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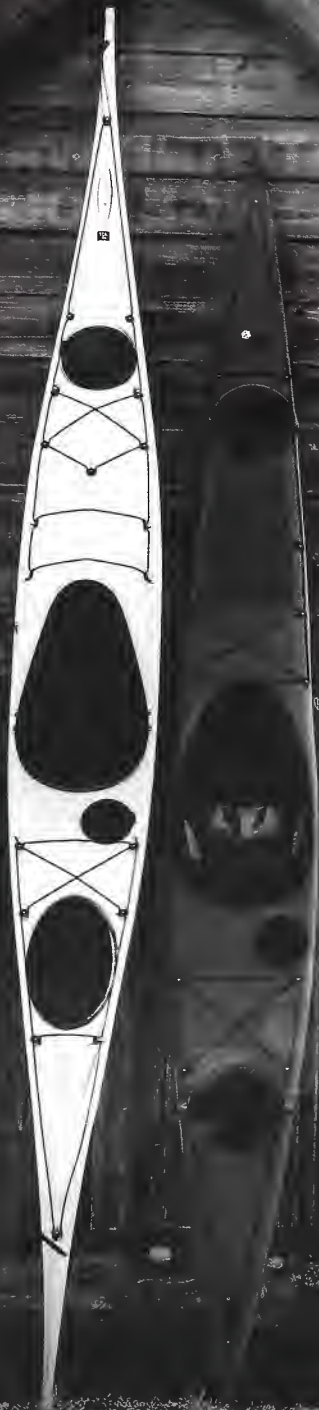
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WELCOME TO THE JUNE ISSUE OF CANOE FOCUS

I hope you've all been enjoying the warmer weather and recent bank holidays, with lots of paddling!

This edition is the first Canoe Focus issue from British Canoeing. We're all very excited to begin the roll out of our new name, which, along with our new brand campaign, will showcase paddlesport as the attractive and liberating activity we all know that it is. The introduction of British Canoeing has already begun and will pick up pace over the next few months. Watch this space!

With the holidays fast approaching, this month's issue looks at everything you need for paddling during the summer months including a look at the best ways to protect yourself from the sun, some handy tips on paddling tandem, some great northern paddling trips and lots more.

As the international competition season gets underway, at the time of writing, we are in the final throes of preparations for the ICF 2014 Canoe Slalom World Cup at the Lee Valley White Water Centre. Thank you to all the staff, volunteers, athletes and supporters for helping to make it all happen. I know it will be a fantastic weekend, full of great racing drama and excitement. And I hope to meet a few of you there too!

By the time you read this, our Canoe Slalom athletes will be moving on to Tacen for World Cup 2, hopefully with a handful of medals

already in their boats! Good luck to them and indeed all the British Canoeing teams that will be competing this year. I'm sure that, like me, you'll look forward to following their progress throughout the coming months.

And our next generation of paddling stars may have taken to the water too, during National Go Canoeing Week, which was held last month.

The Go Canoeing team have worked especially hard to make this year's Go Canoeing Week bigger and better than ever before and it really paid off! Such a huge number of you helped us to achieve our target of 11,073 miles paddled (the distance round the UK's coastline) and record numbers of people took part in Go Canoeing Starter Sessions, Guided Tours and Challenge Routes. Even though Go Canoeing Week is over for this year, the activities will continue to run throughout the summer so there's still time to get involved.

That's all from me this month – I'll let you get started on a packed edition of the magazine! As always, I hope you enjoy this issue of FOCUS and have an enjoyable summer filled with lots of canoeing! The next issue of Canoe Focus will be with you in September.

Paul

Paul Owen, Chief Executive.



HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

We are very keen to receive contributions from our readers. We'd love to see articles and ideas flooding in and these should be submitted via canoeingnews@bcu.org.uk.

Even if it's just an idea – drop us a line and we'll give you some advice.



TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

Please also use this e-mail address as a way to submit feedback on how we're doing. We are really committed to reflecting the views of our members, so we welcome all of your comments.

You can also use the Canoe England Facebook page - www.facebook.com/canoengland

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Image: Glyn

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CHEDDAR: NEW PLACE TO PADDLE

The Bristol and Bath Area Coaching Representative, Mark-Jan Dielemans negotiated access to the famous cheddar reservoir, with the Sailing Club and Bristol Water, for a paddlesport trial day. The reservoir owners, Bristol Water have not previously allowed paddling on the reservoir. Given the short notice to arrange the event, twenty-three paddlers utilised this opportunity to paddle at this new venue. The Sailing Club was very accommodating and allowed the paddlers to share their facilities. Mark-Jan and his team were able to put on a compact all-day paddling programme including lunch. The day was a successful trial and it is hoped the reservoir will become open to more paddlers in the future. This will become another great place to go canoeing in the future. Watch this space!



SHUGBOROUGH OUTDOOR CENTRE IS GO

Shugborough Outdoor Education Centre in Staffordshire has become the latest venue to come onboard with Go Canoeing as a guided tour provider. The centre is located on a historic and beautiful National Trust estate on the banks of the River Trent. The tours will be a new addition to the programme currently offered by the centre and hopefully they will attract new people keen to explore the beautiful scenery that the area has to offer. The new tours were launched during National Go Canoeing Week, with opportunities to take part every day on the Shugborough Loop Tour. This short trip takes in both the river and canal and is a fantastic way to learn about the history of the estate and also local links to J.R.R Tolkein and Lord of the Rings! The route passes close by the very grand Shugborough Hall, which until 2005 was the home to Lord Litchfield, cousin to the Queen.

The centre has plans for a range of tours to be launched very soon, linking up with local partners such as the National Trust to offer experiences suitable for all the family. Centre manager and lead guide Jenny Galland is really pleased to be involved: "We are really excited by the Go Canoeing guided tours, we have got lots of ideas for the future for providing different journeys and trips. The area around Shugborough is really beautiful and it will be great to get more people out on the water enjoying it"

Excitingly, Shugborough Outdoor Education Centre also has just established a yurt village on site, which will be available for the public to hire. These simple round camping huts come equipped with a wood burning stove and camp beds, suitable to sleep 5/6 people. No doubt these will become very popular with people using the yurts as a base to explore the area or to make their guided tour experience that extra special!

For more information visit the Go Canoeing website, or the centres new website www.activityvillages.co.uk

“We are really excited by the Go Canoeing guided tours, we have got lots of ideas for the future for providing different journeys and trips.”

BLOW THE WHISTLE ON SUNBURN!

We're proud to be supporting the Outdoor Kids Sun Safety Code; a free online resource bank for all those who work with children in a whole range of outdoor activities. Simply log on, follow some simple but effective guidelines to earn your accreditation mark and ensure that whenever kids attend your sessions they are adequately protected from the sun.
www.oksunsafetycode.com



PADDLE-ABILITY IN THE NORTH EAST

Congratulations to Hexham Canoe Club who are the first club in the north east region to be awarded the Paddle-Ability Top Club award. Hexham Canoe Club has always been an open club that has embraced and supported many paddlers of all abilities age and gender. The award recognises this very fact as the club continues to organise many events and activities such as the Div 2 & 3 Canoe Slalom at a brand new venue in Tynedale and has already started making plans to improve the flagship Tyne Tour event programmed for 31st Oct, 1st and 2nd November 2014.

By the time Canoe Focus goes to press four of the clubs in Northumberland will have organised and run the 2nd North East Region Paddle-Ability Starter Event at Queen Elizabeth 2 Lake on 17th May.

HINKLEY GETS CLUBMARK

Hinckley Canoe Club has been awarded Sport England's Clubmark Quality Club Accreditation for community sports clubs. Club Chairman Dave Clarke told FOCUS, "We are very pleased that after the hard work of committee members Hinckley Canoe Club has been awarded



Clubmark. This is Sport England's standard for high quality community sports clubs that are recognised as a safe, rewarding and fulfilling place for participants of all ages. The award is a stepping stone for the continuing development of the club."

The club is also moving to start the 2014 season at its new home waters at Stanton Lakes, Stoney Stanton, Leicestershire.

Dave Clarke added, "Our new venue is at a larger lake and there are good facilities including changing rooms and an onsite bar/restaurant. We will be offering canoe and kayak experience sessions and BCU Star award coaching to adults and children on Thursday evenings throughout the summer. In addition we run regular trips on rivers of different grades across the country.

"There will be an open day at Stanton Lakes on Saturday 5th July from 11am to 4pm featuring Go Canoeing Starter Sessions. Other organisations using the lake will be involved and a range of other activities and entertainment for all the family is planned and refreshments will be available. We look forward to seeing many visitors come along on the day".

Full details of Hinckley Canoe Club and its activities can be found on our website www.hinckleycanoeclub.co.uk



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A TRIBUTE TO WENDY ANNE BLACKMAN 1963-2014

Written by John Anderson Performance Director British Canoeing

Wendy Blackman passed away peacefully on 22nd April 2014 after a short illness. Wendy worked for British Canoeing for 22-years, from October 1990 until August 2012. Wendy's funeral took place on Friday 9th May in Wolverton Parish Church and was attended by over 150 friends, colleagues and family members.

Wendy's hometown was Hastings and she met her husband Neil at school while they were both in the school canoe club. Later, they joined the Venture Scouts and their love for canoeing took hold. Neil joined the RAF in 1981 and they were married in 1984 and moved away to live their life as an RAF couple. Wendy was a loyal supporter of Neil as he made progress in his canoeing career, eventually representing Great Britain at the Downriver Racing World Championships in 1993 and then winning a medal at the 1995 World Championships in Bala in C2 with his brother Howard.

Wendy was also an enthusiastic volunteer in canoeing and travelled throughout the UK and overseas to support the GB Junior Downriver Team at domestic and international events. Her first full time employed role with the BCU was as the PA to the Chief Executive.

Wendy changed her role in 1998 to work as the Admin Manager for the first ever Canoeing Olympic Performance Programme (World Class). In this role, Wendy achieved a great deal and played a central and crucial role in helping to set up, structure, develop and guide the Performance Programme for Canoeing. Wendy helped to collate all aspects of the Performance Plan for lottery funding and with this, the BCU were successful in securing funding for the Performance Programme.

With her own background in canoeing, Wendy really understood canoe sport and the needs of elite high performance athletes. She related well to the athletes and knew what it took for them to be successful at the highest level. Wendy continued to support the Programme and the athletes, for 14 years, through the Olympic Games in Sydney 2000, Athens 2004, Beijing 2008 and London 2012. During this time, British Canoeing athletes won a total of 12 Olympic medals. Wendy would often take her annual leave and pay for herself to attend the Olympic games as a spectator, to support our athletes, and she often spoke of special memories at the Sydney Olympic Games when Paul Ratcliffe and Tim Brabants won their Olympic medals. Another truly proud memory for Wendy was seeing the Team GB Canoeing athletes, which she had supported throughout their careers, winning their four Olympic medals in London 2012. Wendy had certainly played her part in creating the environment where these athletes could achieve their dreams. For Wendy, her job in canoeing was a way of life, it really mattered to her and she cared about the people and the sport.

Wendy recovered from breast cancer in 2007 and from then onwards, she made a conscious decision to live her life to the full as she believed that she had been given a second chance. This is a legacy for all of us from this special person. Life is just too short. **What really matters is to be happy and to spend quality time with the people that you love and care for; living the life that you want to. We will all miss Wendy's smile and her infectious enthusiasm for all aspects of our sport and for the people. Those that knew Wendy well will cherish the memories that we have of special times, of challenges faced and above all of a wonderful friend now departed.**

Wendy asked her husband Neil to write down a few words in the last few days of her life. Wendy loved the countryside; the very nature of river environments lent itself perfectly to her love of being in the outdoors. As an accomplished skier she was as happy in the mountains as she was in the meadow.

THIS IS HOW SHE WOULD LIKE PEOPLE TO REMEMBER HER:

Remember me when you see a shooting star.
Remember me when a rainbow shines against grey leaden clouds.
Remember me when you see a white feather dancing on the breeze.
Remember me in springtime, when flowers fill the land with colour again.
Remember me in the heat of summer when skylarks sing and hot fluffy clouds drift gently by.
Remember me in autumn's gold, when leaves fall and carpet the ground.
And remember me, when the snowflakes glisten in the deep winter cold.
But above all, remember me as Wendy, as someone who has spent every minute of my life looking around the next corner, for the next great adventure, no matter how big or small. Try not to be sad and remember all the good times. I have had a wonderful amazing life; thank you – all my love, Wendy.

A SHORT MESSAGE FROM NEIL BLACKMAN

"I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the world of canoeing for all the kind words and support shown, following the loss of my dear wife Wendy. In particular, to all those friends and colleagues that took time out of busy schedules to attend her funeral. The canoeing family is full of amazing people, who achieve amazing things, both on and off the water. Wendy was proud to be one of you".

The whole world of canoeing send their warmest thoughts and feelings to Neil and Wendy's family.



Wendy with London 2012 Olympic medallists, Jon Schofield & Ed McKeever.



JOANNE (JO) SINDREY OBITUARY

Many people in the paddling community will be saddened to learn of the sudden and untimely death of Jo Sindrey at the age of just forty-five. She got a taste for kayaking and canoeing whilst a Venture Scout in the Forest of Dean and then as a member of Wydean Canoe Club. Jo gained coaching qualifications and went on to train Venture Scouts and Army Cadets from the Greater Manchester area. On moving to the Midlands, she joined the Walsall and Birmingham Canoe Clubs and became an active member of the committee of the Open Canoe Association.

With her partner, Andy Bond, she paddled the lochs and rivers of the UK and the big rivers of the French Alps. At Easter this year Jo was camping on Anglesey with Andy and a number of friends for a weekend of sea kayaking. She enjoyed cooking and entertaining so on the last evening of her short life she cooked the communal meal as usual and was described as being her regular cheerful self. She died peacefully in her sleep that night.

She will be remembered for her big-heartedness, her larger than life personality, her engaging smile, her sense of humour, and for her readiness to help others.

“Jo will be remembered for her big-heartedness, her larger than life personality, her engaging smile, her sense of humour, and for her readiness to help others.”

SOUTH WEST CLUB PADDLERS RECEIVE EXTRA FUNDS FOR COACHING AND LEADERSHIP

The South West Regional Development Team were very pleased to announce that the eight south west clubs who applied for a grant to help with coaching and leadership awards were successful. This is the first set of awards from the new team and there will be a second round of grants to be awarded in September. The team had set aside £2500 for the first funding round and £1755 was awarded, the balance is being rolled over to the next round. The receiving clubs will use the grant money to provide courses and help develop future coaches and leaders. The successful clubs were Exeter, Dartmouth, Wiltshire Youth, Frome, Axe Vale, Paignton, Chippenham and Weymouth. The RDT will be advertising the next round of grants in June with the results being announced in September. The grants sub-group of David Mannering, Gary Peverill and Steve Holland did a sterling job of checking the submissions and then working out a set of judging criteria before presenting the results that were agreed at the RDT meeting in March.

MEDAL HAUL FOR JUNIOR RACERS

A successful Canoe Slalom Junior and U23 World Championships concluded recently in Penrith, Australia with British Canoeing athletes winning gold, two silver & three bronze medals (and three 4th places). Well done to all involved it was a great start to the 2014 international season for British athletes. Eleven out of the twenty athletes made individual finals with Tom Quinn (U23 C1M) and Bethan Iatham (U23 K1W) winning individual medals in Olympic classes. The team will race again at the U23 and Junior European Championships in Skopje, Macedonia in early July.





THE VENTURE LONDON



On Sunday 13th April, while the 34th London Marathon was in full swing, the cheers from Tower Bridge were not just for the runners! Below, on the river Thames were 70 plus paddlers in sea kayaks aiming to complete the 26.2-miles, the marathon distance, by paddling to Chiswick Bridge and back.

There was a strong contingent from the clubs of the eastern region participating, namely, Waveney Valley CC, Maldon and Dengie CC and Dereham CG, along with paddlers from all over the country. All were asked to raise, where possible, a minimum of £200 for a charity of their choice, and the overall total raised at the time of writing was in excess of £20,000. For safety reasons, unlike the marathon around the streets of London, this is not a race. The Port of London Authority requests that the Kayakathon

“While the 34th London Marathon was in full swing, the cheers from Tower Bridge were not just for the runners! Below, on the river Thames were 70 plus paddlers in sea kayaks aiming to complete the 26.2 miles, the marathon distance, by paddling to Chiswick Bridge and back.”



KAYAKATHON

travels as one group, with a support boat at the front and rear of the group. This makes for a very friendly, but fast paddle giving the participants a rarely seen view of many of London's major landmarks.

Thanks must go to the sponsors and supporters of the Kayakathon, P&H Sea Kayaks, Shadwell Basin Outdoor Activity Centre, Sea Kayaking Cornwall, Karrek Accountants, Northern Exposure Rescue and Canoe England, without their support the 4th London Kayakathon would not have taken place, and of course to the 70 plus participants.

There are plans to hold similar Kayakathon's throughout the year at different venues in the UK and Ireland, for more information on how to participate please visit www.kayakathon.com





WINDERMERE CANOE KAYAK SUMMER SOLSTICE RACE 2014

Take up the challenge and paddle on the longest day on the longest lake in England with Windermere Canoe and Kayak at the 6th annual Summer Solstice Festival on the 21st & 22nd June. This year is going to be bigger and better, so come along and join in the festival atmosphere. Use any boat; canoe or sit on top, marathon or sea kayak whitewater raft or Bellboat. All are welcome to paddle the 10.5-mile or 5-mile course over the weekend. There will be prizes for each category as well as a BBQ finale and evening entertainment.

Joining the event will be the folks from Go Canoeing, Palm Equipment, We-no-Nah, Grey Owl, SUP North and Peak UK. There will be canoes, kayaks, SUPs, and paddles all available for demo or taster sessions throughout the weekend. Everyone is welcome! There is something to do whether you're just getting into the sport, or an accomplished paddler!

