

November 2024

# **Canoeist**



**Knowing stuff helps with survival**  
**Using Russia's window of opportunity**  
**100 best paddling places - with surprises**  
**Why your average speed is not what you expect**





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# Calendar

## SURFING

**August**  
15-17 Summer Sessions, Bude,  
Llangennith, Freshwater W

## MARATHON

**January**  
11-18 Rio Negro  
12 Chelmsford Winter Series  
12 Frank Luzmore  
18/19 Singapore  
19 Linlithgow Winter Time Trials 3  
19 Wey Hare & Hounds 4  
26 Leighton Buzzard Winter Series  
**February**  
9 Richmond 10km Thames Series  
16 Linlithgow Winter Time Trials 4  
16 Wey Hare & Hounds 5  
23 Waterside A  
**March**  
2 Thameside 1, Aldermaston  
9 Waterside B  
16 Linlithgow Winter Time Trials 5  
16 Thameside 2, Reading  
23 Waterside C  
30 Brigg, H  
30 Cambridge, H  
30 Nottingham, H  
**April**  
6 Royal Leamington Spa, H  
6 Waterside D  
12 Waterlands  
18-21 **Devizes-Westminster**  
26 Austrian K1/C1 Championships  
27 71st Bedford  
27 S Lakes 2  
**May**  
4 **National Championships, Sh, Peterborough**  
4 Fal, H  
4 Spey  
**June**  
2-8 **European Championships, Ponte de Lima**  
**August**  
9-10 **World Games, Chengdu**  
**September**  
2-7 **World Championships, Győr**  
27 Liffey Descent  
**October**  
18/19 Torino

## SLALOM

**January**  
11/12 Mangahao O  
22-26 Rio O  
24-26 Oceania Championships, Penrith  
25 Kayak X Thrombi X-Fest  
26 Stafford & Stone Mini  
**February**  
7 Aotearoa O  
7-9 St Suzanne  
8/9 NZ O, Auckland  
9 Stafford & Stone Mini  
21-23 Australian O, Penrith  
23 Stafford & Stone Mini  
**March**  
7-9 Pau

8/9 Prathet Thai O, Pattaya  
14-16 Zhongguo O 1, Nan'an  
15/16 Pyrenees Cup, La Seu d'Urgell  
21-23 Pan American Championships, Montgomery  
21-23 Zhongguo O 2, Nan'an  
28-30 Oklahoma City  
29/30 Hunningue  
**April**  
5/6 Solkan  
9-11 Markkleeberg  
12/13 56th Ilinden  
18/19 Kraków Mayor Cup  
24/25 S American Championships, Piraju  
25-27 I Feel Slovenia, Ljubljana  
**May**  
1-4 Ivrea  
2-4 4th Memorial of Stefan Kapkaniak, Kraków  
2-4 Chilliwak  
14 **European Championships, Vaires-sur-Marne**  
24/25 Merano 1/2  
**June**  
5-8 **La Seu d'Urgell, WC**  
12-15 **Pau, WC**  
26-29 **Praha, WC**  
28/29 **ECA Cup, J, Flattach**  
**July**  
8-13 **World Championships, J/U23, Foix**  
30-3 **European Championships, J/U23, Solkan**  
**August**  
1-3 GP Bratislava  
8-10 Minden Hills  
15-17 Praha  
22-24 Epinal  
28-31 **Ljubljana, WC**  
**September**  
4-7 **Augsburg, WC**  
**October**  
1-6 **World Championships, Penrith**  
12 Alpe Adria, Klagenfurt  
25/26 **Lee Valley 1/2**

## WWR

**January**  
11 R Eden, Cl  
18 Legendary Barrow Series 4  
**February**  
18 Legendary Barrow Series 5  
22/23 Dart, Sp/Cl  
23 Castlefield Cl  
**March**  
1 Legendary Barrow Series 6  
**April**  
10-12 **Skopje, WC 1/2**  
**June**  
4-8 **European Championships, Mezzana**  
14 Orton Mere, Sp  
**July**  
1-5 **World Championships, J/U23, Solkan**  
11-13 **Banja Luka, WC 3-5**

19/20 Austrian National Championships, St Ruprecht & Ramingstein  
**August**  
15-17 Canadian National Championships, Jonquiere  
**September**  
19-21 **World Championships, Sp, Ceske Budejvice**  
**November**  
15/16 **BUCS**  
23 **Liangollen**

## FREESTYLE

**June**  
16-21 **World Championships, Plattling**

## SPRINT

**March**  
15/16 **BUCS Championships**  
**April**  
12/13 National  
**May**  
16-18 **Szeged, WC**  
22-25 **Poznan, WC**  
**June**  
19-22 **European Championships, Racice**  
**July**  
3-6 **European Championships, J/U23, Pitesti**  
23-31 **World Championships, J/U23/Mas, Montemor-o-Velho**  
**August**  
20-24 **World Championships, Milano**

## MULTISPORT

**February**  
7/8 Coast-Coast, Kumara  
**May**  
11 **European Sp, Kassel**  
17 **World, M, Gyekenes**  
**June**  
1 **Euro Champs, M, Brigg**  
14 **Koberbach, M, WC**  
14 Norfolk Superhero, Burnham  
15 **Cazalegas, Sp, WC**  
22 **Dearne Valley, Sp, WC**  
22 **Seyssel, M, WC**  
28 **World, Sp, Tyn**  
**July**  
6 Deva Divas, Sp, Chester  
12 **Bydgoszcz, Sp, WC**  
**September**  
7 **National Championships, Sp, Brigg**  
**August**  
9 **World, L, Nagyatad Gyekenyas**  
30 **Bohinj, M, WC**  
**October**  
11 Awesome Foursome, Sp/M, Bude

## POLO

**April**  
5/6 **National Championships**  
12/13 Pas de Calais  
19-21 Helmond  
26 W P/1  
26 Sc1

**May**  
3/4 Charleroi  
10/11 2/O  
24/25 P/1/O  
31/1 Amsterdam O  
**June**  
7-9 Deutschland Cup  
14 W P/1  
21/22 Avranches  
28/29 Deventer  
28/29 2/3/O  
**July**  
5/6 **Hull**  
11-13 34th Franco Baschiroto Memorial, Castello di Porpetto  
12/13 P/1/O  
22-27 Belfast J  
26/27 Turin Cup  
**August**  
2/3 3/O

13-16 **World Games, Chengdu**  
23/24 De Paddel  
30/31 Gekko  
**September**  
9-14 **European Championships, Kalisz**  
20/21 13th Trofeo Ponterosso, Trieste  
25/26 1st Torneo Costa Smeralda, Porto Rotondo Olbia

## DRAGON BOAT RACING

**January**  
22 Unleash the Dragons, Sarasota  
**February**  
2 Broadwater Paddle Battle, Carrara  
**March**  
15/16 W Fest, Toscolano Maderno  
**June**  
4-7 ECA Nations, Spresiano

**July**  
16-20 **17th World Championships, Brandenburg an der Havel**  
17-20 ICF Club Crew Championships, Ruse  
**August**  
9-10 **World Games, Chengdu**  
**September**  
18-21 ICF Club Crew Championships, Ruse  
**November**  
15/16 St Martins Summer Festival, Toscolano Maderno

## OCEAN RACING

**May**  
3/4 Exe Bay  
**October**  
17-19 **World Championships, Durban**

# Editorial

For the first time since 1936 there was no British sprint team at the Olympics. Nobody at all had qualified. There was only one Briton at the world championships. Perhaps the surprise is that this situation has not arrived sooner. Enough people could see it coming, perhaps not the right people, perhaps only those concerned with results beyond the next Olympics.

## Sprint pigeons come home to roost

This is usually the clubs. They gather new participants who include the stars of the future. The system only works if a club is worth joining. There is no better reason for doing so than the club already having leading participants. It is inspiring for newcomers to rub shoulders with national champions, even Olympic stars, in the clubhouse or on the water.

‘The system fails if talented paddlers are creamed off and taken out of circulation when they get good. Mixing with remaining paddlers who are quite good does not have the same kudos as mixing with the top stars.’

‘It is galling to know that if you succeed in bringing up youngsters from novice to the top level they will be taken away to some central pool elsewhere. Where is the incentive?’

‘At the start of this process there was a profusion of talent to be taken from the clubs. However, this has led to a gentle decline in numbers of those attracted into such clubs. We have been eating our seed corn, killing the goose that lays the golden eggs, if you like.’

‘We are talking of the top of the pyramid and that will only work for a while before the returns begin to diminish. It is like using an excess of fertilizer on crops with subsequent degradation of the soil. The emphasis is on medals now, not looking beyond the next Olympics.’

‘We need to return to a sustainable system which plans for the future, not just the next medal count. When we run into financial difficulties we can borrow from the future, building up a larger National Debt. It doesn’t work for sport. We can only draw from the existing pool of participants and that pool will only stop declining if the competitive sport environment is sufficiently attractive.’

These quotes are from my editorial of two years ago, unaltered, where I also quoted sprint chairman Tim Scott’s ‘Some funding bodies, governing bodies and coaches have seemingly felt pressurized into prioritizing medals ahead of their athlete’s mental health’ and was mindful of the likes of Rowland Lawler of leading sprint club Elmbridge, despairing at the destruction of the system that had been drawing in the future stars.

Living at home also allows some normality of life, relationships with family and friends, some outside interests to add variety to life, not just doing the same thing with the same people, day in, day out.

Ed McKeever, Johnny Schofield and Liam Heath had provided a rearguard line of competition, brought up through active clubs at a time when forward planning was getting increasingly poor.

‘We only have a pool of talent, from which the winners will develop, if there is a system for drawing in new blood.

There is only so long that anyone can continue this, especially if drawn into racing too early. How often have we heard that the results were disappointing but it was a young team, meaning that older participants have lost interest and moved on to other aspects of life?

Slalom performed better but the lack of suitable water for most clubs inevitably pulls the top people together. Para paddlers also do better but with far fewer potential participants worldwide.

There is the need for all of these disciplines to be managed by people who have the interests of canoeing at heart and hope to be in post beyond the next Olympic medal count.

Stuart Fisher

If you had a business with an opportunity for a unique product or service, which you had finally been persuaded to provide, and it sold out on the first morning, what would you do? Would you get straight on the phone and order more or would you pull down the blinds and sit on your hands?

CRT began running canoe trips through their longest tunnel this summer.

They began by putting something on social media. Then they put out a press release, not with any time embargo but to different publications on different days. Being canoe trips, you would expect canoeists to be among the first to be approached but narrowboaters were advised a couple of days before us, by which time all available slots for the year had been taken up by members of the general public, nothing after the middle of the summer, nothing next year, no reserve list for cancellations, no media preview sessions, nobody directly involved even answering correspondence.

We have long had concerns about CRT’s policy on tunnels, apparently instigated by those who have neither paddled nor portaged them, and have been uneasy about their approach to novice canoeing generally. We have questions about some aspects of these latest trips.

The trips are not cheap yet many people are prepared to pay for them. This should be a good little earner for CRT, who complain about being strapped for cash with declining support from successive Governments. CRT’s elderly heritage property is failing increasingly yet the towpaths, in particular, provide an important resource for public recreation and health and for wildlife. CRT should be reaching out for anything that provides new income, however limited, not prevaricating and twiddling their thumbs.

Stuart Fisher

## Tunnel vision

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# No canoeing this Christmas

No trips up river  
Or out to sea.  
The cold in the winter  
Is finally bringing out  
The old man in me.

My canoe's in the lock up  
And my lifejacket as well  
While the rest of my gear  
Is in the coat cupboard,  
Nice and dry without that  
Damp smell

Time will come again when  
I go canoeing in the warm sun  
But the fact is I'm a bit older  
And my time for canoeing in  
winter  
Is over and done

Time was at Christmas  
That you would find me  
Cooking up breakfast  
And sipping tea on the foreshore  
But you have to know  
When your time is up  
And you can't do everything  
Anymore

But I don't want to spoil  
The lifeboat crew's  
Christmas Day,  
Of that I'm very sure,  
So they can stay  
Where they are.  
It's time to take it easy.  
What's more,

Some folks keep canoeing  
When they're older than me  
But I am in my mid 70s  
And it's time to act responsibly.

Summer will soon be  
Here and I'll be canoeing again  
So a very Merry Christmas  
If you're one for the water  
Or perhaps a long lost  
One time canoeing old friend...

Kevin Pyne



# Undercurrents



CRT have been promoting canoeing with a list of ten benefits of taking up the activity. Meanwhile, the EA spent £960,000 on 232 angling projects and held over 100 angling events. Since 2015 they have spent over £20,000,000 on angling with more than 1,300 projects. What are the corresponding figures for canoeing?

## New approach for River Ant

Since our guide to the River Ant (Aug 95, p37), the EA have prevented restoration work on the North Walsham & Dilham Canal, which uses the river extensively, with the result that the river has become choked up with weeds. The stoppage has now been ended, allowing restoration to restart. Unusually, rather than tackling a section at a time, restorers are working to enable canoes and other small craft to use the route throughout, tackling the more expensive work such as lock restoration and dredging for powered craft as funds become available.

## Thames records

In 2003 we helped Tim FitzHigham paddling a paper kayak from Cricklade to Tower Bridge to raise funds for Red Nose Day. Gordon Bullock and Chris Sze of Bishop's Stortford Canoe Club took a nonstop K2 run from Lechlade to Teddington in 24 hours 12 minutes in 2022. Brazilians Cuatrin/Szubski set a time of 21 hours 57 minutes for St John's Lock to Teddington. Steve Backshall and Tom McGibbon lowering the time for the 270km Lechlade to Teddington section of the non tidal Thames this year to 20 hours 29 minutes. This was lowered again by Billy Butler and Tom Dawson to 15 hours 16 minutes on the same section during the Thames 200 Ultra event this August.

The common factor was that they were all described as world records. Records they certainly were, all very memorable and creditable, but were they *world* records? If you look in the yearbooks you will find a history of records for particular courses, for Olympics, for particular levels of competition etc. A record needs to be challengeable anywhere within the constraints of the title, a Thames record related to the chosen section of river but only on that section of river whereas a world 200m sprint time can be set in Nottingham, China, Argentina or anywhere else in the world. If location is part of the title you could set a world record for running down your garden path or virtually any activity you choose. Tim's distance in a paper canoe had been far exceeded in America. If he had claimed a Thames, British or European record he would have been safe but not a world record. Likewise, all the other records could only be set on the nominated sections of the Thames, not anywhere else in the world.

Two new events were due to take place over most of the non tidal Thames this year, Thames 200 Ultra and Thames Challenge. Although they had different organizers, both were scheduled for the August bank holiday but publicity was limited, both before and afterwards.

Szubski holds a world record of 251.7km, the maximum distance paddled in a canoe or kayak in 24 hours, a record that can be challenged anywhere in the world, not just one nominated length of river.

## Coastwatch updates

The National Coastwatch Institution have updated their list of stations. Burnham on Sea and Minehead are new, Meolfre has reverted to Point Lynas and Caister and Herne Bay have closed. Daylight watch is kept up to 365 days per year by a team of 2,650 volunteers who can spot distress flares, capsizes and other emergencies, beyond the ability of computers.

## Safety conflicts

The Marine Accident Investigation Branch's *Safety Digest* is always published in three sections, merchant, fishing and recreational vessels. One of this year's editions has the latter introduced by Samantha Ward, who has been a member of Royal Leamington Spa and Cardiff University canoe clubs. Although there were no canoeing incidents in that issue, it explains that she is the safety lead for PUK, one of whose key safety messages is 'Always wear a buoyancy aid' although that is often inappropriate. She added that she had learned from many inspiring paddlers over the years who evoked admiration for their ability to make fast decisions. However, 'if plans change an updated written assessment must be completed'.

She says, quite correctly, 'we are probably all familiar with choosing a date, travelling a long way, and going ahead with an activity in unsuitable conditions'. Indeed, paddlers have died as the result of access restraints that have prevented paddlers from selecting a date when river and weather conditions were appropriate.

## Boat numbers down

CRT have seen a 1.4% drop in boat numbers and a 1.2% drop in licence payments. Both figures were most significant in London and the southeast.

At the CRT Annual Meeting the subject of PUK's compulsory canal licences was raised, CRT being paid



Tim FitzHigham at Tower Bridge.



Cuatrin/Szubski setting their record on the Thames.

£300,000 by PUK last year. They said 'We know that many members don't use our navigations, so we gain from it being an all inclusive payment that offsets the lower amount paid per member.' In other words, CRT make more money than if only selling to canoeists requiring licences and paying the full cost.

The Broads Authority cannot balance their books for navigation, expecting a £400,000 shortfall for the next year. Broads tourism brings £780,000,000 to the region's economy, the boating being the central attraction. Defra provide a grant but none of it is allowed to be used on navigation. Navigation all has to be funded by boat licences but boat numbers have been declining.

## Impact of sport

One of the more depressing debates in the Lords this year was on Community Sports: Impact on Young people. In a maiden speech Lord Shamash (Lab) said 'Central to this is working within communities in which clubs - not just football clubs - are based.' Many of their lordships could not get beyond football. The Earl of Effingham mentioned rowing but, apart from a couple of references to the cost of swimming pools, there was no other mention of watersports in over two hours of debate. Too many of them could not distinguish between watching sport and actually taking part. It was noted that 22% of British adults 'play' at least one sport but school sports have declined by 12% since the London Olympics. Other than promoting the football clubs they prefer to watch it was difficult to see what these people achieved in that time.

A Commons debate in October considered sport and the performance of TeamGB and Paralympics in 2024. The range of sports considered was far superior to those considered earlier by the Lords. At a time when much is being said about sewage pollution, Vikki Slade (Mid Dorset & Poole, LD) in a maiden speech stressed the difference of being on the water from being in the water and made reference to Poole Harbour Canoe Club on the River Stour. Steve Yemm (Mansfield, Lab) paid tribute to local Charlotte Henshaw.

Another debate in November on TeamGB and the Olympic and Paralympic Games did spend more time on swimming pools, the only watersport mentioned, of most interest being the Minister learning to swim by being thrown in at the deep end of a pool. As before, little distinction was made between taking part in sport and watching others participating.

On a more positive note, Jane Hunt (Loughborough, Con) presented a petition signed by 66,000 people with a request 'that the House of Commons urges the Government to introduce a requirement for schools to provide annual swimming lessons as part of the physical education curriculum.'

## Are they thieves?

National Highways said proudly that more than 94.6% drivers crossing the Thames at Dartford paid the Dart crossing correctly. Put another way, more than one in every twenty drivers got fined. In 2023 the contract for collecting fees changed and the rate changed to one in every dozen being fined. Are these all dishonest drivers? Should we be proud of such a charging system? The same method is used for the Mersey Gateway and is being proposed for the Lower Thames Crossing.

## Thomas promoted

Gareth Thomas (Lab) has less time for freestyle paddling this year, having been promoted to Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Dept for Business & Trade). Sir Michael Fabricant (Con), who chaired the All Party Parliamentary Group for Waterways and helped PI with access, was one of the Conservatives who failed to make it through the General Election. Caroline Lucas (Green), who did more than any other MP to address river access, had already announced her intention not to stand again.

## More Lichfield

Restoration of the Lichfield Canal continues. Another 500m has been reopened from Darnford Lane towards Huddlesford and then towards linking up with the Coventry Canal.

## Kestrel rescue

A Norwich family rescued a kestrel from the River Wensum while paddling their open canoe. The bird was happy to perch on their canoe trolley and recover until they reached a portage.

## Sustainable AI?

Alibaba Cloud have been helping the ICF to find ways of increasing sustainability. Considering the vast quantities of power needed to process AI data, this seems a two edged sword.

## New Maori queen

Nga Waiho i te po has been selected as only the second Maori Kuini. Just 27 years old and with a Masters degree in Maori cultural studies, she is expected to see a shift in Maori representation. Her installation ceremony involved a wooden throne on a war canoe and a flotilla of waka or war canoes took part in the funeral of her father, Kiingi Tuheitia.

## Leven restoration

The River Leven in Fife has been subject to changes by SEPA. Kirkland Dam has had rocks added below it to remove the stopper. Burn Mill Dam has been removed completely to allow the river to restore itself naturally.

## City centre rivers petition

Following the death of a 16 year old in the River Ouse in York, a petition has been presented to Parliament calling for all city centre rivers to be well lit at night and with CCTV coverage. The petition was signed by 1,428 people. Are there better ways of addressing this?

## Publisher contact

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## Disclaimer

Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the editor or publishers. References to waters do not necessarily imply that access or passage is legally permitted or that they are safe in all conditions. The editor and publishers can not be held responsible for any omissions of references to hazards from notes on these waters. They do not hold themselves responsible for inadequacies in items of equipment reviewed here.

## Governing body enquiries

Canoeist is the not for profit magazine of Paddlers International. Enquiries to governing bodies and associations should be addressed as appropriate.



Emma and Kerry Christie on the Serpent's Tail during the European Canoe Association wild water sprint event, winning the women's C2 class in the event and the whole European ranking list.





ICF photographs

A group of intrepid paddlers kayaked for eight successive days, overcoming a series of obstacles, to mark the centenary of Czech sporting legend Emerich Rath's epic journey to Paris.

In 1924 Rath paddled for 360 kilometres to the French capital to promote canoeing that was introduced as a demonstration sport at the Olympics that year.

One hundred years later and with the Olympics returning to Paris, a Czech family decided to repeat this challenge in Rath's honour.

Tomas Palouda, chairman of Czech canoe club SK Vltava Cesky Krumlov, his son, Mikolas, and daughter, Karolina, were joined by Ondrej Koska, who is from the Czech village of Broumov where Rath lived.

Palouda is also the father of Anezka Paloudova, competing in sprint at Paris 2024.

Setting off on July 27th in Vauvois, located in the French region of Burgundy-Franche-Comté, the Czech group completed 60km of paddling for eight hours each day in their bid to reach the centre of Paris by August 3rd.

During the journey the quartet encountered changeable weather conditions, navigated fallen tree branches and slept in tents along the banks of the River Seine.

They were also stopped by French authorities just 7km short of Port Debilly, near the Eiffel Tower, before walking the rest of the way carrying their kayaks.

'It was very hard work,' said Tomas.

'We were surprised that it was so difficult.

'There were a lot of trees across the river so it was difficult to find a way.

'Many times we had to carry out the boat and go around and put it back on the water and do the same after another 100 metres.

'We went from the small creek to the big river like we have in Paris with great buildings and supermarkets around us.

'There are some rules where it is not possible for small boats going into Paris so we had to walk the rest.'

Karolina said it was the 'hardest thing in my life' and was amazed how Rath had completed such a challenge 100 years ago.

'We started on the small river in the jungle with nature and animals and now we are in Paris, the biggest city in France,' said Karolina.

'I was thinking how Emerich Rath could do this 100 years ago.

'It had to be more difficult but I am so proud, not just for me but also my father, brother and Ondrej.

'We did a great job.'

Ondrej said he was proud to have represented the birthplace of Rath, a man who competed for Austria at two Olympic Games, participating in the marathon at both London 1908 and Stockholm 1912.

Rath was an incredible sporting allrounder, competing in sports including athletics, boxing, canoeing, ice hockey and field hockey, speed skating, wrestling, football, rugby, swimming, ski jumping, mountaineering and Alpine skiing.

'When the town heard about this project they said they would like to have an ambassador on this trip so I saw the advertisement, answered it and they chose me,' said Ondrej.

'I had never been on this kind of boat before but it was a nice experience and I am happy that I tried this adventure.

'I am exhausted; my arms are falling off.

'I think that Emerich would be really surprised and happy about it as it is a really Emerich Rath thing to do, just pick a sport, a boat, and jump on it.

'He would be really proud of us.'

ICF

## Trips

Four members of the 83 day Arctic Cowboys kayak journey from Pond Inlet in 2023 were arrested in Cambridge Bay and 45 charges each brought against them. These included being in a restricted area of Sirmilik National Park and of having a firearm in a bird sanctuary. However, when the case came to court the 180 charges were withdrawn.

Freya Hoffmeister paused the northern loop of her circuit of North America at Kugaaruk in Canada on Aug 18th because of ice problems and switched to her southern loop, which she stopped as planned on Dec 3rd in Tampico, Mexico. She will continue from here in February or March and return to the northern loop in the summer, paddling north from New York to Labrador. This next leg should run from May to September and, unusually, she has been seeking two paddlers to accompany her. Her vast distances covered around the world so far have usually been solo.

French American Cyril Derreumaux is attempting a 4,800km Atlantic crossing this winter, leaving the Canary Islands on Dec 19th, aiming for Martinique. Previously he paddled the Pacific from California to Hawaii in 91 days. His 7m boat weighs 360kg loaded and has foot as well as hand paddles, the journey expected to take 80 to 90 days.

Ireland has been circumnavigated solo in 123 days by Ariel Gazarian. The 28 year old is a sea kayak guide in Washington's San Juan Islands.

A team of four, led by Ash Dykes of Colwyn, have paddled inflatable kayaks 610km along the full length of the Coppename River in Suriname to the Atlantic Ocean. During the 37 day journey through Amazon rainforest they met no people at all, interesting, as one of their objectives was to study the effects of humans on wildlife. They encountered a wide range of animal and fish species which could have caused them significant problems and suffered food deprivation, intake sometimes being little more than 10% of calories used. They suspect they may have been the first people to reach the source of the river. As a diversion they climbed Julianatop, Suriname's highest peak at 1,280m.

## Compulsory PUK licences profitable for CRT

At the CRT Annual Meeting the subject of PUK's compulsory canal licences was raised, CRT being paid £300,000 last year. They said 'We know that many members don't use our navigations, so we gain from it being an all inclusive payment that offsets the lower amount paid per member.' In other words, CRT make more money than if only canoeists requiring licences paid the full cost.

## Reporting wildlife crime

Following the discovery of the bodies of four cygnets, apparently shot, on the Wyrley & Essington Canal, CRT have asked canal users to report any suspected wildlife crimes to West Midlands police or any wildlife in distress to the RSPCA. Canoeists often arrive quietly at locations where other members of the public would be more conspicuous.

Environment Agency  
UKHSA  
Walsall and Sandwell councils  
WM Police  
WM Fire  
WMAS  
Canal and Rivers Trust  
Severn Trent Water

*Following a serious chemical spill into a canal at Walsall the EA website listed out people they consulted. Considering the CRT own and operate the canal, what does it say about EA relationships with CRT that they should be last but one on the list consulted?*

## ICF to rebrand

As the ICF reached its centenary it was announced that its headquarters would return to Budapest and triple in size. This was the location in the Otto Bonn days from 1988 to 2000, since when it has been to Madrid and Lausanne. A subsidiary office has been opened in Hangzhou, location of the ICF Super Cup with marathon, slalom, polo and sprint. Although US\$400,000 prize money was on offer, support for the event was limited.

The ICF are also to abandon their name and be referred to as Paddle Worldwide. These changes seem to relate to the hostile attempts to take over dragon boat racing and paddleboarding and risk losing sight of the ICF's central reason for existing.

Among guests at the centenary event was Albert Woods, who chaired the ICF Slalom & Wildwater Racing Committee from 1988 to 1996 and founded the European Canoe Association, which he headed from 1993 to 2023.

## Kayak death was faked

A 45 year old Wisconsin man, Ryan Borgwast, who disappeared on Aug 12th on a kayak angling trip, sparked a massive search which produced a number of his belongings but no body, leaving a wife and three children. On Nov 11th he finally sent police a video, apparently from eastern Europe where he is thought to be with a woman from Uzbekistan. It seems he had sunk his kayak and phone in 60m deep Green Lake, paddled a child's boat to shore, ridden a hidden ebike overnight to Madison, taken a bus to Detroit and caught a plane in Canada. Before going he had taken out \$375,000 in life insurance, moved funds to a foreign bank account, had a new passport and email address and been communicating online with a woman in Uzbekistan. Authorities in Wisconsin say he owes them \$40,000 for the search costs.

## Scottish inland surfing

Lost Shore has opened as Europe's largest surf venue of its kind. Sited in a former brownstone quarry at the M8/M9 junction on the west of Edinburgh, it adjoins the Edinburgh International Climbing Arena by the Union Canal at Ratho.

## Leeds weirs replaced

The Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme has now been completed after a decade of construction work. A major feature has been the removal of two large sloping weirs from the River Aire. These have been replaced by inflatable neoprene tubes, which can be deflated when floods are expected. It seems that otters and salmon have managed to get past them so it remains to be seen whether canoeists can get past them safely at the edges. Most of the river now passes over sets of weirs that are closed in at each end. While these are lethal it remains to be seen whether they can be adjusted sufficiently quickly



*A new water activity at Holme Pierrepont? An autumn storm brought down part of a ceiling.*



Avon & Somerset Search & Rescue

*Coastguards have had an intensive training session at the Cardiff WW Centre to prepare themselves for flood rescues. Of particular interest was rescue from a car in the water, which had similarities to an incident during the 2000 canoe lifeguards' national championships on the Tryweryn.*

to release somebody trapped and recirculating below them.

## Happier Scottish new year

Major changes have taken place with the PS AGM in December and look set to give a more positive future from 2025. Stewart Pitt, 1996 C2 Olympic slalom paddler, is now president. There are four new board members from a range of disciplines. Stuart Smith, CEO for the last 20 years, is to leave at the end of January. Paddlers, including slalomists, are back on the water at Grandtully.

One issue to be faced, however, is that Chris and Ken Baillie, who have held Scottish slalom together at a practical level for over half a century, have now moved to the Home Counties for family reasons, calling for new slalom management support in Scotland. When the dust settles, the future of canoeing will look brighter in Scotland than it has done for some time.



## Scott Ritchie

The WWR world has been taken aback by the unexpected death of Scott Ritchie of Pinkston Paddlers. This popular member of the junior and senior national teams was taken ill at home and died soon after in hospital.

## Multiple pumped storage schemes

A number of HEP pumped storage schemes are being promoted in Scotland. These include Loch Fearn, Loch Cuaich, Loch Lochy, Balmacann and a couple on Loch Awe, including doubling of the Cruachan scheme. These should not have significant effect on loch users.

## Hengistbury Head groyne enhanced

The groyne at Hengistbury Head is being beefed up to give added protection to Christchurch. It will be 1.5m higher than at present. The sea level is expected to rise by over 10mm/year over the next century, compared with 7mm/year over the last 18,000 years.

## Mushroom kayak

An open canoe grown from mushroom mycelia by Katy Ayres has already taken to the water (May 20, p8). Now Californian student Sam Shoemaker has responded with a sit on top kayak of similar construction. It has the problem of the open canoe, weighing in at 61kg.



White pollution

White pollution looking like paint or toxic blue-green algae has been reported from the Scottish coastline. SEPA analysis has shown that it is pollen from conifers and spruce trees, which can be released in large quantities during warm weather.

EA scorecard

The EA have set up a scorecard system to record their level of achievement for aspects of interest, such as the nature of the workforce. Other subjects, such as recreational use of water, do not feature at all.

Skate on

An angler in a small RIB in Muckle Row off Shetland was attacked repeatedly by a large skate. It bit into the boat in a number of places, leaving teeth in some of them. Possibly it mistook the boat for a rival skate.

Destruction of the Zambezi

Which is the world's best white water run, the Grand Canyon, the Zambezi below Victoria Falls? Keep in mind that there are plans to dam the latter and turn it into a lake. If you want to get there before the destruction of this world beating venue don't leave it too long. August to October is the least testing time, before the start of the rainy season.

Blackballed

A number of beaches around Sydney, including surfing beaches, have been closed after the appearance on them of black balls with soft centres and harder skins, smelling absolutely disgusting. Analysis suggests they are a mixture of human faeces, cooking oil, grease, fuel oil, drugs and industrial chemicals. They are thought to have resulted from sewage spills from an unknown source.

ACCESS & environment

Another Avon threat

The EA are threatening to remove a radial gate on the Avon in Chippenham which jammed ahead of a winter storm and flooded the town centre. They want to reduce the route through the town from a broad river to a meandering stream with a series of rock weirs. While Chippenham Canoe Club are not too worried and could use water upstream of the town, draining of the river would prevent future approach of boats along a restored arm of the Wilts & Berks Canal.

Further downstream, the EA are well into their second decade of delaying a link to the Kennet & Avon Canal at Melksham, which needs to bypass new housing in the town. The link would use part of the Avon to allow craft to return to the town as is widely desired but excuse after excuse has been produced to delay this, not helping Wiltshire Youth Canoe Club, who are sited by the Avon.

It was the same EA that fined Wessex Water £500,000 for not telling them fast enough about a sewage leak in Melksham.

Oxford flood scheme fence

Concerned about a fence shown across a legal navigation channel through the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme, Paddlers International took this up with the EA, who said it was just a shadow. We are pleased to have the following response and note the artwork change:

Thank you for your e-mail. Yes, you are correct; the illustration does show a fence across the new stream. Apologies for the fact that we had previously described it as a shadow. The Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme is a very large and complicated project and the team members who reviewed your previous query were unaware that a removable fence might be required at this location in order to prevent livestock in Hinksey Meadow from escaping under the bridge.

Since this illustration was produced, we have reviewed the fencing proposals for the scheme, and we will not be putting removable fencing across the channel at this location. The water under Willow Walk bridge will be a backwater, created when the new stream connects with the Bulstake Stream. Under non-flood conditions, this water will not extend very far into Hinksey Meadow, so in effect, the channel behind the illustration will be dry for much of the year and we will place the removable fencing across this dry section of the channel rather than placing it across the backwater. We will update the illustration to reflect the fact that there will be no fence across the channel at this location.

My colleague Russell Robson regularly works with canoe and kayaking groups with regards to recreation on the River Thames, but if you have the contact details for any canoe or kayak groups that you think would be interested in working with us specifically on the



The welcome change to the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme artwork.

Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme, then that would be really helpful. Once the flood alleviation scheme has all the permissions required to proceed, we will be re-engaging with the local community and various stakeholder groups, including canoeists and kayakers, to ensure that we make the most of any opportunities for safe recreation where this will not compromise the functioning of the scheme.

Kind regards  
Sarah  
Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme

Some more bathing water sites

The last Government announced 27 new official bathing sites in May, mostly on rivers. This means they have to be tested for pollution between 15th May and the end of September, considered to be the bathing season. There is no testing in the winter. Of 423 official sites in England in 2023, 18 failed to reach the minimum required standard, those rated Poor rose to the highest level since 2015 and there was a decline in those rated Excellent. Test results have to be made available within 24 hours of sampling. If a site is rated Poor in five successive years it loses its designation and testing stops.

Of 89 designated bathing waters around Scotland 98% were at least Sufficient with 84% at least Good.

The Government have been carrying out a consultation on changes to the Bathing Water Regulations 2013. Consideration is being given to including other water activities than just swimming, including kayak paddlers, removing the season cutoff dates and stopping automatic undesignation in the event of any shortfall. Central to all of this should be clarification of the existing legal right to use our rivers, not just about hotspots. In 2023 there were 404 incidents where riparian owners were referenced by the EA. There were no prosecutions at all.

Effluent spills have been a fashionable media subject for some time, often promoted by badly informed journalists. One of the more balanced presentations this year has been by Selaine Saxby (N Devon, Con), introducing the Bathing Waters (Monitoring & Reporting) Bill, who took a more informed approach and did not mince her words over the approach of Surfers Against Sewage.

Fighting rural crime

Rural farmers are fighting rural crime gangs. It has long been said that if you keep people away from private land the honest ones will go but the crooks will return. The locals and honest public who see what is going on are the countryside's eyes and ears. Having the public turn up unexpectedly, not least by river, can make like difficult for crooks. I have upset poachers on occasions. The approach of the Country Landowners' Association is part of the problem.


More of the same

Faced with Parliamentary Written Questions on countryside access, the new Government are pursuing the tactics of the previous one and the one before that in talking about green spaces only although they are proposing nine new riverside walks in England. As ever, they talk about local access agreements for rivers without producing any legal basis for their requirement. Given a similar question about angling, they can produce a long and enthusiastic list of what they are doing.

A tidy sum

CRT have retained Green Flags from Keep Britain Tidy for 1,273km of their canal and river network, about a third of their distance. In addition, seven stretches received a Green Heritage Site Accreditation for the management of historic features, supported in England by Historic England. These are the Huddersfield Narrow Canal East, the Shropshire Union Canal from Middlewich to Audlem and Barbridge Junction

Question



**Grahame Morris**  
Labour  
Easington

Comments

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he has made a recent assessment of the potential merits of granting rights of access to rivers to (a) kayakers and (b) swimmers.

Answer



**Emma Hardy**  
Labour  
Kingston upon Hull West and Holmerprice

Comments

Answered on

7 October 2024  
Inland waterways such as canals and rivers are categorised as regulated (mostly canals and some larger rivers, owned by a navigation authority) and unregulated (mostly smaller rivers and no canals, owned/managed by riparian landowners along their length).

If the waterway is owned or managed by a navigation authority, access can be obtained through the navigation authority's licensing regime. If the waterway is unregulated then access should be negotiated with the relevant landowners through local voluntary access agreements, to ensure the interests of all parties concerned are considered. Legislating on this issue is not (currently) Government policy.

To formally designate a site as a bathing water, an application must be submitted to Defra. Defra welcomes applications for both coastal and inland waters such as lakes and rivers. Local authorities, groups and individuals can apply for sites to be designated. Defra encourages this by writing to local authority Chief Executives, and stakeholders like Swimming Associations.

Question



**Freddie van Mierlo**  
Liberal Democrat  
Henley and Thame

Comments

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will amend the criteria relating to bathing water designation to include the (a) use of (i) non-motorised boats and (ii) paddleboards and (b) holding of (i) the Royal Regatta, (ii) events organised by Swim Henley and (iii) other such events.

Hide full question

Answer



**Emma Hardy**  
Labour  
Kingston upon Hull West and Holmerprice

Comments

Answered on

18 October 2024  
Ministers continue to consider possible changes to the bathing water system. In light of this, applications for designations for the 2025 bathing season which were closed by the previous administration, remain closed.



**Northenden Weir breakup**

Northenden Weir on the River Mersey, which has been in a poor state, began to break up significantly in the centre at the beginning of November although the edges are often dry. It was of particular danger to canoeists as the damage on the sloping face could not be seen from upstream. The EA were working with the local canoe club to address the dangers to users.



Confusing notice on the New River Ancholme at Brigg, where there is nothing to portage.

to Ellesmere Port National Waterway Museum, the Peak Forest Canal and Bugsworth Basin, the Lancaster Canal, Stanley Flight to Wigan Top Lock on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, the Weaver Navigation including Anderton Boat Lift and the Trent & Mersey Canal. To achieve Green Heritage Site Accreditation winners must understand and take action to conserve the heritage value of their sites and help people to understand and enjoy the unique history of these places and communities.

**Weed issues**

The weed azolla has been a particular nuisance in the East Midlands this year. CRT have been tackling it by releasing 2mm long weevils which eat into only this plant, which then sinks to the bottom of a canal and rots. Locations treated include the Chesterfield Canal, the Grantham Canal and the Dearne & Dove Canal at Barnsley. The weevils will not tackle other invasive weeds, however. To clear floating pennywort a floating digger had been used between Meadow Lane Lock and Beeston on the Nottingham & Beeston Canal. Contractors tackled 35km of the River Soar and Grand Union Canal between Aylestone Meadows in Leicester and Kegworth and canoeists have been helping to clear places hard to reach. Over 500t of the weed has been removed this year in the East Midlands. It was introduced 40 years ago as a garden pool decoration but can grow at up to 200mm per day, requiring a constant battle to prevent it from choking our waterways.

Also unwanted is litter. Long Eaton United under 11 boys' football team swapped to CRT canoes to collect



Before and after views of the Dearne & Dove Canal at Swinton.

four large bags of litter from the Erewash Canal upstream of Trent Lock.

**Illegal beaver imports**

Defra have confirmed that the only legal beaver releases in England have been on the River Otter although these are bound to have spread elsewhere. All others are illegal. Wales has not accepted beavers as native species. A Devon Wildlife Trust official said releases require a process 'to support communities to live alongside beavers', which suggests that beavers are the central residents around which others must adapt. Landowners who make space for beavers could be rewarded through agri environment schemes although farmers are far from being the only people whose properties are being damaged by beavers. The damming of rivers has yet to get serious.

**Green remodelled**

The Green River in North Carolina was one of the hardest hit by November's hurricane. Nearly every rapid on the river has changed, often substantially, with sediment gone, leaving large bare rocks, often undercut, some of which will roll. Infrastructure has suffered major damage in the area, the access road having been severed both upstream and downstream, making emergency access difficult. Other rivers in the area will have their own problems, perhaps not so obvious. Damage to roads approaches 10,000km with 1,000 bridges and culverts gone. It is not going to be a canoeists' playground for a while.

**Helmsdale wires**

The suspension footbridge over the Helmsdale River at Kildonan Lodge (NC903224) is being replaced. Wires above the river are not generally a problem but could be dangerous if not seen when the river is in spate. Portage of this grade 1 rapid is straightforward on the grass banks.

# The 100 best paddling places

An ICF competition called for votes to claim the best 100 paddling places in the world. The top three were:



**1 Minaouët River, Brittany, France.**

A pretty river dotted with inlets and turquoise coves leads to a stretch of glorious coast strung with white beaches in this wild and artistic part of Brittany. The river flows through countryside northwest of Pont-Aven (a village made famous by post Impressionist artists such as Paul Gauguin), west to Pont Minaouët, past the sailing boats and out to sea at Pointe de Grignallou. White sand beaches line the coast, making a gorgeous location for paddlers progressing to moving water. This secret gem is a favourite playground of Hector Henot, the French canoe sprint athlete, and was a slam dunk with the judges who gave it top ratings on every category, tranquillity, beauty, excitement, uniqueness and accessibility.

**2 Emerald Lake, Yoho National Park, British Columbia, Canada.**

The colour of the water is everything at this astonishing water body in the Canadian Rockies. Surrounded by the glaciated peaks of the President Range, Emerald Lake is tinted a vivid peacock blue green, thanks to the silty glacial meltwater that refills it each summer. It's the largest of 61 lakes in the Yoho National Park, famed for its vertical rock faces, waterfalls, rare pine tree species and as a habitat for grizzly bears and mountain goats. Around its fringes wild orchids grow, moose graze on surrounding meadows and there are views of the important 508,000,000 year old Burgess Shale fossil beds. It's a dreamy paddle spot for nature lovers and photographers with calm, cool waters on which even beginners can try a session.



**3 Valle Verzasca, Ticino, Switzerland**

In an isolated valley running for 26km in the underrated Ticino region, the Verzasca river is an epic route for experienced canoeists and kayak paddlers. While the upper section is much easier, the lower part is an experts only pinball rally of waterfalls, drops, chutes, granite boulders and narrow churning rapids through spectacular gorges. Thrills abound round here. At the top of the valley the Verzasca Dam is one of Europe's most recognisable bungy jump sites, featured in the James Bond film Goldeneye. Down river near Lavertezzo, divers of one sort leap from the Ponte dei Salti bridge into deep tranquil green pools while scuba divers explore the depths.

British locations (with our guides) were;

**13 Basingstoke Canal, Hampshire** (*Canoeist's first guide, Jan 83/ Canals of Britain*)

Perhaps a surprising entry to folk who know Basingstoke as an average English market town but its canal won over the judges through the gorgeous photographs taken by our tipper, Gill Ryan, while paddling through autumn leaves on this mirrorlike waterway. A section of the canal between Up Nately and the Greywell Tunnel is a nature reserve, then it continues east to join the Wey Navigation, connecting to the River Thames.



**19 Durdle Door, Dorset** (*Jun 03/Coastal Britain: England & Wales*)

The iconic Durdle Door on the Jurassic Coast is one of Dorset's and, indeed, the United Kingdom's most celebrated coastal beauty spots, a perfect limestone arch rising above the waves next to a golden crescent beach. Paddling through the gap under the arch and getting a photo while doing it is a must do for kayakers coming to the area.

**51 Old Harry Rocks, Dorset** (*Mar 03/Coastal Britain: England & Wales*)

The paddle out to Old Harry Rocks, a series of prominent chalk towerlike formations off the white cliff coast of Dorset is a favourite among locals and a fun short expedition for families with older children to try. Nearby Studland Bay has gorgeous beaches to cruise by and lies at the eastern end of the Jurassic Coast, where dinosaur fossils are frequently revealed.

**68 Lake District** (*More British Navigations, free download*)

There's no shortage of good paddling in this rainy, mountainous region and national park in the north of England; the clue's in the name. From the deep and somewhat intimidating Westwater, backed by near vertical scree slopes, to Windermere, England's largest lake, there are many stunning water bodies for hammering out distance sessions or trying a beginners' trip. Paddling twins who provided us with several great tips recommend the tranquil, glassy waters of Buttermere.

**78 Cape Wrath, Sutherland** (*Dec 95/Coastal Scotland*)

Wildly beautiful and one of the most remote parts of mainland Great Britain, Cape Wrath, at its most northwesterly corner, with the vast white sand beach of Sandwood to the south, is an otherworldly outpost. Huge cliffs topped with an iconic lighthouse are spectacular for an expert sea kayak paddler to survey from beneath.

**80 South Devon** (*Dec 03/Coastal Britain: England & Wales/Rivers of Britain*)

The charming south Devon coastline is pocked with pretty bays and coves that are a joy to explore for paddlers of all standards. Beginners might prefer the calm water of the River Dart, which winds from the fishing and sailing harbour of Dartmouth past pubs and historic buildings to the hippyish town of Totnes. Our tipper, Rhi, recommends the gorgeous beaches of Blackpool Sands to the south of the river and Broadsand Beach to the north.

**88 Isle of Wight** (*Coastal Britain: England & Wales*)

Off England's south coast near Hampshire, the jolly Isle of Wight draws holidaymakers with its beaches, bays and coastal walking. Paddlers with sea experience can head out under high white cliffs and around the Needles chalk stacks. Solid kayak paddlers have been known to tackle a 100km circumnavigation of the island in a day or cross the busy shipping channel to the Isle of Wight from Hayling Island, attached to the mainland. Photographers Leon Butler and Stephen Perfect both tipped about loving it here.

## INCIDENT FILE

**Bren Orton drowned**

White water expert Bren Orton was drowned in May in the Melezza River in Ticino after getting caught in a recirculating feature. A search by 15 paddlers failed to find him and he was finally recovered a fortnight later from Lake Maggiore by a sailor. A specialist in running big water and falls, he drew many expressions of regret from across the white water community.

**Teifi fatality**

The body of a missing canoeist was found near Cardigan bridge at the beginning of June. The 24 year old from Tewkesbury had capsized and gone missing the previous evening, following which an extensive six hour search had taken place.

**Curtains for two**

Two paddlers died after going over the 9m Curtain Falls with two open canoes in Crooked Lake in the Boundary Waters Canoe Wilderness Area. The incident began about 4pm in May and continued into the dark. A search helicopter was called but the pilot had difficulty finding anywhere to land, initially on a rock island and then on the bank. Used to carrying out search operations only, she had to make several journeys carrying medics as well as the injured. None was wearing a buoyancy aid and two were lost. The following day a float plane was sent to recover a fifth member of the party who had chosen to go angling rather than canoeing on that afternoon.

**Surfski provides buoyancy**

A 17 year old kayak paddler was rescued off Hawaii after 12 hours overnight clinging to his capsized surfski. High winds had tipped him over and separated him from his paddle and his group. He was located at 4am, the ski giving him support and making him easier to locate.

**Are accident statistics misleading?**

United States Coast Guard fatal accident statistics for 2023 show paddler deaths up 5% to 183 while total boating fatalities were down 11% to 564. Only open powerboats had a greater fatality rate. However, I have the full Recreational Boating Statistics for 2022 and think that the figures given could be misleading. Of those who drowned, 87% were not wearing buoyancy aids and 75% had not received safety instruction. How did those figures compare with the total participation levels? What proportion of non registered canoes and kayaks did not have fatalities despite not wearing buoyancy aids? Of paddlers who died, over a third had less than 10 hours of experience and nearly three quarters had less than 100 hours.

I was trying to compare the number of people who had accidents with the total number of users as a proportion for each category of user, particularly canoes, kayaks and paddleboards (separately). What are the implications of the present sharp rise in paddleboard user numbers?

How representative were the number of registered boats of each kind compared with the total number of users? What proportion of canoes, kayaks and paddleboards were registered (as a rough figure, accepting that it varies from state to state)? If group A have 20 fatalities compared with 10 for group B it points the finger at group A, wrongly if group A is far larger than group B. It sounds bad if 47 of those who died were not wearing buoyancy aids or had been drinking or using drugs but how do such numbers compare with the total population of users? The nature of causes of death suggested powered craft were involved primarily yet how do their numbers compare with the numbers of canoes, for example?

We had a particularly wet and windy June and July in Britain in 2022 which would have reduced the number of non serious users. Did the Americans? I would be inclined to compare statistics over several years rather than read too much into what happened in a single year, which could have produced isolated unusual results, as with Covid in 2020 and 2021. I asked for further details but was unable to obtain a response.

Rhode Island now has a law requiring all paddlers to wear buoyancy aids at all times. Are they required for swimmers who are in the water but do not have a large, buoyant, conspicuous object to hold?



# Knowing stuff helps

## Tethering kayaks anecdotes

On 16th September 2023 the collapse of the side of a 1,200 metre high peak in northeastern Greenland sent a massive rock landslide tumbling down into Dickson Fjord. Crashing into the sea, at 90° to the axis of the fjord, the collapse is thought to have initially created an initial pressure wave (tsunami) of up to 200 metres in height, which, within minutes, settled down to seven metres. The subsequent wave sloshing generated seismic waves that were recorded over the next week in a host of worldwide seismic recording stations:

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/sep/12/entire-earth-vibrated-climate-triggered-mega-tsunami>

With no tour boats or paddlers in the fjord at the time, it took 68 scientists from 40 institutions in 15 countries almost a year to solve the Miss Terry (mystery) of what triggered the seismic waves. Before and after photographs of the 16th September rock collapse show up to 25 million cubic metres of rock crashed into the fjord. The cause, sadly, is global warming and the retreat of a valley glacier's weight against the rock face.

Reading this Dickson Fjord tsunami story reminded me of two paddling tsunami stories, not nearly of the same scale, and also two historical incidents, all of which emphasize the importance of leashing (tethering) your kayak when landing, on land or on ice, always!

### Prince William Sound

When my expedition paddling mate Conrad and I were in Prince William Sound we had launched from Whittier and spent a marvellous morning, high on a rock headland, watching a sustained calving event in Blackstone Bay. Later that evening at the head of Barry Arm we landed on a sandy camping beach, just shy where of three tidewater glaciers calved into the arm.

