:1 / Group coaching
 • Demo boats



01642 678000

www.4seasons.co.uk

WIPE OUT
 THE WATERSPORTS SHOP
www.wipeoutwatersports.co.uk

Canoe & Kayak Shop
 7 Park Hill, Swallownest
Sheffield
 S26 4UN
Tel: 0114 2695757
Tel or Fax: 0114 2692739

Tues - Sat 9.30 till 6.00
 Contract prices for clubs, centres and schools
jackie@wipeoutwatersports.co.uk
New!! On-line Shop!!

Exploring the Islands of ARCTIC

“Although the midnight sun rarely shone brightly, the 24 hour Arctic skyscape, sea and mountains

So where do you head for in Scandinavia when your partner wants to enjoy a birthday holiday under the midnight sun but minus mosquitoes? Now that's a big but. After thinking over my wife's challenge, I replied that the spectacular Norwegian islands of Lofoten and Vesterålen came top of my list for June 2006. What I didn't mention to Kate was that I might just squeeze in a bit of coastal kayaking once we'd helped to finish off her birthday cake.

Six months later, Kate and I were with our two young boys on the small ferry from Melbu to Fiskebøl, Lofoten, nearly 200km above the Arctic Circle. From the ferry, the approach to Lofoten was a jaw dropping mix of temperate colour: turquoise Atlantic water contrasting with the deep green and almost aubergine tones of the mountains ahead. Once off

the ferry, almost all the cars headed for the main town of Solvær, while we took the coastal dirt road to the small village of Sandsletta and our holiday cabin. Driving slowly south via the coastal meadow margins, Lofoten appears as harsh rock sculpture thrust from the ocean, softened by a green necklace of cultivated coastland. The coastal fringe is jeweled with small boat huts and clusters of fisherman-farmer cottages. Close up, the maritime meadows are a paradise for many birds and other wildlife species. On our first evening, we listened for hours to curlews calling across the fjord.

Our small cabin at Sandsletta proved to be the ideal base for exploring the local fjord and the waters beyond. I had brought along my old Nordkapp sea boat and a Penobscot open canoe, partly using the excuse that both made useful roof carriers to hold beer, birthday cake and other essentials for this trip. On the first open canoe trip with our boys, aged 6 and 8, we soon discovered that the crystal clear fjord was a living larder, with an abundance of

We all ate very well at Sandsletta, enjoying the sweet mussels and succulent clams cooked over an open fire

mussels and clams. In a wild food way, our holiday menu was looking very promising, especially given that the Norkapp's stern bulkhead contained

plenty of garlic and bottles of white wine! Having trained as a marine biologist, I could see that all obvious environmental pollution risks were absent in Sandsletta fjord. The slightly salty, crystal clear looked so clear and pristine. Still, to be safe, I first cooked just two or three mussels for only myself and had a 'safety taste' before waiting overnight for any possible health problems. Morning came after a good night's sleep - no problems.

Over the next week, we regularly paddled to different areas of Sandsletta fjord to collect the day's menu and also built ourselves a 'fjord food fridge' below the low tidemark so as to keep plenty of fresh shellfish closer to the beachfront of our cabin. We all ate very well at Sandsletta, enjoying the sweet mussels and succulent clams cooked over an open fire between the fjord and the forest of rowan and dwarf birch. Our meals were often accompanied by the soundscape of sea eagle, curlew and oystercatchers calling across the fjord. Wonderful meals, magic atmosphere.

Paddle with mussels and clams

NORWAY

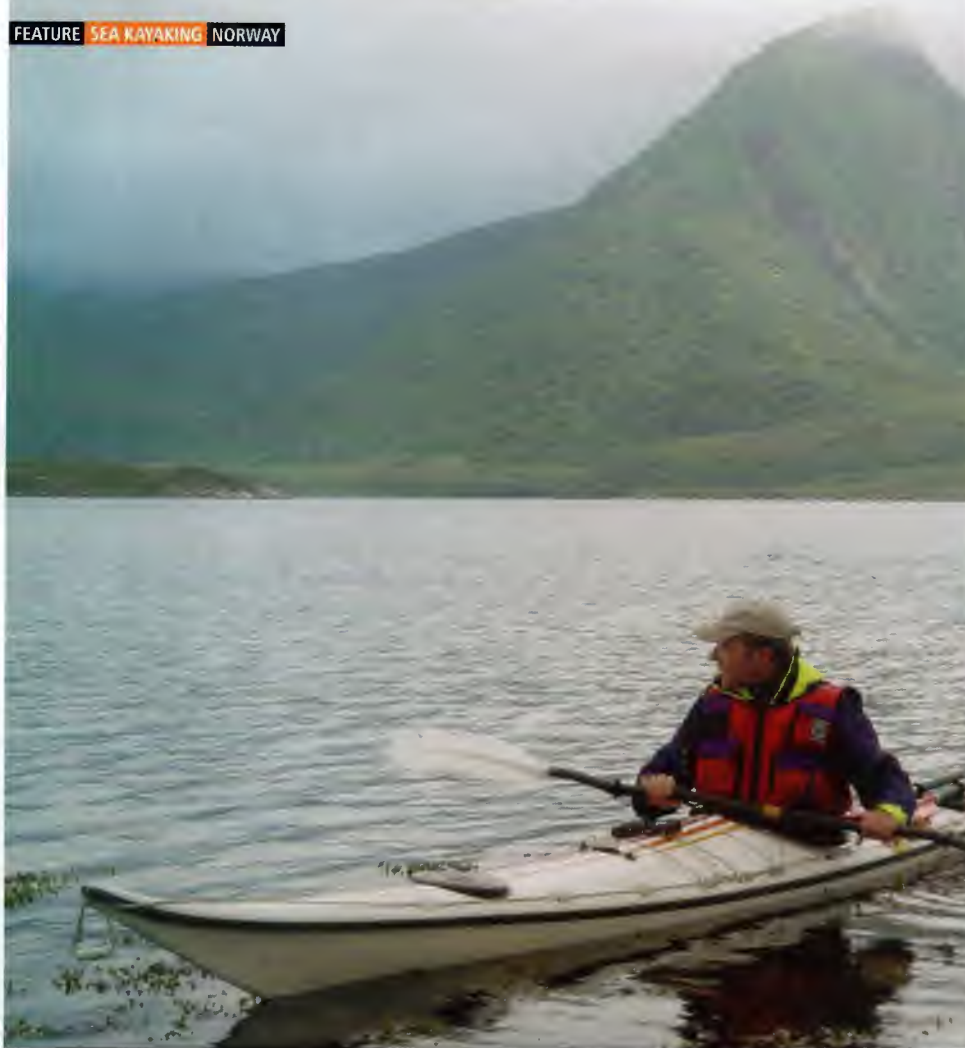


Lofoten midnight sun

made kayaking in Lofoten and Vesterålen an amazing experience". By Tom Hutchinson



Clear waters around Andøya



Midnight paddling in Sandsletta Fjord

You can fly from the UK to Oslo or Bergen, then take a Widerøe flight to Solvær, capital of Lofoten and arrange car hire via the Lofoten Tourist office (www.lofoten-tourist.no) or telephone +47.7606.9800. Lofoten Aktiv company is based in Kabelvag near Solvær and has a good reputation for organising excellent kayak trips and offers equipment rental, telephone +47.9923.1100. Stanford's of London sell maps of the Lofoten and Vesterålen regions. Tom Hutchinson is a biologist living mostly in Devon but sometimes in Sweden. He is a grass roots club paddler with the Ibx Club (Brixham, UK) and a BCU Level 2 Coach.



Lofoten fishing boats

Maybe the tourism brochures should describe Lofoten as the "Islands of the Wonderful Midnight Clouds" and advise the ladies to leave their bikinis at home! Even so, in late June there was always full daylight and plenty of time for gently exploring so many stretches of amazing coastline. In June, almost every Lofoten harbour we saw was busy with fishing boats and evidence of the on-going economic importance of frozen, dried and salted cod. As I explored our local waters by kayak around midnight, the calm of the fjord and surrounding mountains was a very powerful experience. There were countless opportunities for paddling the inshore areas of these dramatic islands, from steep sided fjords to the sandy beaches. In landscapes as big as Lofoten, we are reminded of our naive delusion that we are somehow bigger than nature. It's certainly not true in the Arctic. And if we're honest, not anywhere come to that.

After a wonderful week in Lofoten and meeting amazingly friendly local people, we loaded up the car and drove north some 150 km to Vesterålen. This archipelago has several major islands and numerous small skerries. The main islands, Langøya ('long island') and Andøya ('duck island'), have smaller mountains than seen in Lofoten but enjoy a more open and equally beautiful landscape. In many areas, the sloping coastal grasslands give way to clear lakes and marshes of

great ecological importance. The internationally famous breeding areas for whooper swans are one example, while the northern port of Andenes is also justly famous for whale watching cruises (www.whalesafari.com). Atlantic gales greeted us as we arrived in Vesterålen, limiting the opportunities for solo sea kayaking. Instead the boys loved the opportunity to play on the rain swept beaches around Stave campsite and I took the opportunity to play

The calm of the fjord and surrounding mountains was a very powerful experience



Oyster catcher chick on midnight stroll

seawaters here. Beneath the waves, the fjord's shallows teemed with sea urchins, clam, crabs and other life. My solo paddles along the calm waters of Skogshøya were simply wonderful, always accompanied by the calling of oyster catchers, Northern plovers and other wading birds. So, the islands of Lofoten and Vesterålen are truly an Arctic paradise and a great place to spend your birthday or even your wife's birthday. True, there might have been quite a bit of midnight cloud during our visit but the wildlife and scenery was amazing, especially from a kayak. And finally, I was right – on 30th June, Kate had a great birthday party with her family under the totally golden midnight sun of Lofoten, without a mosquito in sight. The photograph of Delp fjord at midnight says it all. Sometimes you get lucky. Testimony to the fact that many strangers are friends we have yet to meet, this article is dedicated to Jarle Mortensen, the kind fisherman in the yellow house in Delp, Lofoten. ●



Drying split cod with mountains behind

In the distance, rafts of farmed mussels and oysters testified to the constant natural purity of the seawaters here

'dump surf kayaking'. In the Force 5 or 6 sea breezes it was a bit chilly but great fun!

After day trip kayaking along Langøya and Andøya, our next family destination was the westerly island of Skogshøya ('forest island'). The gales had left us by then and with the excellent advice from very friendly local tourist office staff, we easily found a deserted sandy beach as a base for the next few days. In the distance, rafts of farmed mussels and oysters testified to the constant natural purity of the

totally golden midnight sun of Lofoten, without a mosquito in sight. The photograph of Delp fjord at midnight says it all. Sometimes you get lucky. Testimony to the fact that many strangers are friends we have yet to meet, this article is dedicated to Jarle Mortensen, the kind fisherman in the yellow house in Delp, Lofoten. ●

TOM HUTCHINSON
hutchinson@961.btinternet.com

15% off @ the show
not to be used in conjunction with any other discount

THE  Ordnance Survey
MEET US AT OUTDOORS SHOW
14-16 MARCH 2008 NEC BIRMINGHAM



paddleworks
SIOP KAYAK CYMRU

Kayaks & Canoes
www.paddleworks.co.uk mail order **0800 0432 192**

25th Anglesey Sea Symposium

Come and help us celebrate our 25th Birthday!

With workshops, clinics, kayak demos, lectures, guest speakers and much much more there is no excuse to miss it!

3 - 5 May 08 : Main Event
5 - 9 May 08 : BCU Week
10 - 11 May 08 : Tidal Races & Overfalls



For more info:
Tel: +44 (0)1307 765550
Email: courses@seakayakinguk.com
Web: www.seakayaksymposium.co.uk
Web: www.seakayakinguk.com



H2Opaddle

*The natural choice for your next
paddle holiday*



| Sea Kayaking

| Kayak Touring

| White Water Rafting

| Open Canoe

view all our holidays at ...

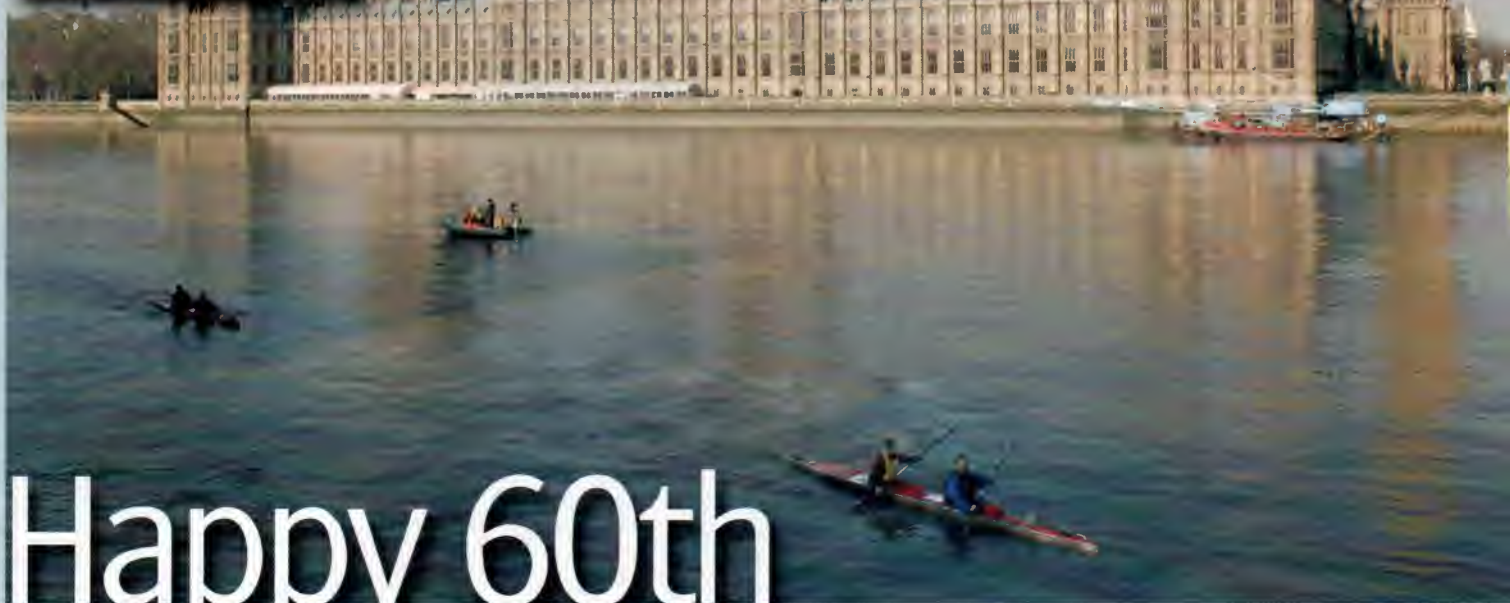
www.H2Opaddle.co.uk



call us today: 01273 90 69 90
holidays@H2Opaddle.co.uk



fully bonded for your financial protection



Happy 60th Birthday DW

DEVISES WESTMINSTER IS QUITE SIMPLY THE BEST AND THE WORST WAY TO SPEND YOUR EASTER. THIS YEAR'S DW ON THE 21-24TH MARCH IS THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST DW RUN. PETER HUTCHISON TAKES UP THE STORY.