Enter the race solo, come as a pair, or even enter as a team.

For more information, or to download an entry form, head to www.windermerecanoe kayak.com



U CANOE IN YORKSHIRE

Lots more young people all over Yorkshire are being inspired to take up canoeing on a regular basis as a result of involvement in the 'U Canoe' programme. Yorkshire universities, colleges and centres have been actively getting involved in both 'Wired' and 'Unleashed' programmes and more groups are expressing an interest in getting involved.

Manvers Waterfront Boat Club were one of the first clubs in the country to pilot the 'U Canoe Unleashed' activities with students from the nearby Dearne Valley College being given the opportunity to try lots of fun activities on the water and many of the students involved have now gone on to join the canoe club and are becoming active paddlers.

The 'U Canoe Wired' programme is also being rolled out throughout the region giving hundreds of students the opportunity to try paddling on the indoor kayaking machines and three 'U Canoe Wired' Activator Tutor courses have been run in the region. Sheffield University and Rotherham College were first to get on board along with the Watersports Hub Schools at Wickersley in Rotherham and Rodillian in Leeds. More recently machines have gone to Dearne Valley College in Rotherham, Huddersfield University and Welton Waters Activity Centre in Hull. In all of the delivery centres opportunities for getting out onto the water are being provided and actively being taken up.



THE FULL ENGLISH

The 2nd Edition of English White Water is now available on the BCU E-Shop. This comprehensive guide to the whitewater rivers, playspots and artificial whitewater courses of England has been completely revised and updated. It is illustrated with photos, maps and the new format makes it even easier to find the information you need!

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BUOYANCY AIDS & HELMETS

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[WHAT GEAR?]

A FAMILY INFLATABLE CANOE OR KAYAK PADDLING ADVENTURE

The FOCUS guide to the essential kit you'll need for a fun, and safe, day out on the water enjoying an inflatable canoe or kayak adventure...

BOAT-IN-A-BAG

The latest designs of inflatable canoes and kayaks certainly tick a lot of boxes for those looking for a compact, easy to store and transport craft. They're increasingly becoming popular amongst general outdoor enthusiasts, such as caravan owners and campers, looking to add a little extra adventure and fun to their trips and they're absolutely great for taking to the water with the kids too! You can play in the ocean waves, get up close to wildlife or just use it as a glorified diving platform. Inflatable boats are usually constructed from tough fabric skin with a series of inflatable chambers, or baffles. Once these are inflated using a pump they form the structure of the boat. Some designs have rigid sections of foam that fit in to stiffen the hull and further increase performance. The absence of any internal frame means that the inflatable option comes in much lower on the scales than its folding counterpart and they tend to be a lot cheaper too. But beware you do get what you pay for with inflatable canoes and kayaks and there are some bargain-bucket blow up boats still lurking out there that could leave you feeling a little deflated after a less than fun experience. Our advice would be to steer clear and invest a little bit more in a decent make and model for a much more enjoyable time on the water.

BUOYANCY AIDS

The most essential piece of kit, which everybody in the family must wear at all times (even any furry friends), is some form of personal floatation device (PFD), usually referred to as a buoyancy aid (BA). For adults, a canoeing and kayaking specific buoyancy aid of between 55N and 70N buoyancy will be fine. There are some available in child and junior sizes, but depending on their age and latest swimming badge, you could also look into a child's life jacket for the kids. (A buoyancy aid is just that, it keeps you on the surface while to actively swim. A lifejacket keeps you floating on your back, even if unconscious). Whatever type of buoyancy aid you deck them out in, make sure it is well fitted and comfortable enough to wear all day, because even when not in the boat it's a sound idea to keep them in them while you're still in the vicinity of the water. Their BA needs to fit snugly enough that you could use it to lift them clean out of the water by grabbing onto it without it being pulled over their head (some models have leg loops to prevent this), so experiment on dry land to ensure that you've got a fit that you're happy with. Look out for any loose straps flapping around, and tuck them away.

GETTING AFLOAT

An important consideration to make is to choose a boat that your children can choose to participate in the paddling of, if they want to, but that you can also paddle happily solo when they inevitably get tired halfway through a journey and want to stop. Because if you cannot then you could literally find yourself up nipper creek without a paddler! Keep in mind as well that basic paddling strokes engage muscles that you wouldn't generally use, so take it easy at first, especially if you're doing all the work. Practicing somewhere on your own before allowing the kids on board can be a good idea, although remember their weight will alter the trim of the boat and how easy it is to paddle.

KIDDY CARE

This part is fairly straightforward, and most parents will be well used to packing this type of gear. Just treat a family day out paddling in an inflatable as if it were a family walk in the countryside. Even on warm sunny days you'd never venture far out without extra layers, extra snacks, hats, sun cream, wipes, simple first aid kit, mobile phone etc. In the world of paddle sport, this is possibly even more crucial, particularly the extra layers, as a full-on soaking can occasionally be on the cards (who are we kidding... Nippers plus water means a soaking is DEFINITELY on the cards!)

One key difference, between a walk and a paddling trip though, is to anticipate how much harder you'll be working than if you were walking: it might be better to treat a family paddle as a family cycle ride in this respect, so take plenty of high energy snacks, and drinking water, for you, to complement the picnic!



PADDLES

Unless they are going to be solely a passenger everybody will need a paddle appropriate to their respective size, strength and the boat that you will be using. If possible, it's always a good idea to take a spare too, just in case! As long as you're not planning on tackling any fast flowing water attaching a length of string between the kid's paddles and the boat will cut down the amount of time you spend turning around to pick up dropped paddles and reduce the amount of tears shed from losing paddles temporarily.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Paddling strokes are not the only things that can be learnt during a day out on the water. Encourage the kids to look around them at their surroundings, most rivers, lakes and coastlines are teeming with wildlife, everything from pond skaters to otters can be seen on the UK's waterways, and exploring seaside rock pools is a must! Look through a wildlife book before your trip, and be sure to pack it into your bag before you go, and challenge the children to spot several different types of birds, insects or animals during the course of the day. Maps are difficult items to look after at the best of times but combine them with kids and water and they will almost certainly never survive the day, try copying and laminating the section you intend to paddle and challenge the junior paddlers to keep track of where they are by matching up features on the map with landmarks. Rivers and lakes are relatively easy to navigate on as you will always be somewhere along the blue line or blue blob. Map reading is not just important for paddling but as a life skill and one that it is important for everybody to learn, paddling trips give an ideal opportunity to introduce the skill of map reading to kids in a fun environment. Beware though, laminated sheets do not float and so can be lost over board very easily. Many canals and rivers have locks and some of the older locks can still be operated by hand, winding wheels to open and close the sluices and pushing to open and close the gates. Provided your kids are calm and well behaved, most lock keepers are more than happy to explain the workings of the lock and have some little helpers to operate the lock with them.

JUST IN CASE

We've already mentioned a spare paddle but it's a good idea to carry both a repair kit and your pump with you. Another useful addition can be an emergency bothy style shelter. These are great for getting everybody huddled up and warm in an emergency, but are also popular with nippers as instant dens!

So that's it, all you need to do now is plan an adventure load up the car and hit the water.





NATIONAL GO CANOEING WEEK 2014



BIGGER and BETTER Than



This year's National Go Canoeing Week, which ran from 24th May – 1st June, gave people across the country the opportunity to pick up a paddle, get out on the water and get involved in the wonderful world of canoeing and kayaking. The annual festival of paddling fun has been running since 2012 and in a bid to make this year's event even bigger and better, we set the nation a unique challenge – to collectively paddle the entire distance around the UK coastline.

To help meet this ambitious target we laid on more than 200 activities at clubs and centres across the country and encouraged participants to log onto our website and register the miles they paddled.

“Your brilliant support has helped make National Go Canoeing Week 2014 a great success and we're already thinking of ways to make next year's event even better!”

Go Canoeing Development Officer Jenny Spencer said, “During last year's National Go Canoeing Week we had more than 120 Starter Sessions, which introduced

hundreds of new people to our fabulous sport. This year, however, we were really keen to open up the event to the entire canoeing community and make sure there really was something for everyone.

“As well as Starter Sessions, this year's National Go Canoeing Week also featured around 100 fantastic Guided Tours and our brand new Challenge Routes, which were launched in three stunning locations.

“Our motto for the week was Every Mile Counts and it was great to see so many canoe and kayak clubs get involved in the fun as well. Whether it was specially arranged events, such as river trips and team challenges, or just part of their normal activities, clubs up and down the country registered the mileage their members clocked up during the week.

“We'd like to say a big thank you to everyone who got involved, from activity organisers and clubs through to the individuals who took the time to visit our website and register their miles. Your brilliant support has helped make National Go Canoeing Week 2014 a great success and we're already thinking of ways to make next year's event even better!”

As part of the Every Mile Counts theme, individuals were also encouraged to clock up some miles during National Go Canoeing Week and to let the event be their excuse to get on the water and do some paddling. Amongst those who registered their mileage was Olympic Gold Medallist Etienne Stott, who also



Ever Before



helped support the event by appearing at the National Go Canoeing Week launch event in early May.

Etienne said, "I kept checking the website during National Go Canoeing Week to see how many miles had been completed and I was really hoping we could reach the target. I was keen to do my bit as well and I was training as usual during the week, so I clocked up a good few miles and registered them on the website.

"National Go Canoeing Week is a great way to get people involved in the sport and the initiative has activities and events happening throughout the year to help people make the most out of their time on the water, whatever their age or ability.

"It's great to be able to support Go Canoeing and give something back to the sport I love. Canoeing is such a fantastic sport and it has given me so much, from countless hours of fun on the river with my friends to the opportunity to compete at the highest level." **CF**

At the time of going to press, the final number of miles registered during National Go Canoeing Week was still being counted and verified. For a final total and to keep up to date with all the latest from Go Canoeing, visit www.gocanoeing.org.uk



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Taking Up The

Article & images by Faye & Jason Smith

THE EVERY MILE COUNTS CHALLENGE ROUTE AT RUTLAND WATER



I settle myself in to the cockpit of my kayak, snap on my deck and reach forward to plant my first stroke of the day. The paddle enters the water with a barely audible plop and as I pull through the stroke I feel my kayak begin to glide out on to the perfectly still, mirror-flat water of Rutland Water. It's still early and we can still see wisps of mist floating gently above the water, and a heron flaps lazily across the sky, as the morning sun warms the surface. We are here to undertake the Every Mile Counts Challenge Route and rack up some miles to register, as part of National Go Canoeing Week, and it's shaping up to be a very good day indeed... ►



Rutland Water is one of the largest artificial lakes in Europe and, certainly in terms of surface area, the largest in England, its set in 4200 acres of open countryside, including a fantastic nature reserve, and is the shining jewel in the heart of Rutland, England's smallest county.

The Every Mile Counts Challenge Routes provide you with the opportunity to complete either a one or three-mile route in three scenic locations. We'd opted for Rutland Water as, being based in the east midlands, it was pretty much on the doorstep, but there were also great routes down in Portsmouth on the coast or on the waters of Windermere up in the Lake District.

At each site there was friendly staff on hand to help you get going (we'd been helped signing in and out by the lovely Kerry at Rutland Watersports) and equipment hire was available at all locations. Or if you had your own kit like we did then you could just register, jump on and complete the route.

All the Challenge Routes were suitable for all ages and it was up to you to choose which distance you wanted to complete, depending on how much of a challenge you wanted to take on. You didn't need any previous experience to take part and the focus was on having fun, so it was a great opportunity to get your friends or family involved. No pre booking was required and there was a whole fleet of different kayaks and canoes available to hire, including singles, double and even some that cater for up to three people.

UP THE CREEK

We'd opted for the three-mile route, although both options took place in an arm of Rutland Water known as 'the creek' at a place called Whitwell. This is home to Rutland Watersports, but also a great café, Rutland

Cycling bike shop and the Rock Bloc climbing tower and high ropes course. There were certainly loads of activities to do on and off the water.

We paddled under an increasingly warm sun. As we reached the mouth of the creek we watched the Rutland Belle, a passenger cruiser, set off on her first sight seeing tour of the day. In the distance we could also see the distinctive St Matthew's Church (more commonly called Normanton Church) on the far shore. Rutland Water itself not withstanding this is probably Rutland's most famous landmark.

"You didn't need any previous experience to take part and the focus was on having fun, so it was a great opportunity to get your friends or family involved."

Normanton Hall itself was a seat of the Earls of Ancaster and an important centre of their estates. The stable block of their hall is still there and is now the Normanton Park Hotel. In the 18th century the village was cleared to make a park for the estate of the Heathcote family with the population mainly re-housed nearby in Empingham. In the 1970s much of the parish was flooded by the construction of the Rutland Water reservoir.

St Matthew's Church is a grade II listed building, built in classical style, and built by Thomas Cundy Jr between 1826 and 1829, whilst the nave and apse were constructed in 1911, by J. B. Gridley of London. Originally the private chapel for the Normanton Estate, it was de-consecrated in 1970, and was to have been demolished as part of the reservoir construction, as its floor was below the proposed water level. Following a public outcry, the lower half was filled with stone and rubble, and a concrete cap constructed just below the level of the windows. An embankment was built around the church leaving it a prominent feature on the water's edge. The structure formerly housed a museum recording the history of Rutland Water, which is now located in the visitor centre. ►



We shared the water with canoes & sit-on-tops



CHALLENGE COMPLETE

As we began to make our way towards the finish there were lots of other paddlers taking to the water to take on the Rutland Challenge. We passed stand up paddle boarders, sit-on-top kayaks and open canoes all enjoying a great time on the water, soaking up the scenery and making those miles count.

THE NEXT CHALLENGE

We enjoyed our Every Mile Counts Challenge so much that we can't wait for the launch of the new Go Canoeing Three Lakes Challenge. Taking in great lakes in the Lake District, Scotland and Wales the challenge can be completed in one epic go, or in smaller chunks, it's up to you and what ever floats your boat. Keep an eye on the Go Canoeing website for more info soon. **CF**



▲ Why not share a challenge route with a friend



Heading off in to the morning sun

USEFUL INFO

Go Canoeing - www.gocanoeing.org.uk

Rutland Water - www.anglianwater.co.uk/leisure/what-to-see/water-parks/rutland.aspx & rutlandwatersports@anglianwater.co.uk

Every Mile Counts - www.gocanoeingweek.org.uk/register-your-miles

Rutland Water is a perfect place for a paddle



“We paddled under an increasingly warm sun. As we reached the mouth of the creek we watched the Rutland Belle, a passenger cruiser, set off on her first sight seeing tour of the day.”

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- › Club of the Year
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- › Waterways & Environment Volunteer
- › Impact on Disability Canoeing
- › Volunteer Coach of the Year
- › Safety Award
- › Outstanding Contribution
- › Performance Coach

**CLOSING DATE:
Noon on
Friday 20th
June!**



Tandem Canoe Skills

WELCOME TO THE DIVORCE BOAT (A SURVIVAL GUIDE)

Paddling an open canoe, as a tandem pair is a powerful and rewarding experience, just as manoeuvrable as a solo canoe but with vastly improved horse power available. Like a sports car with two engines, tandem canoeing is for paddlers with friends!

Article by
Karl Midlane

Strangely in the UK it is an often neglected option, usually relegated to the realms of beginners on flat water and solo paddling is considered the way forward if you want to progress beyond the novice stage. This is probably because the tandem canoe has been earning itself a reputation as a divorce boat, arguments erupt at the simplest of manoeuvres, blame is attributed, tempers flare and boats become consigned to dusty garages or if space allows a second one is acquired so that its crew can have one each and be allowed to revel in their own success rather than suffer the consequences of somebody else's mistakes.

Now we don't like to think of canoeing as having any rules and if there were any there would be plenty of exceptions but here are a few guidelines that may help to prevent unseemly disputes and promote the formation of a slick and efficient team, capable of anything a solo paddler can do but at twice the enjoyment.

PICK A PARTNER

You will both need complimentary goals if one of you has ambitions of huge rapids whilst the other expects tranquil lakes you are not off to a good start.

TRIM

Trim is the way the boat is balanced from front to back. Whilst travelling forwards the canoe usually performs best if the bow [front] is slightly lighter. If the boat is manoeuvring backwards or in windier conditions this may need to be changed. Trim can be changed by a small extent by considering where you position any luggage and to a greater extent where the heavier paddler sits/kneels. This will be a more important factor than who wants the most legroom.

PICK A SIDE

A tandem boat is best paddled with one person on the left and one on the right. All the manoeuvring that you need in your boat can be achieved this way. Swapping sides is expectable if one arm gets tired, but is not really what you do when you need to steer. When you are starting to get tired give your partner a few strokes warning and both swap at the same time. If paddling at speed one partner may shout 'hut' during a power stroke signalling that they are going to perform one more full power stroke after which both will seamlessly switch.

Having both canoeists paddling on the same side, as a means of turning is poor and inefficient, only producing large circles. It always disappoints me when I hear lazy coaches telling novices to do that rather than teaching them something better that they can continue to use for the rest of their paddling careers.

“Complement whatever your partner is doing with a stroke that adds to it’s effectiveness rather than trying to duplicate it.”



Sweep strokes that for a solo paddler go in a wide arc from one end of the boat to the other can now only do a quarter of a circle from the front out to ninety degrees, or from ninety degrees to the front for a reverse sweep. Draws and prys [pulling and pushing] are great, as are bow draws, bow rudders/cuts and bow jams, cross deck bow rudders are also very powerful.

As long as they do not swap hands to do so bow paddlers can temporarily reach across to the other side of the boat to initiate off side turns, but anything they do behind them will contravene the peace treaty.

The rear paddler is permitted to use the no man’s land in front of them by the middle of the boat for forward power only anything else they do has to be behind them like stern rudder and J-strokes or a quarter sweep stroke going between the hips and the back or a reverse equivalent in the same zone. Draws and prys at the hip or behind are great but anything they try to do on the opposite side of the boat is pointless.