This sandy beach offered superb tent sites just above the high water mark; however, we were both very aware of pressure waves generated during glacier calving events. Despite the beach offering a great spot to put the tent up, we instead set up the tent about 10 metres higher on a glacially scoured granite knoll but with excellent views of the calving glaciers. We carried our kayaks close by, tied up to small bits of shrubbery.

After dinner we watched a group of paddlers from the Lower 48 land on the enticing sandy beach. They left their boats just above tide level and set tents up. The boys then joined Conrad and me sitting on a granite knoll, from where we could observe the beach and the stretch of rocky shoreline around to the calving glaciers.

Obviously well pleased to have arrived at this 'sheltered beach', this



Conrad Edwards watching for calving events from the massive front of the Barry Glacier.



A huge calving event from the Barry Glacier with the initial bulge of the sea clearly visible.

rowdy team of blokes celebrated their safe arrival with a bottle of cognac, which we sampled, and huge cigar shaped joints, which we didn't sample. Their dress standards, denim jeans and T shirts, suggested this could well be their very first group paddle into the calving glacier country of Prince William Sound.

After setting up their dome tents close to the high tide mark, the boys joined us on the bare granite knoll, patiently watching and waiting for a calving event from the big one, Barry Glacier.

Patience was soon rewarded with a huge calving event that was observed by all, not just a single towering icy serac but a long section of the glacier front. Generation of a bigish potential tsunami wave was obvious by the upthrusting of a dome shaped pressure wave, a big bulge in the sea surface under the glacier front.

It was this tsunami that created havoc with tents and kayaks on the beach.

Conrad and I didn't say a word. We didn't need to. We knew a rather good tsunami would roll in to the lovely, sandy, camping beach where the boys from the Lower 48 had pitched their tents and had their kayaks (untethered) just above the high water mark.

Just like a slow motion movie, we knew exactly what could transpire as the boys passed the joint around and slugged on the bottle of cognac as the initial tsunami wave developed.

'Tis a matter of sea depth versus wavelength as to how high a tsunami can develop, in deep water just a matter of centimetres in height but in shallow water powerful breaking waves can develop, like the recent mountain collapse in Dickson Fjord, initially gauged at up to 200 metres high.

That initial seismic wave rolled around the rocky shore to where we were perched, rolling around our solid granite headland into the shallows of the sandy bay, where it reared up into a series of powerful breaking surf waves.

Whether it was ignorance, the happy baccy or the cognac, the boys

just watched openmouthed as the first gentle wave rolled into the bay, morphing into the shallows as a breaking surf wave, sending tents and kayaks flying. Only then did the boys stagger to their feet, stumble down into the surf and set out to chase floating tents and retrieve drifting kayaks.

The two Kiwi blokes just exchanged raised eyebrows, a mute form of acknowledgement of a wise decision (knowing stuff) to move kayaks and tent to above the level of calving event tsunamis.

### East Greenland

During our first expedition to East Greenland in 2007 we were paddling southwest from Tasilaq (Angmagssalik) to visit the site of the 1930-31 British Arctic Air Route Expedition base. On the eastern shore of Sermilik Fjord Conrad and I landed on one of the those really rare Greenland sandy beaches, unique really, tucked away in an offshoot of the fjord, an unusually flat shelving beach, so rare, in fact, we had to land, have a brew, a look around and a pee.

We carried the kayaks three metres or so beyond high tide level, parked them by two (rare) drift logs then set up the MSR cooker for a hot brew of sweet tea, along with well earned salami/cheese sandwiches, on a rocky ledge below the really steep surrounding cliffs.

In this narrow offshore arm of Sermilik Fjord we had been paddling through heaps of ice, big bergs, flat pans of leftover winter sea icefloes along with plenty of brash ice but no really enormous bergs in view, nothing to causes trepidation in terms of a big collapse event.

Sheltered from the wind with such a doozy sheltered landing beach and no noise of breaking seas or rebound chop off rocky cliffs and bergs, the scene was one of great tranquillity until we both heard the slow toppling noise of a distant berg slowly rolling, then a monstrous crash, as it calved (broke up).

Although nothing was visible to Conrad and me, we both instinctively anticipated what could ensue. Conrad ran for the kayaks and I bundled up the brew kit, billy and lunch stuff into my carry bag and just in time as a series of 'tsunami' waves rolled into the wee bay. Worst case scenario, just watching and waiting, we would have had to swim after the kayaks. Worse still, we could have lost cooker and the salami/cheese sandwiches if we had not been so intuitively tuned to the noise of a berg calving event.



A flat sea, a magnificent sandy beach in East Greenland, near Sermilik Fjord. What could possibly go wrong?

### Historical untethered incidents

On 20th August 1932 Gino Watkins was seal hunting in the northern arm of Tugtilik (Lake Fjord), in east Greenland, while his two of his expedition mates (John Rymill and Freddie Spencer Chapman) were out surveying in the small expedition boat. There are two arms to Tugtilik, a northern arm fed by a calving glacier and a westerly trending arm with a flat shelving sandy beach where the expedition camp was based.

Both Rymill and Chapman heard the noise of a calving event in the morning but took little notice until Gino failed to return to base from his daily seal hunting foray. From the boat they eventually found Gino's floating sealskin kayak along with his trousers and sprayskirt on a floe in front of the glacier but, despite many hours of searching, no sign of Gino was ever found.

'Tis only my speculation but Gino landed on a flat sea ice floe after shooting a seal and was installing a wound plug so he could tow the seal back to base when a glacier calving event generated a wave that caused his floe to tip up. This sent his kayak gracefully sliding into the icy water.

Gino then had a choice; he could either wait for a few hours until John and Freddie came looking for him in the boat or he could strip off and very quickly swim after the stern of his drifting skin kayak.

With his sprayskirt and trousers on the floe, it was obvious that Gino had swum to retrieve his kayak. Gino had no extra fat layers to protect against the subzero water temperature, very much a slim bloke like my good self, and within minutes must have succumbed to hypothermia/drowning in the frigid water, unable to catch up with his drifting kayak or return to the ice floe.

When Conrad and I paid homage to Gino with a paddle in to Tugtilik and the face of the calving glacier in the northern arm, the day was so serene, a flat sea, a sunny sky with no noisy calving events from the glacier, so calm that we could add morsels of brash ice to wee caps of Irish whiskey in a toast to Gino and the kayaking heritage he left for future paddlers.

The lesson from Gino's demise: when landing on sea ice floes always (secure) tether your kayak. For our four summers in Greenland Conrad and I both carried ice screws for tethering our kayaks on sea ice floes.



Gino Watkins in his skin kayak, during the British Arctic Air Route Expedition to east Greenland





Paul Caffyn by the Gino Watkins Memorial Cross in Lake Fjord, 2007.

### Fridtjof Nansen

When Fridtjof Nansen and Hjalmar Johannsen finally reached solid rock on Franz Josef Land after a failed mission from the ice bound *Fram*, to be the first to reach the North Pole, they still had their bamboo framed, sailcloth covered kayaks.

On 12th June 1896 the Norwegians were sailing their kayaks rafted together and landed to climb onto an ice hummock to figure where they were. A ski stock was jammed into the ice with a strap cut from walrus hide used to tether the raft. When scanning the horizon, Johannsen caught sight of the kayak raft drifting offshore. In a really gutsy



Sketch from Vo1 1 of Farthest North by Fridtjof Nansen, 1897) An artist's recreation of Nansen endeavouring to climb onto his errant kayak raft.

move, Nansen stripped off outer clothing and swam through the icy water until he caught up with the raft. By then he was so cold Fridtjof had barely the movement in his frozen extremities to climb into a cockpit, let alone slowly paddle back to meet Johannsen on the ice edge.

All their hunting and camping kit was on the two rafted kayaks, not even a penknife with them onshore. In this frozen wasteland of Franz Josef Land, although it was mid northern summer, with no food or shelter it would have been a slow cold death for both of them.

### Lessons learned (knowing stuff)

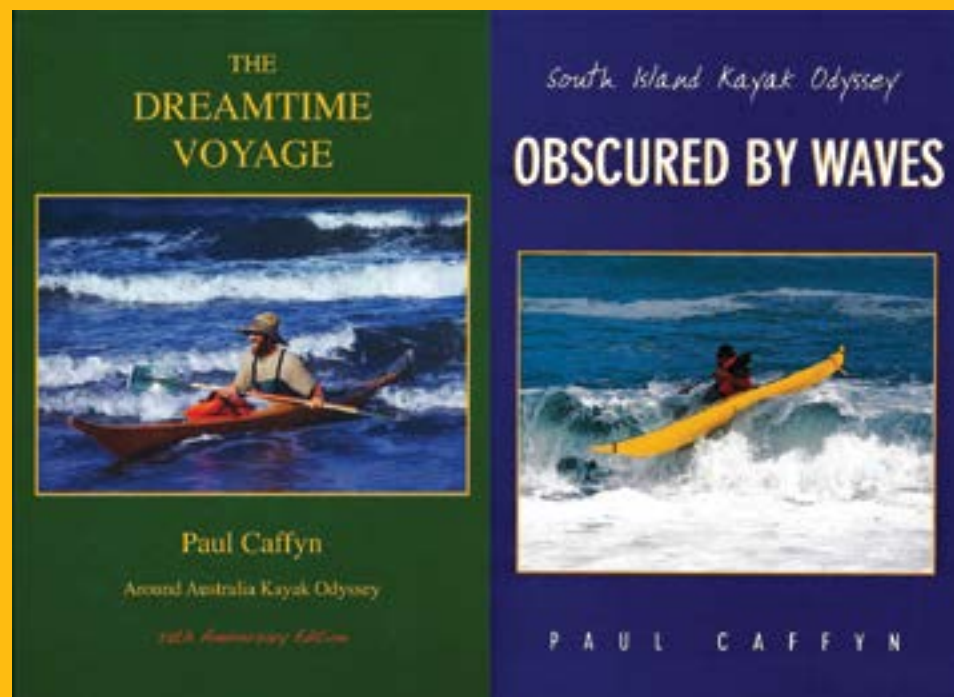
There are so many 'secret squirrel' stories of paddlers losing contact with their kayaks. 'Tis rather embarrassing to have your kayak drift offshore during a pee stop or not to tether your boat overnight and find the beach empty next morning, so many stories!

The essence of this story is no matter how tired or exhausted you are after landing, no matter where you land, on sea, ice or on land, ensure you tether your kayak to accommodate high tide levels, storm surges and tsunamis.

**Paul Caffyn**

### Paul Caffyn Klassic Kayaking Books

Now available in England, both the Australian and South Island books. Sadly, the exorbitant cost of overseas postage has killed off mailing these A4 size books from NZ. However, an old work colleague, Mick, loads up his hand luggage after he visits NZ annually. He has already sold out of the recent 2nd edition of the Stewart Island book but the two classics are available in England from: paulskayakbooksuk@gmail.com



# What's new Eureka!

### Attitudes to pyrotechnics

The Scottish Government have been considering how to tackle abuse of pyrotechnics at football matches. No mention has been made of those for whom pyrotechnics are intended as lifesaving devices although 'carrying pyrotechnics in public without a reasonable excuse' was made an offence under the Fireworks & Pyrotechnic Articles (Scotland) Act of 2022. Something is amiss when lifesaving is considered an 'excuse'.

### Jackson buy Werner

Werner paddles were struggling with rising costs in Washington. At the same time Jackson Kayak had spare factory space in Tennessee. This has resulted in the sale of the 60 year old paddle company to Jackson, who have been trading for two decades. As well as taking on machinery, Werner staff will make the move if they wish to do so.

### New Typhoon products

Typhoon's Hudson 50N buoyancy aid is in black, orange and blue and has been engineered to offer comfort, providing a minimum bulk design with shoulder and waist adjustment. It also comes with chest



Typhoon Hudson buoyancy aid and Sea Kayak 2.0 drysuit.



Melker Kayaks of Karlstad on Lake Vänern in western Sweden have a touring single and double kayak range which includes interesting plant based models. In particular, they have flax based resin and cork cores. Flax was shown at the Beale Park Boat Show decades ago but did not progress whereas the Swedes have some very attractive designs. The stripping of cores from trees is reminiscent of birchbark for canoes. Plant material is used in gel and resin coats.

### Inflatable canoes and more

Go Outdoors are offering the Freespirit range of inflatable canoes. Accessories include paddles, water shoes, wetsuits, rash vests, swimsuits, oversized hoodies, wearable blankets and beach shelters.

### BoatLife shelved

The BoatLife exhibition, which has run at the NEC for three years, has been cancelled. It was bought this year by the NEC's Pendigo Events, who took it no further. Insufficient exhibitors is likely to be the cause. It did manage to draw more canoeing exhibitors than the Boat, Caravan & Leisure Show running adjacent at the same time.

### Stohlquist back

Stohlquist are trading again after being acquired by Sport Dimension. They were taken over by bankers Barings (May, p22) as part of French firm Aqualung, who no longer wished to manufacture sports gear in North America.

### Container canoe stores

Containers UK supply refurbished shipping containers for storage use. These can be standard or anti vandal, in a full range of sizes. Delivery can be anywhere in the UK. They can also collect containers you no longer need.



Malawi Gin uses a canoe for promotion.

### Seaward close

Seaward Kayaks of Vancouver Island have closed after 38 years manufacturing sea kayaks. Their speciality has been handmade craft. They did venture into thermoforming but sold off this branch of the business to Kayak Distribution a decade ago.



## Lidl middle riddle

The Lidl Middle Isle concept has been resulting in rows, typically after he investigates gadgets as impulse purchases while she does the family grocery shopping. One woman bought a double canoe despite having nowhere to use it.



## Construction videos

Off Center Harbor are building up a stock of boatbuilding course videos. These include the Fox, for a which a 26 part course leads to the construction of a large cockpit kayak able to take an adult and child.

## Circular boats

Neil Duncan-Jordan (Poole, Lab) has asked about the recycling of unwanted glassfibre boats, of which Poole Harbour has plenty, canoes and kayaks included. Answering for Defra, Emma Hardy gave a full answer on the circular economy and the OSPAR Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and how the UK is a leader. However, it does seem that before anything of the sort can happen we need to have a process for separating a resin matrix from the tiny hairs of glass set in in order to form something useful. Plastic bottles can be reconstituted as fleece tops, for example, but politicians do tend to think about the compulsory end product without the critical intermediate stages.

pocket, front YKK zip fastening and adjustable buckle. Additional features include a quick release front clasp, removable crotch strap, elasticated side panels and convenient unisex fit. It is also available in junior sizing with the same colours and design. RRP is adult £39.99 and junior £33.99.

Their Sea Kayak 2.0 drysuit is made from waterproof and breathable TX-4 fabric and comes with a smooth, non-chafing Glideskin neck seal, latex cuff seals and an easy donning hinge entry system, featuring the YKK Aquaseal zip. The angled cuff makes paddling easier while still offering cover and protection. The neoprene waistband has a front fastening hook and loop adjustment to customise the fit when used in conjunction with a spraydeck. With male and female versions, it is articulated for ease of movement; a chest strap, internal braces and a buckle system with a rotating buckle aids in the drop seat functionality of the suit. The fleecelined storm collar has a fully adjustable, lightweight, foldaway hood. Both the hood and collar have reflective badges, enhancing visibility at night and in low light conditions when illuminated. Durability is provided by reinforced nylon in the high usage areas of the seat, knees and shins, with seat protection and comfort augmented by removable neoprene seat inserts. It is completed with an upper sleeve pocket which is accessible when wearing a buoyancy aid as well as low maintenance YKK Aquaseal zips and fabric socks. The men's drysuit comes in a tangerine/grey colour and is available in sizes M/MB/L/XL/XXL. The women's comes in a tangerine/plum colour and is available in sizes S/SM/M/LM/L.

## Recycled wetsuits

Barefoot Tech is the company of Ffion McCormick Edwards of Swansea which recovers neoprene from old wetsuits and uses it for such accessories as backpacks, notebooks and purses. She wanted to tackle the volume of old wetsuits going to landfill and is collecting wetsuits up to 40 years old from outdoor activity centres around Wales. She has been helped by Big Ideas Wales, who support business entrepreneurs.



*The NRS Men's Axiom Dry Suit is made in three layer Goretex for water, wind and breathability characteristics. It has a YKK front zip with flap, wrist gaskets, 130mm wide spraydeck seal, relief zip, socks and single splashproof zipped front pocket.*



*Palm have the Shuck 2 helmet with an ABS shell, EPP foam impact protection, removable ear pads and a washable fabric liner. Their Gradient 3 wetboots are in black or more colourful finishes. Price is £64.95.*



*A selection of WRSI helmets, the Moment full face, Trident carbon composite, Current Pro with earguards and Current Vented without.*

# Holiday 2025

## Europe's largest river island

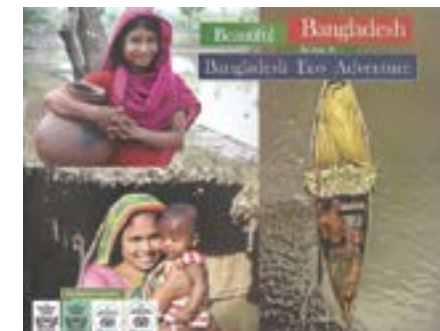
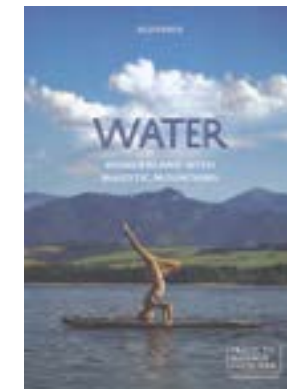
A booklet by Slovakia Travel promotes just about every kind of watersport they have to offer. They include paddling kayaks around Zitny Ostrovi, Europe's largest river island, 1,900km², bounded by the Váh, Danube and Small Danube. Many of the locations are just asking to be canoed.

## Multisport NZ

Water by Nature have a trip on Mar 8th-23rd which will feature an extensive range of activities including sea kayaks in Abel Tasman National Park and swimming with dolphins. Trips are limited to a maximum of 11 guests. See May, p24.



*Bonnie Bay Sea Kayak Centre offers sea kayak trips along the stunning and clear waters of the Sea of Japan. Prices include £27.35 for an adult for half a day and £46.50 for an adult and child for a full day.*



# On show

*Some of the exhibits to be seen at the Southampton Boat Show.*



*As you gaze in awe on meeting one of these, remember it is towing a trailer.*



*How to keep your boat dry while on the water.*



# Act 6



We spent Friday night in the car just outside Fort William; as soon as I woke up I drove onwards, taking the back road through to Gairloch and then inland towards Loch Arkaig. Already the days appeared to be getting shorter and it was surprisingly dark at 5.30am. It is a narrow undulating road that skirts Loch Arkaig, not one where you would want to meet a large oncoming vehicle and have to face reversing. We parked at Arcabhi, next to an electricity station. Breakfast was somewhat less than relaxed as the midges suddenly appeared and were, as ever, an unwelcome irritant. Anne stayed tucked up inside the car. However, despite the midges, I managed to down my instant porridge and hot chocolate mix, sling my prepacked rucksack over my shoulders and head up the track towards Loch Blair.

A circular photograph of a brown dog, possibly a Weimaraner, standing on a rocky and grassy shore. The dog is looking towards the left. In the background, there is a large body of water (Loch Blinn) and a range of mountains under a clear sky. The photo is framed within a circular border.

*Lyra at Loch Arkaig.*



*Ben Nevis inversion from the summit of Meall Blair.*

A person wearing a red jacket is kayaking on a calm body of water. The water is dark and reflects the overcast sky. The person is in the center of the frame, moving away from the viewer. The background is a hazy, distant shoreline.

*In the cloud on Loch Blair.*

The inversion was holding as I took my time to drink in the view and soak up the warmth. I was conscious that, somewhere below me, in the clouds, was Loch Blair. I made my way back down, eventually diving back into the clouds until I reached the shores of Loch Blair. It was a simple task to inflate the packraft and get afloat. It was all quiet and very still as I paddled out into the cloud shrouded waters. Gradually, the cloud shifted and the northern shore of the loch became visible. I paddled a loop on the loch, savouring the warmth of the sun and the quietness of this loch. Having deflated the raft and packed up, I took a short walk back along the side of the loch to reach the track and the final descent. By the time I was back at the car the clouds had dispersed from Loch Arkaig and there were clear views to the peaks at the western end of the loch. After a quick brew we packed up and set the satnav for Torridon and Ben Damh.



As we drove through Kintail the cloud base dropped and the summits were obscured from view. Nothing changed as we reached Torridon late in the afternoon and the peaks there were also hidden from view. I finally set off for Ben Damh from the Torridon Inn, just before 4pm, not being sure of how long the round trip would take. A good path takes you up through the forest and then continues over open moorland. As the climb started in earnest the path became looser until I breached the rise and arrived at the bealach. The pathways were good now and it was a steady climb up towards the first summit. Once again I sensed the warmth of the sun and gradually the clouds thinned and I found myself above the second cloud inversion of the day in glorious late afternoon sun. The first summit was a jumble of rocks but the path skirted this for a gradual climb to a high point before it dropped across a narrow ridge and a final push up to the summit of Ben Damh. The mountainscape behind me had the appearance of a whale breaching the surface of a sea, clouds gently breaking around its body. On my way up I had passed a few parties of hikers on their way back down and I was now the last person of the day on the mountain; this morning I had been the first person on the mountain. Truly, in this hectic world in which we live, I had found my moments of solitude.

It was a straightforward descent and I was back at the Torridon Inn in just under 4 hours for the round trip. My wife was in the bar at the Torridon Inn; she had messaged me to ask how long I would be and if she should order another drink. I confirmed that would be a good idea and then joined her in the bar 20 minutes later. We had stayed in the Torridon Hotel 27 years before on our honeymoon but this night we are heading off to find a less expensive layby in which to camp. How times have changed.



*Contemplating Loch Damh.*



*Summit inversion on Ben Damh.*

From here it is about 1km to the loch and I balanced my kayak on the bike to walk it in. There is a short steep track down to the shoreline at the end of the loch, which I took. A rowing boat was moored there. Out on the loch there was already a boat with two occupants heading to the far side to fish.

I passed a fish farm part way up and the lefthand bank had several industrial sheds. Despite this, the elevation of the loch and the limited number of people around gave a sense of remoteness and isolation. I was out on the water for an hour and half before I walked the kayak back out and down to the road. I strapped it on the roofrack and headed back to the Torridon for coffee in the sun and a visit to the gin garden at the hotel.



*The walk back to Torridon.*





After coffee we started the drive towards Skye, taking a stop at Attadale Gardens for an easy stroll in the grounds. As we crossed the Skye bridge we are greeted with generally cloudfree views. We passed through Portree and headed out towards the Storr. The clouds ahead of us rolled over and cleared the top of the Storr, a very different view from the one we had had two weeks earlier.

As I headed up to towards the Old Man of Storr, wisps of cloud reappeared over the tops and by the time I had turned the corner towards the summit the tops were fully enveloped. The path scrambled up for a short distance before levelling out, tracking away from the summit at a lower level, before I climbed up to the ridge and track back to the summit. It was good going underfoot for the climb to the summit with sheep wandering aimlessly around, keeping the grass short.



The view from the summit.



The Old Man of Storr.



The road to the Storr beside the Sound of Raasay.

I had been hoping for views down to the lower pinnacles but the gullies were obscured by cloud. The return was straightforward and fast. By the time I was back down to the carpark the wind had picked up again. We drove down to the side of the loch to find a put in spot. The Storr Lochs are relatively short, so they do not take long to kayak; the clouds had lifted from the Storr again and I took time to savour the view. It was nearing the end of the day when we set off and darkness fell by the time we had crossed the Skye Bridge and searched for a layby in which to sleep. The following day we headed south; we had completed three Foxy's in two days, 18 out of 21 completed. Yet again I had travelled to places, hiked mountains and traversed lochs to which I would not normally have gone. The Foxy's are an excuse for an adventure.

Alan Fox



Alan Fox photographs

On the Storr Lochs.



# RIP

Sadly, the Foxymobile is no more. Did it bounce away down the side of some Alpine ravine, loaded with kayaks, mountain bikes, pack raft, skis and camping equipment? No, somebody wrote it off in the local Tesco carpark.

## Using Russia's window of opportunity

The British Schools Exploring Society expedition to the White Sea of Arctic Russia, summer 1992.  
Chief Leader's report by John Ramwell FRGS, MRIN BCU L5 coach. Revised and rewritten July 2022.

I had completed several expeditions with the British Expeditions Society, either in the capacity of the kayaking leader or as overall leader though I did feel the weight of responsibility and was pleased and relieved when we returned home safe and sound; this anxiety was made so well worthwhile on learning how fulfilling the experience had been for all those participants.

There's always a gamble when taking on any sort of responsibility and this should be fully recognized by those in authority... as indeed it mostly is. My last leadership experience was taking a BSES expedition to Svalbard back in 2004.

Fortunately I was unable to participate in any further expeditions because my wife and I had just bought ourselves a second home in Newfoundland, Canada, which took up all our spare time. I do not use the word 'fortunately' lightly as the leader who took my place had to deal with one of his young charges being attacked and killed by a polar bear; 'there but for the grace of the Almighty...'

So I return to the subject in hand, our 1992 expedition to Russia.

When one looked more closely towards Russia as a potential expedition site for almost 100 young British citizens and accompanying leaders back in the early 1990s one could see the potential for exploring not only new terrain but a wholly different culture. These opportunities were not lost on my chosen fellow leaders nor on the Expeditions Committee of the BSES to whom I owe my undying gratitude for sharing the risks in return for their perceived rewards.

I was often asked why. Why choose Russia? Winston Churchill was quite right when he described the Russians as a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma. This was the major rationale for our proposed visit and we were not at all disappointed.

For a start the Russian addiction for espionage is legendary. One has only to read Ben Macintyre's *The Spy & The Traitor* to discover just by how much.

For ourselves we were embarking on a voyage of discovery but for the ordinary persons living their lives this could and often did mean a regime of serious economic restrictions as well as a culture of authoritarian control and fear. I'm guessing that if one could choose one's birth country then Russia would be a quiet place.

Moving on to back to the future of 1992, Russia is a huge country... Down had come the Berlin Wall and with it the unification of Germany. Gorbachev was leading his country into perestroika, into openness, and it was thus opportune to give some serious consideration to a BSES expedition to Russia.

I did not want to go too far east, to Siberia. We had to keep in the back of our minds the possibility of the shutters coming down again or at least some other difficulties such that we might have to consider an alternative expedition area. Consequently, we chose to look at the NW corner of the White Sea, not too far from Finland and the Gulf of Bothnia.

Politics and Communism was a power to reckon with even back then, as Boris Yeltsin attempted to unleash some of the fetters to

which I've previously alluded. Today, as Vladimir Putin rages war in Ukraine, there is no chance of a similar excursion and, on reflection, we only ever enjoyed a short window of opportunity that has today slammed tight shut.

The starting point for our expedition was a meeting with the First Secretary at the Russian Embassy in London. So off we trotted, we being the then Director of the BSES, Lt Col Peter Steer and myself, to the Russian Embassy in London to plead our case. Initially it was plain we were on a loser. He sat high behind his enormous desk looking like a copy of Leonid Brezhnev, omnipresent and overbearing but polite and at least prepared to listen as we explained our ambitions. Initially I felt we were wasting our time but then... it was as though a light switch had been thrown, as we both later agreed, when it may have occurred to him that this proposal might just work in both his and our favours and so it was that several months later we had our official invitation to make a recce visit to his country and our chosen area and on 23rd July 1991 Keith Maslen (Deputy Leader), Jenny Ramwell (Logistics Manager) and I set off for Russia to meet up with the three designated Russian officials. It was clear the Russians were taking this whole event very seriously as we were due to meet up with our Russian language interpreter, a professor of English from Moscow University and the Government Director of Education and his wife who was also his deputy.

The plan was to fly into Moscow and take the train north to our proposed expedition area but I had other ideas.

Travelling by ferry via Sweden, we eventually reached St Petersburg. From here we took the train north and as we went we gradually became more and more pessimistic of finding a good expedition area. The terrain was featureless and even on embarking at Kandalaksha on the shores of the White Sea we were still not hopeful.

However, our perceptions changed rapidly. Firstly, it was the people. They were so naturally friendly and determined to help and we were soon treated to a conducted tour of the area, first by car and then by boat.

One of our first stops was at the top of a local hill, which gave us views across Kandalaksha Bay with its myriad islands and coastal inlets and bordered on all sides except seaward by rolling hills. There was no doubt this was just what we were seeking, protected waters for kayaking, hills for trekking and rich wildlife around which to base a science programme so we agreed Kandalaksha Bay it was to be. Whilst I put a leader team together the office was busy selecting the Young Expeditioners.

On 24th April 1992 we staged our training/briefing weekend at the Anglesey (N Wales) school of Sea 'n' Surf. As well as managing to get everyone out in kayaks, we also divided the YEs into the five fires, based on the individuals' scientific interests and disposition to kayaking, trekking and diving. Included in these groupings were a dozen young Russian YEs who were able to join us on Anglesey.







The expedition was to fly from Heathrow to St Petersburg on 18th July. Jenny Ramwell and Dan Cousins had left a week earlier to prepare for the arrival of the main party in Kandalaksha. Eventually, and despite a problem with getting our VHF radio transmitters/receivers through customs, we made it to our first night's destination, the Agricultural College at Pushkin, a town a few miles out of St Petersburg. After a day touring the city we embarked on our train journey north to Kandalaksha. On arrival (in the rain), we were met by Jenny, Dan and our Russian friends and we were soon ensconced in the gymnasium of a local school.



### The expedition begins

The first hurdle for the expedition was to access the container which sat tantalizingly outside the port, locked until cleared by customs.

Unfortunately the Kandalaksha customs officer was totally impotent without his rubber stamp which he was patiently waiting to be sent from Murmansk. No container meant no food, kayaks, medical and science equipment and consequently no expedition. Eventually we negotiated the container's release and the fires rapidly set to preparing kayaks, rucksacks, food and camping equipment, eager for the off.

The expedition plan was slightly different from the traditional BSES format of training, science, then adventure phases. The science and adventure phases were integrated, samples being collected for analysis whilst trekking, kayaking or diving. The fires, distinguished by numbers, would rotate around the different activities (kayaking, trekking and diving).

For the first ten days, three fires went off in kayaks, one fire set off in a boat to dive camp for diving, whilst the remaining fire scrambled into the back of an ex military lorry to be taken up into the hills for their trekking phase.

With the fires away, those of us left behind established our base camp on an island some miles down the bay.

The following short accounts give a flavour of what each phase was like for the participants.

#### Phase 1 22nd-30th July

Young Explorers: Fire 3 - Kayaking by Paul Booker, Matthew Butler, Sarah Chittenden, Alex Crossland, Robert Exon, Michael Hendry, Iain Hutchinson, Fiona Irwin, Andrey Kirkin, Alexey Simanov, Philip Stokes, Kate Wright.

The rest of the fire left Kandalaksha on the morning of 22nd and paddled along the south coast of the bay. I met up with the fire on the evening of 23rd at base camp island after arriving from St Petersburg that morning.

The next day we paddled to Divers Island and met up with Fire 5 before continuing along the south coast until we found a good water supply and made camp. On 25th we kayaked a further 8 miles against wind and tide.

We made camp but found we had 30 minutes' walk to find water. Paul and I were paddling with local wooden blades, one set being those we found on base camp island, the other being a copy we made from drift wood and paracord.

The two Russians, Andrey and Alexey, were demonstrating skills and knowledge of basic survival in the outdoors. Andrey was quite an accomplished fisherman and both showed their ability to light fires in most conditions. The following day we paddled further around the coast into a large bay where we had collected water the previous day. After another full day's kayaking we eventually made camp in a bay on

the headland just around from Kovda. The campsite was well used and littered with rubbish which we did our best to tidy up.

On 27th we paddled out to an island off the headland in the hope of crossing to the Kola Peninsula. However, the wind was force 3-4 from the northeast and we thought it too strong to attempt a crossing at this early stage in the expedition. We waited the rest of the day and night for the wind to drop but, sadly, it did not. At around 1.30am we had a visit from three poachers and it certainly helped having the two Russians with us as they were able to explain our reasons for being on the island.

On the morning of 28th the wind had still not relented so we decided to paddle to Kovda instead, then travelled back around the headland in the direction of base camp. The next day we set off out into the middle of the bay and paddled towards Divers Island. It was the most testing day of the expedition to date, force 5 with a following sea. Sarah had to be T rescued and Fiona came out of her boat. The whole fire coped very well and this helped build confidence in personal skills and as a team. Due to mist, navigation was by compass most of the way and we could not see Divers Island until 5 miles off. We arrived back at Base Camp on the 30th July.

Young Explorers: Fire 4 - Trekking by Patrick Allen, Phillip Hurley, Dimitry Jalin, Sergey Karpov, Keith Maslen, Catherine Mead, Vadim Gouida, Rgbin Nott, Philipp Ritter, Sophie Spread, Lyn Stewart, Simon Wyldes.

Our first day's trekking consisted of what seemed like a near vertical ascent of a rather large hill, led by Vadim Gouida, our crazy Russian leader. Not only was this hill extremely steep, it was also of very rough terrain, making walking or scrambling, to which we generally resorted, quite difficult. To increase our enjoyment it was, of course, raining.

We made our first campsite on a 60 degree slope in the pouring rain. Spirits, however, were kept high as we worked on the assumption that things could not get much worse.

We were right: the next morning dawned warm and sunny and our route that day was predominantly flat! As we were now above the trees we were able to enjoy some spectacular views. From our vantage point on top of the hills we could see across to the White Sea, where we would eventually kayak. We could also see the small islands that are dotted over much of the Kandalaksha Bay region of the White Sea, where our studies were to be carried out. We continued walking till late in the evening to find what was a superb campsite by a small lake, as planned by Vadim.

After the twelve hour walk of the day before we felt we deserved some time off the next morning and we didn't strike camp until after lunch.

We were aiming for another lake named Nizhnee Luvengovskoe, which turned out to be another glorious campsite.

The next couple of days were spent walking to Koalvitser, a small village where we would be receiving our rations for the second half of the phase. The first afternoon involved six hours walking through thick, smelly bog.

Fortunately, the next day our route was along good paths used by the local fisherman, which made life a great deal easier, and we followed a large attractive river into Koalvitser.

Having picked up supplies for the next five days we spent the rest of the next morning walking to a lake situated in the hills, about 6km outside Koalvitser. We made camp here at lunchtime as we all felt the need for a good wash and sort out. Unfortunately, Sophie cut her foot badly while washing in the river and had to be taken to hospital in Kandalaksha for stitches.

The last few days of the trekking phase involved a lot of ascent once again.

The plan was to climb our largest hill so far, a 636m peak named Kruglaya, and then to stay high, following the range across, parallel to the shores of the White Sea, before dropping down to camp on the shore opposite base camp.

Despite the difficulty of the first climb we were all glad we chose this route as the views were tremendous.

Having reached the top, the weather on the following day changed for the worse. Torrential rain was soon followed by thick mist as the clouds came down. While trying to find shelter, the group was temporarily divided and we lost Keith and Vadim. We were soon reunited but decided it would be safer to start descending rather than continue along the tops as planned. An hour took us to the foot of the hills and by evening we reached the shore of the White Sea.

The following day we returned by boat across the bay to base camp, where we met up with Sophie, complete with stitches and walking stick, and the other four fires.



#### Phase2 1st-10th August.

Young Explorers: Fire 5 - Kayaking by Martin Rudd, Katie Burton, Vitaliy Derevesnikov, Sarah Gilbert, Philip Greenfield, Natalia Kuchina, Daniel Cousins, Kirsten Luke, Rachel Nedwell, Alia Petrova, James Sheldon, Fay Weston.

On Friday 31st July we collected our kayaks and went out into the bay to practise our self rescue techniques. With everybody happy with their drills we returned to base camp to pack our boats in preparation for the following day's departure.

August 1st and at last we were afloat! Moving slowly around base camp island to get the feel of our heavily laden boats we edged out into the open sea, heading towards the island on which we had spent Phase One. After stopping to stretch and replenish our water supplies we turned west, aiming to paddle through a small channel around the southern tip of the island. Unfortunately the 'channel' turned out to be a large, rocky and very muddy bank. Not only was it mud, however, it was a thick, black and very deep mud impregnated with the delicate smell of rotting seaweed! Wading Goosander by R Nott through it, carrying a fully laded sea kayak weighing over 100 lbs, was not my definition of good fun. That night we camped on two islands no more than 100m across, joined by an exposed reef.

We spent the next two days moving down the south coast towards Kovda in generally good weather broken only by occasional squalls.

The morning of 4th August dawned wet. It had been raining hard since the previous afternoon and most of our equipment was wet. Relieved to be afloat, we made our way into Kovda harbour, stopping at a village just outside it to buy bread and cheese. We were invited in to tea by the extremely kind area game warden's wife and the warden kindly agreed to let us use an island outside the harbour so we could attempt the open crossing to the north shore of the bay.

We spent the rest of that day in Kovda itself, washing and visiting the church, the most northerly wooden church left in Russia. We were made very welcome by a group of young biology students from Moscow, who return to Kovda each year to continue their studies and who are slowly restoring the church after the years of Communist neglect.

After a leisurely start to the next day we paddled out of the harbour to the island from which we planned to cross the bay. The next morning we were up at 4.30 in time to watch the sun rise in a clear sky over a calm sea.

Conditions were perfect. By 6.15am we were afloat and the 15km crossing went smoothly, taking almost 4 hours. We landed on a tiny island 100m off the coast and relaxed in the sun while we waited for the tide to turn.

As we paddled onwards that afternoon in perfectly calm conditions Vladimir suddenly noticed a Beluga whale about 500m away. Cautiously we paddled towards it and within 10 minutes found ourselves surrounded by 6 of these wonderful creatures, one or two less than 50m away. For almost an hour we sat amazed as the whales sounded all around us, being able to hear them breathing and see their arching backs clearly as they surfaced.

Belugas are seldom seen in Kandalaksha Bay at all, so to have seen 6 together was something special.

The rest of the kayaking phase went smoothly, although we were slowed down by headwinds during the following two days. We crossed back to the south shore on 9th and were back at base camp on Monday August 10th, having covered approximately 145km.

Young Explorers: Fire 2 - Diving by Camilla Cook, Adam Holmes-Davies, Andrew Hunt, Valery Iskenderov, Alexander Lepeyka, Andrew Newam, Debbie Hawkins, Eva Price, Simon Robertson, Paul Troft, Andrey Ugrymov, Simon Vane, Francis Williams.

Phase 2 took on a new dimension for us. We swopped kayaks and paddles for wetsuits and aqualungs. We were to dive in the Arctic Sea.

The previous fire to attempt to dive had been hindered by various factors.

We were all inexperienced and had no preconceived ideas of what to expect.

This helped.

With the help of our Russian instructor (Adil) and our excellent Russian translator (Michael) we took to the water. Two and a half days

of snorkelling acquainted us with the rigours we would face. Next day, tanks filled, strapped to our backs and clad in an assemblage of wetsuits and Russian dry suits (!) we submerged ourselves properly.

The phase culminated with an advanced dive in the middle of the sound. It took over an hour motoring in the boat for us to find the remote pinnacle of rock just jutting above the surface at low tide. It was an exciting dive: the rock was not charted and we knew the depths below us were in excess of 35m.

Our time on Dive Island was refreshing and rehabilitating. Most of us had learnt some new skills and glimpsed a new world which I am sure many will explore further in the future.

#### The last few days

The expedition's final day in Kandalaksha ended with a wonderful celebration cum farewell party at the Belomore Hotel. We had invited all the local people who had directly or indirectly supported our expedition, including the mayor and his wife. If we needed evidence that our expedition had been successful and thoroughly enjoyable then our farewell party provided it.

We were all due to leave Kandalaksha on 23rd August but at the last moment one of the YEs, Simon, fell ill enough to warrant admission to the local hospital. Jenny and I elected to remain whilst Keith Maslen and the team boarded the train for Pretrozavorsk en route to St Petersburg.

Fortunately, Simon made a rapid recovery and we were able to meet up with the expedition in St Petersburg.

A couple of days in and around St Petersburg was worth the effort with the highlight for most being a visit to the ballet to see the Nutcracker Suite.

If further evidence that the six week expedition had cemented firm friendships were needed then the flight back and the parting of ways at Heathrow provided such. There was a general air of depression amongst us as it dawned on us all that the expedition was over.

#### Science Reports

The Kola Peninsula is rich in minerals and so there is considerable mining in the region. The main ores are apatite, from which phosphorus and fertilizers are made, bauxite and nephelite for aluminium and iron ore for steel. Copper and nickel have also been extracted from the region. As the mines are so far from the main industrial centres it is necessary to process the ores on site and then transport the refined materials south by ship or rail.

Refining demands vast amounts of energy and so there are several hydro electric and nuclear power stations in the region.

In view of this industrial activity, the theme for the science work was environmental monitoring and this was done in conjunction with the local White Sea Foundation. This organization has set itself the target of assessing the White Sea environment by 1993 and then monitoring any changes over the following five years. Through this, they hope to be able to quantify the impact of various stresses on the flora and fauna in the Kandalaksha area.

In consultation with Adil Iskenderov we decided to monitor acid rain because the waste gases from the processing plants are thought to be very acidic. The second main whitetailed eagle by R Nott area of the science programme was to study heavy metal pollution.

With so much mining in the region, heavy metals should leach out of the tailings and enter the rivers and lakes.

Besides these two main projects, work was also done on birds, the weather, flowers and marine ecology.

The expedition was in three phases and the idea was to use the kayaking fires in Phase 1 to collect samples from as large an area as possible. Once the samples had been analysed, phases 2 and 3 could be used to make further more detailed investigations.

A summary of the fires and projects are set out in the table below.

Fire Main Project
Other projects
1 Acid rain, Peter & Noel K-T-K birds, weather, flowers.
2 Heavy metals, Paul Troft K-D-K birds, marine transects and weather, Debbie Hawkins.
3 Heavy metals, Paul Booker K-K-T birds and weather, Iain Hutchinson
4 Acid rain, Keith Maslen T-K-K birds and weather, Vadim Gouida
5 Marine ecology, Martin Rudd D-K-D marine organisms Chris and Dorothy and weather Adil Iskenderov
K = Kayaking, T = Trekking, D = Diving
192 Subjective observations of the weather during the expedition by John Kerr.



General synopsis.

We arrived in Kandalaksha on 20th July at the end of a week dominated by low pressure and rain. This was followed by a period of fine weather as a ridge of high pressure developed in the area but this then gave way to a depression from Scandinavia on 29th July. High pressure then started to develop from the south, giving changeable weather but this then weakened and a series of fronts began to cross by 3rd August. The poor weather continued until 7th August, when a ridge of high pressure gave us four days of good but windy weather. A series of low pressure systems then followed quickly until 17th August. Again we had a few good days as a low pressure system passed well to the south before yet another set of depressions and fronts started to cross from the southwest on 25th August.

Subjective weather reports.

Each fire was asked to record how the weather ‘felt’ each day. The day was divided into morning, afternoon and evening periods. The data was then collated and the following grids summarise all the reports from the fires.

Warm and calm  
Cold and calm  
Warm and windy  
Cold and windy  
Phase 1 Phase 2 Phase 3  
22 July-31 July 1 Aug-10 Aug 11 Aug-20 Aug  
40 19 54 18 36 5 19 45 5 22 36 34  
Total 130 42 60 101

The weather was best during the second phase; the third phase was the poorest. Overall the weather was kind to us and this is a useful point to keep in mind for future expeditions to the area. Accurate temperatures were obtained during phase 1 only because the batteries of the digital thermometers failed.

Flowers of the Gulf of Kandalaksha

One of the aims of Fire 1 was to identify the flowers of the area for future reference. It was not only the beautiful colours of the flowers that made 193 of them interesting but also the fact that they were struggling to survive in a harsh environment above the Arctic circle. The flora was studied during the trekking phase on the northern shore and also around the campsites during the two kayaking phases. The flora was very much Western European and British guide books were suitable for their identification. The following flowers were identified: Hogweed, Twinflower, Yarrow Milfoil, Melancholy Thistle, Mouse-ear Hawkweed, Alpine Hawkweed, Goldenrod, Dwarf Cornel, Broad Leaved Cotton Grass, Crowberry, Black Bearberry, Heather, Meadow Cranesbill, Rosebay Willowherb, Dock, Cloudberry, Great Burnet, Creeping Willow, Common Cow Wheat.

Birds of the Gulf of Kandalaksha

During the kayaking phases each fire kept a record of the number and species of the birds seen as they carried out other scientific work. The terrain is low on the southern shore while mountainous on the northern shore. Considering the northern shore to run from Kandalaksha clockwise the following table can be created.

Southern Shore

Gannet, Arctic Tern, Arctic Warbler, Sea Eagle, Golden Eagle, Rustic Bunting, Whimbrel, Ringed Plover, Rednecked Magpie, Grebe, Turnstone, Velvet Scoter, Wood Warbler, Finch, Snipe.

Everywhere

Herring Gull, Common Gull, Eider Duck, Oystercatcher, Goosander, Osprey, Crane, Grey Wagtail, Crossbill, Diver, Temminck, Grey Wagtail, Raven, Northern Shore, Guillemot, Shag, Falcon, Rough Legged Buzzard, Hooded Crow, Willow Grouse.

The indication is that the southern shore is able to maintain a greater variety and density of bird life than the northern shore. This is probably due to the numerous inlets, islands and lakes on the southern shore which give better protection from the weather than the exposed mountainous northern shore.

Kayaking was an excellent method of bird recording as you could get quite close before disturbing the birds. The birds were not evenly distributed along the coast but concentrated in certain areas. The eider ducks, which, with the gulls, were the most common birds, followed the general pattern with only a few sightings on the northern shore. Interestingly, virtually all the sightings were females. The gulls, which included some lesser black backed, were common everywhere but were more localised on the northern shore, grouped into large colonies.

Shags were only sighted at the northeastern extreme of our paddling

area and are apparently more common further around the shore and in the Baltic.

Figures 1, 2 and 3 show the distribution of some of the species. The birds of prey, as shown in Figure 3, cover such a large territory that double sightings are quite possible.

Heavy metal ions in the Gulf of Kandalaksha

The Kola peninsula is rich in mineral deposits and, as it is far from the main industrial areas, the ores are extracted at source. The heavy metals leach into the river water and enter the Gulf of Kandalaksha. At the initial briefing weekend Adil Iskenderov suggested six metals which were the most likely pollutants in the region and we therefore needed a method to study all of these in our water samples.

There are four main methods available for determining the concentration of heavy metal ions in water and each has its advantages and disadvantages.

The most sensitive method would be to use an atomic absorption spectrometer but this would have involved taking the samples back to the UK for processing, which would have been expensive. Also, the aim of the expedition was to obtain results in the field from Phase 1 in order to determine the hot spots for further investigation in Phases 2 and 3.

Two further methods which were considered were ion selective electrodes and a photometric method. Ion selective electrodes had to be ruled out because of their fragile nature whilst a photometer such as Paqualab that could measure zinc at concentrations of 0–4mg/l could not be obtained.

The final choice was to use Merckoquant test strips, which are simple and relatively cheap. Basically, the test strip is dipped into the water sample and a colour change indicates the concentration of the ion being tested. However, there was a price to be paid with respect to sensitivity; the threshold levels for the six metals of interest are listed below.

Metal ion Copper Zinc Lead Manganese Nickel Cobalt Threshold level for detection mg/l 10 10 20 5 10 10

During the first phase, water samples were taken by two kayaking fires from the rivers and shore along both sides of the Gulf of Kandalaksha. Once back at base camp all the samples were tested for all six ions. Alas, all the samples were below the minimum sensitivity of the test strips and so this is all that can be concluded. Further projects of this type would therefore involve taking samples and processing them back in the UK.

Acidity of river water and soil in the Kandalaksha region

In the Kandalaksha Bay region samples of river water were taken by the kayaking and trekking fires. The trekking fire also took soil samples, which were tested with universal indicator to determine their pH.

Water samples

The trekking fire took water samples from the top of the hills and the kayaking group from the river mouths (see Figure 4) with the aim of determining the difference between the acidity levels at the top and bottom of the rivers. This did not prove to be easy in practice as not all of the rivers were marked on the map. Also, above the tree line, where the trekking was easiest, not all the rivers had formed and so samples could not be taken. We intended to compare specific rivers that both groups had tested but in practice there were only two rivers that corresponded.

The water samples were taken from various sources in the hills and at the river mouths on the northern and southern shores of the gulf. Six drops of universal indicator solution was used on each sample.

The average pH at the top was 6.15 while at the river mouths it was 7.06.

The river water appears to be more alkaline on the southern shore with an average pH of 7.9 while the average on northern shore was 7.03.

One explanation of this could be that as the northern shore is more mountainous it catches more of the rain and acidic gases than the southern shore. The results also showed that the water was more acidic at the top. This was as expected, because as the water runs down the slope the acidity is reduced by the soil and underlying rocks. The greatest acidity was pH 6.0, which indicates that the region is not greatly affected by acid rain.

Soil samples

Soil samples were also taken at various depths using a soil auger. A measured quantity of soil was added to water of pH 7 and shaken with barium sulphate, which acts as a flocculating agent. The final solution was tested with universal indicator. The pH was recorded together with the location, vegetation cover, depth, texture and colour of the soil.



There was, as expected, a change in pH with depth of sample, changing from an average of 4.5 at the surface to 7.0 at a depth of 2m. The topsoil is likely to be more acidic in this area due to the high amounts of rainfall. Even if the rainwater is only slightly acidic then the topsoil can become more acidic due to ion exchange, while lower down, close to the basic bedrock, the samples are more alkaline.

Further work

The work could be improved if better maps of the area were available so that more streams could be identified and sampled both at the source and the mouth. The idea of using kayaks to sample the rivermouths was good as walking through the forest is very difficult.

Marine Ecology

This work was carried out by Fire 5 and Fire 2. During Phase one, Fire 5, accompanied by Chris Edge, did some exploratory diving. Then during Phases 2 and 3, Fire 2, led by Paul Trott, recorded several shore transects.

Both fires commented on the limited range of species found in their work, both on the inter tidal region and at depths down to 20m.

Although the time spent diving was very short it brought the reward of two rare species. Firstly, just below the thermocline at 15m, a nudibranch or sea slug was found. It measured about 8cm and has not been seen in British waters.