What is DW?

It's paddling 125 miles from Devizes in Wiltshire to Westminster Bridge in London. The route is a lock-portage interrupted dash along 54 miles of the Kennet and Avon Canal to Reading, from where it's downstream on the Thames to Teddington to ride the tide the remaining 17 miles down to the heart of London.

If the numbers don't mean much, bear in mind most people do the race non-stop in times ranging from 17 to 28 hours. Think about that for a while. What were you doing this time yesterday? Then imagine paddling in your boat from then until now. Or next time you're driving, clock up 125-miles and realise just how far it is.

It's also a bitterly cruel and unforgiving event. Fast crews push too fast and pay the price stumbling to a stop as the cold of the night bites. Slow crews take the tortuous 'steady as you go' approach and quite simply fizzle out as the body packs in, pushed to the limit of physical and mental fatigue. Whether it's kit or crew that crumble, between 20% and 40% of paddlers don't make the finish line each year.



If you race non-stop it's in a K2, but you don't have to. You can break it down over four days and do it K1, K2, as a junior, senior or combination, as long as you're over 15 you can find a way of paddling DW.

Whatever option you choose, it is a monumental achievement that challenges everyone who enters, for that reason everyone has their own reason for entering. "It's great to see quality people who have prepared properly to complete the course," says DW Chairman and eight times paddler Paul Ralph.

Some people just need to test themselves. While it is a race, it isn't so much about beating other people but rather about conquering oneself.

That's the view of 14-times 'DWer' Ian White who also points out "the emotional release at the finish can be like nothing else." As Chief Umpire, White gets the honour of handing out medals at the finish. He hands the job to the support crews: "To watch the pride in the eyes of a husband, wife, son or daughter and the face of the paddler is a truly emotional experience. Not a dry eye on the embankment."

History – the long view

DW's birth is a little hazy, in part because it started in The Greyhound Pub in Pewsey. Back in 1920, the challenge was set to travel the River Avon south to Chichester in under 100 hours. Completed in ten hours under the target, long distance paddling from Pewsey went quiet until 1947 when one of the original paddlers brought up the subject, this time with the idea of paddling down the derelict Kennet and Avon Canal to London.

The following year – 1948 – four members of Devizes Scouts paddled to London in just under 90 hours. The rest, as they say, is history and set out in detail in 'The Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race' by Brian Greenaway.

In the following six decades of DW, over 6,000 competitors have taken part in the event. A few individuals stand out as essential to the development and continuation of the race for such a long time. David Keene, a Royal Engineer, organised the first truly competitive event. For many it is Peter Begent, who chaired the organising committee for almost 40 years, who built and created the race in its current format. Today around 350 volunteers give up their

Athlete Focus



Brian Greenham

Devizes to Westminster record holder since 1979. Brian aged 58 is a well known paddler in the Master category but has a really enviable list of achievements within canoeing. Brian is as fast now, if not faster, than he

has ever been. He (along with Tim Cornish) has held the Devizes to Westminster record of 15.34.12hrs since 1979. It is one of the longest sporting records currently held.

In the K1 class, he was three times national marathon champion in 1977, '78 and '79. Brian has also represented GB internationally and has won Gudena several times, races in Spain and many more. Brian now competes nationally in the Hasler competitions but also competes at World Master events where he has won many medals in a variety of colours.

HOW DID YOU FIRST BECOME INVOLVED IN CANOEING?

It was through scouting. As a venture scout I went to Longridge near Marlow, which was one of the scouting boating and canoeing activity centres as a service team, and we were allowed to go canoeing. My first experiences were in some horrible fibreglass tubs, but they floated and I did enjoy it!

Martin Bosher gave a talk all about the Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race to our Venture Scout unit. I got inspired and it has carried over from there. Canoeing became one of the unit's activities so I was able to combine scouting and canoeing which was a good start.

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

At school I was rubbish at football, liked rugby but lacked the build, running was all right but I lacked the pace (probably simply due to lack of training). With canoeing I found it was a sport that I enjoyed and that I was good at. Canoeing is a team and individual sport so allows an individual to develop at their own pace.

As well as it being an individual competition you are able to work and team up with other people. This can also mean having different canoeing partners depending on the race. Changing partners helps you to find the best combination for a particular event. I was lucky with my pairing with Tim Cornish and we worked together as a unit.

WHEN DID YOU IN YOUR FIRST RACE?

It was in 1969 South Down, a race organised by the Burgees Hill Scouts on the Adur, and I still have the trophy! It seems like a long time ago now.

WHY FLAT WATER RACING AND NOT ANY OTHER OF THE CANOEING DISCIPLINES?

Strangely enough I started in a slalom canoe, but moved into class 3 as the venture scout unit bought one, then later moved into K1 class. Basically I have always lived in an area of flat water, which now is the Thames Valley. I suppose if I had lived in an area of moving water then I would have migrated to slalom or white water.

THE DEVIZES TO WESTMINSTER CANOE RACE IS HAVING ITS 60TH ANNIVERSARY RACE THIS YEAR... WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO PARTICIPATING IN THE RACE KNOWN AS THE 'CANOEIST'S EVEREST'?

My first attempt was in 1973, when I finished in just under 25 hours, I cannot say it was the most enjoyable race I have ever done, but it certainly was a very good

learning experience. From then, the race was certainly more enjoyable. The attraction of DW (apart from the pain) is the long endurance challenge which I enjoy.

YOU HAVE HELD THE K2 DW RECORD FOR VERY NEARLY 30 YEARS... AND YET IT HAS NOT BEEN BROKEN. THESE DAYS, BOATS AND EQUIPMENT HAVE IMPROVED, THE KIT ONE HAS TO CARRY IS SO MUCH LESS AND THE CANAL PORTAGES ARE SO MUCH EASIER, SO WHY DO YOU THINK THE RECORD HAS NOT BEEN BEATEN?

That is difficult to answer...

In 1979 we did a daylight run, the canal was full and flowing well and we had a warm sunny day with a light wind. The Thames was flowing fast, but not fast enough to create dangerous eddies. The night was warm and all we did at Blake's lock (which is at the end of the Kennet and Avon Canal just before you turn right on to the River Thames) was to put hats on. We did not stop to change completely, as many crews do today. We had all the right conditions at the right time! We started the race at around 07:30hrs and finished around 23:00hrs so we did not have to worry about the cold in the early hours of the morning.

The main observation over the years is that crews now tend to stop at Reading for a kit change and a meal, something we never did. We also portaged extremely fast compared with today's crews. Tim and I could both get in and out of the boat at great speed and we could run well. Although it is a canoe race you did need to be able to run as well which is part of the fun of marathon racing.

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ROLE IN THE DW?

I am a four-day stage umpire and I really enjoy being part of the race. There is something really special about the DW, which still inspires hundreds of people to get out a race or just to paddle for personal endeavour or to raise money for charity.

For many years you were involved in the canoeing with the Scouts and now you help youngsters, assisting them to progress through the sport. In your view, what makes canoeing a good sport for youngsters to take part in? A lot of youngsters simply play a sport because that is what they are influenced by or what they see on TV or in newspapers. If they canoe it is because they like it, they may not be the next world champion, but they have the opportunity to improve themselves and perform to the best of their ability.

WHO HAD THE GREATEST INFLUENCE ON YOUR PADDLING?

Martin Bosher and Bernard Perrett. I have also competed with Bernard. Bernard was a sports master at Leighton Park School and had links with Reading Canoe Club (It was then called Reading and Leighton Park Canoe Club)

What else do you do in your life other than canoeing?

At the moment very little, does anyone know of an available female (40-45)?

ARE YOU NATURALLY COMPETITIVE?

I suppose so, not so much as a child, but I have got more so as I have got older. I do actually compete and train because I enjoy it.

YOU ALSO TAKE PART IN THE TOUGH MAN COMPETITIONS. DO YOU THINK THE DW HAS HELPED PREPARE YOU FOR THE TOUGHNESS AND ENDURANCE NEEDED FOR SUCH EVENTS?

In some ways yes, but these events are a distraction from canoeing, they give training a new edge.

HOW MANY TIMES A WEEK DO YOU TRAIN?

In winter three or four times a week. In the summer I am normally on the water six days a week (14 sessions, ten coaching and four personal training).

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

Reading CC since 1975.



time every year to make the race happen checking boats, manning checkpoints and campsites, providing safety cover, marshals and setting up and manning the finishing camp at Westminster on a patch of ground kindly loaned by St Thomas' Hospital.

Epic Endurance for All

Today, the race stands the test of time providing a serious challenge and badge of honour for anyone who takes part. One time DWer, finishing in 22 hours 4 minutes, and Sydney Olympic silver medallist Guin Batten says, "DW is one of the epic events in endurance racing. You learn more about yourself in 22 hours in a boat, than you do in 20 years of working. It's got all the traditions you could want in a modern sports event – open to all, history, environmentally considerate."

Thousands may have taken part, but the records stand out. Brian Greenham and Tim Cornish set the fastest time back in 1979 finishing in a staggering 15 hours, 34 minutes and 12 seconds. Almost thirty years on, and with significant developments in training techniques and equipment design, the record still stands, although a few have come close. Paul Ralph puts that down to a period in the 1970s of high quality paddlers who didn't have marathon World Championships to contend with. Each would choose the event they wanted to make their own. "Brian and Tim were probably two of the best five paddlers in the world at the time they broke the records," says Ralph.

There are financial winners too, with over £20,000 raised in cash for charity each year. To celebrate the 60th, DW organisers are encouraging paddlers that want to raise money to support the Evelina Children's Trust as one way of thanking St Thomas's Hospital for their kind support at the finish of the race. Race organisers have also teamed up with Marie Curie Cancer Care who, like DW, are celebrating their 60th anniversary in 2008.

This year being DW's sixtieth, the organisers have got a few surprises planned including a party on May 24th in Devizes to celebrate the occasion (put the date in your diary!). But mostly they're hoping for a lot of entries, some fast, some slow and all well prepared. If you're racing, enjoy the paddle. ●

HAPPY BIRTHDAY DW – 60 YEARS YOUNG



DW needs volunteers

With in excess of 350 volunteers needed to run the race, the race organisers are always looking for new people. If you can give some time over the Easter weekend – from a few hours to the full four days – please get in touch. Email yvonne.riley2@btinternet.com or call 01227 276930



Brian Greenaway's book 'The Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race' along with everything you need to know about DW is available on the event web site www.dwrace.org.uk

BCU Marathon Racing Committee

New marathon racing rules for 2008...
A guide to the rules changes for competitors, race organisers and team leaders.

There are a few amendments to the Rules of Competition for marathon racing. These will be published in the Sprint Racing and Marathon Racing Handbook 2008 and on the marathon web site www.marathon-canoeing.org.uk but these notes will help you find your way through the small print. The references are to the new rule numbers.

- Rule 13.** Race levies - now payable directly to the MRC Treasurer: payment can now be made by electronic transfer to the MRC's bank account.
- Rule 14.** Clarifies that for Group A races, race organisers must comply with Rule 18.
- Rule 16.** A new rule on finishes. Confirms competitors must finish in their boat.
- Rule 18.** Organisation of Group A races. The order of the sub-clauses has changed and there is now a requirement to publish provisional results of all races on the MRC web site.
- Rule 26.** Competing in a crew boat. Clarifies the permitted crew combinations.
- Rule 34(d).** From 1 September, competitors must wear club colours to score points.
- Rule 35.** From 1 September 2008, race organisers must report results using the HRM computer programme.
- Rule 38(a).** Competitor eligibility. We have added div 4 junior women's kayaks to the competitors who need enter two qualifying races to race in the Hasler Final.
- Rules 43/50.** National Championships. There are several changes:
 - i) There are new singles races for over 39, over 49, over 59 and over 64 age groups and a new doubles race for over 64s.
 - ii) Points towards the team competition will only be scored in the national championship races – i.e. the age-related races.
 - iii) Juniors may race only in the national championship races.
- Remember** – you must be a current comprehensive member of the BCU to race in Group A races;
 - You should be asked to confirm your membership at every race;
 - If you cannot prove current membership you must pay £2.50 for a day ticket.

The main International Marathon Racing events for 2008 are:

- World Cup 1 at Brandenburg, Germany. 14/15th June 2008**
Takes place on a lake 50 miles from Berlin and will give excellent viewing and facilities. There is a modern regatta course with all the facilities you could want. The portage will be right in front of the grandstand and from this you will be able to see 90% of the race.
- World Cup 2 at Crestuma Portugal. 12/13th July 2008**
A race and course known by many which will host the World Championships in 2009. Good spectating and if you like seafood the place to be.

World Championships at Tyn, CZK. 20/21st September 2008
River course with good spectating facilities but accommodation is not so hot. Very cheap living and there will be a very big entry in the Masters events. Bring your raincoat.

Keep up-to-date with the news, race dates and rule changes etc on the marathon web site www.marathon-canoeing.org.uk

2008 Marathon Racing Committee

Committee responsibilities are to be as follows:

- Chairman:** Brian Gandy
- Secretary:** Diane Bates
- Treasurer, Nationals Coordinator, trophies:** David Enoch
- Rankings Officer:** Mike Head
- Lightning Development:** James Hinvies
- Newsletter:** Alan Laws
- Hasler Finals Coordinator:** Andy Rawson
- Calendar Compiler, Athlete Development:** James Smythe
- Athlete Development:** Steve Harris, Dyson Pendle
- Coach:** Roland Lawler
- Website:** Tamsin Phipps
- Other members:** Ollie Harding
- The selection committee will be:** Brian Gandy, Alan Laws, David Enoch, Roland Lawler, Steve Harris and Alan Williams plus the team manager(s) of forthcoming events.

Go to
www.canoefocus.co.uk
 for

Jobs online

Courses online

Accommodation online

Members Classified



HandiRack™

The World's First Inflatable Roof Rack



Perfect for many types of canoes & kayaks

- Can carry loads of up to 80kg
- Suitable for 4-door or 2-door cars
- Takes just minutes to fit and inflate (HandiPump included)
- Totally portable - take it with you where ever you go
- Stores in the boot of your car in a compact travel pouch
- Manufactured with a patented, durable triple layer nylon skin

Available online, through authorised resellers or call 0870 6000 929

www.handirackuk.com

www.canoeandkayaktrader.co.uk

Tel/Fax 0845 456 9533
 Leam Boat Centre, Mill Rd, Leamington Spa, CV31 1BH.

Woodmill

WOODMILL CANOE SHOP
 Woodmill Lane, Swaythling, Southampton, SO18 2JR

We have the largest fleet of demo boats in the UK and we are a waterside centre so you can try before you buy!

