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ISBN 0953-010X

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Annual Subscription Rates

UK inland: £19.00

Overseas: £24.50

Supplied free to BCU members

For subscription, please contact the
BCU on the above contacts

Publishing Contractors

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Printed by

Warners, Bourne, Lincs

The BCU vision is to:

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

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

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

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

Anne Hounslow, Kevin East, Jackie Moores, Simon Hammond, Graham Mulholland,
Dave Halsall, Steve Gorman, Josien Woolmer, Robert Yeowell, David Savage, Tom
Paterson, Bobby Timperley, Nigel Timmins, Matt Tidy, Andy Jackson, Tom
Hutchinson, Chloe Nelson-Lawrie, Tamsin Phipps, Sue Hornby and Mike Devlin.

Front cover photo: Action from the Outdoor Show at the NEC.

Photo: David Leathborough dave@focused-on-adventure.com

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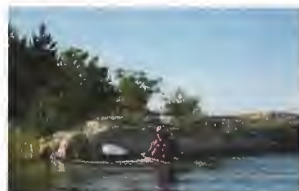
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YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS MAKE CANOE FOCUS HAPPEN.

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

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

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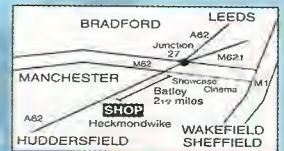


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Comment

by Paul Owen, Chief Executive

Welcome to the June issue of Canoe Focus

The summer is finally here! Whether you enjoy paddling as a pleasurable pastime, recreation, competitive sport or in a coaching capacity, there are lots of events taking place nationwide.

Start gates

The BCU and BCU World Class Programmes, working closely with UK Sport, have secured funding to purchase two sets of nine starting gates to be sited in the UK for use at the NWSC in Nottingham and at Dorney Lake, Eton. These are exciting times for sprint canoeing in the UK.

The addition of starting gates should

have a performance impact for all paddlers as, for the first time in the UK, they get first hand practice in the methods used for starting major international events. In addition this new equipment is vital in our bid to host international and world cup events in the UK in the run-up to London 2012.

Beijing 2008

On page 54 are photographs of the construction work taking place in preparation for the canoe slalom course for the Beijing 2008 Olympics.

Broxbourne

Consultants 'Drivers Jonas' have been appointed by the Olympic Delivery Authority to progress plans to develop a canoe slalom course at Broxbourne for the 2012 Olympic Games.

Drivers Jonas will put together a feasibility study and master plan that will recommend how the project should be taken forward at the site in North Spitalbrook, Broxbourne, Hertfordshire.

The paddlers of the South East have for ten years had the aspiration of a white water facility local to their homes. The BCU welcomes this first step towards making this a reality. The course will help re-generate the Spitalbrook area, provide the region with a site to be proud of and provide an Olympic and recreational venue within a country park setting with a sustainable legacy for local people well into the future.

Environment Agency Boat registration fees

The BCU has expressed concern of proposals made by the Environment Agency to increase the cost of boat registration on waterways where the Agency is the navigation authority.

The proposals would effect the BCU, paddlers and boaters on the rivers Thames, Medway and many East Anglian waterways including the rivers Nene and Great Ouse, and possibly the River Wye at some time in the future (see page 8).

There is a need for major investment in the EA's waterways, as the proposed increase is not considered justifiable or realistic on non-powered users.

70th BCU Anniversary Photo Competition –

What does canoeing mean to you?

It is wonderful to see so many interesting and inspiring photographs being entered into the photo competition. The aim of the 70th anniversary competition is to

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

A selection of photos are displayed on page 34, and on the BCU website (follow the link from the BCU homepage). Each month one winner is chosen by you and wins £25 vouchers (the overall prize, chosen at the end of year, wins a digital camera worth £150). For an opportunity to win start clicking now!

Rivers Access Campaign Get your MP afloat!

The Rivers Access Campaign is continuing to rally the support of MPs. The aim is to keep the argument for clear legislation regarding rivers access, firmly on the political agenda.

You can help support the campaign by inviting your MP to go out with you in a canoe, go along to your club or to an event or competition. Meeting your MP is a great opportunity to highlight the many benefits of canoeing and will help raise the profile of canoeing.

More details on the campaign are in this issue of Canoe Focus and also at www.riversaccess.org.uk

Youthfest, Dorney Lake, Berkshire 9th July 2006

This years Youthfest promises to be as memorable as previous years, with lots of canoeing activities planned (see page 36). To find out more visit the youth section of the Canoe England website.

Canoe England members' area

The Canoe England members' area is where members can:

- Renew membership
- Post classified adverts
- View special discounts

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

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

The next issues of Canoe Focus in 2006 are:

- August
- October
- December

Happy Paddling!

Competition

17 medals for GB at first international regatta of the year

A team of 20 juniors and eight seniors won an impressive total of 17 medals at the annual flat water racing regatta on 22-23rd April in Boulogne sur Mer, France.

The team was delighted to welcome Athens Olympic medal winner Ian Wynne and World Class Performance athletes, Lucy Wainwright and Abigail Coulson, to the team for the first time.

Bronze Olympic medallist

Helen Reeves not in the 2006 GB team

The headline news from the slalom team selection event held at Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham on Saturday 29th April - Monday 1st May, was that Olympic medallist Helen Reeves, who made a brave comeback following a persistent shoulder injury, is out of the GB team.

The tough course, challenging conditions and plenty of first class paddlers made for some very exciting racing (see page 18). Good luck to the team for the forthcoming international events.

| MK1 | WK1 | C1 | C2 |
|------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Richard Hounslow | Fiona Pennie | David Florence | Tim Baillie/Etienne Stott |
| Campbell Walsh | Laura Blakeman | Stuart McIntosh | Stuart Bowman/Nick Smith |
| Andy Hadfield | Lizzie Neave | Dan Goddard | Fraser Florence/Adam Marshall |

Duisburg senior team

The 7th May regatta selection for Duisburg was full of surprises and great racing. A new course record in the K2 500m event was set, well done to Ed Cox and Ed Mc Keever who paddled an impressive time of 1.31.63!

The Olympic medal winner Ben Fouhey joined the quality start lines. In the Men's K1 1000m race, he was lined up side by side with Tim Brabants and won by six seconds. In the women's K1 event, Abigail Coulson was the only woman to contend the 1000m event. She raced against the two C1 paddlers; Matt Lawrence and James Train, whom she defeated by five and nine seconds respectively.

The team for the World Cup in Duisburg is as follows:

| Event | 1000m | 500m |
|-------|--|--|
| K1M | T Daniels | I Wynne T Daniels |
| K2M | P Wycherley/P Almasi B Farrell/T Brabants | E Cox/E McKeever P Wycherley/P Almasi |
| K1W | A Coulson | A Coulson S Braithwaite |
| K2W | L Wainwright/A Hemmings | L Wainwright/A Hemmings |
| C2 | M Lawrence/J Train | M Lawrence/J Train |

Key future competitive events:

- Youthfest, Dorney Lake, Berkshire, 9th July
- Freestyle European Championships, Nottingham, 26th June - 2nd July
- U23 and Junior European Slalom Championships, Nottingham, 25-27th Aug

For other competitive events see: www.bcu.org.uk

Machine paddling the Channel

Sixteen of Royal's junior and cadet canoeists paddle machined their way across the English Channel on Sunday 23rd April.

The juniors covered the 23 miles in three hours and the juniors in four hours. The purpose of this sponsored paddle was to raise funds for the rebuilding of their clubhouse on Trowlock Island. There were two teams of eight, each cadet or junior having to 'paddle' twice to get their team across.

Janet Evans, Hon Secretary



Teva's support

As part of its high profile sponsorship programme in the UK, leading international watersports and lifestyle footwear brand, Teva, has once again support The Liquid Life Festival in 2006. Held near the town of Pittlochry (Scotland), the festival took place on the 27-28th May.

Teva will also be involved in a number of other leading events during 2006. Teva has agreed to sponsor The Peak UK Whitewater Challenge, which includes the prestigious European Freestyle Kayaking Championship and the Big Boat Bonanza taking place in Dublin.

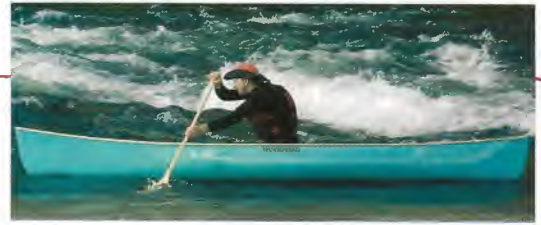
Teva will also be supporting a range of international watersports teams and athletes including the English Surf Kayaking team, the GB Rafting team, surf kayaker Chris Harvey and leading women surfer, Renee Godfrey.
www.teva.co.uk

PADDLE THIS

Wenonah launch new Argosy in the UK

Wenonah's UK distributor, Outdoor Active, will take delivery of the new 14'6" Argosy solo canoe at the end of May. Designed by Dave Kruger, this agile new solo is ideal rivers and streams, where its moderate bow rocker allows it to cross eddylines with confidence, while extra volume in the sides (a Kruger trademark) allows it to lean predictably, further enhancing it's performance in rough water.

Although it is the same length as the recreational solo



Vagabond, this canoe features more rocker (especially near the bow), more depth amidships, more bow flare and deeper ends to help keep the it dry in moderate whitewater. With slightly more rocker than many of Wenonah's other models, the Argosy excels in paddling through moving water, yet still glides through calm water effortlessly.

To find your nearest Wenonah dealer contact Outdoor Active on 01454 261058, or email: sales@outdooractive.co.uk

World's largest coaching study

sports coach UK has announced the launch of a four year UK coach tracking study which aims to further understand coach development and to look at the impact of the support available to coaches. This will be the largest ever coaching survey undertaken not just in the UK, but worldwide, enabling sports coach UK to identify any additional improvements which can be made to pave the way for higher quality coaching prior to the 2012 Olympics.

In partnership with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the study will provide an unprecedented insight into coaches' education, qualification and experiential development. It will investigate the coaches' backgrounds and personal characteristics to discover how and why they become coaches and what influences their development.

sports coach UK is urging coaches to get involved to really make an impact on the research and results. All coaches are encouraged to participate; from novice to expert, qualified to unqualified, full time, part time, volunteers and those who coach as a hobby. Carried out over a number of phases, coach participation and contribution during the length of the study is invaluable at whatever level.

As well as achieving its overall goal of improving coaching in the UK, sports coach UK's Coach Tracking Study will result in detailed recommendations on developing coach education provision, coach management and coaching career pathways illustrating the implications of both policy and practice.

Coaches interested should contact Melina Timson-Katchis at sports coach UK on 0113 274 4802.

Hemmings to sprint

Anna Hemmings, four times world champion has declared her next ambition – to win Olympic gold. The 29 year old, who has recently moved to Nottingham to train at the National Water Sports Centre will be focussing on the K2 500m Olympic discipline in favour of the non-Olympic marathon event.

Speaking from Nottingham she commented: "2005 was a fantastic year for me and it meant so much to reclaim my World Marathon title. Whilst I definitely intend to defend that title in September, my key focus is very much now on the sprint discipline and fulfilling my dream of winning an Olympic gold medal. Over the next couple of years I will be based in Nottingham and hope to gain as much sprint experience as possible to help secure a place in the British Olympic team for Beijing, 2008."

Whilst the shift from competing on a course that is 29km

down to just 500m may sound a dramatic leap, the fundamentals are still very similar. After twenty years in the sport, it's exciting for me to focus on a new challenge and I've been doing a lot more land based training to build my upper body strength and power. We've also been working on adjustments to my technique that will help increase my efficiency and speed on the water."

For more information on Anna Hemmings, please visit: www.annahemmings.co.uk

Active dating

Dateactive.co.uk is a new venture providing a safe community environment where like minded, active people who wish to either seek romance; find fellow travellers; activity partners or even having moved to a new area, want to meet similar minded people.

Whether its extreme sports, weekends and weeks away or meeting for a ramble on a Sunday afternoon - Dateactive.co.uk caters for all ages and requirements.

Registration at Dateactive.co.uk is free including uploading a profile with photographs. The only charge is when contact is made with a fellow community member. The cost is normally £25 for 90 days however the first 20 members to post profiles will enjoy free subscription worth £75 until 31st May 2006.

Dateactive.co.uk

Rumble in the jungle



Bored of going to the Alps every summer? Looking to stretch your personal boating horizons? Then Tom Parker - Coaching and Guiding may have the answer: a trip to the white water paradise of Ecuador! A perfect antidote to the winter blues, this two week trip in December offers the perfect opportunity to explore the awesome

Andean white water Ecuador has to offer, under the expert guidance of Tom Parker and his staff.

Creeking is the new rock 'n' roll! To get your performance on the steeps up to scratch, come along on Tom Parker's brand new creeking course. Based in Fort William, Scotland, this five day course in October will cover all of the key creeking concepts you need to be safe and effective when things get critical, along with giving you the chance to sample some of Scotland's finest white water.

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Paddlesport under new management

Long standing retailer Paddlesport in Warwickshire has recently come under new management. Brookbank Canoes, the UK's largest paddling equipment supplier is refurbishing the premises and filling it with huge stocks to offer a complete store for all your canoeing/kayaking needs.

Other plans include a free demo day on Saturday 8th July where you can come along and try boats from many of the leading manufacturers on the beautiful on-site lake.

Please call for directions and for the 2006

Brookbank/Paddlesport mail order catalogue.

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www.paddlesport.co.uk
info@paddlesport.co.uk

Brookbank Scotland

Brookbank Canoes is expanding to Scotland. Cam Allan formerly of Pyranha is to return to his roots in Perth and manage the all new shop and distribution service. The shop is no more than ten minutes away from the Stanley section of the Tay.

Brookbank have been doing business in Scotland since they started and their new outlet in Perth is set to support that business. The shop will be fully loaded with stock for its grand opening on Saturday June 10th. **Come and see us. For details phone 0161 474 1499 and keep and eye on** www.brookbankcanoes.co.uk

READ THIS

Gyrodactylus salaris

The microscopic parasite *Gyrodactylus salaris* presents a serious threat to salmon stocks and to date it has not been detected in the UK. The BCU recognises this is a serious problem, and Canoe England, the Welsh Canoe Association, and Scottish Canoe Association have joined to gain a fuller understanding of the issue.



It has enabled the BCU to work from a common position and contribute to the Environment Agency notice produced below and posted on the BCU website; and the Scottish Canoe Association to formulate these same measures as a member of a Scottish Executive working party for the prevention of *G. salaris*. The Scottish information is to be issued in the near future.

Ensuring paddlers and the other water sport disciplines that travel to the listed European countries take the simple preventative measures described, will help protect salmon stocks. **May 2006**

Salmon under threat

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

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

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

Thankfully the parasite has not yet been found in the UK – but experiments have shown that our salmon would be killed by it, so it is really important that it is not introduced

from Europe. It is possible that even one parasite imported to an previously unaffected river could cause an epidemic in a very short time.

The main threat is from the importation of diseased fish and controls are now in place to minimise these risks. However, there is also a smaller risk that watersports

enthusiasts returning from these European countries could inadvertently carry the parasite back to this country.

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

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

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

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

Further information

Environment Agency

www.environment-agency.gov.uk/recreation

Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra)

www.defra.gov.uk

Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS)

www.efishbusiness.com

EA boat registration fees

The Environment Agency (EA) proposes to increase the cost of boat registration on their navigations. Increases of 14% per annum over the next three years are proposed that amount to some 48%, with more high increases in prospect for a further six years. The EA put this proposal to the BCU and other waterway user groups at the National Navigation Users Forum in April. Users unanimously rejected the increase.

The proposals would affect the BCU, paddlers and boaters on the rivers Thames, Medway and many East Anglian waterways including the rivers Nene and Great Ouse; and possibly the River Wye at a future date.

The BCU welcomes the additional funding promised from central government, but does not consider the proposed increase is a justifiable or realistic demand on users set against years of under funding by the authorities. The requirements of unpowered craft on infrastructure and services are also less than powered and should be reflected in a lower banding structure of increases.

Affordability, and what is not fair and reasonable to pay

is bringing uncertainty to boating. The Agency have indicated they do not know the consequences of these high annual increases on boating numbers and registration income, and the economic life of the navigations. After years of ready acceptance, users are also objecting to be the resource for funding the navigations as a general amenity for non-navigation recreational purposes.

The EA Board meet in June to fix the rate of increase. Navigation Funding is the topic at Parliamentary Waterways Group on 13 June where the debate will no doubt continue.

Kayak Taiwan

A group of British kayakers will visit Taiwan during July 2006 to seek out new and challenging white water in the country's remote mountainous areas. No major foreign kayaking trips have previously visited Taiwan and the local population has not yet fully explored the potential of the country's hidden canyons. Tim Trew, Pete Cornes, Greg Nicks and James Farquharson have received BCU backing for what looks set to be a memorable expedition. For more information please visit, www.kayaktaiwan.net.

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WW Nile

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The White Nile has countless rapids with most channels having easy and hard lines. The warm water and climate, huge variety of white water and a serious lack of rocks makes it a perfect place to progress. The White Nile is also a playboating mecca, it has everything from huge volume big, air waves to many smaller more friendly waves and cart wheeling holes.

This summer, why not spend 14 days perfecting your river running and play techniques in one of the best kayaking locations in the world!

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Paddleinspain.com is a new website that offers paddlers in the UK and abroad the unique chance to book weekend breaks or holidays in Spain. This is a new and exciting venture for ROC ROI, a Spanish based company with strong UK links and well known for organising some of the largest International freestyle events over the last few years.

They are able to offer a large range of great paddling destinations. You can start with a superb white water destination on the Noguera Pallaresa river in the heart of the Pyrenees mountains. This river is one of the longest and grandest white water rivers in the country. Other white water destinations on offer will be in the Central Pyrenees, southern Spain, Galicia and also the coastal destinations for sea kayaking to Spains' islands and the southern coastline.

The average cost for a weekend for a group of six people which includes renting your boats, your accommodation, renting a car and all meals will be around 150 Euros per person, plus flights. www.paddleinspain.com

DONATE TO THIS

Editor's triathlon for charity



Yes, it's true, I will be competing in the Royal Windsor Triathlon on June 11th, an event I have been training for in the past 12 months. It is Olympic distance and currently the BTA's 'Event of the year' which comprises a 1.5km swim; 40km bike race and finally a 10km run (www.humanrace.co.uk/windsor).

My aim is to raise as much money as possible for 'Dreams Come True' children's charity. Dreams Come True was formed in 1988 with the express aim of helping fulfil the dreams of terminally and seriously ill children. They are a national charity helping children who

have both life threatening and long term degenerative illnesses including leukemia, cystic fibrosis, cancer and muscular dystrophy. They have helped over 3,000 children see their dreams become reality and with your support, they can help even more! Their dream may be a trip to Disney, meeting one of their sporting heroes or receiving equipment to make their lives easier, whichever, we will be working together to make a difference to their sometimes tragically short lives.

You can sponsor me by emailing peter@canoefocus.co.uk or alternatively through 'justgiving', where Dreams Come True will receive your money faster and, if you are a UK taxpayer, an extra 28% in tax will be added to your gift at no cost to you. The service is simple, fast and totally secure (www.justgiving.com/petertranter).

Many thanks for your support and to those who have already donated, I really appreciate it.

Top of their game

To register a team visit www.souce2sea.com – early entries receive an early-bird discount.

source2sea 2006 is a unique team building event in which participants will undertake a series of challenges racing from the source of the river Dart on Dartmoor to the sea at Dartmouth, Devon. The event is set to start on 13th October and will develop exceptional working relationships between team members, through challenging and fun exercises, which in turn will maximise productivity back in the workplace. Teams will face a series of physically and mentally challenging tasks as they journey from the source to the sea.

Each team will comprise five people and will have a dedicated source2sea coach to assist them throughout the event. Each day of source2sea is split into several stages which will involve running, cycling and canoeing. Team orientated intellectual challenges will also need to be overcome in the event which will require logic, creativity and hands on team working skills.

A grand prize will be awarded to the overall winners of the event but other prizes will also be given. The two day event costs £5,000 per team of five people. All training, food and refreshments are provided; entrants will need to supply their own bikes, helmets and clothing. Professional, skilled coaches are also required to participate in the event and support the teams.

All applicants interested in coaching at the event should contact David Sales on 07802 467148 or email david@source2sea.com.

Environment Agency – Recreation strategy and regional strategic planning of water based sport and recreation

The Environment Agency launched their recreation strategy for water related sport and recreation 'A better place to play' at the Outdoors Show, NEC, Birmingham in March. In brief, the strategy aims to guide the Agency to secure more benefits for water related sport and recreation on a sustainable basis. For more detail visit www.environment-agency.gov.uk

The background to producing this strategy are the imbalances and inadequacies in the demand and supply of water-based sport and recreation across England and Wales identified in the study "Water based sport and recreation: the facts 2001"; and known to many as "Brighton 1". The study also highlighted the weaknesses in the planning of sport and recreation on inland and coastal waters at national and local

levels, advocating strategic planning on a regional basis.