Then at 20m a large hydra was found; this had multiple retractile heads and was about 50 cm long. Again, Chris Edge, in all his diving experience, had never come across such a specimen before. Both the hydra and sea slug are the subject of further research.

Fire 2 looked at the variations in marine life upon the shore on both sheltered and exposed sites. The seashore had seaweeds that are found in British waters but these were few in number and variety. The exposed sites had fewer species, which was expected; this may be due to the scraping action of the sea ice on the shore during the winter months.

Medical report

Conditions suffered  
Mild hypothermia (after a capsized)  
Skin on fingers cracking  
Headaches  
Mosquito bites  
Blisters  
Migraines  
Cut fingers etc.  
Sprained wrists (from a fall)  
Medication used  
Waterproof tape  
Zinc oxide tape  
Neurofen I  
Paracetamol  
Melolin dressings  
Crepe bandages  
Finger dressings  
Finger tubigrip dressings  
Migraine tablets



Notes

In the mild hypothermia case the group eight man bivvy bag showed its true worth.

It was very interesting to note that two of our group who had previously suffered from migraines had migraine attacks whilst trekking. Neurofen etc was useless. Only the swift application of special migraine tablets would suppress the migraine. One YE took two days to recover properly, showing the true disabling nature of the migraine in process. YEs who have suffered from migraines in the past should be told to bring migraine tablets with them.

Group first aid kits were deficient in the following:

Melolin dressings  
Zinc oxide tape  
Finger tubigrip type dressings

Food and equipment report

Food generally very good all round. Some specific points could be raised: Alpen portions were too small.

Sardine rations were too small; tins of pilchards were better sized.

Boil in the bags were very good.

Sundries:

Equipment:  
Tents:  
Tarpaulin:  
Primus stoves:  
Kelly kettles:  
Cooking equipment:  
Kayaks:

With 10 out of 12 in one group taking sugar in tea or coffee, sugar was always in short supply.

Arctic Conquest reliable as ever. Would help if all tents were thoroughly checked in the UK. One tent found to have wrong sized legs! Successfully ‘adjusted’ in field.

Lightweight tents were good for trekking.

By far the most valuable piece of equipment. Made life much more enjoyable.

Reasonably OK. Problems with local fuel – took a long time to prime and fuel dirty. Primuses worked well for only a few days before needing major internal cleaning.

It helped if fuel was kept topped up. Thankfully, most cooking was done on open fires.

Whoever services the Primuses will need to clean out all pipes from the fuel cylinder to pricker.

Very impressed with this boat from the start, so much so I’m buying one to replace my own sea boat. It was stable and robust, especially important to young people new to the sport, and lighter and more manoeuvrable than expected. The skeg design was very simple. On one or two boats the skeg rattled around inside the mounting. Any problems with the skeg were quick and easy to sort out. The skeg casing inside the back hatch was surprisingly unobtrusive.

Two types of backstrap were used. Nearly all the cheaper versions were broken by the end of the trip (those without the continuous webbing from one side of the cockpit to the other).

The compass mounted on the front hatch was good, although the plastic rims around the base of the compass all came off. The oval hatch was particularly good for access to the back hatch. Hatches were mostly watertight although one or two did leak periodically.

Spraydecks, paddles, cags, drybags etc: Good.

Lost equipment:

Machete

Tarpaulin (given away in Kovda).

**John Ramwell**



John Ramwell photographs



# Speed indeed

## Paddling in tidal streams and on rivers.

Although I've been paddling since 1962, what follows never occurred to me until last year when I was paddling up and down the river Forth above Stirling. The issue arose because I was given a Garmin watch for Christmas a few years ago which records everything I do of course. Like all gadgets, I'm only using about 1% of its power and have no idea what all the other gizmos do. Body battery +1/-63 – no idea. Stress level 33. I get stressed with tech. Is 33 good news or bad news? Do I care? I simply record current speed, average speed, miles, and time into paddle + heart beat to give me an idea of my effort. Now that is interesting.

I paddled up the river using the eddies, so that I wasn't pegged back against the full flow. On the way down, I paddled in the middle of the river to get the full benefit of the flow.

When I finished my run up and down the river, I expected my average speed to be very good, but it wasn't, and it set me thinking, 'Why not?'

The answer is simple, and applies if you are paddling up and down a river, or on the sea with a tide for and against you as you paddle round an island, or up and down an estuary.

So, here's the maths (the units don't matter, just the numbers). Imagine you are paddling up a river, turning and paddling back, as I was. Let's travel at 4mph through the water and paddle four miles up a river and back. Imagine the river is flowing on average at 2mph. On the way up, your speed over the ground (SOG) is 2mph and on the way back it's 6mph. You'll take 2 hours upstream and 40 minutes downstream – a

total of 2 hours 40 minutes. However, you have only covered 8 miles, and you have been travelling through the water at 4mph. So, if you had paddled on a lake or loch, your time would have been just two hours. You have lost a whole 40 minutes, simply because of the flow of the river. What can you do about it? Not a lot, except use the eddies on the way up as much as possible – everyone knows that. However, if you are racing, what this calculation tells you is that if you are going to paddle flat out at any time, you would be best to pile on the pressure on the way up the river rather than on the way down – the payback is much greater against the current than with the current.

The table summarises the situation for different speeds paddling *against* a 1 knot current for six nautical miles, and then with the same 1 knot current *behind you* for another six nautical miles. The 'Lost time' column is the time difference compared with paddling on flat water with no tidal flow. STW – Speed Through Water.

The table is in knots for old sea dogs, and kph for enthusiastic K1 racers.

You can see, that the faster you paddle through the water (STW) the less this river/tidal effect, and the difference is considerable. So, paddling hard against a strong current pays a big dividend, although psychologically, it can be very disheartening. And if you are racing, drop the b...s going upstream!!!

**Andy Morton**

STW (kn/kph)	Time up	Time down	Total time	Lost time	Average speed (kn/kph)
2 / 3.7	6 hours	2 hours	8 hours	2 hours	1.5 / 2.8
3 / 5.5	3 hours	1hr 30m	4hr 30m	30 minutes	2.7 / 5.0
4 / 7.4	2 hours	1hr 12m	3hr 12m	12 minutes	3.75 / 6.9
5 / 9.2	1hr 30m	1 hour	2hr 30m	6 minutes	4.8 / 8.9
6 / 11.1	1hr 12m	51 mins	2hr 3m	3 minutes	5.85 / 10.8

## River Annan Southern End

Weir  
extremes



Annan Water's wading deep,  
'And my Love Annie's wondrous bonny;  
And I am loath she should wet her feet,  
Because I love her best of ony.'

*The gray was a mare, and a right gude mare;  
But when she wan the Annan Water,  
She should not have ridden the ford that night  
Had a thousand marks been wadded at her.*

*The side was steep, and the bottom deep,  
From bank to brae the water pouring;  
The bonny gray mare she swat for fear,  
For she heard the Water-Kelpy roaring.*

*He spurred her forth into the flood,  
I wot she swam both strong and steady;  
But the stream was broad, and her strength did fail,  
And he never saw his bonny lady!*

**Sir Walter Scott**

From the A709 the banks are softer for 7km, topped by fields and cut away on bends and sometimes with rows of sand martin nest holes. This is a New Red Sandstone basin covered by boulder clay. Fields around Roberthill may be grazed by flocks of Canada and greylag geese and whooper swans. The meandering river appears to make serious attempts to get to Hightae before giving up and heading south between Birkshaw Forest and a monument beyond the Range Castle fort.

There are a number of weirs at this end of the river, mostly small or broken down, and also rapids, up to grade 2 in difficulty, especially when the water level is low. Weirs are shown on OS maps but rapids are not. Anglers' huts are regular features.

Almost as an afterthought the river reaches a loch dotted with islands and turns back on itself to reach a wooded island. The main river goes straight ahead but can be shallow at the end of the island. The channel to the right is better. At one stage it was dammed until the dam was blown up by Ukrainian prisoners of war to end flooding that was taking place upstream. The river turns right at Linn Mill, where a prominent summerhouse overlooks the remains of a cauld where most of the water activity is on river left.

The 6th century St Mungo's church stands roofless

at Nutholm while there is a rocking stone on the right side of the river at Kirkwood.

The remains of a weir near Gillhall form a small rapid. A riverside hideaway is surrounded by primroses in the spring.

The Water of Milk joins on the left before Hoddon Castle with its golf course and camping and caravan site. Carvings have been installed on the conglomerate bank where a footbridge crosses the river. Hoddon Castle was the original seat of the Bruces, then of the Herries, in a 16th century tower castle. On top of Repentance Hill is the 15th century Repentance Tower by John Maxwell.

There is a grade 2 rapid on a righthand



Whooper swans and Canada and greylag geese at Roberthill. Beyond is the Arla creamery.

Access and passage are not necessarily permitted and safe under all conditions.



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## Memories to share?

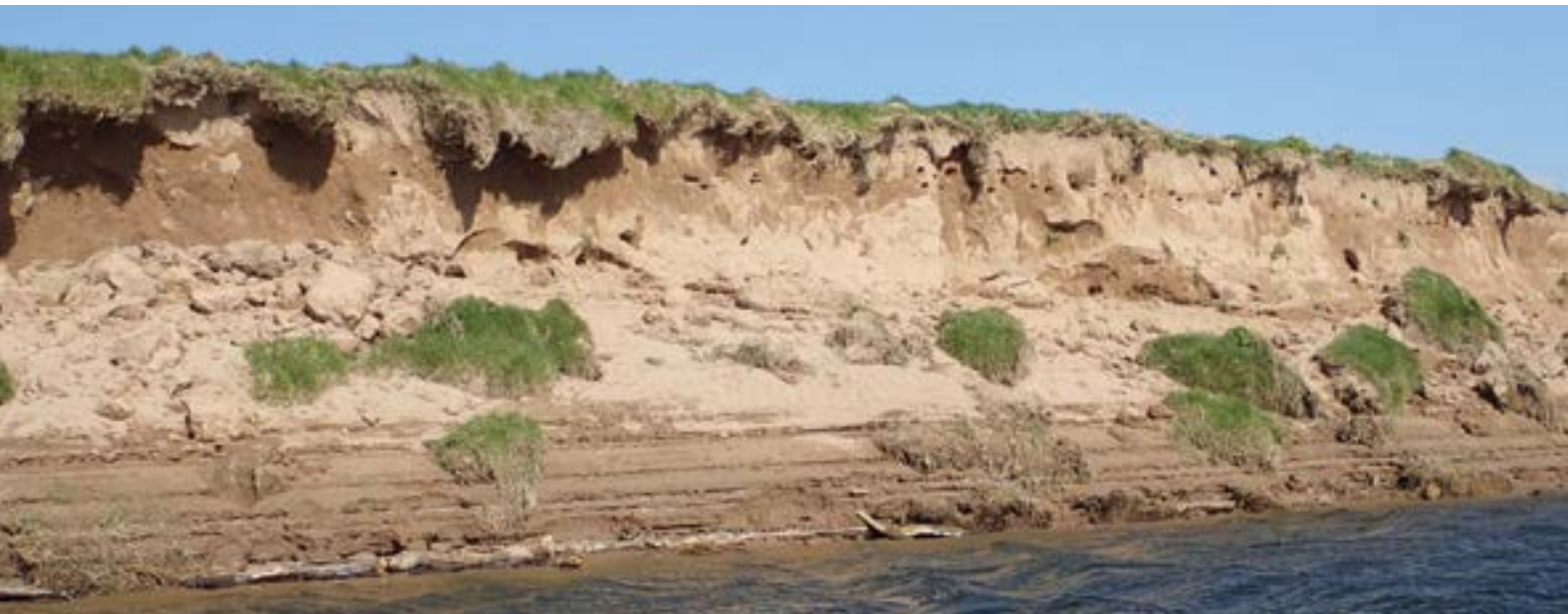
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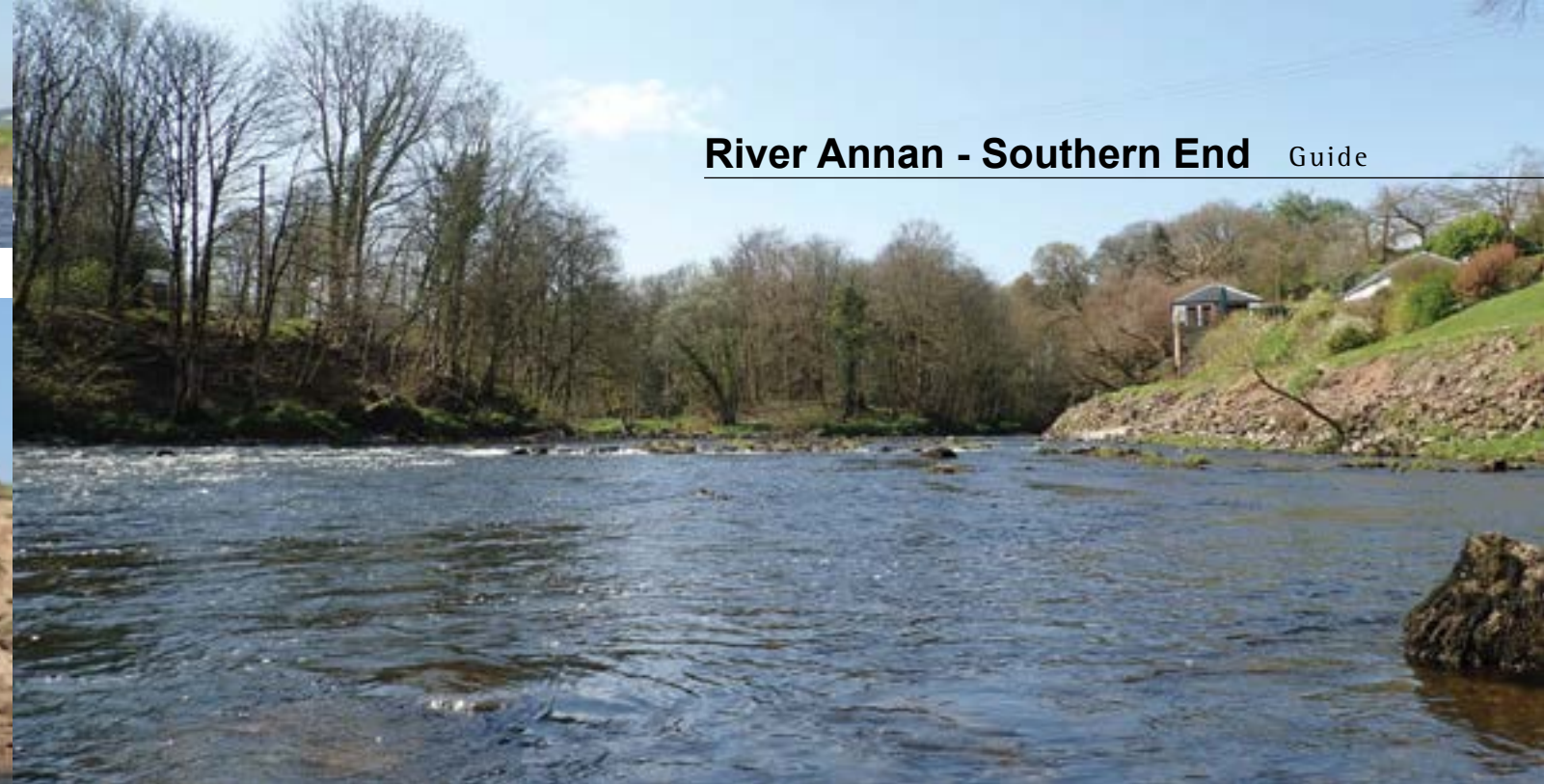
*Looking towards the ridge above Hightae.*



*Sand martin nest holes near Bengallhill.*



*The cauld at Linn Mill at a good level.*



*Looking back to Linn Mill at a lower water level.*



*Rapids at Kirkwood.*



*Rapids at Rotchell.*





*Rapids near Gillhall.*



*Remains of a weir at Gillhall.*



*Sculpture at Hoddom.*

bend as the B723 is first met. The B723 crosses over and the river passes a graveyard opposite the wooded 129m Woodcock Air.

Mein Water joins as the Annan heads towards Brydekirk, where a stone arched bridge crosses and the road runs straight up the hill through the centre of the village to the prominently placed kirk. Below the bridge is another old weir, effectively in two parts with a rocky island in the centre. In low water it is probably better left of the island but to its right when the water is higher.

A long island follows at Mount Annan, most water going left. Pheasants squawk as they head into the woods.

Chapelcross, Scotland's first nuclear power station,

was operational 1959-2004. It has been partially demolished, particularly the four red cooling towers which were visible over a wide area. A set of powerlines are important because they cross the river at what is by far its most dangerous weir. This apparently lethal modern concrete design has a long towback, is closed in at each end and has concrete walls running away downstream on each side for some distance. It lies round a lefthand bend and there is no warning of its proximity. At low water it may be better to land on the left bank although there is no obvious location. There is a flight of steps with a handrail back to the water but it is close to the towback. About 100m downstream there is a concrete platform running away downstream just above water level for some distance, reached where



*Rapid beside the B723 opposite Hoddom Castle.*



*Rapids below the bridge at Hoddom.*





*Rapids above Meinfoot.*



*Rapids at Warmanbie.*



*The bridge at Brydekirk.*



*The lethal modern weir approaching Annan, the most dangerous on the river.*



*The remains of the weir at Brydekirk, easier on the right at this level.*



*Arrival at Annan.*





The remains of the weir at the tidal limit at Annan.



## FACT FILE

### Distance

From Shillahill to the River Eden is 26km.

### Transport

Lochmaben, Lockerbie, Dalton, Hoddom, Brydekirk and Annan have bus services.

### Campsites

There are campsites 1km away at Lochmaben, 5km away at Cleughbrae, 300m away at Hoddom Mains, 2km away at Ecclefechan, 1km away at Brydekirk and 100m away at Annan.

### OS 1:50,000 Sheets

78 Nithsdale & Annandale

85 Carlisle & Solway Firth

### Admiralty Charts

1346 Solway Firth & Approaches (1:100,000)

### Tidal Constants

Annan Waterfoot: HW Dover +0110

LW Dover +0300

### Sea Area

Irish Sea

### Lifeboats

Inshore lifeboat: Sillioth

All weather lifeboat: Workington

### Connection

Solway Firth – See *Coastal Scotland* p6

of the residents moved to the safety of Dumfries. The brewery, in use in 1785, became a cotton factory.

Poet and divine Thomas Blacklock was born here in 1721. Writer Thomas Carlyle was a pupil in the original academy in 1803–10, then a maths master, both positions he hated.

Hare's Landing follows the Burke & Hare trial, which saw Burke hanged and Hare set free after turning king's evidence, heading to Portpatrick to get back to Ireland but being attacked by a mob of 8,000 in Dumfries so he turned and made for Carlisle via Annan. The Historic Resources Centre is the place to learn more. There is an Annual Lower Annandale Walking Festival and an Annual Riding of the Marches. The town featured in *Redgauntlet*.

The tide is outgoing from HW Dover +0120 and ingoing from HW Dover -0240, the river suffering heavy silting.

The Greta to Kilmarnock railway crosses at the start of the harbour area, which was developed in the 18th century by blocking the channel down the side of an island. It was used for emigration to North America in the 18th century and there were steamship services to Liverpool in the 19th century. Young's seafoods are one of the local businesses by the harbour and there are plans to develop a marina here.

There are works at Newbie but the east side of the river has meadows that flood, attracting dunlins, curlews, sandpipers, curlew sandpipers, sanderlings, redshanks, kittiwakes, ducks, terns and birdwatchers.

Barnkirk Point is 800m from the border with England in the River Eden estuary. The proximity with England was not a disadvantage to all. Smuggling was convenient as Bowness-on-Solway was only 3km away. The remains of the former railway viaduct are visible upstream, dismantled in 1935 when the primary users were Scots drinkers walking across on Sundays to benefit from the English licensing laws.

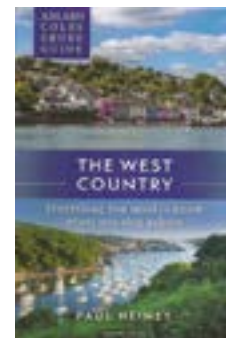
It is possible to drive to Waterfoot for loading but not to Barnkirk Point.



Looking from Barnkirk Point towards Waterfoot and Annan.

# BOOKS

## The West Country



Paul Heiney  
Adlard Coles  
978 1 3994 0999 5  
2025  
220 x 140mm  
208 pages, flexiback  
£20.00

Wikipedia's map of the West Country includes Bournemouth, Salisbury, Swindon and Gloucester. Thus, this book's coverage, the southwest coast from Bill of Portland to Scilly but with nothing at all on the north coast, seems a bit mean. A different title would be more appropriate. You may recall that

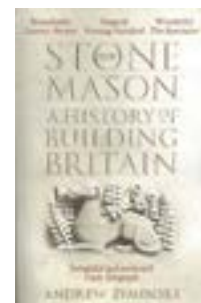
his *Maritime Britain* (May 2005, p34) was primarily about maritime museums and old ships southeast of a line from Shetland to Scilly.

Written for yachtsmen, it is not a pilot. It takes each port or anchorage and describes what it has to offer in the way of amenities, either at the port or within moderate travelling distance. These are often what the yachtsman may need, nearest repairs, laundry and the like, with the distance to such facilities if they are not to hand. However, they go much wider, walks, places to eat or drink, attractions for families and even a number of places with kayak hire. Often these would assist visitors by road or rail.

As well as the coast a number of estuaries are visited, the Dart, the Exe, the Yealm, the Fal and the Helford River. The book does tend to skip features of interest where there is not a port but as these are fairly frequent and significant places of interest are mentioned in passing this is not a great problem.

It is an attractive book but not what it says on the cover.

## The Stonemason



Andrew Ziminski  
978 1 473 66394 7  
John Murray  
2021  
200 x 130mm  
316 pages, paperback  
£10.99

As a stonemason, much of Andrew Ziminski's work involves cutting rotting stone out of old buildings such as cathedrals, mostly around Wessex, and replacing it with good. From ancient Persian mosques through millennia of mainly religious buildings, religious and architectural concepts are explained, right down to his current tools.

A difficulty today is finding suitable matching materials, no longer as readily to hand, so that, around Avebury, for example, he tended to drive around with one eye on surrounding fields and ditches, ready to stop and lift any suitable sarsen stone into the back of his pickup.

This led on to wondering how stones were moved in earlier times. Teams of men hauling ropes tied to blocks of stone would not have worked on surfaces that were not smooth, firm and free of stones.

One of the most spectacular views in the country is obtained by opening the trapdoor at the very pinnacle of Salisbury Cathedral's steeple, to the horizon in all directions. Below is a network of river channels, some of which could be used to bring even large stones. Bearing in mind higher water tables in the past, Andrew does the calculations for the size of timber raft needed to support even stones for Stonehenge.

'As usual I had brought *Laughing Water* along in the back of the pickup.' This was his open canoe, used here to try the route in the half light, to avoid access confrontations. Crossing the Sound of Iona was

## Reviews of books and publications

an odd one, most being in the southwest after completing jobs. From Bath he canoed up the Avon to Bradford. From Glastonbury he used the flooded River Sheppey, over its banks, to Hinton St George. From Wareham it was a coastal trip to Portland. The longest was from Kew to Bath via the Thames, Kennet and Kennet & Avon Canal. Often he bivvied overnight as necessary and there was plenty of wildlife to see.

The book has overtones of quiet anger, sometimes unexpectedly, maybe supporting those more used to a bad press, dropouts in a graveyard, the Stonehenge sunrise crowds rather than authority. Of Crofton pumping station he say 'I thought the great brick chimney a piece of architecture far more worthy than the showy domesticity of its cousins at Hampton Court, which do nothing better than aid the provision of heat and hot food.'

This is the first paperback edition, beginning with two pages of quotes from reviews of the original. The *Evening Standard* begins 'A compelling book: part travel journal – paddling along misty streams in the South-West by canoe'. No other review extract mentions the canoe.

## 15 Short Walks Winchester



Malcolm Leatherdale  
Cicerone  
978 1 78631 164 1  
2023  
170 x 120mm  
95 pages, paperback  
£9.95

The Test, the Itchen and Itchen Navigation, the Alre and the Dever are all met and sometimes followed on these walks around Winchester, frequently in the form of braided chalk streams,

often fast flowing. Like every other inland river in Hampshire, the EA claim that none of them has navigation available to the public although they are unable to produce justification for their position. It was the navigability that assisted the Romans in making Winchester their fifth largest English city, later becoming the English capital.

Clean water, attractive landscapes, often rural, and mellow brick and stone buildings produce enjoyable riverscapes in a band from east of Winchester towards Andover, the book well illustrated and supported by sections of OS 1:25,000 map.

Malcolm Leatherdale previously wrote *Walking Hampshire's Test Way* (Nov 2018, p29). The current title selects from a wider spread of rivers but in less detail so that families can pick brief strolls.

## 15 Short Walks Cornwall Falmouth & the Lizard



Phil Turner  
Cicerone  
978 1 78631 173 3  
2024  
170 x 120mm  
95 pages, paperback  
£9.95

All but two of these fifteen walks are adjacent to water, usually tidal. Two are on the north coast of Cornwall, several around Carrick Roads and the others mostly from Falmouth round the south

coast to Porthleven.

The latter is alongside the Loe, which would have been open to the sea until blocked by the siltation of the Loe Bar. Penrose Estate donated it to the National Trust in 1974, subject to the condition that boats and swimmers should not be permitted to use it. It would be interesting to know the legal basis for the imposition of these restrictions.

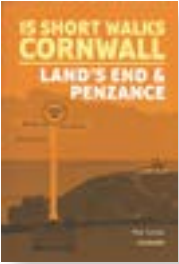
Author Phil Turner highlights 'Lizard Point is the most southerly point in mainland Britain, so it's surprising that so many people are focused on Land's End to John o' Groats journeys. Particularly as John



o’ Groats isn’t the most northerly point either!’ Well said, that man. He might have added their neither of the popular venues are at the most distant points of the British mainland as the crow flies, unlike Lizard Point.

As usual in this series, OS 1:25,000 map sections are included. Having photographs taken from land shows different views from what is seen from the water, the Devil’s Frying Pan being explained particularly clearly, for example.

15 Short Walks Cornwall Land’s End & Penzance



Phil Turner  
Cicerone  
978 1 78631 174 0  
2024  
170 x 120mm  
94 pages, paperback  
£9.95

Another Cornish guide, this one relates to west Cornwall, from Hayle round to Penzance, and complements Phil Turner’s Lizard walks. Most of the routes are on the coast or within sight of it. Many of the pictures are seascapes, sweeping bays or long stretches of cliffs, frequently dotted with chimneys and other tin mine structures. Coastal panoramas show details that cannot always be seen from sea level, including what the water is doing.

Sections of OS 1:25,000 map put names to many features, geological and archaeological, in this ancient landscape.

As usual, carpark, public transport, toilets and places to eat and drink are included, resources that can be thinly spread at times in this remote area.

15 Short Walks Exmoor



Steve Davison  
978 1 78631 190 0  
Cicerone  
2024  
170 x 120mm  
95 pages, paperback  
£9.95

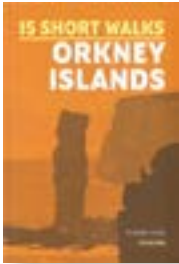
About half the walks in this guidebook are coastal, between Coombe Martin and Porlock Weir, thus with plenty of views from the cliffs. Even Dunkery Beacon and Withycombe Common, well inland, are in sight of the coast.

Inland routes often follow rivers, the East Lyn, the Aller, the Washford River, the Barle included in no less than three of the walks, as are Badgworthy Water and Wimbleball Lake.

Maps are OS 1:25,000 again and all walks are circular.

The author’s longer walking books include *Walking in the Thames Valley* (Apr 2009, p50) and *Walking the Kennet & Avon Canal* (Nov 2016, p37).

15 Short Walks Orkney Islands



Graham Uney  
Cicerone  
978 1 78631 193 1  
2024  
170 x 120mm  
95 pages, paperback  
£9.95

All the routes in this guide are coastal or close, a coast with cliffs, arches, stacks, geos and blowholes, often appearing in the photographs. In addition are some of the most important Neolithic sites in western Europe and some more recent ones, including Scapa Flow.

Logistics of getting to Orkney, getting around, accommodation and obtaining food and drink in an area where resources are limited are all addressed in this group of islands.

The book draws from the author’s *Walking on the Orkney & Shetland Isles* (Nov 22, p37).

15 Short Walks Shetland Islands



Graham Uney  
Cicerone  
978 1 78631 194 8  
2024  
170 x 120mm  
95 pages, paperback  
£9.95

This is the other set of short walks by the author of *Walking on the Orkney & Shetland Isles*. As with Orkney, they are nearly all coastal walks and there are plenty of coastal photographs.

‘Shetland is packed with amazing things to see. Probably the most immediately obvious, whether you arrive by sea or air, is the stunning coastline. Here are the massive sea cliffs, deep voes, sheltered bays, islands, skerries, and some of the finest white-sand beaches in the world.

‘Adding colour and excitement to the coast is the wildlife. Shetland’s shores are home to some of the world’s most important seabird colonies, and in the summer months it is impossible to go to any sea cliff here and not see birds.’ The introduction goes on to list some species with seals, otters and Shetland ponies.

15 Short Walks Isle of Mull



Terry Marsh  
Cicerone  
978 1 78631 195 5  
2024  
170 x 120mm  
92 pages, paperback  
£9.95

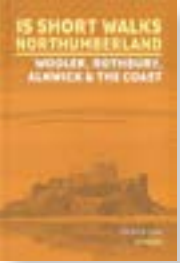
Most of the routes in this guide are coastal with plenty of seascapes included in the pictures, some of which are quite large. Even so, rivers are not overlooked and rapids on the Coladoir River on the Ross of Mull warrant a full page photograph. A double page spread of Rubha nan Gall and its lighthouse is taken from the Sound of Mull but most are coastal views from land.

‘Great swathes of Mull are accessible only on foot, far from outside help.’ Routes often lead to water so approach may also be possible by boat.

The southern end of Iona (May 22, p25) gets a chapter, as does Ulva (Nov 20, p29) where Johnson, Boswell and Livingstone all feature although, surprisingly, there is no mention of the Clearances, particularly bad here.

As usual, there are contacts for the providers of various services and the book ends with a short dictionary of Gaelic terms. If you want more detail, see the author’s *Walking on the Isle of Mull* (Nov 19, p40).

15 Short Walks Northumberland Wooler, Rothbury, Alnwick & the Coast



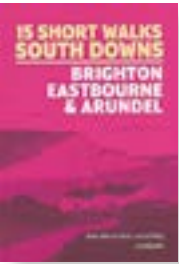
Vivienne Crow  
Cicerone  
978 1 78631 201 3  
2024  
170 x 120mm  
95 pages, paperback  
£9.95

Half of the routes in this book are coastal, between St Mary’s Island and Berwick, including some dramatic castle sites. The rest often include rivers, the Coquet at Rothbury, the Aln at Alnwick and Alnmouth, the Breamish at Ingram, Wooler Water at Wooler and the Tweed at Berwick.

There are long sandy beaches, big skies and not a lot of people, a chance to leave the world behind and get back to nature and sweeping scenery.

Her other books reviewed here have all related to the Lake District.

15 Short Walks South Downs Brighton, Eastbourne & Arundel



Nike Werstroh & Jacint Mig  
Cicerone  
978 1 78631 203 7  
2024  
170 x 120mm  
93 pages, paperback  
£9.95

As the title suggests, most of these walks are on the South Downs between Arundel and Eastbourne, some with long views to rivers or the sea, places that will be seen from the rivers and the sea.

Some routes follow rivers, the Arun at Arundel, the Adur at Upper Beeding, the Cuckmere from Litlington round to the Birling Gap and also Seaford and Beachy Heads. One walk reaches almost from the River Ouse to the Glyne Reach.

The chapters are intended to stand alone. Thus, the South Downs Way is mentioned in most chapters, accompanied by its initials each time for those needing to have them spelled out.

This guide concentrates on walking route instructions more than some other titles in this series, with plenty of superlatives about the views.

Irish Sea Pilot



David Rainsbury  
Imray Laurie Norie & Wilson  
978 178679 3577  
2024  
A4  
194 pages, flexiback  
£37.50

In reviewing the previous edition (May 2016, p35) I commented that the order jumped about somewhat. This has now been changed, moving anticlockwise from Milford Haven via Rathlin to Kilmore and ending with the Isle of Man.

Text is largely unchanged, likewise the chartlets. Some text on Ardglass has got lost in the reordering but nothing likely to be of concern to kayakers. The one consistent change to the text is the addition of a one line subheading for each venue, spelling out its attractions.

The major change has been that many of the pictures are new, including aerial photographs which are particularly informative. The photographs are often better but comparing the two editions gives the best of both. This time there are 36 less pages.

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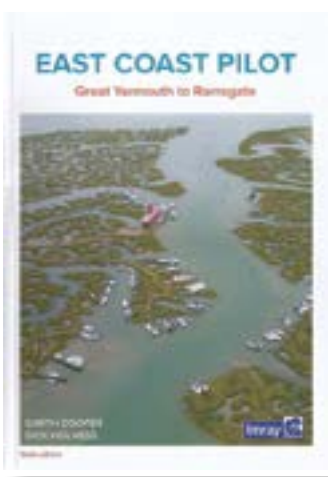
East Coast Pilot

Garth Cooper & Dick Holness  
Imray Laurie Norie & Wilson  
978 178679 451 2  
2005. 6th edition 2024  
A4  
259 pages, flexiback  
£29.50

Like the Irish Sea volume, the stiff paperback cover is in use here.

The title is misleading as the pilot covers only Great Yarmouth to Ramsgate, effectively the greater Thames estuary. In the other direction the Thames is followed to Tower Bridge and several other rivers are traced well inland, the Alde to Snape, the Deben to Woodbridge, the Orwell to Ipswich, the Stour to Mistley, the Colne to Colchester, the Blackwater to Maldon, the Crouch to Battlesbridge, the Roach to Rochford, the Medway to Allington and Faversham Creek to Faversham.

Since the previous edition (Nov 2019, p40) the size of the book



has been increased by 68 pages yet the price has only increased marginally and it is significantly cheaper than the thinner Irish Sea volume. Much of the extra pagination is from the double page picture which starts each chapter. Often this is a drone shot, perhaps the most useful part of the book for us. If a picture is worth a thousand words, look at the cover picture of Woodrolfe Creek, one of the best. How would you begin to describe this waterscape? Even the OS gave up trying to map it at 1:50,000. Most of the pictures have been retaken and frequently features of interest are located.

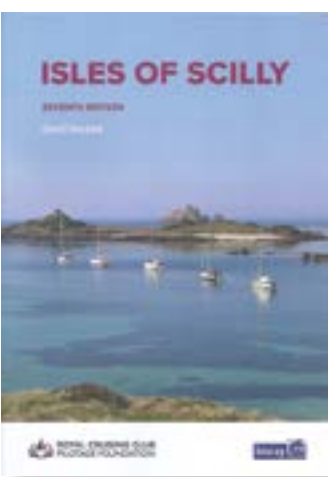
There are less changes to the text which are relevant to kayakers, the largest relating to Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft and the Deben, Colne and Thames.

An important landmark to have gone is Orfordness lighthouse, now demolished. The status of the River Yare through Yarmouth and its £20 charge is unclear. The mouth of the Deben has changed with the channel now nearer the Bawdsey shore.

Two paragraphs in the whole book are picked out in red, both for small craft. One is a warning about commercial traffic at Felixstowe. The other is about Whitstable and reads ‘A few hundred yards further west there is a large and expanding area of flags, posts and buoys guarding numerous metal trestles for raising shellfish. The area is expanding NW-wards, is extremely hazardous to small craft and swimmers, and must be avoided.’ This used to be the first safe landing area with parking east of Sheppey and was an issue addressed by ISKA but we failed to get a satisfactory answer from the oyster company behind this dangerous scheme.

Foulness also remains dangerous with no safe way past for kayak paddlers. If this book prevents a single incident it will have been money well spent.

Isles of Scilly



David Hackett  
978 178679 488 8  
Imray Laurie Norie & Wilson  
1980, 7th edition 2024  
A4  
144 pages, paperback  
£34.50

Since the last edition of this guide was published, much of the text has been rewritten and most of the pictures are new.

The islands cover only a limited area, for which are included transits and details required by yachtsmen, but the first half of the book is extensive introduction. Photographs of landmarks help identification in an area where so many rocks look similar.

This, the warmest area of Britain and with some of the finest beaches in the country around St Martin’s, is compared with the Caribbean. Wrecks play a significant part in the story and further reading is suggested.

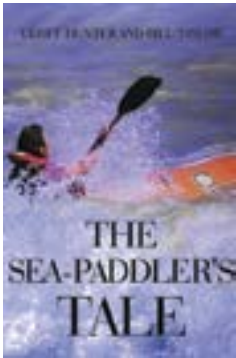
Attention is drawn to several places hiring kayakers. Only five islands are inhabited and many have no water supplies, no toilets, no litter disposal and nowhere to buy food, to the extent that roadside stalls are listed as important facilities. A score of locations have been put out of bounds by naturalists, either for the summer half of the year or permanently, these being marked in the book with kayakers specifically excluded from Annet at all times.

Not infrequently the book draws attention to discrepancies between Admiralty and Navionics charts, often several metres of depth, which may make some routes impassable without long portages.

Passage to Scilly is included, information about rounding the Lizard part of the journey for some.



The Sea-Paddler's Tale



Geoff Hunter & Bill Taylor  
Vanguard Press  
978 1 80016 449 9  
2023  
230 x 160mm  
242 pp, paperback  
£12.99 + p&p

On 3rd May 1970 a young English paddler set off from Maidstone, off the Thames estuary, to paddle in an anticlockwise direction around Britain. Geoff Hunter was paddling a skinny plywood Angmagssalik kayak which he named *Nimrod 1*. Unlike the skin boats of east Greenland, his kayak had fore and aft bulkheads with two deck accessible storage compartments in which Geoff carried his Primus, food and camping gear. On 7th November he paddled back into Maidstone, notching up the first solo paddle around England, Wales and southern bits of Scotland. Geoff took two shortcuts, one through the Caledonian Canal and a second through the Crinan Canal. This was rather fortuitous for Nigel Dennis and me in 1980 when we achieved the first mainland kayak circumnavigation of Britain.

Geoff kept a journal of his 1970 paddle but was unable to attract a book publisher until another similar kayak owner, Jack Clarke, offered to edit his manuscript and published *Angmagssalik Round Britain* in 1982 (May 83, p41), a slender 105 page softcover with hand drawn maps, black and white photos and superb cartoons by DAG (Douglas Godlington) from Scotland.

An outstanding highlight (lowlight for Geoff) was crossing the Solway Firth from Scotland to Workington in England. On 31st July, calm initial conditions deteriorated with a leaking sprayskirt slowly filling his cockpit. Geoff broke his paddle rolling after a capsized but eventually rolled up with half a paddle. Making little headway towards Workington, he reached a big metal channel navigation buoy and spent a night precariously perched on top. During the night, his kayak tether wore through, leaving him stranded. Geoff was hopeful the coastguard would come looking for him as they had been advised of the firth crossing and his landing point.

With only a lifejacket for buoyancy, Geoff set off swimming next morning and was within half a mile of shore when he was finally picked up by two couples in a dinghy. He had lost not only his kayak but all his money and paddling kit. Loaned a similar kayak, Geoff resumed paddling, undeterred by his 'shipwreck', and eventually completed his paddle on 7th November.

In 1986 three paddlers went round all of Britain and Ireland, Mick Wibrew, Richard Elliott and Bill Taylor. *Commitment & Open Crossings* was published in 1990 (Feb 91, p21) as a hardback by Diadem, the text by Bill Taylor with superb maps, two colour plate sections and some corker black and white photos, even double pages bled out to the margins. Along with an index and rear pages with nautical terms, it is one of finest illustrated sea kayak narratives. If you have a hankering to have your own story published, this is the one that sets the benchmark for layout.

In this 2023 title, *The Sea-Paddler's Tale*, Bill Taylor wanted to bring Geoff Hunter's 1970 tale back into print. In the foreword Bill notes that both Geoff and he were not happy with Jack Clarke's edit and interpretation of Geoff's journals so Bill wrote a new account including excerpts from Geoff's original journals, admirable intent but even the title lets this book down; there is no subtitle, narry a hint as to Geoff's historic kayak trip around Britain.

Bill does include a background chapter on the development of kayaks in Britain but claims Geoff's *Nimrod 1* is a west Greenland kayak which it is not, quite obvious by the long projecting stem and stern. He then claimed that in 1932 Gino Watkins 'began a series of expeditions to Greenland'. This disappoints. Gino was leading his fourth Arctic expedition in 1932 when he tragically drowned whilst out seal hunting in his skin kayak. In 2007, from our glassfibre kayaks in Tugtulik (Lake Fjord), east Greenland, Conrad Edwards and I drank a toast to Gino and his heritage of kayaking, close to the glacier face where he went missing.

The chapter heading maps are really bad, even by kayak club newsletter standards, illegible place names, no demarcation of land and water, no paddling route shown and no scale. The maps in the 1982 book were roughly hand drawn with no scale but Geoff's paddling route was shown and the place names very readable.

There are minor photo improvements with some new colour images up to page 56, not seen in Jack Clarke's 1982 book, but thereafter there is not a single photo through to the last page, none of the near full page black and white images of Geoff or the delightful DAG cartoons, one of which is featured on the cover, showing a paddler on a mission with his route around Britain shown. The cover did not need a subtitle; the DAG image provided that.

German paddler Fridel Meyer set off from London in 1933 for a round Britain paddle in a folding kayak with her dog, Wuffles, with an Australian paddler, Jack Nolan, deciding to compete against her. Fridel was banged up in a Scotland car crash while on her way to a lecture and Jack disappeared from the scene with apparent kidney problems.

Then in 1970 Geoff Hunter decided to have a go, a gutsy solo paddle, well recorded and illustrated in Jack Clarke's book. Yes, it is good to see Bill Taylor's rejig of Geoff's journal back in print but it could have been so much better with illustrations, maps and photos of the quality seen in the classic *Commitment & Open Crossings*.

Paul Caffyn

Epic



Ray Salisbury  
Exisle Publishing  
978 1 99 100139 9  
2023  
240 x 160mm  
255 pages, hardback

This anthology of eleven adventure yarns is a marvellous mix of traverses, crossings and circumnavigations achieved by Kiwis in New Zealand, a mix of tramping, road running, mountaineering, road cycling and sea kayaking.

Author Ray Salisbury has taken books written by Kiwi adventurers or their articles and blogs to delve into what makes them tick, their motivation, tenacity, doggedness and satisfaction achieved.

First off is the traverse by Graeme Dingle and Jill Tremain from south to north of the spine of the South Island, the story told in Graeme's excellent book *Two Against the Alps* (1972). Both author Ray and mountaineer Alastair McDowell were inspired by Graeme's book to undertake their own adventures, Ray for a cape to cape tramping traverse across the North Island from East Cape to Cape Egmont while Alastair and Hamish Fleming set out to climb 24 of New Zealand's 3,000 metre peaks in a single sustained push.

The tramping chapters feature Geoff Chapple's late 90s mission from Cape Reinga to Bluff that led to development of the Te Araroa Trail, now such a popular challenge for trampers today, then Brando Yelavich's solo tramp around most of our coastline which led to huge changes in his lifestyle, really a pivotal process in his maturing from drugs and alcohol to seriously challenging his physical and mental skills. It was John Krakauer's book *Into the Wild* that boosted Brando's motivation, about a young fella going off grid in Alaska.

Beautiful Feat is perhaps an intended pun on ultramarathon runner Lisa Tamati but it is just about road running, a long run from Bluff to Cape Reinga; is this deemed adventure or just a physical challenge? Steve Gurney features in *Double Crossing*, also Cape Reinga to Bluff, a mix of bike, run and kayak, but this is a race, people racing each other, and this fails the adventure challenge for me. When serious adventure is involved, does competing add additional risk? Yes, in my view it does. Surely it is sufficient to challenge physical risk on your own without adding extra pressure from trying to beat another adventurer?

Serious adventure in my view involves competition but only between the individual's physical ability and mind, taking into account all the physical factors involved but ability to deal with judgemental decision making about weather and sea conditions. It is that mental side of adventuring that makes me lean towards the chapters on paddling, off road tramping and mountaineering.

Three very special chapters involve sea kayaking, not racing anyone, just competition between mind and body; they include Tara Mulvany with her winter paddle around the South Island, my very first serious trip around Fiordland with Max Reynolds and then carrying on solo with a shore based support crew back to Te Waewae Bay and the Ackerley brothers, Richard and Kevin, who achieved a huge traverse from the most easterly bit of New Zealand (East Cape) to the most westerly (West Cape in Fiordland), a mix of sea kayaking and biking,

along with a descent of Harwood Hole (Takaka) and 15 South Island high mountain ascents.

Ray has used quotes from books, interviews with the 10 adventurers and his own impressions of the adventurers for an engrossing read. The full page colour maps work well, along with enough photos to say the book is well illustrated. Each chapter nicely concludes with a thumbnail history of what the adventurers have got up to since.

A bonus with this book that we rarely see these days with adventure books is a comprehensive reading/blog reference list with an index and two rather good appendices, the first on New Zealand traverses compiled with the help of Shaun Barnett and Alastair McDowell and the second really important one on kayak circumnavigations.

The layout works well; the dustjacket cover design is superb and it is a hard cover book, one with longevity for reading and passing on to reliable friends, those who will return the book!

So, all positive, but are there any omissions that could have been included with the fabulous traverses and circumnavigations in New Zealand that have been accomplished by Kiwis? The stand out omission is the Deavoll /Tyrell unique traverse of the South Island by sea kayak from Te Waewae Bay around Fiordland to Jackson Bay, biking the West Coast up to Arthurs Pass, then tramping north to Farewell Spit. What is so special about this mission is that Ginney Deavoll used her photos and paintings to illustrate a wonderful book, *The Long Way – A Coast to Coast of the South Island* by Paddle, Pedal & Foot.

Overall, this has an excellent layout, a very readable, well designed book with wonderful insights into what makes Kiwi adventurers tick.

Paul Caffyn

Wielkie Jeziora Mazurskie



Wydawnictwo Tessa  
978 83 8882 52 4

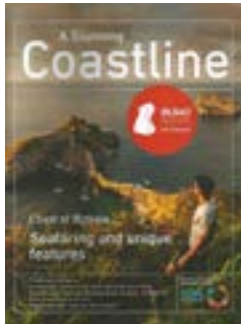
870mm x 1.22m folding to 220 x 140mm

The Mazurian lakes, with their connecting rivers and canals, offer some of the best canoe touring lakeland in Europe. This double sided map at 1:50,000 is very clear and easy to read, despite the amount of information it contains.

It is entirely in Polish, except for the legend in Polish, English and German, an extensive legend that includes things likely to be useful to touring canoeists, campsites and hotels, railway and petrol stations and hiking and cycling trails for those who want a varied trip.

Sometimes the relevant icons are grouped together so it may be necessary to walk around a village to track down what is required. Lakes are all named, even small ones not connected to the rest of the waterways.

A Stunning Coastline



Bilbao Ekitza EPEL  
5th edition 2023  
210 x 160mm  
55 pages, paperback

This tourist guide to 150km of the Bizkaia coast includes the unusual Flysch coast.

Noted for its surfing, a map of breaks locates them, not least Bakio, Sopela and Mundaka, the last with waves 400m long and to 4m high, the best left break in Europe.

With calmer conditions, sit on top kayaks are suggested for use along the coast of Getxo. Bizkaia is primarily the coast, its fishing villages, cliffs, lighthouses, watchtowers, beaches, whale and dolphin watching, seafood, Txakoli wine and everything coastal.

A short dictionary of Basque language includes food dishes and such coastal terms as high and low water.

Beaches [Cullera]



Cullera

270 x 330mm folding to 270 x 110mm

This Spanish Mediterranean guide covers 11 sandy beaches over 15km of coastline. There is one small photograph for each beach, all totally devoid of people, apparently taken at dawn. A sketch map shows the relative locations of the beaches and important places inland. A corresponding list of beaches uses lines of icons to show the facilities at each beach.

The Basque Coast



Eusko Jauriaritzaren Argitalpen  
Zerbitzu Nagusia  
2023 edition  
210 x 170mm  
63 pages, paperback

Other than minor cosmetic changes and the inclusion of the occasional QR code, this is little more than a reprint of the previous edition (May 2020, p43). A couple of the pictures have been updated and the detailed list of events has been replaced with an overview of what the coast has to offer in the way of festivities plus some pictures of examples.

Freedom of the Seas Vol 2



JF Marleau, Justine Curgenvan & Michael Pardy  
446 pages  
<https://408518.e-junkie.com/>

With my serious bias to the *KASK Handbook* as the best sea kayaking manual in the world, I have to confess that this *Freedom of the Seas Volume 2* is now the best sea kayak manual in the world. This 2024 446 page tome is low on words and huge on superb diagrams, figures and photographs. It is a visual delight and its focus is solely on sea kayaking.

A prior 2020 manual (identical lovely graphic layout) covered navigation, sea state and weather so this 2024 manual focuses on 'the most complete source of information for sea kayaking touring paddlers worldwide to increase knowledge, safety and enjoyment. It covers day trips to multi-month trips with examples from across the world'.

I'm a big fan of visually appealing layout, be it a book or a magazine, but from the full page photos leading each chapter to the colourful cartoon diagrams by Andrew Woodford this manual is a visual feast. The text is tight, not too many words, and each chapter has a superb bibliography for further reading.

What lifts this manual is the inclusion of what we term in NZ as Bugger File! moments, actual sea kayaking incidents with near misses, injury or fatalities along with the lessons learned.

There are some cracker chapters like 16, *Tarpology 101*, so applicable with paddling trips into deepest darkest Fiordland, anchors, knots, choice and configuration with erecting tent flies.

Although the emphasis with risk to *Humans from Wildlife* has a focus on North American and polar critters, there is much with how to deal with bears, ticks and mosquitoes when heading overseas.

The *Risk Management* chapter, 'The best way to avoid trouble is to anticipate it', includes the story of Tara Mulvany and Sim Griggs when they were separated after a huge surf launch off the Heaphy River mouth, north of Karamea.

There is much on leadership and group dynamics, also a leaf from the *KASK Handbook* with a chapter on *Leave No Trace & Conservation Ethics*. Superbly illustrated with both cartoons and photos, it includes the female straddling technique for a pee with a photo example of Justine Curgenvan.