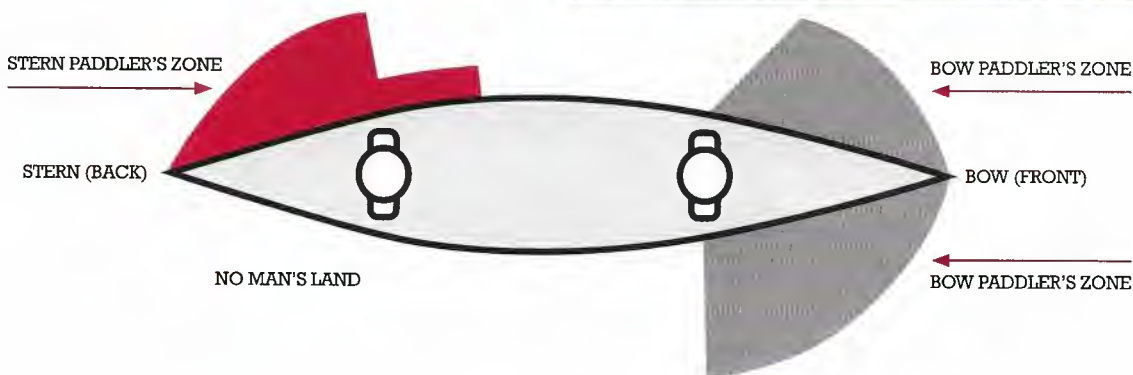
KEEP THE ENGINE RUNNING

Complement whatever your partner is doing with a stroke that adds to it’s effectiveness rather than trying to duplicate it, for example rudders only work when the boat is moving at a good speed, so if the front paddler is doing a cross deck bow rudder the stern paddle cannot choose to do a stern rudder as no one is generating more forward speed. They would be better off providing forward power to make the bow rudder more effective and adding a hint of J to the end if the turn needs tightening. ▶

NO MAN’S LAND

Often in tandem canoes paddlers sit close to the ends (just out of reach of their partners paddle should disputes turn violent). This means that you are not seated at the pivot point of the boat as you would be in a solo, so many of the strokes in your solo repertoire will need to be modified, leading to areas of no man’s land around the boat where performing any strokes will be ineffective or counterproductive.

For bow paddlers strokes performed in front of them are potentially very powerful, but anything that goes in behind them is useless. Forward power should be done with a vertical paddle and run parallel to the centre line of the boat and not follow the curve of the gunnel, but must end at their hips, trying to add any sort of stern rudder or J-stroke is pointless as it does not reach anywhere near the stern [back] of the boat.



“Don’t blame your partner; you are a team if something has not gone right you have both failed”



WHO IS IN CHARGE?

It is a common misconception that the stern paddler is in charge. This option is rarely effective as the stern strokes available are limited to ones that help to keep the boat running in a straight line, and the bow paddler being in the way restricts the view from the stern. Conversely the bow paddler has an excellent view of any imminent obstacles and has a wide range of stroke options that are good for initiating sudden changes in direction. So if the bow paddler suddenly appears to be trying to make the boat turn left trust them and do a stroke that assists as there may well be a good reason for it that the rear paddler is unaware of.

“Communicating with each other is vital, try to talk about the manoeuvre you would like the boat to perform rather than the strokes you would like your partner to do.”

KEEP IN TIME

The boat will hold a better straight line if forward power is done in unison. The rear paddler has a good view of what the front is doing and should strive to keep in time with them. However the rear paddler may need to add some steering correction

to their strokes that will slow their stroke rate, although the bow paddler cannot see this happening they should be able to feel the boost in power the stern is providing and aim to limit their stroke rate to something the rear paddler can keep up with.

COMMUNICATE

Two paddlers in a boat should be able to provide the craft with twice the skill, but this will be limited by the quality of the interface between them. Communicating with each other is vital, try to talk about the manoeuvre you would like the boat to

perform rather than the strokes you would like your partner to do. ‘Sharp left then accelerate’ should do the trick; your partner will know how to achieve that.

PLAN

If you have inspected a rapid you can do your communication in advance. This will give you time to think about how you will complement each other and you may even decide that there is a tactical advantage to be had when deciding which sides to paddle on.

EDGING

Edging or tilt in the canoe is its side-to-side angle, you will need to be able to put it on edge particularly as the water becomes more demanding. Don’t get upset with your partner if the boat is not always perfectly flat. In a canoe tilt is usually achieved by shifting your weight to one side, but your centre of gravity [body] will still remain inside the gunnels so it will be in balance even if it is at an odd angle. You can plan in advance who is going to initiate the edging so that you do not overdo it, but you will need to practice enough to feel comfortable with somebody else tipping the boat if they feel it is needed.

FORMING, STORMING, NORMING, PERFORMING

Tuckman researched how people develop in to effective team and believed there are four stages:

- **Forming:** everybody is really polite to the rest of their new team but they do not function very effectively.
- **Storming:** letting down the barriers and getting used to people, tempers may flair; arguments occur but persevere as the next phase is...
- **Norming:** getting use to each other and developing trust and productivity.
- **Performing:** now you are a slick well-oiled machine.

HUMILITY

Don't blame your partner; you are a team if something has not gone right you have both failed.

EMPATHY

My paddling partner refers to this as 'endpathy', even if you have a preferred position swap ends with your partner occasionally and get a feel for life at the other end of the boat and the problems they have to deal with.

PRACTICE

The perfect unity and ability to sense just what your partner needs that allows you to manoeuvre the boat twice as well as a solo paddler will not happen overnight it needs time to get right and there may be a few tiffs and swims along the way but it is well worth pursuing.

THREE IN A BOAT

Well that is just madness, twice the power on one side as the other is just asking for trouble. Unless the third crewmember is a very young child or the family dog you would be better off getting them to swim along behind. **CF**



The Expert



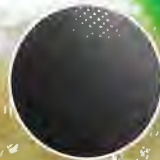
Karl Midlane is a level 5 coach working mostly for Plas y Brenin where canoe coaching is cheaper than marriage counselling. To find out more about Plas y Brenin and their year-round selection of canoeing and kayaking courses and holidays visit www.pyb.co.uk where you can pick up a free 80-page colour brochure.

During the 1990's Karl Midlane and Tim Pryor took slalom C2 by storm. Their retirement from competitive tandem paddling was due to having achieved perfection and thinking it was only fair to let other teams win some trophies. Any performances that may have appeared to be boat based arguments were merely a ruse to put off the opposition. Honest!

photo: G. T. J. J. J.

SHORT STRIDES

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Paddling in the North

By Chris Cleaver & Brian Hamer

Rural landscapes and reminders of our industrial history. The north of England has much to offer the canoe, or kayak, tourer. Check out this selection of diverse and interesting northern paddling trips...

THE NORTH WEST CANAL NETWORK

The North West has always been considered to be the birthplace of our canal systems. It was the partnership between James Brindley and the 3rd Duke of Bridgewater that brought together the source of production to the burgeoning markets for its output. The building of the Bridgewater Canal linked the output from his Lancashire coal mines to the rapidly growing industrial cities of Manchester and Salford. Other canals were rapidly built to provide a reliable and relative quick transport method between the majority of towns and cities of Lancashire and North Cheshire - the majority of which are still navigable, today.

The Cheshire Ring group of canals, linking Manchester with most of the larger towns in Cheshire, provides 94 miles of paddling and 96 locks to negotiate. During the last weekend in June, Macclesfield and District Canoe Club organise



Enjoying a grand day out on the Chester Dee.
Pic by Chester Kayak Hire - www.chesterkayakhire.co.uk

a popular endurance race around this circuit encouraging contestants to paddle all the way or groups to paddle it as a relay.

BRIDGEWATER CANAL

This waterway provides two very different paddling experiences and should be broken down into manageable day paddles, as there are plenty of access points.

Beginning at Castlefield, an inner city conservation area in Manchester, it passes out of the city through an eclectic array of semi-derelict buildings and the wonderfully regenerated area of Salford Quays and past Old Trafford the home of Manchester United.

At Waters Meeting the canal splits. To the right it heads off through the vast but incongruous Trafford Park industrial estate and over the Barton Swing Aqueduct an impressive piece of Victorian engineering. It goes on towards Worsley, the home of the Duke of



“It is often paddled as a canoe camping expedition over three of four days as there are a number of canal side campsites on the way.”

Bridgewater, an estate village of great interest and area considered to be the place where the canal age really began. At the Delph is the entrance to the vast underground mines where 46 miles of tunnels brought out the coal by boat called a ‘starvationer’. Look out for the bright orange coloured water, which is the result of the dissolved iron ore. The navigation continues on and eventually joins the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, at Leigh.

The other arm part of the Cheshire Ring continues from Water Meeting through Stretford and Sale out into the soft Cheshire countryside, passing through Dunham Park and past Dunham Massey Hall in Altrincham, which was once home to the Earl of Stamford and used as a hospital during the First World War. The canal makes its way through several villages, including Lymm and Grappenhall, towards Stockton Heath and on towards Preston Brook where it links with the Trent and Mersey Canal, before heading west to a dead end at Runcorn. ▶





PEAK FOREST CANAL

Peak Forest Canal was built to provide a much-needed outlet for the limestone quarries near Buxton to the city of Manchester and beyond. The returning traffic was coal to fire the kilns.

From Whaley Bridge or Buxworth, the navigation borders the Peak District and provides fabulous views or Kinder Scout, South Head and Chinley Churn as it makes its way towards the industrial conurbations of East Manchester. Here it joins the Rochdale and Ashton Canals at Dukinfield Basin, 14 miles away. At Marple, now a suburb of Stockport, a flight of 16 locks carries you down 214ft until the River Goyt, where a suburb aqueduct and an even grander railway viaduct cross the river nearly 100ft below. From here the countryside is less rural as the navigation passes through two tunnels, both open to canoeists provided the appropriate light is attached, and into the Tame Valley until the navigation reaches Portland Basin at Dukinfield.

LANCASTER CANAL

As a navigation, the Lancaster Canal is delightful, providing 42 miles of lock free paddling beginning by the M6 motorway at Tewitfield and ending at Preston. It is often paddled as a canoe camping expedition over three or four days as there are a number of canal side campsites on the way. Alternatively, it can be broken into several short day paddling trips, as there are also numerous access points. Most of the countryside is gentle and rolling with the Pennine rising in the east. At Hest Bank the navigation almost runs into Morecombe Bay before moving away to cross the River Lune by an imposing aqueduct, grand both by design and construction. The short section from Aldcliffe Road in Lancaster to Galgate is especially enjoyable. As it passes through the wooded cutting at Burrow Heights it is difficult to imagine that the waterway is actually man made. As it continues towards Garstang and eventually to Preston the countryside is no less agreeable passing through the Fylde, which is the 'market garden' of the North West.

CHESHIRE DEE

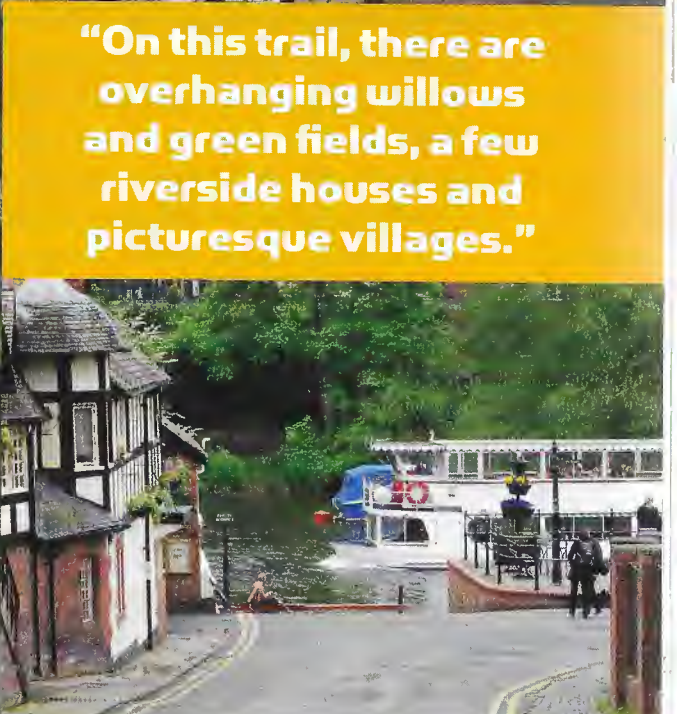
The important place to know on the Cheshire Dee is the car park and launching place at Sandy Lane, Chester. The postcode for this is CH3 5UL. The Cheshire Dee is placid, compared with Llangollen, and normally has a modest flow speed so it is possible to paddle upstream. This allows out-and-back trips up or down stream. There is a choice and a contrast.



Go upstream, for peace and quiet! On this trail, there are overhanging willows and green fields, a few riverside houses and picturesque villages. There are two bridges, at Farndon (11 miles), which is the concrete A55 bridge and the cast iron arch of the Eaton Hall approach road bridge, further on.

Go downstream for activity! On the water, you'll see rowing, canoeing, dinghy sailing, hire boats (motor and rowing) site seeing and party cruise boats and even the occasional visiting narrow boat! On the banks of the river, you'll spot prestige riverside houses, parks and clubs, plus old waterworks, a Victorian suspension bridge, riverside esplanade with bandstand, medieval city walls, a bridge and a weir. So don't forget your camera! ►

"From here the countryside is less rural as the navigation passes through two tunnels, both open to canoeists provided the appropriate light is attached."



“On this trail, there are overhanging willows and green fields, a few riverside houses and picturesque villages.”

RIVER WEAVER

A paddle on the River Weaver can give you lots of scenic contrasts. The navigation was at the heart of the Cheshire chemical industry based on salt so, on this trail, you can spot the head gear of Winsford Salt Mine, Anderton Boat Lift, the enormous works where soda ash used to be loaded into ships, a wartime concrete barge and the riverside meadows, where cattle make milk for the well-known Cheshire cheese.

The river, below Winsford Flash, was improved as a navigation in the 18th Century, to provide 17 miles of normally placid water touring. The navigation was further improved in the 20th Century, this time to facilitate 1000ton ships. Today, this means that the four sets of locks are large with long portages so it is best to take a portage trolley. The navigation is now run for leisure by the Canal and Rivers Trust, and you won't meet anything larger than a barge!

DID YOU KNOW?

For a lot of these rivers, you'll need to have a waterways licence before you can go paddling. If you're a British Canoeing member, you'll already have a licence as part of your membership. Please remember to take your membership card with you, whenever you go paddling as this also represents your licence. If you're not a member, join today for this and many other great benefits. Visit www.canoe-england.org.uk **CF**



"This means that the four sets of locks are large with long portages so it is best to take a portage trolley."



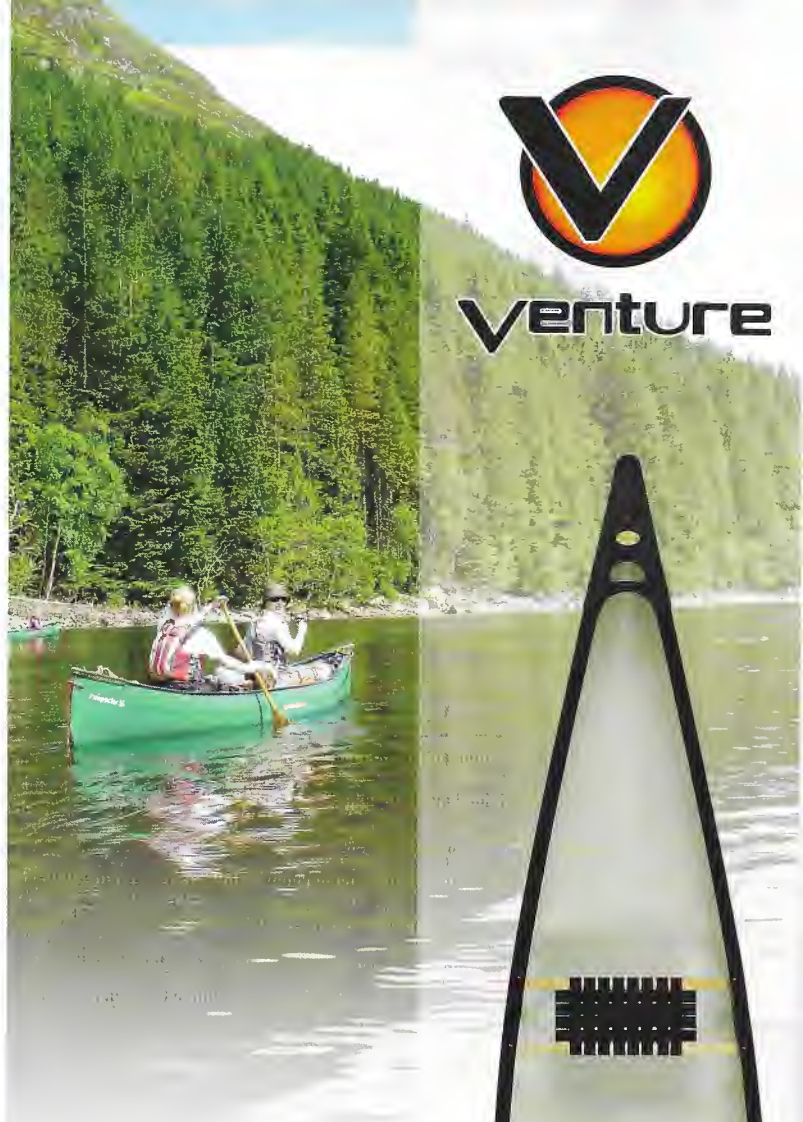


USEFUL INFO

For more fantastic paddling trips and canoe trails, head to www.canoe-england.org.uk/oursport/places-to-paddle



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Article by Chris Adams

Coastal Safety

THE RNLI ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR SAVING PEOPLE WHEN THINGS GO WRONG AT SEA, BUT ITS MUCH BETTER IF WE AS PADDLERS TAKE NOTE OF THEIR SOUND ADVICE AND MAKE EVERY EFFORT AND PRECAUTION TO AVOID GETTING OUT OF OUR DEPTH...