NEW ONLINE
 Canoe Shop for Woodmill
 So you can now buy 24/7
 @
www.woodmill.co.uk/shop.html

Please ring George for details on 02380 555993, mobile 07879 642583 or email at info@woodmill.co.uk

AINSWORTH

Strong, light, affordable paddles and helmets

www.ainsworthpaddles.co.uk
info@ainsworthpaddles.co.uk 0208 898 4839

Lyme disease

Hi there, I know this is rather boring, but after a paddling trip to Sweden involving wild camping I developed Lyme disease. No big problem and being on the correct treatment I will have no complications in the future, but there have been several points.

1. I was unaware that the tick bite was in fact a tick bite, initially thinking it was just another midge bite. After looking through the literature it appears that this is often the case, so any sort of bite may be suspect.
2. The bite itself is fairly insignificant. What is vital to recognise is the red circle spreading out from the original bite with the inner part of that circle returning to normal colour skin. This is called erythema migrans and is diagnostic of Lyme disease. If this is not recognised then it may be several months later that the secondary problems arise as often the initial infection is symptomless. Fortunately being a doctor I was able to self diagnose.
3. In the absence of treatment, the tick borne infection will, after some time, cause varying symptoms including possible arthritis, carditis, neurological problems etc, all best avoided. Often when this occurs there is no recollection of a bite so diagnosis may be fraught.
4. Again looking through the literature Lyme disease is very prevalent in southern Sweden and generally seems on the increase everywhere.

It struck me that without recognising that I had erythema migrans I would not have had the confirmatory blood tests and required treatment. It was also apparent that on talking to other paddling friends, several travelling frequently to Sweden, there was a general lack of awareness about Lyme disease. I therefore thought of writing a letter to Canoe Focus to raise awareness, but wondered if a proper article would be more appropriate?

JOHN BURTON

Thank you for taking the time to write in, it seems appropriate to raise the profile of this disease and educate people of the symptoms and prevention. We will look into the best way of doing this.

Incensed

I was incensed to read in this month's Canoe focus that the general consensus by both Mike Devlin and the general public at large is one that 'commercial' coaches (Mike Devlin's term) have all their training cost paid for by employers, (Liz Smith, Letters No. 169, 2007) thus the volunteer coach will receive 'differentiation' from those of us whom work for payment in either a part or full-time capacity in the outdoor profession.

Lets just put one thing straight. Some centres and businesses certainly pay costs for their staff, but they are very few on the ground. This year, I have invested in my paddling career some £430 with providers for BCU qualification to attain my Level 3 Open Boat Coach status. That's not counting what I invested whilst becoming a Level 2 Kayak Coach, some £300.

How much has my employer contributed? Not a penny. Staff training? Zero. Kit allowance? Zilch! I am not the only one. And that from a high profile centre.

I do not include the transport cost, equipment cost, time spent away coaching for free, accommodation to paddle in varying areas to gain the widest possible experience, not because I want to just be viewed as a Level 3 piece of paper coach, but because I love my sport and want to give the best to my groups. Oh, add to that the cost of Single Pitch Award, Mountain Leader, GNAS – the list goes on. I have spent a few thousand pounds in gaining pieces of paper that say I can pass on my love of my sports. The fantastic wage I receive for all this? £12K a year! Just look at the ads in Canoe Focus for confirmation of what outdoor centres pay.

So the new 4 Star that I am told I must have before attending my Level 3 assessment at – wait for it, another £420 for a Star award (PYB, inc. water safety course) is now frankly, beyond my means. A friend of mine, a volunteer coach, with an income of £55k pa, will receive subsidised courses Mr Devlin! Thanks for your support for some of the many people whom have helped provide you with your wage for the past number of years. I bet it's more than mine!

Many people have have spoken to are very disillusioned with how all this is turning out. I feel I have to ask what the BCU is doing for me as an employed coach and I am not sure I can answer that. I love my job so I will not give up coaching, but I may very well have to give up the BCU. Don't think I can afford you.

What happens then when we all vote to take away our money Mike?

LEI MURPHY

NGB qualifications

One of the main entry points to our sport has been, and probably still is, the Scout movement. In common with every organisation, Scouts increasingly require NGB qualifications before a leader can mount an activity. The purpose of this letter is to plead with those making decisions on awards to understand that, desirable as a change might be, the impact on a volunteer whose primary role is as a Scout, Guide or Cadet Leader might be the loss of canoeing as an activity

rather than improvement of the canoeing experience offered.

The obvious example is the requirement that a qualified coach should be familiar with both kayaking and canoeing. This is undoubtedly a very sensible option for those involved in outdoor education with fleets of both available, and educational targets on group activity that make open boating a highly desirable option. This is not the case for most Scout groups who typically might have a dozen closed cockpit kayaks of various ages that they use at a summer camp, on a few summer evenings and for a couple of day trips at sea, on a loch or on a low grade river. From my experience it is currently a major struggle for leaders to get the time (rather than the money) to do the training and assessment weekends plus the First Aid and Canoe Safety so that all qualifications are up to date. Increasing the time required is the direct opposite of what is needed. It is also not helpful to simply assume that equipment is available locally. Finding equipment and getting permission to use it also takes time.

I think I understand the needs of the professionals in our sport. I am not clear that the professionals understand the needs of the volunteers and the demands made upon their time if the primary role is not in a canoe club. Is there anyone on the decision making groups who speaks for them?

**GEOFF RIDDINGTON
HELENSBURGH (SCOUTS AND CC)**

Fernnickety reactionaries!

Having just read my copy of canoe focus I'm moved to comment, for fear that new coaches may view us 'old' coaches as fernnickety reactionaries! Joking aside, I do understand the predicament of unavailable resources but making this such an obstacle only suggests that the collective 'we' of the BCU cannot get our act together off the water. I'm not part of that organisation, I'm part of this funky new approach to paddling and coaching development. I can be cynical about many things but I know a good thing when I see it.

I'm not going to insult anyone's intelligence and restate the many benefits that come from the new Star Award procession but I did have the luck of working the canoe part of a UKCC 2 Star (run by a kayak coach) and then got to do a kayak introduction with one of the clients the following weekend. Some things we discussed, that I hadn't considered are, the state of exploration that a kayaker finds when placed in a canoe. Equally profound is how well divided the 'experimenting' and 'improving' experiences can be for the learner. He

took away more confidence in his ability to acquire greater paddling skills and adapt things creatively rather than the brief, successful demonstration a particular level of skill, at that time.

This, to my mind, is what coaching is about, perhaps the new courses, better reflect the very real fact that improving skill and ability requires more learning style than paddling style? If this kind of development is not worth making an effort to sustain then I am genuinely puzzled where all the energy goes? The procession through the awards to 3 and 4 Star has found agreement with most coaches and if those gains come with some kind of 2 Star losses then that's uncomfortable going forward, I for one prefer that to the discomfort of going back. There are answers to all the concerns and challenges raised, if the will is there to move forward. I think placing yourself as an obstacle to growing movements isn't healthy or strategic and as a TL3 canoe coach I'd volunteer a hand to smooth out the bumps.

**JUSTIN LOWE
A CANOE COACH**

As always responses and thoughts from readers are always welcome and are always considered. In the case of all recent correspondence in respect of the changes to Star and Coaching awards the National Source Group (NSG) consider all issues against the need to ensure that the changes are reflective of both internal and external drivers and that they are equitable for all award users. Inevitably we will not be able to meet everyone's specific desires or requirements. That said we feel that the changes being introduced provide for every user group. Our apologies to Lei and indeed anyone else 'incensed' by the perceived reference or assumption that all commercial coaches, unlike 'volunteer' coaches, can afford to pay for their awards. The NSG are aware that this may be far from the case, however, we do have to reflect the needs of career coaches as well as volunteer coaches and as such we are aware that there is a need for courses to be provided via a variety of routes. The reference to a commercial route was to flag the commercial course provider as one route of choice. An alternative to this being the Regional Coaching Network route which would specifically target the 'volunteer' coach. Here we will endeavor to seek available support funding from a range of sources to help keep costs down to an acceptable minimum. In such instances there will be no 'selection' or entry requirement to access regional courses, there will be no means testing, any coach or aspirant coach, career or voluntary will be able to access regional courses and benefit from such funding support.

**MIKE DEVLIN
BCU UK DIRECTOR OF COACHING**

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.

BUNAC
SUMMER CAMP USA

www.bunac.org/canoefocus
camps@bunac.org.uk 020 7251 3472

come and see us at **canoexpo**
The Canoe & Kayak Show
16-17 February 2008
Stoneleigh Park, Coventry

ESKIMO

made in germany

Salto
ESKIMO

£599.00

www.highmighty.co.uk
sales@highmighty.co.uk 01227 281111

Kayaking: Spain, Norway, Sweden, Mexico and British Columbia
Canoeing: Spain, Norway, Sweden, Ontario, British Columbia, Yukon, Northwest Territories
Rafting: Northwest Territories, Yukon, Ecuador

Please call for brochure
020 8742 1556
www.windowsonthewild.com

WINDOWS ON THE WILD

UKK

UK Kayaking

Unit 13 Oakhurst Business Park,
Wilberforce Way, Southwater,
West Sussex, RH13 9RT
Email: adrian@ukkayaking.co.uk
Phone: +44 (0) 1403 732389
Website: www.ukkayaking.co.uk

In association with Southwater Watersports Centre we do 1* to 4* Kayak + 1* to 3* Canoe + 1+2+3 Coach training and assessment leading towards the new UKCC awards

We have a wide selection of KAYAKS/CANOES ACCESSORIES and CLOTHING for your perusal.

SO CALL, EMAIL or LOOK @ the website to see what we have to offer.
Discounts given to local Clubs and Groups

Kent Canoes

Specialists in Kayaks, Open Canoes, Sit-on-tops, Inflatables & Equipment

The south east's largest range of kayaks, canoes, clothing & equipment.

Friendly expert advice

Demo boats available.

Kayaking and Open Canoeing Courses

Open Canoeing Trips

MAIL ORDER 01732 886688

www.kentcanoes.co.uk
info@kentcanoes.co.uk
Kent Canoes, New House Farm, Kemsing Road,
Wrotham, Kent TN15 7BU

Youth Canoe racing for people with learning disability



Going for gold at the special Olympics!

Southampton Canoe Club will coach adults with learning disabilities with the aim of training two athletes to compete in canoe racing at the UK Special Olympics in Leicester 2009 and then gain selection for GB team at the World Games in 2011. A grant from Southampton Primary Care Trust has been awarded to pay for a qualified coach to train the athletes and boats/equipment/facilities are provided by the canoe club, aided by additional boats/equipment purchased by Southampton City Council. The athletes choose to take part having shown an interest in canoeing via person centred plans and have become full members of the canoe club training alongside other club members. The athletes have been training now for 3-4 months, supported by two volunteers from Southampton City Council in addition to the coach. As well as enjoying the canoeing discipline, the participants have greatly benefitted from the integration and social interaction during club evenings and new friendships have developed.

The club in 2006 was awarded the Top Club/Community Club Award (Sport England) which recognised the club's commitment to promoting canoeing opportunities to all in the community.

The benefits of the canoeing activity are many, in promoting healthy exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle, promoting opportunities for people with a learning disability to be part of a sporting community but also outcome focused as regards competing at national and international canoeing events. Philip Howard, one of the athletes has fulfilled a long term wish in learning how to canoe, but he has also grown in self confidence and self esteem.

Progress reports are being submitted to Southampton Partnership Board (Valuing People) and the success has been such that the venture is being viewed as a good practice model to promote opportunities for Southampton Citizens with LD to take up other sporting activities locally.



North west Christmas polo event

The second north west Christmas polo event was held at Horwich swimming pool on the 22nd December 2007. Even though it was so close to Christmas we had a fantastic turn out of teams. Teams from Pendle, Bolton, Ribble, Northern Star and Oakwood competed against each other.

This year we added the new rolling competition. In the mid games break people entered the 30 seconds rolling competition.

Lewis from Pendle paddlers rolled an amazing 17 times in 30 seconds. Closely followed by Anthony on twelve and Matt and Connor on ten.

In the polo the games were well fought, with an outstanding increase in skills from last year's inaugural event.

In the junior event, Oakwood Junior came first with Northern Star coming a close second and Ribble Canoe Club coming third. In the Senior event, Pendle walked away winners with Oakwood Senior coming second and Bolton coming in third.

Man of the match went to Matt Grundy from Oakwood for his great gamesmanship and supporting the weaker members of his team. Woman of the match went to Jo from Ribble CC for putting all her effort into the games.

A huge thanks needs to be given to Bolton Youth Service for supporting organising the event, Pendle Paddlers and Duddon CC for loan of kit, Dave Reynolds for refereeing the games and www.kitebeachshop.co.uk for sponsoring the prizes.

We will be organising an Easter polo competition, watch www.bcunw.co.uk for more information.



Adaptive Canoeing

Falcon Canoe Club's Adaptive Canoeing group has been a fantastic success throughout 2007. Helping the less-able people of the Oxford community to experience Oxford's wonderful river environment in a supportive group of people, is of high importance not only to the members of FRCC but to the Oxford community as a whole. It can bring a sense of achievement to the differently-able paddlers, and is a rewarding group to work with for all members of FRCC, the success of which has encouraged a wider participation from an increasing number of club members.

The father of one of the paddlers from the Adaptive Canoeing group has kindly commented on how beneficial the canoeing outings have been for his son.

"Our son has attended the adaptive canoeing group at Falcon for around two years now, and has benefited from it tremendously, not only in terms of sheer enjoyment, but as a means of increasing his physical fitness, coordination and self-confidence. Whether it has been a matter of leisurely paddles up and down stream on idyllic summer evenings or the adventure of winter excursions after dark, with the river shrouded in mist and only a head-torch to guide the way, he has loved every minute of it. Now he is looking forward with great excitement to the prospect of additional skills training – and perhaps competition. Such has been the kindness, patience and professionalism of Jon, Heather and the other coaches, that we have had total confidence in their judgement and no qualms whatsoever about entrusting Rory to their care. It takes a special sort of person to give unstintingly of their time to help others, and we are immensely grateful to them."

JAMES HINVES

Wiltshire Youth CC goes Tivy

Day one

Once again Wiltshire Youth CC has been on its annual introduction to white water weekend based in Tiverton, Devon. Every year the event becomes more popular attended this year by nearly thirty paddlers.

The weekend is designed to introduce complete novice paddlers at 1 Star level to the joys of moving water and the excitement of shooting weirs.

The more proficient paddlers are encouraged to practice leadership and demonstrate/coach moving water skills such as braking in/ braking out, ferry gliding, running rapids and sitting in stoppers.

The senior coach Michael Hill believes in a relaxed and simplistic approach to canoe/kayak coaching, keeping talking to a minimum and correct practical demonstration and group participation to a maximum.

The first day is spent on the River Exe paddling from Tiverton town centre down to Bickleigh Weir. This section contains several weirs and rapids ideal for beginners and large eddies which can be used for the learning of basic white water skills.

After returning to the centre for lunch, a more technical section of the River Exe was chosen. The Bolham to Tiverton section contains a Grade 2 rapid and two very exciting weirs ideal for stopper, surf and rescue practice.