As a first step for taking this strategy forward on a regional basis the Agency are staging two regional pilot schemes in their South West and Anglian Regions. Fortunately these closely match the geographical boundaries of the BCU South West and Eastern Regions. The Agency expects both pilots to commence in June and take up to 18 months to produce strategic plans for each region. Wales may be included as a third pilot scheme in this period. Thereafter the Agency is proposing plans will be rolled out across the remaining regions by 2010 subject to securing funding from DEFRA.

Each strategic planning pilot will be taking an overview of present and future demands of water based sport and recreation; developed from full stakeholder consultation and analysis of current use and trends. Essentially this will be an audit of activity, identifying what and where it is happening, the frequency, and participation rates- present and projected.

The BCU is in discussion with Eastern and South West Regions on arrangements for a full engagement in these pilot schemes to provide a comprehensive picture of canoeing to the Environment Agency. An input from all canoeing disciplines, marathon, slalom, freestyle, touring etc will be essential. Assistance is requested from Regional Teams, PDO's, Local Coaching Officers, Local River Advisors, clubs, members, and activity centres for information and participation in workshops and focus groups.

From this information provided by the BCU and other organisations, the Agency proposes to develop an action plan covering policies, priorities and guidance for the future management and provision of water related sport and recreation; taking into account the social, economic and environmental benefits that can be gained. Spatial planning is an aspect of the work, where the access issue is likely to surface and for the BCU to take a keen interest.

The resulting draft policies and plans would be circulated to all stakeholders for a consultation period before producing a final draft. It is intended these policies and plans will be adopted and followed through by the relevant agencies, stakeholders and land managers at regional, county and local level – Regional Development Agencies, County Councils, Local Authorities, National Governing Bodies etc.

The Agency has already given a presentation of the strategy planning pilot to the South West Region at the Weymouth Road Show meeting on 3rd April with another in Eastern to be arranged. At the time of writing the Environment Agency are finalising details their requirements and timetable for workshops and focus groups. When this known the BCU office and Regions will be seeking the support of paddlers for the collation of information and the stakeholder participation events.

MEMBERS CLASSIFIEDS

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

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Hungerhill School triumphs again

After a demanding series of tournaments over the winter in the Yorkshire & Humberside Year 11 Canoe Polo league, Hungerhill School from Doncaster won the overall title of league champions after winning 10 out of 12 games they played and scoring an impressive 35 goals.

Hungerhill School has had the honour over the past few years of many of its pupils progressing in the sport and these pupils have represented GB in both canoe polo and slalom national squads which is quite an achievement for one school. The school is one of a few in the area to provide canoeing as an extra curriculum or out of school activity. The coaching is again undertaken by teachers, volunteers and ex-pupils who have gained their coaching qualifications and are giving up their free time in the evening and at weekends. A great thank you to them for all their hard work.

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Surf spectacular

Results

Bude

The results for the handicapped event

1. Sean Morley
2. Peter Williams
3. Matt J Long
4. Holly McGowan Hayes, Chris Pease, Steve Davenport, Matt Long, Laura Owen

Gina Troiani recieved the special award for coming all the way from California to compete (and the Welsh boys think they've got a long way to travel!)

The results for the BCU High Performance event

1. Darren Bason
2. Steve Bowens
3. Dave Jaggs
4. Gary Adcock

The real stars of the event however were the competitors and these were Marc Woolward, Sid Sinfield, Chris Constantine, Bill and Dave Jaggs, Harry and Jack Posthill, Andy McCullough, John and Philip Watson, Laura Owen, Emily Woolard, Alex Read, Jack Horwell, Joe Clift, Holly, Jonny and Callum McGowan-Hayes, Daren Bason, Steve and Sam Davenport, Sean Morley, Gina Troiani, Peter Williams, Matt J Long, Chris Pease, John Trelease, Tracey Bigwood, Pete Blenkinsop, Matt Long, Jenny Walker, Steve Bowens, Andrew Banks, Richard Simms, Arthur Norton, Chris Harvey, Ruben Slater, Denzil Pearce, Gary Adcock, Andy Hambley and Simon Hammond.

Darren Bason



Sean Morley



2006 Earplugs-direct.co.uk surf spectacular



Simon Hammond

The met office may have spent millions of pounds on new computer technology to improve our weather forecasts and the best scientists in the northern hemisphere may be engaged in creating wave size models but if you want absolute certain sun and surf then I'd stick with event organiser and mystic forecaster Simon Hammond.

So how does he do it? We asked him what has been his approach to weather and swell forecasting over the last four years of running this event. "Well the truth is I start about nine months before the event and pick a date close to Easter when we've got neap tides here in Bude, the rest is really just good luck and a firm belief that things will be OK. You'd be amazed at the number of people who phone me up two or three days before the event worrying about what the conditions might be like. You can't really predict surf conditions very accurately at all, in the week leading up to this event I stop looking at any internet swell predictions or weather forecasts and just hold my nerve."

The Earplugs-direct.co.uk Surf Spectacular is a competition run very differently from other national surf events. On the one hand it is the biggest high performance surf contest in the country whilst on the other it's a contest where paddlers are given a handicap in order to even out the field. No one is knocked out of the event, instead every paddler competes over three rounds to pick up points, these points give the high performance results and the same points plus each paddlers handicap gives the handicap result! If this all sounds a bit complicated then don't worry, the event is so well managed that everyone seems to know exactly where to be, when to

paddle and when to judge throughout the day. It must be said that as well as being a lucky organiser Simon is also a bit of a sergeant major barking out requests all day in order to get through 33 heats as smoothly as possible.

These surfers like to start early and after a quick briefing the first heat was on the water by 9am. Within each timed heat (for some reason 13 minutes in this contest?) the paddlers could catch up to ten waves with each wave being scored by the judges, at the end of a heat each competitor has their top three scores added together from which positions are decided. The standard seen in the first round was extremely high and was maintained throughout the competition. Paddlers ranged from those who were entering their first event right through to current and past World Champions. The event even claimed to be a full international this year with Gina Troiani from California taking part in her first UK event.

Off the water the competitors had time to compare the qualities of the various kayaks used during the day. And although Mega kayaks dominated the event no one could touch Chris Pease's home made wooden framed Inuit designed boat, costing all of £70 to build; now there's a thought! Sean Morley paddled his High Performance Valley Surf Kayak, whilst surf kayaks from Dick Wold Designs and Amoeba were also on show competing alongside the many and various Mega kayaks including the new Reflex, Slingshot, Neutron and Impulse. Although the surf kayaks had the advantage many new competitors used various playboats in the surf with some very good performances especially from Steve Davenport, Matt J Long and Arthur Norton.

On the water the competition was fierce but friendly, even the odd collision was forgiven by the end of the event! With the surf breaking from a very defined spot it was important to be in position as a set of larger waves rolled in. Competitors had to judge which waves to take and which to leave in order to get the best opportunities to show off their skills which included some fantastic displays from the senior paddlers with the youngsters Sam Davenport, Alex Read, Peter Williams and Philip Watson not far behind.

Earplugs-direct.co.uk were generous in their support and hope that everyone will look after their ears in the surf in order to avoid the terrible surfer's ear condition, check out their website and order your earplugs on-line. Dave Oxnard from Shoreline Outdoor Pursuits and Alison Read handled all the results calmly and efficiently and finally thanks to Simon Hammond, ex-World Champion and author of Surf Kayaking The Essential Guide for organising such a superb event. ● Jackie Moores - Surf Kayak enthusiast from Devon

Andy McCullough



PADDLE THIS

Isle of Portland CC surf day

We came from far and wide to the IOPCC's first surf day. with a 7am sharp start on a damp Sunday morning, nine people turned up, keen to find out where we were going. A quick phone call to our man on the ground Bertie Beckram (at Bude) who asked his wife to look out of the window. Two foot 'ish' was on offer. With nowhere any better, off we went. Kevin in his passion wagon was dispatched to pick up one straggler. Two hours later, we arrived at a sunny Widemouth Bay.

After helping Old Man (Will) Lawrence down to the water we all hit the surf together. Our two young guns, Matt and Mike were very impressive showing us all up by hand rolling on the waves. Paul Newport spent the first session bongo sliding and trying to find something called a neutral edge. Dave Evans and John Christmas practiced their swimming techniques, and Kevin Roberts found it easier to paddle his new boat after sharing some of the water in it with the rest of us!

Later the surf had picked which was just perfect for us all to test out new found skills and techniques, apart from "I'll never roll in the surf" Cate who somehow managed to bury her boat in the sand. After a good three hour session we dragged ourselves back up the beach for a well earned



cup of coffee and cookies. Blisters bandaged, boats loaded and photo shoot done, we all headed home happy to a damp Dorchester. All in all, a great day out with good company. (Eskimo) Roll on the next outing.
By Ken Baillie. IOPPC member number three.



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Cyprus is the third largest island in the Mediterranean (after Sicily and Sardinia) with a coastline of 648km – according to the CIA website! I reckon I may have completed the first solo circumnavigation. If true it'll also be the fastest and that's a record which will stand for... not a long time.

That's because it's taken me nine years. That's an average daily distance... non tidal so no tidal assist here of about 95 metres a day. Hmm – at a speed peaking around 40cm an hour. And so a legend is born and my place in history is assured. For the more serious paddlers it actually took me 27 days over a nine year period which is a slightly more respectable 30km a day and I'm satisfied enough with that.

Cyprus is a divided island and has been since a short and bloody civil war in 1974 which has left two opposing sides of Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots unable to reach a satisfactory settlement. In the North is the self proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus or TRNC, a state not recognised by the UN. In the South is the Republic of Cyprus and it has two British sovereign bases. Literally holding north and south apart is the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus known as UNFICYP. Now I was in UNFICYP in 1996 and that gave me the edge over everyone else who might have wanted to paddle there because I had the connections, and a UN blue hat that got me out of a couple of fairly hairy trouble spots.

My story starts when my regiment was sent to the island's divided capital, Nicosia, for a six month long UN tour of duty from June to December 1996. I was an Artillery Major, a Battery Commander of 160 men and women. As we donned the famous blue berets of the United Nations and became familiar with our temporary new home in the once grand and now derelict Ledra Palace Hotel and settled into the new work regime it became apparent there would be an opportunity for both work and play.

My application to obtain permission to paddle in the TRNC was never really expected to work as the strict military regime in the North of the island was not an open and friendly one. Numerous 'out of bounds' signs and armed guards were posted throughout the countryside. The reply to my request was short and curt and 'NO' and was no surprise. So it was then time to engage with the old adage of 'What the eye don't see the heart don't grieve'. I determined to set off and meet trouble as it might occur. It didn't take long!

The start

Armed with a bright yellow plastic Skerray I started my trip in the TRNC's Kokkina Enclave towards the west of the island. The intention was to paddle for a



Nine ye

solo circumnavigation

Nine years for first solo circumnavigation of Cyprus...or not?



day or so in my days off and see how much of the north coast I could see. I would drive my shiny white UN Landrover with the kayak bungled on the roof atop a borrowed sun lounge mattress and park up and then set off. After a day or two of paddling I would hitch hike/march back. I had no real plan of timing at the start. It was simply a pleasant way of sending my off-duty time.

My first problems started on day two when the (nowadays) ever-friendly Argentineans in UN Sector 1



on the west side of the island set me off having looked after me superbly the evening before. I was dropped off on a beach just inside the TRNC with the intention of paddling eastwards for a day up into Morphou Bay and then scrounging a lift back to the Argentinean UN base and my vehicle. I should first explain that there were at that time significant sensitivities about the Maritime Security Line, in essence the no mans land (sea) between the two sides and it was this that got me arrested for the first time.

After poolting along in superb quiet and still conditions with fantastic scenery I passed a small

harbour and group of houses. I espied a lone figure (the military marine commander) jauntily waving his arms (ordering me to stop) at me from the balcony (the observation post) of an impressive looking holiday villa (the marine guardforce headquarters). Nice folk these I thought. I'm so looking forward to meeting local folk and drinking Effes (fantastic local beer) with them. A few minutes later I was startled from my drinking reverie by the roar of a high speed motor patrol boat as it hit 20 knots leaving the base. The penny then dropped and I realised I was up the proverbial creek. I turned my Skerry sideways to show I was not planning to make a run for it.

Impressive looking weaponry

As the patrol boat drew closer I was slightly concerned to see it was crewed with very young looking sailors sporting some pretty impressive looking weaponry ranging from a sinister looking 20mm quick fire cannon in the bows to a couple of fixed machine guns each side in the waist. Just to top this off all the sailors had automatic rifles strapped to their backs – I was half expecting them to have daggers between their teeth. As the patrol boat



the Islands) which is bogging and I smiled a lot and drank it all down enthusiastically. I invited him up to a Regimental Dinner Night in Nicosia, and he let me go. He never came – pity really.

Well the days passed and my routine got slicker. On my two days off I would drive to the last take-out point and restart loaded with loads of water, a tent and a box of army rations. Having camped on a beach somewhere I would hitch hike or rendezvous with a chum. During my six month tour besides doing my day job I managed to get 11 days on the water and



covered nearly all the north coast. Major thrills were the superb surf at Morphou Bay on the west coast, the finding of interesting things ranging from derelict bunkers and spent ammunition cases from the 1974 war to ancient ruins and pottery. Wildlife was interesting though not especially abundant. I was surprised (actually very startled indeed) to see a grey seal who came to have a look at me near the old Cyprus Mining Corporation works at Morphou. It was a spooky setting with derelict gantries and cranes. A couple of old rusting ships were washed up on the beach and the place was eerily quiet and the water unnaturally black. I hate it when it does that. Then this head pops up ten feet in front of me. I later learned from some marine scientist fellow that there were six pairs breeding around Cyprus. I only ever saw the one though.

The worst scare I had was near Kormaki point in the north west of the island; one of the most beautiful spots and almost a forgotten secret. I was on a 6km no-land leg of the trip and as the wind picked up I put my hood up to keep the noise of the wind down a bit. This was to keep the noise down and to stop my ears from flapping, in the event the only part of me that didn't. Well it worked OK although I did it once with the car radio to keep the dying engine noise at bay and the engine seized so I won't try that again. But the hood thing did work and I sang 'I vow to thee my country' and 'whenever I feel afraid' which was nice. I modified the words to the second one. I think an improvement by including the words shhh, hitting and bricks.

Turtles

Of course Cyprus is famous for its Loggerhead and Green turtles and on one memorable occasion I was surfing badly ashore, craning my neck to see what the beach was made of. The dunes looked nice but a sandy beach too would be good when I was quite put off my last few strokes by a turtle surfing ashore with me. Anyway that resulted in a mystery move by me and a less than impressive bongoslide onto the (sandy – whew) beach. Lucky too because 50 metres further up was the start of a 10km no land zone of jagged high rocks. My UN tour finished in November 1996 and I headed back to Newcastle and more normal paddling.



Posted back

I was delighted to be posted back to Cyprus in 2003 where the urge to finish what I'd started took hold. This time I was more organised. I modified a plastic Skerry with a foot pump and a rudder. If you think, as I used to, that rudders are for girls and Americans then try one. They are must-have bits of kit. I fitted a very nice knee tube out of a length of old plastic drain pipe and scrounged a GPS. That's another nice to have gadget which acts as a great personal motivator for solo paddlers. Just one more kilometre. Just a bit faster. I managed to clock over 12kph on surf near Paphos. Pity there weren't more days like that. The rudder modification I did to the Skerry was a bit dodgy and I had the offer of a Dagger, and a proper rudder, for the last five days. The final bit of must-have kit for me is army boiled sweets.

Now I was more organised I did longer days, paddled faster and camped more as the desire to circumnavigate became achievable. The best wilderness scenery in the south is around the Akamas peninsular where stunning sunsets are best seen from the beach as darkness falls very quickly during summer.

A short way east of Limassol is a lovely stretch of coastline with amazing rock formations and incredibly smooth rocks which flow down to the sea in sinuous and elegant displays. With small secret coves and gloomy caves it is also a very popular naturists area although when I paddled through during early October I was highly unimpressed to find that it was occupied only by old blokes – I presume all Germans. Still the rock formations, the kingfishers and the flying fish were really very nice too.

So in sum it took me 27 days of paddling which ranged from 3-50km a day. For those who wish to paddle in Cyprus the best paddling is spring and autumn. Summer is a bit too hot and winter is a bit too choppy. The people north and south are incredibly friendly. Now that the south is in the EU and Turkey wants to join everyone, including the military, are much nicer than a few years ago.

I paddle solo because I have no mates – so I thought! I finished with a 45km paddle ending up where we live in Dhekelia. My wife organised loads of friends to wave me in and the local radio and newspaper were there too. I was chuffed it was a Force 6 gusting 7 according to the knowledgeable sailors there because it was MUCH smaller than a very long hour I had paddling around Kormakiti Point. And so I paddled in through the surf trying to look good and wave at the people and smile and not capsize into the quiet little harbour at the Dhekelia Officers' Club with the sun setting behind me.

First solo circumnavigation of Cyprus? Maybe, hopefully. Fastest - I'll bet not for long. ●

Andy Lukes



swept past I got the distinct impression this was all show and that they were in fact very dodgy, albeit determined, sailors. This determination became abundantly apparent as they repeatedly tried to approach my bows to get hold of my kayak but kept missing. The turbulence they set up was now getting more worrying than the threat of being shot at – the Turkish military and wild west cowboys fire warning shots. The British Army does not – too many things could go Pete Tongue (wrong). Anyway, after much faffing about I broke the deadlock by using my local linguistic skills (energetic arm waving and very loud and very slow English) and we established I would paddle to them. My bows were pounced upon by a young seaman (no shoes!) and he attached a 2" hawser through my deck lines – no chance of slipping that off then. Then without so much as a 'by your leave' they opened the throttle to full and yanked me 90 degrees left and sped off at high speed back to the harbour with me frantically low bracing and trying to look as if this was all pretty normal.

Once in the harbour I quickly tried to become an appropriately dignified British officer, so the spray deck had to go and I was led off to see the head honcho. Well I can say he was pretty unimpressed with my story initially. My UN hat (and ID card) relaxed him a little. I learned he, like me, was a Major. I was delighted to discover that the literal Turkish translation means 'Leader of a Thousand'. Cool. So I'm a Leader of a Thousand. I nearly creased up though when he patiently explained the Turkish word. So now I'm even more thrilled to be a Bin Basher. We chilled out some more and chatted about the Bronze age settlement on the nearby island in the forbidden military area. He gave me Ade Chai (Tea of

BUSA canoe polo



22-23rd April

Hatfield Water Park



575 competitors from 82 different teams competed in the annual British Universities Sporting Association's canoe polo tournament. The event didn't bring the sunshine it has in previous years but this did not dampen the spirit of the tournament.

There are four different leagues within the tournament; the Open event draws in the best team from each university, traditionally this being the Men's A teams, the Ladies league, which is the other BUSA scoring event, then the Reed League consists of up to two teams from each university, generally B and C teams and the final league is an 'Old Boy's' league, which houses the graduates who are still playing and have created a team to play under the university name.

With the results in from the days matches, the play lists and groups for the Sunday morning were announced; this led to some teams heading to bed for a good night's sleep before the following days' games and the remaining teams to enjoy a night of music provided by a DJ from Loughborough Students Union.

Sunday began bright and early at 8am with the quarter final groups and the competition heating up. The semi-finals

followed shortly leading to the much awaited final matches. These began with the Old Boy's league with Leeds University Old Boys taking on ULU University Old Boys, which was taken in style by ULU with a 6-2 victory. The next final to take place was the Reed event, with ULU University B team competing against Cambridge C team, convincingly won by Cambridge with a 9-0 victory.

With the non-BUSA events out of the way, the point scoring leagues finals were next, starting with the ladies. This saw last year's winners, ULU University Ladies, playing Durham University Ladies for the trophy. Once again ULU showed us why they were feared at every stage of the competition by winning the event 5-0. Congratulations ULU Ladies for retaining your title.

The Blue Ribbon event of the weekend was the last to play. This saw the current champions Nottingham University's A team take on the hosting university, Loughborough's A team. This gave a déjà vu to anyone watching last year's final which saw the same two teams battling it out for the title. In a similar display to last year, the two teams gave undoubtedly the closest match of the finals and saw Nottingham score the only goal of the match in the second half. With the whistle blowing at 1-0, congratulations go to Nottingham for retaining their BUSA trophy for another year.

Over the weekend a total of 230 games were played with 70 hours of canoe polo. The event itself could not have been held without the mention of several people. First, the sponsors, Waterfly, for the match balls that were used and Reed Chill Cheater for the scrutineering stickers used and the prizes for the Reed League.

Well done to all the Loughborough Students CC members who turned up to help and also to those individuals who aided the organiser in the build-up to the event. Without these people the weekend would not have been able to run as it did. Last but not most importantly, the biggest thanks goes to Caroline Jeffries for organising BUSA Canoe Polo 2006. Without her many months of planning and running of the weekend, none of the event would have been possible. ●

Article by Jo Etheridge

Photos by Paul Smith

PADDLE THIS

Friends of Allonby CC win 'Club of the Year Award'

Congratulations to Allonby CC who were presented with 'Club of the Year Award' by Liverpool City Council, at the Liverpool Annual Sports Awards Ceremony, held on 6th April at Liverpool Town Hall.

In addition to the 'Club of the Year Award', six of Allonby CC members also received individual awards for their achievements in canoe polo with the GB teams. Kathryn Grieves, Sarah Kirwan and Peter Meakin were there to receive their awards, and they also collected awards for Ginny Coyles, Stuart Moffitt and Neil Edmunds.