There is much also on planning for overseas expeditions but a well



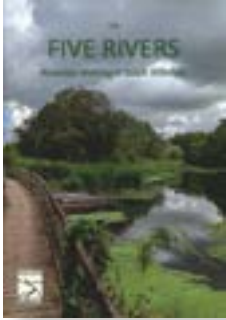
illustrated chapter is titled *Kayak Transportation*, basic stuff but grand illustrations of lifting, carrying and loading kayaks onto vehicles.

At 446 pages, this is now my recommended sea kayaking manual to source. Mind you, it weighs nigh on a kilogram.

Justine advises the download ebook is a PDF but the manual is also available as a print book.

Paul Caffyn

The Five Rivers



South Wiltshire Group of the Ramblers Association  
2022  
A5  
40 pages, paperback

The five rivers are the Nadder, Avon, Bourne, Ebbles and Wylye in the Salisbury area. These frequently feature braiding, often with numerous straight channels running parallel to each other, featuring in the photographs. Most of the text is walking instructions, supported by sections of OS 1:25,000 map although these appear in a

range of sizes.

Introductions include parking and bus services plus places to get food and drink, helped by grid references.

At the end there are nature art notes.

Beaches [Benidorm]



Visit Benidorm  
200 x 480mm folding to 200 x 120mm

This leaflet is a brief guide to 7km of coastline around Benidorm with three beaches and two coves. Each has pictures, a description and icons to show the attributes. These icons can exceed 20 to a beach, not all of which appear in the legend. One is for danger flags, which can include warnings of jellyfish presence, potentially can making swimming unsafe.



Mike Haslam has had printed hard copies of *Dragon Boat Racing in the Modern Era* (May, p45). These should be available via the Dragon Sport News Facebook page.

Paper chart U turns

The UK Hydrographic Office were to cease publishing paper charts although they have now extended the cutoff date from 2026 to beyond 2030 after outcry from users and problems with overseas chart bodies who are not just electronic based. Antares are expanding their range of large scale charts based on modern surveys, the list now running to nearly 700 on the west coast of Scotland, but these are for specific locations likely to be of interest to yachtsmen and are only in electronic format. Some of the UKHO charts for this area are still based on 19th century surveys, for which no new surveys are planned. Imray were to extend their range of paper charts to fill the expected gap but have since decided to terminate paper charts after the 2025 season. Even more dramatic, they are prepared to consider offers for the chart business and associated historic name, supplying charts since the mid 18th century.

Ouch! Moods

Over the years I have found that even just watching the canoe lifeguard championships has reduced anxiety about facing accidents. Some very varied scenarios have been presented (see the last cover) but the reactions of patients have had to be simulated, usually without personal experience. Being an actual patient can throw up some additional factors while removing the competition element of working against the clock. This is offered in the hope that it can perhaps help others.

The European championships series final sprint WWR was held at Llangollen with the Dee at its optimum level. Spectators and rescuers with throwlines stood on the rocks at the Serpent's Tail with the gap full to the top. Rain was falling off and on from one of the winter storms, helping to melt the snow on the sides of the valley. The slate rocks looked slippery but felt quite good when I checked them. The water began slowly to rise further and to turn more muddy so people started to retreat from the water.

After first runs I decided to find a new location for photography. It would only be a question of time before the River Dee was flowing the full width of the channel, certainly by Sunday.

I had stepped over a dry channel in the rocks to get to the riverside. This channel was now flowing. Somebody suggested I pass the camera across first, which saved me several hundred pounds. Trying to keep my feet dry, I was offered a hand and reached for a convenient bush with the other hand. I am not sure whether I jumped or stepped but I misjudged my landing and slipped back into the water.

Early in my canoeing career I had wrecked my ankles in a misadventure following a Worcester Canoe Club party, which I found by sitting on a roadway and feeling for damage. This time I hit the rocks and knew immediately what I had done. The fracture was excruciating.

I fell back into the channel, my shoulders remaining above the water. Others hauled me out with plenty of blood to show. Fortunately, the damage was below the knee but the bone punctured the skin, not good in the polluted water. Somebody produced a large roll of bandage almost out of a pocket and immediately began to wrap my leg.

What surprised me most was the effect of shock. My vision became sufficiently clouded and blurry for me not to recognize any of the people who helped me and I was immediately very weakened. A person under each arm carried me to the foot of the steps but it took me several attempts with rests to get up to the road, during which time I was largely away with the fairies.

A car was brought to drive me to the Chain Bridge Hotel but I was only able to walk with assistance to the first seat, not go a few paces further to somewhere under cover. A further decision was made that I would be taken to Wrexham hospital by car rather than waiting for an ambulance, the days of Llangollen Cottage Hospital being just a memory. I was sufficiently with it to find my car keys and describe my car's location so that the camera could be swapped for clothing and documentation bags.

This time I do have a record. The car crew were Helen Christie (of the family who organized the event and produced some of the top results again) and Louisa Rogers, the mother of one of the rafters, who ensured they kept me talking and did not go to sleep on the slow journey.

Wrexham kept me overnight before taking me by ambulance to Stoke, where bone specialists regularly handle cases from across North Wales. An operation was followed by a week's stay to check on infection from the water, the main concern. I now have enough metalwork to be wary of large magnets. (Whatever happened to Evil Knievel?)

I am still surprised about the significance of shock. It is a matter of regret that I cannot thank personally all those who helped me. We are used to thanking NHS staff including ambulance crews but important speedy first response came from a number of the WWR fraternity. Thank you all.

On about the same day a Lithuanian rafter in Australia in his 60s had become wedged in rocks in a river and had to have his leg amputated to extract him, decidedly ouch!

PS Having unzipping trouser legs meant the hospital didn't need to cut them off.



Camille Prigent.



Felix Oschmautz.



Jessica Fox.

Clarke and Woods eliminated early

Augsburg Slalom

A day of high drama in the rain in Augsburg saw two first time winners crowned as the 2024 World Cup season got underway.

French paddler Camille Prigent delivered one of the best K1 runs of her career to snatch gold in the women's final while a late 50 second penalty delivered gold to Austrian Felix Oschmautz in the men's K1 final.

Prigent had already shown she was in top form by setting the fastest qualifying time in the semi finals but faced a big challenge in the final when the reigning Olympic gold medallist, Germany's Ricarda Funk, posted the fastest time of the day.

Prigent withstood the pressure to post an error free run in a time just point zero four of a second quicker than Funk.

'I'm super happy to have won my first World Cup gold but I felt really nervous,' Prigent said.

'I just wanted to have a solid run; the results didn't really matter. I was thinking my semi final was really solid so if I could do that again I would go close.'

A gate touch and two second penalty robbed Funk of the gold while Brazil's Ana Satila finished third. Australia's reigning world champion, Jessica Fox, missed a gate and had to paddle back to correct her mistake before eventually finishing ninth.

The men's final was riddled with mistakes with only one paddler able to complete the course without penalties.

There was high drama when the final paddler on the course, Italian Giovanni de Gennaro, posted the quickest run, only to be handed a late 50 second penalty for missing a gate.

It left Oschmautz in the gold medal position.

'This is a bit awkward,' Oschmautz said, 'but I'm super happy to win my first World Cup gold. I have lots of other medals from different events but this is my first senior World Cup gold.'

New Zealand's Finn Butcher, who was the first paddler on the course, watched as every other paddler ran into trouble. He eventually finished second with veteran Peter Kauzer of Slovenia taking bronze.

Teenage sensation Ziga Lin Hocevar caused a major boilover while Olympic champion Jessica Fox issued a timely reminder of her class.

At just 16 years old, Slovenia's Hocevar arrived in the German city as the European champion and showed he was in good form by making the final of the men's kayak event on the Friday but it was nothing compared with his error free run in the canoe final, setting a time that nobody else could match.

'It's incredible. I am lost for words,' Hocevar said.

'Most athletes work for their entire life to maybe win a World Cup gold and I am so lucky to have done it at just 16. Last night I was so focussed and motivated and then today I posted a time that was even faster than yesterday's kayak final.

'I was really nervous; this is something I have been dreaming about since the first time I saw my sister paddling in a World Cup.'

Slovakia's Marko Mirgorodsky took the silver while Frenchman Nicolas Gestin posted the fastest raw time in the final but a gate touch



Ziga Lin Hocevar.

and two second penalty saw him drop to third place.

Australia's Fox bounced back from a disappointing K1 final on the Friday and a scratchy C1 semi final which saw her only just scrape into the final to take gold by more than eight seconds.

She picked up an early



gate touch but put together a perfect run for the rest to take the first World Cup win of the season.

'I'm just so relieved to finally put down a good run,' Fox said.

'It's been a tough weekend; it's been wet and harsh. I've been trying to manage the nerves that come with the first World Cup of the season but now I'm thrilled to be back on the podium and to be on the top step.

'It was a tough course. Augsburg is always challenging so I just really had to keep it together.'

Spain's Nuria Vilarrubla picked up the silver with Andorra's Monica Doria taking the bronze.

Slovenia's Eva Tercelj and France's Mathurin Madore both broke through for their first kayak cross gold medals on an action packed day of racing on the Sunday.

On a day when many of the biggest names in world kayak cross, including British world champions Joe Clarke and Kimberley Woods and Jessica Fox, were eliminated early it was Tercelj and Madore who held their nerve to take victories.

Tercelj went into Sunday's competition as the world bronze medallist and got a clear start while her three competitors got caught up jostling for position.

'I had an easy start compared to everyone else so I just knew I needed to keep pushing,' Tercelj said.

'It's my first ever World Cup win so I'm super happy. You just never know what to expect in kayak cross.

Camille Prigent repeated her silver medal performance from last year's world championships while American Evy Leibfarth took the bronze.

In the men's competition Madore looked to be out of the race when he accidentally flipped his kayak shortly after the start of the final but the Frenchman kept his composure and was able to capitalize on mistakes made by his opponents to take the lead in the second half of the race.

'My start was very messy, not just in the final but all day,' Madore said.

'I found it very hard to get to first place early but I also knew that there would be opportunities to make up positions later in the race.

'When I saw the two race leaders go to the same side of the course I knew then that there would be a possibility they would get in each other's way. Next I was in the lead.'

Switzerland's Dimitri Marx took silver with Finn Butcher the bronze.

ICF



Eva Tercelj.



Mathurin Madore.

**K1W:** 1 C Prigent, France, 106.41. 2 R Funk, Deutschland, 106.45. 3 A Satila, Brasil, 108.79. 6 K Woods, GB, 112.49. 19 M Franklin, GB.  
**K1M:** 1 F Oschmautz, Österreich, 101.66. 2 F Butcher, NZ, 102.26. 3 P Kauzer, Slovenija, 102.69. 20 J Dickson, GB.  
**C1W:** 1 J Fox, Australia, 110.68. 2 N Vilarrubla, España, 118.73. 3 M Doria, Andorra, 119.19. 6 E Miller, GB, 126.81. 19 M Franklin, GB.  
**C1M:** 1 Z Hocevar, Slovenija, 101.57. 2 M Mirgorodsky, Slovensko, 101.84. 3 N Gestin, France, 103.09. 10 A Burgess, GB, 111.27. 14 R Westley, GB.  
**K1WX:** 1 E Tercelj, Slovenija. 2 C Prigent, France. 3 E Leibfarth, USA.  
**K1MX:** 1 M Madore, France. 2 D Marx, Schweiz. 3 F Butcher, NZ.





Jiri Prskavec.



Giovanni De Gennaro.

## Setchell's dilemma for Olympic team selectors

### Praha Slalom

Heavy upstream rain threw a curve ball for organizers of the World Cup in Prague.

The Troja River reached heights which made the usual slalom course unrecognizable. As a result, organizers scrapped Thursday's competition and would abbreviate the kayak and canoe competitions.

On the Friday there would only be one heat of the men's and women's kayak with the top ten in each heat qualifying directly for the final. It would be the same format for the canoe on the Saturday.

The kayak cross competition on the Sunday, which also doubled as the final Olympic qualifier, would be run as usual but would also introduce a repêchage round. It would be a similar format when kayak cross made its Olympic debut in Paris.

Brazil's three time Olympian, Ana Satila, said the shortened format would make racing more challenging.

'You only have one run to do and you need to do it at the time,' Satila said.

'The big difference is we don't have that warmup that we normally have and that is really important.

'Unfortunately this is the first time we have seen the water like this during a race preparation but of course it is hard for everybody. We don't have the last part of the course so we can't train there.'

A total of 45 nations representing every continent entered this World Cup. Paris bound competitors from Czechia, Spain and Slovakia, who sat out the previous weekend's season opener in Augsburg, would be back in action.

Czech Olympic champion Jiri Prskavec and Spanish Olympic champion Maialen Chourraut would both line up for their first World Cup of the year.

Paddlers from 38 nations would be competing in the kayak cross. There would be three Olympic quotas up for grabs in both the men's and women's events and only those who had not yet earned their country an Olympic quota would be eligible to compete.

Italy's Giovanni De Gennaro broke through for his first ever win



while France's Emma Vuitton collected her maiden gold medal on the Friday.

It was De Gennaro's final international before he competed at his third Olympics later this year and he'd take winning K1 form to Paris after breaking a run of minor placings on the Czech course.

The event opened up for De Gennaro when the top two Czech paddlers, Olympic champion Jiri Prskavec and World Cups winner Vit Prindis, missed the final.

'I'm really happy, I've been waiting for this run for the last four years,' De Gennaro said.

'I was always so close to getting a win but the Czech guys were always really really fast so today I'm just happy that I was able to put down a solid run.

'I usually don't look at the start list for the final. I just focus on me. I know with them in the final it would be much harder to take the win but today was like this and I won't complain about the fact they weren't there.'

He finished more than two seconds clear of Poland's Mateusz Polaczyk, who secured Olympic selection for his country with his silver, while Jakub Krejci gave the home fans reason to celebrate with a bronze.

In the women's K1 event 20 year old Emma Vuitton picked up the biggest win of her career, finishing ahead of four time world champion and three time Olympic medallist Jessica Fox and reigning Olympic champion and two time world champion Ricarda Funk.

'It's crazy for me because they are two paddlers I watched when I was younger on TV,' Vuitton said.

'I'm super happy about my final; it was not perfect but I tried to push hard in the bottom of the course and I'm happy with the result. This year I'm feeling really good on the water but I've found it hard in the finals to push for the finish line so I'm happy today I could do that. I just need to concentrate on my paddling and try and do a good run every race.'

Vuitton proved the importance of remaining error free. Both Fox and



Emma Vuitton.



Gabriela Satková.



The Troja River course.



Angele Hug, centre.

Funk picked up four seconds in penalties with just over one second covering the first seven place getters in the final.

Hometown heroes and Paris bound paddlers Jiri Prskavec and Gabriela Satková sent their local fans into raptures with double gold on the Saturday.

Satková would compete at her first Olympic Games later this year and celebrated with women's C1 victory over a field which included the current Olympic and world champions.

Prskavec would be aiming to defend his K1 Olympic gold in Paris but on Saturday it was in the men's C1, which he only started paddling competitively last year, where he tasted success. Prskavec missed qualification for the C1 at the Games but is already planning for Los Angeles in 2028.

His win came less than 24 hours after a big mistake in his favoured K1 kept him out of a final in front of his home crowd. He said Saturday's final needed a change of approach.

I went out there, I played and I had fun,' Prskavec said.

'It's my first C1 win and in front of my home crowd so I can't imagine a much better day. I have to show that I can perform under pressure and win medals and I didn't manage so let's wait in four years and I will do my best.

'I had to change my mindset before today because yesterday I was too focussed about the seconds, about other competitors, instead of focusing on myself. Today I was just like a kid who was playing and that's how it should be.'

Reigning men's Olympic champion Benjamin Savsek confirmed his Paris selection when he qualified for Saturday's final and then followed up with silver behind Prskavec. France's Nicholas Gestin continued his strong start to the 2024 season with another bronze medal.

The 22 year old Satková had the biggest win of her career in a scrappy women's C1 final with the top three paddlers all attracting penalties for mistakes during their performances but Satková, urged on by the capacity home crowd, held her nerve to take the gold.

'The feeling is just incredible. I cannot believe I was able to do such a good run in front of my home crowd; it just feels great,' Satková said.

'I was actually pretty stressed because when my sister was going in front of me I heard the crowd cheering so much and the nerves; it just makes you stressed but I was also motivated to make sure I could also do a good run. It all went well and I can't believe it happened.

'The crowd here is so amazing and I'm so glad they came here to support us. Even the Czech President was here to support us, which is incredible.'

For the second day running Australia's Jessica Fox ruled herself out of a gold medal by picking up two gate touches and four seconds in penalties. Her raw time was the fastest of the final but she had to settle for silver.

Germany's Andrea Herzog, who took C1 bronze in Tokyo but would miss the Paris Games, finished third, also with a two second penalty.

France's Angele Hug and Spain's Manuel Ochoa both won in kayak cross on the final day but both then faced a nervous wait to learn if they would get to compete at the Paris Olympics.

Three kayak cross Games quotas were up for grabs in both the men's and the women's competition on Sunday with Spain, Germany and France earning the men's tickets and France, Australia and Great Britain taking the top three spots in the women's event.

The only certain Olympic starter from the six who earned quotas on the Sunday was Australia's Noemie Fox, who was set to join her sister, Jessica, in Paris.

Hug's win was not without controversy with Czech paddler Tereza Kneblova crossing the finish line first before being handed a late penalty for missing a gate. The decision dropped Kneblova from first to fourth and potentially out of an Olympic quota.

Hug's Olympic fate was then in the hands of the French selectors.

'It's a huge pleasure. I really wanted to perform well in kayak cross because I love this sport and it maybe means I'm not sure yet because we have to wait a decision but maybe the Olympics,' Hug said.

'We have to wait for the federation to decide who is the best boat to take to the Olympics. I felt really good today; it was amazing with all the team cheering for us. After the first heats I was really nervous and told myself to calm down.

'I would be so proud to be there (in Paris); all my family is there, all the French team, and it means a lot for me to compete at home. Even if someone else goes it will be a pleasure to support them.'

Fox said getting the chance to compete for Australia at the Olympics would be a dream come true.

'It's been a long road to get here and to be on the podium today,' Fox said.

'It's been like eight months that I've been dreaming about this day every day and visualizing it and really being so motivated to get to this race and be in the best physical and mental possible state. I'm just so proud of myself.'

Great Britain's Nikita Setchell finished third and by doing so had an Olympic quota on offer but, if they accepted it, it would mean either Kimberley Woods or Mallory Franklin would sit out the event in Paris.

If Great Britain decided not to accept the ticket it would be allocated to Czechia.

The Spanish federation also faced a difficult choice after Manuel Ochoa took the gold in the men's kayak cross final.

'I feel very happy, speechless actually, after many months of work to get the Olympic spot for my country and to take the gold medal is an awesome feeling,' Ochoa said.

'I'm so grateful for that. I felt very nervous; it was a very long race.

'I would love to go to the Olympics but we have a strong team in kayak cross so we will have a decision soon. It will be a technical decision but, whatever the decision is, it will be fair. We have one more World Cup in Kraków so maybe we will fight there.'



Manuel Ochoa.





Nikita Setchell left selectors to decide whether to accept an Olympic entry spot.



Kimberley Woods, an established Olympic contender.

Germany's Tillman Roeller was the surprise paddler of the day, taking silver at his first ever World Cup and earning a Paris quota for his country. Who would get to compete for Germany would be decided at the following weekend's World Cup in Kraków. The French federation also had a difficult decision to make for the men with Boris Neveu finishing third and earning a quota. Competition for the final spot in the host nation's slalom team had been intense.

ICF

**K1W:** 1 E Vuitton, France, 94.12. 2 J Fox, Australia, 94.29. 3 R Funk, Deutschland, 94.40. 7 K Woods, GB, 95.36. 20 L Leaver, GB.  
**K1M:** 1 G de Gennaro, Italia, 79.07. 2 M Polaczyk, Polska, 81.28. 3 J Krejci, Czechia, 81.35. 20 J Dickson, GB.  
**C1W:** 1 G Satková, Czechia, 96.35. 2 J Fox, Australia, 97.94. 3 A Herzog, Deutschland, 98.43. 10 M Franklin, GB, 334.42.  
**C1M:** 1 J Prskavec, Czechia, 86.32. 2 B Savsek, Slovenija, 87.14. 3 N Gestin, France, 88.43. 11 R Westley, GB. 16 A Burgess, GB.  
**K1WX:** 1 A Hug, France. 2 N Fox, Australia. 3 N Setchell, GB. 6 K Woods, GB.  
**K1MX:** 1 M Ochoa, España. 2 T Roeller, Deutschland. 3 B Neveu, France.



Joe Clark.



Jessica Fox.



Jules Bernardet.



Martin Dougoud.

ICF photographs

# Fox clean sweep and Clarke wins

## Kraków Slalom

Reigning world champions Joseph Clarke and Jessica Fox would take winning form into the Paris Olympics after both tamed an unruly Kraków course to take the titles at the World Cup on the Friday. Great Britain's Clarke, who won at the Olympics at Rio 2016, was just able to edge out Czech Vit Prindis in the men's K1 final to arrest a form slump which had seen him fail to make a podium at the opening two World Cups of the season. Australian Fox, a four time world champion and Olympic silver and two time bronze medallist in the women's K1, took her first kayak win of the season by finishing just ahead of Rio 2016 champion Maialen Chourraut of Spain. 'I'm really happy; it was such a hard race,' Fox said. 'I'm just happy I was able to put down two good runs; that was my goal here but it was a hard course which was super tough.' American Ria Sribar enjoyed her best international result by finishing third behind Fox and Chourraut. Clarke had had a frustrating start to the 2024 season but his big focus was getting back on the Olympic podium after missing selection for the Tokyo Games.

He also revealed he had gone into Friday's runs carrying an injury. 'I'm very happy, especially because during cross training I pulled a muscle in my neck so I didn't even know for sure I was going to race today,' Clarke said. 'I've got a lot of tape on my neck but I love racing at this place. I've had a lot of great results. 'I've had a disappointing season so far in slalom so it's good to go into the Olympics in winning form. Prindis finished a close second with fellow Czech Jakub Krejci taking bronze.

Jessica Fox notched up the 50th individual gold medal of her World Cup career with a victory in the women's C1 final in Kraków on the Saturday. It was also the ninth time Fox had won both the kayak and canoe titles at a single World Cup. In the men's final France's Jules Bernardet celebrated his first World Cup of the year with an incredible gold medal. Fox won her first World Cup title back in 2010 and on the Saturday registered her 50th.

She now had 32 canoe wins as well as 17 in kayak and one in kayak cross. This win came despite a two second penalty for a gate touch. Fox said she went into the event not certain if she would be able to show her best. 'I felt really tired and flat today so I'm just happy I was able to step up when I needed to,' Fox said. 'It's been a great weekend. I'm really pleased to have been able to finish off with this win. 'It was really important for me to refocus after yesterday's win; there are so many challenges on this course.'

Fox won her first canoe and kayak double back in 2013 in Tacen, Slovenia. This weekend was the second time she had won both in Kraków. Brazil's Ana Satila would go to Paris confident of her form after taking silver. 'I feel so tired after half a season so I'm really excited with this run,' Satila said. 'The course is so challenging physically.' Czech Martina Satková took the bronze. Such is the overall strength of the French slalom team that many of the world's best paddlers can struggle to get opportunities to compete at the top level.



Such was the case for Jules Bernardet, who finally got his opportunity this weekend and responded with the best run of the day and a gold medal. 'I've prepared so hard for this World Cup because it's my first one for the year so I'm so happy that I was able to make a good result,' he said. Slovakia's Matej Benus would head to Paris feeling he was ready to return to the podium after returning his best result of the season so far by finishing second. 'It's the first time I've had a good run this year,' the Rio Olympic silver medallist said. 'It was pretty tiring; you have to paddle hard but I'm very happy with this result in my last competition before the Olympics.' Great Britain's Ryan Westley finished third. Jessica Fox made more canoeing history, becoming the first to win three individual gold medals over a single weekend at a slalom World Cup.

The Tokyo Olympic gold medallist completed the hat trick in Kraków on the Sunday, taking out the kayak cross final to add to the kayak and canoe gold medals she won over the previous two days. Switzerland's Martin Dougoud won his first kayak cross in the men's and would head to Paris as one of the favourites when the event made its Games debut.

Fox only decided late to make the journey to Kraków for the final World Cup before Paris and then admitted to feeling tired and flat ahead of her canoe competition but, having already secured her 50th overall World Cup gold 24 hours earlier, her confidence was sky high. 'This is incredible, so unexpected. I'm absolutely thrilled,' Fox said. 'This has been such a perfect weekend. I couldn't have imagined it turning out like this. You never know what can happen in kayak cross. I really enjoyed myself.

'It was chaos early in the final. I just wanted to get a good start and then to stay clear headed throughout the race.' Fox had already for the ninth time won both the canoe and kayak gold medals at a single World Cup but now became the first to win three finals.

Czech Tereza Kneblova took silver ahead of Great Britain's reigning world champion, Kimberley Woods. In the men's competition the exit at the semi final stage of three time world champion Joe Clarke threw the race for gold wide open. Dougoud took bronze behind Clarke at last year's world championships and held his form in a high class Sunday final. 'The final was really tough; you always have to fight because you never really know what is happening, Dougoud said. 'Sitting on the ramp, you don't think about things too much. In kayak cross it is sometimes a game of luck. Today was my day.' Vit Prindis finished second with the current overall World Cup leader, Mathurin Madore of France, taking the bronze.

ICF

**K1W:** 1 J Fox, Australia, 93.49. 2 M Chourraut, España, 94.24. 3 R Sribar, USA, 99.03. 8 L Leaver, GB, 103.98.  
**K1M:** 1 J Clarke, GB, 85.33. 2 V Prindis, Czechia, 85.96. 3 J Krejci, Czechia, 86.34. 11 J Dickson, GB.  
**C1W:** 1 J Fox, Australia, 102.71. 2 A Satila, Brasil, 105.99. 3 G Satková, Czechia, 110.35. 12 E Miller, GB.  
**C1M:** 1 J Bernadet, France, 91.12. 2 M Benus, Slovensko, 93.39. 3 R Westley, GB, 93.94. 9 A Burgess, GB, 98.27.  
**K1WX:** 1 J Fox, Australia. 2 T Kneblova, Czechia. 3 K Woods, GB.  
**K1MX:** 1 M Dougoud, Schweiz. 2 Prindis, Czechia. 3 M Madore, France.





Czech C1 team.



Ziga Lin Hocevar.



Manuel Tripano.

# It happened so fast for Leaver

## World J/U23 Championships

France and Czechia got off to a superb start in Liptovsky Mikulas with three gold medals each on a day of team events at the junior and under 23 world championships.

It was an action packed opening day at the Slovakian venue as paddlers worked together to achieve success for their respective nations.

France's first success came in the U23 men's kayak where Leo Vuitton, Anatole Delassus and Edgar Paleau-Brasseur triumphed in 88.09.

The trio defeated Great Britain by 0.51 while Italy crossed in 90.07 for bronze.

There was delight for France in the next event as Martin Cornu, Elouan Debliquy and Titouan Estanguet won the junior men's kayak in 90.69 despite receiving a two second penalty.

Italy took silver with Germany completing the podium in third.

France completed their hat trick when Cornu, Debliquy and Estanguet combined again to clinch the men's canoe junior title in 96.58.

Germany were the silver medallists while Czechia bagged bronze.

Czechia also celebrated three gold medals with their first coming in the women's kayak junior event.

Bara Galuskova, Marketa Hojdova and Klara Mrazkova produced a clean run of 101.98 to seal top spot.

Germany and France picked up the respective silver and bronze medals.

Czechia came out on top in the men's canoe U23 after finishing in a winning time of 92.92.

Adam Kral and Martin and Lukas Kratochvil were the gold medallists while Slovenia took silver and France claimed bronze.

Czechia's third and final gold came in the junior women's canoe when Valentyna Kocirova, Marketa Stepankova and Natalie Erlova clocked 116.86 to take the title.

France secured silver with Germany sealing bronze.

Czechia thought they had another win when Tereza and Klara Kneblova and Gabriela Satkova posted what appeared to be a winning time, only to be hit with a 50 second penalty in the U23 women's canoe final.

This meant that Italy's Marta Bertoncelli, Elena Micozzi and Elena Borghi took the glory in 110.90 while the German team clinched silver and Spain earned bronze.



Ting Yang.



'We have raced so many times together so we were confident and this is amazing,' said Borghi.

'I am happy as this is the last under 23 event for Marta so it is a great way to finish.

Bertoncelli added 'It's really nice to start the competition like this for the individual races so all three of us will be confident of getting another medal.'

Germany were also victorious, winning the opening final in the U23 women's kayak in a time of 99.67.

Antonia and Annkatrin Plochmann and Emily Apel were crowned champions despite receiving two two second penalties.

France and Czechia claimed the silver and bronze medals respectively. TingYang made history with a stunning victory.

It was a huge moment for China as the Asian nation had never previously achieved a gold medal at any slalom world championships.

Slovenia's Ziga Lin Hocevar retained the junior men's canoe crown while Anatole Delassus and Great Britain's Lois Leaver won the respective men's and women's kayak U23 gold medals.

Yang produced a superb performance to seal the women's C1 junior title in 112.84 seconds, emerging victorious by 0.68.

'It's really exciting and I am very proud,' said Yang.

'I am excited that I am getting better and better.'

France's Lena Quemerais was the silver medallist with Valentyna Kocirova claiming bronze.

There were no surprises in the men's canoe junior final as Hocevar triumphed by eight seconds to retain his crown.

Hocevar was a class above the rest of the field as he cruised to victory in 92.45 with an impeccable performance.

It is another title to a sensational season for Hocevar, having become senior European champion and won his first World Cup in the men's C1.

'It is incredible, really unbelievable to be back to back world champion,' said Hocevar.

'It is something that I have been dreaming about.

'Not a lot of people have done it before so to win by eight seconds is incredible.

'Of course, every time you can do better but I think it was almost a perfect run.'

Martin Cornu and Germany's Niels Zimmermann clinched silver and bronze respectively.



Emma Vuitton.

There could have been two golds for the Hocevar family but Great Britain's Leaver edged out Ziga Lin's sister in the women's kayak U23 final.

Leaver stunned Eva Alina Hocevar by 0.12 to secure the title.

'It's crazy; it all happened so fast,' said Leaver.

'It feels very surreal right now.

'I felt like I had worked on the things from the semi finals. I improved my run and when I crossed the finish line I saw the scoreboard go green; it was crazy.

'I was really nervous just waiting to see how the other girls did and there were some really good runs going down so I am just happy.

'It will take a few days to let it sink in.'

Hocevar picked up silver with Czechia's Katerina Bekova earning bronze.

Delassus was celebrating another men's kayak U23 title, adding to the one he won in 2022.

Delassus posted a time of 89.92 which proved to be enough as Czechia's Jakub Krejci finished just 0.05 short.

'I feel very happy with my win,' said Delassus.

'It was a tough day, especially in the semi finals as I was a little bit nervous.

'It was very close in the final and I knew before it would be.

'I have raced against Jacob for a lot of years and each year it is hard fight.'

Krejci sealed silver with Slovenia's Lan Tominc bagging bronze.

More history was made as Argentina picked up its first ever title thanks to Manuel Tripano's triumph.

It was Tripano's turn in this day's men's canoe U23 final to enter canoeing folklore with Argentina's first slalom success on the global stage.

Ziga Lin Hocevar completed a canoe kayak double, courtesy of his victory in the men's K1 junior final while Czechia celebrated two wins for Gabriela Satkova and Klara Mrazkova.

Tripano posted a time of 95.27 to put him in pole position before watching as seven more paddlers took to the water.

Lukas Kratochvil looked to have won it when he crossed the finish line, only to receive a two second penalty for a gate touch, giving Tripano the title.

'Wow. I don't know what to feel; it's my dream come true,' said Tripano.

'I thought it was a really good time and it might be enough for a medal.

'When I thought that Lucas got first position at the end I was happy because getting a medal was a really big thing for me.

'When I was celebrating people told me that I was first so it was quite emotional.

'It's a big moment for Argentina.'

Yohann Senechault of France finished 0.21 behind Tripano in second with Kratochvil taking bronze.

The Czech team were soon celebrating when Satkova delivered a brilliant performance to win her first U23 world title.

It was a strong field with fellow Paris bound paddlers Marta Bertoncelli and Eva Alina Hocevar of Slovenia going up against Satkova.

Satkova powered to victory in 99.72, winning the U23 women's canoe by almost six seconds.

'It feels amazing and it's actually my first [world title] in U23 so I am happy I managed to win it,' said Satkova, who was to fly to Paris on the Monday for pre Games training.

'It was a tough competition and that's what I like.

'Everyone is pushing really hard to get the fastest time.

'This is a really important event for me.

'Once I don't race for a month or two I feel like I don't know what to do so for me it is better to do this before the Olympics.

'It is also great to be here with my friends because I cannot take all of them to Paris so it was great to share this with them.'

Bertoncelli and Hocevar collected silver and bronze respectively.

Czechia's other gold was won by Mrazkova who captured the junior women's kayak title in 103.21.

'I cannot describe my feelings as I am so grateful and so happy,' said Mzakova.

'It was my dream and it has come true.

'I made myself think that it was not about the result so I can enjoy the run and feel myself on the water.

'I hope this is just the start for my career.'

Poland's Hanna Danek and Italy's Caterina Pignat also produced clean runs, earning them silver and bronze respectively.

In form Ziga Lin Hocevar backed up his dominant victory in the

previous day's junior men's C1 final with a brilliant K1 triumph in 87.21.

After producing the fourth best time in the semi finals, Hocevar delivered when it mattered most again, winning by almost six seconds.

'It's simply unbelievable,' said Hocevar.

'It's something that I have been working towards for so long.

'I wanted to prove to myself that I am really good in K1 as well as C1 and today I did that.

'It's everything I wished for and everything I wanted.'

Martin Cornu picked up two two second penalties but he still did enough to take silver while Czechia's Michal Kopecek bagged bronze.

Emma Vuitton and Gael Adisson struck gold in the final as France finished with six gold, seven silver and two bronze medals to top the medals table.

Czechia was the second best nation with five gold, one silver and eight bronze medals followed by Slovenia with three gold, three silver and two bronze medals.

The previous month Vuitton had stunned four time Olympic medallist Jessica Fox and Tokyo 2020 champion Ricarda Funk to clinch her maiden World Cup title in K1 in Prague.

The 20 year old continued her good run of form in Slovakia as she won the women's kayak cross U23 final with ease.

Spaniard Leire Goni and Katerina Bekova claimed silver and bronze respectively.

The men's U23 final saw Adisson pip compatriot and 2022 kayak cross world silver medallist Anatole Delassus for the title.

Czechia's Mtyas Novak secured the final podium spot.

Slovenia's Naja Pinteric stole the show in the women's junior kayak cross final, getting the better of Spain's Haizea Segura and Australia's Codie Davidson.

Davidson's bronze was Australia's only medal at the world championships.

In the junior men's kayak cross final Faust Clotet Juanmarti crossed the line first, adding to the Spanish tally and winning his country's only gold.

It was an impressive performance to beat Ziga Lin Hocevar, who was in great form, having won a first senior European title and a maiden World Cup gold to begin the season.

The bronze medal went to Great Britain's Jonah Hanrahan.

The thrilling kayak cross races once again provided a glimpse of what to expect as the discipline was set for its Olympic Games debut at Paris 2024.

The world championships in 2025 is scheduled to be held from July 8th to 13th in Foix, France.

## ICF

**K1WJ:** 1 **K Mrazkova, Czechia**, 103.21. 2 **H Danek, Polska**, 105.45. 3 **C Pignat, Italia**, 106.00. 8 **A Kontchakov, GB**, 114.03. 10 **Z Blythe-Shields, GB**, 131.45.

**K1WU23:** 1 **L Leaver, GB**, 100.16. 2 **E Hocevar, Slovenija**, 100.28. 3 **K Bekova, Czechia**, 101.81. 9 **E Miller, GB**, 108.58. 14 **M Kong, GB**.

**K1MJ:** 1 **Z Hocevar, Slovenija**, 87.21. 2 **M Cornu, France**, 92.84. 3 **M Kopecek, Czechia**, 92.97. 16 **G Williams, GB**.

**K1MU23:** 1 **M Delassus, France**, 89.92. 2 **J Krejci, Czechia**, 89.97. 3 **L Tominic, Slovenija**, 90.93. 4 **S Leaver, GB**, 90.99. 5 **B Haylett, GB**, 91.27. 11 **J Dickson, GB**.

**C1WJ:** 1 **T Yang, Zhongguo**, 112.84. 2 **L Quemerais, France**, 113.52. 3 **V Kocirova, Czechia**, 113.65. 13 **Z Blythhe-Shields, GB**. 19 **A Kontchakov, GB**.

**C1WU23:** 1 **G Satková, Czechia**, 99.72. 2 **M Bertoncelli, Italia**, 105.57. 3 **A Hocevar, Slovenija**, 107.25. 15 **E Miller, GB**.

**C1MJ:** 1 **Z Hocevar, Slovenija**, 92.45. 2 **M Cornu, France**, 100.45. 3 **N Zimmermann, Deutschland**, 100.95.

**C1MU23:** 1 **M Tripano, Argentina**, 95.27. 2 **Y Senechault, France**, 95.48. 3 **L Kratochvil, Czechia**, 95.71. 4 **L Royle, GB**, 96.21. 6 **K Rozenhals, GB**, 96.56. 16 **E McDonald, GB**, 100.89.

**K1XWJ:** 1 **N Pinteric, Slovenija**. 2 **H Segura, España**. 3 **C Davidson, Australia**. **K1XWU23:** 1 **E Vuitton, France**. 2 **L Goni, España**. 3 **K Bekova, Czechia**.

**K1XMJ:** 1 **F Juanmarti Clotet, España**. 2 **Z Hocevar, Slovenija**. 3 **J Hanrahan, GB**. **K1XMU23:** 1 **G Adisson, France**. 2 **A Delassus, France**. 3 **M Novak, Czechia**.

**K1WJT:** 1 **Czechia**, 101.98. 2 **Deutschland**, 105.19. 3 **France**, 109.23. 7 **GB**, 117.15. **K1WU23T:** 1 **Deutschland**, 99.67. 2 **France**, 102.52. 3 **Czechia**, 102.54. 6 **GB**, 112.75.

**K1MJT:** 1 **France**, 90.69. 2 **Italia**, 94.24. 3 **Deutschland**, 95.61. 6 **GB**, 99.18. **K1MU23T:** 1 **France**, 88.09. 2 **GB**, 88.60. 3 **Italia**, 90.07.

**C1WJT:** 1 **Czechia**, 116.86. 2 **France**, 122.77. 3 **Deutschland**, 125.71. 4 **GB**, 141.11. **C1WU23T:** 1 **Italia**, 110.90. 2 **Deutschland**, 119.74. 3 **España**, 119.75. 11 **GB**, 170.33.

**C1MJT:** 1 **France**, 96.58. 2 **Deutschland**, 97.82. 3 **Czechia**, 101.59. 8 **GB**, 122.90. **C1MU23T:** 1 **Czechia**, 92.92. 2 **Slovenija**, 96.84. 3 **France**, 97.40. 8 **GB**, 101.70.





Jessica Fox with an unprecedented set of wins.

## Britain's best Olympic slalom results

### Olympic Games

Australia's Jessica Fox fulfilled her long held dream of women's kayak Olympic gold with a peerless performance at Paris 2024.

After taking silver and two bronzes in the event at previous Games, Fox finally emerged victorious with a stunning time of 96.08 at the Vaires-sur-Marne nautical stadium.

Poland's Klaudia Zwolinska captured silver with Great Britain's Kimberley Woods bagging the bronze medal.

Placed eighth after the semi final, Fox pulled out all the stops in the final, making no mistakes to put her in pole position.

She then watched nervously as paddlers failed to beat her time before victory was confirmed when defending champion Ricarda Funk of Germany received a 50 second penalty towards the end of her final run.

There was plenty of pressure on Fox as the four time world champion in kayak, Australia's opening ceremony flagbearer, delivered a terrific performance.

It was Fox's fifth Olympic medal and second gold following her canoe title at Tokyo 2020.

'It means everything to me right now,' said Fox.

'It's been years and years of chasing this dream, of getting really close, persevering and picking myself back up.

'There has been a lot of teamwork, love and gratitude from everyone to help me to get here.

'Today, to feel that energy from the crowd and also from everyone who was staying up late back home, it was just the perfect day for me.

'It didn't start well but it finished really well and it was just magical.'

Zwolinska picked up her first Olympic medal and her country's first of the Games after clocking a time of 97.53.



Before 2023 the Polish paddler had failed to make the podium at a major event but had now claimed world bronze, European gold and Olympic silver.

'I am proud of the fact that I won the first medal for my country and it came from canoe slalom,' said Zwolinska.

'It was good for me and it was very good that it happened in Paris.

'My family and friends were able to cheer me.'

Woods got off to a blistering start as she went on to cross the finish line in 98.94 for third, edging out Brazil's Ana Satila.

'I feel absolutely proud to represent Team GB and win this medal,' said Woods.

'The crowd make it loud enough so you don't hear what is going on.

'I tried to focus on myself. I knew that I had gone faster than my semi final time. I was a bit frustrated with the mistake at the bottom but I went out there, gave it my all and got a result out of it.'

Funk was fastest in the semi final and was aiming to secure back to back titles but her hopes were dashed when she missed the fourth from final gate.

'I was just fighting until the end, pushing until the end and hoping until the end,' said Funk.

'I didn't realize it was a 50 second penalty. I was still thinking it was a two second penalty so I just saw the result when I was in the finish line, then I saw the video and then I had to agree that it was a 50.'

Italy's Stefanie Horn ranked fifth with home favourite Camille Prigent finishing in sixth position.

France's Nicolas Gestin followed in the footsteps of the onlooking Tony Estanguet with a dominant display to capture men's canoe gold.

With the Paris 2024 President, a three time champion in the event,



Kimberley Woods, placed third.



Nicolas Gestin, winning at home.

watching on, Gestin produced an incredible showing in front of a passionate home crowd.

The atmosphere was electric inside the packed Vaires-sur-Marne nautical stadium and the French fans roared Gestin to a stunning victory as he triumphed by more than five seconds.

Great Britain's Adam Burgess secured silver with Slovakia's Matej Benus taking the bronze.

With the backing of the home fans, Gestin had been in inspired form, registering the quickest time in both runs of the heats and in this day's semi final.

Going last in the final, the pressure was on the world silver medallist to deliver as France's expectation for gold was immense and he delivered in emphatic fashion, crossing the finish line in 91.36.

It was the fifth time France had claimed the men's C1 title with

Estanguet winning three of them and Deni Gargaud Chanut taking the other.

'I don't know what to say; it's better than my dreams,' Gestin said.

'It's the best race of my life. Everyone on my team, my mentor, my brother and I, wanted it.

'When I crossed the line I knew I had put in a great run and now I just enjoy it.'

Burgess ensured back to back medals for Great Britain thanks to his superb showing.

After the previous day's bronze for Kimberley Woods, Burgess added another medal after posting a time of 96.84 that saw him move in front before Gestin's stunning showing.

'There'll be no waking up in the night, wondering what could have been, now,' Burgess said.





Adam Burgess.

‘I really wanted to just leave it all out there today. I’ve paid the price and missed opportunities by being a little cautious at times and I really wanted to just go out with confidence.’ Benus ranked 11th in the semi finals before putting together a brilliant performance in the final as he held on for bronze with 97.03. It was his first Olympic medal in eight years after taking C1 silver at Rio 2016. ‘It’s amazing. I am actually very, very tired but very happy. It is our first medal for Slovakia,’ Benus said. ‘My run was pretty good but I was slow in the difficult combination in [gates] six and seven. It was easier for lefties and I am righty so it was a little bit tight but there was no chance of winning today with Nicolas Gestin’s time so I will take third place.’ Germany’s two time Olympic medallist Sideris Tasiadis finished just 0.24 behind Benus to place fourth while a two second penalty for Spain’s Miquel Trave saw him end up fifth. Slovenia’s Benjamin Savsek, the defending Olympic champion and



Giovanni de Genaro.

last year’s world gold medallist, produced a storming final section to edge ahead of early front runner Benus. However, his hopes were dashed when a 50 second penalty was issued following a mistake on gate five. Senegalese Yves Bourhis’ celebrations were also short lived. He crossed the finish line quicker than Benus, only to realize he had received a 50 second penalty for missing gate nine. Titouan Castryck raised hopes of a second gold for hosts France in slalom after topping the standings in the men’s kayak heats. With excitement among French fans still high after Nicolas Gestin’s sensational gold in the men’s canoe the previous day, Castryck ensured there was more reason for the home crowd to cheer in searing heat this day. The 19 year old, a double junior world champion, had already tasted success at the Vaires-sur-Marne nautical stadium, having achieved K1 gold when it hosted the World Cup the previous October. He was in impressive form this day, posting the quickest time in both runs with 83.71 followed by 80.09. ‘It is really nice to put down two clean runs,’ said Castryck. ‘I do take inspiration from Nicolas [Gestin] but it’s a different discipline. ‘Yesterday it was a really nice moment to cheer him on and have him on the podium. ‘He won but it is not done for us. ‘Of course it helps that we are training here for a long time. It makes a lot of difference but other guys have been practising here a lot. ‘It is really good to race at home as it makes a big difference.’ Czechia’s Jiri Prskavec, the reigning Olympic champion in the event, looked in fine fettle as he bid to retain his crown, registering 83.74 for second. After a shaky start in the first run when he touched an early gate, Italy’s Giovanni de Gennaro posted a time of 85.34 in the second to place third. Great Britain’s Joseph Clarke picked up a 50 second penalty in the opening run after missing gate six. It meant there was extra pressure on the second run but the Rio 2016 gold medallist handled it with ease, ranking fourth with 85.62. ‘Relief, probably the biggest word,’ said Clarke. ‘Obviously, I know I’m fully capable of making the semi final but knowing you can and doing it are two different things, especially with the pressure from the crowd, the media. ‘More importantly, internally. All the training and hard work has gone into this but, yeah, just to tick the box; get the job done. ‘Not our finest hour but more than enough to qualify through today, so that’s all that matters.’ The top six also featured Australia’s Timothy Anderson and Switzerland’s Martin Dougoud as they advanced to the semi finals. Jessica Fox had become the most successful canoe slalom paddler in Olympic history after completing a canoe and kayak double. After capturing the women’s K1 title on Sunday Fox pulled off a stunning performance to retain the women’s C1 crown this day. It was her third Olympic gold, adding to her canoe success at Tokyo 2020, to match Tony Estanguet, who was the only other paddler to have achieved three individual titles in slalom. Fox also sat on six Olympic medals, moving ahead of Slovakian great Michal Martikan, who had five. ‘I have never thought about those records,’ said Fox. ‘They have never felt attainable or even something that I could possibly dream about it. ‘Each Olympic experience has been very different; some have been brilliant and others have been a bit disappointing. This is just magical. ‘To be named among some of Australia’s great champions in Olympic history, I can’t believe it, and in our sport it is very special to follow in the footsteps of Tony Estanguet and Michal Martikan as I grew up watching them. ‘I’m also very proud to be doing it as a woman.’ Germany’s Elena Lilik and United States ace Evy Leibfarth both picked up their first Olympic medals, securing silver and bronze respectively after a thrilling final. There was no stopping Fox as she powered down the course, showing great tenacity and technique to navigate the gates. Lilik had put down an impressive time of 103.54, six seconds quicker than the next best paddler, Leibfarth, but Fox was too strong for the rest of the field, taking the title in 101.06. Fox is the first slalom paddler to win twice at one Olympic Games. ‘To be able to stay composed is the coolest feeling as an athlete,’ said Fox.

‘When you have worked so hard as an athlete in training, to be able to pull it off when it matters is what we all work towards. ‘The fact that I did it twice is a credit to the hard work that we have put in. Seventh fastest in the semi final, Lilik produced a scintillating run to take a medal. After the disappointment of Ricarda Funk’s 50 second penalty in the women’s kayak final and two time Olympic medallist Sideris Tasiadis’ missing out on a men’s canoe medal, Lilik delivered joy to Germany. ‘It feels unreal and super exciting,’ said Lilik, the 2021 world champion. ‘The crowd was crazy. ‘There were so many Germans here screaming my name I got goosebumps. ‘I was so happy with my run and so proud. ‘I just went for it and had no fear. ‘All of those emotions came out at the finish line.’ Leibfarth only sneaked into the final after taking the last spot available but seized her opportunity when it mattered most. Learning from her mistakes, Leibfarth produced a superb run, finishing eight seconds quicker than she managed in the semi final. It was a superb response as she crossed in 109.95 to secure a place on the Olympic podium for the first time. Her medal was confirmed after Czechia’s Gabriela Satkova, who posted the quickest semi final time, crossed the finish line in seventh after registering a two second penalty for a touch on gate two. ‘It seems crazy that I’m an Olympic medallist,’ said Leibfarth. ‘I’m able to be here with my family. My dad is my coach and my mom is here and all of my best friends. It’s just so special to know that everyone who’s been a part of this journey is here for this moment. ‘It’s not just my medal; it is everyone’s medal who has been there for the journey.’ Italy’s Giovanni de Gennaro said he was in ‘disbelief’ after clinching the men’s kayak gold. Eighth in the semi final, the 32 year old paddler delivered when it mattered most to capture the Olympic crown. The reigning European champion became the third Italian man to win this event after Pierpaolo Ferrazzi at Barcelona 1992 and Daniele Molmenti at London 2012. Titouan Castryck finished just 0.20 off de Gennaro as he took silver while Spain’s Pau Echaniz secured a shock bronze. De Gennaro produced a stunning showing, sweeping down the course in a time of 88.22, more than three seconds quicker than he achieved in the semi final. He was then left to watch as the other big contenders for the title made costly mistakes. Defending champion Jiri Prskavec’s hopes were dented when the Czech ace struck gate seven and his chances were over when he clattered gate 16. Joseph Clarke, the Rio 2016 gold medallist, was the fastest in the semi final but he also missed out on a medal, crossing in 89.82 to finish fifth and confirm de Gennaro as the Olympic champion. ‘I’m in disbelief,’ said de Gennaro. ‘I don’t know what has happened. I’m super happy that I have this piece of gold around my neck, just an amazing day. ‘I’m so happy that my family is here and I can share all these emotions with the crowd.’ ‘I thought there was still room for someone to get in front of me but in the end the time was enough. It was a really close one and this time the luck was on my side.’ Castryck came the closest to denying de Gennaro the title as he looked to secure a second slalom gold for France following Nicolas Gestin’s success in canoe. The 19 year old put together a fine run only to make a slight error before gate 17, a section of the course where other paddlers had come unstuck. He powered to the finish but it was not enough for gold as he earned silver in 88.42. ‘I’m disappointed,’ said Castryck. ‘I was really paddling for the gold today but small mistakes made me second. ‘I made small balance mistakes so it got me out of the wave and I had to get back two metres so a lot of time lost and when you see 0.20 at the end you missed those two seconds.’ The surprise of the day came from Echaniz, a 23 year old paddler who had never previously got on the podium at a World Cup. Echaniz sealed the 12th and last place to advance to the final before pulling off a stunning performance.