Bolham Weir has a fantastic stopper for playing at this low level and Salmon Ponds Weir is exciting for all novice paddlers with a long series of narrow drops and an ideal playspots.

The first day was very successful with no swimming incidents and then back to the centre for a late dinner.

Day two

A more advanced river was now needed to improve all our novices moving water skills, so the River Barle was our destination. The water levels were low so the section from Dulverton down to Exebridge was chosen as this contains the infamous Beasley Weir. The water level was superb for doing pop-outs and everyone shot successfully. Below the weir there are several Grade 2 rapids until you join the River Exe. This trip finished conveniently at the Anchor Inn.

This weekend would not have been possible without the help of our qualified and unqualified leaders, Martin, Paul, Shaun Croucher, Andy Lloyd, John Finch, Tim Hill, Dan O'Gorman and Ashley Tarrent and not forgetting the most important members of staff, the catering team Teresa and Ginny Chandler, for there delicious meals.

Finally I'd like to thank the staff at the Tiverton youth centre for the use of the facilities and I'm sure that we'll be back next year.

MICHAEL HILL

Paddlepower Explore and Excel

These latest two Paddlepower awards will introduce young paddlers to the great variety of opportunities within paddlesport. They can be introduced at any point in their skills development – ideally working alongside Discover or Passport. They are designed to be flexible to take account of the range of locations and equipment available.

Paddlepower Explore

Supporting different levels takes the paddler on an extensive journey exploring the great variety paddlesport, with topics focused on participation in events and journeys in the competitive and non-competitive disciplines.

Paddlepower Excel

Three levels to test the paddler on all elements of paddlesport including being responsible for self and others, participation in journeys, coaching sessions, training, events in a variety of disciplines, background knowledge of the sport, access, rules and environmental issues.

For more information on Paddlepower contact paddlepower@bcu.org.uk or 0845 370 9500

Left: Wiltshire Youth Canoe Club – Dulverton Bridge, River Barle, Exmoor

New addition to the PDO team

South West Paddlesport Development Officer – Andy Davey

My paddling days started with Exeter Canoe Club back in the days of fibreglass boats and when the clubhouse was a lean-to shed! I was a member of Exeter CC for ten years and had my first experience of competition paddling in the Exe Descent at the tender age of 11 and finishing a credible third in my class.

I joined the RAF in 1975 and during a 22-year period had the opportunity (not afforded to many) to pursue an interesting career and to paddle some fantastic whitewater all over the world. My main interests during this period were competing in slalom and WWR; however, I was pressed into doing all the main competitive disciplines. When I left the RAF in 1997 I decided to do coaching full time and worked at a variety of outdoor centres before setting up my own coaching business.

I now live in Wadebridge and as well as my love of white water I now do a lot of sea paddling, a bit of surf and still try and get out on the occasional canoe trip. I'm a member of the newly formed Wadebridge Canoe Club. If you are in the area check out the web site to find out what's going on: www.wadebridgecanoeclub.org.

Many of you in Cornwall will know me and for those further afield I am looking forward to meeting you all in the very near future. You can contact me on andy.davey@bcu.org.uk or 07912 466264. Look forward to meeting with you all, happy paddling from your new PDO.

ANDY DAVEY



Clean sweep in Norfolk

While the rest of Fakenham were recovering from Christmas Day, Wensum Ospreys Canoe Club, as part of their voluntary agreement with the Environment Agency's river care project, on early Boxing Day morning paddled towards Sculthorpe Mill on the river Wensum, armed with their mechanical pickers and protective gloves. There were five open canoes and assorted kayaks in the group, filled with members of various ages. They were intent on filling their black bin liners with all of the discarded items that end up in the river; these are a big hazard to the wildlife and an eyesore for the local community. The weather was excellent, with clear blue sky and no wind, though the temperatures were a little on the low side, but it made for a refreshing paddle up the meandering river. Competition was fierce between the crews, each trying to collect the most rubbish in their sack, but the winner has to go to the crew that retrieved a discarded fire extinguisher.

Wensum Ospreys CC regularly carry out clean up paddles on seven miles of the river Wensum, between Sculthorpe Mill and Great Ryburgh. One stretch of the river passes through the Pensthorpe Nature Reserve. They have club members from as far a field as Essex, but mainly provide opportunities for people to paddle with a club in the western half of Norfolk. For further information on the club look them up on www.wocc.org.uk.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY CHRIS SAYER



LONDON TO LEH: THE FIRST YOUTH

Gorge.

It's 5am on a chilly August morning and after ten months of hard graft (fundraising, planning and training) we are ready to leave on our epic journey to run the Zanskar Gorge, the 'Grand Canyon of India'. So, with parents in turn crying and whooping with joy (because they were happy for us or because they were so pleased to have two weeks of peace, we were never sure) we left Laburnum Boat Club in London and set off



for Leh in Ladakh, high up in the Kashmir mountains of northern India.



After multiple arguments with check-in staff over our shiny new Dagger kayaks and a hair-raising internal flight into the mountains we arrived in Leh and immediately came face-to-face with the Dalai Lama, who has a house nearby, which we took this to be a good omen for our trip. Waiting for us in our guesthouse was the famous (or should that be infamous?) Matt Tidy, the last member of our team, which was made up of 11 young people aged 15-19 with a range of abilities (including some disabilities such as diabetes and epilepsy) and three adults, from Laburnum Boat Club, the West Reservoir Centre, Islington Boat Club, and Canal side Activity Centre.

set up camp we were joined by a group of local children, who delighted in trying on our kit, sitting in our boats and even listening to more of our bad singing! After a good night's sleep and a safety briefing we hit the water. The first two days were leisurely Class II, with braided, shingle rapids in a wide, open valley surrounded by Himalayan peaks. This was a great start to the trip, giving us all a chance to get used to the size and speed of the water, which was as wide as the Thames in places.

Sleeping under the stars

For some, the easier water was also an opportunity to learn how to control the fully laden raft or to practice their kick-flips on reasonable sized waves, before hitting the breakers further down. Each night we set up camp and slept out under the stars after a feast of curries, breads and rice. On the third day we passed the confluence with the Tsarap, which marks the start of the



Zanskar River and signals the onset of the canyon. None of us had imagined how stunning the 600 metre vertical walls would be, with green and purple rock stripes, cascading waterfalls and natural rock sculptures.



Acclimatising to the 4,000m altitude

As we had flown straight into the mountains we spent the first few days acclimatising to the 4,000m altitude by scaling the hundreds of steps to the local Stupa and taking trips into town. Even so, we all experience headaches, shortness of breath and other classic symptoms of mild altitude sickness during our stay, with one member of the group suffering so badly that he was checked on every two hours throughout the night. On the third day we finally got on the water, with a one-day warm up paddle on the Indus River. After one break out we found some burial ashes floating past, at which point we all started to realise how far from our local canal we had actually come, where we are more used to finding traffic cones and shopping trolleys in the water! That evening saw our first night camped on the riverbank at the amazing tented village run by Splash Adventures, where we enjoyed a sumptuous spit-roasted dinner under the stars. We then spent a day visiting a local monastery and sorting out all our equipment, including trying on all our new Palm kit, before meeting our raft support team from Aquaterra Adventures and hitting the road for a three-day bus journey to the start of the river. Yes, that does say three day bus journey, and all I'll say is that we had a very big bus on some very, very small, very high roads (I use that term in the loosest way possible!), and if it wasn't for some of the team taking on the job of human-ipod and the brilliant driver I don't think we would have made it!

After three terrifying days, where we passed countless glaciers and remote villages we made it to the Doda River, at Remala. As soon as we had

Entering the gorge by Beth Ettinger



Doda Glacier by Beth Ettinger

DESCENT OF THE ZANSKAR GORGE

...ous!

by Beth Ettinger



Matt ripping it up on the Indus by Terry Kinsella



Raft on the Doda by Terry Kinsella

THREE AIMS

The aims of this once-in-a-lifetime trip for eleven inner city young people were three-fold: firstly to make the first youth descent of the Zanskar Gorge by raft and kayak; secondly to enhance the personal and social development for all involved (the young people helped organise the trip and raised over £24,000 to make it happen) and thirdly to be a motivational tool for other young people, through a lecture tour produced by the group on their return to show what you can achieve if you work hard. If you would like to find out more please visit our web site at www.laburnum.org.

THANK YOU!

The group would like to thank all those who made this trip possible, especially all our sponsors, including Dagger Europe, Palm, Buff, the Drakes Group, PHS, the Jack Petchey Foundation, the Canoe Foundation, Hackney and Brent YOF.



The tempo of the water picks up in the gorge, with large boils and multiple wave trains, followed by peaceful pools that allow you to admire the amazing view. As the water was at a low level it was never bigger than big volume Class III, with big eddies and plentiful teaching spots. Over the three days we spent in the gorge we passed rapids including 'the constriction', where the river squeezes through a five metre gap and a rapid called '18 down', where two rafts had flipped on the previous trip, leaving all 18 clients and guides in the water. We even found several sweet play spots for those that could hold their oxygen-starved breath long enough.

Delhi

Five days after the start of our river journey; after spending nights star gazing in some unique camping spots; seeing some car-sized whirl-pools; six foot waves and saucer-eyes on most of the group we had completed the gorge in one piece. Back in Leh, after a welcome shower, we had a celebratory slap-up curry (only the 15th of the trip!) with our raft guides, saw the start of the Ladakhi festival, and had a day in Delhi at the Ghandi museum. All too soon it was time to return home, to school, college, work and the very flat canal we had left 16 days before. ●



Setting off on the Doda by Beth Ettinger



Spirit of Adventure

A journey of friendship and adventure in the 42-foot Spirit Dancer ocean canoe

A fantastic paddling adventure will start this year having been set up by Chris Cooper, as well as promoting the sprit of friendship between the two nations and opportunities for you to get involved.

The focus of this journey is as follows:

To involve youth and adults from Canada and the UK in an amazing canoe journey and to have the opportunity to learn about the culture, history, people, environment and most of all the challenge of paddling its unique coastline.

The canoe is a 42-foot replica of the Canadian 'Montreal Canoe' an integral part of Canadian history, which is coming to the UK.

Chris believes in the value of water sports and in particular canoeing to develop the youth of today, highlighting that canoeing is in fact extremely beneficial for us all. He wants to promote canoeing and what it does and can do to assist personal and social development alongside teamwork etc.

Mission statement

To bring tog ether, inspire and captivate youth from Canada and the British Isles for a journey of a lifetime in the Spirit Dancer Canoe.

To provide the opportunity for youth to learn about teamwork, life skills, environmental research, history and culture while participating in an innovative challenge.

To complete over two summer seasons, a circumnavigation of the British Isles covering over 4,000km of coastline in a 42-foot Montreal Canadian Canoe.

Spirit Dancer Canoe

The name Spirit Dancer has both depth and meaning, being blessed by the Katzie First Nation on the west coast of Canada. The Canadian made canoe is made from fibre glass and wood and measures a

total of 42 feet in length with a beam of 67 inches, which makes it the largest eastern Canadian canoe. The decorative painting is by Roberta Lindsay and aims to replicate the style of an original birch bark canoe. Artist Mairi Budreau painted the motif on the bow and stern of the Canoe.

Practicality

In terms of its construction, the Spirit Dancer canoe is incredibly strong. Two bulkheads provide structural strength to the hull whilst a heavily reinforced base gives extra safety. A number of custom modifications have been incorporated into the design, the most important being the outrigger system. This utilises two standard double kayaks as outriggers, which traditionally came from French Polynesia. The frame is attached to the canoe bulkheads via a quick release system. There are three main travel modes depending on the severity of the sea conditions, in calmer waters the double kayaks sit completely out of the water on top of the outrigger frame. Stage two gives more stability by connecting the kayaks underneath the frame in the water.

Full stability is gained by extending the outriggers to provide two double kayaks at full reach. This system showed excellent results when tested in Alaskan and British Columbian and is an extremely sturdy craft to paddle. It is quite acceptable to walk up and down the outrigger system to gain access to either end of the canoe and remain incredibly stable.

Expeditions

In terms of expedition capability the canoe comes into its own. A large equipment bay is situated in

the centre providing adequate room for 12 paddlers, belongings and food for eight weeks out alone on the water. A full spray deck encases the paddlers with individual portholes as in a standard kayak, which provides good resistance to wave action and rain. However, the canoe is currently undergoing considerable modification with the addition of a kevlar/carbon fibre hard deck cover. Paddlers will then enter individual portholes and seal themselves in with a conventional spray deck as used on normal kayaks. This is primarily to withstand the rougher seas expected in some of the more open waters of the British Isles.

Gaining a wind advantage

The canoe's front mast provides the opportunity to utilise a square rig sail of 100 square feet in area. Under ideal sailing conditions Spirit Dancer's hull speed has reached ten knots. Two crew members control the sail from the helm via ropes.

What else is he doing and how can I get involved?

Promoting access to inland waters

Chris will also be promoting public access to inland water. Although the journey is around the coastline and Chris and his paddlers will only be venturing up estuaries, he will not experience the see through wall that happens on many rivers he will visit above the tidal section (let alone the ones further inland). Talking with Chris, he was genuinely shocked to hear of the appalling access situation in England and wondered how such a fantastic natural resource could not be available to help with developing youth or health benefits to all.

We will keep you up to date as to what his plans are and how we are supporting him. There will be plenty of opportunities for you to get involved too.

How can I get involved?

We will be liaising with Chris and assisting with paddlers who want to be involved, whether this is in the canoe, in a flotilla alongside or as welcome parties in to the towns where they are stopping. We are going to collate names and pass them on to Chris so he can contact you about inclusion.

The canoe is coming to England in mid-March. Maybe you might like to host it, run an event around it to promote the trip (and even the lack of access to inland waters).



The Spirit Dancer Canoe is seen here in full expedition mode. The double Kayaks provide stability in poor conditions and the complete spray deck helps shelter the paddlers from spray and rain.



The canoe as a mode of transport has played a large part in the history of the native people. It is therefore a very exciting occasion at each community when there is time to take residents out for a short trip.



The traditional painted markings represent the style of the original birch bark canoes of the native Aboriginal people. Even today the canoe inspires joy and celebrations when entering the native villages of the BC coastline



Mileages and legs

Distances are in nautical miles and not exact

- Leg 1:** London to Portsmouth 200 NM
May 01 to May 14 2008
- Leg 2:** Portsmouth to Penzance 250 NM
May 17 to May 31 2008
- Leg 3:** Penzance to Bristol 250 NM
June 15 to July 1 2008
- Leg 4:** Bristol to Fishguard 175 NM
July 8 to July 22 2008
- Leg 5:** Fishguard to Holyhead 160 NM
August 01 to August 15 2008
- Leg 6:** Holyhead to Port Carlisle 185 NM
August 17 to August 31 2008
- Leg 7:** Port Carlisle to Cullipool 300 NM
September 05 to October 05 2008
Via NE coast of Ireland. Mileages on this leg will remain flexible.

There are opportunities to be a sponsor or a supporter, take a look at the Spirit of Adventure web site www.spiritdancercanoejourneys.ca/index.html. We will regularly put out information in Canoe Focus and on to the web site.