“When we make the decision to call it is usually at a point where things are really critical and so is done under high pressure and with no further margin for error.”

It turns out that it's near impossible to operate an iPhone through a dry-case with cold, wet hands. Ramming it back into the pocket on my buoyancy aid, I pop my spray deck and try to locate the VHF radio I have wedged somewhere behind my seat. After a few minutes, and with more luck than judgement, I manage to free the corroded karabiner securing it to one of the seat adjusters. I thought I was prepared for the worst, but when it came to the crunch and I needed to call in the cavalry, I very nearly ran out of luck despite all my preparation and confidence. Although a one off for me, recent research from the RNLI shows this is maybe not quite as uncommon as we might hope...

WHO IS MOST AT RISK?

Last summer the British Canoeing helped the RNLI with a piece of work to understand who is most at risk when kayaking on the sea.

A quick survey and some background research confirmed a preconceived notion that those most at risk were individuals who paddled outside of any formal structure like a club or centre, had limited training, but were ambitious in their activity. This group includes the archetypal bloke in his 30's or 40's with a boat bought off eBay, ready to take on the world. So it comes as no surprise to hear he is sometimes a little under prepared for the change in weather as he paddles off towards the horizon.

SKILLS & THRILLS

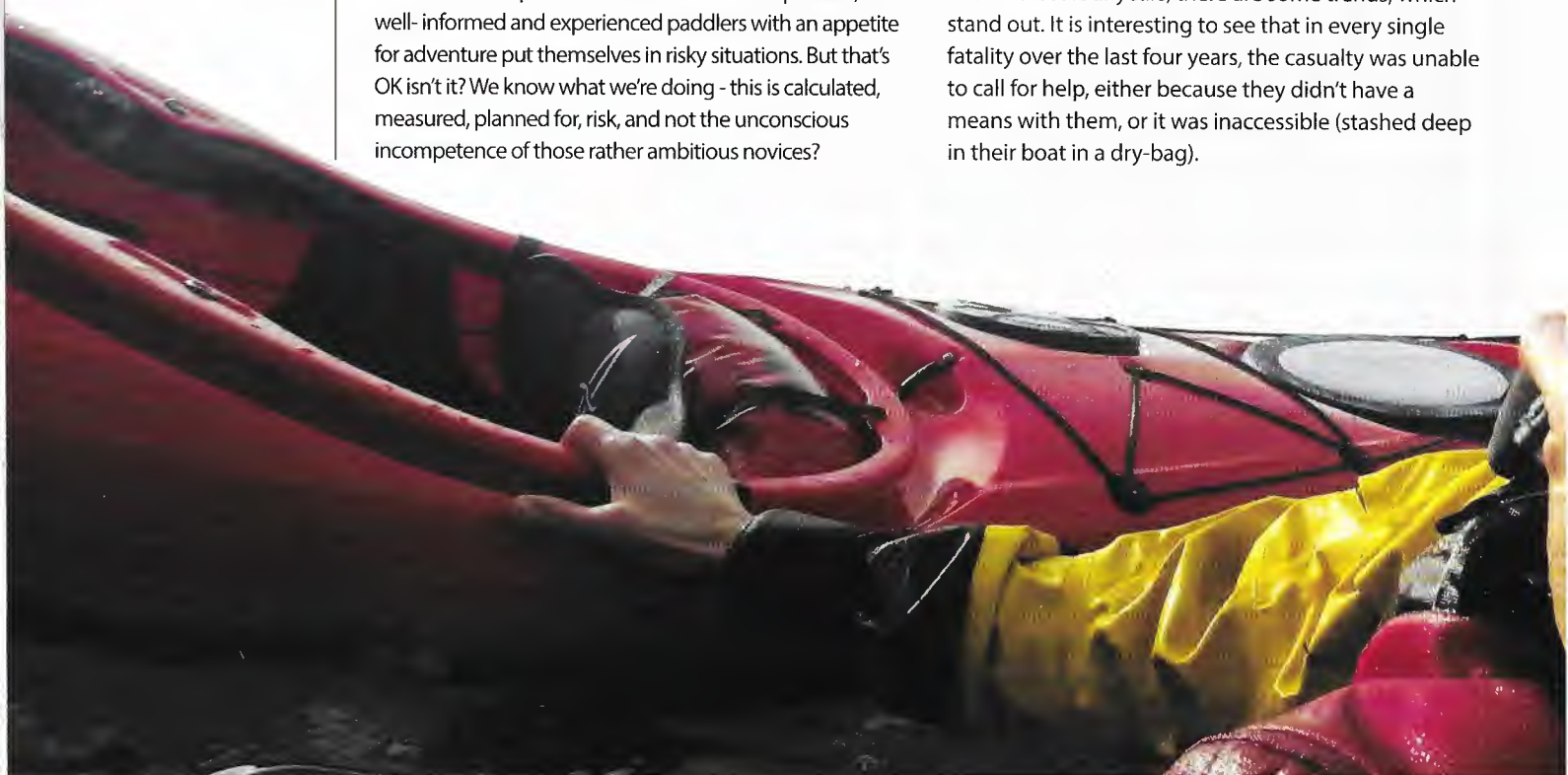
What was more of a surprise was the group that came out second highest at risk – the expert thrill seekers. OK, maybe it isn't such a surprise to hear that those well-qualified, well-informed and experienced paddlers with an appetite for adventure put themselves in risky situations. But that's OK isn't it? We know what we're doing - this is calculated, measured, planned for, risk, and not the unconscious incompetence of those rather ambitious novices?

There was a great article in the December edition of Code by Martin Chester, looking at common decision traps we can fall into as paddlers. It absolutely nails the point around our tendency to make bad decisions when we should and do know better. If you haven't read it, it is available on the website and well worth a read (www.bcu.org.uk/files/code173.pdf). It does however beg the question, what happens if we do get it wrong? This is where I think this recent research picks things up nicely.

WHEN THINGS GO WRONG!

Paddling in challenging environments is a good thing when combined with preparation, planning and a suitable level of experience. But of course we do get it wrong, make misjudgements or just have bad luck. It's so often not the big things that catch us out, but little things stacking up that cause us the most difficulties.

Looking through the causes of serious accidents over the last four years, there are some trends, which stand out. It is interesting to see that in every single fatality over the last four years, the casualty was unable to call for help, either because they didn't have a means with them, or it was inaccessible (stashed deep in their boat in a dry-bag).



We train from day one on guiding principles to protect ourselves and others when paddling. From 'all in' rescues on an FSRT course, to age old mantras like 'less than three there should never be'; we work hard to set parameters to ensure we stay safe on the water. But what happens when these are broken? We find ourselves separated from the group, or unable to get a friend back in their boat after several attempts.

We put lots of time and effort into making groups self-sufficient, able to rescue each other, carrying throw-lines, towlines, repair kits, first aid kits, the works. This is all good stuff! BUT, what happens when we reach our limit, when we can't fix it, when we need external assistance?

Obviously, if we are simply not carrying a means of calling for help such as a VHF radio, a Personal Locator Beacon or at least a mobile phone, then we are asking for trouble. Thankfully, with the cost of technology dropping these are available at a reasonable price nowadays and are seen as an essential piece of kit by the majority of serious paddlers on the sea.

Our message to those ambitious novices, paddling outside of the more formal structures, is to carry a means of calling for help and keep it immediately available should they need it. But I think for those of us who paddle regularly, often in more structured environments too, it is worth taking it a little further. Calling for help is generally considered the last resort. This seems to make sense, but it also means, when we make the decision to call it is usually at a point where things are really critical and so is done under high-pressure and with no further margin for error.

It is too late to discover our VHF battery is flat or we don't have any signal on a mobile phone. We need our systems to work, now!

So, what if we change our mind-set a little and consider communication as an earlier part of the process. Consider your first aid training where we a taught Danger, Response then Call for Help, before starting to deal with the incident.

OK, before you start thinking I'm some risk adverse safety nut, I am not suggesting you call the lifeboat every time your boat wobbles. However, consider whether making earlier communication with a contact outside of your group could add reassurance should things escalate. It could be another group on the water or a friend ashore. Either way, a preliminary call is an easy safety net to put in place and doesn't in anyway reduce your ability to resolve things within your group either. You now have someone outside of the group keeping a closer eye out if needed.

When was the last time you tried to contact another group close by or ashore only to find they didn't respond straight away? Better to deal with that when a situation is not urgent than when it really is time critical, surely?

Much of the good practice within the sport has been built before VHF radios and Personal Locator Beacons became more available and mainstream. The strong focus on the need to be self-sufficient is well founded, but technology is developing fast making it easier and more practical to keep in touch throughout a trip and, should the worst happen, make that call to get help. **CF**



Chris Adams is a Coastal Safety Manager for the RNLI. He has over 10 years' experience coaching paddlesport through the British Canoeing schemes in addition to 20 years' experience kayaking in the UK and overseas.

USEFUL INFO

For more information on coastal safety and the work of the RNLI visit <http://rnli.org>



"We just got hit by a squall; we have half our group in the water. We're just outside the harbour entrance with a strong ebbing tide. We should be able to sort this out but I'll call you back in 20 minutes to confirm, over"



Focus On Canoe & Kayak Camping

Heading out on a paddling powered camping trip can be serious fun, here's a simple guide to help you plan your own fantastic canoe camping adventure. Both canoes and kayaks were originally designed to carry kit and paddlers on multi-day trips and these versatile craft are still the ideal tools for variety of canoe or kayak camping adventures. Pack up your tent; load the camping kit, paddling partner, kids and dog and head out on a canoe or kayak camping adventure.

We're not about to babble on about every little detail of a 'Bear Grylls' style survival camping trip epic, after all half the fun of canoe or kayak camping adventures is discovering what works for you, but rather give you a few useful tips to help make your first forays in to paddling adventure camping fun and enjoyable. First of all before you head off on a multi-day paddling expedition in the back of beyond, it's well worth making sure you've got the basics covered with a few practice day trips. These will give you a good idea of how far you can comfortably paddle in a day, the best way to load your kit in to your boat and give you great practise at navigating, portaging, launching and landing etc.

HAVE A PLAN

Failure to plan is planning to fail as the saying goes. Putting some extra thought in to your camping trip in advance will help make your adventure smoother and will help to eliminate many simple problems that could otherwise spoil your fun. Have a frank chat with your planned camping companions about what you want to get out of the trip and then decide on a location. Weather will almost certainly play a part, so discuss what sort of conditions that you are all happy to put up with, or decide on an alternative if Mother Nature decides not to play ball. The Internet is an invaluable source of good, reliable forecasts.

SORT YOUR KIT

The next thing is to organise your equipment. An open canoe, sea kayak or touring kayak can carry quite a load, but you don't want to over do it, especially if there's a portage or two involved. (Portages are when you have to take your boat out of the water and carry it around an obstacle). Check your boating gear first. Are your

paddles in good condition? It's much easier to do any necessary repairs or to purchase any replacements before you go. Next up make sure you have clothing for the conditions. Even in summer we will take extra thermal layers, a hat, gloves and wet weather gear. A set of outer shells (cag and bottoms) that double up as off-the-water wear if it's wet is a good idea as it'll cut down on weight and save space. If you want to go really wild camping (and lightweight) then consider using a tarp, which can be used in conjunction with a canoe, paddles or strung from trees to make a shelter, but a light weight tent is always a good option.

Although your boat can probably stow a heap of gear we've come to the conclusion remember that when it comes to gear 'light is right, and if at all possible it's best to try and keep the weight down. Pieces of gear that can double up with more than one function are always a great idea too. Cooking on an open fire is fun, but be aware of your environment, using a fire box to protect the ground is highly advisable and it can be as simple as a biscuit tin stood on a couple of rocks or logs. If you opt for a camping stove option make sure you have enough fuel or gas with you? It's always better to take extra, just in case. No one really likes cold beans! A cold-box or cool bag is useful and always make sure you have enough freshwater with you. River water is fine for washing etc, but it's not always OK to drink. Maybe even consider taking a filter with you? What other camping equipment you choose to take is up to you, but a descent sleeping bag and mat is also a must for a good night's sleep.

SIZZLING SAUSAGES

Cooking in the open is always special, there's just something about rustling up a backwoods banquet that makes you feel all warm and fuzzy inside, and not just from the homemade curry! It's easy to get swayed by the lure of freeze-dried food or pre-prepared food in foil packets, but try and resist, just because you are cooking outside doesn't mean that you must live on boil in the bag type meals. It's often easier, cheaper and certainly a whole lot tastier to prepare fresh meals. These can be cooked right there on camp, or with a bit of planning you can cook things like stews, sauces, soups, chillies

"Few will pass up the opportunity to spend as much of the day as possible under an open sky, pushing your boat onward to somewhere special, a place where we can breathe deep and witness the world."

Image: Anita Jenkins

and curry at home and then freeze them ready to be reheated on the camp fire or stove. An old sea kayaker trick is to get cuts of meat vacuum packed by the butcher and then frozen. These then act as extra cold blocks to keep your perishables fresh, but then defrost ready for you to have fresh meat during your camping trip.

Pack some seasoning and a few spices, as these are great for adding a little zing to your dishes and can turn bland dishes in to something far more appealing.

PACK IT IN

Packing and loading your boat are important exercises. Obviously you want to keep things dry and most paddling campers will use either dry bags or waterproof barrels to store their gear in and to keep it dry in the event of an unplanned capsizing/rainstorm etc. Dry bags are easily available from your local canoe shop and really useful. If you're paddling a kayak then you're going to use gear packed in to smaller dry bags and stowed in to your bow and stern (many models have sealed bulkheads to make this easier). They are also simple to pack as they squash into place easily and some models even feature a clear window in the bag to make it easier to find items packed nearer the bottom. It can be useful to have few smaller dry bags too in which to keep things that we may need while we are actually on the water that can be kept closer to hand

For open canoes you can use larger heavy-duty dry bags (often with built in carrying straps) or plastic barrels to store your kit. The barrels are made from tough plastic and have either screw on, or clamp on lids. They are possibly the most hardwearing solution available for keeping things dry in a canoe. But they're not so easy to pack and secure into a canoe and they're not the most comfortable things to carry if you find yourself having to portage.

You need to have a plan when packing and it's best to make sure that you pack the things that you'll need first near the top, so that they'll be easily accessible when you make camp.

As an example in the top of a smaller daytime dry bag pack the first aid kit, waterproofs and snacks, further down is lunch and spare clothes; the items that may be needed during the day, but not necessarily in a hurry. In the top of a larger dry bag will be the stove and pan, so there is always a chance for a last brew before getting underway in the morning and then first thing on arrival at camp in the evening, next in is the tarp or tent, so it can be put up in a hurry if needed. After that comes sleeping bag, sleeping matt, spare clothes and food. Choosing what to take with you is never easy and only experience, over a few trips will tell you what you need. As mentioned above try to take as many multi-functional items as possible and make a note of the gear that seems to be often in use during a trip, and the things that rarely make their way out of a bag. This allows you to plan and pack more efficiently for future trips.

SEE THE LIGHT

Keep a head torch and matches or a lighter at the top of one of your bags, especially in the autumn/winter because if you arrive at camp as it gets dark it will be the first thing that you'll need in order to find everything

else, and it's no good having your stove handy for a brew if your method of lighting it is at the bottom of your bag. Head torches are much more practical for outdoor living than hand-held variety, as you can still use both hands to put up tents, light stoves, even paddle! Be sure you always carry spare batteries and a spare bulb for your head torch too.

FINDING A BALANCE

All of this gear, now packed must now fit into your boat, and fit well. One of the best tricks to successful 'loaded boat' paddling is to trim the canoe or kayak. Trim is the term used to describe the way the weight is balanced in your boat, and is dictated by where you and your gear are positioned. In a kayak you want to try and get your waterline as even as possible. In a canoe you can adjust things a little bit easier while afloat, so you can actually change your trim to help you with certain weather conditions.

As a rule trim the canoe front heavy when you are heading into a head wind, stern heavy for a following wind and level for fair weather. Pack the larger dry bags into the middle of the canoe one either side of the centre yoke, this should balance the weight out nice and evenly. Your smaller bag can sit within reach of you, so it is easy to grab if you should you need it. We often stow it under a seat.

SETTING UP

Once you've reached your chosen camping spot then it's time to utilise a different set of skills. Firstly secure the canoes, or kayaks, or carry them to camp to use as wind breaks, next get out the stove and get some water on for a brew, after all you deserve it after a day's hard paddling, and it's astounding how much a hot drink can improve morale. Now look for a good place to pitch the tent or stretch out the tarp, look for sheltered places with flat ground to sleep on and no obvious dangers, large dead branches in the trees above or very close to the high water mark are both obvious no no's for instance. If everything has gone to plan your tent or tarp should be up by the time the tea water has boiled, so sit down and enjoy your cup of cha. If you have the option of an open fire, prepare a fire pit, or break out your fire box, and collect some wood ready for when it gets dark, be sure to collect sufficient as searching for wood in the dark is no fun. Once this is taken care of you can now start to prepare dinner, hygiene is important when outdoors, so be sure to wash your hands before starting to handle food, and before you eat. Carrying a bottle of disinfectant gel is a good idea as it's an easy and efficient way of keeping hands clean. With dinner done it's time to swap boating tales around the camp fire, if you have one, and maybe enjoy a wee nip, a glass of vino or maybe a mug of hot chocolate before hitting the sack for a good night's snooze.

