

CANOE FOCUS

**Olympic Review
Highlights &
Full Results**

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**Paracanoe
to Make
Paralympic
Debut**

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**Adventures on
the Argyll Sea
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Autumn 2016



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Welcome to the Autumn Issue of Canoe Focus

How else could I start this introduction to Autumn Canoe Focus, than by offering a huge congratulations to Team GB and our sprint and slalom teams? A special mention must go to gold medal winners Joe Clarke K1 and Liam Heath K1 200m and silver medallists David Florence and Richard Hounslow C2 and Liam Heath and Jon Schofield K2 200m. The Rio success story is featured from page 28. Our six Paralympians are now raring to go and we will be loudly cheering them on too, when their events start on 14 September.

There have been other great successes too during the past few months and these are featured in our round up section from page 20; look out for the feature on Hannah Brown, who became the Wild Water Racing World Champion in the K1 Women's Sprint.

Behind any successful athlete there are always a number of others who contribute to making the success possible. There will be an immediate team of coaches, support staff, parents and teammates. Beyond this are those in the clubs who helped start the journey and other participants in domestic competitions who provided rivalry and motivation for improvement. For these domestic competitions to happen there are a multitude of event organisers and technical officials who all volunteer their time to British Canoeing. So, behind every success there is a large team and it is this sense of team that we need to keep developing to bring even greater success to British Canoeing.

Of course this success will come in many forms and not simply be about more medals. We have just released the 2nd consultation draft of our new strategy for British Canoeing 2017-2021. Visit our web site to take a look and share your views. The strategy sets out a clear Purpose and Vision for British Canoeing to inspire a passion for paddlesport, to strive for excellence in all areas of delivery, to be listening and responsive, joined up and well organised and to drive partnerships that can help to deliver and develop the sport in all its various forms.

The strategy is far reaching and sets out 11 challenging ambitions in areas such as; increasing participation, achieving

membership growth with better member engagement and membership services, improving access and places to paddle, supporting clubs to improve their offer to members, improving coaching and support to volunteers and much more. This is a plan for the whole of British Canoeing and I urge you to take a look.

This issue of Focus superbly illustrates the breadth of our sport and the many different interests and motivations of those who paddle. Our ambitious new strategy recognises this diversity and seeks to create a host of improvements right across the sport.

It is a strategy based on team - Team British Canoeing. To deliver our ambitions will require many parts of our sport (clubs, centres, regions, disciplines, committees, coaches, volunteers, staff, board to name but a few) to share and really own the ambitions, to work together towards agreed action plans, agree roles and responsibilities and to unite to find those continuous improvements which will lead to a really great British Canoeing.

I've been incredibly heartened by the support for the emerging strategy; by the enthusiasm of many to embrace this way of working and the belief that we can make real progress in so many areas over the next 4 years.

These are exciting times within British Canoeing.

David Joy
Chief Executive

**Sonja Jones
Circumnavigates
Menorca**

Read more on page 52

**The Youngsters
Targeting Tokyo
and Beyond**

Read more on page 62

Upcoming Events:

SEP
24

The Great North Paddle* 24th September

Starting at Scotswood Bridge on the River Tyne, a group of kayakers and canoeists will paddle 13.5 miles through Newcastle on route to the finish at Simonside Centre, in an attempt to raise over £30,000 for a variety of good causes.

[Click here to find out more.](#)

OCT
01

Bicentenary Small Boats Rally at Loxwood 1st October

Small Boats Rally on the restored section of the Wey & Arun Canal at Loxwood in West Sussex. The event is part of a weekend of celebrations organised by the Wey & Arun Canal Trust to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the opening of the canal. Saturday at Loxwood includes special boat excursions, including trips on a horse-drawn narrowboat, children's activities, historical displays in the Canal Centre and everyone is invited to dress in 1816 costume. The brilliant band Sax'n Swing will be playing outside the Canal Centre.

[Click here to find out more.](#)

OCT
02

Paddle Triathlon 2016 2nd October

Come and join the fun in this new event supporting Overgate Hospice and taking place at Lowfields Business Park just off the M62.

[Click here to find out more.](#)

OCT
01

Ackers Thrillseeker Activity Taster Day 1st October

A great day out for all the family! The ever popular Thrill Seeker Days have been running for five years and each year they get bigger and better! The atmosphere, buzz and excitement around each activity is incredible. Don't miss out on these incredible value for money Thrill Seeker days as they book up very fast.

[Click here to find out more.](#)

OCT
02

Bicentenary Small Boats Rally at Compasses Bridge, Alford 2nd October

Small Boats Rally on the newly restored section of the Wey & Arun Canal's Summit Level at Alford in Surrey. The new Compasses Bridge will be officially opened at noon by actor Dame Penelope Keith, Patron of the Surrey Hills, followed by refreshments for all and entertainment from the famed Friary Guildford Band.

[Click here to find out more.](#)

OCT
02

Bicentenary Small Boats Rally from Shalford to Dapdune Wharf, Guildford 2nd October

Small Boats Rally from Gun's Mouth, Shalford, to Dapdune Wharf, Guildford, on the Wey Navigation. The event commemorates a flotilla carrying canal company directors and guests, which navigated from the Wey & Arun's junction with the Navigation to Dapdune after the official opening at the end of September 1816.

[Click here to find out more.](#)

*The British Open and Hasler Finals are also taking place in September. [Go to P48 for more info](#)

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Asher Completes Paddleboard Challenge



Asher, who has a severe visual impairment following treatment for three brain tumours, decided to paddle three miles between Tenby harbour and Caldey Island off the south west Wales coast to prove that 'people who have disabilities can do great things too'.

Asher successfully completed the challenge on 16th July, making the crossing in around two hours and raising nearly £3,900 for three charities; Royal National Lifeboat Institution, Royal National Institute of Blind People and the Children's Brain Tumour Research Centre at The University of Nottingham.

Asher's dad Tony said: "Asher amazes everyone he meets and people see his amazing abilities rather than his disabilities – what he can do not what he can't do. In fact, because of his positive attitude and bubbly personality, they soon forget he has a disability at all."

In the summer edition of **Canoe Focus** we featured a story on 11-year-old paddleboard enthusiast Asher Jenkin-Jones, who had set himself a very special challenge.



For more information and to see photos of the challenge, visit the Facebook page.

The 57th International **Liffey Descent**

In 1959, Canoeing Ireland started a marathon canoe race on the River Liffey that was destined to become one of the most famous and exciting canoeing events in the world.

This year's race will be held on the 24th September 2016. The race course is 28.2km long and consists of 10 weirs and one portage. It starts at the K Club above Straffan Weir, Co. Kildare and finishes 28.2km later at the Garda Boat Club in Dublin.

Over the years, its reputation has grown and attracted paddlers from all over the world to experience both the event itself and the unique atmosphere of fun and friendship that surrounds it. Year after year, we have participants coming from all over Ireland and around the world to compete in this world-class event.

Why not come to Ireland and experience true Irish hospitality and a great race!

Visit www.canoe.ie for more details on the 57th International Liffey Descent race.



Get involved with **Paddlepower**

British Canoeing's Paddlepower scheme is a colourful and youth-centred award that encourages more young people to come into and stay in Paddlesport by providing a range of opportunities across the sport.



The scheme's flexible structure means that delivery can be at any venue or in any situation. It provides logical progressions through topics and activities and develops supporting knowledge. It encourages paddlers to try different types of Paddlesport; to develop a broad base of experience and to help them find the area of Paddlesport they most enjoy.

There are five Paddlepower awards to work towards, which are aligned with the British Canoeing Star Awards and the scheme is suitable for younger paddlers, although there is no minimum or maximum age.

Paddlepower resources now available online!

Resources to deliver Paddlepower are now available to buy online from the **Hydra Sports website**. And to mark the move to the digital world, British Canoeing are offering a 10% discount to Approved Centres, Affiliated Clubs, Clubmark Clubs, Top Clubs, Sea Cadets, Scouts and Guides on a number of the resources* using code 'BC10DISCOUNT' at checkout.

To make things simpler, there are now only two prices. For the first time in years, there has been a slight price increase, in line with inflation and to cover additional administrative costs.

British Canoeing hopes that the canoeing community will be able to continue to utilise Paddlepower effectively to improve young people's experience of the sport to initiate a long term commitment to taking part.

**Cross Stream resources are now also available on the Hydra Sports website.
*Discount applies to progress cards, coaches handbook and Start Certificates.**

Changes to Quality Mark and Club Mark

In 2014, Sport England started a review of its Club Mark accreditation system. In response British Canoeing undertook consultation with clubs around the country and carried out a parallel review into its Club Mark and Top Club brand.

As a result, the British Canoeing club accreditation system has been updated to reflect the views expressed during consultation and will also remain part of Sport England's Club Mark system. The new system will see the Top Club brand discontinued. It will be replaced with a Quality Kite Mark for clubs which is more easily recognised and understood by the public.

The achievement of British Canoeing Quality Mark standard also meets the criteria specified in Club Mark, Sport England's cross-sport accreditation system. On achieving this standard clubs will be accredited with both awards for three years.

The new system aims to focus more on the quality of club activities, as well as the way it is run. Clubs can achieve accreditation in three different areas of activity:

- British Canoeing Quality Mark/Club Mark – first class activities and club management
- Paddle-Ability Club – providing opportunities for disabled people in paddlesport
- Talent Top Club – accreditation for competition clubs. Initially only available to clubs who offer coaching and pathways in Slalom and Sprint.

The new system was launched during the summer. Full details of the British Canoeing Quality Mark are on our web site and can be found [Here](#)

Alternatively you can contact your Regional Canoeing Development Officer for details about what's involved and how to get started. You can find your CDO [Here](#)



CHARITY CHALLENGE PADDLES THE LENGTH OF THE SEVERN

Six volunteers from a marine conservation charity have completed a 222-mile trek by kayak and on foot, travelling the entire length of the River Severn.



The team, from Sea Shepherd UK, set off from the source of the river in mid-Wales on August 24th, arriving at the Severn Bridge near Bristol six days later.

The team is aiming to raise £15,000 to purchase and equip a new fast small boat to accompany the charity's current boat, Joker, who is now at an age where she needs to go into semi-retirement. As well as taking part in two campaigns in the Faroe Islands (2010 and 2011) and a campaign in Libya against illegal tuna fishing (2010), Joker has been a vital part of Sea Shepherd UK's highly successful Seal Defence Campaign over the last two years. Joker will be kept as a reserve vessel, but she is not fit to go on full time duty on campaigns.

For more information
about the challenge visit
www.sourcetosea.uk



or visit the
challenge's
Justgiving page
to donate.

Member Benefits



British Canoeing is here to help you get the most out of canoeing and your membership package offers you some great benefits to help you succeed.

Our members are really important to us and we continually strive to improve all aspects of your membership to provide you with even better offers and services.

British Canoeing has also joined forces with a number of key partners to offer all members some great special offers across a range of products and services:

Blossoming Gifts

Blossoming Gifts offers a wide collection of beautiful, affordable flowers for any occasion. To receive a 20% discount enter code BCUK20* on the **Blooming Gifts website**.

*The discount code does not include flowers under £12, plants, hampers, wines and personalised gifts.

ORS

O.R.S Hydration Tablets are a scientifically balanced formula of glucose, electrolytes and sodium and are an appropriate, safe and effective method to promoting optimal hydration. British Canoeing members can receive a 30% discount by using code BC30 on the **O.R.S website**.

Reed

Reed garments sell worldwide, providing protection and warmth so you can concentrate on having fun. British Canoeing members can claim a 10% discount when you spend £20 online at www.chillcheater.com by entering discount code BC10.

LogBuy

LogBuy is your hub to thousands of discounted offers, which is now available to British Canoeing Members. Save on 1,000's of high street brands, get discounts on shopping cards and earn cashback when you buy online from hundreds of retailers. Among our brands you will find Apple, Sainsburys, Boots, Pizza Express, B&Q, Virgin Media and many more.

New members will automatically be sent an email to register with LogBuy within four weeks of joining. If you have not received your email, please contact the membership team: membership@britishcanoeing.org.uk.

IHG

IHG provide British Canoeing Members with a discount of up to 30% off the Best Flexible Rate for rooms at Crowne Plaza, Hotel Indigo, Holiday Inn, Holiday Inn Express and Staybridge Suites hotels. **Click here to find rooms.**

Pure Gym

Pure Gym offers 24/7 opening hours*, contract-free membership and more than 50 free classes a week. British Canoeing members can try Pure Gym out for free with a three-day pass as well as zero joining fees.

Simply use promotional code BC3DAY for your free three-day pass and the code BCJF to join with no fee.

Click here to select your preferred gym and follow the signup process.

*Most gyms 24/7, check club pages for more details.