British Isles canoe journey

This Spirit of Adventure will have 15 different sections or 'legs'. Most of the legs are of two weeks in duration except two, which are a month long; you

will find that the legs may need adjusting somewhat based on weather and sea state conditions. Paddlers will need to understand that there will be changes and sometimes delays based on weather and sea conditions, we will ensure that the team leaders will have plenty of notice in regards to the location of each start point for each team of paddlers.

Have a look at the web site and you can see that Chris is renowned for being a professional guide and set up the voyageur canoe business. ●



Adventure is Calling You!

Breathe the pine scented air, paddle the tumbling rivers, feel the mist of the rapids, and experience the tranquility of a breathtaking sunset. Now relax next to a crackling fire beneath the northern lights; welcome to Manitoba, Canada. Northern Soul Wilderness Adventures specializes in planning adventure holidays, and expeditions in remote Manitoba, Canada.

Guided adventures • Self-guided canoe trips • Coaching • Equipment rental • Aboriginal cultural exchanges ✳ Duke of Edinburgh Award endorsed expedition planner

Contact us for your next adventure:
E: adventure@northernsoul.ca
Visit: www.northernsoul.ca
Phone: 01.204.284.4072

Visit us at the
THE OUTDOORS SHOW
14-16 MARCH 2008
 NEC BIRMINGHAM

Clubs and regional news

EVENTS

Canoe Camping Club

Thames and South East group.

3rd February. Sun. R. Wey from Guildford.

9th March. Sun. R. Wey and Arun Canal.

20-24th March. R. Thames, Easter meet

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

Lightning events

The NW region marathon clubs are organising a series of Lightning events in 2008. Each Hasler race will have a Lightning race and there will be three special events.

The special events will take place at Runcorn CC and include a 2km race (as standard) a 500m race (all in Lightning age groups), a coaching session and paddling K2s or K4s. The three Lightning special events and the Hasler Lightning race results will go towards a north west regional trophy to be presented in September before the Hasler final. Paddlers from all regions are welcome to compete. Information and entries to Dave Moore. E-Mail: sgurfiona@AOL.co.uk

Club Forum dates

Throughout 2008, Canoe England will be hosting a number of club forums in each region. The aim of the forums are to provide clubs with information and support and to listen to your comments and ideas of how we can help our volunteers.

The Club Forum Programme will include sessions on:

- How to manage and support you volunteers;
- New Coaching and Performance Awards – what you need to know and how they can help your club;
- Insurance – what you are covered for and how does it work?
- Time to Listen Workshop to support club welfare officers who have previous child protection training;
- Update on the new Club Accreditation scheme;
- Access, equity and safeguarding updates;
- Open forum – tell us how we can help you!

TEAM NORTH: Yorkshire, Sunday February 24th, Pugneys; **North West,** Saturday March 15th, Peninsula CC

TEAM CENTRAL: East Midlands, Sunday March 2nd, Leicester Outdoor Pursuits Centre; **East,** Sunday April 13th, Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre

TEAM SOUTH: London/South East, Saturday March 29th, Wey KC; **South,** Sunday March 30th, Waterside Centre, Newbury

Updated information will be available on the website once venues have been confirmed.

Additional club forums will be held later in the year for North East, West Midlands and South West. Places are limited to up to a maximum of four members per club (maximum of two on the 'Time to Listen Workshop'). Places are £15 per person – make sure your club doesn't miss out, and sign up now!

Check the volunteer section of the Canoe England web site – www.canoe-england.org.uk. Booking forms are available on the web site; your PDO or email volunteers@bcu.org.uk. 0845 3709530.

Opportunity for the learning disabled

The Canoe Club Section of Keynsham and District Mencap Society are seeking new members. We meet every month: through the winter in the pool at Bath University and in the summer on the River Avon in Saltford. We start in the pool with basic safety and confidence training and then progress to the sheltered river where all equipment and full coaching is provided by BCU coaches. Seven members have achieved BCU 1 Star Awards and are now working towards 2 Star. Last summer we also completed a 3km river day trip through the Avon Valley countryside.

Those with learning disabilities aged from five to adulthood are welcome (along with siblings). If you know of anyone in the Bristol/Bath area who might be interested in joining, or are if you are interested in this coaching challenge, please contact me at

mencap@wellsyway.plus.com.

STEW MOFFATT



YORCIE NEWS: www.yorcie.org.uk

Many thanks to all the paddlers who came and supported the region's ACM last November. Your visible support was widely appreciated by the whole regional team. Thanks also to all the team who contributed so much which helped make the evening go so well. If any of the regions' clubs would like to see any of the evenings presentations for their own ACMs or other events, please let me know. This year the ACM is a month earlier than normal on Tuesday 28th October in Ossett. More of that later.

Washburn

Paddlers will be pleased to know that all the Washburn release dates are on the regions web at www.yorcie.org.uk. The season at Washburn started earlier this year with releases in January. The first evening cruise is on April 2nd and the first weekend cruise is the 6th. Please check out the calendar for all the normal cruises and competitions but also the special events like the Children's day on May 28th and the Yorkshire Champs on July 5th and 6th. This year also sees the start of paddlers using the top reservoir, Thruscross, for a whole range of events. Make a note of 29th June and 23rd July. If you would like to know more or even hire the site for your own events, please also contact the Washburn sec Esther on 01302 535941 or esther.mathews@btinternet.com As always please check the YORCIE info line on 0845 833 8654 before you travel.

Coaching news

So far about 250 of the regions 1,000 plus coaches have now registered who they are with our regional coaching secretary Janet Cartwright. This means that they have already received the

information via the improved web email system, for this years annual Aldwark Coachfest weekend on April 26-27th. Revalidation is being offered on both days along with coaching young people, Xstream, fundamentals, safeguarding children, and a whole lot more besides. All this at the double discount January sale prices of £15 for a day or £35 for both with food and accommodation thrown in! At Aldwark we are also running the final two days of the new UKCC BCU L1 four day course. Additional arrangements are applicable for this course.

The next coach's evening get-together, is being hosted by White Rose CC at 7.30 on Sunday Evening 9th March at Fearnville Sports Centre, Oakwood Lane, Leeds, LS8 3LF. Currently the bar facility is closed, but the centre does have vending machines for hot and soft drinks and snacks.

Another coaching related date for your diaries is Sept 28th. During the day, there is another chance to revalidate and learn current best practice at Pugneys. Then in the evening it is back to Fearnville for a coaches gathering. Minutes of the last meeting and an agenda for the next can be obtained by e-mailing Janet at paul@pcartwright.freeserve.co.uk or tel. 01484 603126.

This will be the second year we have had a September regional revalidation day and what an excellent venue we have in Yorkshire at Pugneys. Besides being a base for both West Yorkshire CC and West Yorkshire scouts, Pugneys puts on its own courses and events. Users and potential users of VHF radios might be interested to know they have operator course running on the 2nd and 9th March. Tel 01924 302360.

The Yorkshire Sea Kayakers (please register by e-mailing ysk@yorcie.org.uk is already off to a flying 2008 start with Mike Robson having already set two dates. You may just get this in time for the first on Feb 10th, if not then the next opportunity is 6th April. Both trips will be on the Yorkshire coast and the venue picked to make best use of weather and tides nearer the time.

Similarly Yorkshire Single Bladers our regional open canoeists can catch the action at ysb@yorcie.org.uk

This simple registration process for both groups ensures swift email circulation without your address collecting a load of spam emails. Please don't be put off when you are asked to 'subscribe'. There is nothing to pay, but the system ensures security and allows ordinary volunteers with normal processing power to handle the group. It has the additional benefit of giving you the facility to add your own email address and change it, move it, or unsubscribe to it, as you wish.

If you'd like to know more, about the affairs of the region, please contact our regional secretary Jon on jdakeyne@aol.com 18 Hayton Wood View, Aberford, Leeds, LS25 3AN tel. 0113 2250984. The dates of the next two RDT meetings are 26th Feb, 28th April.

All these dates and more are in greater detail at www.yorcie.org.uk

If you want to have your event added to the YORCIE web please send Kate an email to webmaster@yorcie.co.uk please put 'web' in your subject. Please keep your news coming in. Thank you. Dick.

dickconstable@canoists.co.uk

PERFORMANCE KAYAKS

66 UPHILL WAY

UPHILL

SOMERSET

BS23 4TN

01934

613612

WWW.KAYAKS.CO.UK



FYNE BOAT KITS

18 models from open boats to sea kayaks.
Build in as little as a week. The kits contain all that is needed including pre-cut joints & panels, epoxy & manuals to make a strong boat to be proud of.



www.fyneboatkits.com

Tel: 01539 721770 Fax: 01539 447662

email: info@fyneboatkits.com

THE ULTIMATE PADDLING STORE



TOP BRANDS

- > Waterside Venues
- > Contract Services
- > Group Package Deals
- > Mail order

roto moulded kayaks • open canoes • buoyancy aids • paddles, crash hats • cags, spray covers • roof racks etc.

Open Tues- Sat 9am-5pm

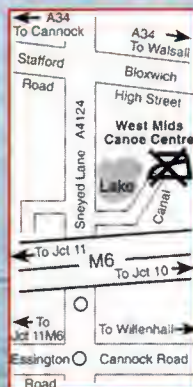
WEST MIDLANDS CANOE CENTRE

Sneyd Wharf, 401 Sneyd Lane, Bloxwich, Walsall, WS3 2LT

For a full price list on all our products visit

www.wmcc.co.uk

or call 01922 479279 for more info



Yorkshire Canoe

Unit 5 Croft Court, Sandall Carr Road
Kirk Sandall, Doncaster
South Yorkshire DN3 1QL

☎ 01302 886633

☎ 01302 885566

☎ 07733 092222

✉ sales@yorkshirecanoe.co.uk

www.yorkshirecanoe.co.uk

* SERVICING & REPAIRS * FAST TURNAROUND * COMPETITIVE PRICES *

Rubberman Drysuits & Seal Replacement Services



Made to Measure Drysuits a Speciality
Repairs to Wetsuits, Drysuits, Cags,
Dry Trousers, Salopettes
All types / sizes of latex seals replaced
Pressure testing and leak troubleshooting
Zip and boot replacement
Alterations and repairs on other
outdoor equipment

Chris Steele, Rubberman Drysuits
& Seal Replacement Services
Tan-y-Ffordd Ucha, Glan Conwy
Colwyn Bay, Conwy LL28 5PG
Phone: 01492-580616 or 07778-803775
Email: chris@rubberman.co.uk
web site: www.rubberman.co.uk

* DIVE*CANOE*SAIL*SURF*RAFT* DIVE*CANOE*SAIL*SURF*RAFT*

Burton Canoe Club

By Stuart Briggs

Background to Burton CC

On Friday 15th June 2007, Burton Canoe Club opened its brand new clubhouse. Burton MP Janet Dean officially opened the new headquarters based on Newton Road Park at the north end of the Washlands; the new clubhouse caters for all ages and abilities.

The building was funded through the Community Club Development Programme (CCDP). The total cost of the project was £420,000. The main grant awarded was from the BCU's CCDP Portfolio, distributed by DCMS and managed by Sport England.

The new club house includes: changing rooms, meeting rooms, boat storage and is now one of the best clubhouses located on one of the best sites in the region, if not nationally!

Membership

Membership has fluctuated but the present total is 160 members.

2002-2003	97	Record
2003-2004	137	Record
2004-2005	108	
2005-2006	126	
2006-2007	145	Record
2007-so far	160	Record

Attendance fees were 50p, they have now doubled to £1 – very good value!

Access position

BCC investigated navigation of the Trent in Burton and discovered it was navigable up to Shardlow by public navigation and common law navigation to Kings Bromley.

Volunteers

The Chairman – Stuart Briggs was presented with a framed certificate for

'Outstanding Service to our Community' at the mayor's dance. Stuart has also been presented with an award for 'Services to Open Canoe' by the Canadian Canoe Association.

Family club member

My daughter and I first came down to BCC 12 months ago, just as it got dark and cold – what great timing! Luckily the winter pool sessions were about to start so we decided to learn some 'wet' skills to prepare us for the next summer. The relaxed coaching style inspired us both to progress quickly learning paddling technique and support strokes while having a great time (and staying warm).

February arrived and the time had come to get out on a real river. What I had pictured was a nice gentle paddle in front of the club house – what I got was an introduction to the local weir! It was fantastic. That relaxed coaching style had done its job again, giving me the confidence to try new things almost every time I paddled.

Since that time both my daughter and I have enjoyed endless new experiences whether it be BCU star courses, a freezing Dove trip, youth specific events for her or Tryweryn trips for me. For the future, the opportunities to become involved in other areas of paddlesport are all there for us. Burton CC supports competition, open, recreational, whitewater, playboating and even boasts sea kayaks (in the midlands!).

What a family club means at Burton is friendship, camaraderie, fun and support - support to achieve as much (or as little) as you want in a friendly, fun environment.



Above: Tryweryn trip

David Walters, club trustee

Like many that are involved in paddlesport, Club Trustee, David Walters had his first taste of canoeing as a Scout on a lake somewhere in Cheshire. Nearly 20 years later, David found himself starting all over again when he joined a Scout group in Burton that had its own canoes and premises along the banks of the Trent not far along the river from the club.

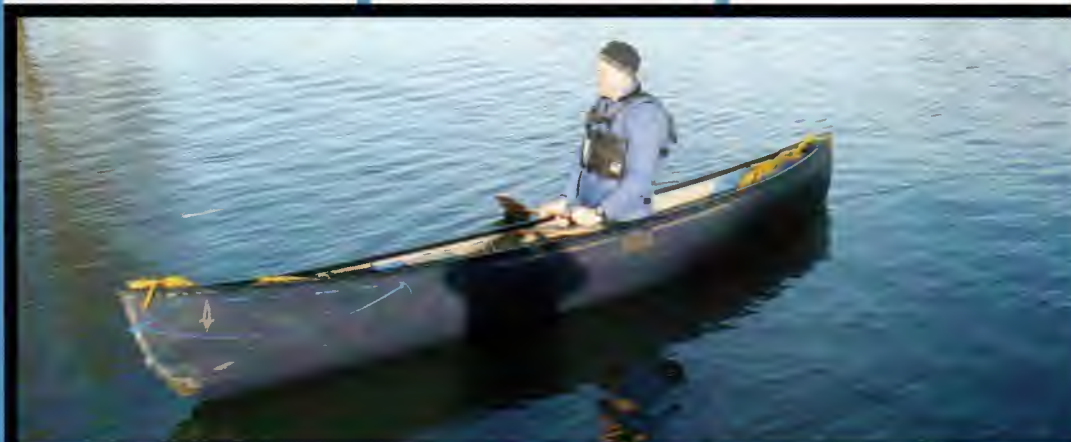
"The club has provided great support to a large number of Scouts over many years and, has helped people like myself to start on the coaching ladder allowing us to put something back into paddlesport."