Joe Clarke.

Going first in the final, Echaniz produced a raw time of 86.87 which would have seen him take gold but a two second penalty for a touch on gate 19 saw him come away with bronze. ‘It is my first Olympics and my first medal; this is crazy,’ said the 23 year old. ‘I’ve been dreaming about this run for a long time so this is a dream come true. ‘The semi final was hard for me so I knew I could do a much better run. I just went for everything and I got it.’ Joseph Clarke and Camille Prigent set the pace as kayak cross made its Olympic Games debut. The time trials saw 38 men and 37 women lay down a marker to secure their seeding and draw placement for the weekend’s heats. Clarke, who had qualified fastest for Thursday’s men’s kayak final before missing out on the medals with a fifth placed finish, put in another blistering run on the course. Last of the 38 paddlers to go, Clarke posted a time of 66.08 seconds to push Brazil’s Pedro Goncalves into second place. Goncalves, whose 50 second penalty in the semi finals saw him miss out on a place in the kayak final, posted 66.41. Titouan Castryck, fresh from his brilliant silver medal in Thursday’s kayak final, was the first paddler to break 68 seconds as he posted 67.29 for third, just ahead of team mate Boris Neveu (67.48). Italy’s Giovanni de Gennaro followed up his gold medal heroics from the previous day with another fast run to place fifth in a time of 67.71. New Zealand’s Finn Butcher, Felix Oschmautz of Austria, Noah Hegge (Germany), Mateusz Polaczyk (Poland) and Manuel Ochoa (Spain) completed the top 10. ‘That was the aim of the game, to try and get top of the time trials,’ said a delighted Clarke. ‘It gives you first seed for the first round and, as long as you keep winning those rounds, then you keep getting that first lane pick. I’ve got my eye on what lane I would ideally be in given the opportunity so, hopefully, I can go on to do good things.’ A determined Clarke had his eye on gold after missing out on the medals in Thursday’s kayak cross. ‘That’s why I’m here, to try and win the event,’ he said. ‘I think when we get going and start knocking a few people out is when it’s going to start getting interesting because the last 16, last eight, last four, are going to be really tight racing.’ In the women’s time trials, Great Britain’s Mallory Franklin, whose 50 second penalty in the final of the women’s canoe blew her chances of a medal, recovered from that disappointment to post an impressive time of 71.85. That set the standard until the final four paddlers of the time trial, home favourite Prigent taking top spot with a time of 70.33 before double Paris gold medallist Jessica Fox followed her home in 70.84. Franklin’s early time was good enough for third place with her team mate, Kimberley Woods, the last to paddle but only managing 16th place. New Zealand’s Luuka Jones was fourth in 72.10 and Ana Satila fifth in 72.64. Evy Leibfarth, still on a high from her podium finish in the women’s canoe final, was sixth, ahead of Ricarda Funk and Noemie Fox. Prigent would now kick off Saturday’s round one races as she came up against Slovenia’s Eva Tercelj and Czechia’s Tereza Fiserova in the first race of the day at 15:30 CET. ‘I’m just trying to take it step by step,’ Prigent said.





Finn Butcher.



Mallory Franklin.

‘I wanted a good run to get myself a good spot on the ramp. Now I can see what the plan is for tomorrow but first I’ll get some rest.

‘In kayak cross you need to be in the moment; it never happens as you envisage so I will just try to be present and not make too many plans.’

Top seed Clarke would kick off the men’s heats against Tunisia’s Salim Jemai and Casey Eichfeld of the United States in race 1 at 16:40 CET.

Goncalves would face China’s Xin Quan and Amir Rezanejad Hassanjani of the International Olympic Committee Refugee Olympic team in race 2.

Twists, turns, thrills, spills and a delightful dose of crashes gripped a packed crowd as kayak cross announced its arrival at the Olympic Games.

The Vaires-sur-Marne nautical stadium was rocking as thousands of fans enjoyed a spectacular day of kayak cross action.

There was not a spare seat in the stands as the event was presented on the biggest stage in sport for the first time.

Kayak cross was making its much anticipated debut at the Olympics with round one and repêchage races taking place on Saturday.

The noise levels increased when French paddlers were introduced on the start ramp before slashing onto the water.

Camille Prigent, who was the fastest female in Friday’s time trials, was the first of the home favourites to go as she won her round one race.

Angele Hug was also in flying form as she swept into the Sunday heats with an impressive performance.

‘The nerves this morning were bad and then I had a little nap,’ said Hug.

‘When I finally saw my friends and family I was okay.

‘I tried to be fast at the beginning to be alone for the rest of the race.

‘Tomorrow it could be different but we will see.’

Most were rewarded for fast starts with French stars Boris Neveu and Titouan Castryck powering home to win their respective races.

Castryck even had time to showboat before crossing the finish line as he turned to celebrate with the French fans.

‘I had nothing behind me so I just looked at the crowd and my boat turned around so I just wanted to enjoy the moment,’ said Castryck.

Other top performers included Australia’s Noemie Fox and reigning world champions Kimberley Woods and Joseph Clarke.

‘Job done for today; just try to get through the first, put the burners on for the first 20 or 30 seconds and then just ease off and save the arms for tomorrow,’ said Clarke.

‘That’s kind of like my super strength is that start, those first few strokes getting the power down and hopefully I can keep deploying that through the rounds and I think from any lane I can get ahead.

Ana Satila, Klaudia Zwolinska, Jiri Prskavec, Benjamin Savsek and Adam Burgess needed another race to seal their places in the heats after dropping into the repêchages.

Noemie Fox advanced to the quarter finals of the women’s kayak cross as her sister Jessica’s hopes of a golden hat trick at the Paris 2024 Olympics were over.

All eyes were on heat three on Sunday as the Fox sisters faced each other in a tough race that included experienced paddlers Martina Wegman of the Netherlands and Maialen Chourraut of Spain.

Jessica, bidding for a third gold in Paris after her success in canoe and kayak, was a double world champion in kayak cross that was making its Olympic debut but she was left chasing after falling behind following the ramp start as Noemie forged ahead.

While Noemie extended her lead, Jessica overtook Wegman and looked to get the better of Chourraut but a mistake at gate eight saw her chances end as Chourraut and Noemie went through.

‘I didn’t pull out my best race and it was really tough off the start as I got really tangled with the other two girls,’ said Jessica.

‘Noemie had a really good start so I was trying to chase from that moment.

‘I climbed up one spot and I almost pulled off the overtake in the last upstream gate but that’s kayak cross and sometimes nothing goes to plan.

‘I’m absolutely gutted but at the same time when you see your little sister win the heat the emotion went straight away and I gave her a massive hug as I was really proud of her.’

Jessica said it had been a ‘dream Games’ and would now be screaming for Noemie as she went in search of glory.

‘It was really hard to be lined up with Jess,’ said Noemie.

‘We always knew it was going to be as we didn’t want to knock either one of us out. The goal was to get the two Australians through as far as possible and it would have been great to meet later on and do a final together.’

Home favourite Camille Prigent continued her impressive form as she stormed to top spot in heat one, qualifying along with Algeria’s Carole Diana Bouzidi.

Mallory Franklin and Kimberley Woods also led from start to finish as they cruised into the quarter finals.

Ana Satila, who came through the repêchage on the Saturday, progressed after finishing second behind France’s Angele Hug.

Luuka Jones and Ricarda Funk qualified from heat four while Evy Leibfarth edged Switzerland’s Alena Marx in a thrilling race as they both went through.

The other paddlers advancing to the quarter finals were Elena Lilik, Stefanie Horn, Andorra’s Monica Doria Vilarrubla and Ukraine’s Viktoriia Us.

There was more French delight in the men’s kayak cross heats as Boris Neveu and Titouan Castryck won their respective races.

‘Every day is really a joy to start at this stadium so I am just enjoying it so much and I hope it will continue like that,’ said Castryck.

‘We’ll look at the other competitors, especially for the starting place on the run, and we’ll adapt a lot the race plan because of that.’

Reigning world champion Joseph Clarke swept into the quarter finals along with Slovakia’s Jakub Grigar in the opening heat.

‘Back here tomorrow, hopefully three runs tomorrow and rinse repeat for three of them,’ said Clarke.

‘I’d be foolish to think it will be that easy but three runs tomorrow is the aim of the game and challenge for those medals in that final round.’

Jiri Prskavec and Manuel Ochoa made it through in heat two with newly crowned Olympic kayak champion Giovanni de Gennaro and Mateusz Polaczyk progressing from heat four.

Pedro Goncalves was faulted on gate two as Finn Butcher and Benjamin Savsek sealed the two quarter final spots from heat five.

Australian duo Timothy Anderson and Tristan Carter continued their kayak cross campaigns while Noah Hegge, Poland’s Grzegorz Hedwig, Czechia’s Lukas Rohan and Martin Dougoud also advanced.

Noemie Fox and Finn Butcher etched their names in Olympic canoeing history by becoming the first ever kayak cross gold medallists.

Monday’s triumph at a sweltering Vaires-sur-Marne nautical stadium capped a golden Games for the Fox family with Noemie following the success of sister Jessica, who had already captured the kayak and canoe



Noemie Fox, spoiling her sister’s attempt at a gold triple.

crowns. With Jessica roaring on her sister from the banks, Noemie powered to victory in a thrilling women’s kayak cross final.

Angele Hug claimed silver with Kimberley Woods securing bronze.

Butcher led from start to finish to take the men’s kayak cross crown as Joseph Clarke picked up silver and Noah Hegge bagged bronze.

It was a historic day in Paris as Olympic kayak cross medals were contested for the first time.

With Jessica Fox’s hopes of three gold medals in the French capital ended on Sunday, it was Noemie’s turn to shine in the sun.

Woods, the reigning world kayak cross champion, got off to a flying start but a slight error on the first upstream gate allowed Fox to seize the initiative.

Fox took her opportunity as she hit the front and didn’t look back as she stormed to the title.

Jessica and her mum and coach, Myriam Fox-Jerusalmi, both jumped into the water to celebrate with Noemie.

‘It feels surreal,’ said Noemie.

‘It’s crazy that it is mine.

‘I experienced Jess’ gold medal moment in Tokyo and the two golds that she won here.

‘She has put so much hard work and effort into that.

‘You don’t really dare to dream this big but I really did this time.

‘I dared to dream to get to the Olympics and then to get to the final.

‘When I saw in the last upstream gate that I was first it was pure joy.

‘There are no words to describe the feeling and the crowd just carried me through.’

Hug delivered another medal for France to the delight of the home crowd by taking silver.

‘It’s a lot of happiness and I am really grateful to all the French people that were screaming for me,’ said Hug.

‘For my first Olympics it was hard to stay focused on the goal and not on the medal.

‘Finally I succeeded so I’m really happy.’

Elena Lilik picked up a fault on gate two as Woods won her second bronze of the Games, adding to her success in the women’s kayak.

‘It’s a little bit bittersweet as I tried to go for that gold but I am really happy to come away from here as a double Olympic medallist,’ said Woods.

Butcher made history by becoming the first New Zealander to win in Olympic slalom.

After hitting the front, there was no stopping Butcher as he cruised to the title.

‘It’s crazy,’ said Butcher.

‘When I dropped off the ramp and I had a bit of clear water in front of me I just went as hard as I could and to finish in front was insane.

‘Coming out of the last upstream I honestly couldn’t believe it so it is going to take a while to sink in but I am so stoked.’

Clarke, a gold medallist in kayak at Rio 2016, was unable to catch Butcher but was happy to take silver just moments after Woods’ bronze.

‘We are both absolutely over the moon,’ said Clarke.

‘Two medals in five minutes for Team GB doesn’t get much better than that.

‘You can control the race from the front; you don’t want to be chasing it and do things at the last minute.

‘I try to control the rounds and had done an extremely good job at that but, unfortunately, Noah Hegge came into my lane when we landed and I lost those all important first three strokes and that allowed Finn to get ahead and then I was in the backseat position, trying to chase him down all the way.

‘I had to settle for silver in the end but silver for me is like a win today and I am very proud of that.’

Hegge, who had never previously won an individual medal at a major championship, got the better of Lukas Rohan to seal his place on the podium.

‘I’m really happy,’ said Hegge.

‘This is the first time I have participated in the Olympic Games.

‘It was a difficult final but I am very happy with the performance I showed.

‘It was great to compete against these great athletes and I’m absolutely thrilled to take home a medal.’

**Geoff Berkeley**

**K1W:** 1 J Fox, Australia, 101.06. 2 K Zwolinska, Polska, 97.53. 3 K Woods, GB, 98.94.  
**K1M:** 1 G de Gennaro, Italia, 88.22. 2 T Castryck, France, 88.42. 3 P Echaniz, España, 88.87. 5 J Clarke, GB, 89.82.  
**C1W:** 1 J Fox, Australia, 101.06. 2 E Lilik, Deutschland, 103.54. 3 E Leibfarth, USA, 109.95. 12 M Franklin, GB, 165.15.  
**C1M:** 1 N Gestin, France, 91.36. 2 A Burgess, GB, 96.84. 3 M Benus, Slovensko, 97.03.  
**K1WX:** 1 N Fox, Australia. 2 A Hug, France. 3 K Woods, GB.  
**K1MX:** 1 F Butcher, NZ. 2 J Clarke, GB. 3 N Hegge, Deutschland.



# Franklin and Dickson win kayak cross

## Ivrea Slalom

Czechia's Jakub Krejci pipped two Olympic champions to the top spot in the men's kayak heats on the opening day of the World Cup in Ivrea.

The biggest roar of the day came when home hero Giovanni De Gennaro was introduced to the Italian crowd in his first slalom since winning the K1 at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. De Gennaro pushed for first place, only to finish just 0.15 behind Krejci, who qualified fastest to the semi finals in 76.78.

Krejci, who claimed bronze at this year's World Cups in Prague and Kraków, headed a top three that also included fellow Czech and Tokyo 2020 Olympic champion Jiri Prskavec, who was 0.53 behind the leader in third.

'When I crossed the finish line I was surprised the time was that good because I just tried to flow on the water and have fun,' said Krejci.

'This is just the next step to qualifying for the final so tomorrow is a new race.

'I had never raced good here but it's the last two World Cups of the season and everyone is over the Olympics and they are just chilling and having fun together.

'I will try to do my best tomorrow and fight for the best position and hope to get on the podium.'

De Gennaro was on a high after capturing the Olympic crown and was delighted to be back competing in front of his fans.

'Being here is like being home so I am just excited that I have the chance to race one more time here in Ivrea in front of all my family and friends and team mates,' said De Gennaro.

'It is a great moment for the Italian community of kayakers. 'Life has been crazy since (I won Olympic gold) and I am happy that I was able to share this moment with everyone who supported me over the years.

'I dreamed about it but when I realized it was even better than I was hoping for. I am just happy to be back here kayaking with all the people that have helped me through the years.

'I am still hungry and I hope to have a good week and put on a good show.'

France's Anatole Delassus ranked fourth in the heats with Switzerland's Martin Dougoud coming fifth and Slovenia's Peter Kauzer sixth.

The women's K1 heats saw Slovenia's Ajda Novak top the standings with a time of 87.42.

Italy's Agata Spagnol thrilled the home fans when she produced a brilliant run to seal second, 0.45 behind Novak.

French duo Emma Vuitton and Coline Charel placed third and fourth respectively while Tokyo 2020 Olympic champion Ricarda Funk of Germany came fifth.

Slovakia's Emanuela Luknarova and France's Jules Bernardet navigated difficult conditions to top the canoe heats as strong winds brought surprises on the water and disrupted competition in Ivrea.

Unpredictable gusts made life hard for paddlers on the Italian course



and resulted in the kayak semi finals and finals being moved to Saturday.

While some paddlers, including Olympic medallists, came unstuck in the tricky weather, others adapted brilliantly to the ever changing wind.

The start of the canoe heats was also delayed owing to the conditions before Luknarova and Bernardet finished first in the respective women's and men's heats.

Luknarova showed great skill in avoiding gate touches as she qualified fastest to the semi finals with a time of 97.61.

'I didn't mind that the start was postponed as that gave me more time to go around the course and take some time to think how I will do the combinations,' said Luknarova.

'I know it was windy but it's quite often like this where I am from so I didn't mind some wind.

'I was trying to keep my focus. 'I was looking at how the gates were moving and I tried to adjust to it but I think it went okay.'

Luknarova was back competing on the World Cup stage after missing the events in Augsburg, Prague and Kraków due to having her appendix removed.

'I am really happy and satisfied that I managed to do a good run from top to bottom,' said the 22 year old.

'I felt I was in good form at the start of the season but I had surgery so I could not compete in the first half of the World Cups.

'I raced at the junior world championships and junior European championships where I went okay so I knew I could race well here and I am happy that it went so well in the qualifications.'

Austria's Viktoria Wolffhardt produced a superb run to rank second, 1.34 behind Luknarova, while Italy's Marta Bertoncetti impressed on home waters to place third, a further 1.84 back.

The top six also included Great Britain's Mallory Franklin, Spain's Nuria Vilarrubla and Switzerland's Alena Marx.

The conditions threw up plenty of surprises as Germany's Elena Lilik and United States' Evy Leibfarth, who claimed silver and bronze respectively at the Paris 2024 Olympics, failed to make it through to the semi finals.

Top ranked Andrea Herzog of Germany and Poland's Klaudia Zwolinska, who achieved Olympic silver in kayak, also did not advance to the next stage.

Bernardet continued his fine World Cup form to top the standings in the men's heats in 83.13, 1.68 faster than second placed Vaclav Chaloupka of Czechia.

The Frenchman was looking to win his second successive World Cup title after triumphing in Kraków in June.

'I had a good feeling and felt in good form,' said Bernardet.

'Yes, the conditions were not easy but I just tried to make my best run.

'I did my training in Vaires-sur-Marne during the winter where it was very windy. That was a little advantage for me.'

France's Yohann Senechault pulled off a terrific run to seal third spot ahead of Jiri Prskavec and Italy's Raffaello Ivaldi.

Tokyo 2020 Olympic champion Benjamin Savsek of Slovenia was also in the top six, finishing almost three seconds behind Bernardet.

Italy's Stefanie Horn delighted the home crowd with a stunning victory.

The Italian fans roared Horn to the women's kayak title as she edged Ricarda Funk in a thrilling final.

There was to be no home men's K1 gold for returning Olympic hero Giovanni De Gennaro as Poland's Mateusz Polaczyk secured his first World Cup win at the age of 36.

Czechia's Gabriela Satkova and Benjamin Savsek bounced back from their Olympic disappointments to capture the respective women's and men's canoe titles on an action packed day.

Funk, the Tokyo 2020 gold medallist, had set the time to beat in the women's K1 after crossing in 97.54.

Horn was the last to go in the final and was



Emanuela Luknarova.



Jules Bernardet.



Stefanie Horn.

almost three seconds behind at one stage before pulling off a superb finish to secure the win by 0.66.

'It means a lot,' said Horn, who had been living in Ivrea for the past nine years.

'I love the kids from the kayaking club as they are really nice and give me the motivation to train every day as they are always happy.

'This happiness gives me the strength to race.

'I am really proud to give them back the joy they gave me today.'

Funk claimed silver with Slovenia's Eva Tercelj earning bronze.

After Horn's victory, Italian fans would have been hoping for another home triumph when Olympic champion De Gennaro took to the water but the home favourite missed the 10th gate to pick up a 50 second penalty.

Instead, the men's K1 title went to a shocked Polaczyk, whose time of 87.34 saw him take top spot.

'I am super happy,' said Polaczyk, who won his first World Cup medal 12 years ago.

'What can I say. I am an old guy!

'I have won for the first time ever. It is special to have it here in Ivrea on such a good course.

'I just enjoy paddling.

'I didn't produce anything special; that was just a good run from a training session and I won a World Cup so I am very happy.'

Anatole Delassus finished just 0.48 behind Polaczyk to take silver while Peter Kauzer was 1.11 further back in bronze.

Satkova recovered from the heartbreak of missing out on a medal at Paris 2024 to clinch the women's C1 title.

She produced a brilliant display, triumphing by more than five seconds to seal her second World Cup win of the season.

'I feel extremely happy because I did not think this race would go this way,' said Satkova.

'I am more than satisfied.

'It was an amazing run and I am happy that after the Olympics I was able to do such a great run and I felt like I believed in myself a little bit after the big disappointment of the Olympics.'

Fresh from winning two medals at the Olympics, Great Britain's Kimberley Woods added another to her collection with a World Cup silver.

Ukraine's Viktoriia Us completed the podium with bronze.

Savsek, the Tokyo 2020 gold medallist, also refused to let the disappointment of leaving Paris 2024 without a medal get the better of him as he claimed the men's C1 crown in Ivrea.

Slovenia's Ziga Lin Hocevar topped the standings in the semi finals and was in a great position to take the title, registering a time almost three seconds quicker than Savsek at the third intermediate but a mistake at the penultimate gate cost him dearly as Savsek clinched gold in 93.05.

'I didn't feel very good at first as I had to take a little vacation after the Olympics to clear my head,' said Savsek.

'I have been trying to get back on track in the last couple of weeks so I am really happy to be still in good form and in a good position in the overall standings.'

Yohann Senechault, who was ranked number 175 in the world, pulled off a superb showing to take silver, one second behind Savsek, while the bronze went to Raffaello Ivaldi.

Mallory Franklin and Jonny Dickson clinched the kayak cross titles as Great Britain dominated the final day.

Four of the six kayak cross medals on offer on Sunday were snapped up by British paddlers with Franklin and Dickson emerging victorious.

There was a British one, two in the women's kayak cross final as Franklin got the better of reigning world champion Kimberley Woods while Australia's Olympic gold medallist, Noemie Fox, took bronze.

Three of the four competitors in the men's kayak cross final were from Great Britain.

France's Gael Adisson tried to spoil the party only to be overtaken by Dickson as he had to settle for silver.

Sam Leaver was the other Brit on the podium as he bagged bronze, nudging fellow countryman and three time world champion Joseph Clarke out of the medal positions.

'It shows how well we are training at home and how good our facilities are at Lee Valley,' said Dickson.

'We held the World Championships last year and we had two world champions in kayak cross and then two medals at the Olympics (with Woods and Clarke) as well.

'Although they are individual medals for those guys, that comes from a collaboration of the whole team and staff and having a good ramp set up and gates so we can train well.'

Looking to deny Great Britain a one, two, three in the men's final, Adisson got off to a flying start.

Adisson looked in control only to be stopped in his tracks by Leaver, allowing Dickson to move in front after choosing to take the other upstream gate.

Dickson forged ahead to take the title as Adisson picked up silver and Leaver clinched bronze.

'I'm really happy,' said Dickson.

'I knew it was going to be a really hard final with Joe being a world champion and Sam and Gael being both under 23 world champions.

'I know how good the British boys are so I definitely felt like I was the least likely to win up there but anything can happen in kayak cross.

'I dealt really well all the way down and made good decisions.'

All three British paddlers opted not to compete in slalom and instead focused all their efforts on kayak cross.

The decision paid off for Dickson, who clinched his first World Cup title with victory in the event that made its Olympic debut in Paris.

'I was only racing kayak cross here which is a bit different for me,' said Dickson.

'Ivrea is a course that I have spent a lot of time at so I was really looking forward to racing on it.

'I was really focused on this race because it was the only opportunity I had in the whole competition.

'It is a good to say that I now have (World Cup) medals in slalom and kayak cross and I think that is a good position to be in especially with the way we selected for the Olympics this time.

'I have got to keep progressing in both and keep pushing forward.'

There was also joy for Franklin, who came out on top in a thrilling duel with Woods.

The first upstream gate proved pivotal as Franklin managed to overtake Woods before powering to victory.

Fox claimed bronze in what was the first World Cup since she won in kayak cross in Paris.

'It is really cool that both myself and Kimberley were in the final and for us to come out with a one, two is another level, said Franklin.

'I have been really building with my kayak cross this year and each race I have been taking a step forward so it is quite nice to take that top step in one of the final races of the year.

'We are a strong nation in kayak cross and we enjoy it.'

## ICF

**K1W:** 1 S Horn, Italia, 96.88. 2 R Funk, Deutschland, 97.54. 3 E Tercelj, Slovenija, 98.81. 8 M Franklin, GB, 109.75. 19 K Woods, GB.  
**K1M:** 1 M Polaczyk, Polska, 87.34. 2 A Delassus, France, 87.82. 3 P Kauzer, Slovenija, 88.45. 19 C Bowers, GB.  
**CI1W:** 1 G Satkova, Czechia, 100.89. 2 K Woods, GB, 106.24. 3 V Us, Ukraina, 108.15. 14 M Franklin, GB. 17 E Miller, GB.  
**CI1M:** 1 B Savsek, Slovenija, 93.05. 2 Y Senechault, France, 94.06. 3 R Ivaldi, Italia, 94.49. 11 A Burgess, GB, 153.45. 17 K Rosenthals, GB.  
**K1WX:** 1 M Franklin, GB. 2 K Woods, GB. 3 N Fox, Australia.  
**K1MX:** 1 J Dickson, GB. 2 G Adisson, France. 3 S Leaver, GB. 4 J Clarke, GB.



Jakub Krejci.





Bowers placed 16th.



Maialen Chourraut.



Jiri Prskavec.

# Franklin and Clarke win cross

## La Seu d’Urgell Slalom

Olympic champions Maialen Chourraut and Jiri Prskavec reminded the paddling world of their class by winning the kayaks at the World Cup final in Spain.

Spanish paddler Chourraut, 41, made the most of her local course knowledge to edge out Slovenia’s Eva Tercelj and American Evy Leibfarth for the K1 in La Seu.

It was her first World Cup gold since 2017, a year after she won at the Olympics in Rio.

‘I just wanted to go out and do my best, to be myself,’ said Chourraut.

‘I’m just so grateful for all the slalom family and all the paddlers and the crowd.

‘It was a pleasure to be in La Seu and to do my best at the end of a long season.’

Prskavec saved his best until last after a year in which he struggled to recapture the form that took him to gold at Tokyo 2020 and won him the overall World Cup title in 2023.

The Czech had struggled in finals throughout 2024, including at the Olympics, where he finished eighth, but he said the win in La Seu would give him confidence going into the off season.

‘I’m truly happy to have broken through,’ said Prskavec.

‘Since the beginning of the season I didn’t have many good runs in finals, so winning the last race of the season will give me motivation for training over the winter.

‘I didn’t have a lot of training after the Olympics but I’m glad to win here on a course where I have had some great results, including a world title.’

Brazil’s Mathieu Desnos celebrated making his first senior final by



taking the silver while Paris 2024 Olympic gold medallist Giovanni De Gennaro of Italy took the bronze.

In the final overall World Cup standings Germany’s Ricarda Funk was crowned the winner of the women’s title, adding to the crowns she won in 2016 and 2017. France’s Emma Vuitton finished second and Australia’s Olympic champion, Jessica Fox, third.

In the men’s competition Frenchman Anatole Delassus was rewarded for not missing a final all season by being crowned overall K1 champion, edging out De Gennaro with 41 year old Peter Kauzer of Slovenia finishing third.

Australia’s Jessica Fox won an incredible 33rd World Cup title in the women’s canoe and seventh overall crown on a dramatic day.

Hometown fans celebrated another gold with Miquel Trave winning the men’s C1 while Slovakia’s Matej Benus wrapped up his fourth overall World Cup title and his first since 2019.

Fox bounced back after missing the podium in the women’s kayak on the Friday to storm to victory in the C1 final.

The dual Paris 2024 gold medallist, who had won back to back Olympic classes in C1, returned to her best form to snatch victory by just 0.11 of a second.

‘I’m so happy with my run. I had to work really hard,’ said Fox.

‘It’s been a great season, so special every time you put down a great run.

‘I didn’t race at Ivrea so I knew I had to have a good race today.

‘Yesterday was a hard day.

‘It’s always a bit of a challenge to come back after the Olympics, trying to find the hunger and motivation.



Jennifer Fox.



Miquel Trave.



Kimberley Woods.



Ryan Westley.



Joe Clarke.



Mallory Franklin.

Domiano Benedetto photographs

‘You sometimes wonder whether to go for a win or play safe but you just have to go for it.’

Czech Gabriela Satkova finished second and, in doing so, secured second place on the overall standings. Satkova won both her previous World Cup appearances.

Her sister, Martina, finished third overall while Great Britain’s Kimberley Woods took the bronze in the La Seu final.

Fox has now won the World Cup series title in C1 in 2013, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2023 and 2024.

In the men’s competition Trave posted the quickest time in the C1 semi final and then followed up with the best time in the final.

Great Britain’s Ryan Westley, who was the slowest qualifier through to the final, finished a close second while veteran and two time Olympic champion Michal Martikan of Slovakia took the bronze.

It was the 45 year old’s first World Cup medal since 2017.

‘It was a really tough run, especially after I touched gate four,’ Trave said.

‘It’s so wonderful to win here with all of the city coming down here to support me.

‘It’s absolutely incredible. I just kept fighting all the way.’

Benus finished fourth to seal the overall title while Slovenian teenager Ziga Lin Hocevar finished second overall.

By finishing second in La Seu, Westley jumped up the leaderboard to finish third in the final World Cup standings.

Great Britain confirmed itself as the global powerhouse of kayak cross with another golden double.

Not only did Joseph Clarke and Mallory Franklin take the men’s and women’s gold on the Sunday but Clarke and Kimberley Woods also successfully defended their overall World Cup titles for another year.

Franklin proved the surprise package once again in the women’s kayak cross final.

After several seasons where the Olympic silver medallist seemed to treat kayak cross as an afterthought, Franklin won at the final two World Cups of the season to finish second overall behind Woods.

‘I really feel like I’m settling into kayak cross now,’ said Franklin.

‘I feel pretty tired and pretty drenched but very happy to have won again.

‘It was such a tough fight at the start, which is always difficult when everyone is clashing.

‘I really tried to get a fast start but then you have to defend the first upstream so it can be quite complicated.

Woods, who took bronze when kayak cross made its Olympic debut in Paris this year, paid tribute to her team mate.

‘Hats off to Mallory. I couldn’t catch her,’ said Woods.

‘I put a lot of work into kayak cross this year so to win the overall title for a second year in a row is pretty satisfying.’

French Olympic silver medallist Angele Hug finished third on the Sunday while Czech Tereza Kneblova ranked third overall for the season.

The big surprise on the Sunday was the early exit of the Australian Olympic champion, Noemie Fox.

In the men’s event it was Clarke who ended up with the win after Poland’s Mateusz Polaczyk crossed the line first but was disqualified for not rounding a gate properly.

The result elevated Clarke to the gold medal and also enabled him to go one point ahead of Brazil’s Pedro Goncalves to snatch the overall title for 2024.

‘What a great way to end the season, to win today and to take the overall win. I’m speechless,’ Clarke said.

‘After last weekend I said to Kimberley that wouldn’t it be great if we could go to La Seu and do the same as we did last year and now we’ve done it.

‘Our team has become so strong because we are always pushing each other and I think that shows in our results.’

Spain’s David Llorente took the silver while Goncalves, who came into the weekend as the overall points leader, took the bronze. France’s Mathurin Madore dropped from second to third overall.

## ICF

**K1W:** 1 M Chourraut, España, 100.30. 2 E Tercelj, Slovenija, 102.67. 3 E Leibfarth, USA, 102.69. 19 K Woods, GB.

**K1M:** 1 J Prskavec, Czechia, 87.47. 2 M Desnos, Brasil, 88.80. 3 G De Gennaro, Italia, 88.85. 16 C Bowers, GB.

**C1W:** 1 J Fox, Australia, 104.30. 2 G Satkova, Czechia, 104.41. 3 K Woods, GB, 106.38. 10 M Franklin, GB, 169.42. 20 E Miller, GB.

**C1M:** 1 M Trave, España, 93.51. 2 R Westley, GB, 94.16. 3 M Martikan, Slovensko, 95.89. 19 A Burgess, GB. 20 K Rosenthals, GB.

**K1WX:** 1 M Franklin, GB. 2 K Woods, GB. 3 A Hug, France.

**K1MX:** 1 J Clarke, GB. 2 D Llorente, España. 3 P Goncalves, Brasil.

## Super Cup

Ryan Westley got the better of reigning Olympic champion Nicolas Gestin to take the men’s canoe single title at the Hangzhou Super Cup.

The first day of Super Cup action saw Great Britain’s Westley produce a sensational run in the C1, clocking 84.43 to pip Frenchman Gestin, who settled for silver.

Bronze went to Vaclav Chaloupka of Czechia, whose timing of 85.37 was enough to surpass Olympic gold medallists Benjamin Savsek of Slovenia and compatriot Jiri Prskavec.

Men’s overall World Cup champion Matej Benus of Slovakia also missed out on a medal, finishing fourth after a two second penalty cost him dear.



‘I was not racing in the Olympics so I’ve had quite a nice year, a lot less busy than a lot of people. I think that has been good for me and I’m probably a lot fresher than Nico is this time of the year but, yeah, it was hard,’ Westley, who finished third overall in the World Cup circuit, said.

The women’s C1 final saw Czechia’s Gabriela Satkova bag gold in 93.86, adding to her fantastic performances in the last two World Cups in Ivrea and La Seu.

Putting the Paris 2024 disappointment behind her, the two time world champion edged Great Britain’s Mallory Franklin for the top prize while Italian Marta Bertoncilli took bronze.

Australian Olympic kayak cross champion Noemie Fox and Paris 2024 C1 bronze medallist Evy Leibfarth of the United States finished



eighth and sixth, respectively. ‘I feel like the journey has been the same for me and Marta since we participated in the Olympics. It was quite hard because, you know, it was an intense experience and then it’s kind of hard to find that focus and go into it again,’ Satkova said after the win, ‘but I felt like we did our best and for me and I think for Marta as well it’s such a big achievement to win a medal here in the last race of the season.’

Italian Olympic champion Giovanni De Gennaro and France’s Camille Prigent won the respective men’s and women’s kayak singles.

They were challenged fiercely by Paris 2024 K1 silver medallists Titouan Castryck and Poland’s Klaudia Zwolinska, with the former losing four seconds to penalties.

Bronze in the men’s K1 went to Austrian Felix Oschmautz while Prigent’s fellow countrywoman, Emma Vuitton, finished third among the women.

It was a new dawn for slalom, with the French pair of Camille Prigent and Marjorie Delassus taking the first ever short slalom titles in kayak and canoe respectively.

For Prigent, it was her second gold medal in the Chinese city, outsmarting the highly technical course in 53.07. ‘It was a fun event. I didn’t know what to expect because it was my first time racing at this kind of event. The course was challenging,’ Prigent said.

‘I expected that we would go much faster on the short slalom but today we couldn’t because the moves were quite tricky.’

Silver in the kayak short slalom went to Martina Wegman of the Netherlands and Klaudia Zwolinska added to her silver from day one by finishing third.

Andorran Monica Doria took canoe short slalom silver but could have finished first if not for the two second penalty. Kimberley Woods of Great Britain kept her podium streak going by taking bronze.

Paris 2024 stars Evy Leibfarth and Noemie Fox missed out again while day one medallists Gabriela Satkova and Mallory Franklin also went home empty handed.

Slovenia and Czechia won men’s short slalom titles. Luka Bozic took canoe gold in 50.58 while Vit Prindis claimed the kayak title in 46.99.

‘It’s nice to have the new discipline. Today was very good. The course was tough and this is what we were looking for. This is a step forward for our sport and I think it is going to be a good format in the future,’ Bozic said after the win.

Frenchmen Nicolas Gestin and Titouan Castryck continued their run of medal wins, taking silver in canoe and kayak respectively.

Adam Burgess was back among the medals when he finished third in the canoe short slalom while another Czech star, Jakub Krejci, took kayak bronze in 47.45

It was a special day for Chiarello, who came out on top in the kayak cross from a tough bracket that had Olympic silver medallist Titouan Castryck.

The Swiss beat two kayak short slalom medallists in Czechia’s Vit Prindis and Jakub Krejci for the win.

‘It’s my first victory in a big event. I enjoyed it and the whole weekend was good. At world ranking events I have been on the podium but that’s it so I am really happy with the win,’ an emotional Chiarello said.

Tereza Kneblova ensured the Czech stood on top of the podium, winning women’s kayak cross.

Italian Stefanie Horn and Mallory Franklin took silver and bronze respectively.

ICF

**K1WSh:** 1 C Prigent, France, 53.07. 2 M Wegman, Nederland, 53.56. 3 K Zwolinska, Polska, 54.75. 7 K Woods, GB, 61.67. 12 M Franklin, GB, 72.98.  
**K1MSh:** 1 V Prindis, Czechia, 46.99. 2 T Castryck, France, 47.12. 3 J Krejci, Czechia, 47.45. 7 J Dickson, GB, 49.15. 8 J Clarke, GB, 50.06.  
**C1WSh:** 1 M Delassus, France, 59.94. M Doria Vilarrubla, Andorra, 59.94. 3 K Woods, GB, 59.97. 7 M Franklin, GB, 63.00.  
**C1MSh:** 1 L Bozic, Slovenija, 50.58. 2 N Gestin, France, 50.72. 3 A Burgess, GB, 50.86. 8 R Westley, GB, 56.58.  
**K1W:** 1 C Prigent, France, 89.51. 2 K Zwolinska, Polska, 92.54. 3 E Vuitton, France, 93.83. 6 M Franklin, GB, 95.34. 15 K Woods, GB.  
**K1M:** 1 G De Gennaro, Italia, 79.43. 2 T Castryck, France, 81.48. 3 F Oschmautz, Österreich, 82.87. 8 J Clarke, GB, 86.22. 15 J Dickson, GB.  
**C1W:** 1 G Satkova, Czechia, 93.86. 2 M Franklin, GB, 94.26. 3 M Bertoncelli, Italia, 96.58. 15 K Woods, GB.  
**C1M:** 1 R Westley, GB, 84.43. 2 N Gestin, France, 85.30. 3 V Chaloupka, Czechia, 85.37. 16 A Burgess, GB.  
**K1WX:** 1 T Kneblova, Czechia. 2 S Horn, Italia. 3 M Franklin, GB. 5 K Woods, GB.  
**K1MX:** 1 G Chiarello, Schweiz. 2 V Prindis, Czechia. 3 J Krejci, Czechia.

### Hradilek retires

Czech slalomist Vavrinec Hradilek has retired after a problems with a hand injury after over twenty years in top level slalom. In that time he has won multiple individual and team events plus kayak cross, making him one of the most successful slalomists of all time.



The Canoe Slalom Center in Oklahoma is to host the slalom for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games.



President of the Paris Olympics this year was Tony Estanguet and his event was considered to have been a success. As a canoeist, he had taken C1 wins at three previous Olympic Games, Sydney in 2000, Athens in 2004 and London in 2012. He is given credit for getting kayak cross

into the Olympics within a decade of its invention. In fact, it has been developed from freestyle. The photograph shows boater-X in action on the Washburn in 2016, which we billed as the antidote to the Olympics.

Another canoeist, Albert Woods had been second in command at the London Olympics in 2012.



### New Korean slalom course

Ulsan in South Korea is to have an international slalom course by 2028. It is proposed to move the Asian Canoe Confederation headquarters to the site in this industrial city.

### Fox takes control

Richard Fox, father of two Olympic slalom champions, is heading the organizing committee for the 2025 world slalom championships in Penrith and will head the ICF Slalom Committee for four years. He was a member of the committee from 1996 to 2000 and ICF vice president from 2008 to 2012. At the back of his mind will be the 2032 Brisbane Olympics.



Carrington/Hoskin.



Xu/Sun.



Liudmyla Luzan.



Aimee Fisher.

# Johnson second over 5km

### Poznan Regatta

China flexed its muscles and picked up three gold medals in Olympic class events on day two of the sprint World Cup in Poznan, Poland.

The New Zealand duo of Lisa Carrington and Alicia Hoskin made it two from two in the women’s K2 500 while the German men’s K4 won their 500 metre final but then split the crew in half to finish first and second in the K2 500.

The powerhouse Chinese women’s C2 combination of Shixiao Xu and Mengya Sun continued their domination of the race which made its Olympic debut at Tokyo 2020.

The pair have not been beaten since the 2019 sprint world championships and again made short work of their opponents in Poland.

‘It was a little bit different to the World Cup in Szeged but still we managed to win this race,’ Xu said.

‘We have to keep calm, keep our feet on the ground and prepare for the Olympics.

Ukraine’s Liudmyla Luzan and Anastasiya Rybachok celebrated their return to top level racing this year with silver while Germany’s Lisa Jahn and Hedi Kliemke took third.

China’s Hao Liu and Bowen Ji broke through for a long overdue win in the men’s C2.

‘We have been training really great but didn’t show our results in Szeged,’ Liu said ‘whereas this time we came to Poznan, we made some adjustments and I think the next step we are going to enhance what we have been doing over the next few weeks and be prepared for Paris.’

Poland picked up silver and bronze with Wiktor Glazunow and Arsen Sliwinski finishing second and Aleksander Kitewski and Oleksii Koliadych taking third.

China’s third gold medal came in a very competitive women’s K4 500.

Starting from the outside lane, the Chinese crew were involved in a tight tussle with the fast starting New Zealand team in the middle of the course.

In a blanket finish China edged out the team in black by just 0.12, with Poland’s Olympic bronze medallist crew finishing third.

‘We met strong opponents but we still made it,’ Chinese crew member Mengdie Yin said.

‘We are so excited to win this race and I would like to thank my team mates, my family and my country’

Germany, who were surprise winners in Szeged two weeks earlier, finished fourth.

It was business as usual in the men’s K4 500 with the reigning Olympic gold medallists, Germany, once again showing they were the crew to beat to win in Paris.

The German quartet led from start to finish and even had the luxury of easing up on the finish line to take gold ahead of China and Slovakia.

‘Usually we struggle a little bit at the start of the season so this gives us confidence our training in the winter was right,’ crew member Max Lemke said.

‘We know what we did wrong in the past years so we hope we can continue to improve and be even better for the Olympics.’

The K4 then split into two K2s with Lemke and Jacob Schopf taking gold and Max Rendschmidt and Tom Liebscher-Lucz the silver. Poland’s Jakub Stepun and Przemyslaw Korsak finished third.

Carrington would head to Paris this year looking to defend her Tokyo K2 500 gold, this time with a new partner.

Her pairing with Hoskin has proved successful with the pair winning both World Cups this month.

On Saturday the New Zealanders held off the impressive German combination of Lena Roehlings and Pauline Jagsch with Poland’s Justyna Iskrzycka and Dominika Putto third.

Aimee Fisher rocketed into favouritism for gold at Paris after another



naïlbiting victory over reigning Olympic champion and New Zealand team mate Lisa Carrington.

The matchup between them was billed as the contest in Poznan, Poland and the race did not disappoint.

Liudmyla Luzan issued a timely reminder of her class in the women’s C1, Portugal’s Fernando Pimenta returned to the top of the men’s K1 1,000 podium and Wiktor Glazunow gave the home crowd reason to cheer in the men’s C1 1,000.

Fisher has spoken of how her road back to the Olympics has been unconventional, choosing to sit out the Tokyo Olympics. The now 29 year old reminded the world of her class when she won the K1 500 world title just months after Tokyo and now, in the space of two weeks, she twice beat her rival, the undisputed queen of the 500, Lisa Carrington. In Szeged she ran down the Olympic and world champion but on Sunday in Poznan she went toe to toe, eventually squeezing out a win by just 0.05 second.

‘I was so nervous this morning,’ Fisher said.

‘I woke up and felt like I could not do this, it’s too big, but I just went through the day one step at a time, through the warmup, through the semi final. That was a tight race. We were on the start for a very long time and I just had to be patient.

‘I just really wanted to be courageous in the first 250. You saw in Szeged that I got quite far behind so for me today it was a real call to be bold and roll the dice a little and it hurt in the last 200. I could feel it was close. I could hear people shouting. Wow, what a contest.’

Fisher said she was enjoying the matchups against Carrington but knew the bar would be lifted to another level in Paris.

‘We have raced so many times now that it comes down to centimetres so you have to just treat every stroke with respect because you know she is going to be right there,’ Fisher said.

‘For me it was that calm, peace and trusting and I just imagined my family and my people shouting for me at home, praying for me and covering me. Just try to surrender to that.

‘It’s good to come out here and get the win but you know what? When the Olympics come around it will be winner takes all. From now I need to reset as I have a lot of work to do and I am going to be working hard every single day.’

Carrington took the silver with Poland’s Anna Pulawska more than three seconds back in third.

Pimenta is considered one of the greatest showmen in sprint paddling and on Sunday he turned on a performance which took him back to the top of the podium after finishing third in Szeged two weeks earlier.

The Hungarian duo of Balint Kopasz and Adam Varga were both missing on Sunday but Pimenta left nothing to chance by leading all the way in the K1 1,000.

‘I am happy with the performance and feeling very good,’ Pimenta said. ‘Before the start, I am a little bit more nervous because over the last week and a half there have been hard training sessions. I think I made a good start and came with good power on the water so I try to improve my technique and I think I do a great show fighting with the German and Swedish until the end.’

Germany’s Jakob Thordsen took the silver with Sweden’s Martin Nathell the bronze.

Liudmyla Luzan served a timely reminder of her class with victory in the women’s C1 200.

Luzan took bronze in the race’s Olympic debut in Tokyo and has had a disrupted Games cycle because of the ongoing conflict in her home country but she showed she is back to top form with a hard fought win over hometown favourite Dorota Borowska with Wenjun Lin third. Luzan later picked up a bronze in the non Olympic C1 500.

The reigning Olympic and world champions were missing from the men’s C1 1,000 final, which opened the door for Wiktor Glazunow to claim a World Cup victory.



Glazunow finished almost three seconds clear of the next best paddler, Germany’s David Bauschke, with another local paddler, Lukasz Witkowski, taking bronze.  
**ICF**

**200m: K1W:** 1 M Yin, Zhongguo, 41.50. 2 N Wang, Zhongguo, 42.24.  
3 K Kolodziejczyk, Polska, 42.58. 6 E Lewis, GB, 43.29.  
**C1W:** 1 L Luzan, Ukraina, 47.67. 2 D Borowska, Polska, 46.80. 3 W Lin, Zhongguo, 48.29.  
9 I Evans, GB, 51.93.  
**C1M:** 1 O Koliadych, Polska, 41.28. 2 Z Nadiradze, Sakartvelo, 41.92. 3 A Kitewski, Polska, 42.46.  
10 T Lambert, GB.  
**500m: K1W:** 1 A Fisher, NZ, 1:54.04. 2 L Carrington, NZ, 1:54.09.  
3 A Pulawska, Polska, 1:57.16. 14 E Lewis, GB.  
**C1W:** 1 M Sun, Zhongguo, 2:13.92. 2 S Xu, Zhongguo, 2:14.10. 3 V Tereta, Ukraina, 2:18.00.  
7 A Fitzhenry, GB, 2:25.13.  
**C1M:** 1 C Scheibner, Deutschland, 1:55.57. 2 T Mazovskiy, Ukraina, 1:57.60.  
3 J Kitewski, Polska, 1:58.45.  
**K2W:** 1 Carrington/Hoskin, NZ, 1:44.10. 2 Roehlings/Jagsch, Deutschland, 1:45.10.  
3 Iskrzycka/Putto, Polska, 1:45.84.

**K2M:** 1 Schopf/Lemke, Deutschland, 1:33.36.  
2 Rendschmidt/Liebscher-Lucz, Deutschland, 1:34.41. 3 Stepun/Korsak, Polska, 1:34.93.  
**C2M:** 1 Liu/Ji, Zhongguo, 1:40.50. 2 Glazunow/Sliwinski, Polska, 1:41.84.  
3 Kitewski/Koliadych, Polska, 1:43.21. 9 Phillips/Jones, GB, 1:51.04.  
**1km: K1W:** 1 M Andersson, Sverige, 4:02.94. 2 J Lagerstam, Sverige, 4:04.41.  
3 F Widmer, Schweiz, 4:05.89. 4 R Simon, GB, 4:06.36. 7 M Johnson, GB, 4:12.33.  
**K1M:** 1 F Pimenta, Portugal, 3:36.28. 2 J Thorsen, Deutschland, 3:38.29.  
3 M Nathell, Sverige, 3:38.93. 5 J Russell, GB, 3:40.63.  
**C1W:** 1 V Tereta, Ukraina, 4:43.74. 2 M Malikova, Czechia, 4:48.50.  
3 P Grzelkiewicz, Polska, 4:50.64. 4 A Palmer, GB, 5:02.70.  
**C1M:** 1 W Glazunow, Polska, 4:06.61. 2 D Bauschke, Deutschland, 4:09.36.  
3 L Witkowski, Polska, 4:10.69. 6 T Lambert, GB, 4:18.34. 7 J Jones, GB, 4:19.61.  
**5km: K1W:** 1 M Andersson, Sverige, 23:45.98. 2 M Johnson, GB, 24:50.30.  
3 K Milova, Czechia, 24:53.95.  
**K1M:** 1 F Pimenta, Portugal, 20:58.14. 2 J Lindberg, Sverige, 21:39.42.  
3 J Candy, France, 21:40.88. 4 J Russell, GB, 21:59.22.  
**C1W:** 1 V Tereta, Ukraina, 28:29.49. 2 Y Huet, France, 28:36.74.  
3 M Malikova, Czechia, 28:36.84. 5 A Palmer, GB, 31:15.52.  
**C1M:** 1 M Borgiel, Polska, 23:48.28. 2 K Krasinskyi, Polska, 24:43.28.  
3 D Yanchuk, Ukraina, 25:12.60. 4 J Jones, GB, 25:35.54.

# Britain’s best results in relays

## World J/U23 Championships

Canoe sprint powerhouse nations Germany, Hungary and China dominated the opening day of medal competition at the junior and U23 world championships in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, on the Friday.