Olympic bronze swimming medallist at Athens, Stephen Parry from Liverpool, presented the trophies; an engraved cut glass decanter and an engraved silver salver.

Allonby CC has an enviable record of success and the want to continue to develop canoe polo by establishing a 'Liverpool Canoeing Centre'. This concept already has enthusiastic support from British Waterways and the BCU. The project needs to find funding in the region of £6.9 million. If successful, Liverpool will arguably have the best canoeing centre in the UK comprising of an Artificial white water course, four world class polo pitches, and acres of flat water in Liverpool's South Docks. www.foacc.com

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Slalom senior and U23 GB selection

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Selection for the senior and U23 slalom teams took place over the three days of the May Day bank holiday weekend. The hard training over the winter was now to be put to the test and competition would be fierce.

The first race on Saturday was extremely testing with some tricky staggers and difficult breakouts, penalties were numerous, and on his first run Richard Hounslow in the K1M class thought that with three touches he would have been out of the running. He was surprised to find himself in second place behind Campbell Walsh with Andy Hadfield third.

PADDLE THIS

Junior Slalom Selection



The final junior GB team selection race for 2006, where 'winner takes all' took place in Grantully, Scotland over the weekend of 14-15th April. The race was run in conjunction with the double premier race and was a great highlight to the end of some very exciting junior racing over the preceding month.

The International format was followed, that is two qualification runs on Saturday, a semi-final race on Sunday in which the top 50% of junior selection competitors from Saturdays race took part and a final in which only the top five boats in each class competed.

The junior men's kayak class was hotly contested. Already qualifying for a place on the team with two wins from the preceding races was Jonny Akinyemi. James Mugford and Toby Jones were on equal points in second place. However with three places available and 'winner takes all' in the final race, this was the one to watch.

Unfortunately Toby Jones, having made the semi-final failed to consolidate on his previous results and was outside the top five, not making the final. In the final, Jo Morely posted a sub 110 second run but Anton Lippek who was even faster – 108.63, which ultimately gave him the fastest time of the day. James Bailey caught an edge between gates 19 and 20, losing precious time, costing him the title. Jonny Akinyemi couldn't match Anton's time and James Mugford picked up two penalties and the title – the GB team place was Anton's. The third place on points from results went to James Mugford with Toby Jones as reserve just missing out.

In the ladies K1 class Alice Spencer (Salisbury) had already secured her place with two emphatic wins was won by Sarah Chynoweth (Stafford and Stone) and in second place was Hannah Burgess giving her the third GB team place.

In the C1 class Mark Proctor (Stafford and Stone) had also secured his place in the team with two wins out of two in the preceding races. However Greg Pitt (Stafford and Stone) came through to win the final race securing him number one spot. Closely behind was Peter Hall (Ormskirk Scouts) who took the third GB team position.

Congratulations to all competitors that made the team and to the J16 Home Nations Development Squad of:

K1 Women

Sarah Timperley
Janine Dickie
Claire Kimberley

K1 Men

Toby Jones
Joe Morley
Joseph Coombs

C1

Robert Downes
Thomas Quinn
George Tatchell

Richard's second run was clean and a second faster than his first and Campbell much to the shock of the crowds, missed a gate, picking up a 50 second penalty, giving first place to Richard, Andy Hadfield was second with Huw Swetnam third.

In the K1W class, Helen Reeves put down two exceptional runs to finish first with Laura Blakeman second and Fiona Pennie third.

There was some exciting racing from the C1s being hotly contested by David Florence finishing first, Stuart McIntosh second and Dan Goddard third.

The C2 class was won by Nick Smith and Stuart Bowman with Tim Baillie and Etienne Stott second and Fraser Florence and Adam Marshall third.

Sunday was a new race, with a slightly different format where only the top 50% would qualify for second runs. The winner of this race gained automatic selection and would be crowned UK champion.

The C1 class had a new name featuring at the top: Mark Proctor, a J18, who paddled the race of his life only to be beaten into second place by a superb performance by David Florence with Dan Goddard third.

The C2 of Tim Baillie and Etienne Stott have been chasing the long standing partnership of Nick Smith and Stuart Bowman for a couple of years now and this race was to be their best ever taking first place and the UK title. An excellent result gave third place to the new pairing of Fraser Florence and Adam Marshall.

In the K1W, Fiona Pennie hard to take the title with Laura Blakeman second and Heather Corrie third. Helen Reeves, the winner of Saturday's race picked up a 50 on a tricky gate in the looping pool, putting her out of contention.

In the K1M class, competition was fierce, Richard, buoyed on by Saturday's win and Campbell's need for a result plus Andy, Huw and Neil Buckley's desire for a place in the team was to lead to some racing of the highest standard. Richard pulled off two world class runs, whereas Campbell, was somewhat more tentative as he couldn't risk another 50. Andy had another exceptional race. Richard came through to take his second first place with a six second lead over Campbell and Andy finished third.

One boat in each class had now been selected; the other two would be fought over the following morning. This third race was to be a single run only, no errors could be afforded by a number of competitors, in particular Campbell and Helen.

The K1M started the day, Richard had elected not to compete as he had already bagged his place. The course was a bit more open but with some tricky breakouts. Campbell was off quite early as he only had one reasonable result. His racing was again somewhat tentative, not quite the Campbell we know but it was still good enough to take first place with Neil Buckley second and Tom Wakeling third. This gave Campbell second place in the GB team and Andy Hadfield third. Excellent racing from Andy – his first year on the senior squad and still an U23!

The C2's raced well, Etienne and Tim collecting their second win consolidating their position. Stuart and Nick took second place on the team and Fraser and Adam third.

In the C1 class, David Florence continued his winning form, paddling to his third win with a repeat of the first race with Stuart MacIntosh and Dan Goddard behind which also meant they join Dave in the C1 team. Mark Proctors result wasn't quite good enough to give him a place in the senior team, finishing fourth but he headed up the U23 C1 team.

However the K1W did not go as would have been expected, surprisingly to everyone watching, Helen was a victim of the weather and collected another 50 putting her out of contention. Fiona, not needing this result paddled well and finished second and Laura put in a solid performance to win the race and Louise Donnington was third. Fiona is joined by Laura and Lizzie Neave, who at only 19 with two fourth places took the third place by one point over Louise.

I hope everyone enjoys their racing and that some medals return to the UK, on this weekend's performance this is very possible. Huge thanks must go to Ken and Sue Trollope and their team of volunteers who made the race such a resounding success. ●

Anne Hounslow, Chair – Slalom Committee.



Campbell Walsh

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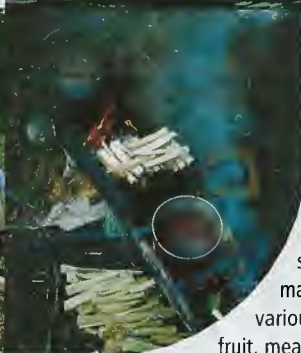
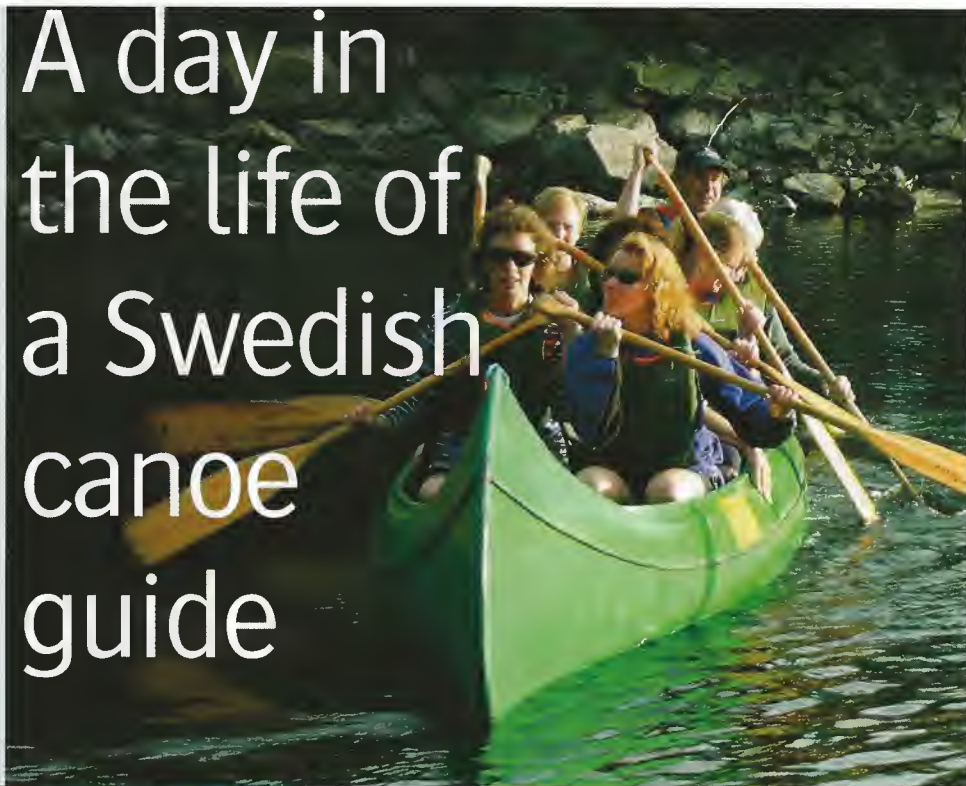
www.daggereurope.com

I could hear the others stirring but my sleeping bag was so cosy and warm that I thought I would steal five minutes more of luxury. This was to be our final full day on the water and we were hopefully going to move the group northwards to a great wild camp that we knew of.

This was our last tour of the season and the clients were a group of women, the majority of whom worked together in a rural health centre in North Yorkshire. None were paddlers but all wanted the experience of wilderness canoe travel with the luxury of a guide to look after them.

The previous day had been very wet and windy and I think it had been a real eye opener for the women. They had learnt about wind and waves on a lake, safe lake crossing in difficult conditions, the use of rafts and how to quickly set up camp and get a fire going. This morning was sunny, warm and bright with a slight breeze; just how Sweden normally is in late August.

A day in the life of a Swedish canoe guide



After the five minutes I was quickly out of my pit, dressed and over to the fire to get a brew going. We follow no trace camping procedures and as part of that we have designed some self-contained wood burning fires. They have hinged lids so at night it is just a case of filling the fire full of wood, closing the lid and leaving over night. In the morning there are usually some embers to start the fire for the next day.

The Kelly Kettle was soon boiling for the first brew and for the next couple of hours it would be

pressed into service as members of the group required drinks. Paul was the duty guide for the day and after he had set out the breakfast materials; fruit juice, various cereals, fresh fruit, meats, cheeses, jam and bread he came over to discuss

the day ahead.

It was just after 6.30am and we were hoping to be on the water by 10 and then at the next camp by mid-afternoon. It looked like we would have the wind at our backs and we hoped it would remain warm and sunny for the rest of the day. We talked about the individuals within the group and how they were paddling together, were there any combinations that might work better together and who we should paddle with to make the group more efficient as a whole. We looked at the map to decide on a rough route, possible stopping points for lunch and to look at areas of interest along the way.

By 7am most of the group were up and having their first cuppa, some standing around the fire talking, others sat alone on various promontories, with their thoughts, looking out at the glorious views across the lake. Protected by the island the lake was mirror calm and gave perfect reflections of the trees, distant hills and clouds dancing across the blue sky; so typically Swedish.

While the group are busying themselves with breakfast we can start some of the packing of our personal gear and some of the group gear and grab a bite to eat. We also discuss with the group the plan for the day, what they would like to do, who they would like to paddle with and see if anyone would like to map read and lead the group on various sections of the route. That done they go off to take down their tents and pack their barrels and we dismantle everything else.

With the boats packed and secured, the toilets

are closed up and the site checked over by the guides, then it is off onto the water. With a couple of guides working and a large group we use radios to communicate between the guide boats. Better communication allows us to let the group wander a little more, gives quicker decision making for stops and changes but maintains better safety cover.

Once clear of the protection of the island and after an hour or so of paddling, with the wind at our backs we are in a perfect position to raft up and put up a sail. This is distance for free; sometimes we can lunch or snooze but today it is time for a snack and a game of catch with a tennis ball. The wind holds fair and we spend a leisurely couple of hours eating up the kilometres and by early afternoon we are very near the next camp. We drop sail and quickly dismantle the raft, nothing tied together it is just a matter of letting go a line or unhooking a leg from another canoe.

After a toilet, leg stretch and snack stop, the group decides to fore-go lunch, paddle for another hour to reach camp early. This will give them time for fishing, swimming and generally relaxing. The group is now well rehearsed in setting up camp; as soon as the gear is unloaded they go off to find a suitable area for their tents and we sort out the kitchen, communal area and getting a fire going to brew up some tea. By the time the water is boiling everyone is sorted and gathers for a drink before going off to do their own thing; some go for a solo paddle, some to fish, others take a swim, a couple go off on a moose safari and some help with the food preparation for the evening meal. As it is the last night and there is plenty of wood we build a large fire for the group, it's a cold night and the fire is great for its warmth but also as a focal point for people to gather around. After the meal we play a few camp games, finish off the treats and generally reminisce about the trip.

By 11pm everyone has gone off to their tents, we can tidy up and get into our sleeping bags and snuggle down for some well earned rest. The last sound I hear before dropping off is laughter and giggling from a couple of the tents across the bay; they have had a good time. ●

Dave Halsall

FACTS : SPONSORS

Dave Halsall lives and works in North Yorkshire canoeing with groups and individuals mainly in the Lake District and Sweden. He also works for Dallam Community College running BCU NGB awards for canoe and kayak. He can be contacted at motorafiki@hotmail.co.uk for more information.



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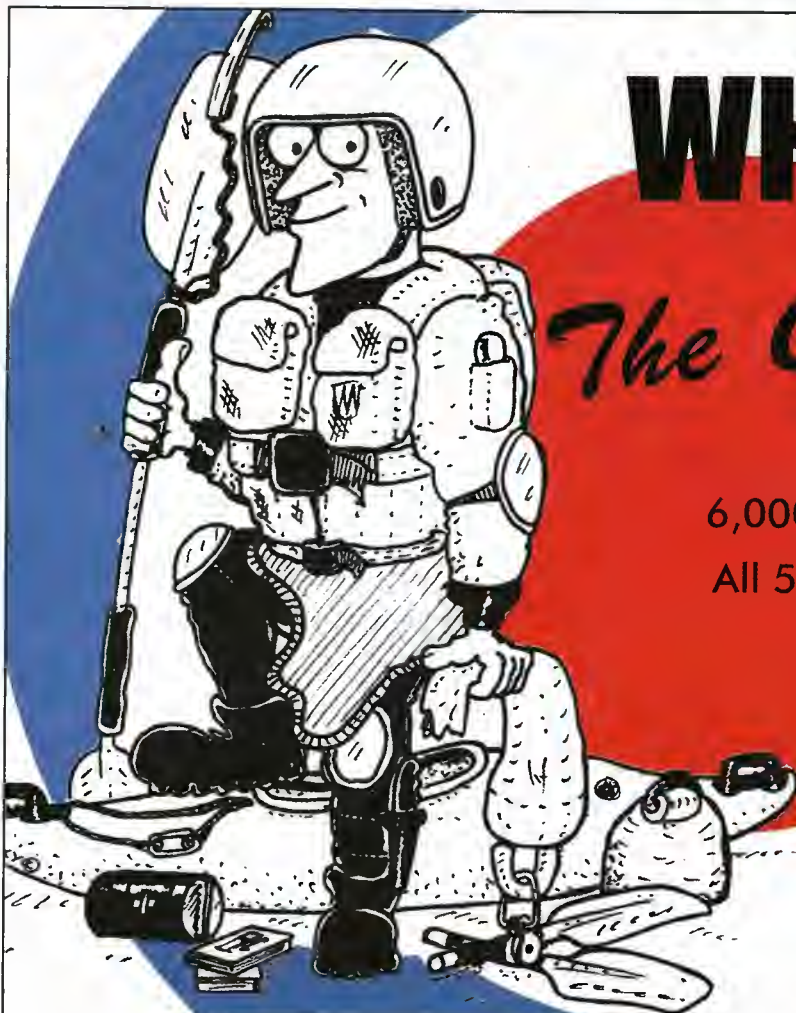
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Three rivers, two families another summer

“Where do you fancy going for the rest of the holidays?”, was the question put to Tom (8) and Pippa (7) after we returned home from leading a school trip to the Ladhak region of northern India.



Small weir on the Allier



Tom



Tom again



Pippa



Griff

It had been great with most of the sixth form pupils getting to the summit of Stok Kangri (6,130m), completing the Markha valley trek and touring Rajasthan. Tom and Pippa had found the trek quite tough but still enjoyed being with the older pupils. The answer should not have been in doubt as last year's trip to France had been such a huge success. Both children therefore exclaimed “canoeing in France and can we meet more English people?”. Although I couldn't promise that we would meet other families I was fairly sure that we would, going on past experiences. So after a quick phone call to Ferry Savers and Endsleigh Insurance brokers, we were all set to leave in four days time. A check of the kit list and a day spent packing and buying bits and pieces and we were ready for the off. Having used Peter Knowles's excellent book 'White Water Massif Central - Fluffy's guide to the friendly rivers of southern France' (why isn't their one for the UK?), we decided to try and visit three other rivers – the Dordogne, the Lot and the Allier. Our trusty Nova Craft 17ft Prospector secured to the roof and four bikes strapped to the back plus camping kit, the car was well and truly packed and ready for action.

The journey through France was uneventful,

although there were no Formula 1 hotels when we needed one and so decided to stop in a motorway service station for a few hours sleep. I slept on the tarmac whilst Ali and the kids slept in the car. During the night it rained a little but as I was so tired I didn't notice until the morning. After only two miles we passed a whole host of cheap hotels. Maybe I should have researched them on the internet before we left.

We arrived at our chosen campsite at around 11am in perfect weather. We stayed at the basic 'Camping la Berge Ombragee'. It was cheap, friendly and had other children staying, which meant Tom and Pippa were taken care of. The fact that the other children spoke no English seemed to make no difference to them as they ran around kicking a ball or riding their bikes chasing each other.

The Dordogne

The Dordogne was quite pretty but very slow moving. The villages and towns around the area were very interesting particularly Beaulieu and Carennac, both of which we enjoyed walking through. After

jogging most of the shuttles last year we had decided to try and cycle them this year, thereby including yet another activity in our holiday schedule.

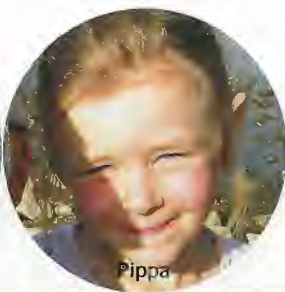
After a few days paddling and sight seeing in the area we decided to try our luck on the Lot. This was a much better river for us with two main sections to canoe. The first was from Entraygues, starting at our campsite, down the 10kms of grade 2-3 rapids as far as le Port and finally a further 11kms to Grande Vabre. The section down to le Port was my favourite as it had some excellent rapids and the much photographed and talked

I think this had something to do with the massacre the rapid was inflicting on the French kayaking group we were watching

about 'la Daze'-3. On the cycle up the valley, after dropping off the car at the very helpful canoe school at le Port, we stopped to watch a group of French kayakers going down it. Tom was not impressed and said he wanted to get out and walk around that rapid when we got to it. I think this had something to do with the massacre the rapid was inflicting on the French kayaking group we were watching. Anyway, as we paddled down mum and dad forgot which rapid it was (honest!), even though there was a sign just above it to let you know what was coming up.



Griff



Pippa



'La Daze' The Lot



The Allier's first rapid after leaving Prades



Pippa again



Cai



Argentat The Dordogne

Tom was not best pleased when we got through, even though we were the right way up! The final section takes you through yet more fantastic scenery and passed a camp site which in hindsight would have been a better option for us to stay, as ours had nowhere for the Tom and Pippa to kick a ball around. The village of 'Conques' is 5kms from the take out at Grande Vabre, and is worth a visit. We found it a little too touristy for us but it was very pretty and very oldie worldly. Tom and Pippa enjoyed ice creams which we ate outside the church and the donkey that they spotted outside the pilgrims accommodation block.