So there you go, there should be no stopping you now, so dig out the maps, research on-line, make a plan, get a forecast, pack the gear, round up the family, load your boat and go out there in the great outdoors, GO wild and enjoy your own canoe or kayak camping adventure this summer! **CF**

PITCHING A TENT

Tents come in all shapes and sizes and you really need to have practiced putting up your chosen model before your trip. A riverbank, in the rain and dark are not the place to try pitching it for the first time! Choose the flattest area possible and avoid natural hollows, they may look inviting and offer protection, but in the wet they will be magnets for water. Make sure you're tents outer layer, or fly sheet as it's called is pegged out tightly enough, so that it doesn't touch the inner tent, even in strong winds. If possible make sure that you're tents is properly and securely pegged down. If the terrain doesn't allow then use heavy rocks to tie guy lines to instead.

KNOCKING UP A TARP

Tarps are brilliant and they can be erected in all manner of different ways. They can make great shelters to sleep under, but more commonly they are used as communal are a to shelter from the elements. Think of your tent as your bedroom and your tarp as the kitchen come living room (and bar). For a really simple tarp. Tie a rope between two trees. Now lay the tarp over the line and then secure the four corners by pegging them out with a guy line and peg. There you go a shelter. You can use kayak and canoe paddles and even boats to make more elaborate tarp shelters.



Against the Odds

Article by Stuart Lockton
images by Simon Raven





The journey was six months in the planning. Simon and I had tried a number of routes to cross Scotland West to East by canoe. This route was planned as a mixture of river, loch and tidal paddling linked by some portages on roads; straight forward enough when you look on a map, but the actual experience can be very different from that which you first anticipate in a cosy pub...

“Above us, recently returned curlew made their bubbling mating calls on descending glides over the river, we disturbed groups of red deer drinking from the river at the end of the day.”

So our journey began on a benign late afternoon in April on Loch Ewe in the far North West of Scotland. From the grey expanse of open sea loch we paddled under the bridge and up the River Ewe for a couple of kilometres before finding a level and sheltered place for the first night's camp.

The following morning we woke to snow on the ground and a steady fall of heavy snowflakes. Tent and tarp were both decked in a wintry white. Unperturbed, we packed up ready for the first full day of our journey, aiming to paddle the length of Loch Maree. The first part of Loch Maree is in a narrow gap between steep schistose cliffs rising directly from the loch. A steady south easterly blew the length of the loch, directly in our faces, and this was concentrated in the narrowing. As we entered this gap, all we could see was dark, steep-fronted waves, driven forward by 20km of channelled fetch. The chilly wind whipped spray into our eyes. We set to, glad to be paddling tandem, and soon the waves were bucking the boat uncomfortably while wave crests broke onto the bow and ran along the tops of the gunwales. We were 5km into our journey and already we began to doubt whether the conditions would allow us to continue. Trying to hug the north shore we avoided the biggest waves, but where rocks rose directly from the water, reflected waves confused the water and increased the risk of swamping. This pattern continued for hour upon hour, not allowing for a second, a break from heavy paddling. But little by little we passed on up the loch, reaching Isle Maree for a late lunch, where we visited the graves of Clan McLean. The north shores of the loch were wooded with mature oak and birch, but even in mid-April there was not the least sign of leaf buds starting to swell. Wild goats grazed where withered grass showed through last year's russet-coloured fallen bracken. The snow covered bastion of Slioch towered above the far end of the loch, its summit shrouded in swirling grey cloud. It looked and felt like deep winter. Finally, at the end of an exhausting day, continually battered by wind and waves, the canoe bumped up against the course ochre-coloured beach marking the end of the loch. ▶

A JOURNEY FROM POOLEWE TO CROMARTY BY CANOE



NAE WATER!

We had anticipated perhaps being able to reach the village of Kinlochewe by tracking up the river, but following six weeks of severe cold and no rain, this was ruled out after the most cursory of investigations. The heavily loaded boat with all our supplies for a six-day journey had to be loaded onto Simon's custom-built portage trolley. From here it was a 12km journey on the road, over the Pass of Glen Docherty to the next piece of water. The trolley performed wonderfully, and views back toward the north west gradually opened up as we ascended steadily. From the summit, we somewhat naively remarked that now we would have gravity in our favour for the remainder of the journey.

Reaching Loch a Chroisg on forest tracks, we paddled, always against the wind, towards the massive glacial moraines at Achnasheen to the entrance to the River Bran. Having already noted the absence of water, it was no surprise to us to find a shallow trickle of a river. Either the water passed over broad gravel banks, just a few centimetres deep, or squeezed between exposed algae-cover rocks. Our journey became a

succession of brief paddles, sections of lining the boat down narrow channels, and dragging the boat over slippery, barely wet rocks. As we continued down the valley, the sections of paddling became less and the dragging of the boat became more. As we struggled on, the sun came out, but only as it dipped towards the horizon. Above us, recently returned curlew made their bubbling mating calls on descending glides over the river, we disturbed groups of red deer drinking from the river at the end of the day. As the afternoon drew on, we were finally able to paddle longer sections of deep peaty water, though still frequently interrupted by shallow gravel banks. As the light faded we found dryish level ground against a plantation, pulled the boat out of the river, and rapidly assembled a camp in the last light. The temperature fell like a stone, white dust crept over every surface and fingers of frost formed rapidly on our damp clothing, while ropes became stiff as wires. It was going to be a cold night! The following morning ice covered parts of the river, in places stretching from bank to bank. We estimated that the temperature had dropped to -10°C .



"The river bottom plunged steeply from soil banks, deep water the colour of brown ale slipped smoothly through contorted meanderings."



RUNNING DEEP

But now at last, the river was consistently deep enough for us to paddle. The river bottom plunged steeply from soil banks, deep water the colour of brown ale slipped smoothly through contorted meanderings. Now at last, there appeared to be more wildlife on the river, pairs of Teal sheltered in each bend, scattering in their rapid diagonal flight at our approach. On entering Loch Achanalt, a remarkable area of shallow water and irregular marshy islands, where open water hosted more ducks of several kinds, while reedy islands and flat sand beds provided habitat for waders and Snipe. This was a strange and beautiful refuge of wildness best seen, and only accessible, by canoe.

“This was a strange and beautiful refuge of wildness best seen, and only accessible, by canoe.”

That afternoon we portaged the precipitous Grudie Falls from above the Achanalt Weir and entered Loch Luichart. This remote loch curves round through 90° through steep shores wooded with birch; watery sunshine lit up the maroon haze of upper branches, contrasting starkly with the silver bark. Once away from the railway line, into a remote area well away from any sign of human life, much of the shoreline was eroded by wind and waves into overhung soil banks, which looked like enormous breakers with heather and grass forming a fringe of spray at the top of the curl. Having portaged the Luichart Dam, we found excellent camping in the birch woodland below it.

ALL CHANGE

From here on the river's character changed dramatically. It felt as though we had passed from the Highlands to the Lowlands in an instant. Mature oak trees lined the banks of a broad flowing river, delineating the boundary between water and agricultural fields. Having battled contrary winds and shallow watercourses for three full days, suddenly the paddling seemed straightforward:

deep flowing water carried us steadily towards the sea. By the end of this day we passed under the several bridges of Conan Bridge and into the open expanse of the inner Cromarty Firth. The sudden width of view filled with a silvery haze, and a thousand calls of sea birds, while the tang of salt was in the air.

Day 5 dawned dry, clear and windless: just what we needed to paddle the final leg of our journey across open estuary to Cromarty. As we waited for the tide to rise, the estuary buzzed with life. Around 300 geese had noisily gathered on a dry sand bank, more teal grouped in shallow water, while oystercatcher and redshank calls echoed across the mud. As the incoming tide slowed to a gentle pace, we pushed

the canoe into the muddy saline flow and paddled out to sea. Once under the A9 bridge the tide changed. The water was now clear, a seal approached the boat to suss us out, and small groups of curlew flew from the shore making their evocative calls. Osprey flew overhead. As we entered the outer bay of the Firth, the water remaining flat calm, large rafts of rarely seen long tailed ducks had gathered in noisy mating groups before flying off to their northern breeding grounds. Now the outgoing tide picked up pace and we were whisked briskly toward our ultimate destination. The sturdy whitewashed houses of Cromarty gradually grew in size. With a sense of elation we pulled the canoe up on the beach at Cromarty, having passed from the sea in the west to the sea in the east, with the canoe and the trolley having been our only transport.

The journey had been very tough due to the conditions we had faced, but we had completed our plan and experienced inaccessible and beautiful places, with their wildlife, in a way which is certainly only achievable in a journey by canoe. We are already planning the next one. **CF**



“How well you are protected depends on what product you use and how you use it. If you are constantly going in and out of the water, sunscreen may need to be re-applied after every dip depending on how waterproof it is.”



Stay Sun Safe This Summer

We know you will all be keen to hit the water this summer and, in hope that the sun will be shining, it's important to take care in hot weather, make sure you cover up, wear a hat and apply lots of sun-cream to avoid getting burned, or sunstroke. And always remember the water will be reflecting the sun's rays back up at you as well. So to help you slap it on and stay sun safe we've scoured the shop shelves for a selection of paddling friendly sun protection products.

There are literally thousands of sunscreen products to choose from on the market and a walk down the sunscreen aisle can be a confusing experience. They vary in feel, scent, water resistance and how well they rub in. The whole point of sunscreen is to prevent UV radiation from damaging your body.

How well you are protected depends on what product you use and how you use it. If you are constantly going in and out of the water, sunscreen may need to be re-applied after every dip depending on how waterproof it is. Heavy sweating and towelling off can also wear off a sunscreen.

SLAP IT ON!

General instructions on how to apply sunscreen (this may differ for the product you already use, so always read the instructions.)

- Apply to dry skin
- Make sure to cover your face, ears, neck and shoulders
- Apply 15 to 30 minutes before going in the Sun
- Re-apply after towelling off, swimming, or heavy sweating
- Re-apply roughly every 2 hours
- So look sharp paddlers stay safe this summer and apply your sunscreen!

AloeUp SPF50 Pro Sun Cream

RRP: £12.50

This is the highest protection in the AloeUp range. It's fragrance, paraben and alcohol free. Biodegradable and naturally high water resistance thanks to the 35% pure Aloe gel ingredient. This has the same PH as your skin and so doesn't feel greasy. It absorbs rapidly into upper dermis skin layers for hours of protection.

More information available at www.aloeup.co.uk



Island Tribe SPF 40 Gel

RRP: £13.75 for 100ml, £9.25 for 50ml

This broad spectrum SPF 40 gel has been designed for water sports enthusiasts. Island Tribe SPF 40 clear gel is highly impervious to water, so protects you from harmful UVA and UVB rays for far longer than conventional lotions. With its sweat proof formula, you can be sure it won't sting your eyes!

More information available at www.islandtribe.co.uk

Ultrasun SPF20, SPF30 & SPF50 Sports

RRP: SPF20 gel from £16, SPF 30 spray £26 & SPF 50 spray £26

Ultrasun offers a once a day protection in many different formulations. Their sports formulations are created especially with the active person in mind. The non-greasy, clear liquid is really easy to apply, water-resistant and offers great protection from UVA and UVB – all day!

More information available at www.ultrasun.co.uk



Uvistat SPF30 Waterproof Sun Cream

SPF30 Suncream RRP £13.23. SPF50 Lipscreen RRP £5.06

Uvistat SPF30 is a High protection 5 Star UVA/UVB Waterproof sweat resistant sun cream, manufactured in the UK and formulated fragrance free for those people with sensitive skin, making it suitable for most skin types.

With the lips having the least layer of skin on the body the Uvistat SPF50 lip screen also helps keep them protected while you're on the water.

More information available at www.uvistat.com



A final group photo at Syrtveit.

▶ Hallem Parsons going over the wall of water.



Tom Norbury paddling hard down stream.



The last campsite near Hornes (Evje).

▶ C-J Wymer having fun on the easier rapids.



Wyn Jones paddling hard upstream



▶ C-J Wymer about to hit a wall of water on Syrtveit.



“There was the grimace as each cadet approached the rapid, then into the white fury, a change of expression, utter focus and determination to get through to the calmer waters below.”



Playing in a stopper.



EXPEDITION VIKING CHALLENGE

THE FURY OF NORWEGIAN WHITE WATER AND SERENITY OF OPEN FJORDLAND CANOEING!

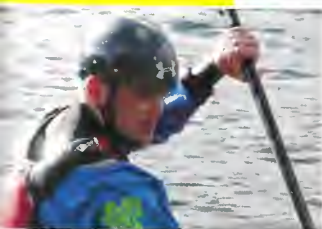
Expedition Viking Challenge was Wycliffe College CCF's first ever canoeing and kayaking expedition to the Setesdal Valley in southern Norway. The aim of the expedition was to introduce a number of their senior cadets to grade 3/4 white water, and also, to complete a three-day, 60km unsupported open canoe expedition...

In technical terms this was a relatively inexperienced group. They were either upper sixth, lower sixth or year 11 cadets, aged 16 to 18. None had done this level of kayaking before. The group did gain experience on the grade 2 rapids at Symonds Yat. All could roll, but not consistently in moving water.

During the white water phase the team were based at Trollatv an outdoor pursuit centre, which

is situated 5km north of Evje. It is owned and run by Tim Davis, an ex-serviceman, stationed at the British Outward Bound Centre (BOBC) Norway in the late 1980's. The centre provided the team with hutted accommodation, showers, dining area and drying room. It is set in the spectacular Setesdal Valley and more importantly it was only a 100m's from the major rapids at Syrtveit.

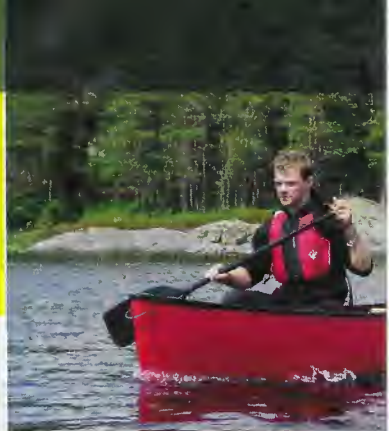
▼ The team's top canoeist Gwilym Wyn-Jones.





The first and very beautiful camp-site.

► Ciaran and C-J paddling along Byglandsfjord.



THE PARTICIPANTS VIEWS

GWILYM WYN - JONES

"Exped Viking Challenge proved to be a fantastic training opportunity for all cadets attending. Despite the long 43-hour journey, we threw ourselves straight into the water on the day we arrived. The first four days were spent advancing white water kayak techniques, based out of Trollaktiv Centre in the Setesdal Valley. We can now all competently paddle grade 2 and 3 rapids complete with some advanced paddle techniques.

The second stage was a three-day flat canoe expedition. As a self-sufficient expedition, we carried our kit with us in dry bags. Covering around 60km, it proved to be a great experience, new to most of the cadets on the exercise.

The final phase included white water rafting and more advanced kayaking. It was altogether a fantastic trip; all of us have thoroughly enjoyed our time in Norway; the accommodation, equipment and opportunities were brilliant and thus praise must go to the staff who organised the trip."

CIARAN POVEY

"The Viking Challenge in Norway has proved to be an amazing experience and a challenge both physically and mentally. Shortly after arriving, we became thoroughly immersed in the white water stage of our expedition. Despite some unnerving incidents, I managed to build up a greater confidence in both my own capabilities and those of my other team members. We then moved onto the expedition part of the challenge, which consisted of travelling 60km in Canadian canoes across three days. This provided a pleasant and relaxing break from the adrenaline-fuelled days of the white water. After the conclusion of the expedition, we were presented with the opportunity to do white water rafting, this provided another adrenaline boost, yet was also a pleasant change in routine from the kayaking and canoeing. On reflection, I feel that, although the Norwegian expedition was not as strenuous in terms of previous expeditions, it has provided a much more satisfying challenge in terms of removing me from my comfort zone."

JOHNNY DAY

"Being my first CCF expedition, I did not quite know what to expect. However, I thoroughly enjoyed myself. At first I was quite anxious; however, when we started the white water phase, my fears were set aside as my confidence grew. And, by the end, I was asking to go again. During the white water phase, we faced water that pushed us to our technical and mental limits. Next was the canoeing stage of the expedition, which was slightly tedious after the white water stage, but we soon broke into a rhythm that persisted throughout the rest of the canoeing stage. For the last two days, we did white water rafting and more advanced white water skills. Both were exhilarating and great fun. To conclude, the expedition was brilliant, whether participating in the activities or resting in our camp."

C-J WYMER

"Exercise Viking Challenge was my first expedition with the CCF. I found it a lot better than I had anticipated. The journey to Norway took longer than expected due to a delay with one of the boats. Because of this, we arrived early in the morning and started our kayaking phase the same afternoon. We spent two days on the white water near the centre before travelling a little while to some more challenging rapids. Over the weekend, we started our canoeing expedition. We camped out for two nights and, over three days, we managed to travel 60km. On the penultimate day, we did white water rafting and some more kayaking. This was a brilliant way to end the expedition. Overall, the whole challenge was incredible."

HALLAM PARSONS

"The challenge started with a long bus journey to Harwich to catch the 18-hour ferry, which would take us to Denmark and later Norway. Arriving at Trollaktiv we slept for the majority of the morning and then took to the water for our long-anticipated kayaking that we had so been looking forward to. We all started well and took to the water like fish. The next day, we were all eager to hit the water and master the rapids. We entered a new river and experienced rapids up to



◆ A stand up salute to finish.

Jon and Tom canoe exped Byglandsfjord.

grade 3, with some of us capsizing but eager to get back into the water and get another run.

We then moved onto the expedition phase where we canoed 60km through rivers and a few rapids. We were completely self-dependent, camping out and carrying our equipment. Although not as exciting as the white water kayaking, the canoeing offered a great experience and provided a very big mental challenge for myself and the whole team. The last days of the trip were spent enjoying white water rafting which was an amazing experience and the whole team, including the staff, enjoyed it thoroughly.

Overall, the trip pushed us physically and mentally and provided an early life experience that will never be forgotten!"