Membership benefits include:



Membership card



Licence to paddle on 4,500km of waterways



Combined liability insurance up to £10million



Great rates on boat insurance



Four issues of digital Canoe Focus



Monthly newsletters



Access to members only area



Information and resources



Access to competitions



Discounts from canoe retailers



Campaigning and representation



Voting rights (over 18 membership only)

Towergate

Do you need canoe or kayak insurance? We have arranged an exclusive boat insurance policy on behalf of members which provides good cover at competitive prices.

For more details on this great offer [click here](#).

Perkins Slade

British Canoeing has been in partnership with insurance broker Perkins Slade for over 15 years, providing Combined Liability Insurance to protect clubs and members whilst enjoying their sport.

Perkins Slade is working with British Canoeing to develop an exclusive 'British Canoeing Club House

Insurance Scheme' that will offer your club or activity centre comprehensive cover and competitive premiums; the product is underwritten by Hiscox.

Cotswold Outdoor

We are delighted to offer 15% discount* for British Canoeing members in store and online. Just quote code AF-BCU-H9 at the time of purchase or shop online by [clicking here](#).

*Not to be used in conjunction with any other offer or discount. Only on proof of British Canoeing membership in store or use of discount code

Love Smoothies

British Canoeing has teamed up with revolutionary frozen drinks company Love Smoothies to provide members with a great 10% discount on orders. Use the discount code canoe15 at checkout. [Shop here](#).

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Meet and greet airport parking is the easiest way to park your car at the airport. We collect your vehicle at the terminal on your day of departure and take it to our secure Park Mark car park for the duration of your stay. On your return we are only a phone call away and we bring your car back to you at the terminal.

We are offering British Canoeing members a 20% discount on their airport parking at Gatwick, Stansted, Heathrow, Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham.

Just quote code BC2015 at the time of purchase. [Click here to book](#).



New Chair and Independent Director to be appointed

British Canoeing is seeking to appoint a new Chair and also another Independent Non-Executive Director to the Board following the resignation of the Chair and Vice Chair.

Former Chair Mohamed ElSarky resigned from the Board of Directors in June after the demands of a new role within his business, which require him to be based overseas, made it increasingly difficult for him to carry out his duties as Chair of British Canoeing.

In July, Vice Chair Denise Barrett-Baxendale also resigned from the Board. At the beginning of July, Denise was invited to join the Board of Everton FC and will continue to operate as Deputy CEO of the club and as Executive Chair of Everton in the Community. These additional responsibilities made it impossible for Denise to continue to commit the same amount of time to British Canoeing, prompting her resignation from the Board.

Both Mohamed and Denise joined the Board in June 2014 and dedicated a significant amount of time to guiding the review and modernisation of governance and the executive structure within British Canoeing and in laying the foundation for the new strategy which will be launched in 2017.

British Canoeing is now recruiting a new Chair to maintain this momentum and in addition, is seeking to appoint another Independent Director to the Board.

Key responsibilities and skills required for these roles include:

- Chair
- Provide effective leadership within the Board and British Canoeing
- Occasionally attend meetings with funding partners including UK Sport and Sport England and other national partners
- Engage with the sport as a whole through the attendance at meetings and events
- Chair and Independent Director
- Work closely with the CEO to oversee the management and reviews of the four year strategy and annual plans
- Ensure effective governance throughout the organisation
- Act as an independent thought leader to assist in the development of such areas as wider participation, commercial revenue streams and effective governance

Candidates for both of these positions should be able to demonstrate effective Board experience, an understanding of governance issues and commercial experience. Successful candidates do not need to have experience within the sport sector and applications from other sectors, particularly consumer focused, are encouraged.

For further information please contact daryl.mason@hartmannmason.com.

British Canoeing has recently appointed four new Board members. To see profiles of the new Board members, [click here](#).

Coaching Chaos

Making Sense of the Coach's Learning Journey.

For further information and to book your place click here.

2016 Coach Conference

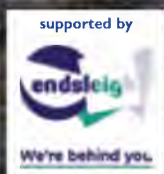
19th / 20th November 2016

**Eastwood Hall,
Eastwood,
Nottingham**





Photo: Karl Midlane



STUDENT SAFETY SEMINAR (22-23 OCT)

With in-depth sessions on planning, coaching, equipment, rescue, transport and legal responsibilities, this weekend seminar is the perfect opportunity for anyone involved in a university or college club to get up to date with the latest thinking in paddlesport safety.





Unique Canoe Challenge Gives Funding Boost to Charity

Simon Outhwaite's innovative idea to raise money through a five-canoe, ten person challenge from Oxford to Windsor has netted an amazing £9,000 so far for Ronald McDonald House Charities.

The donation will go towards the running costs of the charity's Oxford facility, providing free 'home away from home' accommodation for families of children being treated at John Radcliffe Hospital.

Simon's first grandchild, Bella, spent the first five weeks of her life in the hospital during which time his daughter and her partner had the opportunity to be near Bella in the relaxed and comfortable surroundings of the House.

Keen to ensure other families going through the trauma of an ill child in hospital can have the same support, Simon planned a very different challenge with his family and close friends.

The task was never intended to be easy. It required the craftsmanship of Simon and one of his work colleagues, Ian Goldswain, to build two of the canoes out of wood rather than fibreglass, and then with family and friends, canoeing 70 miles from Osney Marina in Oxford to the finish in a pub in Windsor for celebrations and a raffle. Moreover, some of the team had hardly stepped into a canoe before other than during their school days.

After huge time and effort, the team of ten set off on Friday, 8th July on the three-day event, beating squally weather and more than a few aches and pains on a frugal journey, with a basic scout hut serving as their resting place on the first night.

Simon said: "It was a tough challenge and I am grateful to the whole team for helping me to make it all happen. We had a few adventures along the way dodging motor boats and rowers, but we came through to finish on time. All who took part are amazed at people's generosity and kindness. It is beyond belief; the monies raised will help so many."

To find out more about Ronald McDonald House Charities

and how to support them, visit: www.rmhc.org.uk.

The Cheshire Ring Race 2016



Watch the racing calendar and make a date for your diary for next year's Cheshire Ring.



Starting and finishing in the depths of rural Cheshire, the Cheshire Ring canal race may not have quite the cachet of the Devizes-Westminster race, but since 1977 this friendly but competitive annual event has attracted competitors from the UK and internationally.

A major attraction of the Ring race is that the 96-mile, 92-lock, five-tunnel challenge can be undertaken as an all-the-way attempt in K1, K2 or Canadian, or as a team relay in any type of kayak or canoe, which opens the event up to paddlers of a wide range of ages and experience. It is also the only UK endurance race that gives solo K1 or C1 paddlers the chance to test themselves non-stop over nearly 100 miles.

The 2016 edition of the Ring took place over the 18th-19th June, with competitors in various combinations of solo and K2 all-the-way paddlers and relay teams in the K1 and K2 classes. This year was especially notable for the Christie family K2 team made up of grandfather, two sons, and two granddaughters who supplied the eldest (over 70) and youngest (under 12) competitors in the race.

There was also an 'international' return visit by a K1 relay team and a K1 all-the-way paddler from the Isle of Man, and more return visits from the husband and wife Passmore all-the-way K2, and the Shackleton/Wilson C1 relay team – some people are clearly addicted to the thrills of the Ring! Neil and Angela Jennison also deserve a special mention for providing bank support to the Hel-Jen-Bar K2 relay team; thanks to the power of Facebook this K2 team were able to recruit the Jennisons, who made a special weekend trip from Hull to Cheshire to support three perfect strangers!

Despite a last-minute scare with a leaky canal, that was luckily refilled just in time to prevent paddlers having a 1.5mile portage after 90 miles of paddling, road disruptions for the support crews due to the Marple carnival and towpath obstructions from revellers at the Middlewich Boat & Folk Festival, the Ring proceeded successfully. Fantastic GPS tracking supplied by Open Tracking transformed the ability of paddlers, support crews, organisers, and friends at home to follow the race and is clearly the way forward for this type of event.

The fastest overall time was set by the North-West's Best 3-pair K2 relay time in an impressive time of 14h 53m 25s – but who were still some time off the all-time K2 relay record of 14h 26m 00s set in 1988 – admittedly set by a five-pair team. The Christie three-generation team came home in 18h 37m 00s, a brilliant performance especially as two of the team hadn't sat in a K2 for approximately a decade!

The ladies K1 all-the-way record was broken by Sarah Millest from Nottingham Kayak Club in a new time of 19h 13m 00s setting the target to aim for in 2017.

The all-time men's K1 record set by Stuart West (15h 27m 27s) and the all-time K2 record set by West/Pedlar (15h 10m 12s) remained unbroken this year. Perhaps the Ring in mid-summer 2017 will see them challenged and smashed?

Name	Category	Time
Sarah Millest (NKC)	K1 all-the-way	19:13:00
Graham Cooke (MADCC)	K1 all-the-way	23:01:40
Robert Pearson (Ind)	K1 all-the-way	24:45:00
Martin Spencer (Ind)	K1 all-the-way	30:07:35
Manx Paddlesports	K1 x5 paddler relay	20:28:30
Shackleton & Wilson (Ind)	C1 x2 paddler relay	19:11:00
Rob & Julie Passmore (Tonbridge)	K2 all-the-way	19:28:10
Fortun & Sheppard (Falcon)	K2 all-the-way	26:59:00
The North West's Best (Runcorn & MADCC)	K2 x6 paddler relay	14:53:25
The Christies (Soar Valley)	K2 x5 paddler relay	18:37:00
Hel-Jen-Bar (Falcon & Wey)	K2 x3 paddler relay	22:26:00

Support Our Rivers on World Rivers Day!

Every year on the last Sunday of September people across the world show their support for our rivers. Over the past two years British Canoeing has helped support events across the country to help paddlers show their love for the rivers that matter to them.

We've given you some ideas for events you could hold, but we'd love to hear any ideas from you too!

River Clean Ups – These are a great way to 'give something back' to your local river, by helping clean and tidy the water and river bank. We can help you organise such an event.

Wildlife Watching – World Rivers Day could be a great way to learn more about your local rivers by researching the species that thrive on them and seeing if you can spot them. Make sure to keep your distance from the wildlife to avoid startling them! You may even be able to engage local wildlife group to come along to help you understand the habitats along the river – we're sure they'd love a trip out in a canoe!

Have a Paddle! – If nothing else just use World's Rivers Day as an excuse to have a paddle on your favourite river – and don't forget to send us your pictures!

The important thing is getting out and reminding ourselves and others what a vital role rivers play in our lives. If you would like any more information, or any support with organising an event, get in touch with us via richard.atkinson@britishcanoeing.org.uk.



Indulge in the adventure of the year this summer with IHG

Release your inner adventurer! Now is the time to explore assorted boutiques and quirky street food, splash in crystal waters and taste the local fruits of summer by glass or dish.

Ready to test your skills in new waters? Experience a canoeing tour down the Scottish Summer Isles alongside dolphins and whales, manoeuvre through the Mediterranean ocean and majestic Volcanic arches of Italy's Amalfi coast or paddle through southern France's

tranquil Orb river amidst the picturesque backdrop of the national natural park Haute Languedoc.

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[Click here to find rooms.](#)



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The Paul McConkey Memorial Slalom

This year's McConkey Memorial Slalom was held at Holme Pierrepont National White Water Centre, Nottingham on the weekend of 21st-22nd May. The event was organised by Stafford and Stone Canoe Club chairman Dave Royle and supported by S&SCC members and friends, who are always proud to continue to host this prestigious event.

The event, which is now in its 30th year, was well attended with Premier and Division 1 paddlers from all over the UK. It was a strong showing from Stafford and Stone with paddlers from the club winning four out of the five categories: Mark Proctor and Etienne Stott in the C2, Adam Burgess in C1M, Lizzie Neave in K1W and Christopher Bowers in K1M.



Southern Series Wild Water Races Come to an End

The last of the Southern series Wild Water Races for the 2015/16 season was held at the YMCA Fairthorne Manor's grounds on the River Hamble in Hampshire on 17th July. The event was run by the Sharks Canoe Club and Itchen Valley Canoe Club and involved racing from Botley Mill down many narrow twists and turns and under overgrown trees to Fairthorne Manor boat house.

As this was the series end, overall series winners were rewarded:

Overall Man: Dr. Selwyn Richards

Overall Woman: Susan Templeton

Overall Team: Itchen Valley Canoe Club (three members with a total age of 195 and over 145 years of WWR, Slalom and Marathon canoeing between them).

Best under 16 WWR paddler: Thomas Richards, received a book on performance psychology for winning in canoeing and kayaking "In The Flow" donated and signed by the author Dr. Jonathan Males an International kayaker and business and sport psychologist.

There will be more WWR and open races as part of the next season's Southern series with the next one again at Fairthorne Manor, Botley on 18th September 2016. For more information, visit www.wildwater.org.uk.