"The club has a great family atmosphere and everyone is encouraged to take part at whatever level they want to, be it a leisurely paddle along the Trent on a Sunday afternoon or, the thrills and spills of the"

Tryweryn. When I've finished paddling for the day, I can always put my trustee's hat on and go and clean the club room!"

The club would not be the success it is without the commitment, dedication, hard work and enthusiasm of the volunteers that help run it. This can be anything from cleaning the toilets to fixing the landing station that may have been carried away by the unexpected June floods (twice!). The amount of hours they devote must be equivalent to full time job! Regardless of how busy they are they are still more than happy to offer advice on any aspect of the sport.

It is fantastic to see such a variety of people of all ages sharing an interest in a common hobby that is so interesting and exciting!



"The club has a great family atmosphere and everyone is encouraged to take part at whatever level they want to"

For more information on the club visit

www.burtoncanoecub.co.uk

Thank you to the members of Burton CC and to Stuart Briggs for giving an insight into Burton club life.

If you would like to see your club featured in the next issue of Canoe Focus email chloe.nelson-lawrie@bcu.org.uk with information.

Burton CC from the member's perspective

Matthew Bowley, aged 13

I've been with Burton CC for four years. I started racing for Burton in U10 Lightnings in sprints, marathons and Wavehoppers in wild water. I have been encouraged to compete in regional marathons, national sprint regattas and youth series wild water races. We've had trips to the national marathon finals and Hasler finals.

I have been continuously developed by the coaches every step of the way and have been promoted in the divisions in sprints and marathons, dabbled at slalom races and I'm currently U12 Boys National Wild Water Champion.

I am at present being challenged with Grade 3 water races and longer flat water training distances. Even when flooding stopped us paddling, coach Bill Lawrenson kept up busy with gym work. Bill also keeps us busy in school holidays and even Christmas Eve training.

As part of the racing team I've been able to network with other clubs and make new friends around the country. I've raced in mixed teams in K4's, and my partner for K2 sprint regattas has been Albert Hicks from Norwich.

I've been lucky to meet sportsmen and women who are the best in the country and who are world champions. At recent wild water racing development academy training camp at Bala I was fortunate to be coached by members of the junior and senior GB squads.

Michael Walker, Open Canoe Level 3 Coach

I have used canoes and kayaks since the age of 11 albeit without formal coaching, back in the early '60s there was not the structure locally as there is now so we learnt by trial and error, and I am still here.

I joined Burton CC about 20 years ago, following my son down to see what mischief he got up to! I have been there ever since. During the ensuing period, I graduated through the BCU Star tests and then on to coaching both competition and canoe.

With the canoe I have been involved in a number of Duke of Edinburgh groups mainly silver but this year a group taking gold.

I also coach adults and young people mostly in solo canoe, which I enjoy. At Burton we are lucky in having differing water within reach of the club base that allows training of all the elements of open boating in a safe location.

Kevin Gallagher, club member

Our very first association with Burton CC came about when my then eight-year-old son, Lee, came home from school asking if he could join the after-school canoeing club. The thought of him having a fun splash-around on the river with a few of his friends from school seemed a good one so we agreed without any hesitation.

Rather than simply slashing around as he might at a recreation park, he followed a program of proper coached sessions. Within a few months, he had experienced a number of different types of canoe, was familiar with where each would be used in their respective different roles and was able to perform a variety of different types of paddle stroke. In short, he had come to recognise canoeing as a sport.

Since those first days, Lee has attended a number of pool sessions to learn such things as how to correctly recover from a capsized, has attended a number of club trips where he has been able to experience fast moving water situations. He is now totally confident in four or size completely different types of canoe in which he is able to demonstrate very good control. Importantly, he is always keen for his next session because, aside from providing a physically healthy outlet, it is fun!

Following on from his initial membership, we have recently taken a family membership so that we can enjoy the experience as a family group. My wife is almost ready to complete her two star coaching, my six-year old daughter thoroughly enjoys a few miles a week, and I even enjoy it myself!

Kevin Gallagher continues his experience of Burton CC in his 'Diaries of a complete novice' which can be viewed on the BCU web site under 'news'.

Lisa and Dan – the young couple

My partner and I only joined Burton CC in May of this year. We were looking for a new hobby that combined an alternative way to exercise. We found Burton CC via Google search and found the web site to be very informative, easy to use and showed lots of fun images. I initially contacted Stuart Briggs via email whose reply was very speedy and informative. Stuart mentioned in his email that Thursday night is a popular member's night where many gather to use the facilities and where various lessons were taught.

We went down to the Burton CC the following Thursday, having made a quick phone call to Stuart to see if it would be OK for us to visit. We were met by Stuart who remembered us from our previous contact, who made us feel very welcome within a hive of excited activity around us. Stuart devoted a good deal of his time with us, answered all my many questions, gave us a tour of the club and all its contents and asked if we like to participate in that evenings activities. Within minutes my partner and I were having our first experience in a Master K2 kayak!

We haven't looked back since becoming full members of the club nearly seven months ago. I am delighted to say we have passed our One Star, taken part in a sideways manoeuvre course, completed several lessons on the Two Star course and now participate in the weekend sessions based at a local swimming pool. This is great opportunity to practice specific moves such as the Eskimo rescue in a warm, clean and safe environment. One of the great aspects about the club is the variety of courses offered.

At present we currently see kayaking as a recreational activity. It is great way to spend sometime outdoors, see the local area from a different perspective and a great way to meet people. However, as time goes on and new techniques are learnt, we hope to move on to moving water and participate in some of the trips that are organised by various members of the club.



OC 2 Star



Duke of Edinburgh



Duke of Edinburgh



Kayak coaching



Tryweryn trip



Duke of Edinburgh

BCU PHOTOGRAPH COM



The winners for November and December (as voted by you)

NOVEMBER ADULT WINNER

Michael Wilson

NOVEMBER YOUTH WINNER

Sam Hanks

DECEMBER ADULT WINNER

Adrian Wintle

DECEMBER YOUTH WINNER

Kathryn Styan

**December adult winner –
Adrian Wintle**

The photo competition is still running!
For your chance of winning the 2008
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.nelson-lawrie@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:

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

PRIZES: MONTHLY WINNER

A winner will be chosen each month until December 2008. 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 chloe.nelson-lawrie@bcu.org.uk

OVERALL WINNER

At the end of January 2009 one overall winner from the youth category and one winner from the adult category will win a digital camera worth £150!

PHOTO QUALITY

The images should be a minimum of five megapixels if possible.

Terms and conditions

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.



**December youth winner –
Kathryn Styan**



PETITION

COTSWOLD

outdoor | action | travel



Left:
November youth winner –
Sam Hanks

Below:
November adult winner –
Michael Wilson



Winners 2008



Above:
adult winner –
Gary Tutt

Left:
youth winner –
Chris Ripper

Gear

NEW BOATS

Rev alert!

2008 sees Pyranha launching their new 'Rev' playboat. Incorporating Pyranha's vortex carving rails, they've been lifted to enhance the overall control of the kayak. The Rev has got a forward cockpit and moderate aft rocker providing good acceleration for big air moves, the volume has also been maximised and centred.

Pyranha have also made a beneficial change to their 2008 Ammo range by swapping the foam pillar to now include the same 'hand grip' internal pillar as found in the Burn range. This gives the Ammo range greater versatility as an all rounder for all



types of white water paddling.

www.pyranha.com

Venture Kayaks add to their family

The new models, based on the popular Easky are the Easky 10, tailored towards inland paddling, the Easky 14 designed for lighter and smaller paddlers and the Easky 17, a sea touring kayak with quick performance.

New features include a flip-top backrest, which you can either choose to have up to relax with maximum support and security or down for more serious paddling, rolling and re-entry techniques.

Other new additions include a paddle park, fully adjustable footrest system and Venture Kayaks own skeg system.

www.venturekayaks.com



Breakthrough for P&H

P&H Custom Sea Kayaks have been busy testing their new Corelite material in high use locations such as, Plas Y Brennin. Put to the test for over 300 hours, the results have been good enough for P&H to start producing all of their three layer polyethylene kayaks in the new Corelite.

Over the duration of three years, P&H have been working closely with their suppliers to create one of the strongest, lightest and stiffest foam cores available on the market today. Corelite has a strong abrasion resistance allowing your P&H kayak to have a much longer life. The weight reduction and rigidity increase help you to carry and paddle your boat for longer with less distortion.

www.phseakayaks.com



Thule

Thule Hull-a-Port 835-1

www.thule.co.uk



The Thule rack offers a new angle on the kayak rack. The well designed J-style carrier gets your kayak or sit-on-top on its side at an angle creating extra room on the roof for a second kayak. Handy for those of us who like to paddle in pairs without the fuss and expense of taking two cars.

Made for use with either Thule's roof bars or the factory fitted bars on your vehicle, setting them up is five minutes work and no tools needed. Loading is easy, just lower the boat on the padded cradle and secure it down tightly with the two provided excellent ratchet tie-down straps.

New, improved pads and metal brackets make the product more stable than the previous version and once tied down the kayak will not budge giving real peace of mind even at motorway speeds.

Thule QuickDraw ratcheting tie-down straps and buckle protectors included.

The rack is padded to gently cradle your boat.

Metal brackets wrap around the vehicle's cross bar.

Works with all shapes of kayaks from white water to sea. Priced around £90.00

STEVE HUMPHREYS



Helly Hansen Bullet High Neck Zip

www.hellyhansen.com

A new part of the Helly Warm collection, with its LIFA polypropylene inner layer and stretchy nylon exterior, the Bullet is designed to be worn as a mid-layer over a Helly Hansen Dry base layer when extra warmth and dryness is required. These high intensity mid-layers cannot absorb moisture internally but rather move excess heat and sweat to the exterior, leaving the body comfortably dry in winter conditions.

The Bullet High Neck Zip is intended for snow sports, but we can't help thinking that it looks ideal for a spot of watersports too.

The Bullets tight body fit, flatlock stitching, high collar and zipper shield puts it ideal those who take the outdoors and their sport seriously.

Available for both men in white/blue; red/black and black/white or for women in white/pink and black/white.

Stretchy Lifa fabric with flat lock stitching.

High neck giving full protection with chin shield zipper.



Retail Recommended price: £60.00

ANDY PEARSON

NEW KIT

Spray deck for the Dagger Dynamo!

Up to now a lot of Dynamo children paddlers have had to make do with oversized Nylon models.

Palm have changed all of that by making a special deck just for this model. Made from tough neoprene the deck features an 8mm elastic shock-cord so stretching it onto the cockpit is easy, whilst latex on the underside keeps it in place. There is also a large grab handle that's easy to find for first time spray-deck users.

The body tube is made of super stretch neoprene, which makes it easier to get on and off and helps to fit different sizes of user – it also has a neat name label! A Dynamo graphic covers the deck making it look totally cool and funky.

Available now at £39.95. Sizes - xxs/xxs , xxs/xs
www.palmequipmenteurope.com



Polar Electro (UK) Ltd

RS800 G3

www.polarelectro.co.uk

Any paddler will see the advantages of the RS800 heart rate monitor when combined with the G3 GPS sensor. Unlike many other sports it is difficult to know just how far you have paddled and at what speed etc when on the water and particularly when training.

Worn around the arm, waist or wrapped around the webbing of your kayak, The G3 is water resistant and transmits its data wirelessly to the RS800 which at the same time has been recording your body's performance.

The combined information is shown on the wrist mounted monitor and can be downloaded later to your Windows PC using Polar's ProTrainer 5 where it can be analysed with further session planned and recorded.

The RS800 allows you to designate your own training zones on the monitor and interprets personal calorie and energy expenditure over one or many sessions. Apart from its performance, the monitor itself is lightweight, compact for this type of equipment and very stylish.

For those runners amongst you, there is also the S3 stride sensor (below) that can be used with the RS800.

All in all, a brilliant piece of technology that is easy to use and produces an impressive array of useful data for anyone in serious training.

The recommended retail price is £384.50 for the complete RS800/G3 package, this does not include the S3 stride sensor.



RS800 data screen switches between stopwatch, lap time, pace (with G3), distance (with G3), altitude, and heart rate when exercising.

Speed and distance tracking G3 GPS unit sold with armband.

Powered by AA battery with 10-15 hour life.

LED lights show signal and power modes.



Or bought separately the G3 is available for £124.50
CHRIS POOLE

Nova Craft Canoe distribution

The Nova Craft range features a wide array of traditional Canadian canoe designs including the classic multi-tasking Prospector. Anyone looking for a solo and occasional tandem can appreciate the popular Bob Special. The PAL 16 is a light tripping canoe, whilst the Tripper 16 and Haida 17 offer two length options for recreation use. Other names that will strike a chord are the Supernova and Angler.



Performance options

The SP3 foam core polyethylene construction is available in the Prospectors starting at £699. This construction is ideal for family and fleet use. There is also the lighter weight Royalex (ABS) and Royalex Lite models starting at just £999.99. Committed enthusiasts are catered for with a variety of composite constructions including Kevlar, Kevlar/Spectra and Nova Craft's Blue Steel Kevlar Carbon material.

Manufacture of Nova Craft canoes will continue to take place in Canada and hand finished in the UK by Perception's skilled staff.

Nova Craft UK 01825 765892. Trade enquiries should be directed to Dave Atkins on the same number or by email dave@novacraftuk.com
www.perception.co.uk

Life is good Crusher Short and Long Tees

www.lifeisgood.com

Jake and his crew have flown over from New England and for the cool and the up-to-the-minute amongst you these are the tees to have.

Comfortable and humorous, these 100% cotton shirts make you smile whatever the mood.

Famous for its softness, durability and unique weathered look, they have now added a secret new step they call 'crushing' which doubles its softness. Double needle stitching and 12 stitches per inch on all seams deliver exceptional durability and the no-feel print replaces sewn neck label for added comfort. Small Jake print below back collar.

Prices around 320.00



Jake always brings a smile to anyone's face.



Peruvian cotton. Available in M, L, XL, XXL
TONY CORNWELL

SCHOOL OF OUTDOOR STUDIES | AMBLESIDE | PENRITH



adventure

Exciting opportunities for outdoor learning at the University of Cumbria

- ▶ Foundation and honours degrees leading to a range of outdoor careers.
- ▶ Extend your HND or foundation degree studies with accredited prior learning.
- ▶ Specialisms in coaching, outdoor education, outdoor leadership, recreation management, personal development, ecology, environmental education and activism, youth work and the outdoors.

Courses at both Ambleside and Penrith in the beautiful English Lake District.

University of Cumbria

www.cumbria.ac.uk/outdoorstudies
 Course enquiries Tel. 0845 606 1144 (Local Rate Number)

Sports and Outdoor qualifications in the Heart of the Peak District



OUTDOORS

- BA (Hons) Outdoor Activities Management
- FdA Outdoor Activities
- FdA Sports Coaching
- BA (Hons) Sport and Adventure Toursim
- BSc (Hons) Physical Activity and Health
- BA (Joint Honours) Outdoor Recreation with Countryside Management
- Obtain your degree in 2 years with our Fast Track Joint Honours Programme.