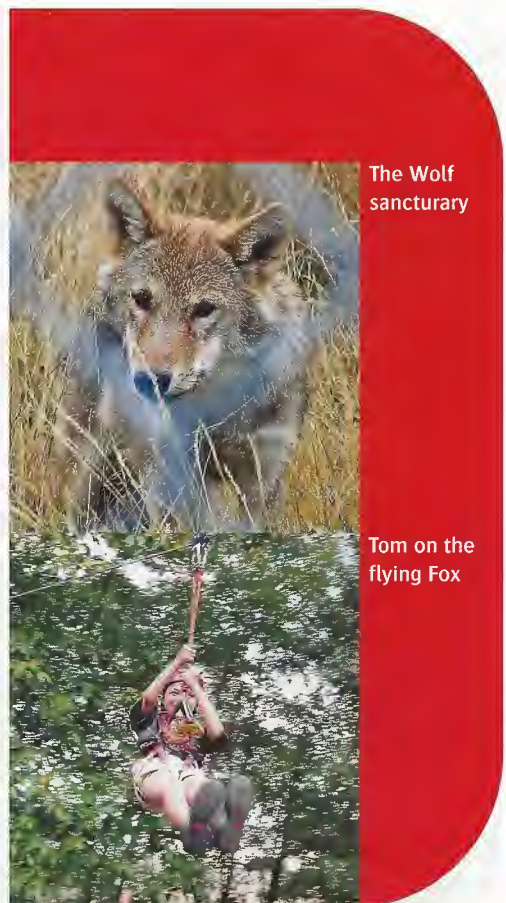
The 'Allier'

As we were getting towards the end of the holiday we decided to head back to one of my favourite rivers the 'Allier'. The river was a lot lower than last year, which we understand was due to a problem with one of the dams higher up the valley but this still did not detract from the unspoilt nature the river. We stayed at the Municipal campsite on the banks of the river. Our first bit of paddling was the section down from Prades to the campsite, this time Ali did the shuttle back up the valley to fetch the car on her own. I think she wanted to get away from the kids and me. The following day we visited the Wolf sanctuary which is a good four or five hours drive away and is something we should have seen whilst travelling up from the Lot. It was great and Tom and Pippa loved it. The noise that the wolves make when they start to howl is truly incredible. Tom was completely taken by them and is full of interesting facts about them. The next day after a few games at the campsite, Pippa and I paddled down from Lavoute Cilhac, which we had all cycled back from after dropping off the car earlier in the day. We stopped for a well earned ice cream at the Maze which was a well earned treat. The town is amazing as you see it from the river when you paddle around the swan neck of the river and under the bridge.

Until now we had not met any British families but then there they were, perfect, a family with two children. It turned out to be Mari, Chris, Griff and Cai Rowland who were also out on a paddling holiday. Although we were nearing the end of our trip we did manage to paddle down from Prades together and enjoyed their company in the evenings over many bottles of wine and a BBQ. We also visited the high ropes course together which all the children enjoyed. I think the adults enjoyed it as much as the children. The expressions on their faces were a picture.

As the end of the holiday approached it seemed that our time had flown by again. The weather had not been as good as we had been hoping for, however, the people we had met, the villages and towns we had visited and the rivers we had paddled had made it another holiday to remember. The journey home was straightforward and we arrived home, our batteries fully recharged ready to face our respective jobs. We are already planning our next trip but are unsure of where to go. We may try Norway or possibly Canada. It's great to be able to dream isn't it. ●

Steve Gorman

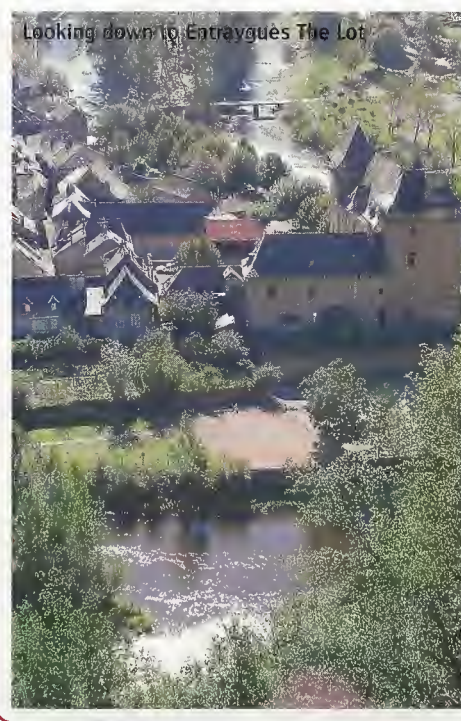


The Wolf sanctuary

Tom on the flying Fox

NOTES :

I still hope that one day we will gain the same access rights to our rivers as the French seem to enjoy. It would be great to be able to canoe camp on the River Derwent, one of our local rivers, without being shouted at by fishermen or running the risk of prosecution.



Looking down to Entraygues The Lot

Milos to Santorini

The tent and sleeping bags have been aired, the salt has been washed out of our paddling kit and the smell of wood-smoke has 'sadly' been removed from our clothes after washing. We are home after an eight day sea kayak expedition in Greece, filled with an enormous sense of achievement, dead chuffed to have successfully completed this adventure.

I have to resort to a commonly mis-used term I'm afraid: it was awesome!

We arrived on Milos in the Greek Mediterranean on Tuesday, and were welcomed by Rod who runs sea Kayak Milos and with whom we had paddled around the island nearly two years ago.

This time the plan was to undertake an island hopping expedition from Milos to Santorini, a total distance of 150km, taking in several of the other Cycladic islands on the way. We had been warned the trip was not for the faint hearted or inexperienced paddler, but having been out with us before Rod was confident we possessed the skills and determination required.

On the day we arrived we undertook a short 12km warm up paddle, across Milos bay, to get used to the boats and set them up to suit us. All three of us; Steve, Josien and Rod, would be paddling Rainbow Lasers, Italian made sea-kayaks, with ample bulkhead space to enable us to carry all the kit required for a seven night camping expedition. They are good straight tracking boats, although I was allowed the 'privilege' of a rudder being the smaller, not quite so strong, member of the team.

First leg of our trip

Wednesday, 13th of April, saw us setting off, at around midday, from Pollonia beach in the north east of Milos with fully laden kayaks on the first leg of our trip. We firstly crossed to Kimolos and after a brief exploration of the village from there to Poliegos, the largest uninhabited island in the Mediterranean. Where we made camp on a beautiful beach, beneath the lighthouse, on the eastern side of the island. Dinner consisted of steak cooked over the charcoal produced by our driftwood fire.

The wind/weather forecast for the coming six days was encouraging though not ideal. As we were soon to find out, the success of trip is highly dependant on both wind direction and strength.

The wind had been getting stronger during

the day and the next morning (Thursday) we woke up to wind Force 7 and huge waves. This forced us to postpone the intended crossing to Folegandros until Friday. We spent the day exploring the island, and climbing up to the lighthouse for a better view of the sea state.



To our joy, Friday's conditions turned out to be perfect. The wind, still strong but veering to the west, provided us with a much reduced sea state and a push from behind. We completed the 24km crossing to Folegandros in 3h:50m. While Steve and Rod hiked from the beach to the nearest village, to replenish our water supplies, I minded the boats (my excuse, and relaxed my aching limbs in the sun). As the wind was in our favour we paddled a further 14km to our next campsite at Livadi beach on the southern end of Folegandros, making up for our lost day. We hitched a ride up to the town for a superb celebratory dinner.

Saturday, a smooth sea faced us at sun rise, we breakfasted on chocolate filled croissants, a Greek speciality, packed all our kit back into the kayaks and set off on a superb day's paddling via several smaller islands to Sikinos. Along ever changing steep cliffs, we found an inlet below one of the countless tiny white Greek churches, with just enough room to haul the boats out. A narrow, steep path allowed us to climb all the way to the summit of the island, where in the village we snacked on Greek salad, Calamari and enjoyed a well-earned cold beer. That night we camped at Malta beach on the eastern end of the island which is beautifully secluded and strangely sheltered from the strengthening east wind, with plenty of drift wood for one of our now famous huge camp fires and lots of large stones for Steve and Rod to build camp furniture with.

Plan B

On Sunday we have to resort to plan B: the wind is unabated Force 6 from the east, and although we try, it is too strong a head wind to allow us to cross the 9km to Ios. While Steve and I explore locally, Rod marches all the way to Sikinos village and back to ensure we have sufficient water, and also finds some delicious pork chops

ni



for our BBQ dinner. Red Sahara dust blown in by the easterly winds turns the sky an eerie pink.

Monday, an early start with a now south westerly tail wind finds us sitting on the beach by the

harbour on Ios by 10 am. We have to face the fact that the wind direction is not going to change sufficiently to allow us to complete the journey by kayak. The north wind we need to enable us to cross the 18km from Ios to Santorini is not going to happen by tomorrow. Not to be thwarted in our aim to get to Santorini we board the 2pm ferry from Ios. We manhandle the fully laden kayaks onto the car deck, and leave them with the piles of luggage and suitcases. Huge seas break over the bow and decks of the ferry, at least we do not have to feel as if we whimped out of this crossing.

For the third time on the trip we have to resort to plan B, when we find that having got to Santorini the now gale force winds are preventing us from leaving the dock area and paddling to our next beach camp. We have to resort to squatting round the back of the harbour authorities building overnight, and spend most of Tuesday exploring Santorini by hire car until the wind dies down and we make our escape around 4pm.

Wednesday the 20th is our last day of the expedition and we are rewarded with beautiful sunshine, no wind and a calm sea. We make the most of it and explore the Caldera, the sunken volcanic crater that forms the inner sea of the near circular island of Santorini. We paddle to Nea Kamini, the 'new' volcanic island in the centre, to visit the hot springs and the volcano. A relaxed paddle to the northern tip of the island is followed by a very pleasant lunch at Ia. The early part of the evening is spent in the sun cooking dinner on a small beach below an old mining area. To round it all off we paddle back to the port at sunset.

At 10pm we board the ferry back to Milos where we arrive at 2am on Thursday morning.

Later that day we find a note stuck to our bedroom door: 'The surf is up, fancy a paddle, Rod'. ●

Josien Woolmer



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The Dalsland Canoe Marathon

The Dalsland Canoe Marathon takes place on the northern section of the Dalsland Canal lake system. The mass start takes place by the picturesque Baldersnäs Manor on Lake Laxsjön and the competitors then travel north through the beautiful Lake Svärdlång and Västra Silen.

The route then takes a left at Gustavsfors to head south on Lake Lelång to reach the finish at the guest harbour in Bengtsfors. The total length of the race is 55 km (34 miles) with three portages between the lakes.

It is an early morning start and as with any event of this nature there is always an air of eager anticipation with paddlers making final preparation for the race. The mass start on the lake is very exciting and for the first few kilometres we were

surrounded by a mass of other boats all heading north to the first portage. After a while the canoes thinned out, there was less to do on the steering and we were able to settle into our own rhythm.

The whole of the 55 km route is buoyed so even if there had been no one to follow we could not have got lost. The portages are well manned with the organisers providing water, energy drink and food for sustenance and for those who want it, a free massage.

It is a great testament to the organisers that the local community has taken the marathon to their hearts. So at any strategic vantage point large crowds form to cheer on all the competitors and their presence gives those with tired bodies a real lift.

After competing the 26 miles of a normal marathon there is then the sting in the tail of the '+ ' added onto this marathon; another 8 miles to the finish. It might seem a little daunting on paper but in fact the mind set is 'well it's only 8 miles and we have already competed 26 and we are feeling OK. Bring it on!' We were glad to get to the finish though.

At the finish we were helped out of the boat and then our boat was carried away and taken to the car park. We were provided with showers, hot food and drink and there was even a chance for another massage. Everyone received a medal; it is a great event and it is worth visiting the crayfish party in the evening to see a Swedish sing along. ●

Dave Halsall

FACTS : WHY DO THIS MARATHON ?

- Beautiful scenery
- First class organisation
- It is going to be a classic
- Large mass start
- Easily added to any Swedish holiday
- Friendly atmosphere
- The Crayfish party
- Everyone speaks English
- The cost of living is similar to the UK
- Easy access through Goteburg
- Because it is there to do



Dalsland is covered with more lakes than almost any other Swedish province. One of the most beautiful waterways in Europe, the Dalsland Canal connects a

labyrinth of large and small lakes and rivers, and idyllic, meandering canals. Only ten kilometres of the canal is man-made; the rest is a 240-kilometre navigable system of lakes. It is superb canoe touring country.



There are many types of accommodation available in Dalsland during the summer. The DCM+ attracts many visitors so book early to be sure of a place to stay.

One of the highlights of the canal is at Håverud - completed in 1868, it is a combination of a roadway bridge, a railway bridge and an aqueduct. The Dalsland Canal can also be seen from a passenger boat. Four different companies operate on the system of lakes, and the canal is open to passenger boat traffic from May 1-September 30.

Another popular way to experience the magnificent countryside of Dalsland is on a railway inspection trolley. You travel on disused railway lines straight into the wilderness, where you can spot elk, deer and various birds.

Other popular outdoor activities include guided beaver and elk safaris where you can also see predators like lynx and wolf. In Tresticklan National Park in northwestern Dalsland, by the Norwegian border, visitors can hike through large tracts of virgin forest, thin, barren pine forest and rift valley landscapes.

Dalsland also offers excellent fishing, whether it's angling in small lakes or trolling in Vänern, Sweden's largest lake. And by the shore of Vänern is Dalsland's only town - Ämål - known for its international blues festival.

www.kanotmaraton.se

www.canodal.com

www.vastsverige.com

If you would like any more information please contact me:

torafiki@hotmail.co.uk

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Suggested paddles



Where can I go paddling is often the question from new and experienced paddlers. Well, we are campaigning for greater access to the 98% of waterways we do not have access rights on... but in the meantime there are some interesting paddles around and the following are a few suggestions. Our hope is to offer a variety of suggested paddles as whilst some canoeists are interested only in rapid or

white (wild) water rivers, others enjoy competing and there are also many others who enjoy paddling quietly along, exploring and visiting new scenes and developing awareness of nature round them. In our selection of paddles we hope to cover everyone's needs.

PADDLE THIS:

River Thames, St Patrick's Stream and River Loddon

This is a two way paddle starting in Reading, then using St Patrick's Stream and the River Loddon which takes you back to the main river and an up stream paddle back to Reading. The journey is about ten miles and suitable for kayaks and canoes and anyone used to slow moving water. The Geoprojects map of the R.Thames and O/S Map 175 covers the whole trip.

Start at the free car park at the end of the A3290, the entrance is on the left just past the last roundabout for Reading town centre (beware of height barrier). Next to the car park is Marsports canoe and kayak shop and the Wokingham Canoe Club. The A3290 leaves the M4 at junction 10.

Paddle down stream, this section is called Dreadnought Reach, for just under two miles until you reach Sonning Lock. You can portage, but many lock keepers will allow canoes and kayaks to lock through with launches (the Thames name for any boat fitted with an engine) but take care, the rules stipulate that launches must turn off their engines in locks. So some of the larger launches i.e. 60 foot sea going gin palaces, are only kept in place by their attached ropes and the strength of their crew members, they do tend to move about as the lock fills or empties, stay well clear! From Sonning after passing the old three arched road bridge and Great House Hotel, a further 1.5 miles will take you to the entrance to St Patrick's Stream, this is marked by a small bridge on your right and a notice declaring "it's not suitable for launches".



As you head under the bridge you will feel an increase in the water flow, St Patrick's Stream bypasses a lock and therefore drops about 5 feet over about two miles. Just past the bridge is an under water gate to control the flow, which is well below the surface at normal water levels, we usually pass over it on the left side. Follow the winding stream, passing a small channel on your left which also returns to the Thames via a weir. After going under a low accommodation bridge and past some expensive houses you reach the junction with the River Loddon. Turn left onto the Loddon passing more expensive houses with long gardens, you eventually reach the River Thames just below Shiplake Lock. There is a newly built canoe portage from the weir stream across a strip of land by the lock house back to the upper level, which we only found this after we had carried our boats around the lock! You can of course share the lock with the launches! Now paddle back upstream on the main river – this is a wide sweeping reach with several large islands which can be explored. The second one, I believe, is the one mentioned in Jerome K Jerome's 'Three Men in a Boat', a book that all paddlers of the Thames should read. Carry on upstream passing St Patrick's Stream which is now on your left, back to Sonning Lock, Dreadnought Reach and to the starting point at Reading.

We usually paddle St Patrick's Stream in the closed fishing season, mid March to mid June, this also gives the highest water level and this back stream is very popular for fishing matches at weekends in the fishing season. Our group last paddled the above on 26.03.06.

Robert Yeowell



Changes in politics

Jim Knight MP has been 'promoted' to Minister for Schools. What a way to get out of doing the Poole Harbour Race later this year with us! He had always wanted to paddle around Brownsea Island so we had made an agreement to go out in a stable kayak so he could enjoy the view!

David Milliband MP is now the Secretary of State for Environment Food and Rural affairs (replacing Margaret Beckett). Interesting times to come! The other Ministers of state for Environment Food and Rural affairs have been announced but no specific roles announced as yet...



If you have a suggested paddle... please e-mail the text and images to the editor of Canoe Focus:

peter@canoefocus.co.uk

Text is preferable in Microsoft Word format and images as 300dpi JPEGs saved at highest quality.

Access on-line @ www.riversaccess.org

The media interest grows

There is a huge public interest in the access issue from canoeist/non-canoeists and people who think the situation is archaic and unjust. Much of the publicity stems from local groups who contact their papers/TV etc to show what the access situation is like in their area.

This also provides the opportunity to demonstrate what a truly inclusive activity canoeing/kayaking is and how it can benefit our health. Articles showing that canoeing benefits all though physically activity/fund raising etc abound in the press. The BCU through Chloe Nelson-Lawrie continues to publicise canoeing and the access campaign.

Media coverage, among others includes:

- BBC Breakfast TV
- Radio 2
- Radio 4
- Leeds BBC Politics Show
- The Sun
- Shropshire Star
- Manchester Evening News
- North West Enquirer
- The Times
- The Guardian
- The Independent
- BBC Look North
- BBC 2 Daily Politics Show
- Western Daily Express
- Yorkshire Post
- BBC Meridian (South East)
- Northern Echo
- Western Times

What are you doing to help publicise the access campaign and the issues locally and nationally? Please do contact your MP (we still need to keep the pressure up with letters) and invite the local media along to an event you are running and then specifically talk of the benefits of canoeing and therefore the need for greater access.

For more help please contact Chloe Nelson-Lawrie at the BCU Offices 0115 9821100 or email chloe.nelson-lawrie@bcu.org.uk or info@riversaccess.org. We all need to work together as this gives us a greater and stronger presence. Thank you for your support.

The River Ivel

The river

The source of the River Ivel is at Ivel Springs in North Hertfordshire, on the outskirts of Baldock. The River Ivel flows in a generally north direction for 20 miles/32km past Biggleswade and Sandy before joining the River Great Ouse at Tempsford, 6 miles/10km east of Bedford.

History

www.ivelvalley.co.uk/valleyhistory.html

The River Ivel was made navigable between Tempsford and Biggleswade in 1758. Goods such as timber and coal were shipped from Newcastle to King's Lynn where they were transferred onto barges or 'lighters'. The lighters were then drawn by horses along the River Great Ouse and the River Ivel, with the goods being delivered to the many wharves on the way. The lighters returned to King's Lynn with flour, grain and vegetables. In 1823 the Navigation was extended from Biggleswade to Shefford.

Many new structures were required along the river, including locks, tow paths, wharves and bridges. Where water mills obstructed the passage of the lighters, as at Blunham and Holme, by-pass channels were dug and bridges constructed.

Until the 1850's business on the Navigation thrived as the primary means of transporting goods to and from the Ivel valley.

But trade rapidly declined after the arrival of the railway and in 1876, the Navigation was closed by the 'Ivel Navigation Abandonment Act', with debts of £14,350.

Natural history

www.ivelvalley.co.uk/pg1.PDF

The Ivel has a rich and diverse flora and fauna and is home to many endangered species, including the water vole, otter, water shrew and white clawed crayfish.

Canoe and kayak

The seven miles from Biggleswade to Tempsford offers the canoeist a very pleasant and varied entirely rural paddle on a clean unpolluted stream with enough flow to create small and simple rapids. The course is obstructed by several weirs which are quite easily negotiated.

Access and egress

The best launch point is in Biggleswade from the small park in Mill Lane, just below the Mill shoot. (Map Landranger 153: 186445.

Egress may be made at Sandy (onto the A1 slip road to Shefford 162490, on the old ford at Tempsford (Church End) - below the weir 155530 or at the Anchor Inn, Tempsford on the Northbound A1 at 161540. If you use the pub landing, then ask permission and buy a drink or two!

Access agreement

The Ivel is extensively fished and no formal

access agreement exists. Avoid paddling at weekends (particularly Sundays) during the coarse fishing season as fishermen use the places that you will want to use to portage. Please be polite and respectful and report any problems or encounters that you may have to David Savage BCU Regional Access Officer: squeezer@ntlworld.com

Paddler's guide

Please note: Descriptions of weirs and hazards are as the author found them at a medium water levels. Conditions

on a weir can change dramatically with a small change in river level and careful inspection and experienced judgement is vital. All weirs can become dangerous under the 'wrong' conditions!

0Km (186445) At the small park beside the river in Biggleswade, park in the small car park on the main road rather than block the lane, carry your canoe or kayak across the grass (don't drag it), launch and enjoy 5km of gentle flow with clear water, lots of wildlife and good views.

5km Weir (175486) This is a simple gentle slope that may be portaged on the left if required.

6.8km Egress to A603 (162490)

8km Weir (154503) A modern structure with long sidewalls, a straight drop and a deep re-circulating stopper. If attempted it will be vital to hit it fast to clear the tow.

Portage left

8.2km Weir. A small gentle slope – sidewall stains suggest that a stopper may form at high water levels. May be portaged left.