Germany picked up five gold medals, Hungary four and China three as seventeen gold medals were decided on a busy day of competition. The Germans and the Hungarians had a stranglehold on the K4 500 events with Germany winning both the men’s and women’s U23 titles and Hungary taking both junior events.

Germany’s Carlotta Loske and Lykka Strobel won the women’s C2 junior 500, Tobias Hammer and Jan Prager the men’s K2 U23 1,000 and Leon RekHzah and Hannah Spielhagen the mixed U23 K2 500.

Hungary’s other two gold medals came in the women’s U23 C2 500 through Reka Opavszky and Zsofia Csorba and Hanna Peto and Zsadany Hizo in the mixed junior K2 500.



China finished day one with three gold medals, Huizhen Hu in the women’s junior K1 1,000, Xijian Zhang and Xikang Zhang in the junior men’s K2 1,000 and Xina Jiang in the women’s U23 C1 1,000.

Competitors from the independent nations also picked up three gold medals. They triumphed in the men’s U23 C4 500, Ilya Veraschchaka and Stanislav Savelyeu in the men’s C2 U23 500 and Maryia Papichych in the junior women’s C1 1,000.

Brazil’s Lucas Santos and Mateus Santos won the junior men’s C2 500 and Uzbekistan’s Arina Tanatmisheva the women’s U23 K1 1,000.

Athletes representing independent nations dominated day two on the Saturday.

AIN won five of the 14 gold medals on offer while Germany added another three gold to the five it won on Friday and China took its overall gold medal tally to five with another two titles.

Brazil, Australia, Poland and Hungary each picked up a gold medal.



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The AIN gold rush began in the women’s junior K2 500 with Maryia Misivchenka and Darya Kliuchynskaya picking up the honours. Misivchenka added another gold later in the morning in the junior women’s K1 200.

The final two gold medals came in the junior and the U23 mixed C2 500. Elizaveta Iakovleva and Aleksandr Mineev took honours in the juniors and Aleksandr Bots and Ekaterina Shliapnikova won the U23 title.

China won its two gold medals in the C4 women’s junior and U23 500 races while Alex Borucki picked up Poland’s solitary gold in the men’s junior K1 500.

Moritz Florstedt won the first of Germany’s three gold medals, saluting first in the men’s U23 K1 500, while Tillman Sommer and Linus Bange won the men’s K2 U23 500. Chelsea-Lynn Rousсиеkan won a hard fought gold in the women’s U23 K1 200, edging out Australia’s Natalia Drobot.

Drobot had earlier teamed up with Kailey Harlen to win for Australia in the women’s U23 K2 500.

Mateus Dos Santos won for Brazil in the men’s C1 1,000 junior final and Peter Samu and Zalan Hidvegi added to Hungary’s four gold medals from Friday with victory in the men’s K2 junior 500.

A dead heat in the women’s U23 K1 500 and an exciting new race format were among the highlights on the final day of competition on Sunday.

Spain was the most successful nation on the final day, picking up four gold medals, while Hungary and China both picked up three more gold medals. Overall, Athletes from Independent Nations had the most successful champions, taking ten gold medals.

Mateus Dos Santos added the junior C1 500 title to the C1 1,000 title and the C2 500 while Alex Borucki took his second individual win, taking victory in the men’s junior K1 1,000.

The judges could not split the first two competitors across the line in the women’s U23 K1 500, eventually ruling that Hungary’s Eszter Rendessy and Czechia’s Barbora Betlachova had recorded the same time.

Hungary also won the women’s U23 C1 500 (Reka Opavsky) and the mixed K1 5,000 U23 relay (Emese Kohalmi and Csaned Sellyei).

Spain’s Pablo Crespo and Manuel Fontan got their country to the top of the podium in the men’s U23 C2 1,000 before teammate Martin Jacome Couto triumphed in the U23 C1 500. There was double gold for Spain in the new mixed 5,000 metre relays with Daniel Grijalba and Ana Cantero winning the U23 C1 and Victor Pizarro and Yaiza Novo the K1 junior.

Less than one second split the first three placegetters in the men’s U23 K1 1,000 with American Jonas Ecker eventually being given the judges’ nod.

There was double gold on the final day for China’s Meisi Liu, firstly in the C1 women’s junior 200 and then in the 500.

China also won the mixed junior C1 5,000 through Xiubiao Zhong and Xiao Chen.

Athletes from Independent Nations won the women’s C1 U23 200 (Ekaterina Shliapnikova) and the junior C2 men’s 1,000 (Hleb Dziomin and Ivan Kazlou).

Germany’s Caroline Heuser posted one of most impressive wins of the day, taking the women’s K1 500 junior by almost three seconds.

## ICF

**500m: K1WJ:** 1 C Heuser, Deutschland, 1:54.715. 2 A Insabella, Italia, 1:57.693.  
3 Y Novo, España, 1:58.607. 20 A Hutchinson, GB.  
**K1WU23:** 1 B Betlachova, Czechia, 1:53.423. E Rendessy, Magyarország, 1:53.423.  
3 K Harlen, Australia, 1:54.620. 6 K Armstrong, GB, 1:56.708.  
**K1MJ:** 1 A Borucki, Polska, 1:40.278. 2 I Novozhilov, 1:41.110.  
3 J Geisen, Deutschland, 1:42.080. 20 P Ehrnrooth, GB.  
**C1MU23:** 1 E Jacome Couto, España, 1:51.359. 2 M Karataev, 1:52.011.  
3 S Wu, Zhongguo, 1:53.262. 8 T Lambert, GB, 1:54.815.  
**K2WU23:** 1 Harlen/Drobot, Australia, 1:44.264. 2 Bugar/Sidova, Slovensko, 1:44.502.  
3 Qu/Ren, Zhongguo, 1:45.741. 8 Clark/Armstrong, GB, 1:48.130.  
**K2MJ:** 1 Samu/Hidvegi, Magyarország, 1:30.740. 2 Vjestica/Dragosavljevic, Srbija, 1:32.720.  
3 Valerasi/Pedralli, Italia, 1:33.662.  
**K4MU23:** 1 Magyarország, 1:21.213. 2 Ukraina, 1:23.048. 3 Deutschland, 1:23.377. 11 GB.  
**1km: K1WJ:** 1 H Hu, Zhongguo, 4:04.559. 2 F Hermanussen, Deutschland, 4:06.939.  
3 S Mavlanova, Uzbekistan, 4:08.861. 7 A Hutchinson, GB, 4:15.409.  
**K1WU23:** 1 A Tanatmisheva, Uzbekistan, 4:01.161. 2 B Sidova, Slovensko, 4:01.301.  
3 L Sinkel, 4:02.645. 7 Z Clark, GB, 4:08.748.  
**K1MJ:** 1 A Borucki, Polska, 3:43.620. 2 Z Hidvegi, Magyarország, 3:42.893.  
3 S Lokkegaard, Danmark, 3:45.349. 17 T Bullock, GB.  
**K1WU23:** 1 J Ecker, USA, 3:36.810. 2 D Yermolenka, 3:37.217.  
3 T Hammer, Deutschland, 3:37.785. 13 P Miles, GB.  
**C1MJ:** 1 M Nunes Bastos Dos Santos, Brasil, 4:03.137. 2 X Zhong, Zhongguo, 4:04.990.  
3 M Gyany, Magyarország, 4:07.926.  
**C1MU23:** 1 D Verashchanka, 3:57.068. 2 P Crespo, España, 3:58.707.  
3 D Bauschke, Deutschland, 3:59.535. 10 T Lambert, GB.  
**5km: K1MixJR:** 1 Pizarro/Novo, España, 22:21.509. 2 Soderman/Nilsson, Sverige, 22:25.423.  
3 Sindel/Voriskova, Czechia, 22:41.539. 4 Bullock/Hutchinson, GB, 22:48.139.  
**K1MixU23R:** 1 Kohalmi/Sellyei, Magyarország, 21:33.516. 2 Sequeira/Itria, Argentina, 21:35.465. 3 Henry/Forest, France, 21:53.716. 6 Miles/Clark, GB, 22:15.911.



# Anna Palmer is sole British entry

### World Championships

Czechia’s Martin Fuksa and Josef Dostal got back to business after the euphoria of their Olympic success as they impressed on the opening day of the sprint world championships in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

Just two weeks after their Olympic wins, Fuksa and Dostal returned to action, hoping to capture world titles.

Fuksa had his eyes set on winning the men’s canoe single 500m after capturing the Olympic crown over the 1,000m distance.

The 31 year old, who last won the men’s C1 500m world title back in 2017, breezed through his heat, clocking a time of 1:52.280, four seconds quicker than second placed Conrad-Robin Scheibner of Germany.

‘It’s a little bit different than in Paris,’ said Fuksa.

‘It’s been 14 days since the best race of my career so it is not easy to be back on the course but I like this sport and I won this heat so I am in Sunday’s final.

‘It wasn’t easy training after the Olympics because there were a lot of press things to do.

‘I like this sport so I wanted to come here to Uzbekistan after the Olympics.

‘I am here, I’m ready and we will see what happens.

‘I like 500m so I want another medal on Sunday.

‘Every medal is important for me.

‘I am a little bit of a collector of medals so I like them and I will do everything.’

Dostal had a busy opening day as he teamed up with fiancée Anezka Paloudova to seal a place in the mixed kayak double 500m final before advancing in the men’s kayak single 500m.

The newly crowned Olympic champion in the men’s K1 1,000m looked strong over the 500m distance, getting the better of Individual Neutral Athlete Uladzislau Kravets in the semi final.

Portugal’s Fernando Pimenta also made his mark in the men’s K1 500m as he cruised into the final.

‘I think I did a very good race in the heat and semi final and now it’s time to rest and prepare for the mixed K4,’ said Pimenta.

‘Every time I say after the Olympics, if I take a medal or not I want to come here and fight for good results and give my best.’

Ukraine’s Liudmyla Luzan arrived in Samarkand after another successful Olympics, having taken silver in the women’s C2 500m in Paris.

Luzan won her heat in the women’s C1 500m as she sought to win it for a second time after being crowned champion in the event in 2022.

She finished ahead of Chile’s Maria Jose Mailliard, who won the title in 2021.

‘I’m feeling good,’ said Luzan.

‘The goal was to go straight through to the final so I am happy to do that.

‘Everyone was preparing hard for the race as it is the world championships.

‘I respect all my competitors and I’m happy to win this heat against these strong athletes.

‘This is one of my favourite races and distances but I don’t want to say too much. I want to show what I can do.

‘I decided to compete in this before the Olympics so I am here and I want to show myself.

‘The Olympics is a different level in the sport and when you participate there you fall in love with canoeing once again.

‘I have three Olympic medals but not gold yet so I am still competing and I will keep showing myself.’



The first races of the day saw Hungary’s Emese Kohalmi and Norway’s Maria Virik top their respective heats in the women’s K1 1,000m.

China’s Xina Jiang and Hungary’s Giada Bragato impressed in the women’s C1 1,000m to move through to the final as heat winners.

Germany’s Felix Daniel Frank and Martin Hiller and Sweden’s Joakim Lindberg and Martin Nathell posted the quickest times in their respective heats in the men’s K2 1,000m.

The men’s C2 1,000m heats saw AIN paddlers Zakhar Petrov and Ivan Dmitriev and Hungarians Balazs Adolf and Daniel Fejes come out on top.

Portugal’s Teresa Portela and Francisca Laia and AIN paddlers Volha Khudzenka and Maryna Litvinchuk powered through to the women’s K2 200m final after topping their respective heats.

Moldova’s Mihai Chihaiia and Maria Olarasu won their heat in the mixed C2 500m before AIN’s Alexey Korovashkov and Ekaterina Shliapnikova took top spot in the next.

Portuguese pair Teresa Portela and Messias Baptista pulled off a stunning fightback to win the mixed kayak double 500m.

There was just 0.011 second separating the top two as Portela and Baptista edged Individual Neutral Athletes Volha Khudzenka and Dzmitry Natynchyk in a gripping race.

Khudzenka and Natynchyk were closing in on victory, only to be pipped on the line by Portela and Baptista, who triumphed by 1:37.592.

The victory ended 36 year old Portela’s long wait for a world title as she now completed the full set of medals with the gold adding to her bronze in 2009 and silver in 2022.

‘It is really special to be here after the Olympics and enjoy this success with Messias as he is a good friend of mine,’ said Portela.

‘It is great to conquer it with him.

‘It’s my first world championships gold so it is special.

‘We knew we were able to do a good race.

‘There were a lot of good athletes in this field so we knew it would be a good fight until the end but we won so we are really happy.’

Khudzenka and Natynchyk took silver with Czechia’s Josef Dostal and Anezka Paloudova claiming bronze.

The world medal is another great moment in a year that has seen the Czech couple get engaged, Paloudova make her Olympic debut and Dostal win at Paris.

‘This is my first senior medal at a world championships in canoe sprint so I am super excited and I am more than happy to win this with my fiancé,’ said Paloudova.

AIN paddlers Mikita Borykau and Aleh Yurenia were crowned world champions in the men’s K2 1,000m with a fine performance in the final.

Yurenia said he overcame illness to take gold with Borykau at a sweltering Samarkand.

‘This was the main distance for us at the Tokyo Olympics but it was not good,’ said Yurenia.

‘It has been the dream for the past three years to make it happen over this distance.

‘There have been very hard days because of the temperature and I was ill but during the race everything went well.

‘We just came together and made the best finish we could.’

Joakim Lindberg and Martin Nathell sealed silver with Germany’s Felix Daniel Frank and Martin Hiller bagging bronze.

Alena Nazdrova emerged victorious in the women’s canoe single 1,000m after leading from start to finish.

‘I am very happy that at the end of the season after all the races I still produced my best,’ said Nazdrova.



Emese Kohalmi.



Portela/Baptista.



Liudmyla Kukinovska.

‘I controlled the race throughout but the temperature and the weather is the only thing I can’t be well prepared for.

‘During the race, I was competing against myself and the weather.’

Giada Bragato battled hard to take silver as Xina Jiang clinched bronze after an exhausting race in the heat.

There was delight for Hungary in the women’s K1 1,000m as Emese Kohalmi powered to victory.

It was Kohalmi’s third world title and first in this event, having previously prevailed over the 5,000m distance in 2021 and 2022.

‘It was a really good and really hard race,’ said Kohalmi.

‘I am so proud of myself.

‘I really like the 1,000m. This is my favourite event.’

Maryna Litvinchuk took silver with Sweden’s Melina Andersson earning bronze.

The other gold medal of the day went to Zakhar Petrov and Ivan Dmitriev in another clash against Hungary in the men’s canoe double 1,000m.

The AIN paddlers withstood a strong challenge from Balazs Adolf and Daniel Fejes to take top spot.

‘We only had two days for preparation in the crew,’ said Dmitriev.

We remembered our crew feelings from the past years and managed to restore them at the end, although far from ideal.

‘World champion is forever.’

Adolf and Fejes picked up silver with Ukraine’s Yurii Vanduiuk and Pavlo Borsuk completing the podium by sealing bronze.

Josef Dostal backed up winning Olympic gold a fortnight before by securing his place at the top of the podium.

Dostal’s gold was one of 15 won across the non Olympic events on an action packed final day as Moldova, Ukraine, Portugal, Poland, Chile, Hungary, Denmark and Individual Neutral Athletes also achieved success on the Sunday.

Just two weeks after clinching his first Olympic crown in the men’s kayak single 1,000m at Paris Dostal captured the world title over the 500m distance.

It was Dostal’s sixth world gold and fourth in this event as he continued his fabulous form.

‘I was just trying to stick with the shape I had at the Olympic Games,’ said Dostal.

‘It was pretty hard as I had a lot of media stuff and was also trying to manage some training sessions with the mixed K2 with my fiancée.

‘We finished third yesterday so I am really happy about the results that I got in this championships here.’

Fernando Pimenta came second with AIN paddler Uladzislau Kravets bagging bronze.

There was no gold for the other Olympic champion in the field as Martin Fuksa had to settle for silver after a dramatic men’s canoe single 500m final.

The victory went to Moldova’s Serghei Tarnovschi while Romania’s Catalin Chirila got the bronze.

Ukraine picked up two gold medals on the final day, courtesy of victories for Liudmyla Luzan and Liudmyla Kukinovska.

Luzan was crowned women’s C1 500m champion for the second time. She overcame Maria Jose Mailliard and Kazakhstan’s Mariya Brovkova, who picked up silver and bronze respectively.

Kukinovska delivered further Ukrainian success when she won the women’s K1 200m title.

‘This is my first world championships medal and I don’t believe it,’ said Kukinovska.

‘I am very happy.

‘I would like to thank everybody who believed in me and those that didn’t because I did it.’

AIN paddler Anastasiia Dolgova was the silver medallist while Denmark’s Bolette Nyvang Iversen secured bronze.

Messias Baptista clinched his second gold medal with victory in the men’s K1 200m.



Martin Fuksa.



Josef Dostal.



Liudmyla Luzan.





Charlotte Henshaw.

# GB's crushing win

## Paralympic Games

Australia's Curtis McGrath and Great Britain's Charlotte Henshaw looked in fine form on the opening day of paracanoe action as they bid to do the double at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games.

McGrath, who held a record three Paralympic gold medals, got off to a flying start on Friday, topping his heat in the men's KL2 to advance to the final.

The Australian then backed that up by producing a Paralympic Games best time of 48.97 in the men's VL3 to ensure he remained on track for back to back doubles, having done the same at Tokyo 2020.

'I was nervous this morning with a lot of excitement,' said McGrath.

'What adds to the nerves is that we are one of the very last events of the Games.

'The weather was a bit average yesterday and now it is nice with a bit of headwind so I was able to get out there and do a really good race and I am very happy with how it all came together.'

McGrath was also delighted to see fans back at the Paralympic Games



after competing in front of no spectators at Tokyo 2020 owing to the Covid 19 pandemic.

Among the crowd at the Vaires-sur-Marne nautical stadium were members of the Australian army with whom McGrath previously served.

'It's great to have them here as it's come full circle,' said McGrath, who lost both his legs in a mine blast in 2012 in Afghanistan while serving as a combat engineer for the Australian army.

'Some were there in Rio 2016 and they had planned to come to Tokyo but it didn't work out but they made the trip to Paris.'

McGrath's team mate, Scott Martlew, secured top spot in the other men's KL2 heat while Ukraine's Vladyslav Yepifanov also moved through to the final with McGrath in the men's VL3.

There was also double delight for Henshaw, who starred in both the women's VL3 and women's KL2, clinching her place in the finals of both.

'It was always going to be a difficult morning backing up the kayak with the va'a in the space of 45 minutes,' said Henshaw 'but we have



Curtis McGrath.



Hope Gordon.



Vladyslav Yepifanov.



Eyres in V1.

been working on doing that in training and I am pleased to get a good run under my belt.

'I haven't had a hit out against the full field but good to have put down a solid performance and one that I was pretty happy with.'

Henshaw's chief challenge for the women's KL2 crown looked set to come from Hungary's Katalin Varga, who won the other heat.

It was poised to be an all British battle between Henshaw and Hope Gordon for the women's VL3 title after they both topped their heats.

Great Britain enjoyed a strong day with Emma Wiggs and Laura Sugar launching the defences of their respective women's VL2 and women's KL3 titles.

Wiggs was commanding in her heat as she aimed for a third successive women's VL2 gold while Canada's Brianna Hennessy also qualified for the final.

Sugar was expected to face a test from home favourite Nelia Barbosa in the final after they came out on top in their heats.

Hungary's Peter Kiss was another defending champion in the field and he saw off France's Remy Boullé in his heat in the men's KL1.

'It was great but a very tough race,' said Kiss.

'It was a little bit windy. I didn't expect this.

'The time is not very good but maybe in the final I can do better.

'I think Remy Boullé will be faster in the final so I need more rest to compete tomorrow.

'I have a lot of confidence because my family and friends are here cheering for me so I feel the motivation.'

Brazil's Luis Carlos Cardoso da Silva won the other men's KL1 heat while fellow countrymen Fernando Rufino de Paulo and Igor Alex Tofalini look primed to go head to head for the men's VL2 crown after putting in dominant displays.

Chile's Katherinne Wollermann and Ukraine's Maryna Mazhula were the top performers in the women's KL1 heats while Spain's Juan Antonio Valle and Australia's Dylan Littlehales qualified for the men's KL3 final.

Algeria's Brahim Guendouz captured Africa's first ever paracanoe gold medal on a historic day of racing.

Guendouz, who was part of the International Canoe Federation's development programme, marked Algeria's Paralympic debut in the sport with gold in the men's KL3 after a thrilling final.

History was also made by Curtis McGrath, who extended his record gold medal tally to four with victory in the men's KL2.

Charlotte Henshaw became the first ever winner of the women's VL3 at the Games while her team mate, Emma Wiggs, made it three women's VL2 titles in a row.

Peter Kiss was the other gold medallist, clinching the men's KL1 crown for a second successive Paralympics.

After five of the 10 events, all five continents have picked up at least one medal to underline the globalization of paracanoe, which first featured at Rio 2016.

Guendouz etched his name in African paracanoe history with his stunning triumph as the continent had previously not won a medal.

Senegal's Edmond Sanka was the other African in the final as he placed fifth behind Dylan Littlehales in silver and Brazil's Miqueias Elias Rodrigues in bronze.

Guendouz hoped his success and Sanka's presence in the final would inspire more African paddlers to follow their path.

'It's incredible, to be honest, and I know this medal will make a big jump in my country and Africa generally to develop our sport,' said Guendouz.

'I know there are a lot of talented athletes right there but they are waiting for the right moment and right opportunity.

'If they have the right people, as I have, they will be in the same place that I am sitting in right now.

'This is Algeria's first participation and first gold medal.

'I know that in the next years our sport will be developed more and especially in Africa because there are a lot of goods athletes over there.

'We have two Africans in the final and that is something to be proud of.'

Guendouz started paracanoe in 2017 and joined the ICF's Talent Identification Programme in 2019.

He won Africa's first ever world medal in 2023 and has been training in Spain since February thanks to an International Paralympic Committee development grant which the ICF successfully secured.

'I have been preparing in Seville with the Spanish Paralympic team and that helped me a lot to be in the elite level,' said the 25 year old.

'In my country I am the only paracanoe athlete and I don't have a lot of competitors.



Emma Wiggs.



Laura Sugar.





Peter Kiss.



Rufino de Paulo.



Katherinne Wollermann.



Brahim Guendouz.



David Phillipson.

ICF photographs

‘That gave me a big opportunity to be reach my full potential.’

No paracanoe paddler had more Paralympic wins than McGrath, who claimed his fourth and third in succession in the men’s KL2.

Great Britain’s David Phillipson took silver with Ukraine’s Mykola Syniuk earning bronze.

‘I am over the moon,’ said McGrath.

‘I’m just so proud to execute the results and get the gold medal and defend my championship.

‘My wife and child are at home supporting me from Australia.

‘They couldn’t make the trip but their names are written on my boat and it’s a nice reminder that they’re along here in spirit with me.’

Kiss registered a Paralympic Games best time of 44.55 to retain the men’s KL1 title.

The 21 year old proved too strong for the rest of the field, with Luis Carlos Cardoso da Silva picking up silver and Remy Boullé taking bronze in what was the same one, two, three as at Tokyo 2020.

‘I could enjoy this one more than the one in Tokyo,’ said Kiss.

‘This one is perhaps even more precious because there’s so much work behind it and also because of the (chest) injury I had a few months before this competition.

‘It’s always harder to defend the title than to get it for the first time.’

The women’s VL3 made its Paralympic debut with Henshaw overcoming compatriot Hope Gordon to take top spot.

Gordon claimed silver, while Yongyuan Zhong became the first Chinese paddler to take a paracanoe medal with bronze.

‘We are immensely proud that we have gender equality in terms of events,’ said Henshaw.

‘To be the first VL3 Paralympic champion is incredibly special. I wanted to come into the Games and just enjoy it.

‘I have made a conscious effort to just be in the moment and soak it up. I have got my school friends and family here. They have all been a massive support for me so I am just so grateful for them to be here today.’

Wiggs also delivered gold for Great Britain, winning the women’s VL2 title for a third time after success at Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2020.

Brianna Hennessy sealed silver while Australia’s Susan Seipel placed third to complete the medal podium.

‘It’s never a guarantee that you’re going to get on the podium, so to be there again was fantastic,’ said Wiggs.

‘Every medal is a new, different experience.

‘It’s never something to take for granted.’

Charlotte Henshaw secured her second gold as Great Britain finished with a flourish of medals on the final day.

It was a British one two in the women’s KL2 as Henshaw finished ahead of team mate Emma Wiggs while compatriot Laura Sugar successfully defended her women’s KL3 crown.

Great Britain’s other medal came in the men’s VL3 as Jack Eysers took silver after being beaten to the line by Vladyslav Yepifanov.

There was also South American success as Fernando Rufino de Paulo and Igor Alex Tofalini got gold and silver respectively in the men’s VL2 and Katherinne Wollermann was crowned women’s KL1 champion.

Despite blustery conditions there were Paralympic Games best times in all five events on Sunday as paddlers thrilled the packed crowd.

Great Britain finished top of the medals table in paracanoe with four golds and four silvers.

Two of those golds were won by Henshaw, who backed up Saturday’s success in the women’s VL3 with victory in the women’s KL2.

It was the former para swimmer’s third Paralympic gold in paracanoe, having also won the women’s KL2 title at Tokyo 2020.

‘I only did 100m breaststroke when I was a swimmer so I was always ready and prepared for one race,’ said Henshaw.

‘To come into a Games knowing that I have got a busier schedule, it was going to be really tight.

‘We have been preparing for that for more than just this year.

‘The dream was to stand on the top of the podium for both of them and I can’t believe that’s what has happened.’

Henshaw overcame strong winds to retain her title as Wiggs grabbed silver and Germany’s Anja Adler sealed bronze.

‘That was a fight,’ said Henshaw.

‘That was probably the hardest 200m weatherwise I have ever had to do at a major.

‘It was not pretty, probably not my best delivery in terms of how it looked, but I’m really proud of how I managed to think quickly, draw on all my experience of water sports and managed to get that kayak to do what I wanted it to do and get over the line first.

‘I am so proud of both myself and Emma for battling that.

‘It has not been easy but I’m grateful that we got the job done and I can’t believe that I got a gold yesterday and I am standing here with another one.

‘It’s just beyond what I could have imagined.’

Sugar was the third and final British paddler to strike gold after powering clear to make it back to back women’s KL2 titles in a Paralympic best time of 46.66.

‘It’s not the best conditions but I know I’m capable of some really fast times. I’ve just not quite had the conditions to do it,’ said Sugar.

‘It doesn’t matter about times really on the day; it just matters about beating everyone else but I’m really happy to improve that Paralympic Games best.

‘We train in Nottingham in the UK; a little bit of wind doesn’t faze us. We’re not afraid of that.

‘It’s just managing it and doing your race process and then dealing with whatever happens during the race.’

Nelia Barbosa delivered another medal for France with silver while Germany’s Felicia Laberer secured bronze.

Wollermann took Chile’s first ever win in paracanoe after emerging victorious in a thrilling women’s KL1 final.

Maryna Mazhula was strong over the first 50m before Wollermann came roaring back to seal the title.

‘I cannot even describe how I’m feeling right now,’ said Wollermann.

‘I’ve been fighting for this for 10 years now. I’m extremely happy to have this in my hand.’

Mazhula picked up silver while defending champion Edina Mueller of Germany had to settle for bronze this time around.

There was double delight for Brazil in the men’s VL2 as Rufino and Tofalini, sporting the same facial hair that was a homage to the film *Wolverine*, took the top two spots.

Rufino retained the crown in emphatic style as Tofalini edged Steven Haxton by just 0.03 in the battle for silver.

‘I’m very proud of my country and very proud to see it getting better at each Paralympics,’ said Rufino.

‘Brazil is a very strong nation in para sports so it’s great to see it getting better and better.

‘It feels amazing to get these two medals.’

There was to be no second gold of the Games for Curtis McGrath as the defending champion placed fourth in the men’s VL3.

The gold medal went to Yepifanov who held off Eysers to seal the title while New Zealand’s Peter Cowan claimed bronze.

‘I didn’t expect this,’ said Yepifanov.

‘I’m surprised and everything is good.

‘I will not stop and I plan to have two more gold medals.’

## ICF

**200m: K1WL3:** 1 L Sugar, GB, 46.66. 2 N Barbosa, France, 47.91.

3 F Laberer, Deutschland, 48.79. 5 H Gordon, GB, 49.11.

**K1WL2:** 1 C Henshaw, GB, 49.07. 2 E Wiggs, GB, 51.56. 3 A Adler, Deutschland, 52.17.

**K1WL1:** 1 K Wollermann, Chile, 51.95. 2 M Mazhula, Ukraina, 52.87.

3 E Mueller, Deutschland, 53.13. 7 J Chippington, GB, 1:01.19.

**K1ML3:** 1 B Guendouz, Al-Jaa’ir, 39.91. 2 D Littlehales, Australia, 40.68.

3 M Rodrigues, Brasil, 40.75. 6 R Oliver, GB, 40.82.

**K1ML2:** 1 C McGrath, Australia, 41.31. 2 D Phillipson, GB, 42.43. 3 M Syniuk, Ukraina, 42.61.

**K1ML1:** 1 P Kiss, Magyarorszá, 44.55. 2 L Cardoso, Brasil, 46.42. 3 R Boullé, France, 47.01.

**V1WL3:** 1 C Henshaw, GB, 55.70. 2 H Gordon, GB, 56.58. 3 Y Zhong, Zhongguo, 57.43.

**V1WL2:** 1 E Wiggs, GB, 58.88. 2 B Hennessy, Canada, 1:00.12. 3 S Seipel, Australia, 1:01.39.

4 J Chippington, GB, 1:02.41.

**V1ML3:** 1 V Yepifanov, Ukraina, 47.49. 2 J Eysers, GB, 47.87. 3 P Cowan, NZ, 48.28.

**V1ML2:** 1 F Rufino de Paulo, Brasil, 50.47. 2 I Tofalini, Brasil, 51.78. 3 S Haxton, USA, 51.81.

7 E Clifton, GB, 54.78.



# Chinese star against limited entry

## Super Cup

Chinese women ruled the roost in the canoe and kayak single 500m races at the Hangzhou Super Cup.

Xina Jiang cruised to victory in the C1 500m, crossing the line in 2:19 before fellow countrywoman Shuqi Li bagged silver.

Sophia Jensen of Canada did just enough to beat compatriot and C1 200m Olympic champion Katie Vincent, who finished fourth.

Nan Wang ensured the hosts got on top of the podium again, battling Emma Aastrand Jorgensen, Denmark, to finish in 2:03.

‘It’s a warm feeling to be winning at home. I tried my best. It was difficult at the Olympic Games in Paris. I am happy to be winning again,’ the two time Hangzhou 2022 Asian Games champion said.

Bronze went to Michelle Russell of Canada with Aimee Fisher of New Zealand missing out again, finishing fifth in 2:05.

The men’s C1 500m gold went to Serghei Tarnovschi of Moldova in 1:58. The two time C1 1,000m bronze medallist added to his tally, having taken silver in the C1 short distance on day one.

Nicolae Craciun of Italy and Conrad-Robin Scheibner of Germany took silver and bronze respectively.

South America opened their account by triumphing in the men’s K1 500m, thanks to Argentina’s Agustin Vernice. Vernice, who missed out in the K1 1,000m at Paris 2024, was competing in his first event after the Paris Olympic Games and delivered in style, clocking 1:47.

‘I’m very happy. It’s a good finish to the year with this result so I am very happy. I finished fourth at the Olympics and this is my first major tournament since. I spend time with my family and I am happy to be among the medals,’ Vernice said.



ICF photographs

Martin Nathell of Sweden finished second and Italian Samuele Burgo claimed the final podium spot.

The last day saw Nicolae Craciun and Dawid Szela combine for a superb race to win the men’s canoe double 500m gold medal in 1:46.

The Chinese duo of Yuebin Yu and Chenwei Yu took silver. The event also saw many international competitors from different countries team up.

Serghei Tarnovschi ended in style in the C2 500m, combining with Poland’s Wiktor Glazunow for bronze.

The kayak double men’s 500m title also went Italy’s way, thanks to Samuele Burgo and Tommaso Freschi, who finished in 1:33.

‘The race was difficult because the level was very high. It was the first time for us in the water as a pair. We are happy to win gold on our first try,’ Burgo said.

Portuguese pair Joao Ribiero and Messias Baptista took silver while Agustin Vernice teamed up with Spaniard Francisco Cubelos to finish third.

China continued their domination of sprint events with a clean sweep of the women’s K2 500m.

Shimeng Yu and Yule Chen took gold in 1:49 with Ningning Qu and Xuan Li taking silver.

Bronze went to Han Jiang and Jieyi Huang. The women’s sprinters for the hosts took gold and silver in the C2 500 as well.

Anshuo Teng and Xina Jiang gave the home fans joy by crossing the line first in 2:01 with Shuqi Li and Lina Xue taking silver.

Katie Vincent stood on the podium with Italian Olympian Della Giustina taking the C2 500m bronze.

The mixed C2 races were popular and Tarnovschi had more in store. He delivered another title in the mixed C2 500m with Sophia Jensen.

The K2 mixed gold medal went to Emma Aastrand Jorgensen and Germany’s Olympic champion, Max Lemke.

The race also saw kayak specialist Aimee Fisher making a return to the podium after the disappointment at Paris 2024, taking bronze with Burgo.

‘I had so much fun. This is my first mixed race and he was so strong. We had such a good finish,’ Fisher said.

## ICF

**500m: K1M:** 1 A Vernice, Argentina, 1:47.856. 2 M Nathell, Sverige, 0:47.945.

3 S Burgo, Italia, 1:48.755. 15 L Flecher, GB.

**K2M:** 1 Burgo/Freschi, Italia, 1:33.102. 2 Ribeiro/Baptista, Portugal, 1:33.607.

3 Cubelos/Vernice, 1:33.666.





Men's over 44s Enoch, Irvine and Boehm.



Ladies under 16s Fulford-Perez, Ritchie and Green.

# Chelmsford take major titles

## National Championships

Reading managed to find a couple of half reasonable days from a cold and wet early summer, sunny intervals and just a light westerly breeze. Caversham church fête on the far side of the river from the lower of the two portages had a silver band playing gently to add to the ambience. Entries seemed to be down a touch but they had been getting out of hand.

First away with the younger veterans and juniors were the C1s. Of the five there were just two high kneeling C1s, George Bell and Anna Palmer being significantly faster than the seated C1s.

There were only two junior C1s, both from Richmond, paddling among the older K1s, Owen Chisholm beating Andrew Elliot by nearly three minutes.



Starts often saw separate groups forming on each side of the river, as was the case with the senior K1s. James Russell and Matthew Johnson, whose brother retired from the race, led the leading group away and were clear of the rest before they reached the second portage and that is how it was going to stay, the first two places for Chelmsford but in which order? Johnson did most of the work but Russell got away from the final portage to win by 48 seconds.

In the under 23s Henry Freeland and Timothy Dowden broke free of the leading group around the first portage and kept together to the line, Freeland just getting his nose ahead at the finish. There was also a fairly tight race for third place, taken by Gabriel Popham-Coveley from Arthur Morley, Daniel Sklenar and Isaac Pipe, nine seconds separating these four.



Trish Davey.



Men's under 16 winner Roeser.



C1 winner George Bell.



C1 winner Anna Palmer.



Sklenarova, Ball, Dunlop and Payne.



Matthew Johnson and men's K1 winner James Russell.



How, Newlands, Birkett and Hicks.



Timothy Dowden and under 23 winner Henry Freeland.



Brookes, Peters, Krefl and Johnson.



Lucy Guest.

The ladies saw seniors Melissa Johnson and Brynde Krefl in a lead group with under 23s Freya Peters and Katie Brookes, still together at the fourth portage, after which Johnson took the lead but Brookes pushed her to the line. Half a minute later Krefl had Peters five seconds behind her, nobody else in sight.

The under 18 men produced one of the best races. At the line three seconds separated Joseph Enoch, William Short, Alexander Worgan and Flynn Holt, in that order.

Considering there were only five finishers, the under 18 ladies did

equally well, only two seconds separating Kamila Sklenarova, Sophie Dunlop and Mollie Ball.

On the Sunday over 44s Allan/Cowper capsized and swam a boat length short of the finish line. There were also problems at the top portage where horses in the field proved troublesome.

There were just three C2s, spaced out behind Poole/Jones.

A lead group of seven men's K2s had slimmed down to the Johnson brothers, Dowden/How, Russell/Enoch, Benstead/Morley and Cadell/St Stanley before the final portage.



Men's over 34 K2 start.



Starts tended to be separate groups on each side of the river.



Ladies' over 34 winners Wilson/Knee.



Men's over 44 K2 winners Baker/Irvine.



Ladies under 18 leaders.



Allan/Cowper, so near and yet so far.



C2 winners Poole/Jones.



Russell/Stacey, taking a full part in the race.



Dowden/How leading the men's K2s.



Holt/Green and Landsborough/Maloney.





Brookes/Montagna and ladies winners Lewis/Johnson.



Mixed winners Russell/Russell and Petersen/Freeman.

**K1LU10:** 1 A Bartsch-Cotta, Falcon, 26:55. 2 F Enoch, Nottingham, 27:29.  
**K1LU12:** 1 L Small, Wolverhampton, 47:45. 2 A Grant, Wey, 48:48. 3 A De Bilio, Royal,50:34.  
**K1LU14:** 1 M Burton, Elmbridge, 39:40. 2 R Shephard, Reading, 41:52. 3 J Allan, Wey, 41:55.  
**K1LU16:** 1 C Fulford-Perez, Reading, 1:07:28. 2 K Holt, Richmond, 1:07:42.  
3 S Green, Wolverhampton, 1:09:08.  
**K1LU18:** 1 K Sklenarova, Norwich, 1:41:07. 2 S Dunlop, Elmbridge, 1:41:08.  
3 M Ball, Devizes, 1:41:09.  
**K1LU23:** 1 K Brookes, Exeter, 2:04:13. 2 F Peters, Richmond, 2:04:46.  
3 L Guest, Nottingham, 2:09:03.  
**K1L:** 1 M Johnson, Chelmsford, 2:04:12. 2 B Kreft, Falcon, 2:04:41. 3 S Martyn, Wey, 2:13:02.  
**K1WOB:** 1 L Avery, Chelmsford, 1:10:47. 2 S Monera Cabarique, Poole Harbour, 1:11:17.  
3 F Whiteart, Richmond, 1:13:11.  
**K1LO34:** 1 K Wilson, Bishop’s Stortford, 1:04:25. 2 V Knee, Bradford-on-Avon, 1:08:09.  
3 A Whelan, Gloucester, 1:10:27.  
**K1LO39:** 1 E Watts, Wey, 1:16:50.  
**K1LO44:** 1 R Lovell, Worcester, 1:02:42. 2 C Vallance, Falcon, 1:11:52.  
3 E Hutchinson, Reading, 1:13:50.  
**K1LO49:** 1 T Davey, Exeter, 1:07:40. 2 S Colley, Hereford, 1:08:36.  
3 G Moulec, Gloucester, 1:12:26.  
**K1LO54:** 1 I Hermans, Royal, 42:46. 2 C Ayling, Ealing, 43:37. 3 J Jenkins, Nottingham, 45:10.  
**K1LO59:** 1 T Parsons, Nottingham, 40:33. 2 L Fender, Nottingham, 41:51.  
3 M Chapman, Kirkcaldy, 45:23.  
**K1LO64:** 1 M Pilkington, Poole Harbour, 48:31. 2 C Gaffard, Reading, 48:58.  
3 J Moran, Worcester, 49:13.  
**K1LO69:** 1 W Dodson, Addlestone, 49:07. 2 J English, Falcon, 55:52.  
**K1Mini:** 1 B Fel, Ealing, 27:18. 2 B Boughton, Reading, 31:46.  
**K1MU10:** 1 N Barat-Farkas, Elmbridge, 22:33. 2 C Bates, Leighton Buzzard, 24:57.  
3 M Burt, Newbury, 25:00.  
**K1MU12:** 1 F Barnett, Worcester, 41:23. 2 J Wade, Reading, 45:39.  
3 E Foulger, Nottingham, 47:20.  
**K1MU14:** 1 L De Bilio, Royal, 37:48. 2 L Smith, Worcester, 37:49. 3 O O’Keeffe, Wey, 37:50.  
**K1MU16:** 1 W Roeser, Wey, 56:24. 2 F Heard, Exeter, 57:57. 3 S Dickson, Falcon, 57:58.  
**K1MU18:** 1 J Enoch, Nottingham, 1:28:37. 2 W Short, Elmbridge, 1:28:38.  
3 A Worgan, Richmond, 1:28:39.  
**K1MU23:** 1 H Freeland, Elmbridge, 1:54:53. 2 T Dowden, Norwich, 1:54:53.  
3 G Popham-Coveley, Falcon, 1:55:27.  
**K1M:** 1 J Russell, Chelmsford, 1:44:52. 2 M Johnson, Chelmsford, 1:45:40.  
3 M Collinge, Fowey, 1:48:59.  
**K1MOB:** 1 L Rockey, Reading, 1:06:05. 2 J Avery, Chelmsford, 1:08:55.  
3 L Chamberlin, Army, 1:10:07.  
**K1MO34:** 1 A Birkett, Richmond, 1:32:07. 2 J Cauncho, Barking & Dagenham, 1:32:50.  
3 S Walsh, Nottingham, 1:34:52.  
**K1MO39:** 1 S Tebbett, Wey, 1:37:01. 2 D Seaford, Reading, 1:40:07.  
3 J Pilliams, Poole Harbour, 1:40:16.  
**K1MO44:** 1 M Enoch, Nottingham, 57:31. 2 E Boehm, Reading, 57:32.  
3 B Irvine, Richmond, 57:34.  
**K1MO49:** 1 S Baker, Richmond, 59:25. 2 J Butler, Nottingham, 59:26.  
3 S Dunn, Barking & Dagenham, 1:00:20.  
**K1MO54:** 1 D Roeser, Wey, 37:24. 2 A Pipe, Runcorn, 37:25. 3 J Elliott, Truro, 37:26.  
**K1MO59:** 1 N Blackman, Royal Leamington Spa, 37:03. 2 N Herbert, Falcon, 39:45.  
3 D Pemble, Addlestone, 40:15.  
**K1MO64:** 1 S Missen, Bradford-on-Avon, 38:35. 2 D Pendle, Norwich, 39:39.

The Johnson’s took the title from Russell/Enoch by four seconds with Dowden/How another seven seconds back.  
Worgan/Holt appeared to be about a minute ahead of Short/Ross as the under 18s approached the third and final portage and were to be exactly a minute clear at the finish.  
Brookes/Montagna and Lewis/Johnson headed a lead group of senior ladies away from the start, these two and Hall/Martyn still in contact as they returned downstream with Peters/Wallace-Loizou not far behind. Peters/Wallace-Loizou had dropped back before the final portage, from where Lewis/Johnson opened up for a 48 second win.  
Heard/Mazur, Roeser/Clifford and Dickson/Kinder made an early break in the under 16s, dropping Roeser/Clifford after the first portage. That is how it stayed to the finish, Heard/Mazur taking the title by a couple of seconds.  
There were just four under 16 ladies’ crews, Holt/Green comfortably clear from Landsborough/Maloney and the others not in sight after the first portage and that is how it continue to the finish, another win of exactly one minute.  
The ever popular mixed K2 race had 78 boats on the start line, where there were at least three false starts and the starter began handing out time penalties.  
Once they got going, at least four crews swam in the resulting choppy conditions. The single lap race saw James and Emma Russell take the win from Petersen/Freeman.  
  
3 P Allinson, Nottingham, 39:41.  
**K1MO69:** 1 M Swallow, Chester, 43:25. 2 M Phillp, Royal, 43:27.  
3 M Hawthorn, Worcester, 45:49.  
**K1MO74:** 1 M Purchas, Bradford-on-Avon, 43:21. 2 A Miles, Lincoln, 50:38.  
3 C Marsh, Wey, 51:57.  
**C1F:** 1 A Palmer, Reading, 1:11:54. 2 A Fischer, Paddlesport, 1:21:12.  
3 L Murnaghan, Taunton, 1:29:47.  
**C1U18:** 1 O Chisholm, Richmond, 39:39. 2 A Elliot, Richmond, 42:31.  
**C1:** 1 G Bell, Fladbury, 1:09:09. 2 N Poole, Devizes, 1:14:30.  
**K2LU10:** 1 Bartsch-Cotta/Enoch, Falcon/Exeter, 25:56.  
**K2LU12:** 1 Anderson/Grant, Southampton/Wey, 43:54.  
2 De Bilio/Small, Royal/Wolverhampton, 44:42.  
**K2LU14:** 1 Burton/Mckernan, Elmbridge, 37:20. 2 Saunders/Allan, Wey, 38:57.  
3 Shephard/Bates, Reading/Richmond, 40:07.  
**K2LU16:** 1 Holt/Green, Richmond/Wolverhampton, 1:02:11.  
2 Landsborough/Maloney, Nottingham, 1:03:11. 3 Ritchie/Beeson, Wey/Wokingham, 1:06:47.  
**K2LU18:** 1 Scrivener/Sklenarova, Falcon/Norwich, 1:36:50.  
2 Payne/De Bilio, Chelmsford/Royal, 1:37:27. 3 Dunlop/Long, Elmbridge/Falcon, 1:39:18.  
**K2L:** 1 Lewis/Johnson, Worcester/Chelmsford, 1:59:17.  
2 Brookes/Montagna, Exeter/Royal, 1:59:55. 3 Peters/Wallace-Loizou, Richmond, 2:01:01.  
**K2LO34:** 1 Wilson/Knee, Bishop’s Stortford/Bradford-on-Avon, 1:03:11.  
2 Jordan/Mckeand, Maidstone/Chelmsford, 1:05:00. 3 Bird/Whelan, Newbury/Gloucester, 1:05:07.  
**K2LO44:** 1 Hutchinson/Muszkane, Reading, 1:07:58. 2 Maloney/Howell, Nottingham, 1:08:11.  
3 Rosalba/Hinkova, Norwich, 1:10:12.  
**K2LO54:** 1 Queeney/Ayling, Bishop’s Stortford/Ealing, 40:36.  
2 Jones/Fender, Nottingham, 40:39. 3 Walker/Butler, Pangbourne, 42:58.  
**K2Mix:** 1 Russell/Russell, Chelmsford, 52:58. 2 Petersen/Freeman, Banbury/Richmond, 52:58.  
3 Johnson/Johnson, Chelmsford, 54:02.  
**K2Mini:** 1 Field/Mckernan, Elmbridge, 23:28. 2 Boughton/MacLeod, Reading, 24:58.  
**K2MU12:** 1 Barnett/Wade, Worcester/Reading, 40:24.  
2 Barat-Farkas/Ockendon, Elmbridge, 44:12. 3 Cheyne/Maloney, Chelmsford/Nottingham, 44:14.  
**K2MU14:** 1 De Bilio/Smith, Royal/Worcester, 35:51. 2 O’Keeffe/Barnett, Wey/Worcester, 35:52.  
3 Prior/Bull, Elmbridge, 37:01.  
**K2MU16:** 1 Heard/Mazur, Exeter/Reading, 53:40. 2 Dickson/Kinder, Falcon/Reading, 53:40.  
3 Roeser/Clifford, Wey, 54:19.  
**K2MU18:** 1 Worgan/Holt, Richmond, 1:24:01. 2 Short/Ross, Elmbridge, 1:25:01.  
3 Lovell/Niland, Worcester/Falcon, 1:25:32.  
**K2M:** 1 Johnson/Johnson, Chelmsford, 1:45:14.  
2 Russell/Enoch, Chelmsford/Nottingham, 1:45:18. 3 Dowden/How, Norwich, 1:45:25.  
**K2MOB:** 1 Smith/Shaw, Wey, 2:38:53. 2 Hill/Peers, Wey, 2:42:09.  
3 Dallimore/Dallimore, Cardiff Bay, 2:42:25.  
**K2MO34:** 1 Caruncho/Boehm, Barking & Dagenham/Reading, 1:27:47.  
2 Enoch/Oakley, Nottingham, 1:28:23. 3 Williams/Kingman, Poole Harbour, 1:33:08.  
**K2MO44:** 1 Baker/Irvine, Richmond, 55:15. 2 Balla/Dunn, Barking & Dagenham, 57:41.  
3 Quinton/Smith, Pangbourne/Reading, 58:14.  
**K2MO54:** 1 Hayward/Pendle, Norwich, 35:05. 2 Blackman/Blackman, Burton Phoenix/Royal Leamington Spa, 35:10. 3 Martin/Pipe, Gloucester/Runcorn, 35:33.  
**K2MO64:** 1 Escott/Missen, Bradford-on-Avon, 36:55. 2 Holmes/Holmes, Wey, 36:56.  
3 Mietus/Allinson, Nottingham, 39:08.  
**K2M074:** 1 Sharp/Lee-Smith, Norwich, 45:15.  
**C2:** 1 Poole/Jones, Devizes, 1:09:50. 2 White/Fillingham, Reading, 1:14:36.  
3 Murnaghan/Metcalfe, Taunton/Pangbourne, 1:16:55.



Maria Gomes.



Melissa Johnson.

# Enoch/Short second for junior men’s K2

## World Championships

Sweden’s Melina Andersson overcame the disappointment of her paddle breaking to retain the women’s kayak single short distance title at the marathon world championships in Metkovic.  
Her victory with the use of a paddle with which she had never competed before after her team mate accidently broke her original one came on a day of dramatic short distance races at the Croatian venue.  
Denmark’s Mads Brandt Pedersen clinched the men’s K1 crown for the first time after coming out on top in a final that saw Portugal’s Fernando Pimenta and Argentina’s Agustin Rodriguez both receive 15 second penalties for missing buoys.  
There was also a maiden triumph for Spain’s Ignacio Calvo who



secured top spot in the men’s canoe single final while Hungary’s Zsolia Kisban successfully defended the women’s C1 title.  
Andersson proved too strong in the women’s K1 short distance final, forging clear of Hungarian pair Emese Kohalmi andVanda Kiszli.  
It looked like a comfortable victory for Andersson but the Swedish paddler revealed that it was a far from easy day.  
‘Just before the heats my original paddle broke,’ said Andersson.  
‘A team mate of mine dropped a table right on the blade so it broke.  
‘I had to take the spare one that I never use but then it felt really good when I got on the water so I could calm down and do my race.  
‘When it happened I was really sad so I decided to call my mum,



Marcell Meri.