TOM NORBURY

"When I was told that I was going to Norway, I didn't know what to expect and I was fairly unsure about everything that was happening. I felt almost a bit out of place. But when we hit the white water and progressed through higher and higher grades of rapids, my thoughts completely changed, as my abilities massively improved. The canoeing phase was quite a nice relaxing break after the white water rapids. Although throughout the three days of sitting in canoes, I was almost itching to get back to the white water. But, despite it being tedious at times, the epic landscape that surrounded me was unbeatable and the achievement as a whole is something to remember.


Overall, this trip was without doubt one of the best things I have done. With the experience I have gathered, I will be sure to take my kayaking ability further because I am definitely not 'done' with white water yet!"

PAUL ROTHWELL

"Over the years we have carried out numerous adventure challenges, from Alpine climbing to Nordic ski expeditions. This was going to be our first canoeing venture to Norway, the question was, what were we going to call it? Well... with water and boats in mind and a fair amount of challenge and fear to overcome

it had to have a Nordic theme to it, so Exercise Viking Challenge was born. For twelve days six cadets and two members of staff spent part of the school holidays in the land of the mythical Trolls, not that we saw any!

During the expedition /camping phase we were enveloped in the sheer beauty and tranquillity of the place as our open Canadian canoes serenely glided along the vast open Fjordland with most of us not having a care in the world, lost in our own private thoughts, with the cadets probably thinking how much further to go! Then there was a dramatic change of tempo, the adrenaline pumping white water phase where each rapid was approached with a great deal of fear and trepidation, accentuated by the deafening noise and the sheer volume of water crashing over the steep rocky drops. Once on the rapids the turbulent water seemed to take control of both the direction and stability of the kayaks and for a split second both paddler and kayak were submerged in the turbulent and confused white waves. Many a photograph was taken, each facial expression telling a different story. There was the grimace as each cadet approached the rapid, then into the white fury, a change of expression, utter focus and determination to get through to the calmer waters below. Once there, for some the body relaxed, there was a sigh, a smile, a wink, thumbs up, overall there was a sense of relief. For the more eccentric it was a 'howl', a shout of victory, success, sheer exhilaration!

The main impression for all will hopefully be the challenging white water, team spirit, personal achievement and new experience gained in this stunning, yet wild and rugged area of Norway, where for part of this expedition we were well away from the creature comforts of modern civilisation." 

"This trip was without doubt one of the best things I have done. With the experience I have gathered, I will be sure to take my kayaking ability further because I am definitely not 'done' with white water yet!"

CHECK OUT THE VERY BEST CANOEING & KAYAKING IMAGES FROM THE MARCH AND APRIL ENTRIES TO OUR POPULAR REGULAR PHOTO-COMPETITION...

Photo Competition



We're constantly amazed at the amazing photos that you submit each month, from the inspiring images that flood into the FOCUS office and inbox it's pretty clear that, not only are you paddling in some fantastic locations, but you have a great eye for capturing the spirit of our brilliant sport.

Have you captured a perfect paddling picture that might be a winner?

Send us your best canoeing or kayaking photo and senior entrants could win a Cotswold Outdoor voucher while Junior winners receive a WHSmith gift card. There is a prize for the winner of the year selected from all the winning monthly entries.

And don't forget, as a BC member, you get 15% off* all year round at Cotswold Outdoor on production of your membership card in store or by entering your affiliate code online. Find your nearest store at www.cotswoldoutdoor.com/stores

To enter simply send a large photo (at least 5 megapixels) on a CD along with your contact details and a few words about the photo to Coral Jackson, British Canoeing, National Water Sports Centre, Adbolton Lane, Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham NG12 2LU coral.jackson@bcu.org.uk

Please note we can only allow one entry per person per month. *Not to be used in conjunction with any other offers or discounts. Valid only on production of a British Canoeing membership card at the till point or discount code online.

Keep up with the latest entries and monthly winners by visiting www.facebook.com/canoengland



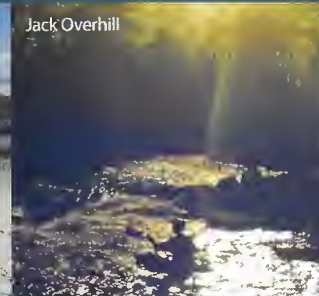
Alan Trevarton



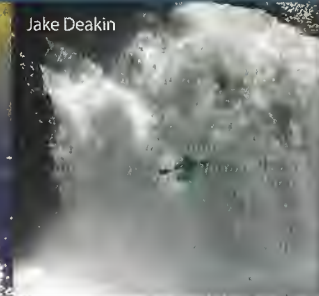
Andrew Markham



Ian Blackbyrn



Jack Overhill



Jake Deakin



Ade Stevens



Adam Holbrook



Andy Pagett

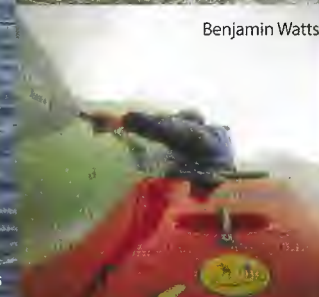


Alan Waters



Benjamin Watts

Ben Hargreaves





Brian Gould



Gavin Hart



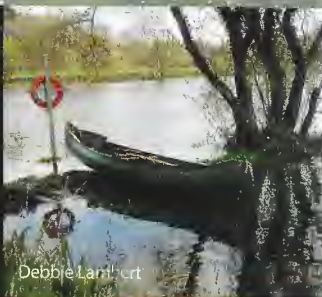
Hannah Sheridan



Hugh Jenkinson



Craig Turpin



Debbie Lambert



Iain Howkins



Olly Michelin



Dan French



David Wörtler



Nick Wright



Jason Cole MARCH WINNER



Jane Allen



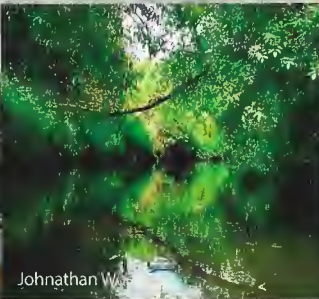
Jon Brook



Neil Band



Julie Fowler



Johnathan W.



Trevor



John Ferry



Mike Rees-Clark



Sharon Richardson



Oliver Richardson



Simon Penson



Mick Barrett



Glyn



Michael Scott



Michael H.



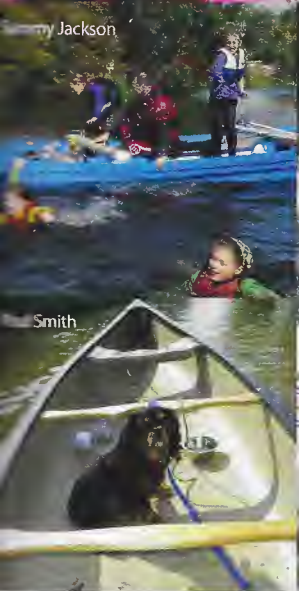
Roberts



Jackson



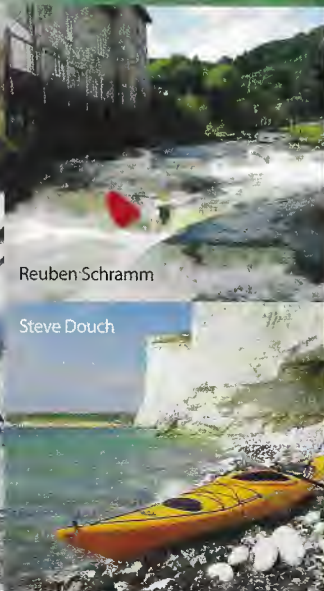
Martyn Butler APRIL WINNER



Smith

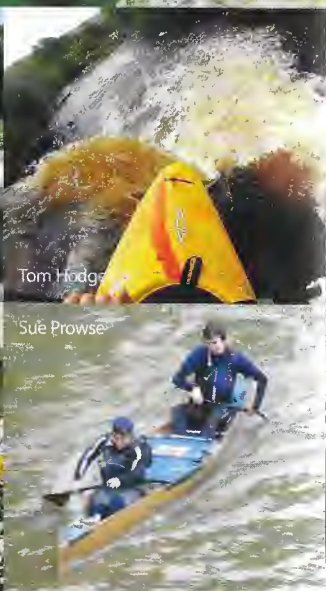


Richard Vernon



Reuben Schramm

Steve Douch



Tom Hodges

Sue Prowse



Paul Rainbow



Tim Harlow



Vincent McKeown



Sinead McLaren



Steve Rostance



Rob Murphy



Steve Hodgson



CLASSIC RACE SERIES

The Classic Marathon Series is a challenging, fun and competitive series across some of the most exciting races in England. Focusing on (although not exclusively) an A to B format for crew boats, so that you have to bring a friend!

Rivers, lakes, weirs, estuaries and harbours; downstream or upstream, the Classic Race Series has something to challenge everyone! There will be annual series prize for each class for Senior, Junior and Master (Over 34 on the 1st Jan) in male and female plus, Mixed (1 male and 1 female) and Master / Junior (1 Over 34 and 1 Junior).

Prizes will be awarded on a series basis and will consist of medals for the top three crews in each category. Ongoing Cups/Shields will be awarded to the winners of each class.

For more information please visit

www.canoe-england.org.uk/our-sport/classic-race-series/



CANOE CLUBS CAN NOW SIGN UP TO DELIVER U CANOE UNLEASHED

This exciting new offer is available to clubs across England looking to enhance their offer to 14-25 year old young people participating in canoeing at their club. Unleashed sessions are primarily aimed at beginner paddlers and can provide a great starting point to progress further into the sport of canoeing through fun, informal activities that inspires the participants in a socially engaging environment.

The programme has a range of activities put together in an easy to use resource, enabling the young people to choose their own outcomes and 'canoe your way'.

Enthusiastic, young people minded 'Activators' from your club can use the resource pack supported by a U Canoe Unleashed kit bag which is available to purchase.

It's easy to get started. Just fill out the registration forms and return them to Canoe England. A Canoe England Development Officer will visit to go through the resources and train your club's coaches to become 'Activators'.



STEPS

- Go to www.canoe-england.org.uk and click on the U Canoe tab.
- Download the U Canoe registration form and return it.
- Organise a convenient time for your Canoe Development Officer (CDO) to visit and discuss delivery.
- Receive your resources and kit bag
- Start delivering.

BENEFITS OF U CANOE UNLEASHED

- Increase your club membership.
- Enhance your offer to young people.
- Strengthen and create new links with local partners.
- Receive support with accessing groups to attend and with funding applications to enable delivery.
- Leadership experience for club coaches.
- Complements structured pathway inc. PaddlePower.
- Support from your CDO.

GRANTS ON HOLD

Please note that we are currently looking at ways in which to improve the charity and during this period, we will not be taking new applications for small grants until the end of 2014, so please do not apply for any new grant funding during this time. All Applications that are currently in the system will be dealt with through the normal procedure. We do look forward to hearing from you in 2015 when the Canoe Foundation will once again be fully operational.

For more information on the Canoe Foundation visit www.canoefoundation.org.uk



CANOEING AND KAYAKING WITH TECHNOLOGY

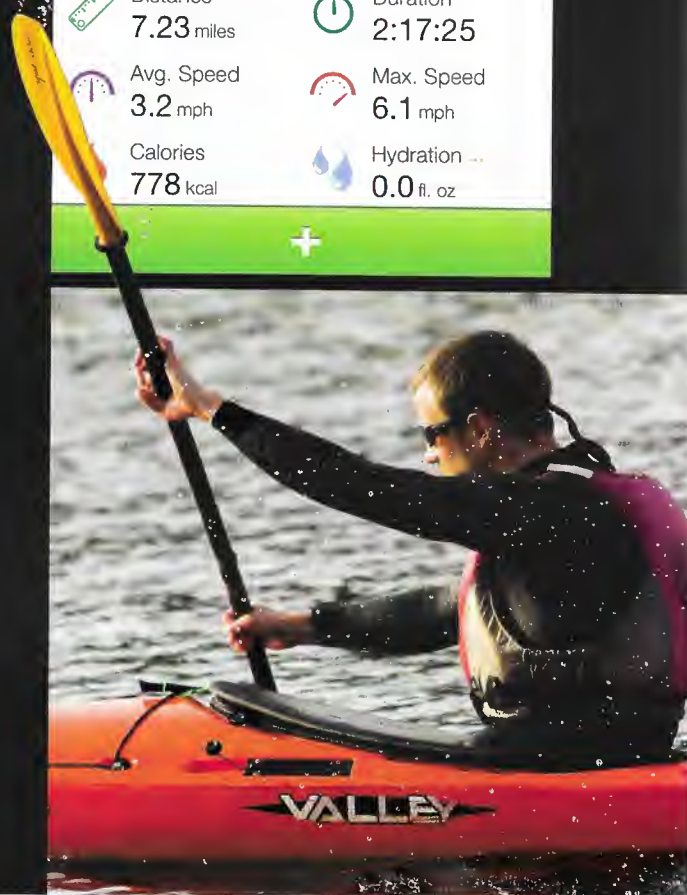
Slipping a canoe or kayak into water for the day is a great way to detach from the stressors of life. But before completely unplugging from the hustle and bustle, consider bringing a smartphone along on the trip since there have been so many advancements in modern technology and gear protection.

One very handy tech item is the popular Endomondo Sports Tracker, available for free download to nearly any smartphone, which includes kayaking as one of more than 50 fitness activities tracked by the app. Just select kayaking from the 'Choose Sport' menu, click play/start, and the app records how long a kayaker/canoeist has been out exercising, distance traveled, and general calories burned. The service even uses GPS to create a map showing where one has paddled, and archives all the information so it can be recalled and analysed later. Mette Lykke, Endomondo's CEO, also pointed out to us that if someone runs into trouble while on the water, the app can actually serve as a real-time safety tool that informs others of the last known map location for someone in distress.

With nearly 25 million users worldwide, Endomondo Sports Tracker turns GPS-enabled smartphones into a personal trainer and social motivator capable of tracking workouts, analyzing performance, and can aid in the discovery of new activities and insights into fitness so people become and stay active. Endomondo stands apart from other activity tracking apps thanks to its free, online social fitness network focused on communal interaction. This helps folk connect with like-minded people to encourage the sharing of experiences and support in achieving collective goals. Users can send friends real-time pep talks while they exercise, compete against friends for fun, challenge co-workers, and share it all on Facebook, Twitter, Google+ or across the Endomondo social network.

Before placing smartphones in canoes or kayaks, Ture Borglum, an avid kayaker who is VP of Product at Endomondo, said precautions must be taken. First, purchase a dry sack, to hold electronic devices. There are many different types on the market, but Borglum prefers those that are clear because they allow paddlers to visually check smartphones during an outing. Whichever brand is selected, be sure to leave air in the sack so the pack will float if it ends up in the drink. While this next tip may seem overly cautious, Borglum also suggests people spend a little extra for waterproof smartphone cases. There are many cases from which to choose that fit nearly any modern smartphone. Prices vary, but all are less expensive than the cost of a new phone. And when protecting your gadget and data, it's better to be safe than sorry.

Endomondo Sports Tracker adds an intriguing layer to canoeing/kayaking that simply was not available years ago. And the Endomondo social fitness network creates a global community for enthusiasts that has only become a reality in recent years. So paddle out and give your smartphone a try, but remember to keep it dry.



PADDLE-ABILITY

NEW MEMBER OF STAFF

British Canoeing have appointed a Disability Consultant, Catherine Slater, to work with Paddle-Ability Officer, Clarisse Smith, to further develop our programmes and projects for disabled paddlers. Catherine Slater has previously worked in both sport and the public sector working with disabled people and external organisations to develop programmes and opportunities. She has worked extensively in the sporting sector writing and producing resources for the English Federation of Disability Sport, working for Derbyshire Sport and has worked with a number of organisations and sports to develop their sporting pathway.

To find out more about the work that we are doing to develop Paddle-Ability visit

www.canoe-england.org.uk/paddle-ability.

PADDLE-ABILITY STARTER SESSIONS

Is your club or centre interested in running starter sessions for disabled people, or do you currently run come and try sessions for disabled people and would like to reach out to a wider market?

British Canoeing has started promoting Paddle-Ability Starter Sessions through the Go Canoeing programme. This project is to develop a programme of starter sessions offering a more bespoke opportunity to introduce them to paddlesport maybe in a smaller group or in a more accessible location.

Paddle-Ability Starter Sessions can be run in any way dependant on the target group and the location at which the session is run. This might involve running a session where a disabled person can come with their family or for a group of disabled people from a particular organisation. Clubs and centres may wish to plan sessions with more time to set up or over a shorter time period to allow for a person's ability.

To find out more about Paddle-Ability Starter Sessions or to download the Paddle-Ability Starter Session Fact sheet visit

www.canoe-england.org.uk/our-sport/paddleability/gocanoeing/

REVOLUTION TO EVOLUTION

John Gibson,
Navigations Manager,
River Wey

A WONDERFUL PADDLING DESTINATION - THE RIVER WEY AND GODALMING NAVIGATIONS

WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

Built in 1653 in the aftermath of a bloody civil war by a man determined to put his shattered fortunes behind him, and look forward to a prosperous future, the Wey Navigations helped to steer the country towards a new kind of revolution – that of industrial dominance and a new world confidence.

Social and political turmoil inspires great innovation, and the Wey was exactly this – a highly significant international transport route, trail-blazing a hundred years before the Canal Age and the industrial revolution, it held the promise of wealth for its investors and created opportunities for local prosperity. From its inception, it has altered the lives of the broadest social spectrum and has had a profound impact on the shape of modern Surrey and its inhabitants.

The River Wey Navigation is nationally significant as one of the earliest waterways to be made navigable (1653) and, when combined with the Godalming Navigation (1764), forms the southern most extremity of the navigable Inland Waterway network.