Watch the 26th Joy Davis Hull International From the Air!

The 26th Joy Davis Hull International was hosted by Kingston Kayak Club on 2nd-3rd July at a new venue – Dacre Lakeside Park! Check out this great video featuring some of the thrilling action that took place... from the air!



Watch
the video
here

A silver and bronze as GB reach 10 A finals at the ICF Sprint Junior and under 23 World Championships

Magnus Gregory won silver whilst Trevor Thomson and Noah Dembele took bronze as the Great Britain team made 10 A Finals in the ICF Junior and under 23 World Championships at Minsk, Belarus in July. [Click here to read more.](#)



Great Britain scoops three medals in Junior and under 23 Europeans

Great Britain's young sprint team completed the ECA Junior and under 23 European Championships in Plovdiv, Bulgaria having won a medal of every colour. [Click here to read more.](#)



A gold and two silvers for GB at Krakow Slalom Junior and U23 World Championships

Great Britain underlined its strength across all disciplines, but particularly in the C1, after winning a gold and two silvers at the ICF Canoe Slalom Junior and U23 World Championships in Krakow. [Read more here.](#)



Coach Blog: Wild Water World Championships, Banja Luka

The Wildwater Racing World Championships took place from 1st-5th June in Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the

GB Wildwater Racing team coach kept [this brilliant blog](#) whilst competition was underway. It's a brilliant read for the 'behind the scenes' gossip!



Gold for Heath, silver for Walker at the Sprint European Championships in Moscow

Great Britain's K1 200m boats for this summer's Rio Games both displayed impressive speed in high quality fields at the Canoe Sprint European Championships in Moscow in June. [Read more here.](#)



Franklin takes Gold in Pau ahead of World Champion Fox

On the challenging French Pyrenean course in Pau, Great Britain's Mallory Franklin won her first ICF Slalom World Cup gold medal of the season. [Click here to read more.](#)



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HANNAH BROWN: WILD WATER RACING WORLD CHAMPION

In June, British athlete Hannah Brown was crowned K1 Women's Sprint World Champion at the Wild Water Racing World Championships in Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina. As well as competing in Wild Water Racing, Hannah is a women's Sprint kayaker and is a member of the 2015 British Senior Team.

Canoe Focus caught up with Hannah following her gold medal success.

How did you first get into canoeing?

I first started canoeing during the school summer holidays when I was 13, me and a couple of friends went to Bradford on Avon Canoe Club open sessions on a Saturday afternoon. We spent most of the time swimming! We all stopped after the holidays finished, but went straight back the next summer holidays and I never stopped after that.

Why did you decide to get back into Wild Water Racing?

For me Wild Water Racing is always close to my heart and I have followed it watchfully whilst dedicating my time to flatwater sprint. At the end of last season I sat down and set out this year's plan, which had two pathways, either to follow a successful Olympic dream or get back onto the Wild Water scene. And well, after a tricky start of the year with injury and some poor results at the British Olympic selection races, I jumped at the chance to get back in my Wild Water boat and race at the Worlds at Banja Luka.

Which discipline do you enjoy the most and why?

This is tricky, both are fun and similar in certain ways... Wild Water obviously has the element of exciting water and I do love the amazing places it takes me around the world.

Would you encourage more paddlers to get involved in multiple disciplines?

Massively, there are so many different skills that each discipline uses and many are cross relatable. I think it is so healthy to have a wide repertoire of skills, especially as young

developing athletes. I think getting out of your comfort zone and trying new things is how you can excel in sport. Also, the more canoeing or races you do, the more people you meet so socially it's fantastic.

What's your proudest achievement in canoeing?

This year's World Championship win is the proudest, it actually makes me emotional just thinking about it. I had had such a frustrating year beforehand, so to successfully come back after so long out of the white water boat and with such a big team around me was fantastic. Also having so many voices belting out the national anthem whilst on the podium, many of which have been alongside me throughout my canoeing career was a pretty special moment.

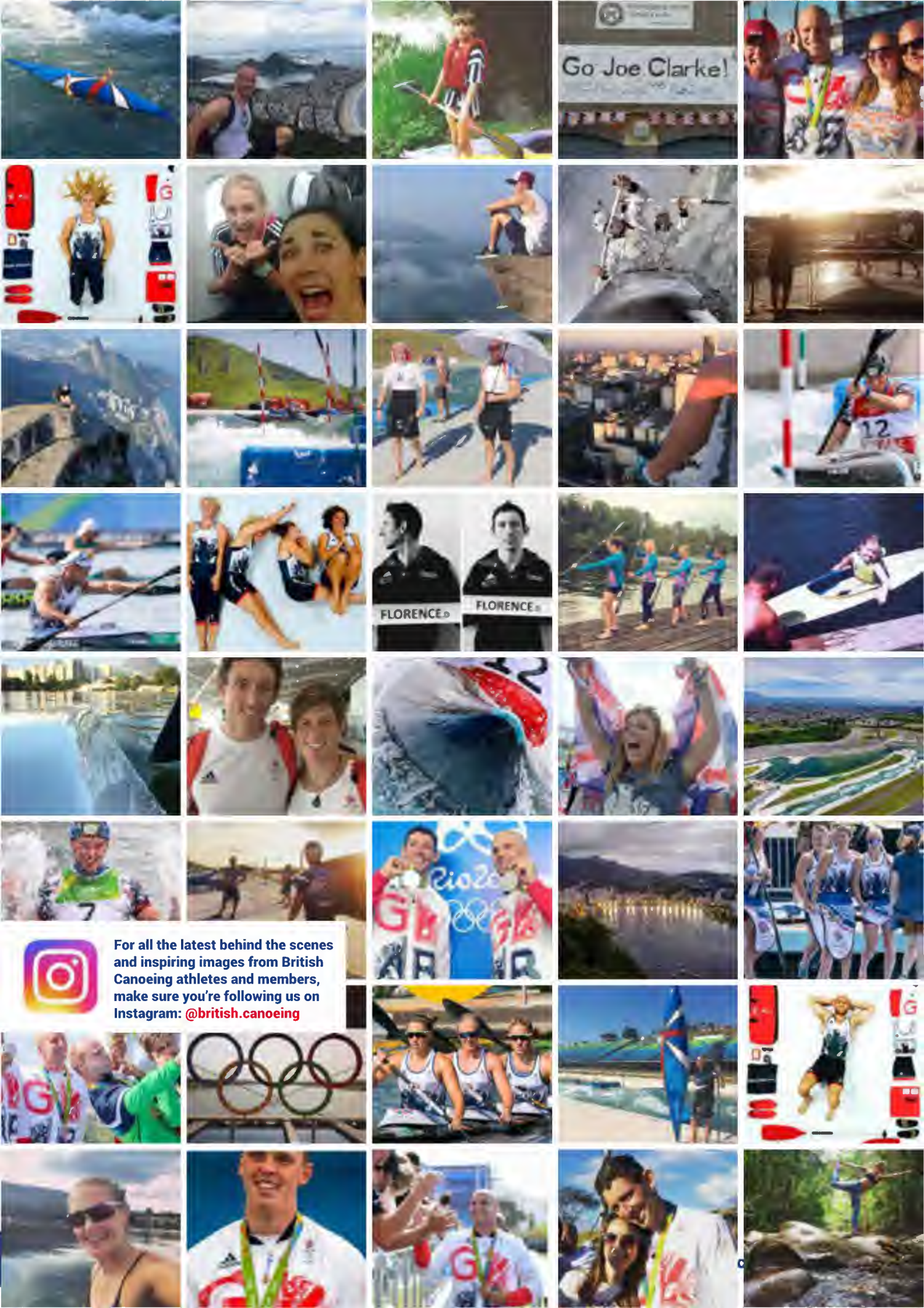
What's next up for you?

I unfortunately dislocated my shoulder at the World Cup in Pau, just a couple of weeks after the Worlds. So the coming months will be filled with surgery followed with rehab so I can get back in a boat as soon as possible!

If someone was looking to get into Wild Water Racing what advice would you give them?

Definitely go out and give it a go! If you're stuck or wondering what the best option for you is in your area, I'd suggest checking out the Facebook page 'Wild Water Racing for Fun'. It's a really active page and if you dropped a message on there, someone will quickly be able to point you in the right direction. Otherwise check out the racing calendar on the website www.wildwater.org.uk.





For all the latest behind the scenes and inspiring images from British Canoeing athletes and members, make sure you're following us on Instagram: [@british.canoeing](https://www.instagram.com/british.canoeing)



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Olympic Review Highlights

Rio 2016 ranks as British Canoeing's most successful Olympic Games with the slalom and sprint teams winning a combined total of two gold and two silver medals.

There's always a lot going on during the Olympics with jam-packed schedules of a whole host of sports. It can be easy to miss some of the key results from the canoe sprint and slalom especially with the time difference too!

We've compiled the highlights from two weeks of competition with the key information you need; if it leaves you wanting more, just click on the story to read the roundup in full!



John Anderson MBE, British Canoeing's Performance Director:

Rio has been our best ever Games for British Canoeing with two golds and two silver medals and a lot of other finalists.

We've gone a step up from London which, coming to South America and doing that, is a massive achievement.

You can't stand still and canoeing will move on and we will be looking for those gains for Tokyo.



Canoe Slalom

A gold and a silver in canoe slalom made GB joint top of the nations' table in slalom with Slovakia.

David Florence and Richard Hounslow crowned a successful week for GB after winning silver in the men's C2 for the second Games in a row.

Florence has now won 3 silver medals in successive Games and he has no plans to stop there.

Fiona Pennie showed consistently high form at each stage before finishing sixth in the women's K1 final.

23 year old Joe Clarke delivered the run of his life to win the Olympic men's K1 title. Amazingly this was his first ever senior international title at Clarke's first ever Games.



Joe Clarke wins GBs second gold of the Rio games

[Click here to read more](#)



Richard Hounslow:

Top to bottom it was a good run down and close to gold. I enjoyed the race more than I had in London where it was really nerve wracking and such a huge atmosphere. This time we are more experienced and more relaxed

David Florence:

I still absolutely love canoeing and I'm not about to retire. I've loved all the training in the build up to the Games and if things continue successfully for me I'd love to go to Tokyo.



Joe Clarke:

I don't know what I did to deserve that but I obviously did something right along the way.

Joe Clarke, Olympic Champion! It was what I went to bed dreaming about last night and what I've dreamed of for so many years.

Fiona Pennie:

Sixth isn't the worst result even though it's not the result I was after. But I felt I gave it my all in the final and couldn't have done any more than that.

A silver in mens C2 wraps up a successful Rio canoe slalom campaign for GB

[Click here to read more](#)





Canoe sprint

Heath wins gold and crowns most successful olympics for British Canoeing

[Click here to read more](#)

Canoe Sprint also enjoyed great success in the medals table, with silver for Jon Schofield and Liam Heath in K2M 200m and a gold for Liam Heath in the K1M 200m

Lani Belcher and Angela Hannah, the team's late call ups, finished seventh in the K2 500m B final.

Liam Heath and Jon Schofield completed their "unfinished business" of bronze at London 2012, by winning the men's K2 200m silver in Rio.

Following from his silver medal, Liam Heath powered his way to gold in the men's K1 200m and into the history books as Team GB's most successful Olympic canoeist with a medal of every colour to his name.

Great Britain's K4W 500m team – Jessica Walker, Rachel Cawthorn, Rebeka Simon and Louisa Gurski - put in a strong effort in a high quality field to finish their A final in seventh place.



Jon Schofield:

To get that today was absolutely amazing. Last Olympics I smashed the paddle in half, but I was reminded before this race that they're a bit too expensive to do that again.

Liam is absolutely on fire in his K1. He's been killing me in training day in and day out and I didn't want to let him down because I know he's the best guy out there.

Angela Hannah:

Four weeks ago we weren't coming here so it's a bonus that we are here and we have worked really hard to be here.

Heath & Schofield win canoe sprint silver in Rio

[Click here to read more](#)



Liam Heath:

You cross the line you look around, you have an inkling you're in front and then when they've looked at the photo finish and put your name up on the board that's when you know and it starts to sink in a bit." "It feels absolutely incredible. It's all the efforts of so many people behind me in my team, UK sport and lottery funding, my coach, my K2 partner, my loving family, my wife, my friends at home.

Rachel Cawthorn:

We all gave it everything we had out there and we're all shaking trying to walk back now. But we're so close. It's just the last few little bits and a few more years training and hopefully we can close the gap more.