Melina Andersson.



Sklenarova/Payne.



Hutchinson/Ball in a bunched turn.



Kadler/Zatyko.



Victor Devesa.





Mads Pedersen waves to supporters.



James Russell.

saying “I don’t know what to do”. I just gave this one a shot and it felt the same so I could be confident as I got help from some paddle guys so it was awesome.’

Kohalmi, who took two golds at the previous month’s sprint world championships in Samarkand, took silvers as two time champion Kiszli bagged bronze.

There was drama in the men’s K1 short distance final as Pimenta’s hopes of a third successive title ended shortly after a portage.

Pimenta and Rodriguez both missed a buoy after running into traffic, allowing Pedersen and South Africa’s Hamish Lovemore to battle it out for gold.

Pedersen, who has picked up silver on three occasions, held off Lovemore to end his long wait for gold.

‘This is huge,’ said Pedersen, who has three world titles over the long distance to his name.

‘It’s my first win in the short race at the world championships.

‘It was the biggest field ever with more than 50 people signed up in the men’s K1 so it is also cool to see the sport keep growing and get a lot of interest.

‘This is such a nice atmosphere and community.

‘Racing is at a really high level so to take the win at the end of the day is pretty cool.’

Lovemore sealed silver as Spain’s Ivan Alonso collected bronze after Pimenta and Rodriguez both received 15 second penalties.

Calvo became the latest Spaniard, joining Diego Romero and Manuel Campos, to win the men’s C1 short distance crown.

The 27 year old’s decision to return to marathon paddling paid off as he produced an impressive showing to bag gold.

‘It is my first participation in the world championships in this distance so I could not be happier,’ said Calvo.

‘I have found a race which is a mixture between marathon and sprint and is the most suitable for me.’

Poland’s Mateusz Borgiel finished strongly to clinch silver with France’s Thomas Dunilac earning bronze.

Kisban tightened her grip on the women’s C1 short distance with a superb showing to retain the title.

After tussling with Ukraine’s Liudmyla Babak, Kisban found an extra gear to pull away for the win.



Enoch/Short on their way to second place..



Sousa/Batista.

‘I am really happy because I won this short race last year and can again be world champion,’ said Kisban.

‘It has been a really hard year because there was pressure.

‘I really wanted win this race again so I am so happy.’

It was the same top three as last year’s world championships as Babak sealed silver and her Ukrainian team mate, Olena Tsyhankova, claimed bronze.

The morning’s competition was hit by torrential rain and thunderstorms when junior finals were held.

Portugal’s Maria Gomes and Czechia’s Tereza Kodetova clinched the respective women’s K1 and women’s C1 crowns before Hungary’s Marcell Meri sealed the men’s C1 title.

Melina Andersson and Mads Brandt Pedersen completed a kayak double with impressive victories on the penultimate day.

After both winning the short races on Thursday, Andersson and Pedersen emerged victorious over the long distance as they sealed the K1 titles on Saturday.

As well as being crowned champions for the second time in Metkovic, Andersson and Pedersen earned quota places for Sweden and Denmark respectively for the World Games 2025 in Chengdu.

While Pedersen stormed to the men’s K1 crown for a fourth time, Andersson pulled off a sensational fightback to break Vanda Kiszli’s stranglehold on the women’s K1.

Since 2018 Kiszli has topped the podium in the event but her hopes of winning it for a sixth successive time were dashed by Andersson.

It appeared to be a two horse race with Kiszli and Emese Kohalmi looking to pull away.

Andersson was left to go it alone in third when Australia’s Rebecca Mann capsized before the Swede decided to launch a comeback.

After closing the gap on the Hungarians, Andersson overhauled Kohalmi and then faced a battle with Kiszli for gold.



Lamph/Roeser on the run.



Pimenta/Ramalho and others.





Johnson/Collinge off the turn.



How/Dowden.

Garry Bowden photographs

‘We are feeling very good,’ said Zuchora.  
‘We have been waiting for this moment for eight years.  
‘We started in Brandenburg (in 2016) with fourth place and now we are first.

Portugal’s two time Olympic medallist, Fernando Pimenta, ended his championship on a positive note with a gold in the men’s kayak double alongside Jose Ramalho.

Pimenta was determined to bounce back after a 15 second penalty cost him a medal in the men’s kayak single short distance final.

‘It’s a really nice feeling after a very hard season for me,’ said Pimenta  
It is the third successive year that Pimenta and Ramalho have come out on top as they overcame two time world champions Quentin Urban and Jeremy Candy of France.

‘The first time we went on the water together we knew it was a good boat and we could see that we had the potential,’ said Ramalho.

‘In 2022 we took our first gold and we knew that if we stayed focused and worked well we could get more golds or fight for the medals and we have managed to do that for now.’

Urban and Candy claimed silver while the bronze went to Hungary’s Adrian Boros and Tamas Erdelyi.

Zsoka Csikos and Emese Kohalmi delivered another gold for Hungary with success in the women’s K2 final.

It capped a fantastic week for the Hungarian team, who topped the overall standings with eight golds including six in the junior and under 23 classes.

Kohalmi, who won twice at the previous month’s sprint world championships, almost made a costly mistake when she came close to falling into the water after exiting the penultimate portage.

The wobble did not disrupt their rhythm, though, as Csikos and Kohalmi saw off South Africa’s Saskia Hockly and Christie MacKenzie to take gold.

‘We are really happy now as we are world champions,’ said Csikos.  
‘It was a great race with really tough competitors.

‘After running, Emese didn’t know what to do, swimming or paddling, but, after, she knows that she is paddling.

‘After that, everything was fine and we got the gold.’

Kohalmi added ‘It’s been a really successful year which is amazing. This means a lot to me and that was my plan.’

Hockly and MacKenzie finished second with Sweden’s Melina Andersson and Ella Richter clinching bronze.

Portugal also secured a junior title on the final day with Joao Sousa and Franciso Batista winning men’s K2.

Great Britain’s Joseph Enoch and William Short bagged silver with Spain’s Ruben Castilla and Arturo Aguilar picking up bronze.

ICF

- Sh: K1W:** 1 M Andersson, Sverige, 14:02.03. 2 E Kohalmi, Magyarország, 14:08.58.  
3 V Kiszli, Magyarország, 14:09.90. 7 M Johnson, GB, 14:50.16. 11 G Roser, GB, 14:59.35.  
**K1M:** 1 M Pedersen, Danmark, 12:27.69. 2 H Lovemore, S Africa, 12:41.25.  
3 I Alonso, España, 12:49.68. 8 J Russell, GB, 13:07.64. 19 M Johnson, GB, 13:53.49.  
**L: K1WJ:** 1 M Gomes, Portugal, 1:28:37.47. 2 G Singe, S Africa, 1:28:39.23.  
3 C Heuser, Deutschland, 1:28:45.67. 14 S Payne, GB, 1:34:07.34.  
**K1WU23:** 1 P Sinko, Magyarország, 1:46:10.14. 2 P Csepe, Magyarország, 1:46:11.89.  
3 P Hostrup, Danmark, 1:46:23.30. 4 G Roeser, GB, 1:46:23.86.  
**K1W:** 1 M Andersson, Sverige, 1:58:37.51. 2 V Kisli, Magyarország, 1:58:43.42.  
3 E Kohalmi, Magyarország, 1:59:21.09. 13 M Johnson, GB, 2:05:30.05.  
**K1MJ:** 1 V Devesa, España, 1:37:06.24. 2 L Candela, Italia, 1:37:06.24.  
3 T Ivancso, Magyarország, 1:38:07.55. 6 J Enoch, GB, 1:39:25.47. 14 W Short, GB, 1:42:50.74.  
**K1MU23:** 1 P Knudsen, Danmark, 1:50:14.40. 2 U Hart, S Africa, 1:51:07.23.  
3 Z Peli, Magyarország, 1:51:08.00. 13 T Dowden, GB, 1:54:10.00.  
**K1M:** 1 M Pedersen, Danmark, 2:03:28.75. 2 J Ramalho, Portugal, 2:05:53.21.  
3 A Martin, España, 2:06:14.22. 4 J Russell, GB, 2:07:50.77. 20 F Cadell, GB, 2:13:41.30.  
**K1ML3:** 1 G Keirel, France, 58:12.32. 2 T Lodge, GB, 59:06.92. 3 Y Grondin, France, 1:01:28.89.  
**K1ML2:** 1 M Swoboda, Österreich, 57:56.79. 2 M Deghmachie, France, 1:05:33.60.  
3 J White, GB, 1:06:59.22.  
**C1MJ:** 1 M Meri, Magyarország, 1:15:17.80. 2 A Wilga, Polska, 1:15:33.99.  
3 A Ruiz, España, 1:16:26.90. 6 O Chisholm, GB, 1:17:42.98.  
**V1ML2:** 1 R Suba, Magyarország, 1:08:56.55. 2 S Cook, GB, 1:15:08.02.  
**K2WJ:** 1 Kadler/Zatyko, Magyarország, 1:24:03.47. 2 Singe/Smith, S Africa, 1:24:32.23.  
3 Hutchinson/Ball, GB, 1:24:39.13. 7 Sklenarova/Payne, GB, 1:26:15.94.  
**K2W:** 1 Csikos/Kohalmi, Magyarország, 1:53:01.90. 2 Hockly/MacKenzie, S Africa, 1:53:33.16.  
3 Andersson/Richter, Sverige, 1:54:13.84. 9 Lamph/Roeser, GB, 1:57:38.82.  
**K2MJ:** 1 Sousa/Batista, Portugal, 1:29:06.47. 2 Enoch/Short, GB, 1:29:35.81.  
3 Castilla/Aguilar, España, 1:29:53.43.  
**K2M:** 1 Pimenta/Ramalho, Portugal, 1:53:56.58. 2 Urban/Candy, France, 1:53:58.23.  
3 Boros/Erdelyi, Magyarország, 1:54:19.68. 9 Johnson/Collinge, GB, 1:58:03.83.  
17 How/Dowden, GB, 2:01:49.71.



Ferenc Csima powers away.

# Kayak makes it again for Csima

## World Middle Distance Championships

This year the Keyo Brigg Bomber was the middle distance world championships although only half a dozen overseas competitors made it to Lincolnshire. Chief of these was Hungarian Ferenc Csima, who has attended the event several times and been a past winner here.

Additional support came from a triathlon run alongside the quadrathlon. The triathlon actually had the larger entry although triathlon generally is declining with the average age of entrants increasing. Shrewsbury quadrathlon has now ceased after a dozen years because of the inability to attract enough event crew and the Brigg event only had a limited entry from the leading Lincsquad, whose members were largely occupied with running the event.

Mostly sunny and with very little wind, the race offered pleasant conditions this year, backed by efficient organization that appeared



suitably relaxed, helped by a humorous briefing.

First off was the swim with leaders pulling away in the first few seconds. One of the team swimmers was first to finish, then Czech Leo Rousavy and Frenchman Laurent Martinou came out of the water together with Csima half a minute behind them. Jason Frary was the first non team Briton, nearly three minutes behind Csima.

German Susanne Walter was the first female swimmer, almost 10 minutes behind the first swimmers but a couple of minutes ahead of first British female Natalie Abbott.

On the bikes, Martinou opened up just 7 seconds on Rousavy, negligible after 48 minutes on the road. Csima slipped a further three minutes on the leaders. Oliver Fairbairn was the next fastest cyclist, two and a half minutes behind them on the road but 11 minutes behind overall.



The swimmers head up the New River Ancholme.



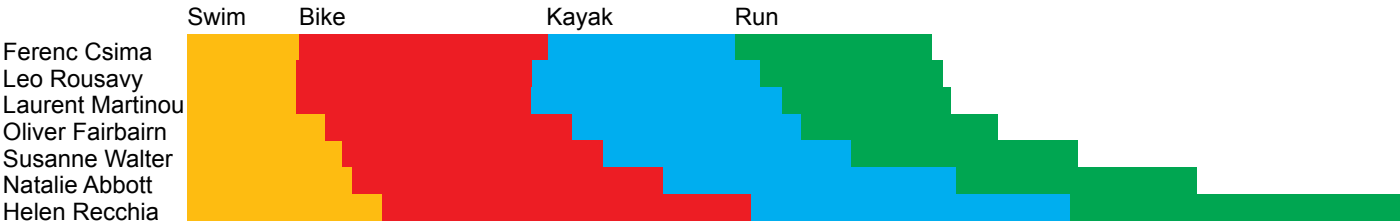
First out of the water.



Petr Mejzlik.



Laurant Martinou.



Transition times included with previous legs.





Unwin of Bradford-on-Avon.



Fire and water.



Steady progress.



A surfski worked well, slower on turns.



Wakeford of Greenwich in a slower kayak.



Using a stable racer.



Former white water paddler John McAdam.



Returning from the bike ride.

Walter was the fifth fastest cyclist overall, taking a bike lead of over 10 minutes on Abbott, the next fastest female.

It was all about to change with the kayaks. Martinou and Rousavy were first onto the water but Csima just turned on the power, as he has done on previous occasions, to take more than nine minutes off Rousavy, who was only a second faster than Jules Taylor and 11 seconds up on Fairbairn, while Martinou slipped the better part of four minutes on Rousavy. This gave Csima a four minute advantage, 22% faster than anyone else in the kayak without looking as if he was working hard, just quietly efficient.

Walter's kayak time was fifth fastest overall, including beating Martinou by over half a minute.

The run course was changed this year from two laps through the town to a single out and back along the bank of the New River

Ancholme, where they had just paddled, rural and with no crossing of major roads. This was Martinou's strong leg, pulling back over two and a half minutes on Rousavy and over five minutes on Csima but Csima had enough time in hand for an 11 minute win over Rousavy. Fairbairn was 8 seconds adrift of Csima on the run for fourth overall.

A further three minute gain for Walter gave her a 26 minute win over Abbott.

Teams of two, three or four competitors in relay were mostly from Manvers, their members producing better times as they were each racing shorter distances.

Both world champions were M50 age group competitors and nearly all the entrants were M40 to M60. Fourth placed Fairbairn, an Elite competitor, was one of the few who were not Masters but best British female, Abbott, was M60.

**F:** 1 S Walter, Berlin Teamwork, 3:01:55. 2 N Abbott, Macclesfield, 3:27:29. 3 H Recchia, Selby Swans Tri, 4:09:51. 4 C Jones, Chesterfield, 4:29:02.  
**M50:** 1 S Walter, Berlin Teamwork, 3:01:55. 2 C Jones, Chesterfield, 4:29:02.  
**M60:** 1 N Abbott, Macclesfield, 3:27:29. 2 H Recchia, Selby Swans Tri, 4:09:51.  
**O:** 1 F Csima, Kaposvar, 2:30:56. 2 L Rousavy, Hradec Urvlov, 2:41:07. 3 L Martinou, 3 Sports, 2:43:08. 4 O Fairbairn, Macclesfield, 2:47:25. 5 J Taylor, Bristol, 2:51:33. 6 Mad Dog & Yorkshiremen, 2:55:40. 7 J Frary, Scunthorpe Tri, 2:58:16. 9 N Unwin, Bradford-on-Avon, 3:04:51. 10 P Jumeau, City of Lancaster Tri, 3:09:03. 11 L Ball, Wreccsam Tri, 3:14:55. 12 J Chappill, Lincsquad, 3:20:30. 13 M Chrysanthou, Leeds, 3:21:36. 14 J McAdam, Fladbury, 3:23:49. 15 R Wakeford, Greenwich Tritons, 3:23:54. 16 P Belcher, Bridgend Pen-y-Bont Tri, 3:26:50. 17 N Abbott, Macclesfield, 3:27:29. 18 200+, 3:27:47. 20 J Scratcherd, Brigg, 3:30:27.  
**E:** 1 O Fairbairn, Macclesfield, 2:47:25. 2 R Wakeford, Greenwich Tritons, 3:23:54.  
**M40:** 1 L Rousavy, Hradec Urvlov, 2:41:07. 2 L Martinou, 3 Sports, 2:43:08.  
**M50:** 1 F Csima, Kaposvar, 2:30:56. 2 J Frary, Scunthorpe Tri, 2:58:16. 3 L Ball, Wreccsam Tri, 3:14:55. 4 J Chappill, Lincsquad, 3:20:30. 5 W Smith, Glanford & Scunthorpe, 3:30:59.  
**M60:** 1 J Taylor, Bristol, 2:51:33. 2 N Unwin, Bradford-on-Avon, 3:04:51. 3 P Jumeau, City of Lancaster Tri, 3:09:03. 4 J Chappill, Lincsquad, 3:20:30. 5 J McAdam, Fladbury, 3:23:49.  
**S:** 1 P Belcher, Bridgend Pen-y-Bont Tri, 3:26:50.  
**T2:** 1 Mad Dog & Yorkshiremen, 2:55:40. 2 Manvers 2Somesmiles, 3:39:55. 3 Manvers Minions, 3:49:05.  
**T3:** 1 200+, 3:27:47.  
**T4:** 1 Caffeinated Comets, 3:36:27. 2 Manvers Misfits, 3:35:55. 3 Manvers Marvellettes, 3:47:33.



The new run course by the river.



Susanne Walter.



Denmark v Iran.



Loose ball.

# McCutcheon and Littlewood star but no medal placings

## World Championships

The opening day of the world championships in Deqing saw the top three nations in the U21 men's and women's categories start with wins.

Men's world number one, Spain, got the better of Lithuania 7-2 in their opener with Jose Luis Aguilar smashing in four goals.

Despite the scoreline, the first half saw Lithuania defend well and concede only two goals.

However, the mood changed in the second half with the Spaniards turning on the style. The defending champions faced Belgium next and won the game 5-2.

Johannes Foerster joined Aguilar on the four goal bandwagon, helping Germany breeze past Japan 11-2 before beating Switzerland 3-1.

A Paolo Messina brace was enough for the Italian men to triumph over world number 14, the Netherlands. They won 6-3 and added to the result with a massive 9-4 victory over Chinese Taipei.

In the second half, however, the Italians lost focus at the back, allowing Ruo-Chi Sun and skipper Tien-Yang Sung to score three goals with six minutes remaining.

Back after missing out on the last edition in Saint-Omer, Australia failed to win in their opening fixtures.

However, the Aussies were involved in entertaining draws in both categories against teams ranked above them.

The men's team drew 5-5 against Chinese Taipei while the women's team finished 3-3 against Great Britain.

France, Germany and Spain women all showed their class in the morning session, registering massive wins with many double digit scores.

Spain got the biggest win of the day, brushing past debutants Thailand 18-1. Ines Arosa Soto, Valentina Nogueira and Carmen Almela Isach all scored hat tricks.

Raquel Calvente Reboll was the star of the show, scoring five past a helpless Thai side.

Defending champions New Zealand had it easy against fierce rivals Australia and Singapore, winning 8-2 before edging Great Britain 4-3.

Hannah Hunt and Ellery Nielsen scored three goals each for the Kiwis on the first day.

The second day of the tournament would see the senior men's and women's teams begin their campaigns.

The Germans would be favourites in both categories. Poland's men's team beat a higher ranked Great Britain side to take control of Group D as action continued.

The focus shifted towards the senior men's and women's matches as they began their journey to seal a spot at the World Games 2025 in Chengdu.

Defending champions and world number one, Germany, made it two wins from two in the men's Group A, getting the better of Belgium 5-2 before beating Japan 6-2.

Captain Jonas Vieren, Aren Beckmann, Lennart Unterfeld and Rene Kirchhoff all found the back of the net in both games.

The Poles took pole position in Group D after an easy 5-2 victory over Australia before the tenth ranked nation upset world number four, Great Britain.

A first half hat trick from British captain Suryan McCutcheon suggested it was going to be a routine win until Jan and Juliusz Bulira combined to stage a comeback for the ages and beat them 5-4.

As expected, world number three, Italy, took on Malaysia and Chinese



Taipei in Group C, winning both fixtures, 6-1 and 4-0 respectively.

Spain scored eight past Sweden to put their Super Cup woes behind them. Ranked second in the world, they set the pace in Group B with a 4-1 win over New Zealand.

Denmark, ranked fifth in Group E and sixth placed France in Group F also won both their games of the day.

France's second win against seventh ranked Portugal was impressive. They scored four goals in the first half, including a brace from captain David Linet, and delivered a composed defensive performance to come out on top, 5-2.

Great Britain women showed their intent and followed the path of their Spanish U21 counterparts from day one, taking the honour for the biggest win of the day.

They scored a whopping 25 goals and conceded 0 against China, including a sensational seven goal performance from Bethan Littlewood.

Katie Howes and Georgina Longbottom scored three each, Sara Lanao-Madden bagged four and Eleanor Mcbay smashed in five past the hosts.

The Germans, however, humbled the Brits later in the day, scoring eight past them to make up for the Super Cup loss and reassert their dominance.

The Spanish women's team continued their winning streak from the Super Cup the previous week to register a comfortable 11-1 win over Hong Kong. Neith Natalia Leon Martin scored four in the game.

The first group phase of the U21 tournament finished with no big surprises for the day but one.

World number one, Spain, was handed a reality check by the Danes, who beat them 4-2. Carl-Christian Palmquist Dahl scored to give Denmark the lead in what was an end to end game.

Jose Luis Aguilar equalized but a Viggo Willumsen brace secured the points for Denmark. The win helped them top Group A and qualified along with Spain and Belgium.

Germany, New Zealand and Switzerland were through from Group B, Italy, Great Britain and the Netherlands from Group C and France, Poland and Portugal from Group D.

Among U21 women, Germany, France and the Netherlands from Group A and New Zealand, Spain and Great Britain from Group B had all secured qualification.

Spain and Italy were handed blows in their quest for semi finals among men while the Dutch women came out on top against France.



Australia.





France v Netherlands.



Germany v Italy.



Spain v Switzerland.



Spain.

A quickfire start from the Swiss took the second ranked Spaniards by surprise on Thursday.

Shane and Livio Vogeli combined well to help world number nine Switzerland register a famous 6-3 win.

The Italians, up against Great Britain, conceded after only 17 seconds of play but Gianmarco Emanuele pulled one back soon after.

However, nothing could stop captain fantastic Suryan McCutcheon, who powered Britain to victory. Leading from the front, he bagged another hat trick as they won 3-2.

The race for semi finals saw Germany, Poland, Denmark and France all come out on top in the men's category. Rene Kirchhoff and Erik Beukenbusch stood out with a two goal performance for the Germans against Portugal.

Earlier in the day the fight for second position in the men's Group A went down to the wire with Japan and Belgium giving it their all.

The exhilarating match ended in heartbreak for Japan, who squandered their lead twice.

Skipper Ryota Kimura's hat trick was in vain as the Belgians did enough to edge the game 5-4.

The women's competition saw the Netherlands entertain the crowds by edging second ranked France 6-5.

The nailbiter saw the French lead 4-3 at half time, only for Selina Dijkstra to level things up.

Alisha Van Den Berg and Astrid Van Der Maas stood out for the Netherlands as they scripted a memorable win at the Deqing County International Convention Centre (Fengqi Lake).

Germany's women's team made light work of hosts China, defeating them 17-1.

Katharin Gruenewald starred with five goals and skipper Svenja Schaeper got a hat trick. They went on to make it two from two against world number eight, Denmark, 7-0.

Singapore women came up with one of the results of the tournament, drawing 2-2 with the in form Spaniards.

A brace from Jia Xin Ong almost got them a surprise win against the Super Cup champions, only for the sensational Beatriz Carmona Quevedo to equalize with two minutes remaining.

Learning their lesson against Singapore, Spain took a cautious approach to beat higher ranked Italy to finish the day on a high.

France and Italy won both their games in the U21 men's category, bagging crucial points in the second phase of group stages.

World number one, Spain, was in front against third ranked Italy thanks to the ever reliable Jose Luis Aguilar but failed to keep up the momentum as the Italians came back to win 3-1.

Spain did just about enough to beat the Netherlands 4-3 in their first game of the day to remain in contention for the semi finals.

Poland was embracing the giant killer role, following in the footsteps of the senior team, beating second ranked Germany 3-2.



Spain v Hong Kong.

Winner at the death is an understatement as Dominik Taluk scored with one second remaining to help the Poles victory.

In the U21 women's category, Spain and France got the better of the Netherlands, 3-2 and 5-2 respectively.

The defeat against Spain would have been hard to digest for the Dutch after two goals in the last moments almost sparked a comeback.

New Zealand were well on course for defending their title after a stunning 3-2 win over Great Britain.

Defending champions Germany lost both of their games on Friday as semi final lineups were confirmed in the U21 categories.

Germany's title defence was hanging in the balance after Italy and Denmark surprised the number one ranked team in the world.

Sylvia Cogoni came up with the sucker punch with 37 seconds remaining as world number three, Italy, beat them 1-0.

Later in the day Lara Charlotte Robra found the back of the net in both halves to script a famous 3-2 victory for the Danes.

There was another upset as world number six, Spain, were shocked by Iran. Skipper Elahe Pourabdian Limoudehi scored the decisive goal to help the Asians win 3-2.

Iran, however, were unlucky to lose their second match against the Netherlands by a whisker but would take plenty of confidence from the win earlier as they looked to reach the last four.

Early second half goals from Alyssa Shepherd and Klara Richter ensured France did not have it easy against New Zealand. They went on to win the game 2-0, putting themselves in contention for the semi finals.

With Spain drawing 1-1 against Great Britain, the penultimate day was sure to provide all the drama and emotions.

Semi finalists were confirmed in the women's and men's U21 categories.

The top four teams qualified among women with defending champions New Zealand set to take on France while world number one Germany would face Spain.

Four entertaining 3-3 draws between Germany and Spain, France and Great Britain, Czechia and Lithuania and New Zealand and Great Britain were the highlights of the men's U21 competition.

The results meant that Germany would not play for the title along with Great Britain.

France would be up against Spain for a place in the final while Denmark would battle it out with Italy in the other U21 men's semi finals.

The Italians joined the senior women's team in inflicting more pain on the Germans.

An early goal from Henning May put the Germans in front but a lack of creativity cost them as Tommaso Gaetano Lampo' bagged the winner for the Italians with three and a half minutes remaining.

The senior men's competition on Friday saw France and Spain come up with a blockbuster.

Both sides shared leads at various points in the game but the scoreline read 3-2 in favour of the second ranked Spaniards thanks to a Samuel Lorenzo Pardavilla strike with more than four minutes remaining.

However, Baptiste Cotta ensured that sixth ranked France shared the spoils.

Close encounters were the theme of the day with world number 22 Iran stretching 12th ranked New Zealand. The Kiwis eventually won 6-5.

Poland edged Sweden 4-3 while Portugal was made to work hard against Chinese Taipei before winning by the same scoreline.

Mateusz Donart powered the Poles by scoring all four goals while a double from captain Sergio Bento rescued Portugal.

The Spaniards, ranked second, would have been concerned about their defensive record, going into the business end of the tournament after their 8-6 win over 14th ranked Belgium.

Spain retained the U21 men's trophy while France's U21 women won their first world title in 14 years.

World number one, Spain, controlled the final as they beat Denmark 3-1 to lift the trophy for the second consecutive time.

Despite the defeat, it was a significant step up for the Danes, who had finished 10th in the previous edition in Saint-Omer.

'This is the best feeling. We are world champions two times in a row. It is historic. Now it is time to part,' Spanish captain Antonio Romero Mesa said.

France scored 4-2 against Spain in the women's U21 final with captain Anaïs Bonamy scoring a brace.

'It feels great. We finished behind them in the final group stages but we won when it mattered the most. I am very happy for the team,' Bonamy said.

Earlier in the day, Spain defeated France 4-3 in the U21 men's semi final, with Jose Luis Aguilar and Javier Jesus Saborido Ruiz scoring two goals each.

On the other pitch, Denmark took on world number three, Italy, where Viggo Willumsen scored with almost six minutes remaining to complete the comeback and win 3-2.

France and New Zealand finished third in the men's and women's U21 categories respectively.

Germany would play Great Britain and France would be up against Denmark for a place in the final in the senior men's category.

The reigning champions were unstoppable in the final group games of the tournament, registering big wins. They beat Chinese Taipei 7-1 before a 3-1 victory over Poland.

Great Britain lost their first game of the day against world number two, Spain, despite a hat trick from skipper Suryan McCutcheon. However, they made up for it with a 7-1 win against Belgium.

Second ranked Spain, on the other hand, could only draw with world number three, Italy. The 4-4 result meant that both teams would not have a chance to play for the trophy.

German women recovered well from Friday to beat Sweden 9-1 before a huge confidence boosting 5-1 win against France.

World number two, France, were having an off day as the Danes managed to edge them 3-2 thanks to an Emilie Ahrnkiel Jorgensen winner with five minutes remaining.

Iran squandered a three goal cushion against Switzerland but captain Elahe Pourabdian Limoudehi proved her class with another clutch goal to shock the world number five team 4-3.

Germany defended the men's world title while New Zealand women were back on top for the first time since their triumph in 2016.

It was a slow start to the women's final with the Kiwis and Italians taking a cautious approach on the final day but the New Zealanders went into overdrive with five minutes remaining in the first half. Emma Malcolm and Tania Dugdale opened the scoring with the second one being a delicious dipping finish.

They started the second half with intent, scoring four more goals as the Italians were mentally and physically defeated.

Chiara Trevisan got a consolation for the Europeans as the match finished 6-1 to New Zealand.

'The game's not over until it's over. Even if we did put a couple away

early we kept working right to the end. I guess the scoreline does reflect how hard we work throughout the game,' New Zealand captain Kate Blincoe said.

'We were inspired by the 2016 New Zealand senior women's team who won gold and following in their footsteps is cool. It is so nice to bring it home for the country.'

The men's final was a contrast as Germany retained their title by beating France 2-1 with a defensive masterclass.

Germany broke the deadlock when captain Jonas Vieren found the back of the net from a tight angle. He bettered that finish by sending a rocket to make it 2-0 to the Germans.

There were plenty of chances for both sides and the French did their bit, too, attacking from both ends of the pitch.

Leo Dehainault finally cracked the German backline with four minutes remaining but could not add to the momentum.

'I think it's just great teamwork. We work well together. We might not have made the best match in the final but to be able to beat the French team is great,' Vieren said.

'We do our defensive work then it will be hard for other teams to score against us. We knew we would score at some point. It worked out in the semi final and the final as well.'

Germany, France, Denmark, Great Britain, Italy and Spain will head to the World Games in Chengdu next year among men after finishing in the top six.

New Zealand, Italy, the Netherlands, Iran, Germany and Spain among women sealed their spots.

Earlier in the day a goal in either half from Vieren and Arne Beckmann was enough for Germany to beat Great Britain in the first men's semi final.

Ivan Debelyi was the hero for world number six, France, as they came out on top against fifth ranked Denmark 3-1 in the other contest.

Iran faced New Zealand in the women's category for a place in the final but were unable to contain the Kiwis.

The first half finished 4-0 in favour of the Oceania side but the seventeenth ranked Iranians started the second half well with two quick goals.

However, the last three minutes saw world number four, New Zealand, add three more goals for a comfortable win, with Blincoe and Alyssa Shepherd scoring two goals each.

World number three, Italy, pipped the Dutch in the other women's semi final. In the entertaining match Italian captain Roberta Catania scored a hat trick to win it 5-4.

Bronze medals went to Denmark and the Netherlands in the men's and women's categories, respectively.

## ICF

**WU21:** GB 14, Thai 2, GB 3, Australia 3, NZ 4, GB 3, España 1, GB 1, GB 6, Singapore 0. Deutschland 1, GB 1. NZ 3, GB 2, GB 3, Iran 2. **7:** GB 4, Australia 1. **3:** NZ 3, Deutschland 2. **F:** France 4, España 2. **O/A:** 1 France. 2 España. 3 NZ. 7 GB. **W:** GB 25, Zhongguo 0. Deutschland 8, GB 1. Danmark 3, GB 4. GB 9, Australia 3. GB 1, Singapore 1. España 1, GB 1. Nederland 3, GB 2. GB 0, Schweiz 0. **5-8:** Deutschland 6, GB 2. **7:** GB 1, Danmark 2. **3:** Iran 1, Nederland 2. **F:** NZ 6, Italia 1. **O/A:** 1 NZ. 2 Italia. 3 Nederland. 8 GB. **MU21:** GB 4, Nederland 0. GB 7, Australia 1. GB 6, Taipei 3. Italia 1, GB 1. Danmark 2, GB 2. GB 8, Portugal 3. France 3, GB 3. GB 9, België 6. NZ 3, GB 3. **5:** GB 5, Polska 4. **3:** France 4, Italia 1. **F:** España 3, Danmark 1. **O/A:** 1 España. 2 Danmark. 3 France. 5 GB. **M:** GB 12, USA 0. GB 4, Polska 5. GB 6, Australia 0. GB 2, Schweiz 1. France 2, GB 1. España 4, GB 3. België 1, GB 7. **SF:** Deutschland 2, GB 0. **3:** GB 1, Danmark 2. **F:** Deutschland 2, France 1. **O/A:** 1 Deutschland. 2 France. 3 Danmark. 4 GB.





# Wood takes masters’ surfski title

## World Championships

Germany’s Gordan Harbrecht made history by becoming the first European paddler to win the men’s surfski at the ocean racing world championships on the island of Madeira, Portugal. The men’s SS1 had only previously been won by paddlers from South Africa and Australia since the first edition of the world championships in 2013. Harbrecht broke the South Africa-Australia duopoly with a stunning performance.

The German, whose previous best result was a silver medal in 2021, swept to victory in a time of 1:27:31.69. ‘I am stoked,’ said Harbrecht. ‘I had a race plan, went for it and I am so happy with the outcome. ‘It was a super tough race. ‘There was a very nice downwind for the first half and then the second half it was just pushing against the wind. ‘It wasn’t nice but I just followed my plan and I am super stoked with the result. ‘I have had some good results in the last few years. ‘I was on the podium in 2021 but some of the best guys were missing due to Covid. ‘I am super happy to win the title. I couldn’t have asked for more.’ Australia’s Cory Hill, the defending champion who was aiming to win the event for a record extending fourth time, crossed in 1:28:24.62 for silver.

‘It was really tricky out there,’ said Hill. ‘We had a lot of wind behind us and then it was right in our face. ‘At the end, there, Gordan showed how strong he was. ‘He was unbeatable today; it was scary to see how fast he was paddling.’ South Africa’s Hank McGregor, the 46 year old canoe marathon legend, secured the third canoe ocean racing world medal of his glittering career with bronze in 01:28:34.35. There was a one-two for South Africa in the women’s surfski with Michelle Burn getting the better of compatriot Melanie van Niekerk to take the title. Burn finished in 1:44.01.56 to become world champion for a second time following her last success in 2021.



‘I am very tired as this was probably one of the toughest races in terms of conditions that I have ever done before,’ said Burn.

‘We had a current against us and we had a headwind so it was very tough.

‘It just got harder and harder.’ Van Niekerk crossed in 1:45:16.84 for silver while Spain’s Judit Verges sealed bronze with a time of 1:47:31.57.

## ICF

**SS1WJ:** 1 **G Singe, S Africa**, 1:47:48.22. 2 H Smith, S Africa, 1:56:56.97. 3 L Cellier, España, 1:58:46.54. 11 E Jones, GB, 2:28:58.30. **SS1WU23:** 1 **K Bester, S Africa**, 1:43:39.79. 2 K Swetish, USA, 1:45:16.51. 3 S Hockley, S Africa, 1:47:00.39. 5 R Edwards, GB, 1:52:05.45. **SS1W:** 1 **M Burn, S Africa**, 1:44:01.56. 2 M Van Niekerk, S Africa, 1:45:16.84. 3 J Verges, España, 1:47:31.57. 7 B Kreft, GB, 1:53:18.65. 13 L Kraus, GB, 2:01:16.53. **SS1MU23:** 1 **S Mocke, S Africa**, 1:35:59.74. 2 H Clarke, S Africa, 1:36:07.27. 3 T Michael, GB, 1:40:29.13. 9 O Pope, GB, 1:43:37.68. **SS1MU23:** 1 **M Fenn, S Africa**, 1:29:19.20. 2 B Pereira, Portugal, 1:30:35.11. 3 U Hart, S Africa, 1:31:50.92. **SS1M:** 1 **G Harbrecht, Deutschland**, 1:27:31.69. 2 C Hill, S Africa, 1:28:24.62. 3 H McGregor, S Africa, 1:28:34.35. **SS1MMas40-44:** 1 **H Lima, Portugal**, 1:42:58.41. 2 E Reis, Portugal, 1:45:15.95. 3 L Silva, Portugal, 1:50:29.18. **SS1MMas50-54:** 1 **M Melara, España**, 1:45:43.84. 2 T Zachert, Deutschland, 1:46:35.85. 3 J Mendez, España, 1:47:39.88. 14 N Hibberd, GB, 2:09:14.46. 18 B Bosch, GB, 2:21:08.25. **SS1MMas55-59:** 1 **M Dobler, Deutschland**, 1:41:20.13. 2 E Verduyck, België, 1:55:06.68. 3 R Seymour, S Africa, 2:00:57.21. 10 I Robinson, GB, 2:24:03.48. **SS1MMas60-64:** 1 **S Wood, GB**, 1:48:28.45. 2 J Norton, Australia, 1:48:48.37. 3 R Fieldus, GB, 1:54:42.60. 13 C Urquhart, GB, 2:11:22.65. **SS1MMas65-69:** 1 **S Willmott, S Africa**, 1:55:24.19. 2 M Carlisle, S Africa, 1:55:30.54. 3 W Gram, Norge, 2:04:24.55. 5 R Howes, GB, 2:12:12.54. **SS2MixJ:** 1 **Smith/Smith, S Africa**, 1:36:07.16. 2 Rosco/Cellier, España, 1:36:13.17. 3 Aizpurua/Hachawi, España, 1:37:14.93. 7 Turner/Jones, GB, 2:01:42.39. **SS2MixU23:** 1 **Singe/Hart, S Africa**, 1:29:02.27. 2 Pereira/Brito, Portugal, 1:33:27.08. 3 St Mary/Mengual, España, 1:33:29.91. 7 Edwards/Michael, GB, 1:35:59.28. **SS2MixMas:** 1 **Echave/Aizpurua, España**, 1:37:43.95. 2 Kapisovska/Mendez, 1:40:15.34. 3 Alzola/Kannemann, España, 1:48:07.83. 6 Sierra/Guerra, GB, 2:13:04.98.



World champion Gordon Harbrecht.

ICF photography



Kerry Christie puts in an extreme support stroke.



C1 champion Louis Passernig.

# Britain’s best ever sprint results

## Llangollen Wild Water Race

It seemed inevitable that the settled weather of October and early November must fail before the ECA final sprint WWR in late November. Such was the case. A week before the race it turned bitterly cold and North Wales was hit by snow, which was still lying on the sides of the valley. One of the winter storms was set to arrive on Saturday but the strong winds forecast to sweep up through the Irish Sea were minimal on the Dee.

Even the persistent rain dropped away nearly to nothing at times but it was melting the snow to add to water levels. However, it was a murky autumn afternoon, then banks of fog even appearing briefly. The Serpent’s Tail, to be used for this final ECA sprint of the year, was at its optimum level, challenging water in a scenic setting, a complete contrast with the Holme Pierrepont slalom course event of equal status in the spring, attracting several continental teams.

The programme began with a raft race, giving participants a rare chance to get on decent water, producing some collisions with the overhanging rock at the crux of the Tail. More than one raft capsized spectacularly, spilling out all its paddlers.

There was a solid turnout of home racers, enhanced by visitors from Czechia, Slovakia, Germany, the Netherlands and France, small numbers but good to see European names on decent home water.

The course was challenging, as ever, and there were frequent breakouts. However, from Break Out Canoe Unit came Molly Sandercock with the sweetest line I saw from anyone in the whole event, like a hot knife through butter, to win the women’s kayaks by over two seconds from Victoria Murray of Pinkston Panthers. The men’s kayaks were won by Czech Jan Sindelar with Freddie Brown of Wiltshire Youth 0.17 sec behind.

There were only two women’s C1s, Czech Alexandra Plachtova four seconds clear of Slovakian Viktoria Scholzova. Louis Passernig of

Colmar took the men’s C1 from Czech Tobias Trnka and Nicky Cresser of Nottingham, Filip Stratil being the only other finisher.

The Christie sisters took a one second C2 win from the international crew of Scholzova/Plachtova while the men’s C2 went to Stratil/Trnka from Jefferies/Holmes. By the end of the first runs the river was rising so the course would be different for second runs and there would be increasing technical problems with running the race, including safety cover, so results were decided on first runs only.

Being the second ECA sprint in Britain this year, British racers had an attendance advantage. Perhaps the Holme Pierrepont event should have been run with the Dee, contrasting courses.

Elsie Lansborough of Nottingham ended as European junior champion while the first four senior women were Kerry Christie, Molly Sandercock, Emma Christie and Laura Milne. Alex Sheppy was European men’s champion and women’s C1 went to Molly Sandercock from Kerry Christie, the Christie sisters also taking the C2 title. Nicky Cresser had our best men’s C1 result, 4th, while Holmes/Jefferies were in 3rd place in men’s C2. We have never had such a good set of sprint WWR results as these.

On Sunday the start area was underwater and the river was running out into the trees in places. Thus, a race on the river was discounted, the Welsh Open taking the form of a time trial on the canal. It was not ideal but it gave a weekend of varied races, sometimes challenging, in an attractive setting, a memorable couple of days.

Being flat water, the time trial gave less advantage from knowing the water. Kerry Christie and Jan Sindelar were the two kayak winners and Molly Sandercock and Tobias Trnka took the C1s. The Christie sisters and Jefferies/Holmes took the women’s and men’s C2s and there were a couple of mixed C2s, won by Phil Dean and Viktoria Scholzova.

Jamie Christie and team pulled off an event that could have been far less successful.



Tobias Trnka struggles to hold his line.



Alexandra Plachtova was women’s C1 winner.





Molly Sandercock had an excellent line down the Tail.



Men's K1 winner was Jan Sindelar.



Jefferies/Holmes in C2.



The Chain Bridge on Sunday, where the start had been sited the previous day.

**ECA 6 Sp: K1W:** 1 M Sandercock, Break Out, 1:13.15. 2 V Murray, Pinkston Panthers, 1:15.30. 3 L Milne, Pinkston Panthers, 1:16.69. 5 K Pocklington, Wilts Y, 1:18.42. 6 E Christie, Break Out, 1:20.33. 7 F Pryce, Edinburgh Schools, 1:22.29. 9 E Landsborough, Nottingham, 1:25.75. 10 H Brown, Nottingham, 1:25.80. 11 K Christie, Break Out, 1:28.89. **K1M:** 1 J Sindelar, Czechia, 1:03.16. 2 F Brown, Wilts Y, 1:03.33. 3 A Sheppy, Devizes, 1:04.05. 4 J Holmes, Breadalbane, 1:04.44. 5 H Singleton, Nottingham, 1:04.68. 8 N Boreham, Nottingham, 1:06.01. 9 W Stevely, Pinkston Panthers, 1:07.48. 11 R Jefferies, Banbury, 1:08.39. 13 A Knox, Pinkston Panthers, 1:09.81. 14 F Gormal, Pinkston Panthers, 1:11.73. 15 R Toop, Wilts Y, 1:12.96. 16 L Tomlinson, Nottingham, 1:15.91. 17 S Stevely, Pinkston Panthers, 1:16.13. 18 A McDonald, Central Cats, 1:24.03. 19 P Dean, Wear Whoppers, 2:27.17. **C1W:** 1 A Plachtova, Czechia, 1:23.95. 2 V Scholzova, Slovensko, 1:28.19. **C1M:** 1 L Passernig, Apach Colmar, 1:13.31. 2 T Trnka, Czechia, 1:17.57. 3 N Cresser, Nottingham, 1:19.08. **C2W:** 1 Christie/Christie, Break Out, 1:20.48. 2 Scholzova/Plachtova, Slovensko/Czechia, 1:21.72. **C2M:** 1 Stratil/Trnka, Czechia, 1:12.02. 2 Jefferies/Holmes, Banbury/Breadalbane, 1:13.74. 3 Dean/Tomlinson, Wear Whoppers, 1:17.76. 4 Cresser/Stegeman, Nottingham/Proteus, 1:17.82. 5 Stegeman/Toop, Protues/Wilts Y, 1:21.17. **ECA series: Sp: K1WJ:** 1 E Landsborough, GB, 118. 2 J Faass, Deutschland, 94. R Haselhoff, Deutschland, 96. 10 C Maloney, GB, 73. 11 L Harrison, GB, 72. 14 I Patrick, GB, 50. 16 F Pryce, GB, 46. **K1W:** 1 K Christie, GB, 155. 2 M Sandercock, GB, 146. 3 E Christie, GB, 120. 4 L Milne, GB, 119. 7 H Brown, GB, 84. 11 K Pocklington, GB, 78. 15 F Pryce, GB, 71. 16 E Landsborough, 67. **K1MJ:** 1 K Lazarov, N Macedonia, 273. 2 B Guginov, N Macedonia, 253. 3 N Niederle Gomez, Deutschland, 200. 9 R Toop, GB, 168. **K1M:** 1 A Sheppy, GB, 354. 2 I Lamers, Nederland, 343. 3 F Brown, GB, 340. 5 J Holmes, GB, 254. 6 N Boreham, GB, 238. 7 R Jefferies, GB, 235. 8 L Tomlinson, GB, 233. **C1W:** 1 M Sandercock, GB, 100. 2 K Christie, GB, 84. 3 A Plachtova, Czechia, 46. 6 V Scholzova, Slovensko, 43. **C1MJ:** 1 N Nikiema-Schwarz, France, 50. T Trnka, Czechia, 50. 3 J Tassotti, France, 46. 5 C McDonald, GB, 43. O Stegeman, GB, 43. 12 R Toop, GB, 36. **C1M:** 1 J Presecki, Hrvatska, 139. 2 T Hohnjec, Hrvatska, 125. 3 J Mueller, Schweiz, 100. 4 N Cresser, GB, 82. 17 A Crowhurst, GB, 41. 19 O Stegeman, GB, 39. **C2W:** 1 Christie/Christie, GB, 50. 2 Patrick/Milne, GB, 46. 3 Mette/Norguet, France, 43. 4 Maloney/Landsborough, GB, 41. **C2M:** 1 Presecki/Hohnjec, Hrvatska, 141. 2 Scholz/John, Deutschland, 92. 3 Holmes/Jefferies, GB, 89. 10 Dean/Tomlinson, GB, 43. 14 Cresser/Stegeman, GB, 41. 18 Harrison/Crowhurst, GB, 39. Stegeman/Toop, GB, 39. **WO: Cl: K1W:** 1 K Christie, Break Out, 12:28.06. 2 L Guest, Nottingham, 12:34.64. 3 H Brown, Nottingham, 13:03.61. 4 K Pocklington, Wilts Y, 13:42.71. 5 E Christie, Break Out, 14:13.48. 6 V Murray, Pinkston Panthers, 14:33.97. 7 F Pryce, Edinburgh Schools, 14:42.63. 8 L Milne, Pinkston Panthers, 14:14.62. 9 C Maloney, Nottingham, 15:02.25. 11 E Landsborough, Nottingham, 15:59.26. 13 A Czarnicka, Edinburgh Schools, 17:34.40. 14 K Leeson, Central Cats, 17:46.18. **K1M:** 1 J Sindelar, Czechia, 11:31.94. 2 N Boreham, Nottingham, 11:33.05. 3 W Stevely, Pinkston Panthers, 11:43.96. 5 L Tomlinson, Nottingham, 11:53.69. 6 H Singleton, Nottingham, 11:56.55. 8 S Stevely, Pinkston Panthers, 12:06.86. 9 J Holmes, Breadalbane, 12:08.41. 11 P Dean, Wear Whoppers, 12:29.48. 12 A Knox, Pinkston Panthers, 12:37.46. 13 R Jefferies, Banbury, 12:49.33. 15 R Toop, Wilts Y, 13:22.07. 16 F Gormal, Pinkston Panthers, 13:23.17. 17 F Brown, Wilts Y, 13:37.27. 18 A McDonald, Central Cats, 18:13.13. **C1W:** 1 M Sandercock, Break Out, 17:44.47. 2 A Plachtova, Czechia, 18:31.44. 3 F Pryce, Edinburgh Schools, 18:35.01. 4 E Maclean, Pinkston Panthers, 19:10.50. **C1M:** 1 T Trnka, Czechia, 14:14.96. 2 L Passernig, Apach Colmar, 14:21.82. 3 N Cresser, Nottingham, 16:12.54. 4 O Stegeman, Proteus, 17:18.75. 6 C McDonald, Central Cats, 18:09.63. 7 M Stegeman, Proteus, 18:46.54. **C2W:** 1 Christie/Christie, Break Out, 16:36.64. 2 Maloney/Landsborough, Nottingham, 17:27.78. 3 Scholzova/Plachtova, Slovensko/Czechia, 18:11.61. 4 Leeson/Czarnicka, Central Cats/Edinburgh Schools, 22:39.23. **C2Mix:** 1 Dean/Scholzova, Wear Whoppers/Slovensko, 17:17.20. 2 Boreham/Milne, Nottingham/Pinkston Paddlers, 17:53.67. **C2M:** 1 Jefferies/Holmes, Banbury/Breadalbane, 16:04.45. 2 Stratil/Trnka, Czechia, 16:49.60. 3 Stegeman/Toop, Proteus/Wilts Y, 17:48.95. 4 Stevely/Stevely, Pinkston Paddlers, 17:57.46. 5 Knox/McDonald, Pinkston Paddlers/Central Cats, 18:13.98.

**Name change?**

The most discussed item at the ACM was whether to change the name of Wild Water Racing to River Racing. The case was put that some races on the calendar do not use rough water and draw in entries from those who would not want to race on serious water. This suggests that WWR, sprint and marathon are tending to blurr their boundaries and stray into what would have been seen as each other's territories in the same way that slalom has taken on freestyle's boater-X, there are short marathons and sprint races with portages.



Off the start.

# Fenwick on minimum points

**Nationals**

There were a number of unusual aspects about the IC nationals. It was a three day event instead of the usual five so there was no long distance race and the social calendar was rather depleted. Sailors had been given a choice of Dale, at the far end of Milford Haven, in early July or West Kirby on the Wirral in the autumn. The vote had gone for the former, only a fortnight before the world championships at Travemünde on the Baltic, so most of the top names were missing and there were only 10 participants.