Navigations, like the boats that use them and the cargoes they carried, are intertwined with places, objects and archives. They were, and are, part of people's lives and human interaction: local, national and international. They reflect the history of people as skilled craftsmen, inventors, and risk takers. They remind us of the history of national and international politics, economies and national prestige. The importance of navigations to the culture and history of the country should not be underestimated.

WHAT'S ON OFFER TODAY?

Together the 20-miles of Navigations provide an important and environmentally sensitive corridor through Surrey, linking heavily populated and commercially developed suburban areas with open countryside mostly within 20-miles of central London. The corridor offers unique opportunities for informal recreational enjoyment. The towpath provides flat access for walking and cycling alongside the waterway and paddling is relatively easy providing new experiences for novice paddlers and areas to explore in a relaxed fashion for the more experienced. There are a number of recreational boats using the waterway but it rarely feels busy or crowded.

The River Wey property contains several Sites of Special Scientific Interest and is a designated Conservation Area. As well as the river and canal habitats, the property has woodland, heath land and fenland environments. There is a lot of flora and fauna to look out for – the elusive Kingfisher darting along close to the water, the Heron stalking its prey quietly along the bank side and Moorhens busying themselves along the waters edge. Dragonflies are abundant in the summer and in the evening as dusk begins to fall bats can be seen flitting low across the water and adjacent meadows. If you are visiting take a while to just soak up the wonderful atmosphere and watch the delightful wildlife but don't forget your camera or binoculars – you will be sorry if you do!

CANOE TRAILS

If you want to follow a route and find out more about what you are paddling past, download a canoe trail from www.nationaltrust.org.uk/river-wey-godalming-navigations-and-dapdune-wharf/things-to-see-and-do/ or www.canoe-england.org.uk/our-sport/places-to-paddle/. You can also pick up a River Wey guide from Dapdune Wharf.

WHO LOOKS AFTER IT?

The National Trust were gifted the River Wey Navigation in 1964 from its last owner Harry Stevens bringing to an end three generations of continuous family operation and ownership. The Godalming Navigation followed in 1968 via the Commissioners of the Godalming Navigation and for the first time both navigation were owned and operated by the same organisation.

There is a small property team consisting of a Maintenance Team who look after the larger more complex technical tasks, the Lengthsman Team who look after lengths of the river and manage water levels, a small office team to help you with your queries and a Visitor Services team primarily based at our visitor area at Dapdune Wharf to help bring the property alive for you.

Most importantly we have around 160 volunteers who undertake a wide variety of tasks across the property and without their help and assistance the waterway just would not function. We are always looking for new volunteers so if you wish to get involved please do contact us.

No	Name	Grid Ref	Portage side	Distance from Thames Lock	Parking	Features of interest close by
1.	Town Lock	TQ068 647	North	0.8 miles	Free – across road from lock	Oatlands Palace - located close by site of former Tudor and Stuart royal palace
2.	New Haw Lock	TQ055 630	East	2.3 miles	Free – adjacent to lock	Brooklands motor-racing circuit and aerodrome site is close by. Access to Basingstoke Canal 0.5 miles to south
3.	Newark	TQ039 573	North	6.6 miles	Free – east of river on B367	Newark Priory ruins in field close by – functioned 1189 to 1199, disestablished 1538
4.	Triggs Lock	TQ012 548	West or East	9.7 miles	Free/limited at end of lane leading to lock	Sutton Place Grade 1 listed Tudor manor, home of Sir Richard Weston III (1591-1652) founder of the River Wey Navigation. Now in private hands – keep to navigation and towpath
5.	Bowers	TQ010 527	East	11.9 miles	Free Bowers Lane car park	As for Triggs Lock
6.	Waterside Centre	SU995 511	West	13.5 miles	By arrangement with Wey Kayak Club Tel. 01483 536407	Stoke Mill – Grade II listed former corn mill now home to Surrey Advertiser
7.	Dapdune Wharf	SU993 502	East	14 miles	Free parking - hen wharf is open or by arrangement with National Trust tel. 01483 561389	Visitor Centre, tea room and boat trips. Access for launching free. Location of Navigation Office.
8.	Millmead Lock	SU995 491	West	15.4 miles	Pay & Display	Yvonne Arnaud Theatre and Town Mill – housing a turbine generating electricity
9.	Broadford Bridge	SU996 467	West	17 miles	Free – on wide road verge adjacent to A248	Meadows designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Junction with Wey & Arun Canal
10.	Catteshall Lock	SU980 444	West	19 miles	Free	Farncombe Boat House and tea room with WC's.
11.	Godalming Wharf	SU975 440	East	19.5 miles	Pay & Display	Upper limit of navigation. Ancient Lammas Land adjacent to waterway.



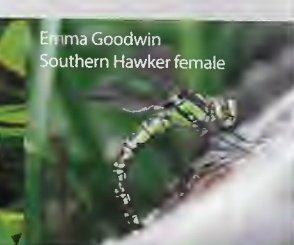
John Miller at Dapdune Wharf



Emma Goodwin at Female Banded Demoiselle on nettle



Emma Goodwin Small Copper



Emma Goodwin Southern Hawker female



John Miller at Godalming Navigation

PRACTICAL STUFF

The National Trust as Navigation Authority licence power and non-power craft using the waterway with all the revenue going straight back into funding the operation of the property. The Trust have a block licence agreement with Canoe England so your membership is your licence so always bring your membership card with you when enjoying the navigations as staff may ask you to demonstrate your membership by producing your card.

The Navigation Office is situated at Dapdune Wharf almost in the centre of Guildford and our contact details (can be found below). Parking and access is not always easy across the waterway but information for paddlers can be found on our website or you can always contact us by e-mail or telephone to ask for advice. Personal visits to the office are also welcomed and from mid March to the end of October you can also enjoy some light refreshment at Dapdune Wharf Visitor Centre (closed Tuesdays/Wednesdays).

The navigation is part river and as we now all know rivers can cause flooding. Due to the number of water control structures, weirs, locks and bridges navigation can be affected by severe weather conditions. Current river condition status can be found on our River Conditions Website. Please always take heed of warning signs/flags and advice from staff.

WHERE ELSE CAN I PADDLE WITH THE NATIONAL TRUST?

The National Trust care for some very special places, and several are perfectly placed for you to enjoy a paddling adventure. Why not head to the Lake District, and paddle Windermere, the largest lake in England, Fell Foot Park is great place to launch from or try Wastwater, the deepest lake. With 1130 kilometres of coastline in its care, the Trust now owns nearly one tenth of the coast of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. 8,000 hectares of National Trust estate is classed as marine i.e below Mean High Water. So the chances are you will be paddling past some National Trust land if you go sea kayaking.

See www.nationaltrust.org.uk/canoeing for more information.

OTHER INFORMATION:

Basingstoke Canal Authority - www.basingstoke-canal.co.uk

Wey and Arun Canal Trust - www.weyandarun.co.uk/

River Thames and Southern Waterways –

Collins-Nicholson Waterways Guide Book

ISBN-10: 0007493819 ISBN-13: 978-0007493814

Canoe England trails

www.canoe-england.org.uk/our-sport/places-to-paddle/

River Wey & Godalming Navigations

Wharf Road, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4RR

T: office Mon-Frid: 01483 561389

T: out of office hours/emergencies: 01932 843106 (24 hours)

E: riverwey@nationaltrust.org.uk

River conditions:

www.riverconditionsnt.wordpress.com/

Website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/riverwey

Facebook: www.facebook.com/NTRiverWey

Twitter: www.facebook.com/RiverWey



The Rob Roy Canoe Rally Summer Challenge

Come and explore our great and beautiful River Thames this summer 2014 between Lechlade and Teddington, whilst raising money for Age Unlimited

A fun family-orientated event for all ages and abilities using Canoes or Kayaks

Incorporated as part of the Thames Festival's Source to Sea River Relay www.totallythames.org

To register for the Rob Roy Rally please contact us at:
T: 020 7830 9337
E: info@robroyrally.co.uk
www.robroyrally.co.uk

- Enjoy a real challenge
- Paddle the length of the non-tidal Thames
- 123 miles with 44 locks
- Explore the River Thames at a leisurely pace
- You have the summer to do it in
- Have fun!

to the source www.robroyrally.co.uk

Age Unlimited

BRITISH CANOE UNION

MAIL BAG

LETTERS, MAILS POSTS & TWEETS OF THE MONTH!



Mark Clayton: "Well done on the re branding of the three current names to one British Canoeing. It was very confusing having three different names for really the same organisation, even to me as a keen paddler and member of the BCU. Well done!"

Alex Sheil: I am very disappointed that once again the BCU has taken a good idea and spoil it with poor implementation. I agree that the branding needed refreshing and I think the name change to British Canoeing is great but the logo does not reflect paddlesport. It is messy, confused, ambiguous and generic."

Barzi28: "I like the new name but the logo is truly awful. What is it even supposed to be? You have wasted our membership fees on this."

Timofnewbury: "Just licenced my #Kayak via #CanoeEngland. So much water to paddle in and around our island!"

Pault1984: "Looking forward to spending an afternoon with @Canoe_England coaches at the North East coach update!"

@EtienneStott: My main man @timbaillie getting the full page treatment in April's #CanoeFocus magazine :-). Thanks @Canoe_England and the BCU!"

@HavenBanksOEC: "Looking forward to hosting tomorrow's @Canoe_England BCU Coach update. Plenty of workshops to keep paddlesport coaches updated and informed."

@Wavecloud: "I went "paddling" with a friend yesterday; he was in #kayak I was on #SUP. We were #paddlesurfing :)"

@spogoUK: "Had a great time #canoeing at @LeeValleyWWC on Saturday! First time for most of the group!"

@StaffsFedChair: "That's my buoy!! Great day at @STWCarsington on bank holiday Monday!"



@PaulSmithMIA: "Great couple of days running a @Canoe_England White Water Safety and Rescue course with @mrpetefirth up in North Wales."

Alison White: "My sons doing GB training freestyle in Nottingham this weekend! Need more about freestyle in the magazine!"

STOP THE SPREAD OF INVASIVE AQUATIC SPECIES

Invasive species, invasive non-indigenous species and invasive non-native species, all these terms refer to species outside of their natural range due to intentional or unintentional introduction and can have a devastating impact. As well as preying on, out-competing and displacing native wildlife, they can spread disease and block waterways. Their presence can sometimes be so damaging it can lead to an adverse effect not only on biological diversity, but also to impact on society and the economy. As with all waterways when you come and visit ours from elsewhere please follow these simple instructions

As a water user, you could unknowingly help to spread invasive plants and animals from one water body to another. Animals, eggs, larvae and plant fragments are easily transported in or on equipment, shoes, clothing and other damp places and can survive for a long time. For example, new research from the Environment Agency shows that a killer shrimp can survive in the moist fold of a wader for up to 15 days. Help stop the spread by following three simple steps: check, clean and dry equipment when you leave the water.

1. Check - you're not carrying living organisms

Check your equipment and clothing for living organisms. With your equipment ...Pay particular attention to areas that are damp and hard to inspect, the bow and stern of the boat, under the seats and rims, behind buoyancy bags and foot rests etc. With your clothing check folds of cags, buoyancy aids, spraydecks, throwlines and the clothes you wear under your kit etc.

2. Clean - all equipment, clothing and shoes

Clean and wash all equipment, footwear and clothes thoroughly. If you do come across any organisms, leave them at the water body where you found them do not take them home and if they are notifiable then report it. Use tap water to clean your boat.

3. Dry - equipment and clothing carefully

Dry all equipment and clothing - some species can live for many days in moist conditions. If it's a warm sunny day do leave your boat out in the sun to dry, along with your extra kit. If the sun won't help then do dry your kit with towels etc. They will need to be washed after use too.

SPLASH OUT ON SOME NEW KIT FOR SUMMER

With sunny days and warmer climes upon us, now's the perfect time to brighten up your kit locker with some smart, summery gear. Our elite paddlers at GB Canoeing led the way by recently taking possession of a big new batch of kit from leading British technical sportswear brand Crewroom.

According to the manufacturers, the squad's new kit reflected the 'talent and flamboyance' of our top canoeists, but whether you're on or off the water, and whether you're an elite paddler or just enjoy getting out on the water for fun, there's an exciting range of new designs to suit all tastes.

The award-winning British firm based in Putney, south-west London, has forged a unique alliance with the prestigious London College of Fashion and some of its top design students. The Head of Design at Crewroom, a first-class graduate of the college, has created sportswear that includes a host of existing popular items from the company's Sea Dog range. Their Laser Vests feature the company's flagship fabric, Vapour-X shirt, which combines bamboo charcoal technology with recycled polyester. It's sustainable, wicking, anti-stink, anti-chafing and super breathable. With an extra-soft finish, it's no wonder it's a firm favourite with watersports enthusiasts.

Keeping an eye on fashion trends, the fabric has been merged with some funky prints across the retail range to make sure you cut a dash when you're out paddling.

Also, check out the Seamless JL paddle shorts a functional garment that is comfortable and fit for purpose. With no rear seam, you'll avoid that irritating chafing on your tailbone. They also have a double-layered seat to reduce friction and keep your derriere nice and comfortable on the water.

Finally, no fashion-conscious paddler should ever neglect their headgear and Crewroom's Airhead visors and caps are among the company's hottest sellers. The visors are ultra-lightweight, so are ideal for sea kayaking, touring and endurance racing where



you need to protect your eyes from the sun and keep the sweat off your face. The retro-style Air Head Cap features the traditional short peak our super-soft fabric Vapour-X, so the magic carbon particles wick away sweat and keep you cool, while the adjustable size strap provides a perfect fit.

Kate Giles, Founder of Crewroom, told FOCUS, "We like GB Canoeing because they are very forward-thinking and open to development ideas. Our design team has been working closely with the squad on technical and design features, which represent their talent and flamboyance as a group of talented athletes and paddlers.

"Our other kit ranges are designed to suit everyone and are also well-tailored to paddlers' needs whether they're on or off the water."

For more info and to check out the range visit www.crewroom.biz

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FLUID REPLACEMENT DURING EXERCISE

A Guide To Hydration

Article by Bodo Schulenburg, AMSPORT UK

“Knowing how much fluid you lose during exercise is the first step to ensure proper hydration levels. Sweat rates vary individually and increase with exercise intensity and ambient temperature.”

Now that summer is hopefully approaching fast, staying hydrated becomes even more important. Adequately replacing fluid losses during exercise is vital, not just from a performance perspective but also for a number of health reasons.

The main source of water and salt loss during exercise is sweating, which is essentially a mechanism to regulate body temperature and protects your body from overheating. You will also lose respiratory water simply by exhaling more intensely in training. Another cause of dehydration is the redistribution of water between body compartments during exercise: Extracellular water, e.g. the water in your blood, is moved to the inside of muscle cells to help maintain physiological electrolyte (salt) concentrations, which muscles need in order to operate normally.

Water plays many important biological roles in your body: Water is used to maintain physiological concentrations of electrolytes and is involved in the vast majority of chemical reactions. Water transports glucose, oxygen and other fuel sources to working muscles, while clearing away waste products like carbon dioxide



and lactic acid at the same time. Equally important, water is used to dissipate heat that working muscles generate (muscles can produce up to 20 times more heat during exercise than resting muscles) so that your body temperature can remain constant. In the form of urine, water is used to eliminate waste products: The darker your urine, the greater the concentration of waste products and the less water it contains, which is your best indicator if you are dehydrated or not. Always aim to keep your urine colour light.

THE EFFECTS OF DEHYDRATION

The effects of dehydration on exercise performance can be quite severe, which is understandable given the biological functions of water outlined above. Dehydration leads to increased heart rate, which means you might end up training at a higher intensity than

planned or you cannot reach your top-end performance because your heart is already working as hard as it can. Dehydration increases the risk of muscle cramping because your body cannot maintain physiological salt concentrations. Water imbalance will also impair your body's heat regulation, which means your muscles won't be able to work as effectively and your cells will suffer heat damage. All this amounts to an increase in perceived exertion, i.e. you feel like you have to work a lot harder to reach a certain training goal. Lack of water will also reduce mental functions and ultimately your skill levels. Stomach upsets are also very common because dehydration reduces the blood flow to your organs significantly.

SWEAT RATES

Knowing how much fluid you lose during exercise is the first step to ensure proper hydration levels. Sweat rates vary individually and increase with exercise intensity and ambient temperature. Your level of fitness and body size will also affect how much you sweat. Fitter and bigger people tend to start sweating earlier and more during exercise. An easy way to determine how much you sweat is by weighing yourself before and after exercise. If for example you start your training weighing 70kg, you then exercise for one hour and finish your workout weighing 68.5kg, your sweat rate would be $70\text{kg} - 68.5\text{kg} = 1.5$ litres per hour. Make sure to take into account any drinks you take in during training when calculating your sweat rate; if we stick to the example above but you drank 1 litre of sports drink during the hour of exercise, your sweat loss would be $70\text{kg} - 68.5\text{kg} + 1\text{ litre} = 2.5$ litres. In case you do not have access to a set of scales to weigh yourself, you can use the following estimates of sweat rates in canoeing: 1.8l and 1.2l per hour for male and female athletes respectively when training in hot conditions (30°C) and 1.2l and 0.8l per hour when it's a little colder outside (around 15°C). It is important to restore your fluid balance while you are exercising, do not wait until after training. As a general guideline, we recommend drinking 200ml before you start training and then take in another 200ml every 20min throughout your training session, even if you don't necessarily feel thirsty. Continue to drink after exercise until you have reached 1.5x the amount of fluid losses (e.g. if you have lost 1l, drink 1.5l in total) to account for ongoing sweat and urinary losses.

