

Drawing by George Reed

The WBB Newsletter

12th Edition

November 2009

The Westminster Boating Base

City of London School takes the plunge photos by Ellis Whitcomb

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During the summer season, City of London School arranged for the Westminster Boating Base to run kayaking sessions in the school swimming pool. Sixteen boys participated, it was great preparation for the river sessions, which started this Autumn. School boy Sam Gross reports:

“It was summer and to the surprise and delight of many of the (then) fourth formers, it was announced that kayaking would become a new senior games option. People flocked to sign up, and it looked like kayaking was to be over-booked.

We arrived at four forty, and were immediately told to capsiz... about forty

minutes and several gallons of inhaled water later, we could paddle (albeit in a not very straight line) and turn (both sideways and upside-down). The next week, after a nine mile trek in

is not very strenuous on the legs!

Everyone had a great time, particularly in the last session, which involved ‘chariot-racing’. With two kayaks side-by-



the morning, the tired kayakers determinedly returned and found that to their advantage, kayaking

side, one person standing up with one leg in each boat, trying to paddle forward while the other per-

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Summer of Sport

For the fourth year running, WBB ran water sports sessions during the school holidays giving local young people and youth groups the opportunity to participate in kayaking and sailing. Although the weather was a little dull during July two hundred and eighteen people attended.

Sailing by Oliver Dewhurst

Summer is traditionally the season renowned for light winds and blue skies-perfect for the classic yachtie cruising around with his pipe and flat cap. But our classic yachtie would have had a surprise at WBB this summer, as the wind gods blew solidly throughout the summer of

sport. The instructor’s capsiz league table reflected this, it was won by Elaina; we lost count after 20 capsizes!

There has been a great influx of new blood this year on the sailing front with a number of new instructors and many new students progressing

through the RYA qualification schemes. A number of youth members, having already passed their levels 1&2, are well on the way to earning their seamanship skills.



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son sits down, also with one leg in each boat, desperately attempting to stop the two of them falling down.”

In the Autumn the boys experienced their first sessions on the River Thames. Fifth former, Nicholas Hulbert reports:

“I’d kayaked a little in my school’s pool, and also once on a river in Surrey, but they were little compared to actually getting out onto the Thames with the Westminster Boating Base. On my first time out, within an hour, I had experimented with several different types of strokes, played a game of kayak-polo and capsized my

boat. As early as our second outing we made a serious journey along the Thames, out by motorboat with kayaks stashed on board, paddling all the way home. Maybe it was because we were enjoying ourselves so much that we had the impression that this was not the normal school sports ordeal; an impression occasionally interrupted by waves breaking over the kayak’s bow, spraying me and my classmates in the face. Kayaking on the Thames gives me a wonderful feeling of freedom and enjoyment and I look forward to my weekly adventures.”



No Tide Day Fun Slalom

The 4th of October saw the Thames Barrier closed for its annual test, creating ideal conditions for a fun slalom and freestyle competition. 25 participants competed in the slalom and 7 in the freestyle. 10 competitors attended from Shadwell Basin. Oh and there were tasty barbecued hamburgers with salad and relish for everyone at lunch time. Thanks to all the volunteers who gave up their day to help run this competition—it wouldn’t have happened without you.

Here are the Results:

Freestyle

Senior Freestyle Winner:

Gabriel Metcalf

Junior Freestyle Winner:

Kadeem McFarlane

Slalom

Ranked Winner:

Daniel Petev

Overall medals - Girls

Bronze - Jessica Mark

Age Group Medals

J15 girls winner - Nikou Damestani

J18 Girls winner - Rachel Swann

Throwbag competition winner

Pat Shamji - adult volunteer

Ergo competition

Girls winner

Jessica Mark

Congratulations!