Full results

Slalom



Joe Clarke
K1M – GOLD



David Florence & Richard Hounslow
C2 – SILVER



David Florence
C1M – 10th



Fiona Pennie
K1W – 6th

Sprint



Liam Heath
K1M 200m – GOLD



Liam Heath & Jon Schofield
K2M 200m – SILVER



Lani Belcher & Angela Hannah
K2W 500m
B Final 7th



Jess Walker, Rachel Cawthorn, Rebii Simon & Louisa Gurski
K4W 500m
A Final 7th



Rachel Cawthorn
K1W 500m
B Final 7th



Jess Walker
K1W 200m
B Final 7th



Rio Start Up Events

Are you all fired up by the Olympics? Did watching our athletes giving their all at the top of their sport make you want a taste of the action? Then we have just the thing for you!

Rio Start Up Events are being run by clubs and centres nationwide and offer everyone a chance to get a taste of competitive paddlesport.

If you fancy trying sprint, slalom, polo, wild water racing, marathon or freestyle then head to our **Seasonal Fun** page to find an event near you.



Paracanoe to Make Paralympic Debut

2016 is an exciting year for Paracanoe as it will make its Paralympic debut in Rio this September. Great Britain is the world's most successful Paracanoe nation and achieved the rare feat of qualifying quota places in all six events. This is the team hoping to beat the world's best in Rio.



Jeanette Chippington (KL1) – Longridge Canoe Club

Having won 12 Paralympic medals during her swimming career, Jeanette began canoeing in 2011. Since then she has won the K1 200m KL1 world title on four consecutive occasions until 2016 when she took silver. She

is also a double European Champion at this event. In Rio, Jeanette will be representing Great Britain for the sixth time in the Paralympic Games.

Describe your favourite training session

6 x 30sec x 5

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself

I couldn't swim at the age of 12 and then went on to become a five-times paralympian

What's been your greatest challenge on the Road to Rio?

Staying healthy and injury free



Anne Dickens (KL3) – Wey Kayak Club

The former mountain bike racer was working as a volunteer at London 2012 when she was inspired to take up the sport. At that point she had never sat in a canoe and apparently hated boats because of sea sickness.

But determination and belief have taken the physiotherapist to the top. In 2016 she won the world championships in K1 200m KL3, her second world title. She is also the 2015 European Champion, retaining the title since 2013.

Describe your favourite training session

Pilates and core sessions

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself

I get sea sick, even when snorkeling.

What's been your greatest challenge on the Road to Rio?

Staying injury free while pushing the limits of my training



Rob Oliver (KL3) – Solihull Canoe Club

Since attending a Paralympic multi-sport trials day in 2011, Rob has achieved much in the sport. A talented athlete who played football at a high level through his teenage years, he has gone from strength to strength since

joining Great Britain's Paracanoe programme. Rob became 2015 European Champion in his class K1 200m KL3 and went on to win silver at the 2015 World Championships.

Describe your favourite training session

MASSIVE back session/heavy bungee session

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself

I don't like masks!

What's been your greatest challenge on the Road to Rio?

Staying focused



Ian Marsden (KL1) – Trentham Canoe Club

The former mainstream Team GB powerlifting European and World champion had competed in handcycling and target shooting before attending a Paracanoe talent ID day in 2012. He became a full time athlete

on the GB Paracanoe programme and has medalled at both European and World Championships since 2013. He is the 2015 European Champion and 2014 World silver medallists in K1 200m KL1.

Describe your favourite training session

Arms and sprints

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself

I have a big implant in my right leg

What's been your greatest challenge on the Road to Rio?

Staying ahead of the competition



Emma Wiggs (KL2) – Independent

A four-time world champion in the KL2 class and 2015 European silver medallist in the same event, Emma had represented Great Britain in the GB Sitting Volleyball Team for the London 2012 Paralympic Games. The former PE teacher then searched for

a sport that would give her a chance to be the best she could be and found canoeing was the answer.

Describe your favourite training session

Pressing in gym or Saturday morning gym

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself

I'm a twin

What's been your greatest challenge on the Road to Rio?

Keep pushing all boundaries



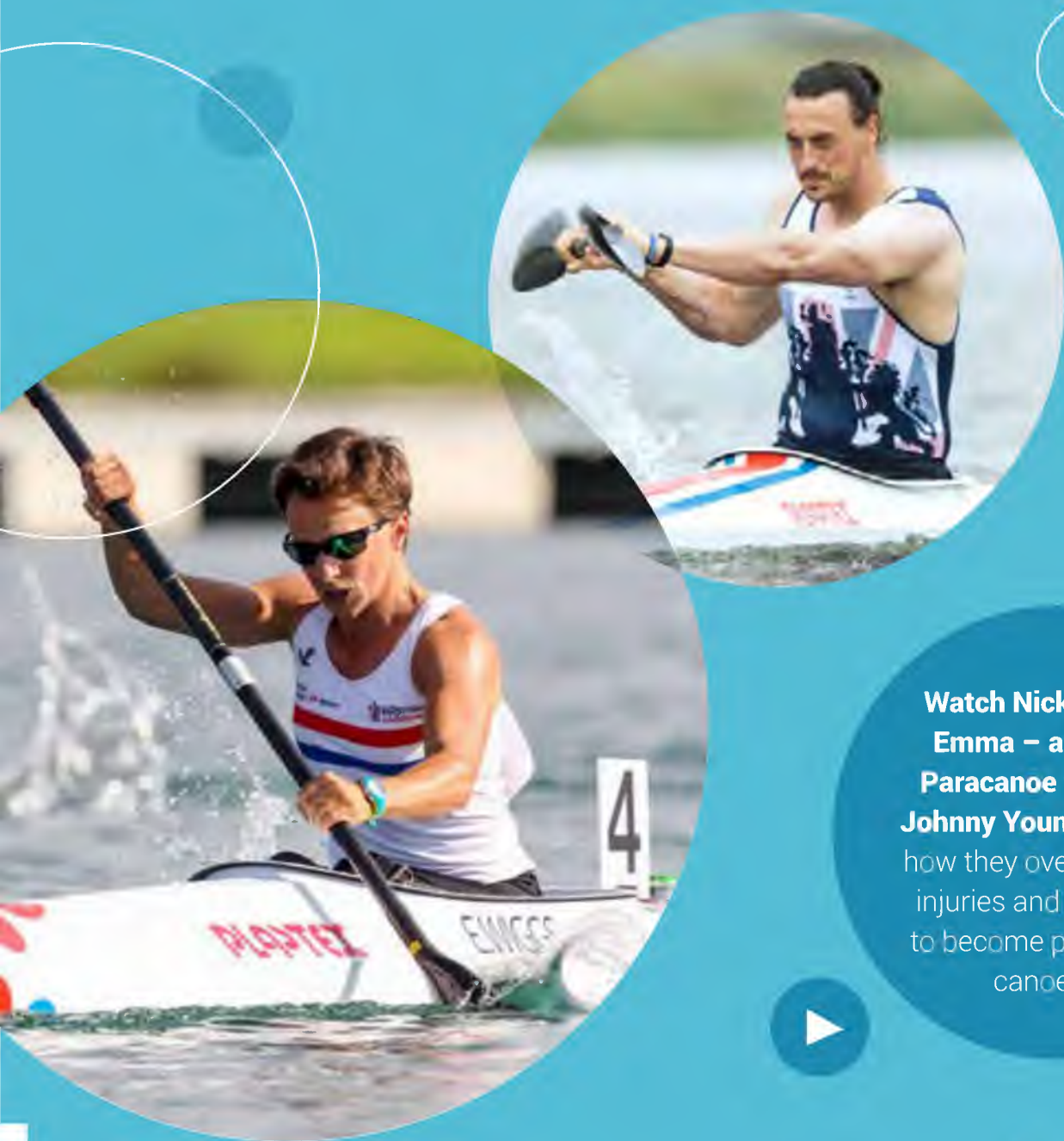
Nick Beighton (KL2) – Shropshire Paddlesports

Having rowed at the London 2012 Paralympics, Nick transitioned to British Canoeing in 2014 and has made rapid progress. Nick competed at the 2016 World Championships, coming 3rd in the K1 200m KL2. He won both

his KL2 races at the British Canoeing Paralympic selection trials to secure his own nomination for Paralympics GB.

Tell us a bit about yourself

"I competed in rowing at the London 2012 Paralympics coming 4th TAMix2x. Before competing in sport, I was a Captain in the Royal Engineers of the British Army. In 2009, while in Afghanistan, I stood on an explosive device and lost both of my legs."



Watch Nick, Rob and Emma – along with Paracanoe teammate Johnny Young – discuss how they overcame their injuries and disabilities to become professional canoeists.



SUMMER

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EVENTS



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National Go Canoeing Week

National Go Canoeing Week 2016 seems like a distant (but very pleasant) memory now. During the week over 12,800 people took part and a fantastic 38,395 miles were logged on our National Go Canoeing Week website!

Once again, we would like to say a huge thank you to all who took part and celebrate by sharing some of the great stories and pictures from the week.

Our mascot MacGregor certainly had fun, heading out around the country joining in with many of you during the week.

Winners' Stories

Throughout the week we had some great prizes on offer and we were incredibly impressed at the mileage some groups and individuals racked up. We had some very well deserved winners of our top prizes.

Top Individual

WINNER: Peter Applewood (Hampton Canoe Club)

who spent many mornings getting on the water at 5.30am and paddling throughout the day to clock up 227 miles for the week. Peter says that he spent more time paddling than sleeping for six days! His longest day of paddling saw him take in 41.5miles over 8.5 hours. Peter won a Wave Sport Ethos Blackout kayak, which was kindly supplied by **Perception Kayaks** and he is donating it to his club, Hampton Canoe Club.



Top Club

WINNER: The club that paddled the most miles were: Nottingham Kayak Club

They really went all out to accumulate a total of 2,730 miles and win themselves a Dagger Katana Club Kayak, a Drift paddle and a Quest PFD, all from **Palm Equipment**. The club being a marathon/sprint club took on the National Go Canoeing Week initiative and clocked up many miles from all ages, everyone on their weekly five-mile time trial contributed, along with other miles accumulated through early morning training sessions, afternoon sessions and evening sessions.

Everyone from the club set out to try to see just how many miles they could achieve! Even the recreational session for beginners took on completing a mile or two on Sunday. The Nottingham Hasler Marathon race was held on the first weekend of Go Canoeing Week, so a healthy amount of miles were totted up there, helping us achieve our overall mileage.

The club sends a big thanks to the club secretary, Norman Mason, who made it his mission to make sure people used the mileage totalisers that were put up in the clubhouse, provided from the resources sent by the Go Canoeing Team to record their miles paddled!





Top Female and Juniors

The winners of our Top Female, Top Junior Male and Top Junior Female mileage all went to participants in this year's 100 Mile Canoe Test. This four-day event is open to all affiliates of the National Association of Boys and Girls Clubs. The event was made even tougher than usual this year by high winds.

Top Junior Male Mileage Winner William Barnd

Told us that the 40mph gusts slowed them down, but did not make them stop and was proud that their adventure made it into the local paper.

Top Female Mileage Winner Imogen Watson

Praised the amazing water safety team as well as the organisers, Paddle Plus. Top Junior Female, Imogen Watson, completed the first three days of the test; covering an impressive 70 miles. Her team found the weather a test too far on day four and, along with many other participants, were forced to withdraw. Imogen still found the experience exciting and said that her team could not have done it without their captain, Dave Priestley.

All three of these winners received Go Canoeing medals and trophies as well as a £25 voucher from **Pyranha**.

Top Organisations

A special mention for the **Go to Water To Canoe** in **Weston**

As an organisation they really threw themselves into the week and their efforts saw participants, from their Racquet Farm base, paddle a huge 5,550 miles during National Go Canoeing Week.



**National
Go Canoeing
Week 2017**
runs from May
27th to June 4th



Your Stories

People took part in boats of all shapes, sizes and types, on rivers, canals, sea, lochs and lakes. Some paddled alone, some with their families, with friends or with clubs.

Some members of the Open Canoe Association took to the water for a weekend of paddling fun in Leicestershire, including making and attempting to paddle cardboard canoes - with varying degrees of success! You can read more on their adventures [here](#).

Archie and Anya Story, both aged four, spent some time on the water with their parents. As well as seeing Highland cows and a swan carrying her cygnets on her back, they were also highly amused by their mum's lack of steering skills!

We heard many stories from Scout and Girl Guide groups who did a variety of paddling activities throughout the week, including a group who built their own rafts.

Miles were also logged by people practising for races, helping out as support boats at triathlons, completing Safety and Rescue courses and canoe geocaching. Tales came in from all round the British Isles, including 55 mile Orkney adventures and 3 Star courses in North Wales.

One group who really enjoyed their experience during the week were from Eglinton Community Hall Group and part of the Healthy Aging Network. The group were aged between 40 and 92 and had a fantastic time on the water with Brighter Paddlers. They found that some of their grandchildren liked the look of paddling so much that they joined in too.