WHAT TO DRINK

A common question is what exactly should you be drinking during exercise? Water and squash are fine if your planned training intensity is very low. For moderate to high intensity endurance training however, sport drinks are without doubt the drink of choice because in addition to water they also contain isotonic concentrations of electrolytes (salt) and carbohydrates (4-10%) to facilitate water uptake in the gut. Electrolytes are also lost through sweat and need to be replaced during exercise. Without restoration of salt balance, an effective restoration of hydration is not possible. When choosing a drink, look out for products that contain multiple electrolytes: Sodium is important to maintain extracellular hydration levels (blood volume) and muscle function. In

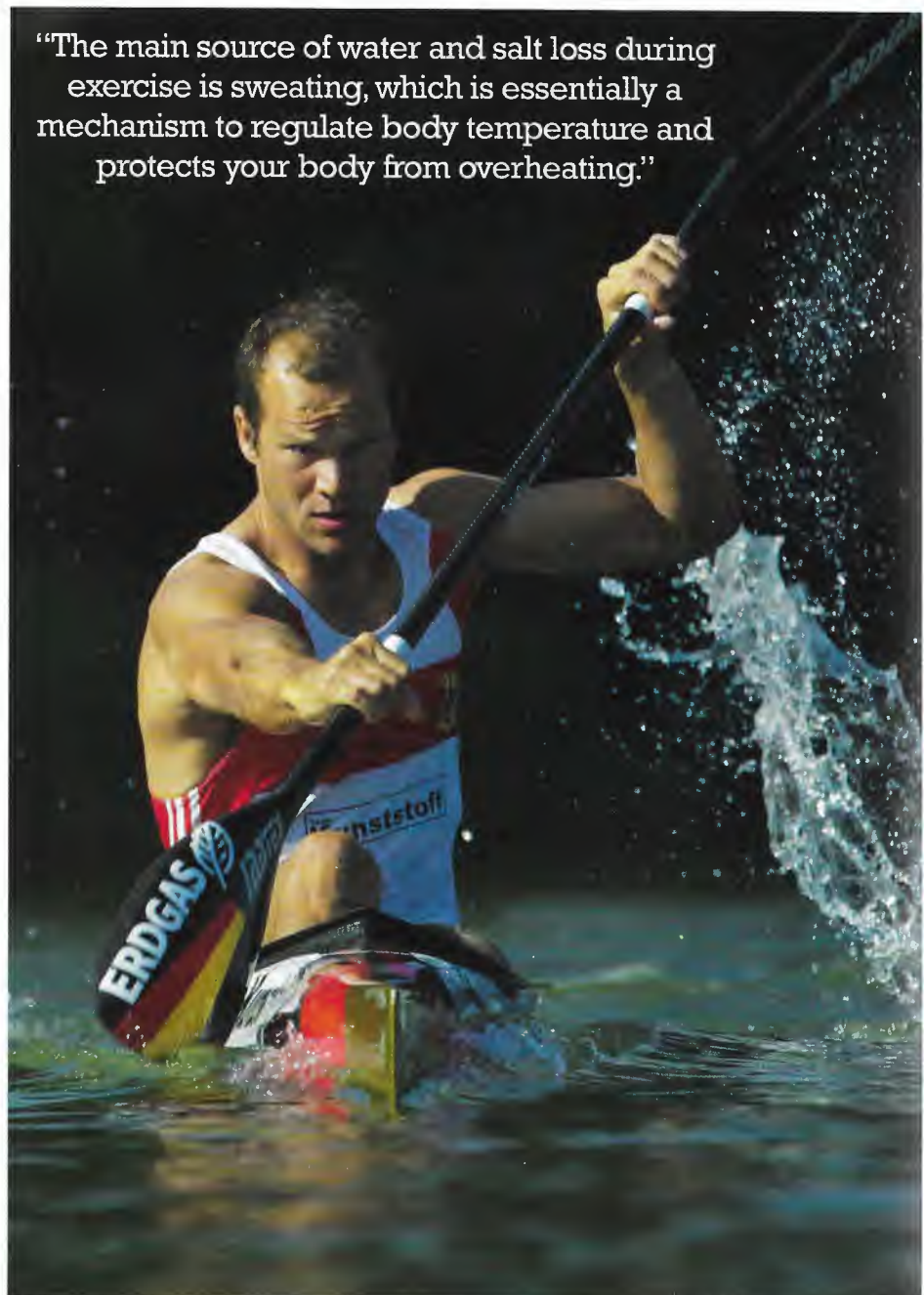
addition to sodium, make sure your drink also contains potassium, which is very important for intracellular hydration. At AMSPORT our main goal is to maximise training effects and potassium is very important in that respect as it helps to bring water into cells during exercise; this process of cell swelling seems to play a key role in initiating anabolic adaptations in muscle cells.

Most importantly however for hydration is to find a way to make drinking during exercise easy: Choose a palatable drink that you like and have a bottle with you at all times; plan short breaks – ideally every 20min – into your training routine so you can match fluid losses as closely as possible throughout your training session and prevent dehydration in the first place. **CF**

USEFUL INFO

If you have any further questions about hydration or how sports nutrition can help you in training, please contact me at bodo@amsportuk.com or visit our website www.amsportuk.com for more information.

“The main source of water and salt loss during exercise is sweating, which is essentially a mechanism to regulate body temperature and protects your body from overheating.”





A CHALLENGING YEAR OF GREAT ENDURANCE RACING

Peter Hutchison - DW2014 (247) -
Dusk at Marsh Benham (Mile 32) - the
cold is starting to bite



Ollie Harding - www.olympics.co.uk - Fighting fatigue and conditions a crew
take a swim just metres from the finish line at Westminster.



Peter Hutchison - Ben Huft-Davis (right) and Matt
Parish at the finish



THE DEVIZES TO WESTMINSTER CANOE RACE 2014

In an event steeped in tradition, victory for Ryan Pearce and Michael Southey in the Senior Doubles of the 2014 Devizes Westminster International Canoe Marathon may have opened up a new chapter in the event. The pair, at 20 and 23 years, have totally smashed the view that experience trumps youth in the ultimate test of canoe kayak endurance racing...

Pearce and Southey, from Fowey Canoe Club were up against a handful of quality crews. Steve and Rob King from Hereford were seen as pre-race favourites by some, with others tipping Div 1 paddler pairing Louis Allen and Giel Spierings also from Fowey. Add Daniel Beazley and James Smythe to the mix and it's race on.

THE START

Devizes Wharf is an eerie place when the last crews are playing the waiting game. Gone is the hustle and bustle of the crews. Elite boats rest on racks with crews hiding away. King / King left first. Next Pearce/Southey and Beazley/Smythe set off together stretching each other to fight off the expected push from Allen/Spierings.

"We left last, about three or four minutes behind," said Louis Allen, "tactically it seemed like we were catching up." Moving down the course, at Aldermaston (42-miles) Giel started to feel bad and couldn't take on food. By the 49-mile mark at Theale he'd collapsed suffering mild hypothermia, the race was over for boat 383. Pushed for an answer to what went wrong, Allen struggle to nail it, speculating, "perhaps we should've practiced taking on food more. We only had the Watersides to test what worked for us." Whatever the reason, DW2014 was over for Allen and Spierings and the focussed shifted to the battling pair. ▶

"The pair, at 20 and 23 years, has totally smashed the view that experience trumps youth in the ultimate test of canoe kayak endurance racing."

Article by Peter Hutchison, images by James Asser, Phil Cazenove, Peter Jolly, Ollie Harding – www.olympics.co.uk and Peter Hutchinson

Ollie Harding - www.olympics.co.uk - Brian Greenham & Remi Miklos, first mixed crew



THE BREAK

The break came at Marlow when at Mile 70 Pearce and Southey broke away as Beazley and Smythe stopped for food. "We tried to catch them," recalls Daniel, "but after a couple of minutes we realised it would take too much out of us." By Westminster, the youngsters had a winning lead of 32-minutes, to finish in 17 hours 23 minutes and 35 seconds. Beazley and Smythe were second, with King and King finishing in 18:15 happily taking third from a steady position planned to pick up the pieces if the other crews had fallen through.

Brian Greenaway watched the gruelling race having dropped out of supporting Allen and Spierings. "It was great to see them battling it out head to head," said Greenaway, also from Fowey. The competition must have got even more nerve wracking once news of Allen and Spierings' retirement reached the crews. Youth won the day, but age hides experience. At 20 years of age Mike Southey has five DWs under his belt, winning Junior Doubles with Peter Connors and never finishing lower than second. While Ryan Pearce, 23, has completed DW in various classes six times. Their experience is greater than their years suggest.

Just outside the podium places by nine minutes with a time of 18:24:53 were Reni Miklos and 64-year-old DW legend Brian Greenham who was finishing his 13th DW. Back in 1979, Brian and Tim Cornish set the Senior Doubles course record time of 15 hours 34 minutes and 12 seconds, which has stood for 35 years.

WHEN THE STAGE IS YOUR PLATFORM

The stages race, held over four days, had a more sombre start. With the slowest crews preparing to leave at the earliest possible opportunity, the start was stopped as the first person was sitting in their boat with the discovery of a body in the Kennet and Avon Canal a few hundred metres from the start of the course. While police and emergency services investigated, a growing number of crews arrived for final preparations. A delayed start was permitted, with each class starting two-and-a-half hours later than originally scheduled.

The best race of the stages event was in the Senior Singles, with Reading CC's Radek Zieski winning in a time of 16 hours 23 minutes and 13 seconds, just four minutes ahead of Billy Butler from Falcon CC. "It's a great event," said Radek who says he only took part because DW2013 Senior Doubles winner Dan Seaford took his joke about competing seriously: "Dan and I were going to the gym and I joked about doing DW. Dan held me to it."

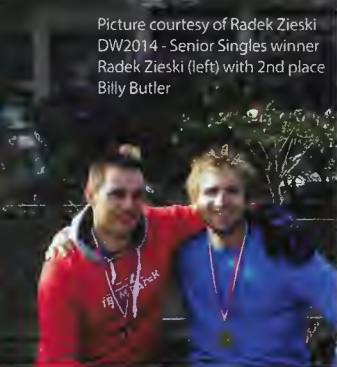
"Many crews in all classes were facing personal challenges, quietly taking on the demands of the event within their teams."



Peter Hutchison - Ben Hunt-Davis and Matt Parish, Marsh Benham (Mile 32)



Peter Hutchison - start of the four day race



Picture courtesy of Radek Zieski
DW2014 - Senior Singles winner Radek Zieski (left) with 2nd place Billy Butler



Photo courtesy of James Asser - DW2014 - Junior Doubles Winners Daniel and Connor



Ollie Harding - www.olympics.co.uk - DW2014 - Senior Doubles Winners Ryan Pearce and Mike Southey



Peter Hutchison - Beazley & Smythe (left) and Southey & Pearce set off from Devizes



Peter Hutchison - a 4-day crew cross the line



Photo courtesy of Peter Jolly.
Brian Smart and Peter Jolly (right) -
Royal Marines DW1955



Photo by James Asser - DW2014 Senior
Doubles winners Ryan Pearce (left) and
Michael Southey

On the water competition was more serious. The first day was OK with Radek building a four-minute lead. On day two, leaving last as leader, he caught up with Billy, extending the lead to ten-minutes. Day three was the worst, with the bad weather and Butler piling on the pressure, "Billy pushed really hard, he nearly broke me," said Radek whose lead was trimmed to seven-minutes. For the tideway, Radek just had to stay with Butler to claim the win. "It was a great race and I'm really impressed by Billy. Being ten-minutes on Day Two he could've given up, but he kept pushing," said Radek.

Once over the line, the two spoke. The bad news for Senior Doubles crews is that they talked about pairing up to make a K2!

Daniel Palmer and Connor Peters from Fowey Canoe Club won the Junior Doubles in 14

hours 39 minutes and 44 seconds. Palmer and Peters' victory, 1 hour 38 minutes ahead of second placed crew Matthew Hayward and Harry Shearer, made it a rare double for a club to take the Senior and Junior Doubles title. Thought to be a first, former Royal Marine Peter Jolly jumped on the claim to point out the Royal Marines did the double back 59 years ago in 1955 when he and Brian Smart won the junior race and David Mitchell David & Stewart Syrad the seniors. Giving Fowey the first Double in the modern era, hints at the suggestion that the club from the southwest maybe a dominant DW force for years to come.

While the Fowey crew were well out in front, the overall performances of the Junior Doubles continues to improve and grow, with clubs taking the top three spots setting schools the challenge of pushing back to the top.

Veteran junior crews posted great times with Clive Neale and Bill Hardiman from Tonbridge CC finishing first in 17-hours and 27-minutes. Clive's 33 and Bill's four years of paddling, Div 2 quality and DW experience made them a natural combination. Clive reports the event was relatively event free, although the cold wind caught them out on Day 1 after the lovely summer weather in the car park at Devizes. And the third day from Longridge to Teddington was an 'old slog' in to the headwind and rain that felt like seven hours not five. In second place was DW veteran Ian White with Madi Barnicoat. White, whose time in record year 1979 was 15:57, described Madi as "completely relentless" finishing in 18-hours and 20-minutes.

Fifteen crews were in the touring Endeavour class, with the husband and wife Richmond crew of Jorg and Tanya Herwanger describing it as a "great way to get to know the course", with Senior Doubles being a possibility for 2015.

DW2014 IN NUMBERS

Entries to Devizes Westminster have returned to the peaks of the 1970s, with 611 canoeists and kayakers entering the race in 334 boats. Numbers would've been even higher if it weren't for one of the larger schools not taking part this year. Of the 190 Senior Double crews that started, 52 (27%) retired. ►

"Entries to Devizes Westminster have returned to the peaks of the 1970s, with 611 canoeists and kayakers entering the race in 334 boats."



Photo courtesy of Phil Cazenove - Cazenove and Parker setting out working through the Pound



Peter Hutchison - Billy Butler (red boat) tries to break away from Senior Singles race leader Radek Zieski



Picture courtesy of Radek Zieski - DW2014 - Senior Singles winner Radek Zieski

The fastest female Senior Double crew was Susan Middlehurst and Beth Martin from Richmond with a time of 21 hours 9 minutes. Women excelled in the C1 class, taking the top three places with Megan Middleton from Fowey CC, taking first place in 22:17:03 beating second place by almost two hours. Overall female crews are nudging up slowly and in 2014 they made up close to 20% of the entrants.

The retirements were surprisingly high. Brian Greenaway believes, "the cold caught a lot of people out; after last year, people thought this was going to be mild." The sun stayed stubbornly hidden behind cloud for much of the weekend, so the heavy rain and constant headwind simply added to the discomfort. Veteran DW commentator Paul Ralph (who completed Senior Singles in 18:53:56) agreed, "conditions were harsh; the headwind just blew and blew and blew. It was so hard on Sunday I didn't notice the thunder and lightning."

In amongst the mix was Sydney 2000 Olympics Men's Rowing VIII gold medallist Ben Hunt-Davis who, with new partner Matt Parish from their 1996 Atlanta Olympics rowing crew, was returning for the small issue of 125 miles of unfinished business. After the disappointment of retirement through injury in 2012, Hunt-Davis was back, determined to put months of training to the test and return as, "paddlers, not rowers who were paddling." The determination, planning and practice paid off, passing under Westminster Bridge in just over 20-hours 37-minutes.

Nursing a sore wrist, Hunt-Davis says it was an amazing thing to have done, but has no plans to return: "Crews are doing it three hours faster and 20 hours slower than us; it's an amazing event but no, I don't want to do it again."

For Hunt-Davis and Parish it was about taking on the course in small bits. "A friend had got out of bed to cheer us on at Henley around 12:30 and I said to myself we just have to keep going. We'd done the maths and 90% retire

before Windsor. We stopped asking our support team the time around Staines." But as Hampton, Teddington and the tidal Thames approached the nearness of the finish took its toll. "The tideway water was rubbish, we hadn't eaten enough and I hit the wall," says Hunt-Davis who says it was Matt's dogged determination that kept them going across the line.

Many crews in all classes were facing personal challenges, quietly taking on the demands of the event within their teams. Phil Cazenove and Harry Parker finished in 24:52:36. The team from Cremorne Riverside are based beside Battersea Bridge, giving them a great advantage on the Tideway. Harry is a double amputee having lost both legs in Afghanistan so Phil carried the boat at portages as the pair was determined to do DW without any concessions. Phil reckons it added about a minute to each portage. The pair joked about wanting under 24-hours, but the easterly headwind put paid to that. "It wasn't nearly as tough as it sounds or could've been," Cazenove recalls. They finished 63rd out of 137. Like many crews, Cazenove and Parker added to the personal challenge and achievement raising £4,200 for their charities Great Ormond Street Hospital and Louie's S.M.I.L.E.S.

PLANNING FOR DW2015

Devizes Westminster 2015 runs from 3-6 April 2015. If you would like to take part, the DW Organising Team recommends first timers start training in the summer. More details at www.dwrace.org.uk

COUNTDOWN TO 2015

Some crews are already out training for DW2015. And the great online support of the BBC Wiltshire team has led to speculation that a couple of presenters may enter the race. It may be a long time off, but you can't start the training too early. Whatever level of success you're looking for, work on getting a good crew, start building up the hours in the boat, get advice from a good coach or experience club and hope for good conditions. For more information and stories see www.dwrace.org.uk and sign up of the DW Newsletter. **CF**

See you on the wharf in 2015!

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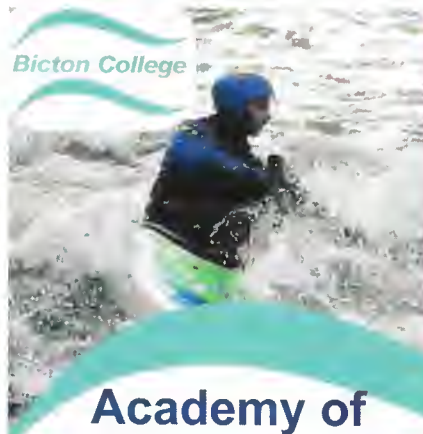
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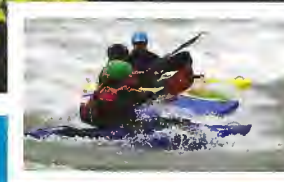


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