Strangely, it was possible to get from the border to Dale, on the opposite side of the country, with a similar number of ultra low speed traps as there were via the A5 to Llangollen, virtually within sight of the border. The first day of racing was the day after the general election when the number of Labour MPs in Wales had increased although the number of Labour votes decreased, blamed by locals on the speed limit crisis.

The championships were run in conjunction with the corresponding event for the Cherubs although they were to continue for a fourth day and the fleets used different courses, the canoes on triangle-sausage-triangle. Race Officer Arky had been one of George Cherry's white water kayak paddlers in his Hatfield Polytechnic days.

A three masted sailing ship had been moved away by the start of racing, to be replaced by an LPG tanker, which was moved immediately racing finished on the first day. An Irish car ferry came in and went out and there were various small sailing craft making the haven busy.



Hofman with distinctive asymmetric, off Dale Fort.



Clive Everest off Dale.

The first day, Friday, was fairly calm, sunny with winds just reaching force 3. As the forecast for the next day was not good Arky proposed to bank a fourth race.

Mike Fenwick completed the first lap of the first race just ahead of Clive Everest, who then capsized but was quickly back up again, the rest of the field well back. They held these positions over the next lap and then until the finish, Fenwick 12 seconds faster on time.

The sky had clouded over by the start of the second race. Tony Robertshaw led the fleet to the leeward mark for the first time, followed by Fenwick, James Hofman, Martin Robb and Stephen Clarke as the next to arrive. Over the next lap Hofman took the lead, he and Fenwick breaking free of the rest. Hofman was in the oldest boat in the fleet, the only remaining asymmetric, finishing over a minute clear on time, the first time he had ever won an IC race. He was eight minutes up on third placed Stephen Fleming.

The wind had died to force 1 by the third race. Fenwick was again the first to complete the first lap with Everest, Hofman and Robb as the next three. The course was shortened, Fenwick comfortably ahead of Hofman, himself clear of Everest, Robb and the rest.

The Cherubs didn't need any more of this so racing reverted to the original programme.

Rain and strong winds followed overnight, as forecast. The canoes did not feel any need to go out and break things so they stayed onshore and walked along the road to Dale Fort to watch the Cherubs capsizing.

Sunday was much more sensible, sunny intervals with force 3 winds.



National champion Mike Fenwick.





Martin Robb leads Tony Robertshaw round a mark.



Chris Hampe off Dale Fort.



With the big boys at the mouth of Milford Haven.



Martin Robb checks for barnacles.

Everest and Tony Robertshaw were over the line at the start, only Everest responding to the recall so Robertshaw was disqualified. Fenwick established a good lead over the first lap with Hofman, Chris Hampe and the still present Robertshaw well clear of the others, the order in which they finished the shortened course.

Robertshaw retired for the rest of the event, well short of his usual standard.

It seemed that the next race might have to be abandoned when another LPG tanker arrived but it was appreciated that commercial shipping was operated to avoid the championships. The first lap saw Fenwick, Everest and Hampe clear of everyone else after Hofman capsized. That was the order after the second lap and the order at the finish, Fenwick having opened the gap significantly on the others. Robb

had been in fourth position for most of the race but capsized before the finish, allowing Tim Garvie and Hofman past.

The final race was on a windward-leeward course. Fenwick led from Robb and Hampe after the first lap, Hampe pulling up a place by the following leeward mark. Fleming had been four and a half minutes back in elapsed time but the Portsmouth Yardstick correction pulled him up to third place.

One discard was allowed. Fenwick dropped his second place in the second race to leave a full set of wins, his 5 points being the minimum possible. Hofman was second on 15 points, a couple of points clear of Fleming in the only Slurp. Fenwick and Robb are both from Castle Cove at Weymouth, where the sailing secretary is Peter Bell, formerly a leading C1 slalomist with Viking.

**R1:** 1 M Fenwick, Castle Cove, 43:55. 2 C Everest, Hayling Island, 44:09. 3 C Hampe, Hooe Pt, 46:29.

**R2:** 1 J Hofman, Grafham Water, 57:09. 2 M Fenwick, Castle Cove, 59:53. 3 S Fleming, W Kirby, 1:02:48.

**R3:** 1 M Fenwick, Castle Cove, 49:59. 2 J Hofman, Grafham Water, 51:34. 3 C Everest, Hayling Island, 53:49.

**R4:** 1 M Fenwick, Castle Cove, 45:08. 2 J Hofman, Grafham Water, 47:05. 3 S Fleming, W Kirby, 48:33.

**R5:** 1 M Fenwick, Castle Cove, 1:03:35. 2 C Everest, Hayling Island, 1:05:59. 3 S Fleming, W Kirby, 1:07:25.

**R6:** 1 M Fenwick, Castle Cove, 55:36. 2 C Hampe, Hooe Pt, 57:08. 3 S Fleming, W Kirby, 57:39.

**O/A - Quincey Cup:** 1 M Fenwick, Castle Cove, 5. 2 J Hofman, Grafham Water, 15.

3 S Fleming, W Kirby, 17.

**ICOD/Slurp - L Erne Trophy:** 1 S Fleming, W Kirby.

**AC - Worcester Trophy:** J Hofman, Grafham Water.



Stephen Fleming and Ferguson.



Powerhouse with a clear lead in the women's S14 200m.

## Amathus edge past Wraysbury

### National Finals

While much of the country was being disrupted by thunderstorms, racing got off to a good start at Nottingham. The sun was hazy but a warm, northeasterly, following breeze made racing pleasant and some fast times were recorded over 200m, including some very close racing.

In the repêchages for the S20 open Yorkshire Sharks took second place from St Neots by 0.03 sec and Pershore Pheonix took their race from Bristol Empire by 0.06 sec. Third place in the minor final went to Pershore from St Neots by just 0.01 sec, as close as the timing system allowed. Powerhouse of Teesside took the only win that did not go to Amathus or Wraysbury from Egham, in the next two places.

Hurricanes of Wraysbury, no longer sponsored by BA, won their S14 women's final from Wraysbury by 0.05 sec and Secklow Hundred took the minor final in this event from Soaring Dragons of Loughborough

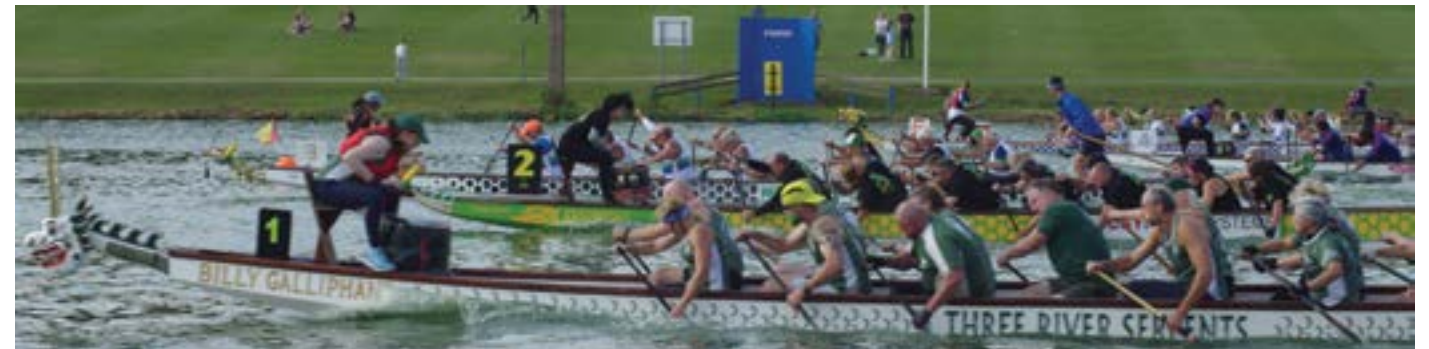
by 0.08 sec. Amathus were pushed to the line by Wraysbury in the grand final.

In the first heat of the S14 men Thames took second place from St Neots by 0.06 sec. The grand final went to Amathus by the better part of a second from St Neots.

Kingston Royals won their heat in the S14 seniors by 0.09 sec from Wraysbury Mixed in a race in which seven lanes were used. Wraysbury Open won the grand final, Notts Anaconda in second place by 0.03 sec from Three River Serpents of Durham.

The juniors had a couple of round robin races, as usual, Tsunami having the edge over Drizzly Dragons.

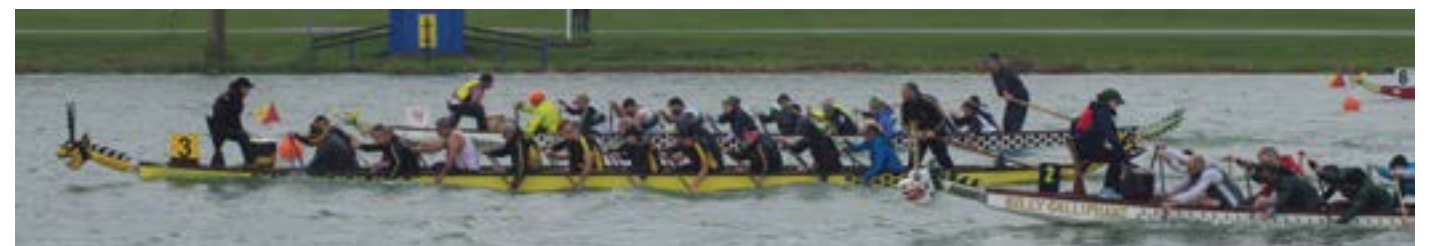
The S20 mixed class was deleted entirely. By this stage the racing was running over an hour late because of problems with the scoreboard, which, like the scoreboard on the slalom course, has been giving



Wraysbury in lane 3 take the senior S14 200m.



The wind did not help turns in the 2km race.



Amathus take the S20 mixed 500m title from Wraysbury.





Amathus take the women's S14 race from Powerhouse, Bristol Empire and Wraysbury.



Wraysbury take the S14 masters' title from Amathus by 0.07 second.



Amathus take the open S20 title from Notts Anaconda during heavy rain.



Wraysbury's S20 open crew see off Amathus and Notts Anaconda.

problems for years. In addition, despite the wind still from the northeast, the sky was blackening from the south. There were lightning strikes within 2km of the regatta course so crews were called off the water and racing was abandoned for the day.

On Sunday morning, after a wet night, the breeze was still from the northeast but by this time it was cold, bringing a steady drizzle, and there was foam streaked across the boat loading area at the end of the course.

Racing began with the 2km time trial, two laps, held over from the previous day. Nineteen crews took part, well over 400 people in one race.

After the odd collision, Amathus were fastest by over 6 seconds, followed by Wraysbury Open, exactly 20 seconds clear of Notts Anaconda.

The programme of 500m races had to be slashed because of the shortage of time remaining and lane 7 had to be used again

Amathus won the S20 mixed grand final from Wraysbury but third place was very tight, going to Three River Serpents from Kingston Royals by 0.02 sec.

The next race, the first heat of the S14 women, saw the first two places go to Powerhouse and Kingston Royals but Three River Serpents lose the third spot to Bristol Empire by that same 0.02 sec. There was no third heat or minor final but Amathus took the grand final by over 4 seconds while second place went to Powerhouse from Kingston Royals by 0.03 sec.

The S14 men had a straight final with no preliminaries, Wraysbury winning by 0.07 sec from Amathus. By this time fog was beginning to develop. The S14 seniors did not happen at all. Instead, there was an S20 open, just two heats and then a final, which Wraysbury took from Amathus.

Although Wraysbury remained on form, Amathus were back on top with marginally better results.

**200m: S14W:** 1 Powerhouse, 57.12. 2 Amathus, 58.84. 3 Wraysbury, 58.96.  
**S14M:** 1 Amathus, 50.50. 2 St Neots, 51.41. 3 Shadwell, 51.45.  
**S14S:** 1 Wraysbury O, 52.40. 2 Notts Anaconda, 53.38. 3 3 River Serpents, 53.41.  
**S200:** 1 Wraysbury, 48.77. 2 Amathus, 49.81. 3 Typhoon, 49.93.  
**500m: S14W:** 1 Amathus, 2:28.23. 2 Powerhouse, 2:32.76. 3 Kingston Royals, 2:32.79.  
**S14M:** 1 Wraysbury, 2:10.20. 2 Amathus, 2:10.27. 3 Kingston Royals, 2:12.37.  
**S20Mix:** 1 Amathus, 2:09.56. 2 Wraysbury, 2:10.42. 3 3 River Serpents, 2:12.11.  
**S200:** 1 Wraysbury, 2:05.96. 2 Amathus, 2:07.42. 3 Notts Anaconda, 2:08.48.  
**2km: S200/Mix:** 1 Amathus, 10:08.32. 2 Wraysbury O, 10:14.99. 3 Notts Anaconda, 10:34.99.

#### More ICF skulduggery

The ICF have set up an agreement with a Chinese car manufacturer to promote dragon boat racing. The agreement does not mention the International Dragon Boat Racing Association, the sport's governing body, or that the sport is so popular that the Chinese have a public holiday for the national championships. This behaviour by the ICF is simply resulting in confusion over a sport which already has the largest world following without the ICF's unwanted intrusion.

Qualification for the 2025 World Games dragon boat racing will be via the ICF championships again. This means that the world's leading crews will be excluded automatically and makes a mockery of the World Games as such.

#### And I quote...

... Mark England, GB Olympic team Chef de Mission, ahead of the 2024 Olympic Games, "Team GB has also been consistently successful on the water, winning 147 medals in sailing, rowing and canoeing events...

"In canoe slalom events Scotland have won the most medals, with David Florence collecting silver medals at the 2008, 2012 and 2016 games...

"it is no surprise to see that places with access to open water and rivers over-index in those disciplines".

#### What the judge sees

Many sports rely on what the judge or referee sees as the final decision, even if spectators think they see differently. The replacement with video assistant referees, the decisions of which are often not as quickly available as desired, may or may not help. Best results are for measurement. Having video cameras on sprint finish lines can give times to three decimal places of a second and are never disputed, provided the system does not break down.

It should be possible to have cameras covering all lines on a polo

pitch rather than referees having to stop a match to confer but, realistically, it would be expensive, they would be vulnerable and even timing fails too often. David Wain put a lot of effort into developing a slalom pole that would register touches reliably but had to admit defeat in the end.

Instead we have gate judges and section judges, independent eyes on what happens. To try to cover this with cameras would require them to cover all angles. Even then, filming by spectators might show something different. In surfing and freestyle opinions play a much greater part and so a panel of judges all watch and their deliberations are shared. There is scope for measuring some aspects of canoe competition but it comes at a price and needs to be reliable.

## Back then

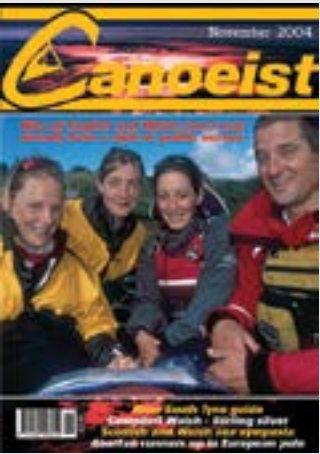
### 50 years ago



- ★ Up to a third of BCU members were slalomists, who appeared to be getting a raw deal in the way finances were handled by HQ.
- ★ An improvement in slalom deck numbers, especially those applied with tape, was called for, particularly from ZZ at Llangollen.
- ★ The Tryweryn saw its first ranking white water race.
- ★ The Northern WWR series results were based on the best five results from the nine races on the Eden, Wharfe, Tyne and Tees, at least one race on each river.
- ★ Certificates of Competence had been abandoned for WWR entrants as too unpopular.
- ★ Summer Grandtully was lost because of lack of an organizing club but Llangollen International slalom went ahead with no organizer or sponsor.
- ★ Open events were being added to increasing numbers of slaloms and WWRs.
- ★ Albert Woods' slalom team report called for teams to fly to events and stay in hotels rather than camping and was critical of the lack of cooperation from BCU HQ.
- ★ After a 16 hour drive the GB team to New Zealand were moved on from their campsite by the army and had to camp by a roadside layby.
- ★ There was a call to move the National Canoe Surfing Championships from Bude after some difficult rescues.

### 20 years ago

- ★ Sean Morley completed his 7,200km circumnavigation in one season of all the inhabited islands in Britain and Ireland except the Channel Islands.
- ★ Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott, Acting Prime Minister in Tony Blair's absence, had been white water rafting on the Tryweryn and had taken Graham Cook of Waveney Valley Canoe Club to the doctor in one of his two Jags after an incident on the river.
- ★ British Waterways were to restore the Forth & Clyde Canal at Glasgow's Pinkston Basin.
- ★ Narrowboat magazines but not canoeists were warned that the EA were trying to get the right to impose compulsory boat insurance, while promising not to use such powers.
- ★ It was hoped that an access demonstration in Llangollen would be the largest ever gathering of canoeists in Britain. Labour's Defra Minister, Alun Michael, claimed there was little unmet call for river access.
- ★ The WCA funded a feasibility study into a white water course in Cardiff Bay.
- ★ Writing for *Canoeist* on behalf of the European Canoe Association, President Albert Woods called for the EU Water Framework Directive not to define canoeing as 'bathing', activity which could be banned from rivers failing to meet cleanliness and sediment targets.
- ★ Former BCU National Access Officer Douglas Caffyn explained to *Canoeist* readers how a bungling lawyer in 1830 had caused our access problems.
- ★ Rockpool Kayaks began trading from Holyhead with their Alaw sea kayak.
- ★ Justine Curgenvn and Freya Hoffmeister were among those attending the Outdoor Hebrides Sea & Surf Symposium.



### 10 years ago

- ★ Circumnavigating Australia, Jason Beachcroft had to chase and repeatedly beat a crocodile trying to drag his kayak into the sea.
- ★ The Pinkston Watersports centre was approaching opening. The Chain Bridge above Llangollen was to be restored after decades of dilapidation.
- ★ The BCU was rebranded as British Canoeing.
- ★ Percy Blandford died, his PBK kayak plans having been responsible for the revival of canoeing after the Second World War.
- ★ Paddlers were being charged up to £14 per day by the WCA to use the Tryweryn.
- ★ The Welsh Government access Green Paper was kicked into the long grass.
- ★ Paddlers found a badly injured driver in a car in the Etive after being in collision with a deer.
- ★ Paddlers International helped the coroner and Northumbria Police after three men on sit on tops were drowned at the modern Riding Mill Weir on the Tyne.
- ★ The American magazine *Sea Kayaker* folded after 30 years.
- ★ Pearce/Southey were the youngest ever DW winners, the race start delayed by a body in the canal at Devizes.





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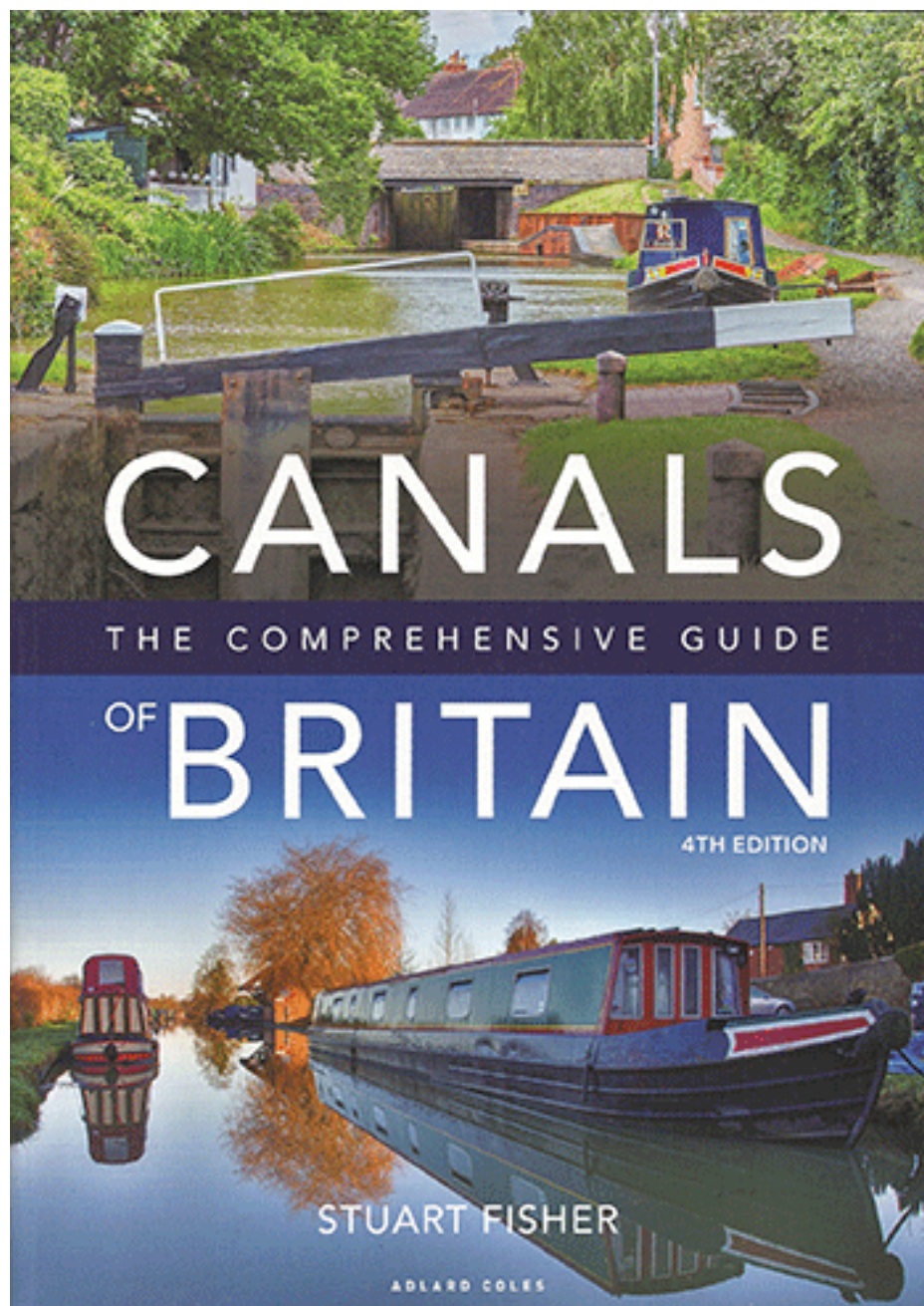
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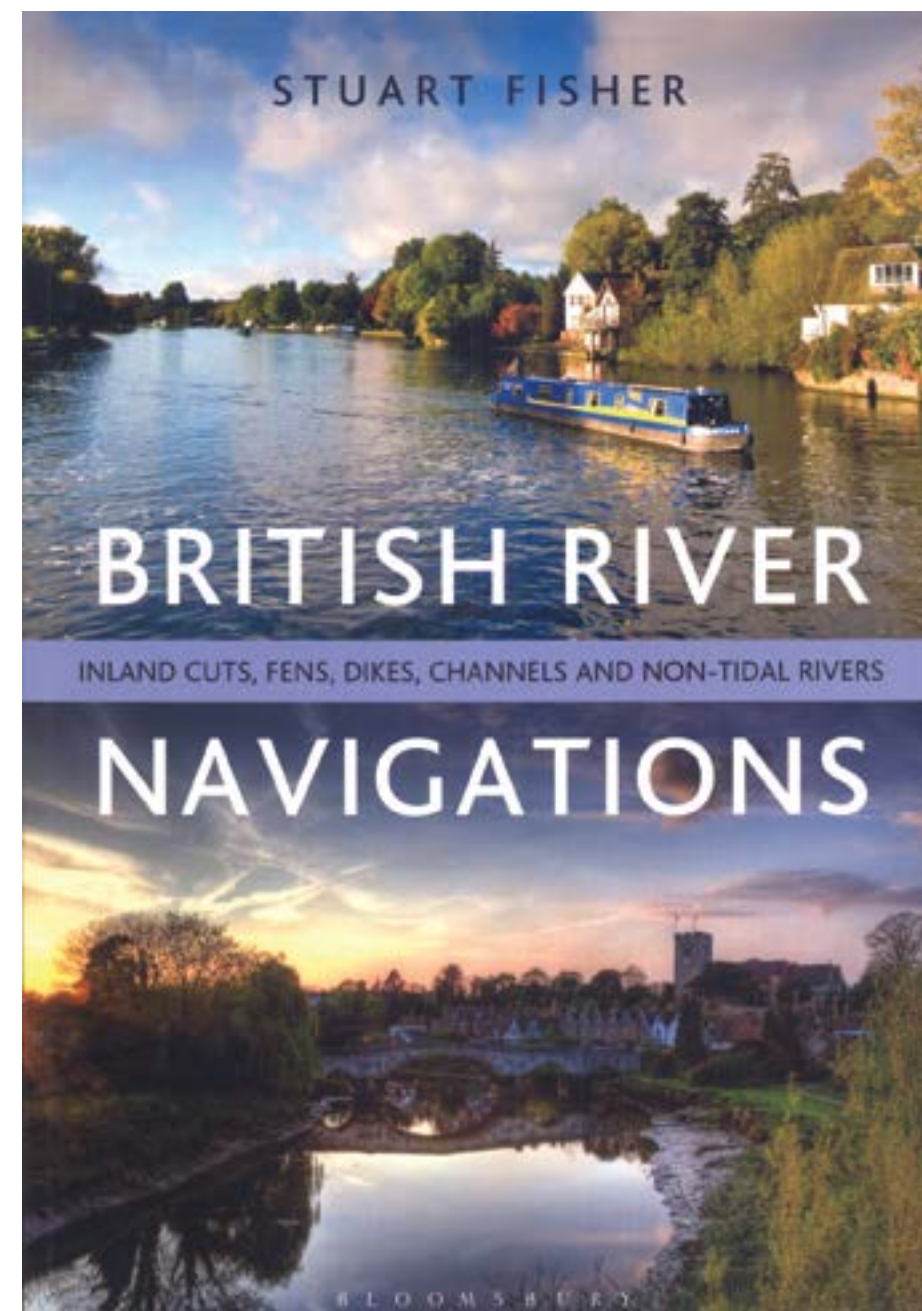
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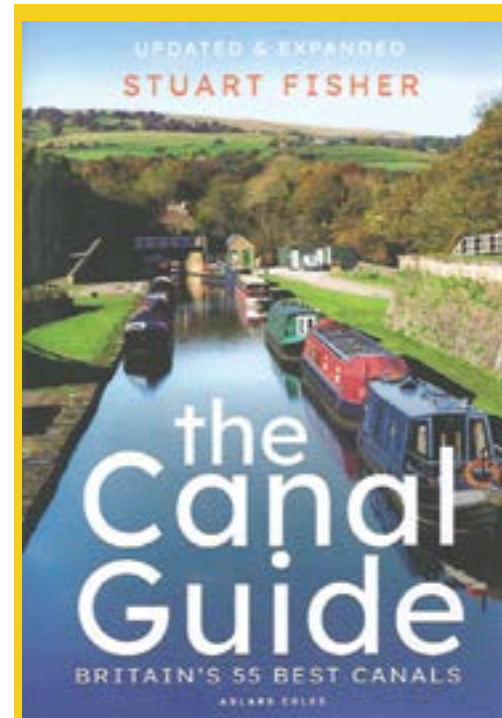
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'He packs in miles of paddling, and pages of travelogue info' - Rowan Mantell, *Eastern Daily Press*

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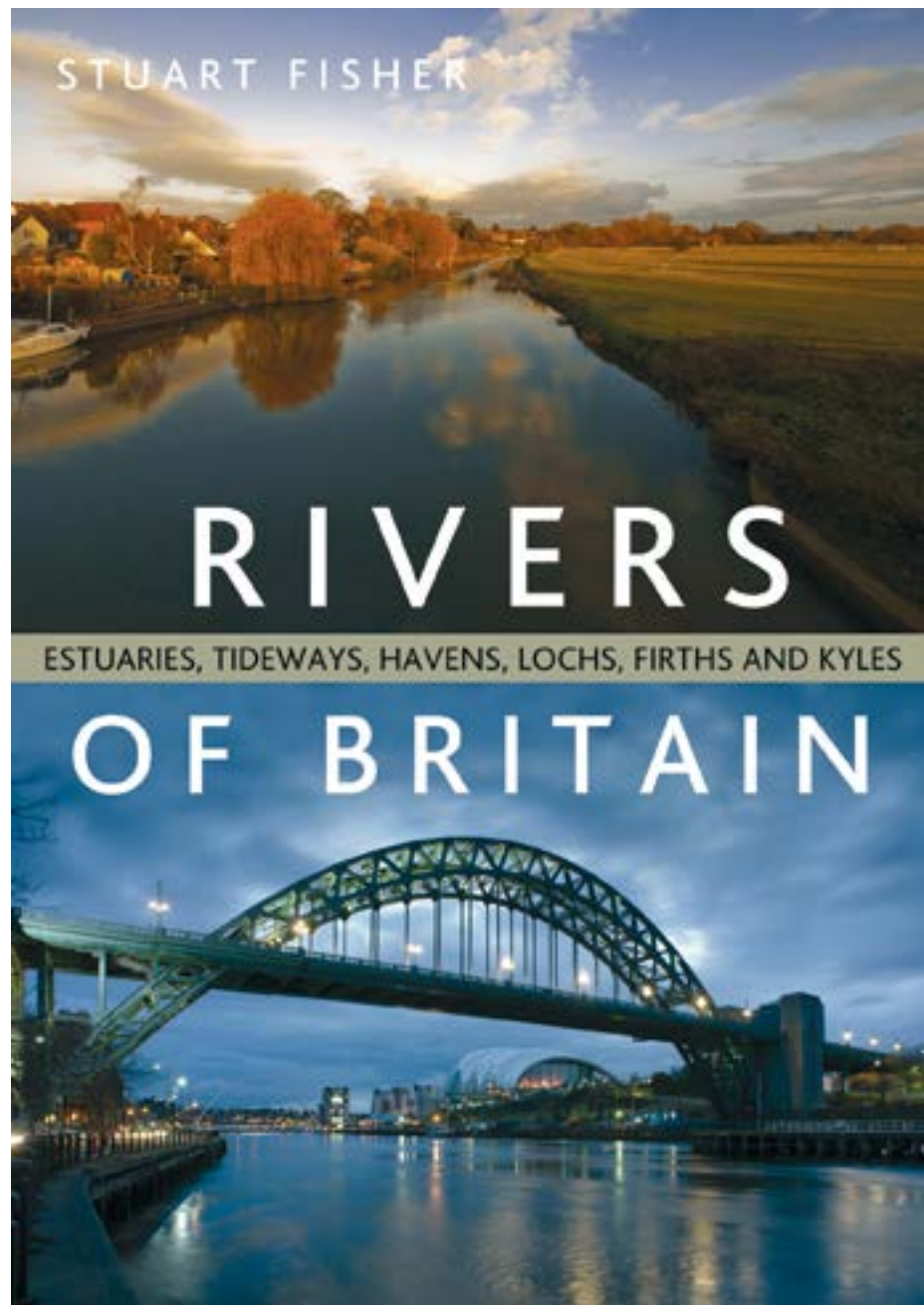
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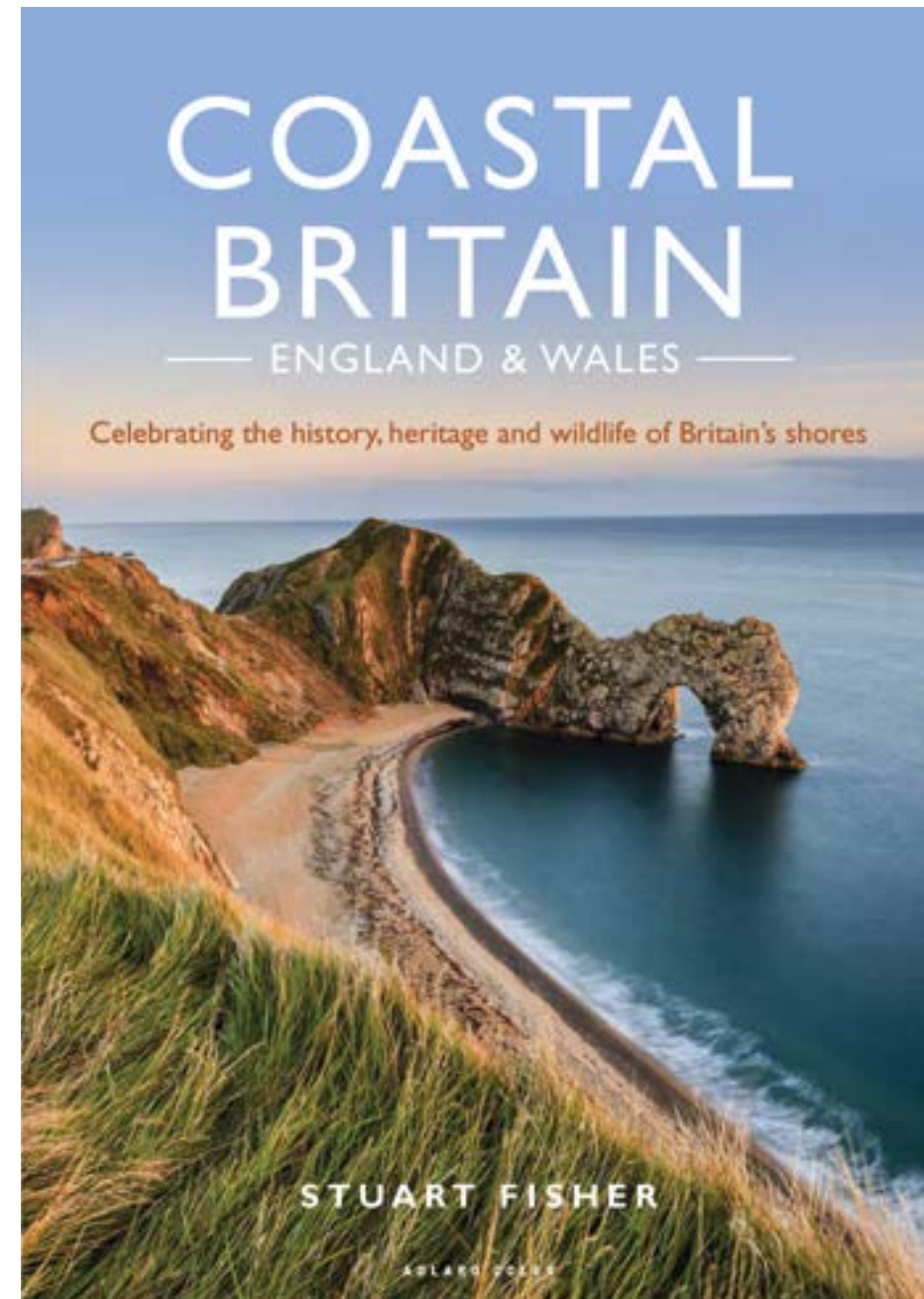
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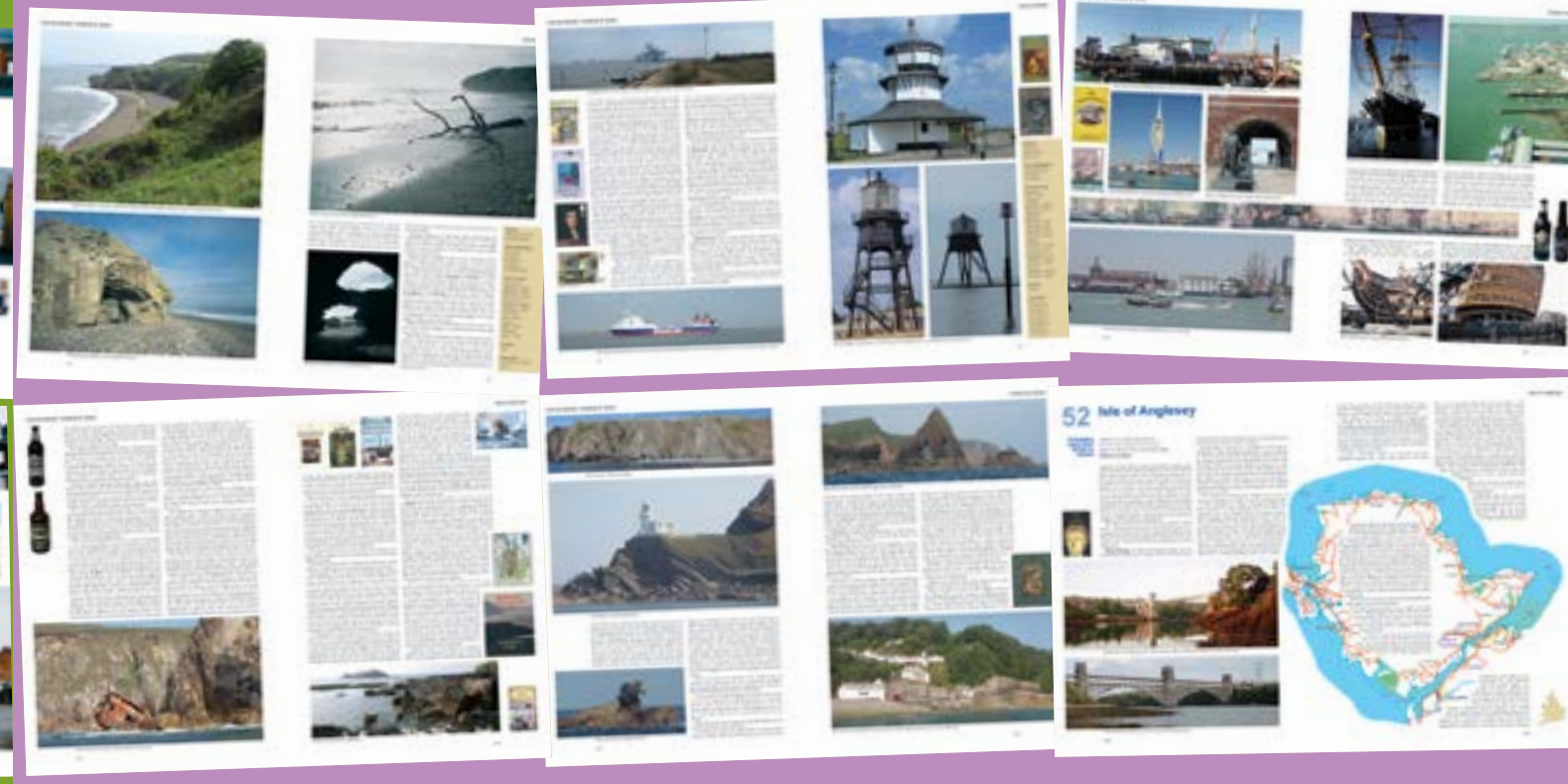
'New books on rivers keep surfacing but here is an ambitious volume that stands firmly on its own... it transcends the conventional temptation to be pigeonholed.' - Peter Faulkner, *BBC Countryfile*

'as a reference book, it is unmatched' - *Kensington & Chelsea Today*

'there are some absolute gems to be found in Fisher's knowledgeable and eclectic commentaries... an interesting reference work for anyone who enjoys paddling in or walking alongside Britain's great waterways.' - *Lakeland Walker*

'this book thinks out of the box... an impressive and colourful coffee table read.' - Stephen Sinfield, *Burton Mail*

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Scotland has perhaps the most diverse and attractive coast in Europe although not always the easiest. The Corrievreckan is one of the largest whirlpools in the world, the Pentland Firth has some of the fastest currents in Europe, the Mull of Kintyre and Cape Wrath are a long way from civilization and some of the biggest surf in Britain is found along the north coast. Navigation aspects are covered fully.

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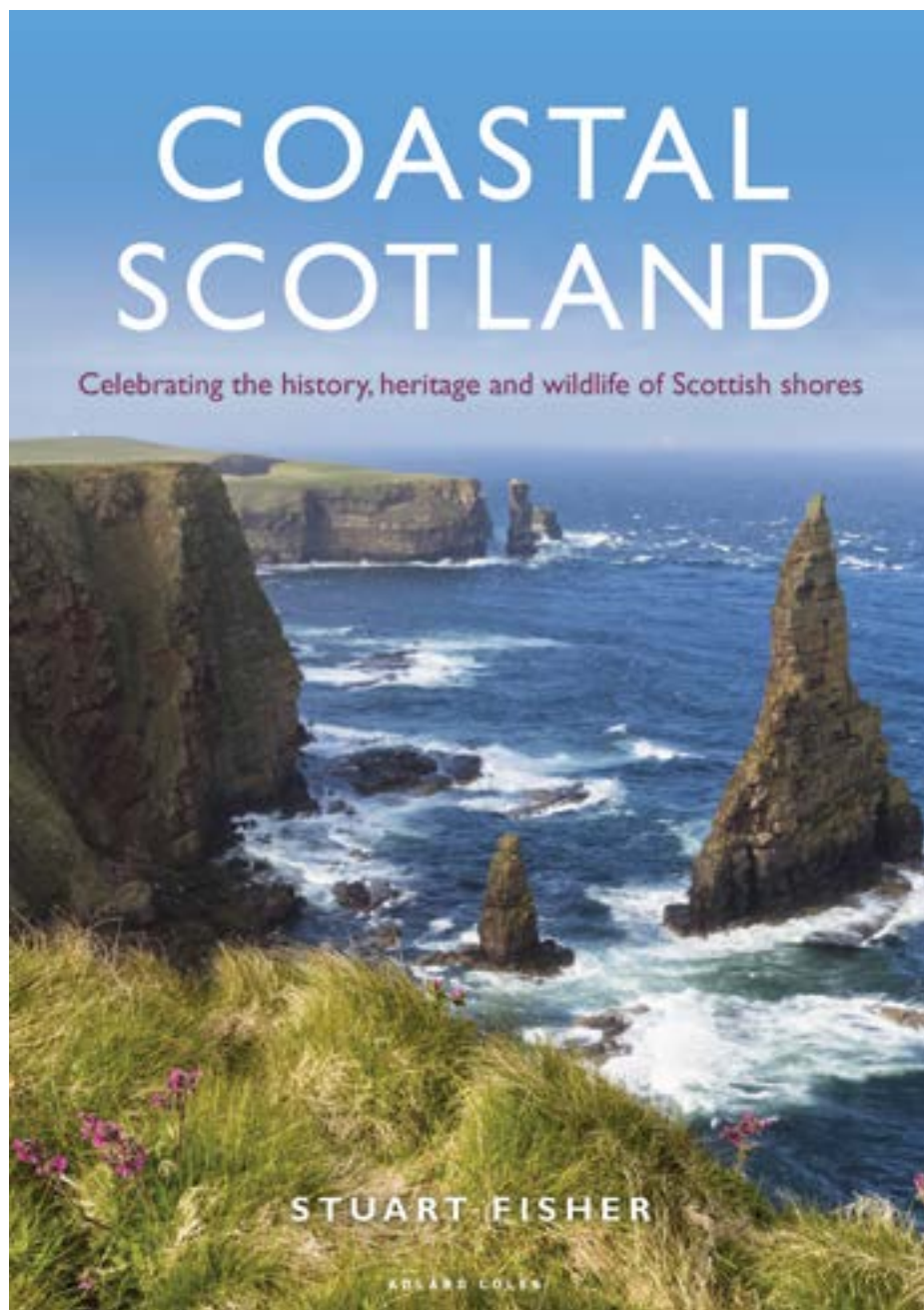
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This book features 50 lochs, both inland and sea. Some have been featured in *Canoeist* as guides or parts of guides but most are taken from a completely new study. They are generally the larger ones but not so large that they become open coastline. They are accessible by public road without the need for long carries to get on and off the water.

They do not include lochs which require commando techniques to access. Neither do they include the less interesting ones used for water storage which leave wide bands of dead grey rock along the shoreline for much of the year when drawn down.

Only three of these 50 lochs are Foxys.

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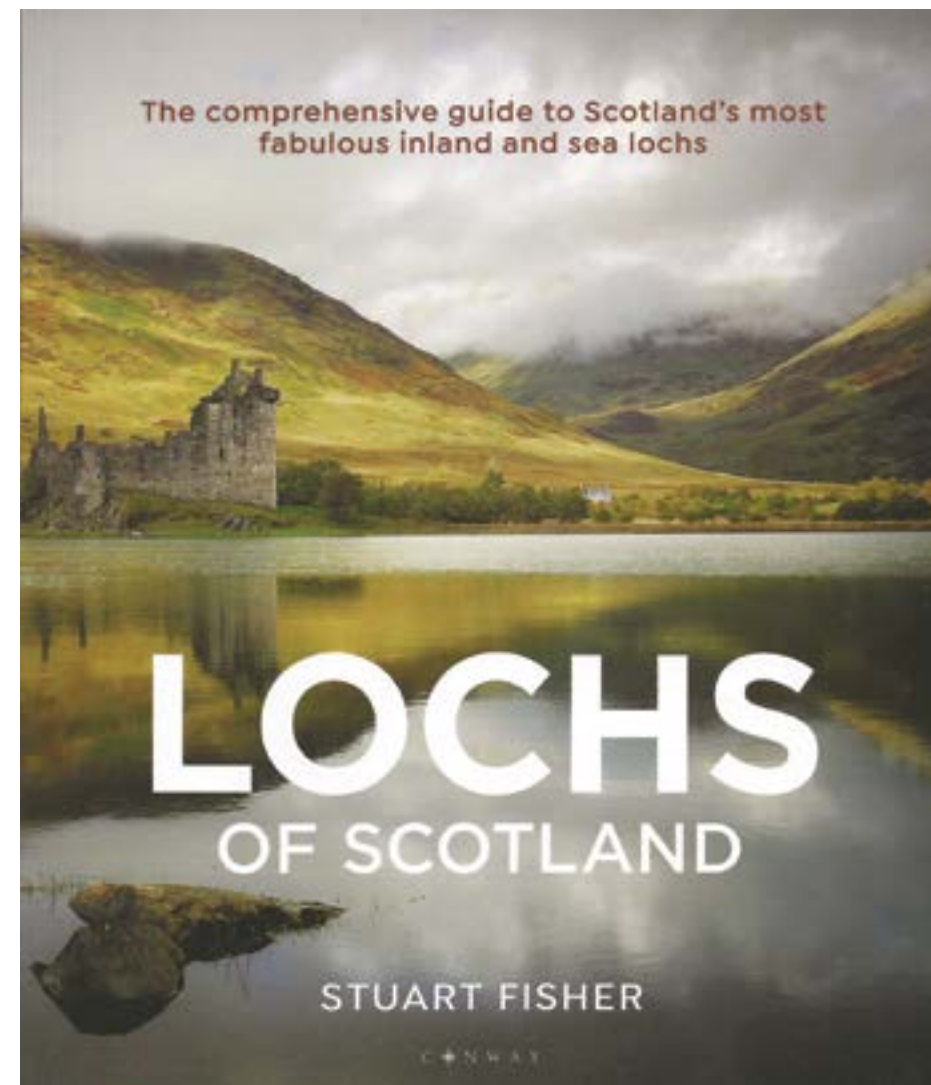
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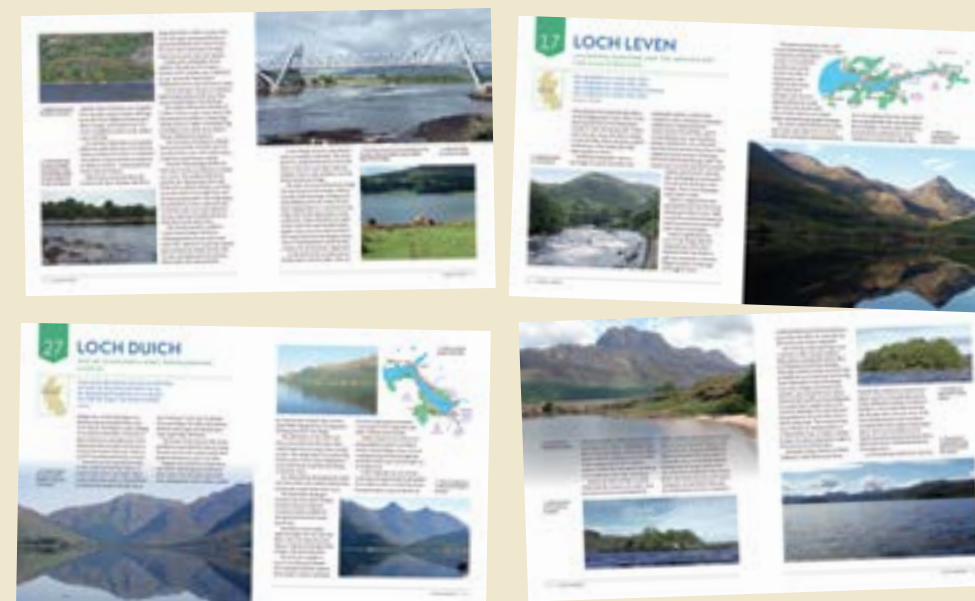
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'From spectacular coast to mountain nooks, this inspiring book showcases 50 of the most interesting lochs that frame the landscape of Scotland... it's packed with maps and information on local facilities, and is the perfect guide for anyone wanting to know more about these iconic locations.' - *Countryside*

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'Dramatic photographs and maps complement a fascinating survey of Scotland's diverse coastline. Fisher has provided a treasure trove of interesting facts and knowledge' - *The Scots Magazine*

'With detailed maps and evocative photography, *Coastal Scotland* will have readers itching to explore this rich and fascinating stretch of coast' - *Countryside*

A brilliant addition to Stuart Fisher's series of observations from his sea kayak, possibly even better than last year's England and Wales volume. Refreshingly, Fisher is not interested in analysing his inner journey, only in recording what he learns... A wealth of unexpected fact on every page. Highly recommended.' - *Yachts & Yachting*

'The numerous colour photos make one want to head off to the coast and explore immediately... I'd recommend this book for its interest and enjoyable mix of facts and stories. I enjoyed revisiting places I know well and those I am yet to visit.' - Cicely Oliver, *Towpath Talk*

'there's more than enough detail here to satisfy anyone who longs for Scotland's shores... His kayak noses into places which may not have been seen before and, almost certainly, they will not have been photographed either' - Roger Butler, *Scottish Islands Explorer*

'Each page is lavishly illustrated... With up to six photos per page, how Stuart kept track of photo locations and managed to cluster them in geographic order impresses me no end' - Paul Caffyn - *Journal of the Tasmanian Sea Canoeing Club*

'My wife came home yesterday with a wonderful book re the Scottish coastline... A fantastic piece of work' - Colin Brown

Coast Book of the Month

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Coastal Scotland  
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# Which book?

This visual index gives a quick guide to which waters are included in each book. Some, such as some of the sea lochs, appear in more than one book.



Canals of Britain

British River Navigations

More British Navigations

Rivers of Britain

Coastal Britain -  
England & Wales

Coastal Scotland

Lochs of Scotland