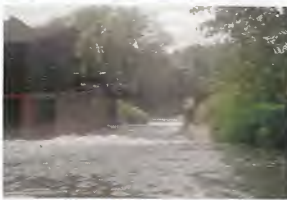
8.9km (156518) Take the Right hand fork (left leads to some very posh Mill houses who may not like you paddling through their garden!), enjoy a mini rapid and a very small straightforward shoot over a small (15cm) drop. Portage will be difficult.

9.5km (158530) Sluice with weirs. Portage to the right of the sluice gate on the left hand bank and re-launch at an old ford on the side (mill) stream. The weir at the mill (private) has a single fairly wide step which could be difficult and which is followed by a fast narrow shoot through the old mill sluice.

Egress can be made onto the lane (use the metal angler's stile) onto Mill Lane by paddling across the old ford to the opposite bank or

10.8km Paddle on to join the River Ouse below Tempsford lock and weir and get out at the Anchor Inn (RH bank) (161540) If you use the pub, then **please** don't drag your boat – carry it – and don't strip off and make an exhibition of yourself in the car park... and do buy a meal/drink... but **do not** eat your sandwiches on the pub premises or in the pub grounds.

David Savage



PADDLE THIS: A Canoe Camping Club favourite paddle

Cliveden Reach on the Thames

Between Maidenhead and Cookham, Cliveden Reach is one of the classic scenic stretches of the River Thames. Off the main channel, the backwaters of Hedsor Water at Cookham and the upper section of the Jubilee River at Maidenhead can be explored. An out and back trip from Maidenhead with no car ferry to worry about provides a five or six mile paddle suitable for all in kayak or open canoe in normal river conditions. A BCU sticker or Environment Agency (EA) licence is required.

The trip is best started at Boulters Lock, Maidenhead where there is a free public car park (height restriction) a few yards from the river. From Maidenhead Bridge on the A4, turn into the A4094 to Cookham and the car park (O.S Map ref 175/903825) is on the left, about 100yds after the lock. Toilets and a café can be found in the park and gardens on the island behind Boulters Lock.

Just across the road from the car park and towards the upper end of the lock the bank is dropped to provide an easy launch. Paddling upstream to Cookham, the entrance to the upper Jubilee River comes into view almost immediately on the right and is easily identified by a barrier system to only allow canoes and small craft to pass through. The half mile or so tranquil tree lined backwater leads to Taplow Mills where there is no egress and necessitates returning to the Thames.

Back on the Thames, the steep wooded hillside of Cliveden owned by the National Trust is followed for 1.5 miles past a series of small islands to Cookham Lock where the river divides into three channels. The right hand channel leads into the backwater of Hedsor Water that is now open to public navigation.

The EA gained a ruling from the High Court in 2002 that it has

a public right of navigation, and disputed by the riparian owners since 1870. If the notice denying access is still in situ at the mouth of the backwater it should be ignored. Landing in Hedsor Water and portaging the weir at the top end is not possible as all the banks are private, requiring a return to Cookham Lock.

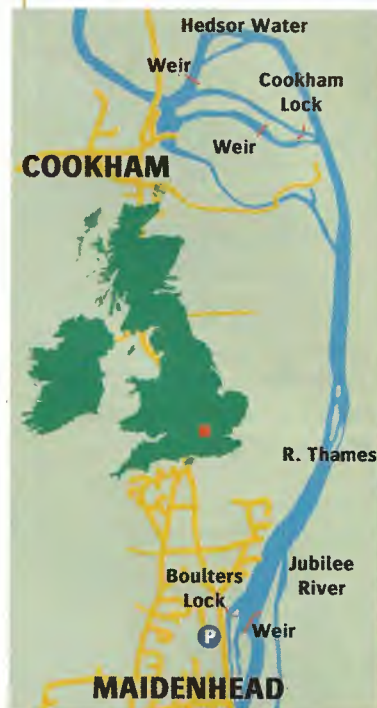
There is a landing point and grassed area for breaks by the public moorings at Cookham Lock and another by the weir at the head of the backwater to the left of the lock cut entrance; and closer to the toilets on the lock island. It is also a short walk from this point into Cookham village for pubs etc.

On the return to Maidenhead, there is the Jubilee River to visit if not paddled earlier and the option to stop off at the portage point for Boulters Lock to view the BCU flume on the weir for freestyle paddlers. Take the channel just to the left of the lock cut entrance and the portage is just at the top of the island beyond the weir. The portage point is on the island public park and it is a short walk through the gardens to the café and toilets as mentioned earlier.

For a trip of about ten miles, continue past Cookham Lock towards Spade Oak Ferry where there are a number of bank side areas and the Spade Oak and Bounty pubs to stop off, but keep a watch out for the dinghy sailing.

Riverside campsites at Cookham Lock and near Maidenhead by Bray Lock enable an extended stay to paddle adjoining sections of the river and the lower section of the Jubilee River. Campsite details are available from the EA (www.visitthames.co.uk) and for paddling information contact the BCU Local River Advisor (Jubilee River and River Thames, Henley to Bell Lock, Egham), details at www.bcu.org.uk.

The Canoe Camping Club is a section of the Camping and Caravanning Club.



In the media

Canoeists have again shown how environmentally friendly they are by undertaking more river clean-ups. The Scouts in Horncastle have been particularly active and took part in the very recent river care day.

In the magazine *Cheshire Life*, Andrew Hobbs explored Llangollen, where culture vultures and canoeists mingle happily. He says "Where else would you find a street full of people clad in, respectively, tweeds, tie-dyed draw string trousers, woolly hats, cagoules and wetsuits?"

In the Scotsman a piece titled 'Bosses splash out on the company canoe', a kayak has been purchased to help a marine inspector do his job. The kayak described as environmentally friendly, has been found to be the ideal way to tackle the geography and accessing difficult areas. Once again, the kayak has been shown to be environmentally friendly!

In the Watford Advertiser, a new fleet of canoes have been presented to the Sea Cadets Cassiobridge HQ, as a result of a Watford Observers charity golf day. Once again the value of exercise, social skills, personal development and team building has been recognised and this type of canoeing can provide it all!

the Dundee Courier and Advertiser has an article showing how canoeing is again being used to raise large sums of money for charity. The RAF service personnel plus a group of Dundee United fans have set out to canoe 222km across Scotland to raise funds for three local causes.

Suggestions of aggression

If you trawl many of the fishing websites you will find suggestions of aggression towards canoeists... from throwing stones/bricks/ to actually hanging wire at neck height across rivers. Wire has been found on several rivers in the past. This is not only outrageous and against the law but it puts the fishing fraternity in a very bad light. Come on advocating violence is not a way forward.

The BCU meets with and talks to a huge variety of people about access to rivers on a very regular basis... this includes the fishing fraternity. In the 21st Century the rivers should not be a battleground but we should all be able to enjoy our natural heritage and the very fabric of our countryside.

More in the media

You may have noticed that the access to rivers issue continues to have profile in the media. We have had articles and letters in the press all around the country and also a debate on Radio 2 on 4th May 2006. Ashley Charlwood represented us in the debate.

As ever Martin Salter MP was factually incorrect.

- It is not a fishing v canoeing debate..
- What length of the 65,000kms do they actually own?
- Why should the rivers have exclusive access only?

Martin also has no concept of canoeing, opening up a few more Thames weirs will not solve the problem. Canoeing is a hugely diverse sport and recreational activity. It is not just about rodeo or white water paddling or competition but also includes those who want to go touring and use the rivers as a leisure activity with their families etc. By encouraging people to travel hundreds of miles down to the Thames is also not

very environmentally friendly. A lot of rivers are near urban areas and this is where the vast majority of paddlers would like to go... locally!

Ashley put forward a very strong case with the River Tryweryn as a shared resource as well as an SSI, SCA etc. There the canoeing and fishing fraternity not only both use the river, which is not dimensionally a big river, they do so in harmony along with many others.

The environment

Even DEFRA have now recognised 'W266 Effects of Canoeing on Fish Stocks and Angling – Research and Development Technical Report W266' and are stating in letters that "Whilst all water-based activities can have a direct impact on the environment, research undertaken on behalf of the Environment Agency found that overall canoeing is not harmful to fish populations." The BCU's access strategy makes it very clear that paddlers should undertake their sport in ways which do not have an adverse environmental impact

Meeting the fishing fraternity

The BCU does and is always prepared to meet with the fishing fraternity to discuss a wide variety of issues. They also sit on many groups at which the fishing fraternity are represented and discussions take place regularly at many different levels.

The selected fishermen came across as quite arrogant in the radio debate, as they consistently put their point of view across by speaking over the other debater. This is not the case for most

access for all

Support the Rivers Access Campaign

www.riversaccess.org

Access Study Rivers – Update May 2006

The Environment Agency reports on the progress and status of the access agreements on the four access river studies.

River Mersey - 30km of access is provided by the access agreement that is finalised.

River Waveney - 38km of access is provided by the access agreement that is finalised

On both these rivers the infrastructure, and signage to support canoeing is in place for paddling to commence. The Environment Agency has requested the rivers should not be paddled until the river guides are available. These will be provided locally and on the Environment Agency website. (a notice of availability will be posted on the BCU website.)

Rivers Teme and Wear - agreements are expected to be in place by mid-July and subject to the provision infrastructure, paddling will be possible from October this year.

Also, in mid-July the Agency will be publishing a report on the four access case studies by the University of Brighton and is expected to be presented by the new minister for inland waterways. At the time of writing recent changes in government DEFRA had not detailed the portfolios of newly appointed ministers.

INFO

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



fishermen who are genuinely good people and, like us all, want to enjoy their sport/pastime and the environment.

Paying... here we go again

Why does this one go un noticed by Martin Salter MP? We do already pay.

In addition canoeists regularly pay for access to facilities for recreation and competition. The argument was used that fishermen pay... well do they? There are supposed to be four million fishermen (the fishing fraternity also dispute this figure as being far to high!) but only 1.2 million rod licences sold... so they are not really regulated. (see letters in the Times on 4th May titled 'River Rights')

However, that is all by the by and the debate is about opening up the rivers for all to enjoy including opening up more places for fishing and other recreational activities. Canoeing is an inclusive sport/recreational activity, so come on lets move the debate on again away from the old myths.

DEFRA – take a different slant on river access to non-powered craft

Letters to MPs are now eliciting a different type of reply from previous ones. But again nowhere in the letters has the fact been stated that the legal position is unclear and needs clarification. We have also been informed through the presentation that Neil Ravenscroft (Brighton University) gave at the Outdoors Show in March that "negotiating voluntary access agreements is an expensive and resource rich exercise." None of which is truly addressed in the letter.

The letters now state

"Whilst all water-based activities can have a direct impact on the environment, research undertaken on behalf of the Environment Agency found that overall canoeing is not harmful to fish populations..." "The BCU's Access strategy makes very clear that paddlers should undertake their sport in ways which do not have an adverse environmental impact. So I (Geoff Collard, Central Communications Unit, DEFRA) believe that with sensible management it should be possible to accommodate the needs of both anglers and canoeists."

The Government is a firm believer in the benefits of outdoor recreation on land or water. Visitors are good for the local economy and people who exercise regularly are healthier than those who do not. So we are keen to promote recreational opportunities as widely as we can and this includes canoeing. The only difference between us and those who advocate a statutory right of access to inland water is the means by which access should be secured."

If the Government is a firm believer in championing outdoor activities, why then is it taking so long to move on the access issue? The letter then goes on to discuss the Brighton reports and suggests again that overall supply is roughly in balance with demand... but we know that to be inaccurate and demand certainly outstrips supply.

The letter suggests "Moreover, statutory right of access would be extremely lengthy, complex and expensive because regulatory systems would have to be put in place for managing a range of different and potentially conflicting activities. It would also be necessary to take in to account of the interests of those who hold riparian rights – generally the adjoining land owner. Any such legislation would be far more complicated than the new right of access to open country and registered common land which is only for people on foot."

The letter also mentions the 70kms of access created by the work the Environment Agency are currently doing on the four pilot projects. However, it does not mention the cost of the projects, (now hundreds of thousands of pounds) the complexity of trying to negotiate with hundreds of land owners

and the time it has taken to achieve the 70kms of access (some of which was already accessible anyway... ie on the River Waveney) plus the fact that the projects are not due to be completed until summer 2008! (Over four years after they were begun!) The water made 'accessible' does not address the needs of those wanting to paddle on moving (white water).

The letter then states "looking further ahead, it has been clear for some time that a strategic approach to planning recreational access to inland waters is needed if we are to make real progress in opening up new opportunities. For that reason DEFRA is supporting the Environment Agency in its proposals to work with other stake holders in developing regional strategies to identify what is needed and where. Plans for the first two regions will be in place by March 2007."

The letter concludes by stating "By adopting the voluntary approach we believe we will (be) able to deliver increased access in the very near future rather than canoeists having to wait for legislation which may not be on the table for a very long time."

The BCU agreed with the Government that they would look at the voluntary agreements via four pilot studies the Environment Agency are undertaking. However, they have grave concerns over the effectiveness of them. There are concerns over the cost of the four pilots, not only in terms of time but in actual cost. Hundreds of thousands of pounds have been spent to potentially gain about 70kms of water out of over 66,000kms of rivers where there is no access! Is this approach a feasible or practicable strategic solution? The rivers chosen for the feasibility study are not exactly attractive options for the canoeist as there is no huge demand to canoe on the River Mersey, for example.

Successive governments have encouraged canoeist to seek to negotiate voluntary access agreements. From over 66,000kms of rivers in England and Wales without a public right of navigation, only 812 kilometres of highly restricted access has been negotiated. Some agreements are for just a few days each year adding very little (1.2%) to the 4% of inland waterways with a public right of navigation. Ultimately, access is in the hands of riparian owners. If they refuse to engage in negotiation, there is no way canoeists can make progress. This leads to unauthorised access to rivers and possible conflict.

Sport England – improving access to the countryside Planning bulletin 17th March

The bulletin is aimed at providing regular information on issues for sport and recreation in the land use planning system and an update on Sport England's planning policies and services. For the latest report see:

www.sportengland.org/index/get_resources/resource_downloads/planning_information.htm

There is a whole section on access to water.

The scene is set in the first place by mentioning CRoW and the Ramblers and how the countryside can offer a range of benefits to people's quality of life, health and well being with the opportunity for fresh air, enjoying the scenery, adventure, recreation and appreciation of nature.

The access to water section discusses the lack of access for sport and in particular for canoeing. It quotes the BCU and discusses the Rivers Access Campaign and what we are trying to achieve. The website www.riversaccess.org is highlighted as the place to go for additional information as well as www.bcu.org.uk

We are getting noticed! Above all canoeing and other non powered watersports and recreational activities are a fabulous and relative inexpensive way of getting out and being healthy... but we need access to the rivers in order to truly be inclusive and accessible for all. ■

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BCU 70th anniversary



Tim Pyror
March adult winner



Owen Bailey (aged 7)
April youth winner



Melanie Taylor
March adult



Thank you for all the wonderful entries we have received so far! The photographs can be viewed on the BCU website, just

follow the link on the homepage. The winners for March and April (as voted by you) are:

- March adult winner - Tim Pyror
- April adult winner - Darren Blyth
- April youth winner - Owen Bailey (7)

Prizes

Monthly winner

A winner will be chosen each month until December 2006. 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 website where people can vote for their favourite image by emailing the number of the photograph to pete@bcu.org.uk

Overall Winner

At the end of January 2007 one overall winner from the youth category and one winner from the adult category will win a digital camera worth £150!

How to Enter

Email photographs in jpeg format to chloe.nelson-lawrie@bcu.org.uk. Or send in photographs on a CD to; BCU, John Dudderidge House, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 5AS. Remember to provide contact details that including; membership number, name, address, telephone number and age.



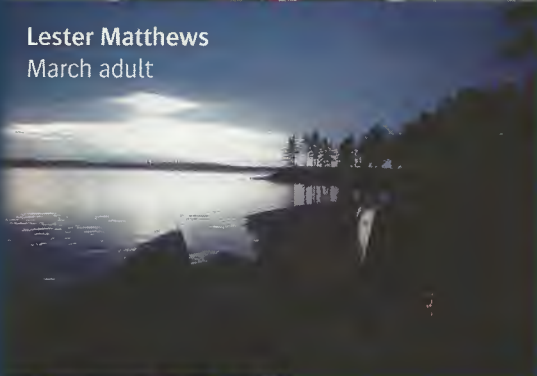
Sarah Shephard
Youth



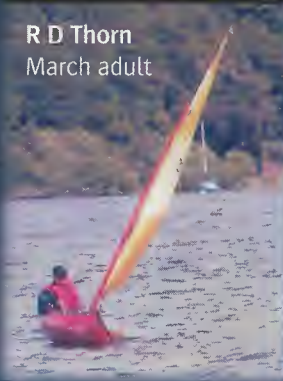
Sam Ellis
Youth



Mark Hampton
Youth



Lester Matthews
March adult



R D Thorn
March adult

y photo competition



Darren Blyth
April Adult winner



David Bloomer
April adult



Mathew Thompson
April adult



Alex Wilson
April adult



Mike Redders
April adult



Sam Ward
April adult



Steve Ball
April adult

PADDLE THIS



The British Canoe Union presents:

YOUTHFEST
2006 National Bellboat Championships

We've got some great events lined up for you this summer – you can check them out on the InfoZone pages of our website at www.canoe-england.co.uk – just click youth then KidZone. One event not to miss is of course our annual YouthFest event – if you haven't got your entry in yet then read on...

YouthFest 2006
Sunday 9th July 2006
Dorney Lake, Berkshire

This year we are at the venue for the 2012 Olympic regatta site at Dorney Lake – how cool is that? You can go for medals on the same water that our Olympic paddlers will battle for medals in 2012. We are also delighted to announce that this year YouthFest will be supported by PGL Travel, one of the leading providers of residential activity breaks for schools and adventure holidays for children and families. Their support will help to make the event bigger and better than ever before!



Sunday 9th July 2006
Dorney Lake, Berkshire



XStream Challenge – where you can limbo or spin and try your boat skills with this great new challenge! Or you could challenge your shooting and ball handling skills in the Polo 'Golden Shot'. If you want to try some flips and spins you could join in the Freestyle sessions, or if speed is your passion then join in the Lighting and Open Canoe racing events. And all through the day you can have a go at the ergo paddling machine challenge or 'Come and Try' a different boat out.

So don't miss out on the fun... entry forms can be downloaded from our web site or contact Michelle by email: youth@bcu.org.uk or phone 0115 982 4220. Closing date for entries 26th June 2006
www.canoe-england.org.uk

Activity Holidays for 7-17 year olds

The school holidays don't have to be boring... For more details of our great holidays visit



www.pgl.co.uk
or Freephone on 0500 749147

There's the National Bellboat Championships – paddle with your mates in teams of eight! Then you could try the

Paddlepower success

Two young members from Hexham CC received recognition of their paddling skills at the NEC Outdoor Show on Saturday 18th March. Glendenning sisters Anna Louise (aged 17) and Chloe (aged 13) joined an elite handful of junior paddlers by completing Paddle Power 2 and the Black Challenge recently. This is the highest skills award in the BCU Young People's Programme and involves participation in a wide range of Paddlesport activities and competitions.

The presentation was made by Olympic Silver medallist Campbell Walsh (K1 Slalom Athens 2004)

These two sisters started their paddling career only four years ago. I've a feeling that this could be a case of 'watch this space'!
Bobby T. PDO NE region



Paddlesport at Nene



1st May 2006, May Day bank holiday, and rather than dancing round May poles, southern region paddlesport organised a day out to paddle at the Nene White Water Centre in Northampton. This was in addition to the normal Paddlepower Event series run which young people enter as teams from their clubs. The trip to the Nene was a little different and very much about paddling and having fun!

The clubs provided Level 3 coaches who coached the young paddlers throughout the day and who also provided safety cover. It was really good to see everyone getting something from the coaching. Some of the little steps at the start of the day turned into huge personal leaps by the end. The improvement in individual personal confidence was great to see. The coaches were really great at bringing on the confidence of the paddlers.

The various boats brought along by the different clubs made a difference from the usual short playboats I usually see on the Nene. Adventure Dolphin Pangbourne provided a

Spanish Fly OC-1 (open canoe one person) and a Topo Duo. These provided a huge amount of entertainment. The Duo also gave some paddlers the opportunity to paddle the full course from the top. This was fantastic to give them the chance to paddle all the way from the top of the course and conquer the mighty drop into pool A. Most then went back and paddled it on their own in their kayaks – success!

The Southern region paddlesport committee worked very hard at making the day happen. The helpers and parents who got the young people there and got everything in the right place at the right time. The coaches who gave it that bit of magic to make it a special kind of day. The young people made the day worthwhile by turning up, taking part and having fun.

This event at the Nene proves that there has to be time for fun and play – however serious you are at competing. If you haven't tried something like this in your region, then you should think about organising something.

Tom Paterson, Southern region paddlesport team



Back to back Wavehopper events

Two Perception Wavehopper Challenge events took place in April in the Northern region. Supported by juniors from six clubs over the weekend, a total of 36 intrepid paddlers took to the swollen rivers at the Tyne Riverside Country Park Prudhoe on April 1st (no fooling!) and the Sands, Carlisle the following day. Some excellent times were achieved – several competitors were only seconds apart – and in the case of Connor Gibbs and Michael Errington (both of Hexham CC) a joint first in the U12's at the Prudhoe event. A big well done to all!