There are so many more stories which people have shared with us from National Go Canoeing Week. We can't wait to do it all again next year!

Canoe Focus Autumn 2016



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GO

Canoeing!

Challenge Routes

We are excited to have launched our new Trent Loop Challenge Route to add to our three challenge routes already in existence.

The Trent Loop Challenge Route takes paddlers 12 miles on the Nottingham and Beeston Canal and the River Trent. Starting and finishing at the National Water Sports Centre, Holme Pierrepont, the route includes three portages and takes you through town and countryside.

Craig Duff, Go Canoeing Support Officer at British Canoeing, went out to paddle the route for us and he told us what he thinks:

“Nottingham is my home city and so I thought I would feel that I had ‘been there, done that’ on a local route but it really gave me a chance to appreciate the heritage of the town.

Due to the length of the route, it is not an easy one to paddle but the miles seem to go by quickly as you look out for all the landmarks and points of interest.

I am excited to see the challenge route launched and look forward to hearing other paddlers experiences of it.”

We are excited to hear that lots of you have been out on the water completing our Challenge Routes and would love to hear about your experiences.

You can register your results through the **individual route pages** in our challenge routes section. Or, if you would like to let us know more about your adventures, drop us an **email here**.

You can download a copy of the Trent Loop Challenge Route **here**.





Peak UK Racer ST - Performance Enhancing Paddling Equipment

The all new Racer ST is a unique and ground breaking three in one garment that combines a paddling jacket with spray deck and buoyancy aid for the ultimate streamlined performance.

This revolutionary garment was four years in development and collaboration between Derbyshire based Peak UK Kayaking Co Ltd, British Canoeing and the English Institute of Sport. It sped Joe Clarke, David Florence & Richard Hounslow down the whitewater course in Rio to Olympic Gold and Silver.

Traditionally with a regular PFD (life jacket) athletes will have 40-50mm of buoyancy foam on the front and back of their body. The Racer ST holds around 30 percent of it's flotation in it's spraydeck, meaning now there's less than 20mm of flotation foam on the athlete's body. Lines can be cut closer to the poles and run times reduced. This piece of kit is truly "Performance Enhancing". It does of course meet all the ISO 12402 and ICF 6.12kg pfd safety standards.

The Racer ST is available now in long and short sleeved versions attached to a Slalom C1 or K1 spraydeck. It is also available with a Whitewater Composite or Keyhole deck for the ultimate in freestyle or surf kayak performance.

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New Canoe Lifeguarding Weekend Launched

The National Lifeguard Committee have launched a brand new event for 2016 – the National Canoe Lifeguarding Weekend – which is due to take place at Upton Warren Outdoor Education Centre on the 17th and 18th September. The weekend is open to all and will include workshop sessions covering a range of topics.

Some of the courses on offer over the weekend are automatically recognised as British Canoeing Coach Updates, while others may well be, but will require coaches to complete a self-assessment form for consideration by the coaching department.

The British Canoeing Lifeguards Committee Annual Consultative Meeting will be held on the Saturday and all those attending the weekend are welcome and encouraged to attend the ACM. A club forum will also take place before

the ACM and all interested parties are welcome to attend. Bunk house accommodation is available at the venue, on a first-come, first-served basis and camping is also available. Accommodation is included free of charge when attending any of the courses or workshops being held over the weekend, but must be booked in advance.

The weekend is being run and funded largely by the Lifeguards Committee, although a £10 contribution is requested from attendees. There will also be additional certification fees for some courses.

Booking is essential and spaces for each session are limited and will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

For more information about what's on offer, [click here](#).

Events Timetable

Saturday 17th September

Morning Session

- Assistant & Canoe Lifeguard Training (formal training/sign-off)
- Canoe Lifeguard Skills Workshop
- Aquatic First Aid Induction Workshop
- Swim Event Safety Award (continued in afternoon session)

Afternoon Session

- Assistant & Canoe Lifeguard Training (formal training/sign-off)
- Canoe Lifeguard Skills Workshop
- Swim Event Safety Award (continued from morning session AND revalidation)
- Flood Response Project Workshop

Sunday 18th September

Morning Session

- Mini Champs – Safety & Rescue Skills - (entered into as teams of 3)
- Assistant & Canoe Lifeguard Assessments
- Aquatic First Aid – AED bolt-on induction (for existing AFA Trainers)

Afternoon Session

- Mini Champs – Unknown Incidents (continued from morning session)
- Assistant & Canoe Lifeguard Assessments (continued from morning session)
- Aquatic First Aid – AED bolt-on (for candidates)
- Coach Updates

WYE NOT NOW?

By Teresa Yonge



After my River Thames trip last year, I was keen to do another solo trip, this time going down the River Wye in Wales and Herefordshire.

My idea was to drop in at Glasbury and paddle down to Symonds Yat, wild camping on the way. However, the river was running high and this was my first experience going solo on a fast river with rapids and I ended up only paddling for two days, here is what happened.

I launched in at Glasbury Bridge in Wales at around 10am and set off down the river. After the slow lock controlled River Thames trip that I did last year over 26 dreamy days, this felt very different. The Wye was wild and faster and I soon learnt to look ahead for any shallow water and obstructions, and to scan the whole river looking for the best place to paddle through the rapids. There were places where I was able to relax a little and take in the surroundings. After leaving Glasbury, I passed sand martins in abundance darting around and across the river from their homes in the sandy banks. The scenery was stunning from the start and I happily learnt how to ride this wild river... or so I thought! About 17

miles into my first day's canoeing, I was starting to get a bit tired and it was getting late so I thought it time to look for somewhere to camp. I spotted a possible campsite on my left, but it was just before I was approaching some rapids that stretched right across the river. I made a big mistake of turning the canoe left towards the land, too close to the rapids. I paddled hard and as fast as I could. Luckily I made it to the bank under the trees, but the fast flowing water just took me sideways, right to the start of the rapids and wedged me against a fallen tree on the bank.

To my horror, the water started flowing over the top and into the canoe and so I baled out with all my kit floating all about, anything that wasn't tied I lost, including the paddle I was using.



Luckily, I had a tied on spare, but most importantly, I was desperately holding onto the canoe by the front line as the river was tugging it away from my grasp like a hungry lion! I had to secure it somehow. I was chest deep in very fast flowing water and was just so relieved to have reached the edge of the river. The tree I was wedged against was useful in that I was able to tie the front of the canoe that was facing the river, but then I had to untie all my kit with the back line and hoik it up into the tree while I then secured the rear end of the canoe to another branch, once I had my kit safely in the tree above the water.

I now had to think of a way to get rid of the water inside the canoe. Alas it was too heavy for me to tip out as the river had the canoe now flipped on its side and the full force of the current was lodging it up against the tree, so I tried pulling it up towards the bank, which was proving too difficult!

Heck, I needed help fast, it was getting late, I was wet and getting cold. My mind was racing as to what to do next, I was all alone and stuck in the undergrowth and trees and not visible to anyone who might pass by. As I was thinking what to do, some paddlers caught my eye who I had recently passed earlier picnicking on the bank of the river... here's my chance for help! I wolf whistled and hollered 'HELP'.

I was relieved that they had heard me and realised that I needed their help and assistance. There was no way they

could have come over to me there at the beginning of the rapids and so they paddled on through the rapids, landed on my side further down the river and came back up to me on foot through the scrub. Thank God for these two lads, they helped me to turn the boat over to empty it. I then re-packed the canoe and tied it all back on and set off again downriver with them for the last five miles to the Bycross Farm Apple Orchard campsite [www.bycrosscampsite.co.uk].

The next day, I paddled on a further 12 miles down to the Hereford Rowing club where I was given a lift back to Bycross Campsite. I had canoed 34 miles in two days which had left my left forearm flared up and painfully swollen with a very painful Repetitive Strain Injury, my arm had said 'enough' (well enough for now while I recover and heal!) A hot meal at the campsite put me right again, but I felt silly, foolish and disappointed in myself. I should have known better!

Anyway, it was quite an adventure experiencing a powerful river in flood and I have learnt not to think that I could beat the river by turning left before a rapid.

This has been a valuable and big learning curve for me and one day I shall go back and complete what I had started, but not when the river is in flood!

EVENT SERIES PROVES A ROARING SUCCESS

British Canoeing has launched a new initiative to help raise the profile of canoeing competitions in the UK and to showcase the breadth and diversity of our sport. In its inaugural year, the British Canoeing Event Series has selected four key events from its 2016 calendar that demonstrate the high quality of competition that already exists in Marathon racing, as well as our Olympic disciplines of Canoe Sprint and Canoe Slalom.



The four events are as follows:

- JUN 04** National Sprint Regatta (Sprint)
Nottingham, 4th & 5th June
- JUL 23** National Champs (Marathon)
Reading, 23rd & 24th July
- SEP 17** British Open (Slalom)
LVWWC, 17th & 18th Sept
- SEP 25** Hasler Final (Marathon)
Worcester, 25th Sept

The events are organised by the individual British Canoeing Discipline Committees and have been run successfully over many years, but were selected to feature in the British Canoeing Event Series, providing organisers with additional support and resources from the central British Canoeing team. By providing this support, British Canoeing aims to help the Discipline Committees develop their events further and ensure our events calendar is full of premium quality sporting and spectator experiences.

In June and July, the first two events were held and both proved to be a fantastic success with spectators treated to some top-class racing. And at the end of September, the Event Series wraps up with two more great events that promise even more thrilling action..



Image supplied by AE photos

NATIONAL SPRINT REGATTA, NOTTINGHAM

Over the weekend of 4th-5th June, paddlers from all over the UK and further afield descended upon Nottingham for the National Sprint Regatta. The event featured more than 200 races over the two days, including the U23 Selections and the Paracanoe National Championships, with athletes competing for Paralympic Selection and National Titles.

For more information about the Paracanoe National Championships, click here.



NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS MARATHON, READING

On Saturday 23rd and Sunday 24th July, Reading Canoe Club hosted the British National Open Marathon Racing Individual and Team Championships – one of the country's biggest canoeing events. The event took place at Caversham in Reading and featured over 1,000 paddlers from across the country battling it out to be named National Champion.

You can see results for all the races here.

BRITISH OPEN, LEE VALLEY WHITE WATER CENTRE, HERTFORDSHIRE

British Canoeing's Olympic athletes will be back on home water for the first time since the Games at the Slalom British Open on Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th September. As well as two days of intense Slalom racing, the event will also showcase a whole host of other canoeing disciplines, including Canoe Polo, White Water Rafting and Boat X, making it a real festival of paddlesport.

The event is free to attend and there will be plenty for spectators to see and do, including Go Canoeing and White Water Rafting 'come and try' sessions, canoeing trade stands and even the chance to meet some of our Olympic heroes, who will be signing autographs.



HASLER FINAL, WORCESTER

The Hasler Trophy is the National Team League Championships for marathon canoeing. Clubs compete within their regions throughout the season to win the right to race at the Hasler Final, held this year on 25th September in Worcester.

The Hasler Series is named after Herbert "Blondie" Hasler, who led Operation Frankton, a WW2 commando raid in double kayaks on the port of Bordeaux. The story of this raid was made into a 1955 film, The Cockleshell Heroes. If you're free that weekend, come on down and enjoy this fabulous spectator sport!

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NEW CANOE ROUTES GIVE FRESH PERSPECTIVE OF RAMSGATE

THE ACTIVE RAMSGATE INITIATIVE HAS LAUNCHED TWO NEW CANOE ROUTES

One guided, one self-guided – giving paddlers the opportunity to explore some of the most impressive scenery in Kent.



The initiative, project managed by Explore Kent, is designed to support economic regeneration by promoting the Ramsgate area through its outdoor activities, and the launch of the canoe trails will take canoeists of all abilities right along the Kent coastline, as well as through one of the UK's most important protected bird sites – Pegwell Bay.

The self-guided route is for more experienced canoeists and starts at Marina Esplanade in Ramsgate and follows the coast around to the seaside town of Broadstairs. The trail gives paddlers the opportunity to get close to nature and go wild exploring some of the most precious and dramatic landscapes in Kent. Exploring by canoe gives you access to areas inaccessible on foot, whilst maintaining the peacefulness of the area so as not to disturb the natural balance.

The guided trails are run by Go Canoeing Provider Canoe Wild and Thanet Diving and Watersports and take two to three hours to complete. The route is a mixture of open sea and river, running right through Pegwell Bay Nature Reserve, providing a unique opportunity to spot rarer birdlife and seals in their natural habitat.

Pegwell Bay is famous for sightings of Oystercatchers, Terns and Shelducks to name just a few of the rich array of wetland birds found there. Both Canoe Wild and Thanet Diving &

Watersports have an extensive knowledge of the area and can ensure paddlers have a responsible canoeing experience in this highly protected area.