Go to www.derby.ac.uk/udb for more information or call: 01298 71100.

UNIVERSITY of DERBY
 BUXTON www.derby.ac.uk/udb

SPARSHOLT
 COLLEGE HAMPSHIRE

Centre of Vocational Excellence

Sparsholt delivers top level training and qualifications for careers in the land-based industries

Careers & Courses drop-in events:

Saturday, 1st March
 10.00_{am} - 3.00_{pm}



If you are considering a career in outdoor sport, veterinary nursing, ornamental fish management, landscaping, tree surgery or any in our wide-ranging qualification range, from first level to BSc (Hons), then come and see it all...

01962 797280
www.sparsholt.ac.uk

SPARSHOLT
 COLLEGE HAMPSHIRE

The Future of Performance in the Outdoors



- *Foundation Degree (Sc) in Outdoor Leadership
- BTEC National Certificate in Outdoor Adventure (L3)

- Learn the science behind performance in Outdoor Sports
- Develop high-level skills in the major disciplines
- Train under highly qualified coaches to develop your own coaching expertise

Courses enrolling now
 Tel: 01325 503030

Visit www.darlington.ac.uk for more details.
 Applications direct or through UCAS.

*Course is delivered in partnership with the University of Teesside.

darlingtoncollege **UNIVERSITY OF TEESSIDE**



WINDERMERE
ST ANNE'S SCHOOL

The all new *Venture* Baccalaureate for Sixth Form

Now taking applications for entry this September. Developed by WSA and endorsed by the IB, the programme skilfully combines core components of the IB course, with the hands-on study of outdoor adventure activities such as canoeing, kayaking, sailing and climbing.

The Venture Baccalaureate is ideally suited to students looking for a career in the fields of Outdoor Education, Sport, Tourism and the Services.

Open Morning, 14 March
Open Day, 26 April

WSA is the only School in the country to offer this unique Sixth Form Programme, so if the Venture Baccalaureate sounds like the course for you, contact Admissions now on 015394 46164 or admissions@wsaschool.com.

www.wsaschool.com



Woodmill



WOODMILL OUTDOOR CENTRE

Kayak and canoe programmes for beginners, through to advanced and coach courses.

Multi activity courses for groups and individuals including our exciting high ropes.

Sea Kayak expeditions

Well stocked shop with a huge demo fleet of over 200 boats

Group and club discount available

WOODMILL OUTDOOR CENTRE

Woodmill Lane, Swaythling, Southampton

SO18 2JR

Tel 023 8055 5993 Fax 023 8055 6641

www.woodmill.co.uk Email

Info@woodmill.co.uk



EAST BARNBY

OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE

A residential centre running Open Canoe and Kayak, Sea and Surf courses at all levels.

Weekend courses from £115 and 7 day guided expeditions from £450. All inclusive of full board and lodging, equipment hire and fully qualified instruction.

SPRING 2008

7-9 March	BCU Level 3 Coach Sea (training)
	BCU Level 3 Coach Canoe (training)
14-16 March	Intro to White Water Canoe
	Intro to White Water Kayak
11-13 April	Farne Islands Sea Kayak Trip
18-20 April	Intro to Sea Kayaking
	Intro to Canoeing
3-10 May	Skye Sea Kayak Expedition
25-31 May	Mull Sea Kayak Expedition

For a brochure and details of all 2007 courses contact us at E.B.O.E.C, East Barnby, Whitby, N. Yorks, YO21 3SA
Phone: 01947 893333
Email: east.barnby@northyorks.gov.uk
www.outdoored.co.uk



Canoe Canada's Northern Wilderness

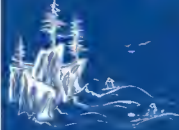


- Expedition outfitting for lakewater & whitewater canoe trips in Temagami & James Bay watershed, including Missinaibi & Harricana rivers.
- Kevlar & ABS canoe rentals, trip food, gear rentals, shuttle service, maps & route planning.
- Comfortable lodging & organic cuisine for your pre/post trip stay.

Smoothwater Outfitters & Ecolodge
www.smoothwater.com • temagami@ontera.net
 Tel: 001-705-569-3539 • Fax: 001-705-569-2710

SEA KAYAK ATLANTIC CANADA

TOURS - COURSES - RENTALS



Have breakfast at home in Britain and supper the same day on a coastal island off Nova Scotia. We're that close! Discover our deserted offshore islands, the Cape Breton highlands and whales, Newfoundland fjords and icebergs, and the highest tides on earth in the Bay of Fundy. Our 25th year. Coastal Adventures PO Box 773 Tangier NS Canada B0J 3H0
info@coastaladventures.com www.coastaladventures.com

ANDYTURTON

KAYAK COACHING - RIVER GUIDING - WORLD TOURS

North Wales and UK
 JAN to MAY 07/08

Austrian Alps Trips
 MAY to AUG 08
 JULY 1-6 INTERMEDIATE KAYAKING WEEK

Zambezi Adventures
 AUG 08

Himalayan Expeditions
 OCT / NOV 08

YOUTH TRIPS PROGRAMME
 UK & ABROAD 08

Individuals & groups welcomed Visit Website For More Details
Progressive Kayaking For All Abilities

Let our coaching convince you

BCU courses personal coaching UK and abroad

tomparkercoaching.co.uk
 coaching and guiding

Higher National Diploma in Outdoor Activities

(In partnership with University of Wales, Newport)

- work placements in the UK or in Europe
- overseas expedition to the Alps
- full time for two years
- residential facilities available

Activities include:
 • Sailing • Kayaking • Mountain biking • Caving • Climbing • Water skiing

For more information telephone: 01495 333674
 email: geraint.forster@coleggwent.ac.uk or text CANOE to 88020
 Coleg Gwent, Usk Campus, The Rhadyr, Usk, Monmouthshire NP15 1XJ

www.coleggwent.ac.uk

The College of West Anglia

The First CENTRE of VOCATIONAL EXCELLENCE for Outdoor Activities in the UK

GET OUT OF THE CLASSROOM

Activity Instructor Certificate Ages 16 - 18
 Diploma in Outdoor Activities Ages 19+

Contacting us
 01553 761144
www.col-westanglia.ac.uk
enquiries@col-westanglia.ac.uk

Two Amazing Outdoor Activities courses for ages 16+

GET INTO THE EXTREME

Climbing
 Sailing
 Kayaking
 Canoeing
 Orienteering
 Winter Mountaineering
 & So Much More...

GET MTB QUALIFIED
Cyclewise Training
 offer AALA approved SMBLA Mountain Bike Courses.
 2 Tutors per course
 New for '07
 MBL Skills Courses, Night Riding & Expedition Modules
 Courses delivered in the Lake District and throughout the UK
www.cyclewisetraining.co.uk
 Tel: Rich 07946 176 228
 or Craig 07786 443402

Menorkayaking
www.menorkayaking.com
 The ultimate experience - kayak in Menorca

GREECE SEA KAYAKING

HOLIDAYS AND COURSES
 AFFORDABLE - ALL YEAR ROUND
 Apartments 40mtrs from beach
 INSTRUCTION BY BCU COACH
www.greekislandactivities.com
 UK OFFICE Tel + 44(0)1546 603852

Superb Inland water canoe & kayak training venues
 Hire, launch, tuition, camping, catering
 Devon, Cornwall & Somerset
 Call 01350 771530 • www.enlknor.co.uk

www.frontierpoland.com
Canoeing in North East Poland

Sea Kayak MILOS

Genuine hospitality, quality equipment and an amazing place to paddle.
 We offer: Day-trips, expeditions, courses and accommodation.
 Milos Island, GREECE
www.seakayakgreece.com

Go to www.canoefocus.co.uk
 for
Jobs online
Courses online
Accommodation online
Members Classified

HOLIDAYS & COURSES

www.canoe-poland.com



- Canoe rental/hire
- Transportation
- Accommodation
- Wide range of tours
- Tourist information

email:

andrew@frontierpoland.com
Phone: 00 48 501 274 244

OUTDOOR DIMENSIONS

Sea Kayaking and
Canoe Holidays in
Scotland

Tel: 01241 875844

www.outdoordimensions.co.uk

ACCOMMODATION

SOUTH ALPS:

Fully equipped s/c accommodation
for groups 2-20 in Briancon,
L'Argentiere, Embrun and Vallouise.
£50-75 pp per week.Kayaking, climbing, sailing,
mountain biking, canyoning, via
ferratas, skiing....Tel: 0033 6 60959566 or
0033 4 92230515Email: kate@hautes-alpes.biz
visit www.hautes-alpes.bizKeswick
Independent HostelRiver Greta access across road.
50 beds in dorms, linen included,
central heating, hot showers, 10
mins walk to town centre.

Instruction available.

Groups or Individuals;

£12/person/night

www.vividevents.co.uk

017687 75351

River Dart
Totnes DevonIntroduction to White Water
in Canoes or Kayaks
Accommodation and all kit
providedwww.littleriverside.com
01803 866257

Fort William

Self-catering - Home comforts
Excellent drying rooms - Twin and
four-person bedrooms - Parking
for trailers - Groups or individuals
22 Beds

Tel: 01397 700451

info@fortwilliamholiday.co.uk
www.fortwilliamholiday.co.uk

EQUIPMENT & SERVICES

Reed
of CambridgeEXPERIENCED SELLERS OF CANOES
AND KAYAKS FOR OVER 15 YEARS
VISIT OUR WEBSITE - ORDER ONLINE
www.reedsofcambridge.co.ukTel: 01223 425348
Two Tees Boatyard, 70 Water Street
Cambridge CB2 1PA

FIBREGLASS

MATERIALS & SUPPLIES

Resin	Coatings	Pigments
Gelcoat	Releasers	Acetone
Mats, Fabrics	Epoxies	Books, Tools
Fillers	Foams	Free Advice

LOWEST UK PRICES

Free Catalogue Next Day delivery

Tel 01209 821028

Order from our on line catalogue
www.cfsnet.co.uk

Top Barn

ARCHERY
HOT AIR BALLOONING
ORIENTEERING
RIFLE SHOOTING
MOUNTAIN BIKING
RYA DINGHY SAILING
RYA WINDSURFING
CANOEING
QUAD BIKING
CLAY PIGEON SHOOTING
TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES
EVENT HOSTING

Top Barn Activity Centre
Worcester Road, High Heath, Worcester, W6 4PH
Tel/Fax: 01905 622223
info@topbarnactivity.com
www.topbarnactivity.com

www.dateactive.co.uk

The new dating site
for active people

INSURANCE

N W
BROWN
INSURANCE BROKERS
LIMITED

Insurance for Paddlers

- ◆ Canoes & Equipment
- ◆ Other Small Crafts
- ◆ Activity Travel
- ◆ Activity Centres / Companies

For more details please call: 01223 720350

Or for an online canoe quote visit:

www.nwbrown.co.uk/insurance/canoe.asp

Phone: 01223 720350
Fax: 01223 353705
Email: acs@nwbrown.co.uk

N W Brown Insurance Brokers Ltd

Richmond House, 16-20 Regent Street, Canal Edge, CH2 1DB

Approved & Regulated by the Financial Services Authority

EQUIPMENT & SERVICES

Joel Watersports

Courses, Canoes & Kayaks
All at our Lakeside Shop
Top Barn, Worcester WR6 6NH
Tel: 01905 621734

www.joelwatersports.co.uk

Shoreham Sea Kayaks

High quality composite sea kayaks from £999



www.shorehamseakayaks.co.uk

Phone: (01273) 464218 Fax: (01273) 464278

Reed
www.chillcheater.com
Tough, ultra thin, super-thermal,
base, mid and outer layers for paddling.

Free catalogue: 01271 815828

THE FAMILY ADVENTURE
STORE a real adventure...

Free Free
Dart
OCEAN KAYAK
Lilander
Old Town
Paijon
pyro
Zodiac

Around 100 canoes, kayaks & sit on tops in
stock at our showroom on Marsh farm,
Hilperton, Trowbridge
We supply all the major brands of canoes,
kayaks, Sit on Top kayaks and equipment,
and offer expert advice, see our website
for special offers.
www.familyadventurestore.co.uk

SITUATIONS VACANT

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



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 February, March and April 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 principle of equal opportunities



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

paddlers wanted!



Go to www.canoefocus.co.uk

for

Jobs online • Courses online

Accommodation online • Members Classified

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

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

Looking for the best Training & Working Adventure?

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

Robinwood offers:

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

For further details:

bestjob@robinwood.co.uk

robinwood
Activity Centre
Todmorden, Lancs
www.robinwood.co.uk



Tel 01706 814 554



Challenge, Energise, Motivate!



Become a World Challenge Leader

We're currently recruiting UK outdoor instructors on a seasonal and freelance basis. A variety of locations and excellent benefits available.

Contact us for more details:

T 08704 873 173

E leaderinfo@world-challenge.co.uk

www.world-challenge.co.uk



REF: WCHK001

GRAFHAM water centre

Instructors and Trainees

For 2008 and beyond we require enthusiastic staff who are able to deliver programmes of exciting and educationally valid activities for schools, youth groups and individuals.

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

Salaries for Instructors start at £225.00 per week with opportunities for overtime. Accommodation and meals are available.

This role involves working with young people and adults. GWC has a policy for safeguarding children and all applicants will be required to complete the CRB process before starting work at the Centre.

For further information and an application form, please ring

Grafham Water Centre, Perry,
Huntingdon, Cambs PE28 0BX
on (01480) 810521

www.grafham-water-centre.co.uk



Cambridgeshire
County Council

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.

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



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



Charity no. 306016

Girlguiding UK



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



Heatree Activity Centre

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

Currently seeking committed Christians as:

Trainee Instructors

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

Apply with full CV and motivational covering letter to:
Director, Heatree Activity Centre, Manaton, Devon TQ13 9XE
Tel: 01647 221307 Email: admin@heatree.com

Hindleap Warren Outdoor Centre



Senior Instructor of Outdoor Education required
£17,428 - £24,160

Closing date 15th February 2008

An excellent opportunity to join the senior team of a successful centre. Applicants should be motivated outdoor enthusiasts with a range of NGB qualifications and previous centre middle management experience. Board and accommodation are free of charge. Ten days staff training every year plus appropriate special leave for NGB courses. For further info please contact Tony Smith on 01342 822625 or email tony@hindleap.com



Southampton City Council

WOODMILL OUTDOOR CENTRE

Woodmill Lane, Swaythling, Southampton, SO18 2JR

OUTDOOR ACTIVITY INSTRUCTORS REQUIRED FOR 2008

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 915740/43 or e-mail info@woodmill.co.uk.



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



TAIN ADVENTURE CENTRE BALLYOONAN, OMEATH, CO LOUTH IRELAND

Instructor's required for 2008 season, for a busy multi-activity centre providing a wide range of activities to schools, youth groups and universities throughout Ireland and the UK.

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

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

WATERSPORT INSTRUCTORS REQUIRED

BCU/RYA Instructor and Raft Guide positions
available at the
National Watersports Centre, Nottingham.
Full time / Part time / Casual.