A team of cheerful volunteers turned up both days despite the far from spring-like weather which meant that the events could go ahead with excellent safety cover. Thanks also to those who helped with coaching, registration, timing, carrying boats and a special thank you to the strong guys who pushed my car out of the mud on the Sunday!

The Wavehoppers will be out on the water again at the Northern min-y-Fest on Saturday 20th May at Derwentwater, near Keswick. Full details on www.bcu.org.uk/northern. Hope to see you there!

Bobby E. Timperley PDO NE region
Nigel Timmins CDO Northern region

Surf development day

As is traditional, the fourth CREST and BCU sponsored Surf Kayak Development Day followed the annual www.earplugs-direct.co.uk surf spectacular held at Widemouth Bay, North Cornwall. Both days were extremely well attended with plenty of young paddlers taking part in the competition before staying on for the following coaching day.

BCU surf coaches Simon Hammond, Andy Hambley and Dave Oxnard ran workshops in fantastic conditions on the development course with 20 women and youth paddlers taking part. The advanced paddlers explored the coastline between Bude and Northcott Mouth before working on pre-rotation skills in the afternoon whilst the intermediate and novice groups followed the theme of trying to be in the right place at the right time in order to make the most of every wave they caught.

These development days will continue over the next two years with more opportunities for young and women paddlers to come and get involved. The next development day will be Saturday 29th July. Contact Simon Hammond Cornish PDO on hammond.family@virgin.net

Simon Hammond, PDO Cornwall

Jack Horwell



PADDLE THIS

Lucid Laburnum



Normally when a sports club achieve their Club Mark accreditation, there's a 'bells and whistles' presentation with VIP invites to local press, the Mayor, other dignitaries and Z list celebrities etc etc. So when Laburnum Boat Club achieved their Sport England Club Mark and BCU version Top Club, I asked how they would like to celebrate.

Not interested in speeches, clapping and Champagne, Laburnum decided quite rightly to celebrate in the best possible style for a boat club and get on the water! So in the absence of Ken Livingstone I headed over to the club to help them celebrate this achievement by

getting on the water and teaching some of their young paddlers some freestyle skills instead, and at least I didn't offend anyone (I hope).

Beth Ettinger at Laburnum has worked hard to help the club through the paces to achieve Top Club. Its not that the club wasn't already good, it was, but having ticked the right boxes and completed the file, Laburnum Boat Club can proudly display its Sport England kite mark and consider itself on par with all other fine sports clubs in the country. The club will also be offered more support and many funds consider these Top Clubs more favourably.

Laburnum Boat Club offers many opportunities for young Londoners in South Hackney to get out on the water. At the club they make good use of the canal system with a range of different canoes and kayaks and two working narrow boats. The youth club is very active and regularly travels outside London on paddling trips to exciting destinations like the Highlands of Scotland or North Devon.

I asked Beth Ettinger about the club. "Laburnum Boat Club is a small community boating project in South Hackney, London, set up in 1983 by a group of local parents. We have over 60 canoes and kayaks, two narrow boats (one fully wheelchair accessible) and a fully accessible site with a club hut and classroom. We run numerous services for the local community, including a busy youth club; two sports clubs for young people with disabilities; a youth watersports training project; an adult canoe club; a family club; a watersports club for adults with mental health issues and canoeing and narrow boating sessions for local schools and youth, community and welfare groups."

On the day the sun was shining, and we started with a warm up paddle on the canal before getting stuck into some serious boat control exercises, we got wetter and wetter throughout the session which culminated in two young paddlers pulling their first cartwheels then watching some exciting action on the purpose built launch ramp. Props to: Elif Beckwith and Jemima Williams for launching themselves into the freezing canal!

The day ended with a quick photo shoot of handing the certificate to Laburnum's Jim Armstrong. Then as the sun was still shining (and with water in the weirs) the coaches zipped off to Hurley for an evening surf session. A good end to a great day on the water.

Matt Tidy



If you didn't see them we ran two previous articles in February and April 2005. These are now on www.kayakojacko.com. You'll probably need to read these to make sense of this one. As we have had a bit of a break lets recap what we have already covered.

In the first article we covered the component parts of every freestyle move – Rotation, Edging, Body Posture and Your Arms and Paddle Dexterity. We gave details on why these were so important and some tips to help promote the skills. We also included details about your boat and bullet pointed what you need to look out for.

Article two gave a detailed description of the terminology surrounding freestyle so that when you hear or read the words they make sense. It gave details of Pour-Overs, Waves and Holes explaining how they look, who they are suitable for, how to get on them and some other general information. The article gave a few rules to help when you're on these features and then went on to explain front surf, back surf, side surf and flat spins.

So onto the next article. Here we deal with the very real issue of barriers to progression in freestyle. These are there for everyone so well worth a mention. Then we give advice on how to get into position. This is so important as it gives the ability to do the fullest range of moves on every site.

The Barriers

It is not easy to perform the move's that's why not everyone is doing them but if you take time and give yourself the best opportunity you will succeed. Remember once you have truly identified the barriers your half way to overcoming them. 'The Barriers to Progression' we have identified come in four variants

- Physical
- Psychological
- Technical
- Logistical

It's worth pointing out here that one barrier may lead to another occurring and these four distinct areas actually can play into each other. When identifying exactly what the barrier is be sure to consider the route cause rather than the outcome.

1. Physical Barriers

There is no getting away from it; some of the moves require physical strength to achieve. If you're not strong enough you may well adapt technique to create the desired outcome but more likely than not your efforts will build strength and eventually the move will come to you.

2. Psychological Barriers

Psychological barriers come in so many variants and tend to be the things that you emotionally feel, for many these are the toughest to overcome. Here is an example: One of the biggest barriers to progression in freestyle is intimidation, e.g. by the size of the feature or by all the people watching. Imagine trying to learn algebra whilst being placed on one of those spinning knife tables and you're about in the same learning environment. Creating the correct learning environment is essential to promoting the quickest progression.

3. Technical Barriers

How is your technique? Do you truly understand the move and how it works? If the answer isn't great and yes then this could be the barrier to achieving what you are after.

4. Logistical Barriers

A good example of a logistical barrier is – If you have not got a car then canoeing is hard graft, as you have to rely on other people getting you to a place where you can do your freestyle. Here are some barriers we have come across and how we dealt with them: **"I don't have time to do all the things that are required to make the move happen"**

Try to identify the key elements to the move and then focus just on these keys. Create a tick list of the keys and work through these one at a time rather than all together. Practice new moves and techniques on the flat or on dry land. **"I don't seem to have the flexibility required to achieve the move"**

Learning flexibility, rotation and body posture does not need to occur just on the wave, if you practice rotation every day within two weeks you will see results. Body posture becomes a constant, so that you are aware when slouching and always correct yourself. If you can't rotate or hold posture during every day activity you certainly won't be able to during freestyle on the wave or in the hole so get it right every day e.g. when driving the car, sitting at your desk or eating your dinner.

"I know what I want to do but feel nervous when going onto the feature"

If you are intimidated – analyse what intimidates you. Is it the water,

Principles of freestyle 3

By popular demand the freestyle articles are back.

the crowd, the cold or something else? Try to recognise and rationalise then go with a plan to do something about it.

Give yourself time – as freestyle has become more popular the places where we do it have taken the strain and now this means you have to queue longer. When people have been waiting and then wash straight off the feature they get upset and then you end up with an eddy where peoples moods are somewhat strained. Take

time; in a friendly way let them know you need to set up before entering the wave and who knows they may even give you a few words of advice.

"I train on the flat but when I get to the feature I can't do as much as on the flat"

Remember that practice needs to actually replicate what you are trying to do on the feature. Perfect practice makes perfect performance. It's worth studying footage of what you are trying to achieve with your practice. Then isolate boat, body, blade and water to give you more idea of exactly what you are after.

"I hate queuing"

Queuing can be positive as it gives you the opportunity to visualise what you want to do, time to practice in a more stable environment and it gives the opportunity to observe both good and bad practice. There's so much learning we can take from working out exactly why things happen.

"I don't have anywhere near where I live to train, how am I ever going to be good without a good freestyle site on my doorstep, all the good paddlers live near a good feature"

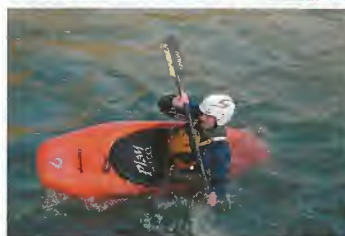
Practice everything about your freestyle where you can. For me this was the River Avon in Wiltshire and that is flat as a pancake. When I was training on this river I would make sure I could do loads on the flat, this included pyramid training, flat water technique, running, weights and swimming. Then when I got to a play spot I could train longer, be more focussed and have more power when I needed it.

Barriers are there to be flattened so recognise and destroy.

Progressing into a routine

Now we have that lot out of the way we probably have a few moves and want to start progressing into a routine. I follow this pattern.

- Practice position not move
- Practice move not sequence
- Practice sequence not whole run
- Practice whole run not how long you can stay in the hole



The struggle when learning freestyle is to recognise without position you won't hit the moves and retain the feature. Learning how to position requires discipline, as many of us would rather show the move than show we can get to a point where the move will work best.

Ok so how do we get in position? Well we have come up with four distinct methods. These are used either as individual techniques or more commonly in combination with each other.

- The edge thrust.
- The flat spin or single end cartwheel with weight shift – weight shift (show boat and talk about cause and effect of body movement and the shape of the hull rocker break).
- Carving
- Power bounce

The edge thrust

The edge thrust is a useful method of moving the boat around in the hole when you are in a side-surf. We also use minor edge thrusts whilst on waves to maintain height.

Lets first look at the hole version. The technique works best where the hole has pile on the surface and a fast undercurrent below the surface.

From the side surf where you should be maintaining correct edge all you need to do is push up with your knee on the upstream side. This makes the down stream edge to go deeper into the water and causes the boat to rise up the pile. The key aspects to make this work are-

Keep your body and head upright during the whole manoeuvre. This will keep your body weight centralised over the down stream edge.

Keep the paddle in a low brace position as much as you can. If the pile is really high you may have to alternate between high and low brace.

Focus on your upstream knee – to make this technique work you need to be able to apply and maintain the lifting motion so that the edge comes on and holds. You may need to hold this position for five seconds plus

The wave version relies on very similar technique. Here the boat will be moving across the wave and instead of holding the position you tend to do thrusts of edge which have the effect of making the boat sty high on the wave.

The Flat Spin or end dab with weight shift

We went through flat spin technique in article 2. It is worth revisiting this before progressing into this technique. To use this technique you must first be able to do the standard flat spin.

Set up and begin the standard flat spin

Assuming the boat starts pointing straight upstream, as the nose of the boat reaches 4/7 and 6 o'clock (right and left spin) of the spin rotation bring your body weight forwards. This will load the front rocker break and make the back lighter. This means as the nose comes around that the boat will be pushed up. Remember to return to your correct body position. This technique works well in unison with the edge thrust.

Carving

Carving is simply keeping the boat front surfing and applying edge to make it go in one direction. Then you change edge and go in the opposite direction. If you carve hard/fast and over a long enough distance you will also start leaning, this is where your body is still upright but assumes an angle so that you are still sat upright in your boat rather than upright compared to the horizon line.

Remember to look where you want to go and to follow this through with correct rotation.

Your stroke will be somewhere between a low brace and a stern rudder with the blade flat to the surface. As you want to change direction, change the side your blade is on, make this a dynamic transfer and you will make dynamic turns. The blade is on the upstream side of the boat.

You can shift your weight during the carve and this will load or release the rocker break and thus move you around on the wave.

Carving offers an excellent opportunity to start cartwheels, as it tends to position you well. The start of this cartwheel will simply be more edge transfer.

Power Bounce

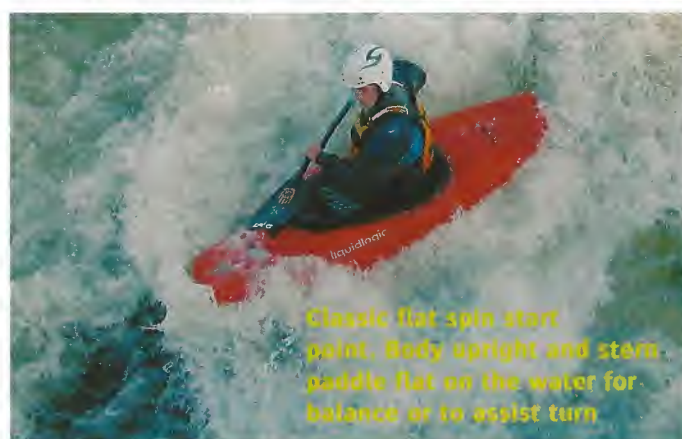
The power bounce is simply paddling against the flow hard and hoping there will be a mirrored energy that pushes you back up the wave or hole. My least favourite as it is not always successful but it is the easiest to learn.

From any position, paddle forwards or backwards as appropriate. Hope that the energy is mirrored and the boat rises back up the pile.

Leaning forwards when going backwards and backwards when going forwards will allow the boat to travel farther up the hole or wave. Once at its maximum though you need to do the opposite. ●

Andy Jackson

PADDLE THIS



Next edition – cartwheels. Remember all the articles are posted on www.kayakojacko.com and we really do welcome feedback.

See you on the water

Jacko

Classified adverts

A reminder for Canoe England members: You can freely add or remove classified adverts by visiting the Members' area of the Canoe England website.

How do I log in the members' area?

Visit www.canoe-england.org.uk

Click on Members heading at the top of the page.

Enter your membership number only. Do not include letters i.e. F or B and do not include /

Tick the box 'pick up my password' and click continue.

Enter your postcode and continue.

Your password will be displayed. You can change this to make it more memorable.

The classified adverts are on the left hand side.

BCU lifeguards updates

Aquatic first aid trainers

Late Last year the European Resuscitation Council introduced new resuscitation guidelines. BCU aquatic first aid trainers should now be teaching to these best practice protocols. The aquatic first aid syllabus has been updated and copies of this can be found on

www.bculifeguards.org.uk

New for 2006 is the BCU Lifeguards Aquatic First Aid Manual. The manual is fully updated to the New 2006 protocols and is highly recommended as a handout on all aquatic first aid courses. Lifeguards are giving a 'free' copy of the manual to all current aquatic first aid trainers. Contact Phil Quinn via email secretary@bculifeguards.org.uk

Lifeguards

Over the last few months the BCU Lifeguards National Committee has been restructuring the examiner grading scheme to come in line with the BCU coaching scheme. The Lifeguard Trainer, Examiner Grades 1 and 2 and Lifeguard Coach will now be replaced with;

BCU Level 1 Lifeguard Coach through to BCU Level 5

Lifeguard Coach.

The Level 1 Lifeguard Coach is a new award aimed at Lifeguards wishing to assist on Canoe Safety Test Training.

Level 2 Lifeguard Coach replaces the Lifeguard Trainer award.

Level 3 Lifeguard Coach replaces the Lifeguard Examiner Grade 1
Level 4 Lifeguard Coach replaces the Lifeguard Examiner Grade 2
Level 5 Lifeguard Coach replaces the Lifeguard Coach award.

All existing Examiner Grades will be notified by the National Training Officer of their Coaching Levels and Certificates will be issued. As a result of the above changes all the Lifeguard Awards Syllabi have had to be reworded. The New Syllabi are available on the Lifeguard web site.

www.bculifeguards.org.uk.

National Lifeguard Committee

Confirmation of canoe use at Carsington Water

1. School use (community sports coach project)

2 sessions per week 4pm-6pm (one hour on water)
Up to eight pupils on each session (maximum of 16 per week)
40 weeks a year for three years, then subject to review.

2. BCU affiliated clubs (groups)

Evening and weekend use by prior arrangement.

3. BCU members (individuals)

10% reduction (including launch fees and use of facilities)

4. BCU county/regional coach updates

Car parking for updates days will be free of charge, however, all cars must park in the watersports car park not in the visitors centre car park. For more information please contact Sarah Barrett carsingtonwater@btconnect.com

YORCIE NEWS: www.yorcie.org.uk

The Yorkshire region of the BCU comprises 1,900 members of which 850 are also members of the coaching scheme and has 47 affiliated clubs. This column is yours to help me tell the rest of the region about you.

Congratulations to Sheffield CC on successfully being awarded with Top Club and to White Rose CC for passing their first two yearly revalidation of the award. Thanks to the volunteers in these clubs who have the drive and vision to implement these improving awards. Congratulations also to Richard Longley on being awarded the Wakefield and District Sportsman of the year. Richard is a member of West Yorkshire CC and plays polo for Pennine A team and Notts University.

Some more clubs have contacted me with their meeting details. If one of these is near you and you fancy a night out, then please make contact.

Lower Wharfe CC meets on summer Thursday evenings at Bishopthorpe from 7.00pm. Please contact Sue Couling on 01904 400509 at suecouling@hotmail.com or check out www.lowerwharfe.co.uk

If you are a bit further south then try Knottingley CC who meet at Knottingley Sports Centre also from 7pm on Monday nights. Please contact Heather Emms 01924 895867 at heather.emms@virgin.net or check out www.knottingleycc.org.uk

White Rose CC meet on Tuesdays and Wednesdays evenings and have specific dates which are all comers 'come and try it'. Please contact Kate Wright on 01132 943778 at mail@whiterose-canoeclub.org.uk and www.whiterose-canoeclub.org.uk

Some forthcoming diary dates for you are:-

You may just catch up, with some of the 53 names now on the register, for the next Yorkshire sea kayakers event, which is a trip to the caves at Flamborough on June 17th. Details contact Ken Reece 01937 588786 on ken@reececfreeserve.co.uk and check the regions web for the rest of the years six events www.yorcie.org.uk

July 1-2nd at Washburn for the **Yorkshire Championships**. Come watch the fun and see if you can pick our champ. Will it be another girl? Have a go, or watch, serious or just for fun in the combination events of slalom/wild water race/freestyle. New for this year will be the best of two and best of three events. And if that wasn't enough there are Div 1 and 2 slaloms on as well. Details from Esther Mathews on 01302 535941 at esther.mathews@btinternet.com

Esther is also the contact for polo for Beginners and Improvers event to be hosted by Green Star at Hatfield Water Park on July 8-9th. (And for you diaries - this weekend will be repeated on Oct 7-8th. The second Paddlefest is Sept 9-10th.)

On Saturday 5th Aug, White Rose CC will be hosting sprint races in Roundhay Park in Leeds. Information is available from Kate Wright. Please see above for contact details.

Well, were you there? The 'Aldwark Coaching Extravaganza 2006', if so, you'll want to join me in thanking the entire Aldwark team for a fantastic coaching weekend. 17 courses concurrently ran over one or both days with 150 participants, making it the biggest single coming together of coaches in the Yorkshire region ever (I think). Very well done, to all the staff, cooks, coaches and helpers who so enthusiastically put so much into the weekend and to John Lucas who made it happen. How on earth we top that I don't know. Answers on a digital postcard to lucasj@btinternet.com or 07884 181828 or 103, Springfield Rd, Morley, Leeds, LS27 9AT.

And at the risk of making this sound like a John Lucas appreciation society, I am very pleased to say it goes on. At the March meeting of the Yorkshire Regions Coaches (which was another record breaker, with 41 attending and apologies from a further 16),

John volunteered to become a Local Coaching Organiser. For some years, two areas 'Moors' and 'Dales' (which had previously been combined) have been organised by Terry Hailwood tandjailwood@aol.com. Geographically this was crackers and by John volunteering, it will allow the seven regions to be redefined and our coaches to be better served. Details of the areas and all Yorkshire coaching related information is available from our secretary Janet at paul@pcartwright.freeserve.co.uk

And if that wasn't enough, I am delighted to announce that John has also volunteered to take on the region's role as Regional Access Officer. Dedication indeed. For years now Norman Taylor has sought to provide a basic access service, but has always asked for someone to take on and do the job properly. Norman wants to concentrate on his many others responsibilities, of which you all know him best for Washburn. So a big thank you to both Norman and Pam and very best wishes to John Lucas.

John has lots of ideas and will be rolling these out in due course. At this point I do want to thank the entire current team of Yorkshire River Advisors and encourage them to make contact with John so he can start to update the regions rivers guide. (This appointment needs to be ratified by the LRAs).

The next coaches get together is on Sept 24th (note date change) and again it is being hosted by White Rose CC mail@whiterose-canoeclub.org.uk at Fearnville Sports Centre, Oakwood Lane, Leeds, LS8 3LF. The evening starts at 6.30pm (Ian will be along about 8ish!) with the theme of '3 star skills - lets all sing off of the same hymn sheet'. Sound familiar? There will be a model demo on DVD. This will then be followed by a coaches meeting. All coaches are invited and very welcome. Details from Janet.

Coaches who missed the March meeting please note that following the successful launch of the improved regional website, that the old coaching website is now obsolete and the information has been transferred to www.yorcie.org.uk

The region's website www.yorcie.org.uk is now stuffed with all the latest dates and events and continues to attract more and more surfers. Earlier this year it topped 20,000 hits. If your club hasn't yet taken up **your** page, then you are missing out. You now have the facility to directly input/edit your own events and all it takes to start you off is an email to the webmaster (Kate) at webmaster@yorcie.org.uk

Invitation, calling all clubs.