And once you've explored the coastline, you can spend the rest of the day exploring the town's cobbled alleyways in this vibrant coastal resort, have a pub meal by the marina or perhaps stay the night. Ramsgate is home to a great collection of quality bed and breakfasts, hotels and inns all serving great food with a renowned Kentish welcome.

To book your place on a small group guided Wildlife Canoe Safari, visit www.canoewild.co.uk and www.kentscubadiving.co.uk or call Canoe Wild on **07947 835688** and Thanet Diving & Watersports on **07981 551922**. All equipment will be provided, or bring your own!

The self-guided trail is free to download from the Active Ramsgate website – www.ramsgatetown.org/activeramsgate and includes the route directions, details on how to get in touch with the route organisers and also highlights various points of interests.

In addition, the canoe route is also supported by Active Ramsgate ambassador, Olympic Gold Medal winner, skeleton athlete Lizzy Yarnold.

Lizzy said of the canoe trails: "I love the idea of taking to the water and canoeing your way around the fantastic scenery in Ramsgate. You'll get to see the wildlife from a completely new perspective and it is great that a scheme which will improve regeneration will also help to encourage people to get active."

For more information:

visit www.ramsgatetown.org/activeramsgate.

THIS GIRL CAN

**SONJA JONES
& CREW
CIRCUMNAVIGATE
MENORCA**



Earlier this year we heard on the grapevine that Sonja Jones, winner of last year's John MacGregor Award, was planning another adventure. It seemed somewhere a little further afield was on the cards – somewhere with warmer climes and beautiful scenery. So Sonja hopped on Google Earth for a nosey of what Europe had to offer – she was instantly struck by the idea of circumnavigating Menorca...



Menorca is a highly compact island, but one of immense contrast; every few kilometers, it felt like we were paddling through different countries. I remember staring into the horizon looking at such a lush, green and hilly landscape thinking, "I feel like I'm paddling towards a tropical rain forest," to then paddling through a Country and Western film set. Other times you could be mistaken for thinking you were on the South Devonshire Coast or even in Scotland.

The pure frequency and quality of the caves along the coast between Canutells and Cala en Porter, upon exploration, were out of this world – and the deep purple colour of the cave walls, if dark enough, sparkled like something from a fictional land. At one point, we entered a cave in Cala Galdana which was 180 metres deep; I will never forget the smell of rotting sea weed at the end.

Some parts were so dark that even head torches did not light our path sufficiently, but fortunately our own Ray Mears, Mr Wilkinson, happened to have a lunar sized lamp attached to his person which lit the way sufficiently. Absorbing its beauty and varied landscape, Menorca isn't a stereotypical Balearic island.

When I first considered an expedition in the Balearic Sea, I immediately thought of glassy waters and glorious sunshine. The more I read about Menorca and its windy tendencies and researched the subject matter in depth, I began to realise that it may not be as placid as one imagined. However for me, the challenge of intense sea states does nothing but stir the senses – the choppier the better.



I think that's an incredibly important consideration for any group that is looking for a warm paddle, that warm doesn't necessarily mean serene, and it's certainly important that all members know what they're getting themselves into and have suitable experience. We had a few days of lovely swell much to the distaste of a team member's stomach.

One day that particularly stuck in my mind was day 6. We paddled through a soup of jelly fish in waves which were about two double decker buses high – it was like paddling up mountains and riding down them like ski slopes. We had nowhere to stop for 12km due to the limestone cliffs and no sheltered coves in the interim – loo breaks were not

an option, and any sickness had to be dealt with through “manning up” and pushing on through.

The bigger the waves got the more hilarious it became for Cress and I in particular – especially when they started cresting and breaking over our heads. In these situations we did what all true Brits do. Get stuck in and sing musical theatre! You may laugh, but the technique worked. If you were in the trough of a wave and unable to see anyone around you, you knew that your buddy was okay because you could hear them. For those that weren't singing, they said it was helpful on a safety note as they knew we were fine because they could hear us. Admittedly it must of been pretty annoying for them.

After 12km we managed to find a safe haven to relax and regain energy for a while. We weren't sure, due to sea sickness and group lethargy and my painful leg spasms that



To read all about
Sonja's adventures,
visit her blog
paddlehigh5.
wordpress.com

arrived unceremoniously, whether we should continue with the paddle that day, especially as the forecast advised gusting winds of 30km. The final 4km, although not far, were set to be very committing again – and if we weren't all tip top, we could run into problems. We relaxed for a few hours and then climbed the headland to see if the sea state had worsened as forecasted. This didn't seem to be the case and so we persisted and found ourselves in the most excellent cove for the night – it was worth the journey.

It's funny – you spend so many months planning and getting excited for a trip and then once it's over it's the most hideous anti-climax and blues inducing occasion on the planet. Now I am aware how deeply depressing that sounds, but I had the most eye opening and wonderful time circumnavigating Menorca. As an individual I learnt so much, and as a group, we experienced enormous amounts together – we will always be bound, no matter our distance, forever, because of this trip.

If it wasn't for my team – I certainly wouldn't have done this adventure on my own. For me, travel and exploration is deeply connecting and spiritual; something which I must share with others. Without my team I'm not sure I would have successfully completed the challenge, and without my team, I believe the experience would not have been as rich or as vibrant as it truly was.

Thank-you so much Erin, Cress, Anna, and Mathew for sharing this most excellent adventure; you have been the most beautiful "yes" people and I will treasure you all forever more. Now, where to next!?

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CHECK CLEAN DRY SUMMER 2016 – PADDLING ABROAD

This summer, the Non Native Species Secretariat (NNSS) and Defra are working on a Check Clean Dry campaign targeting travellers, to reduce the risk of introduction of new invasive species and diseases.

Many recreational water users, including paddlers, will be travelling to the near continent, where numerous invasive freshwater species have been found.

To raise awareness of invasive freshwater species and the steps to help prevent their spread, posters will be displayed in channel ports for paddlesport to highlight the issue. Similar posters have been prepared for the other water-based pursuits of angling and boating. NNSS will also be promoting the campaign in the specialist press and on social media.

The campaign is prompted from continuing concern. In recent years the rate of new introductions of invasive freshwater species to Britain has increased dramatically.

Following the 1992 creation of a canal linking the Danube and Rhine, numerous species from the Ponto-Caspian basin have spread rapidly into Western Europe. Many of these species, which include killer shrimp, quagga and zebra mussel, are highly invasive. Before the canal was built, a new Ponto-Caspian species was introduced to Britain every 100 years, but the rate has increased to one new species every 18 months since 2004.

Many more of these and other invasive freshwater species are present in neighbouring countries such as France, Belgium and the Netherlands. A key concern is that these could be introduced to Britain by recreational water users returning from a trip abroad with their own kit, many of whom travel to the near continent each year.

For more information visit:

www.nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry
and www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/guidance-resources/waterways-environment/environmental-good-practice/stop-the-spread/

HEADING ABROAD THIS SUMMER TO EXPLORE NEW WATERBODIES?

Invasive species can block waterways, make navigation and paddling difficult and harm the environment. Protect the sport you love, remember to:

CHECK

CLEAN

DRY

your equipment and clothing before you return

www.nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry

Paddlers Explore Olympic Park

Twenty paddlers from Croydon Active Paddlers, Edmonton CC, Windsor and District CC and the Canoe Camping Club took part in a special tour to formally mark the reopening of the Bow backwaters in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.



The tour took place on 9th July and followed a nine-mile route through the Olympic Park and up the River Lee. The Waterways and Environment Team coordinated arrangements with the Inland Waterways Association, Canal and River Trust, London Legacy and St Pancras Cruising Club for paddlers to participate on these waterways that had been closed off since the time of the construction work for the 2012 Olympics.

Starting from Hackney Wick on the Lee Navigation there was time to go alongside the Moo Canoes cafe boat for refreshments, before the tour got underway via Old Ford Lock and then into the River Lee and along City Mill River, skirting the Olympic Stadium as far as the Crossrail works that block the channel.

The paddlers returned to Old Ford Lock and continued down the Lee Navigation towards Bow and making for the Bow Back River just before the Bow flyover. City Mill Lock was quickly reached where the water level had been set to allow passing straight through the chamber to lead into the Waterworks River to pass the Aquatic Centre and Carpenters Lock. Here the waterway enters the natural course of the River Lee that forms the North Park Paddle Hub and in this section the waterway changes in character from concrete-lined walls to open parkland.





A large pontoon in the North Park Paddle Hub close to the Copper Box Arena provided a convenient landing point to finish the paddle and for some to have a break before continuing up the River Lee and returning to this point to complete the paddle. Beyond the Copper Box Arena and Velodrome, the river passes through Hackney Marshes where there is another scenic change to a tree-lined secluded waterway with beds of rushes and the presence of waterfowl.

The contrasts in the backdrop to the waterways in such a short distance very much added to the interest of this tour to formally mark the reopening of the Bow backwaters in the Olympic Park.



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New club property insurance scheme

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We have now partnered with Perkins Slade to develop an exclusive **'British Canoeing Club House Insurance Scheme'** that will offer clubs and activity centres comprehensive cover and competitive premiums, the product is underwritten by Hiscox and is being launched in February.

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If you would like to contact someone at British Canoeing about this fantastic facility, please email via: commercial@britishcanoeing.org.uk

THE YOUNGSTERS TARGETING TOKYO AND BEYOND

It may only be weeks since the 2016 Rio Games drew to a close, but for young Olympic hopefuls targeting the 2020 Games in Tokyo, the hard work has already begun. And thanks to British Canoeing's Talent programme and the legacy of the London 2012 Games, more youngsters are having the chance to pursue the Olympic dream.







The British Canoeing Talent Programme

Launched in April 2013, the England Talent Programme aims to develop a world leading talent infrastructure for athletes throughout England. It is led and managed by British Canoeing and funded by Sport England. The England Talent Programme is built on the strong foundations laid between 2009 and 2012 when a number of full time and part time coaches were deployed in canoeing clubs around the country.

To read more about the Talent programme, [click here.](#)

At Lee Valley White Water Centre, home of British Canoeing's High Performance Centre, a handful of talented youngsters have been selected and nurtured by the Talent Development Team and have begun competing in Canoe Slalom both nationally and internationally.

The programme involves the team visiting local schools each year to identify emerging talent. After running some basic tests with children regarding their fitness, youngsters who pass certain criteria then progress to further tests at the Lee Valley Centre and if they pass, they are put on a two-year programme.

One of the programme's up and coming stars is 14-year-old Beth Forrow, who has become the first young paddler training at the venue to make the national team through the programme. She was selected for the Junior Great Britain Team in the World Canoeing and Kayaking Junior Championships held in Poland this summer, headed out to Slovenia in August for the European Canoe Slalom Championships and raced in the under 16s Teen Cup in Slovakia in late July.

Beth, who was in the Premier Division last year, was just 11 when she was 'discovered' when the Talent Development Team visited her school through its annual selection programme.

Beth said: "I was surprised and excited to be selected when I was tested, despite being just 11 and being very small. Had it not been for that selection, and the Lee Valley White Water Centre trials, I would never have discovered canoeing and kayaking. I was thrilled to represent Great Britain in Krakow in July!"

Beth's mum, Nikki who coaches netball, added: "Lee Valley White Water Centre has become our second home! We are down here every day training and the centre has really transformed our lives!"

Beth is a keen sportswoman and admits she had to make a decision after starting canoeing, between her love of netball and her new sport, as she was playing netball at county level and was on the verge of being put forward for regional trials. Now, as well as her sights on the future Olympics, she is planning a career as an athlete or coach.

Another young paddler hoping to make it to Olympic standard is 16-year-old Jason Brewer who was 'spotted' three years ago when he was 13 and has never looked back.

He has now been promoted to the Premier Division of the National League of Kayaking (Men's) and is one step away from getting into the England National Talent Squad for under 18s. Little did Jason know when he went for trials in canoeing at the venue, having been picked from an initial 1,500 children to make the final 17, that he would now be aiming for a career in sport and possibly a chance to qualify for the Olympic Games.

Jason said: "I had never tried canoeing before. If it had not been for the White Water Centre being round the corner and the Talent Development programme, I would not even be canoeing. Now I am hooked, training six days a week and twice on some days at the Lee Valley White Water Centre. I am hoping to make it to the England National Talent Squad this year and on to the Junior GB Team the following year. I used to play football, but now this has taken over and I love it and would like to continue with the sport as long as I can."

Thanks to that day in July 2013 when he was selected, he is certain that he will make a career in sport and is already undertaking sport studies at school with the aim of eventually focusing on coaching or personal training.

Shaun Pearce, British Canoeing's Lead Regional Pathway Coach, who has been involved with the scheme from its very beginning four years ago, said: "Under the scheme we now have an intake of 20 each year. We have been focusing on school years 7, 8 and 9 (ages 11, 12 and 13) and last year we took years 6 and 7 (ages 10 and 11). The programme has been very successful and we have seen a high number of youngsters continue with the training – and some exceptional paddlers such as Beth and Jason who are heading for national and international status. We have had a very good retention rate and some promising success."