Please contact James on 01159 824715 for
more information



Hindleap Warren Outdoor Centre



Outdoor Education Instructors required
£12,429 - £14,662
Closing date 15th February 2008

Applicants should be motivated outdoor enthusiasts with min. of two NGB qualifications (ideally SPA), and previous experience of working with children. Board and accommodation are free of charge. Ten days staff training every year plus appropriate special leave for NGB courses. For further info please contact Tony Smith on 01342 822625 or email tony@hindleap.com

WHITECAP LEISURE

A multi activity centre based at Willen Lake - Milton Keynes.
Staff required for 2008 season.

Senior Instructor, Instructors:

Must hold 1 NGB award with the BCU or RYA

Trainee Instructors:

Training can be given to gain NGB awards. You will need personal skills and a desire to teach watersports.

Accommodation is available on site.

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE:

www.whitecap.co.uk

Contact:-

Whitecap Leisure, Willen Lake, V10 Brickhill Street,
Milton Keynes, MK15 0DS
Tel 01908 691620 email: - admin@whitecap.co.uk

Rutland watersports

Has vacancies for Level 2 and Level 3 Coaches for the 2008 season on one of the biggest man-made reservoirs in Europe. Come and join a fun and dynamic large commercial centre.

Contact Craig Freestone on 01780 460154

cfreestone@anglianwater.co.uk

WANTED
Instructor and Assistant Instructor
 for our activity holiday cruises.
 Friendly, relaxed atmosphere.
 Wages circa £7.5k to £15k p.a.
 April to October.
 No live in costs. Apply by 29/2/08
www.fingal-cruising.co.uk/jobs.html
 01397 772167

UKSA

Senior Kayak / Canoe Instructor needed to revolutionise paddling at UKSA

Candidates should be Coach 3 Level 4 Sea and Surf, preferably with a sailing or windsurfing instructor qualification, although training will be provided.

Also Multi Discipline Instructors needed for the 2008 season.

For more information and to download an application form visit, www.uksa.org/recruitment

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 development

www.mendipoutdoorpursuits.co.uk/staff

Watersports Instructors

Trafford Watersports Centre is now recruiting for the 2008 season.



We are on the look out for enthusiastic, hard-working instructors to join our team of seasonal and part-time instructors. Candidates are required to hold at least one of the following qualifications as a minimum; BCU Level 2 Coach Kayak, RYA Dinghy Instructor or RYA Level 1 Windsurf Instructor

Start Dates available in April and June.

For an application form ring: 0161 962 0118
 Email: twsc@thedeckersgroup.com

YMCA

National Centre, Lakeside

We are looking for committed, enthusiastic individuals to join our experienced instructor team for the 2008 season.

Set in a stunning location of Lake Windermere, Lakeside is one of the the country's leading outdoor education centres. We specialise in the delivery of developmental activity programmes to a diverse range of clientele.

Applicants must hold a minimum one NGB assessment and one NGB training from the following: Summer ML, SPA, RYA Dinghy Instructor or BCU L2 Canoe/Kayak Coach. We are also seeking to recruit Trainee Instructors.

For a recruitment pack, please contact:

Personnel Manager
 Tel: 08707 27 39 27 or Email: personnel@lakesideymca.co.uk
www.lakesideymca.co.uk



Go to
www.canofocus.co.uk
 for
 Jobs online

situations vacant

Carsington Sports & Leisure

Join an enthusiastic team at our watersports & mountain bike centre beside 1000 acres of water in the Derbyshire Dales.

BCU / RYA Instructors

Kayak, canoe, windsurf, sailing & powerboat instructors required. Long & short contracts.
 £12,818 - £13,923 pa pro rata, subject to qualifications.

Call 01629 540478 for application & details

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
 Widemouth Bay, Bude, Cornwall, EX23 0DF, or
rob@outdooradventure.co.uk by 12th November
www.outdooradventure.co.uk 01288 361312

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 SPA/ML/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



SITUATIONS VACANT

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

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

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

Level 2 Coach in Kayak/Canoe
 High Ropes Trained

Sailing/Windsurfing Instructors
 Rock-Climbing SPA Instructors

** Mini-bus (D1) License over 25 preferable

Salary Commensurate with experience and qualifications

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

TOM McARDLE, H.R. MANAGER
CARLINGFORD ADVENTURE CENTRE, THOLSEL STREET,
CARLINGFORD, CO. LOUTH, IRELAND

Tel: 00353 42 9373100 Fax: 00353 42 9373651
 email: info@carlingfordadventure.com
 web: www.carlingfordadventure.com

Neighbourhoods, Communities & Children's Services

Hatfield Waterpark Outdoor Activity Centre,
 Old Thorne Road, Hatfield, Doncaster DN7 6EQ.



Seasonal Activity Leaders

£8.57 ph Ref: REC393

Assistant Activity Leaders

£7.35 ph Ref: REC394

To deliver exciting and educationally valid activities for Schools, Youth Groups and Individuals.

We are looking for experienced and enthusiastic staff with coaching qualifications in Kayaking, Canoeing, Windsurfing and Sailing as well as SPA training. Additional NGB's would be an advantage and training will be available in obtaining further outdoor qualifications.

Please note accommodation is not included within these posts.

If you wish to discuss this post further please contact Stuart Wearing, Manager on (01302) 841572 or email him at stuart.wearing@doncaster.gov.uk

Application forms, further information, job descriptions and person specifications are available online at www.jobsdoncaster.co.uk

Closing date:

Whitewave: Skye's Outdoor Centre
 2008 Instructional staff required. Seasonal or Full Time.

Check www.whiteact.demon.co.uk/job.htm for job specification.

Contact John White by email at info@white-wave.co.uk or 01470 542 414



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

SITUATIONS VACANT



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

Activities and Training Manager, Halesowen

Acorn Adventure are the UK's leading provider of adventure camps for groups and families.

We are currently seeking an Activities and Training Manager, based at our Head Office in Halesowen, to take joint responsibility for all aspects of onsite delivery of the Acorn Adventure activities product, from the training and monitoring of our seasonal activity managers to the reviewing and implementing of our health and safety procedures.

You must have excellent communication skills, both written and verbal, a proven managerial track record within the outdoor industry, the ability to work under pressure and high level NGB qualifications such as MIA, MIC, Canoe/Kayak level 4 or RYA Coach Assessor.

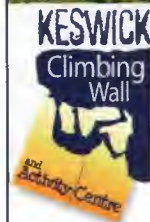
This is an exciting and challenging role offering a competitive salary and the chance of international travel.



For further information please contact Dave Freeland on 0121 5042060, or email dave.freeland@acornadventure.co.uk.



Would you like to live and work here?



Keswick Climbing Wall and Activity Centre are looking for **full time** and **seasonal** Multi-Activity instructors (April - October). Open boat qualifications and SPA are essential for full time posts; we would consider applicants with just open boat qualifications for the seasonal posts. A driving license would be an advantage for both.

We work with a variety of client groups across the activity range, so a flexible approach will be required. Please send a CV and covering letter to; Jason O'Rourke at Keswick Climbing Wall & Activity Centre, Southey Hill, Keswick, Cumbria CA12 5NR

web: www.keswickclimbingwall.co.uk Email: Jason@keswickclimbingwall.co.uk

Adventure International

Energetic... Motivated... Team Orientated?
 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.

Contact us for an application pack

Tel: 0870 7775111

www.adventura-uk.com tracy@adventura-uk.com

Activity Instructors



**BCU and RYA
Instructors and Senior
Instructors
Required for the 2008 season**

at
**ALBANY PARK CANOE
AND SAILING CENTRE**
Kingston upon Thames

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

Email:
albanyparksb@rbk.kingston.gov.uk
www.albanypark.co.uk

Kingston Children & Young People's Trust
Making a Difference Together

Royal Kingston

Peat Rigg Outdoor Training Centre

Instructor £13,500 - £16,500

With a good range of NGBs and experience of running personal development courses.

We also require qualified freelance staff for busy periods and weekends.

Peat Rigg is a high quality centre set in the North York Moors National Park. The instructor will join our experienced and well motivated small professional team.

For more details and an application pack contact Ian Thorpe on 01751 417112 or ian@peatrigg.co.uk. Also check out our website www.peatrigg.co.uk



arnfield care crisis intervention

INSTRUCTORS/CARE WORKERS WANTED

- Based in the Peak District - working UK wide
- Flexible and dynamic outdoor based care teams
- Work with young people with challenging behaviour
- 2+ National Governing Body awards preferable



For more info:
Paul Knowles - 01457 860200
info@arnfieldcare.co.uk
www.arnfieldcare.co.uk



challenging solutions for challenging behaviour

Trade

West Sussex

**SOUTHWATER
WATERSPORTS CENTRE**
www.southwatersports.co.uk
Cripplegate lane Southwater
West Sussex RH13 7UN
Watersports Courses phone
01403 734424
For all your watersports equipment
look @ www.ukkayaking.co.uk

Somerset

PK
66 Uphill way, Uphill Village
Weston-super-mare BS23 4NT
Tel: 01934 613612
Email: performance@kayaks.co.uk
Website: www.kayaks.co.uk

Essex

Nucleus Watersports
The Essex Superstore
Kayaks, Canoes, Accessories
www.nucleuswatersports.co.uk
Sales@nucleuswatersports.co.uk
Tel: 01255 812 146
204 Frinton Rd, Holland-on-sea,
Essex, CO155SP

Somerset

AS
WATERSPORTS
HAVEN RD, EXETER. 01392 219600
Full range of equipment for all
aspects of the sport. Playboating,
Fun, Surf, Touring, Racing.
www.aswatersports.co.uk

Greater London

CANOE RESCUE EQUIPMENT
AND ACCESSORIES INCLUDING GREEN
SLIME THROWBAGS

**MAIL ORDER
SERVICE
AVAILABLE**

CONTACT: SUZY, 2 VICTORIA CLOSE,
EAST MOLESEY, SURREY, KT8 9SQ
TEL/FAX: 0208 941 2714

Yorkshire

GO₂H₂O

FOR ALL YOUR CANOE & KAYAKING NEEDS
IN NORTH YORKSHIRE

Tel: 01765 635333 Mob: 07768 440914
Email: john@g02h2o.co.uk Web: www.g02h2o.co.uk

Stainford Water Mill, North Stainley,
Ripon, North Yorkshire, HG4 3HQ

Outdoor Activity Instructors



Full-time positions starting March 2008

CRS Adventures is one of the largest Outdoor Education Centres in the South West. We have a reputation for excellence and professionalism; we operate to the highest safety standards. We offer residential and non-residential courses. Situated on unique and beautiful grounds on the edge of Dartmoor.

We Offer

- Experience working in a friendly environment.
- Fantastic training package.
- The opportunity to deliver a variety of activities to a broad client base.

What are we looking for?

Ideally candidates must hold a minimum of S.P.A, Level 2 Coach Canoe and hold a full driving license (including D1 category for minibus driving). Applicants must be prepared to undertake ongoing professional development as required.

To apply send a CV and Covering letter to:

Roger Sell

CRS Adventures

River Dart Country Park, Ashburton, Newton Abbot TQ13 7NP

Buy and sell your second hand boats on line with our
FREE e classifieds service www.brookbankcanoes.co.uk

MEMBERS CLASSIFIEDS NOW ONLINE

Please send to peter@canoefocus.co.uk or by post with BCU membership number to: Canoe Focus, Members Classified, 49 Greenfields, St Ives, Cambs PE27 5HB.
ADVERTS CANNOT BE TAKEN OVER THE PHONE. Ads are posted on www.canoefocus.co.uk.

Second Hand Boats www.aswatersports.co.uk

Part two of a series highlighting European paddling escapes for all the family by Dave Halsall

Paddling in southern Norway

After a short flight into Kristiansand in southern Norway we picked up the car and drove north for just over an hour to Evje and the site of outdoor centre. Set in the beautiful Setesdal valley the district is famous for its wealth of minerals. There are old mines and hundreds of small quarries that were originally opened to mine feldspar and quartz. The actual landscape and morphology of the area was formed by the glacial processes during the last ice age. The Setesdal valley has a marked 'U' form; characteristic of glacial valleys and the 'ice age' landscape has a number of kettle holes, eskers and terraces. The Otra River, which runs down the valley floor cuts through these wide areas of glacial sediments and moraines that are covered by pine forest.

The centre offers a wide range of quality activities in the rivers, lakes, forests and mountains of the spectacular lower Setesdal valley. They supply challenges of a physical and mental nature and unforgettable experiences for all age groups.

We elected to have a day tour on the river, a day tour on the lake and an evening fishing with a guide.

Wall-to-wall sunshine

We knew the day paddle down the river was going to be fantastic when we opened the bedroom curtains to find wall-to-wall sunshine with not a cloud in the sky. After breakfast we went to get our map, canoe, paddles and buoyancy aids and to arrange a rough guide for our pick up. We then carried our boat, an inflatable canoe, across the road to the put in and we were off. The river wound its way down through the valley that was full of the scent of hot pine from the forest. We spent a lot of the time just letting the current take us along as we laid back and watched the scenery go by. What a way to relax. We had one serious rapid to portage and if we had had helmets we might have shot it but a portage is always a good way to have a look around and we did find a great lunch stop. We had a swim and then lay in the sun to dry off.

Paddling on in the afternoon we stopped for an hour or so to watch an osprey's nest that was perched on the top of a tree on an island in the middle of the river. There was a male and a female bird that looked to be just bonding; the male turned up at one point with a large fish which seemed to impress the female.

What a day on the river; we saw no one and 15 minutes after ringing for our pick up there was the van to take us back to base.

Fishing

Once showered, fed and watered we met up with our fishing guide for an evening's practical tuition. It was a beautiful evening and in three years of fishing, Jan, our guide had never failed to catch a trout. We were his downfall, he did not catch a thing, not for the want of trying and I caught two small ones that were not pan size so they went back into the river.

The day on the lake was another lazy day pottering about looking for places to swim, fish and laze in the sun reading; we were not disappointed. We paddled a hard plastic canoe and the drop off and pick up were again right on time.

DAVE HALSALL

www.singingpaddles.co.uk
www.paddleescapes.co.uk
www.visitnorway.com

Why spend a few days in southern Norway?

- The equipment is first class
- A massive range of varied activities
- Coaches from all over the world
- Gives a taster for a more extended stay
- Beautiful and quiet area
- English spoken
- Easy access from the UK





CANOE ONE OF THE YUKON'S GREAT RIVERS

THE YUKON, BIG SALMON, SNAKE, NISUTLIN, MCQUESTEN, TESLIN AND THE WIND

The Ultimate adventure in spectacular surroundings
Holidays from 7- 20 nights - Prices from £1560pp

(inclusive of flights and all arrangements)



Expect to see Salmon, Grizzly Bears,
Moose, Beavers, Wolves and Eagles.

Call Windows on The Wild or Paddle Escapes

020 8742 1556

www.windowsonthewild.com

www.paddleescapes.com

Pictures courtesy Dave Halsall & Sue Crawford



 **Dagger**
Wherever
there's
water...
www.daggereurope.com