The next regional team meeting on Monday 26th June at 6.30 will be followed at 7.45 with guest speakers. David Gent, BCU Vice President and Chris Hawkesworth, BCU Facilities Manager, will be presenting 'Yorkshire Paddling, now, the future and more'. Miss it and miss out. This is being hosted for the region by White Rose CC at their new clubhouse on the lake in Roundhay Park and places are limited. So please contact our regional secretary Jon Dakeyne to secure your place. Tel 0113 2250984 on jdakeyne@aol.com The following RDT meeting will be on Monday Sept 4th and we are being hosted by Bradford & Bingley CC at their new facilities at Wagon Lane Bingley. This will give the opportunity for any of the regions' clubs to send a representative and to see two of the region's top clubs who have also benefited from Community Club Development Funding and what they have done with it. A reminder that the Region's ACM is again at Ossett cricket club on Tuesday Nov 28th.

Don't forget that the region's yorcie phone information line 0845 8338654 is not just for the Washburn and you can use it to advertise your own events. Contact Jon.

Finally I know all the regions' paddlers will wish to send their condolences to the Yorkshire Family, following the Easter Canoeing tragedy of their daughter on the R Wye. Dick. dickconstable@canoeists.co.uk details in the yearbook p62

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Keep it simple

Dear Sirs, I may be being naive or missing something here but the way I see it is:

The riparian owner owns the banks and bed of the river but not the water. You cannot be trespassing unless you are on someone's property.

By being on the water you are floating above the property and so are not on it. In the same way that aircraft are not trespassing by flying (floating) over my back yard. Why is it not this simple?

Steve Corston

The hypothesis is wrong and the conclusion is also wrong. You may cross any land in a normal journey from one place to another in an aircraft. Not in a hovercraft. A boat on water is more like a hovercraft than an aircraft.

The courts have held since 1690 that if you go in a boat to catch salmon in a river you are both poaching and trespassing.

It is true to say that a riparian owner does not own the water in the river. But he does have certain rights over it. At Common Law the right to abstract water. The right to use the power of the water, as in water mills.

There are rights relating to the temperature of the water for it may be used for cooling. The right to divert the water into a new course providing it

CONTRIBUTION DETAILS

Email: peter@canoefocus.co.uk

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

leaves his property at the same point. The right to breed fish in the water. The right of fishing for wild fish. He does not own the fish. He does not own the water. But he owns the right of fishing.

It is clear from the Derwent case and the Ouse case that the riparian owner also owns the right of navigation. This is stated explicitly in some of the legal commentaries. This is the same as a field. The farmer owns the right to walk over the field.

It is clear from the case concerning tidal waters in the Malayan States that there may not even be a public right of navigation on tidal waters if the area was dug out by the riparian owner.

However there may also be an overriding right for the public to pass over the field on a footpath. Equally there may be a right for the public to pass over a river. This right may be provided by statute, as on part of the non-tidal Thames. It may be provided in other ways, as on the Cam between Cambridge and Grantchester. I claim that it exists on all rivers which were physically navigable in 1189 and are still physically navigable. But not everyone agrees.

If you buy a man-carrying balloon and fly it at 50ft when there is a north wind so that it sits over the garden of your neighbour to the south, you will soon be told by the court that the right to fly a balloon is not unrestricted. If you fly a model aircraft at 20ft in circles which go over your neighbour's garden you will be told to stop.

It is clear that the riparian owner owns, in general, the bed of a non-tidal river and has many other rights to the water while it is over his land. Our claim is that there should be, and often is, a superior public right of navigation.

I regret that there is no mileage to be gained from this argument.

Douglas Caffyn

Putting the record straight

In the April 2006 copy of Canoe Focus you publish an article 'North Sea Challenge'. This article contains the statement; 'The only person before us to make the North Sea Crossing was Derek Hutchinson in 1978...'

This statement is entirely false and an affront to myself and my paddling friends who hold the world records for crossing the North Sea at, or longer than, the traditional crossing point from Felixstowe to Zeebrugge. This is a distance of over 100 miles and was completed in a double sea kayak in just over 20 hours and in single sea kayaks in just over 24 hours. I would imagine that it is also an affront to Kevin Danforth and Franco Ferrero who also did the crossing a few years before us, again at the traditional crossing point.

There is no way that I would wish to detract from the adventure that the folk in the article had, good for them. However, you must get your facts straight before going to publication so that you do not offend those of us who have our own adventures and memories and who do not want their achievements ignored in this way.

You will find full details in Canoe Focus after the records were achieved in August 1997 and August 1999, or with Guinness Book of Records who verified both the records and issued confirmation documents and certificates.

Regards, Rod Cooke

Apologies for taking our eye off the ball and glad to put the record straight. **Ed**



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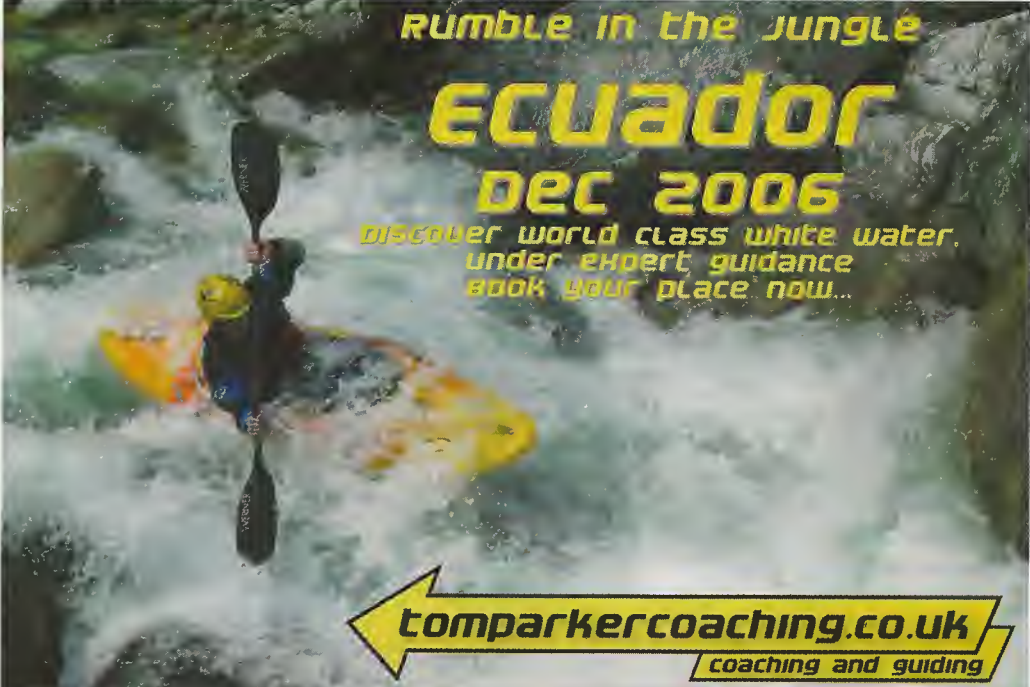
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SITUATIONS VACANT**Freelance Residential Care Workers Needed!**

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

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

Can you say yes to the following questions?

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

For information /application pack call us on 01768 899998
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YMCA
National Centre, Lakeside

Looking for a job in the outdoor industry?

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

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

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

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

www.lakesideymca.co.uk**DEVELOPMENT TUTOR (OUTDOORS) • KENT**

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

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email kent@fairbridge.org.uk or ring 01634 815341.

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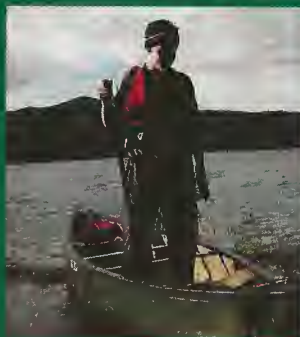
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WANTED PADDLERS**Are you up to the challenge?****IF YOU ARE:**

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- Enthusiastic ● Full of initiative
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OUTDOOR EDUCATION***"Learning Through Adventure"***SENIOR INSTRUCTOR (Full Time Post)**

Salary £16,602 - £17,655 inc.D.I.A

(Job ref no Ed/073/06)

The post will commence September 2006.

Candidates

must have at least 3 years of teaching outdoor education and possess a wide range of land and water based coaching qualifications. The candidate must have 2 or more of the qualifications listed below:

Summer ML ● M.I.A. Training/Assessment ● B.C.U. Coach L3 Canoe/Sea Kayak ● P.A.D.I. Divemaster ● A.P.I.O.L.

The full time Senior Instructor will be required to work under the direction of the Outdoor Education Advisor. The post holder will share the responsibility of managing a busy outdoor centre (32 bed) and seasonal staff on a day to day basis.

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The closing date for applications is August 1st 2006

For an informal chat or to obtain an application pack please contact:

Chris Jex, Education Department, Orkney Islands Council,
School Place, Kirkwall, Orkney KW15 1NY,
tel. (01856) 873535 ext 2414 or email:
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Contact Scott or John on 01983 404987, email

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**horseshoe
lake**
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BCU Kayak/Canoe Coach L2 - BDA and GNAS an advantage.

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THE CHILDREN ARE READY... Are You?

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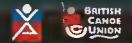
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For more details please contact Paul Ball on 01782 722226 or email paul@peakpursuits.co.uk



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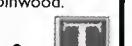
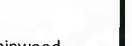
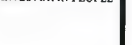
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Tel 01706 814 554

SITUATIONS VACANT



B.C.U. & R.Y.A Instructors & Senior Instructors Required for 2006 season

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

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

email: albanyparksb@rbk.kingston.gov.uk



Arnfield Care Ltd

Instructors/Care Workers Wanted



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

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

Please contact Paul Knowles 01457 860200

MARRICK PRIORY



Outdoor Education Centre 2Posts

We require enthusiastic multi-activity instructors with excellent interpersonal skills and experience of working with young people in a centre environment. Qualification at NGB level in one or

more of the following is essential: SPA, BCU level 2 coach, GNAS, LCMLA level 1. NGB training or experience in one or more of the above is desirable.

We are a Christian run centre, set in beautiful Swaledale, in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Excellent salary package including accommodation and NGB training worth over £16,000.

Send a full CV and a letter of application to:

Head of Centre, Marrick Priory Outdoor Education Centre
RICHMOND, North Yorkshire DL11 7LD

Web site: www.marrickpriory.co.uk

E-mail: office@marrickpriory.co.uk

Telephone: 01748 884434

Interviews planned for late May and early June

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Tel: 020 7592 1892



Charity no. 306016

Girlguiding UK

**Haven Banks OEC is seeking
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instructors to deliver an extensive activity programme to
adults and children throughout the 2006 season.**

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



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or call 01392 434668



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More details on website: 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

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£7,548 - £10,117

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We're seeking a highly motivated and dedicated professional to join our dynamic Sports Development team. One of three sites funded by the Big Lottery as part of their new opportunities for P.E and sport programme, Woodmill Outdoor Centre has brand new classroom and changing room facilities. Your responsibility will be to increase community usage of these facilities and ensure that everybody has the opportunity to enjoy outdoor adventure activities at whatever involvement or level of ability.

You'll have two years' experience of Sports Development supported by experience of working with local communities and the voluntary sector, to identify, promote and develop new initiatives. You should also have a variety of outdoor adventure coaching qualifications (eg B.C.U level 2 coach) and have a sound knowledge of current Sports Development initiatives.

For the suitably qualified person opportunities will be made available to increase hours worked by delivering coaching and instructing in one or more of the activities available at the centre.

For an application pack, visit www.southampton.gov.uk/jobs
email: recruitment@southampton.gov.uk
or tel: 023 8083 3111 quoting ref: A599.
Minicom: 023 8083 2838.

Closing date: 9th June 2006.



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KIMBOLTON SCHOOL



Outdoor Pursuits Instructor

Required for September 2006

Kimbolton School is an 850 strong HMC co-educational school with both day and boarding pupils. The School is delightfully set in the grounds of Kimbolton Castle in rural Cambridgeshire.

The School is committed to strong extra-curricular provision of which canoeing and sailing play an integral part. Kimbolton canoeists regularly partake in D-W, with a canoeing base on the Great Ouse at Eaton Socon. The sailing club is located at Grafham Water, two miles from the school. The successful candidate will need to be a proficient canoeist and sailor with the skills necessary to maintain and repair the school dinghies, canoes and ancillary equipment.

Further details from the PA. to the Headmaster:
Kimbolton School, Kimbolton, Huntingdon,
Cambridgeshire, PE28 0EA
Telephone: (01480) 862204
Email: headmaster@kimbolton.cambs.sch.uk

Closing Date: Friday 16th June 2006
Kimbolton School Charity No: 1098586

Want more than just a job?

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

■ Full-board accommodation ■ Competitive weekly wage
If you are a competent paddler, but don't currently hold any awards, we offer training and assessment opportunities to help you get qualified.

Flexible length contracts available

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keep it simple!

So Friday evening, we loaded the kayaks on the car in Stockholm and drove about 20km to our departure point on the beautiful island of Älgö. Stunning islands are pretty commonplace in the Stockholm archipelago. Most Swedes agree that there are about 14,000 of them, so Johan, Fredrik and I had plenty of scope for a few days exploring and camping.

Sweden has an enviable code known as 'all men's right' (allmansrätten), which allows people to roam freely in the countryside and islands, providing you do no damage to nature and that you respect the privacy of others. In practice, this means not lighting fires on bare rock (it may cause them to split and leave ugly scars) and not camping on islands where someone has a summer cabin or boathouse. Not a problem with so many uninhabited islands to choose from. Swedes are really lucky to have such an amazing natural area just a short distance from Stockholm. And they appreciate it.

Easy start to the trip

After a fine Friday evening with family and friends, we woke up next morning to overcast skies holding back the full force of the sun. The sea was totally flat – pretty typical for autumn in the inshore Baltic – and it promised to be an easy start to the trip. We soon loaded up and launched the three kayaks, Johan paddling a new Skim kayak, Fredrik with his sea tourer from Svima Kayaks and myself with my old Nordkapp that I brought over from Devon a few months previously. In three different ways, each of our kayaks fitted well into Annie Prioux's great definition of a boat in her novel *The Shipping News* ("... a bow and a stern with harmony in between..."). From the jetty in Älgö (pronounced 'Aelyoer'), we paddled south east through a 2km wide channel, easing our way towards the island of Namdö. High clouds in layering lines of grey stretching out to the east and south. As forecasted, there was no sign of rain but also no need to reach for the sun block just yet. This was only the second time we had paddled together but we soon shared a comfortable pace, Johan and Fredrik telling me about



the islands on either side of us and helping me translate some of their names into English. Brevik ('Broad cove') and Fagerholm ('fair islet') were just some examples. These names made me think of the strong linguistic links between Britain and Scandinavia. From the Viking times, word endings like 'holm' still resonate around Britain's shores (for instance, like the Pembrokeshire island of Grassholm).

I was struck by how clear the water was as we

Stockholm Archipelago se



My Swedish friends sometimes tell me "There's no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing". Luckily the September weather forecast was ideal for our trip – fine and calm conditions expected.



paddled towards the bays south of the island of Nämö. The water was much clearer than anything I have seen around England, probably due to the big differences in the water chemistry of the Baltic Sea compared with the Atlantic and North Sea. On average, Baltic seawater has a salt content that is only about one tenth of that found around the coast of Britain, while the levels of nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus are also much lower.

Tidal range

Lower natural nutrient levels means less plankton, thereby making the water more transparent. As I paddled along, sometimes looking down into the crystal waters, the rocks some three or four metres below us were clearly visible. A few minutes later, as we crossed shallower areas, I could easily see the colonies of larger seaweed carpeting the rocks and stones. In other ways the natural environment in the

oalm

a kayaking



INFO :

When to go?

June through to September is probably the best time and the inner islands are accessible during this period. For the outer archipelago's nature reserves that contain breeding birds and seals, you should not camp or go within 500m of a reserve between 15th March-15th August. Importantly, you should know about the common sense principles of Sweden's right of public access. Full information is provided (in Swedish and English) by the very helpful Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (www.naturvardsverket.se).



How to get there?

Many airlines (eg BA, British Midland and SAS) fly into Stockholm Arlanda from several UK airports (eg London, Manchester) for around 100 pounds if you plan ahead, or you can fly Ryanair from Stanstead to Stockholm Skavsta. Both airports have excellent bus or train links into central Stockholm. An alternative is to take the ferry to Gothenburg from Newcastle, then drive to Stockholm (about 480 km).

Weather information

The Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute provide excellent updates in both English and Swedish (www.smhi.se). The Swedish Coastguard is also a useful source of information (www.coastguard.se).

Guidebooks and maps

For general information on the people and places of Sweden, Lonely Planet Sweden stands out as the most useful guide. Swedes generally speak excellent English but a few words of Swedish from visitors are always appreciated (the Berlitz Swedish Phrase Book & Dictionary is a good buy). We found that 1:50,000 maps were ideal us (available from www.lantmateriet.se or www.stanfords.co.uk). If you want to obtain nautical charts, contact the Swedish Maritime Administration (www.sjofartsverket.se).

Kayak hire

Kayak ('kajak' in Swedish) hire is available from several companies in Stockholm. The guys at both Svima Sport AB (www.svima.se) and Skim Seakayaks AB (www.skimkayaks.se) were very helpful in providing boats and they speak excellent English.

Baltic means that these seaweeds have an easier time than their North Sea cousins – for one thing, they don't have to endure the physical stresses caused by major tidal changes on a daily basis. During September in the Stockholm archipelago, the daily tidal range was only about 10cm. So we didn't need to worry about a tidal stream atlas on this trip.

Beautiful nature reserve

After covering about 30km on our first day, we made camp on the island of Biskopsön, part of a beautiful nature reserve. In order to protect breeding eider duck and other seabirds, camping in this area is out of limits between 15th March-15th August (and before that the sea is usually covered with ice!).

After setting up camp on the smooth rocks by the shoreline, we just settled down to enjoy the warmth of the evening sun, a few beers close at hand. The air

smelled sweet with the aroma of Scot's pine and juniper, some of the few tree species that can survive the maritime climate of these offshore islands. On Biskopsön, a few small birch trees grew in the few places where deeper soil gathered between boulders. Their fallen branches make ideal firewood (damaging living trees is not allowed under 'allmansrätten').

Early Sunday morning, we awoke to bright sunshine. After a leisurely breakfast with a few traditional Swedish treats (smoked ham, sweet pickled herring, caviar on rye bread and strong Swedish coffee), we launched the kayaks and paddled across more open water towards the larger island of Örmö ('sea eagle island'). We didn't come across any sea eagles on the trip (but a few weeks earlier I had seen six or seven sea eagles on a single day) but we did see plenty of ospreys and other wildlife. The weather was perfect; huge blue skies,

bright sunshine and an easterly sea, maybe touching Force 3. In the distance, yachts were making full use of one of the last good sailing days in September. By late afternoon, we were in sight of our destination, the harbour at Dalarö. We had covered a total distance of about 60km but perhaps more importantly, had experienced a wonderful weekend exploring one of the most beautiful coastal areas of northern Europe. It was great fun to paddle with Johan and Fredrik, as well as learn so much from them about the nature to be found in the archipelago. As I write, the islands are covered in the first snows and the waters we paddled will soon be covered in ice; but I expect we'll be back in the archipelago come next summer. The cost of living today in Sweden is comparable to the UK - so why not consider including a trip to 'Abbaland' in your next summer kayaking schedule? ●

Tom Hutchinson

The photographs on the right were taken at the end of April.

Images of Beijing 2008

Right: Regatta course.

Far right: Hill at the top of the slalom course plus the pumps.

Below: The Olympic Stadium.



Get a tow!

Increases in tow system sales are indicating sea and touring kayakers are changing attitude towards personal safety and responsibility. North Water Paddle Sports is reporting an overall increase in sea kayak tow systems sales of over 55%. The challenge is to educate the consumer to look at safety accessories beyond the PFD / buoyancy aid.

All too often, this extras equipment is perceived as unnecessary costs by novice paddlers according to Sales and Marketing Manager Morgan Goldie, "we've found that paddlers have started to realise that these products, combined with some instruction, practice and healthy judgment are a key to responsible fun paddling".

North Water introduced its Sea Tec Tow Line in 2005, with a new kernmantle cored H2pro Line which give the rope a good hand for knotting and a 1363kgs (3000lb) break strength.

www.northwater.com



Grippy Palms

Palm Equipment has released a new range of paddle specific footwear. The range has been designed from the ground up which means a specific sole unit with a grippy 'diamond' tread, ideal for wet rocks and roots.

Kevlar Moc

A $\frac{3}{4}$ boot with optimally positioned over laid Kevlar® protection panels on the sole, heel and toe. Uses 3mm neoprene with smooth skin ankle seal and super stretch front panel.
Usage: Freestyle, surf, multi-purpose
Sizes: UK: 4-12 Continental: 36-47
Colours: Black/ Kevlar
MSRP: £26.95



Granite $\frac{3}{4}$ River Shoe

A Creeking Boot with a super grippy rubber sole, supporting sole stiffeners to protect the foot from rough ground. Toe and heel rubber caps protect from abrasion. The adjustable webbing straps make sure that the shoe stays in place on your foot. Features 3mm neoprene with super stretch front panel and smooth skin ankle.
Usage: All river
Sizes: UK: 4-12 Continental: 36-47
Colours: Black/Grey/Blue
MSRP: £34.95



Action Side Zip Boot

An easy to use 3mm neoprene boot, with a durable YKK® side zip and internal baffle to reduce water ingress. The boot has large protective rubber toe and heel caps. The sole unit gives grip on slippery rocks and uneven ground.