Paskell Blackwell, Lee Valley White Water Centre's General Manager, added: "We are proud to see all this up and coming talent being developed at Lee Valley White Water Centre, thanks to the legacy of the London 2012 Olympic Games that took place here. Through our venue we hope to nurture new champions and Olympic successes in years to come."



A Teutonic Tour

Kringelfeiber 2016

By Nick Dennis



At the end of April we left St Ives, Cambridgeshire, on our travels abroad for a week. Our destination was to be Germany for a short break in the Eifel region and followed by a few days near Edersee for the 2016 Kringelfieber Canoe event.



I loaded my 1950s wood/canvas Chestnut onto the roof of the car, packed the camping gear, stove and clothes and at 4am on the Sunday we set off for the Channel Tunnel and then onto the Eifel. It snowed and snowed, but we had a good time walking and sightseeing. It was un-seasonally cold for the spring and the late snows caught everyone out.

On the Wednesday morning we left our centrally heated accommodation in the Eifel and headed northeast to set up our tent at Camping Park Teichmann in Edersee in advance of

the start of Kringelfieber, which would officially start on the Thursday evening with workshops taking place on the Friday and Saturday, culminating with a display of Canadian and American Freestyle Canoeing on the Saturday evening.

The Kringelfieber Canoe meet is probably now the largest annual freestyle canoe meeting in Europe. Kringelfieber started out as a small gathering of friends – like-minded souls, united by passion and drawn together when Jörg Wagner helped them all become ACA Freestyle Instructors. That was back in 2005. Today it attracts around 100 people, not only the adept but also many newcomers to freestyle paddling. As for the name, ‘Kringelfieber’ roughly translates as ‘squiggle fever’- a reflection of the infectious nature of moving with grace and style.

This year we arrived at the site a day early, so that we could get a good camping spot and get set up ahead of the event. We arrived on Wednesday afternoon in a thick snowstorm; fortunately, it didn't stay long and we were soon able to get camp set in the dry.

We were ridiculed last year for having such a large tent which was christened ‘The English Dance Hall’. So this year we came prepared to blend in with our Bell Tent, awning and frontier stove.

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Kayaking: Whitewater Nepal for the over-60s by Kevin Jones; swashbuckling Siberian swagger by Mark Hirst and Sal Montgomery and whitewater coaching by Corran Addison; paddling with EJ by Steffan Meyric Hughes.

Salty: Kayak surfing by Bill Vonnegut, the Floridian mangrove tunnels by Peter Tranter; Motionize review by Scott Edwards and Epic kayak review by Jeremy Vore.

Canoeing: Paddling the River Shannon by Phil Maxwell and conquering the Yukon Canoe Quest by Richard Harpham.

PLUS: Seasonal Delights by Sonja Jones, Behind the lens by Dave Wortley, World-class coaching by Chris Brain and Dave Rossetter plus kit reviews galore. . .

"The Paddler is fantastic media for paddlesport, that brings the top news and adventures from kayakers all around the world. The quality of articles and images really showcase how amazing the sport of kayaking is."

Claire O'Hara – Freestyle World Champion

"I have enjoyed tremendously reading the Paddler every time it comes out. I don't have a lot of free time, and the little I have I must spend wisely. Thanks for such a fantastic magazine."

Corran Addison – Olympic Canoeist, designer and WW kayaker

"A very colourful and easy to read paddling magazine. Fun to browse through the many articles, and delve deeper into the one that is of interest to me."

Claudia Van Wijk – Canadian National Slalom Champion



If you have any queries

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I assembled my new bit of kit from Pete at Two Tree Crafts who built me a new 'Mi' camping chair. This is a very sturdy and well-engineered chair that breaks down into parts which are stored in one neat bag for canoe tripping. It can be strapped securely beneath the yoke or thwart. It is a well made chair and it fitted my oversized frame well.

Over the day the camping peninsular was filling up not only with enough tents and camping gear to give anyone and everyone 'kit envy' but also with canoes of every shape and size. You name it, it was probably there; wood/canvas, wood strip canoes, Royalex, composites; canoes of all designs and sizes.

We were only 'half camping' so in the evening headed off to the nice campsite restaurant for a beer and schnitzel, which were excellent. The temperature was plummeting so the frontier stove was lit and the tent warmed - we dived into bed listening to music whilst the fire burned down.

Thursday morning dawned with a frost but it was dry. The airbed had sprung a leak so we headed out to Frankenburg for a replacement and to get some logs. We also found a very good ice cream parlour and being the law, we went in and partook. We were successful with the air bed search but the cold snap had caught everyone out and there were no logs for sale anywhere so for the next few days I fuelled the stove with a mix of the wood which I had brought and barbeque charcoal which all worked well. The tent was really warm and we would cook Camembert cheese on the stove and wash it down with a glass or two of wine.





On Friday and Saturday mornings the camp stirred early - fires and stoves were lit, fresh rolls collected from the bakers across the lake and the smell of freshly brewed coffee percolated the misty air.

Idyllic really, albeit a bit cold around the nether regions when you made the loo dash. The sound of a tent zip going early in the morning seemed to have the same effect on everyone's bladders! I met Rolf Kraiker who was up early and taking photos in the still conditions. "Boy it's a cold morning" I said, "Not really" was his reply, which puzzled me coming from a chap who had spent the night sleeping in a Ford Fiesta. It later dawned on me that just below zero degrees is probably a balmy and quite tolerable temperature for a Canadian! We are soft.

The Saturday workshops were being held by Rolf Kraiker on Canadian canoeing; the art of paddling Canadian style and how to paddle large Canadian canoes solo. There was the opportunity for everyone to try out different canoes. Wolfgang from CCB Austria had a trailer-load of Swifts canoes and Jorg had a selection of canoes too. There were paddles and other stuff available too from artisan paddle makers.





Next year's event is on the
**28th April - 1st
May 2017**

.....
www.kringelfieber.de/



In the evening the group assembled for the show and final gathering. Unfortunately the wind came up which induced a few wobbles into the routines but some great skills were on display. Suitably frozen we retired for wine and schnitzel followed by some winter warmers in the site bar.

We said our goodbyes on Sunday morning and I drove the 300+ miles back to the Channel Tunnel. We had a thoroughly good time again.

If you get the opportunity to attend do so, you can paddle, watch and learn. You will be assured of a warm welcome and you will make new friends. I feel that with the help of Gerhard I am now a nearly proficient 'Kringelslinger'.

Further info

Kringelfieber is the annual meeting for all paddlers interested in American freestyle and Canadian style paddling open canoes, and is held in the Eder valley near Edersee. There are no fees except for the workshops which you participate in; just a basic schedule and camping – the aim is to paddle together, learn from each other and have fun! Several certified ACA Freestyle instructors are present, offering low rate courses and workshops in Canadian style, solo and tandem freestyle.

About the author:

Nick heads up the Wooden Canoe Heritage Association in the UK, is a prolific paddler and is a regular contributor to Song of the Paddle and organizes regular trips for the OCA within East Anglia.

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Adventures on the Argyll Sea Kayak Trail

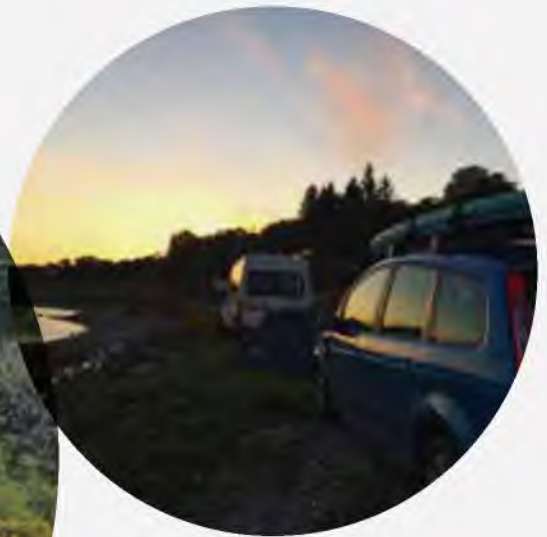
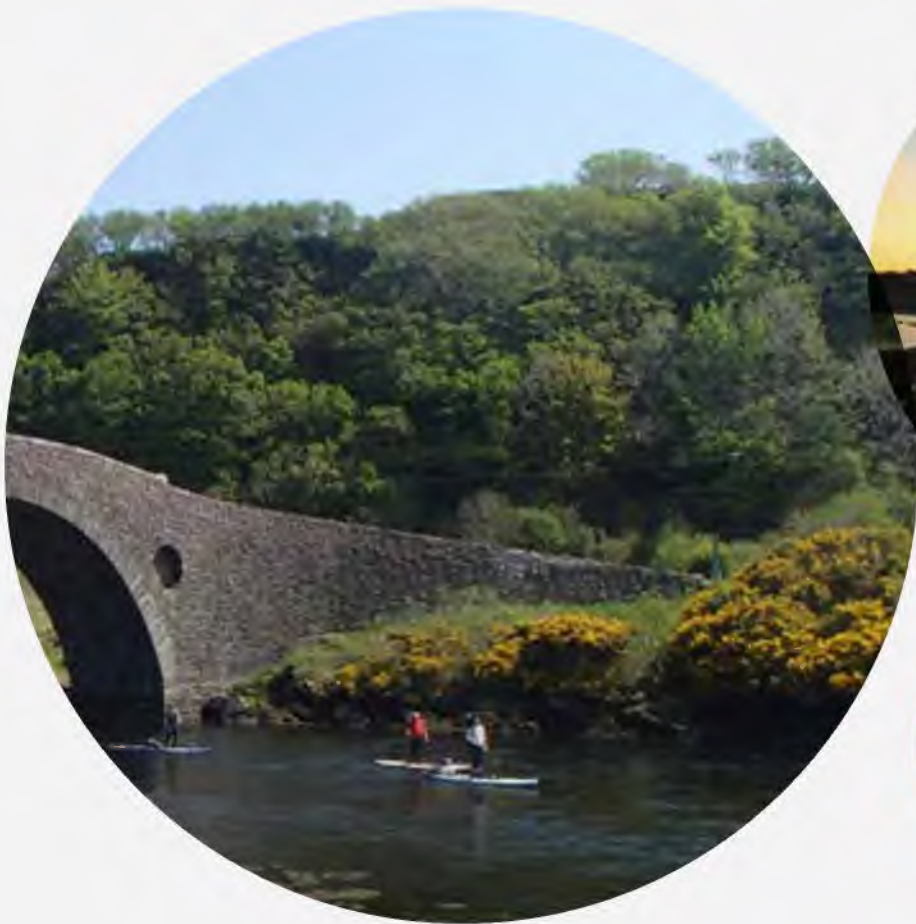


It was all Cathy's' fault, or should that read "idea"? No, let's stick with "fault"!

In 2015, a very good friend Cathy Winterton told me about the newly opened Argyll Sea Kayak Trail and suggested that this could make a great wee paddle.

The route stretches along the west coast of Scotland, from Ganavan, (near Oban) in the north, down to Helensburgh, (near Glasgow) in the south, 150km. Although many people had kayaked and canoed the whole route, nobody had yet done the whole route on stand up paddle-boards.

Could we be the first? We were about to find out. Unfortunately Cathy was unable to join us on the paddle, so taking the challenge was myself, Allistair Swinsco of Northwest Paddleboards and Ian Cormack of SUP Ecosse.



Watch the
Youtube
video here

Day 1

On the morning of the 12th of May, 2016, our little trio set off from Ganavan beach. The water was pretty lumpy at Ganavan, and for the first few hundred metres, we were forced to kneel down but as soon as we entered Oban harbour we were back on our feet.

We next met up with the girls at Seil where we paddled under “The Bridge over the Atlantic”, and were carried along at a fair pace on the river. Even when we didn’t paddle, we were still knocking out around 1.5mph.

All was going well, until we passed Ardfern and turned the corner into Dorus Mor. This place was mental! We knew that we had to get there before 17:30, and we had arrived a good 30 minutes early, but the whirlpools were already kicking off, and the waves were roaring towards us. We had to try to hug the shore, but at the same time, avoid the whirlpools, which were springing up all over the place. We pointed our boards in the direction we needed to go and paddled hard. However, after 20 minutes of paddling, keeping the land on our left and our boards pointing forward, we had only gone forward around 100 yards. We had just done the Dorus Mor Shuffle.

Eventually we made our way into an eddy and took a breather. After a quick recce, we decided to get even closer to the shore. From here, we were able to then take a wide route around the wild water and slowly paddle towards Crinan. This must have been tough on the other 2, because they could see Crinan a couple of miles off in the distance, but due to the conditions we could not paddle straight there, and took a more circuitous route, which went on for well over an hour. That evening we arrived in Crinan, and spent the evening camped out in the car park.

Day 2

The day started with us on the canal at 05:30, with a paddle along the Crinan Canal to Ardrishaig. The canal is 9 miles long, so we had thought that this would be an easy 2-2.5 hour paddle. We were wrong. Almost all of the paddle was into a headwind, and was definitely not as easy as we had hoped. There was also a lot of portages, which slowed things down. But at least the water was flat!



At Ardrishaig we spent a bit of time working out how to get on to the sea loch, and eventually plumped for going in via Ardrishaig harbour. From Ardrishaig we made our way out into Loch Gilp and then onto Loch Fyne.

For the first 4 miles we had a slight tail breeze, so decided to stick to the middle of the loch. Unfortunately, the conditions quickly changed, and not for the better. The winds whipped up, and the water got extremely lumpy. Allistair at 6 foot tall, was forced to kneel down, as when he stood up, he was blown backwards. A short time later Ian was also kneeling down.

Unfortunately after too many accidents, my knees and ankles are pretty much shot away, and this means that I cannot kneel down for more than 2-3 minutes without seizing up. This meant that although kneeling down was the safer option, I had to remain standing.

From the middle of Loch Fyne, we pointed our boards to the distant east shore and put our heads down. 1.5 miles and 60 minutes later we reached it and went ashore for a wee break. It was here, that Ian told me that whilst paddling through these rough conditions, that I had looked like "Bambi on ice". I didn't care what I looked like, I was just amazed that I hadn't fallen in!

After our break, we then headed south towards our finish point at Portavadie. With the conditions as rough as they were, we decided to hug the coast again, and when we came to any bays to cross, we just put our heads down and paddled from headland to headland, taking a wee breather at each one, before crossing the next bay. Whilst hugging the coast, we had a constant headwind, but when crossing

the bays, we would get an even stronger crosswind, coming down through the hills. Locals later told us it was a 30mph crosswind... No wonder we had found it tough! The route itself was beautiful though; we even saw seals leaping out of the water.

Day 3

Day 3 started off from Portavadie. Heading out of Portavadie, we headed south towards Bute and then went around the north end of the island. Our timing had been spot on, and we had used the wind and tide to our advantage. Near Tighnabruaich, we were joined by local kayaker, Peter, just as we hit a headwind.

As we rounded the north end of Bute, the headwind turned into a tailwind, and we told Alison and Rhona that we would be heading on down to Toward but 10 minutes after telling them, the wind changed from a reasonable tailwind, into a very unreasonable headwind. After the previous days' battle against the headwinds, we decided that it would be pointless to head to Toward, and that we would finish the day at Colintrave. Unfortunately, the girls had already headed off into the hills on a very long drive to Dunoon and round to Toward. By the time we were able to tell them of our change in plans, they were almost at Dunoon.



About Dean

Dean Dunbar is a Blind adventurer and inspirational public speaker. Two years after being registered blind at the age of 29, Dean did a charity tandem skydive which changed his life. Since then he has notched up over 80 activities around the world, ranging from adventure racing to zorbing, and set almost 20 world firsts in activities ranging from open-water swimming to stand up paddle-boarding.

Find out more about Dean at www.extremedreams.co.uk and www.dean-talks.com



Instead of hanging around in Colintraive, waiting for the girls, we made a decision to try and make some movement down the shoreline. Every yard we paddled today would be a yard less to paddle tomorrow and by the time the girls met up with us, we had paddled another couple of miles past Colintraive. This unplanned, rough camping spot, proved to be the best camp site of the whole trip!

Cathy and her daughter Farraid also joined us here and Cathy paddled the first mile or so with us the next morning too.

Day 4

As we turned the corner at the lighthouse, just past Toward Sailing Club, we entered the Clyde. Here we hoped to have the wind and tide with us. From the west side of the Clyde, we took a slow and steady paddle aiming to our 1 o'clock.

We did get some assistance from the tide, and we were grateful for that. But up near Cloch Point the water got rough and two team members took a dip. Rounding the Point however, the water became much calmer, and from here we made our way towards the finishing point over at Helensburgh.

The sun had shone for most of the 4 days, and we all ended up with weird and wonderful tan lines. We had a fantastic team on and off the water for the ASKT, and I think this could well be the start of many adventures together. I certainly hope it is!!

Thanks to the great folk at Argyll and Bute Council who were so helpful with our preparations and Cathy Winterton, because it was all your fault. Thank you Cathy!!

Written by Dean Dunbar

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Swan Corralling in Dorset

By Jenny Dale

Late July should have been the perfect time of year to get involved in the biennial volunteer event organised by Abbotsbury Swannery. In typically British tradition, the blustery grey Friday morning when 70 kayakers grouped together at Wyke Regis military training camp, was more reminiscent of a damp chilly day in March.

The miserable conditions however, failed to dampen the spirits of the largest group of keen paddlers I have ever seen in one place.

We were all there, from a number of different canoe clubs across the region, having been invited by the Swannery to assist with the safe and stress-free corralling of around 700 mute swans during their flight feather moulting season. Our remit – to simply paddle slowly in a line across the width of the water over two days, (merely seven miles of the Fleet lagoon) to ensure all the swans were amassed at Abbotsbury Swannery.

Due to our launch being from a military base positioned on the edge of The Fleet, we only had 15 minutes to get all the kayakers vehicles into the base, with another 45 minutes to unload and for our drivers to remove their cars from the site. I had packed my kayak (a second hand Dagger Charleston) the night before; filling every available space in the front



and rear hatches with dry clothing, a tent, cooking stove, food, drinking water and very basic camping toiletries. I had signed up, along with a few other intrepid fellow paddlers, to camp overnight at Shipmoor Point, overlooking the water. We would then keep an eye on the inflatable barricade that would be dragged across the width of the water overnight to prevent any swans from doubling back behind us.

Several organisers were already on the water, sorting the keen paddlers into some semblance of a line across the width of the water. Loud hailers were used during the day to keep stragglers up with the main body of kayakers; the plan being to prevent a break out from the swans we could see paddling serenely ahead of us.

We had only been on The Fleet for a couple of hours before relentless rain started to hammer down. Those of us with good quality cags were extremely grateful for their protection against the dismal, unseasonal deluge.

We were all happy to stop for lunch at the Moonfleet Hotel, where the considerate owners had allocated us a large room where we could drip and steam, away from the normally well dressed, and much drier, usual clientele of the establishment. Hot chocolates, teas and coffees were ordered as some very wet people found dry clothing to change into. Buoyancy aids and spray decks were piled high in the continuing rain outside the door.



It was certainly a challenge to get back into the wet gear and tramp down a slippery, muddy path to the myriad colours and shapes of the waiting kayaks lining the grey shore. However, once back on the water, the skies lightened and the rain eased off. Spirits were raised as we spotted large groups of swans heading slowly away from us, in the right direction thankfully. During the next couple of hours, a number of paddlers were periodically directed around a small bay where several small flocks of birds were grouped together. Slowly and calmly the paddlers persuaded them to head their way up the water away from us towards the Swannery.





It seemed no time at all before we found the inflatable boom, and a small group of us decided we were so wet anyway, that we would volunteer to enter the waist-deep water and drag the barrier across. This was no mean feat, as the booms' resistance against the water made dragging it hard work. However it was eventually fixed into place and the brave few who had agreed to camp there unpacked our kayaks and set up our tents.



Some convivial conversation, shared hot food and a trip to the pub later saw us gratefully turn into our tents as darkness fell. I soon realised I had made the rookie mistake of pitching my tiny one-man tent on a slight slope and spent most of the

night slowly sliding in my slippery sleeping bag down the self-inflating camping mat. As every time I awoke I could hear the almost nonstop rain on the outside of my tent, I decided to put up with the foolish site I had picked and shuffle myself back up to the head of the tent each time I found my feet wedged against the end.

We campers were all up before 6am and although weary from a rough night, the sight of the other kayakers all returning to their boats, having camped in far more luxury than we had, cheered me up no end.

The next few hours would see whether we had successfully accomplished our objective. I ate a hasty breakfast of cereal bars and a very welcome cup of tea brewed on my tiny camping stove, before dismantling the tent and trying to puzzle out how on earth I had wedged all this equipment into my kayak the day before!

At 6:45am we were ready to launch again, knowing that the land-based volunteers were waiting, ready to wade into the water at the Swannery holding pen area a couple of miles ahead of us as they saw us appear.

We repeated the previous day's tactics, paddling slowly so as not to alarm the birds and as we reached the point where we could see the Swannery in the distance, the barked orders from the loud hailers became more frequent and insistent; shouting at any errant kayakers who were not keeping the



line going. To cause a breach now, after so much work by so many people, would be a real shame. There were dozens of professionals, along with large numbers of volunteers, waiting at the site to deal with the swans we were hoping to persuade into the holding pens.

By just after 8am, over 700 swans had been rounded up successfully and were safely padding around in the muddy pens waiting for the next stage of the operation.

Now came the exciting bit. All volunteers who wanted to carry a swan lined up by the first pen as Swannery workers picked up one swan at a time and handed them to the volunteer. The swans were held facing outwards, wings snugly tucked into the volunteer's chest. Surprisingly, as soon as they were held like this, the majority stopped any sort of struggle and stayed calm, grey webbed feet stuck out in front of them and a dainty long neck, sometimes placed around the volunteers own neck. It was a little disconcerting to have a large black beak only inches from your own face, but the sight made for some awesome photographs!

The first station involved the leg ring being checked, or added if this was a swan without one. The next station was manned by vets, who checked each swan and vaccinated it against Duck Viral Enteritis. The birds were then weighed and measured and finally taken to the shoreline where a worker would gently release it to paddle happily away.

Food stations for the human helpers, and hand washing facilities were abundant and free and we all filled up on hot food and drinks between swans. I carried a total of five swans during the morning, some heavier and some feistier than others. The white sections of my kayaking cag have never been the same since that day, but are a strangely nice reminder of the day I held wild swans and was part of a wonderful and rare experience involving one of my favourite activities – kayaking!



How to Get Articles Published in Canoe Focus

It's easier than you may think to get published in Canoe Focus Magazine, here's our guide to producing interesting, inspirational and publishable articles.

We'll consider publishing your canoeing or kayaking story if:

- it is a good story/it has a good angle. Articles should be between 1,000-2,500 words
- if it comes with a decent set of images

Story/Angle

It is essential to bear two things in mind when writing an article:

Audience: Literally everybody – young people, pensioners and everybody in between are members of British Canoeing and read Canoe Focus, so articles have to appeal to them all in some way.

Purpose: This one is simple – it's to entertain and inform.

As with all good stories, you have to think about the WHAT, WHERE, WHO and HOW.

What: What sort of article are you writing?

- Destination feature
- Instructional/technique article
- A philosophical, political, scientific article about a paddling issue
- Paddling history

Each of these will require a slightly different voice; make sure the one you are using is appropriate.

Where: If we receive a really, really dull article, with poor images chronicling an amazing mind-blowing trip we won't publish it. If we get an entertaining and interesting one with a good angle and great photos, about a day out on an average piece of water then we very probably will.

Who: If it's a destination feature about a trip, we don't want an arbitrary list of the names of the people on the trip – that means nothing to anyone who wasn't there. But we do want some human colour, and at the very least to be able to identify with the narrator. A dry list of events with no human element whatsoever becomes very boring.

How: The HOW is an excellent add on to an article – readers respond well to hearing about something that sounds as if it could be attainable.

Decent images

However good an article, we can't publish without photos, and poor quality images are about as much use as no photos at all. Because Canoe Focus is now digital, photos don't need to be huge file sizes - 1MB will usually suffice - but they need to be in focus, sharp and bright. We can't use shots that are too dark or out of focus and fuzzy.

In any collection of photos we look for a good mix of the following:

- On the water action – canoes, kayaks and you, doing what you do!
- Lifestyle – camping, driving, eating, etc.
- Destination – landmarks, wildlife, culture, scenery, etc.

It's important to have a good spread, but they're not all as important as one another – we can't publish without any canoeing or kayaking action shots whatsoever, but if you're short of lifestyle shots, you might get away with it. The very best paddling photographs will include elements of all three.

Experiment with different angles, try to crop in close on some shots, and pan out for context on others. Being able to read facial expressions on some shots really helps lift a collection of photos.

Remember to rotate your camera 90 degrees occasionally - if you submit a great portrait shot it might even end up on the front page!

We love reading your submissions and following these guidelines will certainly improve the chances of having your article published, but we unfortunately cannot guarantee publication of every item received.

Email articles as Word documents and jpg images to:
mediaenquiries@britishcanoeing.org.uk.

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World Rivers Day