Usage: General water sports, centre use, kayaking, surfing.
Size: UK:4-13 Continental:36-49
Colours: Black/Grey
MSRP: £24.95



Quartz $\frac{3}{4}$ Shoe

A lightweight general performance shoe that is ideal for recreational paddling or wearing on the beach. Easy to put on and take off with the inclusion of a pull-tab. The sole unit provides protection from rough terrain and grip on slippery rocks. The adjustable webbing straps support the heel and mid foot ensuring the boot stays on.

Usage: General water sports, kayaking, surfing.
Size: UK:4-13 Continental:36-47
Colours: Black/Grey/Blue
MSRP: £22.95



The Bedrock 6mm full cut boot

Coming Autumn 06
www.palmequipmenteurope.com

Stretch with ease

HH Prostretch pullover

A lovely soft low-bulk fleece pullover, which is perfect for layering under your jacket. Sleek cut and designed to be easily fitted, its stretchy fabric enable it to move with you. Ideally, this should be worn as mid-layer in cold conditions, however, it can

also be utilised as a top layer in milder conditions. The soft fitting inner fleece gives a warm and cosy feeling.

The ProStretch pullover is lightweight and entirely functional and offers insulation when you need it without the usual weight and bulk associated with this type of clothing. As a bonus, there is a very handy chest pocket with a zip to carry small items, a half neck zip for cooling and the pill resistant fabric will ensure a long life.

After a few washes the pullover has become a little tight around the neck; I would like to think it was my neck muscles enlarging – sadly, the reality is the garment may have shrunk a tiny bit, so maybe I should have opted for the XL. A must for those chilly summer evenings.

Andy Pearson

Features:

- Full stretch body for better mobility
- Half zip for flexible venting
- Fabric: 97% polyester, 3% elastane

Sizes: S-XXL, Colours: black, dark blue, crimson

Average price: £50.00

Ladies Dynamic crew block

LIFA® has become one of the most trusted pieces of clothing that any outdoor type can use and an unbeatable starting point for any effective layering system.

The crew block is made from 100% LIFA® and designed to be worn next to the skin as a base layer. LIFA® is a remarkable fabric, quickly transferring sweat away from the body, unlike a cotton shirt which actually retains moisture. It keeps you warm and dry when you're active, offering exceptional moisture control. It can also work as a single layer in warmer conditions.

Whilst retaining all the thermal benefits, it also has an improved feminine cut and is sewn with flat seams to reduce chaffing. The printed logo and contrasting side panels with printed stripes really make for a cool looking piece of kit and unlike past Hellies are now manufactured in a stylish range of colours to suit anyone.

It is one of those 'must have' pieces of kit, where you cannot possibly go wrong with its proven technology.

Debbie Colt

Features:

- 100% Polypropylene
- Low bulk flat lock seams
- Odour resistant

Sizes: S-XL, Colours: glacier, black, white, drage and apple

Average price: £28.00

www.hellyhansen.com

Koolpack Sport

I swear this stuff is black magic! I do not know how it works but it does - and very effectively it is too on soft tissue injuries.

After straining a leg muscle after a run - I followed the instructions on bursting the inner sachet, gave it a good shake and hey presto - an instant ice pack!

The bio-degradable crystals inside the bag fit the contours of the injury perfectly. Essential to have one with you where ice will be hard to find.

www.koolpak.co.uk



Protection and comfort

Crewsaver have optimised their rash vests with features that enhance protection, comfort and appearance.

Constructed from a soft high stretch, lightweight and quick drying fabric, Crewsaver rash vests are designed primarily as a base layer to protect your skin from painful irritation caused by bacteria and rubbing when wearing a wetsuit.

The advanced fabric composition (86% Nylon and 14% Spandex) gives you the casual comfort and style you desire. The flatlocked seams further eliminate rubbing, securing lasting comfort.

They can also be worn in the winter as a first layer under your cag for extra warmth and comfort, or worn in the summer, for added sun protection.

Available in three colours, black, red and blue.

www.crewsaver.co.uk



PADDLE THIS

Do-it-all

The Pisgah is a full-featured day touring kayak that defies the idea that one boat cannot do it all. This versatile kayak is a true 'cross over' capable of handling all types of waterways, from rivers to ocean swells.

The true measure of the Pisgah's whitewater worthiness came out right after the boat went into production. Shane Benedict paddled the Pisgah to a first place finish in a race on Section IV of the Chattooga, a class IV-V wild and scenic river – beating paddlers in all kinds of downriver racing boats (this was an unofficial race as a real race would have been illegal). In September, Shane and Woody

paddled their Pisgahs down the entire 26 miles of the Gauley River, a West Virginia classic. Both the Chattooga and the Gauley have technical lines and tricky moves. The Pisgah handled them all with style and then glided through the flats with equal ease.

Statistics:

Font and Rear watertight hatches. Tiltomatic seat. Proflex Backband. Adjustable footrest.

Length: 14' (4.26m) Width: 23.5" (59.7cm)

Bow storage: 5775 cubic inches (94.6 cubic cm)

Cockpit Size: 21" X 35" (53.3X90cm)

Weight: 55 lbs. (25kg) Capacity: 425 lbs (193kg)

Colours: yellow, blue, orange.

RRP: £699.95.

Contact - System X. info@systemxkayak.co.uk

www.systemxkayak.co.uk



Easy with the rudder!

Venture Kayaks have announced that you can now get the 'easy rudder' as an option on all the touring kayaks in their comprehensive range. This new rudder system is lightweight at only 500g and provides a fantastic option if you require a rudder for easier manoeuvres on your touring kayak.

The effective blade area and low profile design has also been specially designed to have much less windage than many other rudders on the market and combined with the simple one cord deployment and retraction system this makes its operation one of the easiest on the market, hence the name!

Also now out is the 2006 Venture Kayaks brochure with all the information and details on all the kayaks in the range. For more details on the Easy rudder system and to pick up a brochure why not pop in to your local Venture Kayaks dealer.



Dagger correction

Whist we are on the subject of rudders, Canoe Focus tested the Dagger Exodus X and mentioned that the rudder was missing from the boat.

The rudder was missing when the kayak was tested, however, this mistake was down to us as one of the team had removed the rudder when the Exodus arrived to see if it would fit another kayak.

Apologies to Dagger, however, the person concerned has been hung, drawn and quartered!

Two way comfort



Of the many items we have tested here at Canoe Focus, there are the those items that would make the all-time favourite list. One of those is the short sleeved Cambia t-shirt, which was usually the first piece of clothing in my bag until I lost it - so I had big expectations for the long sleeved version.

It didn't disappoint either with its usual reversible design with a smooth water-attracting face next to the skin to offer maximum cooling through the spread of perspiration over a

large area and the honeycomb air-containing face for dry comfort in cooler conditions and when used as a base layer.

This shirt will keep you comfortable in all conditions and the sleeves give just that little extra protection for the arms on those days that are neither chilly or warm and we've had plenty of those recently! The result is a t-shirt or base layer for most weather conditions and activities, near enough perfect all the year round.

Another value to anyone concerned with watersports is its lightweight construction and the ability to rapidly dry itself out. It is easy to carry and quick to wash and dry and the stretchiness of the Parameta T fabric gives total freedom of movement. If you are into running then you will appreciate the non-abrasive flat seams. There was one irritation though, and that was concerned with the stitching. On the left arm the cuff stitching unravelled. Eventually I was forced to burn off the trailing stitch and everything has been fine since, though only a third of the stitching remains. Fortunately, this doesn't affect the performance of the garment.

The CAMBIA T-shirt come in two different colours, navy and slate, in women or men's

short or long sleeve, or unisex long sleeves and is available at selected outdoor sports shops priced from £25.

Overall, an excellent all-in-one solution and ideal base layer for most types of climates that will not disappoint and would still be the first clothing in my bag!

Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL

Average weight 133g

Tony Cornwell

www.paramo.co.uk

PADDLE

Feelfree

FeelFree sit-on-tops (SOT's) have extended their comprehensive range with the addition of two new exciting models for the summer, the Apollo touring SOT and the Xpress touring kayak.

If you're looking for a SOT with improved handling, then the expedition ready Apollo SOT could be for you. Coming with an integral rudder system for exploring tight environments and a long waterline length, it travels along quietly and quickly. The optional luggage pods are also ideal for carrying more gear such as tents or camera equipment.

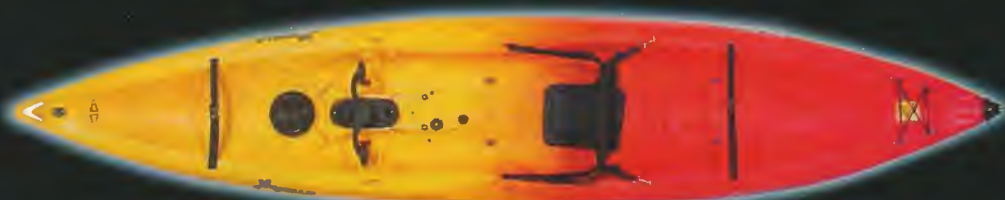
With its enhanced maneuverability it's also a great explore for shorter mini adventures and the Apollo is a superb addition to this popular range.

Meanwhile those looking for a dynamic 'sit-in' recreational



kayak will enjoy the modern lines of the Xpress. Designed for people wanting a dryer ride combined with the potential to carry plenty of gear it also features an integral rudder system as standard. The Xpress is packed full of features for anyone wanting to get out on the water in a stable and capable kayak.

To get more information contact your local Feelfree dealer or call 01928 716 666.



A keen pair

Keen Humboldt

Firstly, the look of the shoe isn't as 'big nosed' as other shoes in the Keen range as their trade toe protection is less pronounced than previous shoes such as the Targhee and has an all round softer look.

With the looks also comes a softer feel and they were a great fit straight out of the box, slipping on like a slipper, which curiously, is how they feel; being light and very cushioned with plenty of padding, particularly around the ankles and heel.

Before you reach for your pipe though, let's look on the technical side where you will find the usual comforts you would associate with a good well made trail shoe. These include heel and tongue loops with enough room to put your fingers and thumbs through to aid entry and exit, anti-microbial mesh linings to absorb moisture, which dry fast and are odour resistant. Moulded EVA midsoles offer good shock-absorption and padding while Metatomical™ EVA footbeds are custom shaped to provide cushioning and arch support. Non-marking carbon rubber outsoles with 3mm-deep lugs offer long-wearing durability and superb traction where it is needed at the water side.

When I tested the Keen Targhees last year I felt the shoe was too narrow, resulting in high temperatures within the shoe. This Humboldt has corrected that with a much wider fit and more flexibility.

Taking them to Hunstanton beach in Norfolk, it scored highly by preventing sand from penetrating the breathable sides, which just for this alone I would recommend them over the open sandals, as I and I am sure others, cannot stand sand inside shoes or anywhere else for that matter! The meshing keeps everything else out too, whilst remaining breathable and comfortable. I only had one quibble with the shoes in that I was expecting cordlock lacing, however, the test shoes were fitted with ordinary laces, which are no substitute and kept coming undone.

That aside Keen have quickly made a reputation for constructing fine shoes and this one carries on the tradition, a little expensive, but well worth the it for the extra comfort.

The Humboldt retails at £79.99

Tony Cornwell

Keen Venice

We tested the impressive Keen Newports last year, which is where the Venice sandals take their cue from and then taking it a step further so to speak.

The sandals are fast-drying with good ventilation and would be ideal for extended trips on the river where the feet get a soaking. They also offer exceptional traction on mixed terrain due to the knife-cut outsoles. The real benefit of these sandals over regular sandals is the protection for the toes that



with Keen's patented rubber toe guards. You will appreciate that extra protection of the sandals next time you drop something on your toe, and it also benefits the wearer when you go off-trail which prevents any type of toe stubbing. They also provide nice and easy access with a quick, secure fit provided by the drawcord laces.

Technically they have all the features you would expect of a sandal in this class with AEGIS Microbe Shield™ treated SBR lining, washable waterproof leather upper, V-Strap forefoot capture design and Metatomical™ EVA footbeds that are custom shaped to provide ample cushioning and arch support. The compression moulded EVA midsole offer shock absorption and padding for all-day comfort with non-marking siped rubber for the outsole. To finish off there are heel and instep loops which aid entry and exit and are reflective to increase visibility in dark conditions with elastic, one-pull cordlock lacing

Streamlined and well-ventilated, the Venice sandals are very comfortable with a great fit and very attractive, although they do make my feet sweat quickly. I heard a lot about Keens running small, but I ordered my normal size, and they fit perfectly.

The Venice retails at £69.99

Anne Egan

www.keenfootwear.co.uk or 0800 612 9292

PADDLE THIS

Catch the fish of the day

Aimed towards the fishing fraternity as well as families and avid kayakers, Perception Kayaks have introduced three new models to their comprehensive sit-on-kayak range.

Perceptions' Freedom 1 has been further enhanced by the angler specification. The combination of performance, tracking, stability and fishing equipment will allow anyone to get afloat and catch the fish of the day.

The all new Caster Angler's are stable fishing kayaks, designed to be safe platforms in which to fish from.

Coming in two sizes 11.5 and 12.5 these kayaks will suit fisherman's needs, be it a large recess for their catch, or a compact kayak for easy storage and transportation off the water.

All of these kayaks come with a competitive outfitting specification, details of which can be found by visiting:

www.perception.co.uk or calling Perceptions sales team on 01825 765891.



Events

WW weekend

5-6th August. Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham

London and SE region are again hosting a fun and training weekend. This is the only weekend when low water is available on the course. Training, testing, demonstrations and fun events are planned. The course will be open from 8am to 6pm on Saturday and 8am to 4pm on Sunday. Camping is available near by. The weekend costs £12 for BCU and club members, others £16. For more information www.LASERwhitewater.co.uk www.LASERwhitewater.org.uk

Email info@LASERwhitewater.co.uk

Open Canoe tour Grade 2 Scotland

October 21-28th

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

Cost around £240 all in. Contact **Kevin Jackson Woodlands OEC Glasbury-on-Wye Powys (via Hereford) HR3 5LP** Tel. 01497-847272 e mail head.woodlands@sds.theocn.net

Canoe camping club

Thames and SE group Summer programme

Sunday 11 June, River Thames, local paddling from Chertsey

Sunday 23 July, River Thames, Bourne End to Datchet

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

Robin Hickman
Robin@rhickman.freemove.co.uk
Tel 01403 267244

Poole Afloat!

24-25th June

Now in its second year, Poole Afloat is brimming with exciting features, the free entry event, sponsored by Rockley Holiday Park, will bring together a varied selection of boats, marine equipment and watersports gear, with 'Try a boat' sessions, and a range of new activities.

The action will take place at Harbourside/Baiter Park and Poole Quay, and subject to availability and conditions, visitors will be able to take short trips, free of charge, on a variety of craft from ribs, sailing yachts, as well as dinghies via Poole Quay. To schedule a short trip in Poole Harbour or to sign up for the boat handling skills competition and power-kiting sessions people will need to visit the booking office. For further information please visit

www.bmfwessex.co.uk/pooleafloat.htm

Cardiff Bay Canoeing and Rowing Festival

24-25th June

For a second year running this free festival demonstrates Cardiff Harbour Authority's commitment to the promotion of paddle sports across Wales. The Inner Harbour will be zoned, with activities on the land and water designed to suit beginners, novice or more experienced paddlers. The Canoe Village will be busy with lectures and advice, manufacturers and suppliers. The water's edge will showcase kayaking demonstrations, flat water racing, and the freestyle kicker ramp.

Saturday highlights include the canoe pool tournament, Scouts bell boating regatta and the big air free style ramp competition. Sunday highlights include the first Welsh Lightning regatta, sponsored by the EA; slalom competition and sprint racing, plus the Cardiff Bay rowing challenge. Information on how to register for the competitions prior to the event, or obtain details contact Ben Longhurst on 07855 795203 or Email: blonghurst@cardiff.gov.uk

European Freestyle Champs/ Canoe Kayak festival

June 26-July 2nd

National Watersports Centre, Nottingham Plans are coming together well for this summer's main event. There will be a shuttle bus and trailer service set up to take athletes to and from East Midlands Airport. Sky Sports will cover the event as well. European Freestyle Championships

Competitors from over 20 nations will battle it out for whitewater supremacy on our purpose built wave.

Youth/newcomer whitewater challenge (Sat/Sun) Developed to encourage and introduce junior and newcomer paddlers to the whitewater competition disciplines. Coaching will be provided to all paddlers. Competitors will participate in a river running skills slalom style event and a freestyle kayak jam session. Email: matt.tidy@bcu.org.uk

Come and try it sessions (Sat/Sun only) Have a go at canoeing and kayaking through our 'come and try it' sessions on the Winfield Pool. This is an introduction to flat water canoeing. Paddlers will be able to try the basic strokes and moves under close supervision. For more info email: howard@bcu.org.uk

Big Air Jam (Sat night) To demonstrate the real expressive and fun nature of freestyle. Saturday evening will see a big boat jam session open to all paddlers. Great prizes will be on offer.

Embers Youth/Newcomer Canoe Polo (Sat/Sun)

We have coaches and players from the European and World

Championship medal winning Men's GB squad. They will play scheduled exhibition matches alongside come and try it sessions throughout the weekend. For more info contact chris@champions.demon.co.uk

Big Cup Video Contest Finals (Fri night) The Big Cup Video Contest is the most innovative new event of 2006 and it is the first of its kind to be launched throughout Europe. Competitors can enter video clips into any of the six categories for the chance to get their hands on the big cash prize. Entries can feature any location in the world but the paddler must be of a European nationality. Check out www.big-cup.com. **Kayak Village (Thurs-Sun)** All the main manufacturers and retailers will be there showing off the latest kayaking gear. Demo boats will also be available for testing on the whitewater course.

The European Championships are a BCU Freestyle Committee Event and are officially sanctioned by the BCU. International and European Canoe Federations. Tel: 0115 9813222. Email: info@eurofreestylekayak.com

York River Festival

Canoe race: Saturday 1st July

This event is open to paddlers of all ages and abilities and all types of canoes and kayaks.

Competitors can choose between three different distances, all on flat water: short course - 2,500m; medium - 5,000m; long - 7,500m. There is a large prize list for different classes of canoes covering all three courses: singles, doubles, Canadians, play boats, sea kayaks, general purpose canoes.

Please contact the race organiser for more information: Phil Puckrin. Tel: 01904 654 302 Email: philpuckrin@freenet.co.uk

Hull International Canoe Polo Challenge

1-2nd July, Princes Dock

In the last few years we have had teams from South Africa, Holland and New Zealand Playing as well as teams from all parts of the British Isles.

This event starts with the preliminary games been played on Saturday starting at about 8am and Sunday morning and the finals take place on Sunday afternoon. We have leagues for men and youth and another for ladies all levels of ability are catered for. We have off site camping for the teams which you can arrive at on Friday evening. For more information contact Joy Davis on joy@geoffreydavis.co.uk

River Usk Canoe Race

Sunday 16th July

Start: Newbridge on Usk. **Finish:** Hanbury Arms Hotel, Caerleon. **Distance:** 7 miles. **Start time:** 12.00 hrs Everyone welcome. For details contact: Alan Baker, 20, Larkfield Close, Caerleon, S.Wales. NP18 3EX. Tel: 01633 421629. Email: baker@alval.freemove.co.uk www.croesycaenoe.co.uk

Tourability special tour

11th June

The West Midlands region is organising a tour along the River Severn from Arley to Bewdley (approx 4 miles) especially for those with a disability or special needs.

The tour is free to anyone that falls into this category and coaches from within the region will be on hand to lead and guide paddlers along the river. Many types of craft available from bellboats, open canoes, single and double kayaks.

Contact Dave Bateman at the Ackers for a booking form. Tel: 0121 772 3739.

Email: info@ackers-adventure.co.uk

Don't be board!

perception
kayaks



Sit down!

You used to have to stand up to have fun in the surf but that's so old hat.

The enhanced Scooter range has never been so cool and provides a stable kayak for fun-seekers and families alike whether at the beach, lake or on a river. The more adventurous paddler can carve turns through the waves with the added control afforded by the thigh straps and surf outfitting. Two is twice the fun with the Scooter Gemini our most versatile tandem.

Surfs up dude!



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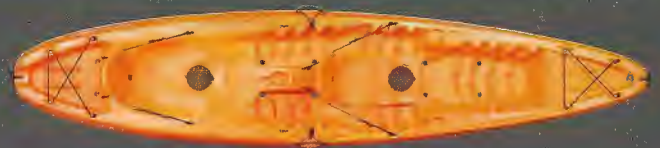
www.perception.co.uk

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Just because you want a tandem doesn't mean you have to settle for a barge. At 13-feet the 130T is easy to get from car-top to water. Once on the water it's, well, a Tarpon – smooth, stable, capable, and comfortable with adjustable back rests. Experience the difference at a Wilderness Systems dealer near you.



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