To all those who have achieved promotion at national slalom events this year ☺

Ben Langton ~ Division 1

Kadeem McFarlane ~Division 2

Division 3 ~ Marta Cuenca

Blaire Bacchus

Stefano Farina

Alexis Mourier

Charles Philpot

Rachel Swann

Zane Metcalf

Jack Cameron

Nikou Damestani

Gabby Bathgate

Charlotte Moseley

Family Activity Days

The first four Sundays of August saw the first WBB Family Activity Days. There was sailing and kayaking for anyone who wanted to participate and parents were encouraged to join in with their children. All the sessions were fully booked and bathed in warm summer sun.

For those too young to take to the water, sessions were organised in the building by Pimlico Toy Library.

Safari Pete was very popular with a hands-on demonstration of snakes, lizards and one of the world’s largest toads.

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra provided several musicians to give young people a chance to learn about classical music.

A group of African musicians and story tellers kept the young ones enthralled with an interactive day.

Yoga Helen had a good turnout of people wanting to use their time to learn some gentle exercise and relaxation techniques. The park outside was used for a variety of sporting sessions; Kiwi cricket, football, rounders and tag rugby.

The 2009 London Regatta words and photo by Kevin Burke

The fourth running of the London Regatta took place on October 4th during the annual testing of the Thames Barrier. The Regatta is open to all London sailing centers, the idea being to promote the sport of sailing in the city during the years leading up to the 2012 Olympic Games.

The event was again hosted by Greenwich Yacht Club who operate just up-stream of the Thames Barrier. It is also the only major sailing event in the UK where the able bodied compete with people with dis-

abilities on equal terms. This year's event was the biggest yet with ninety boats entered from ten London centers. Team WBB took all seven of our crewed dinghies, with fourteen keen sailors making the early start down to the race course in Greenwich.

The last two regattas suffered from having too little wind, but this year a light breeze was present for the whole day, which made for much more interesting racing. In the Stratos class, Jon Appleby and Helen Lee sailed very consistently over the day's seven races and were

never out of the top three. These were unbeatable results, and they were awarded the gold medal. Paul Cotter and JP Gossart were very unlucky not to place in the medals after some very impressive results in the afternoon session. In the mixed handicap class, Oliver Overstall and Richard Pangonis put in some very good performances; sailing one of the new Laser Bahia's. Over the two sessions they were always near the front end of the group and managed to place second overall and pick up two shiny silver medals.



Hot freestyle tips by Adam White

1. Gain confidence. Getting your boat to stand on end is a fundamental skill and the starting point of many freestyle moves. Many people are really keen to learn but are held back by a lack of confidence, e.g. they will try a double-pump but sub-consciously pull back at the last minute. This often leads to capsize and always a failed manoeuvre.

Build your confidence by understanding how your boat will be-

have when it is standing on end and finding the balance point. A kayak of lower volume than you would normally choose for your weight can help with this. You can try stern squirts, part-filling your boat with water or get an instructor or friend to lift your boat into the vertical position so that when you do that double-pump, you will know what to expect.

2. Use your head! A key skill of any type of kayaking or canoeing is trunk rotation and this is no different with freestyle. Once you can stand the boat on one end and are looking to make the transition onto the second, lead your body rotation

with your head. For example, if you are standing on the bow, as you move the paddle into the position to smash the stern into the water, look over your shoulder towards the stern, this will rotate your body into the correct position.

3. Be one step ahead of the game. If you want to be able to consistently link your ends together, you need to be thinking one step ahead all the time. For example, when you are initiating your second end, have the required movements for the third in your mind so it doesn't come as a surprise. Remember that *you* are leading the boat, not the other way around!



Forthcoming Events

2* Kayak and Canoe course

Three Sundays in Jan/Feb. Dates tbc

Cost £60 for adults,
a donation from under 24's

Tower Bridge Night Paddle

Tuesday 12th January, 6pm–9pm

Cost £10 for adults,
a donation from under 24's

RYA Seamanship Skills

January 17th, 24th, 31st

Cost £50 for adults,
a donation from under 24's

You'll need to pay in advance to book
your place.....

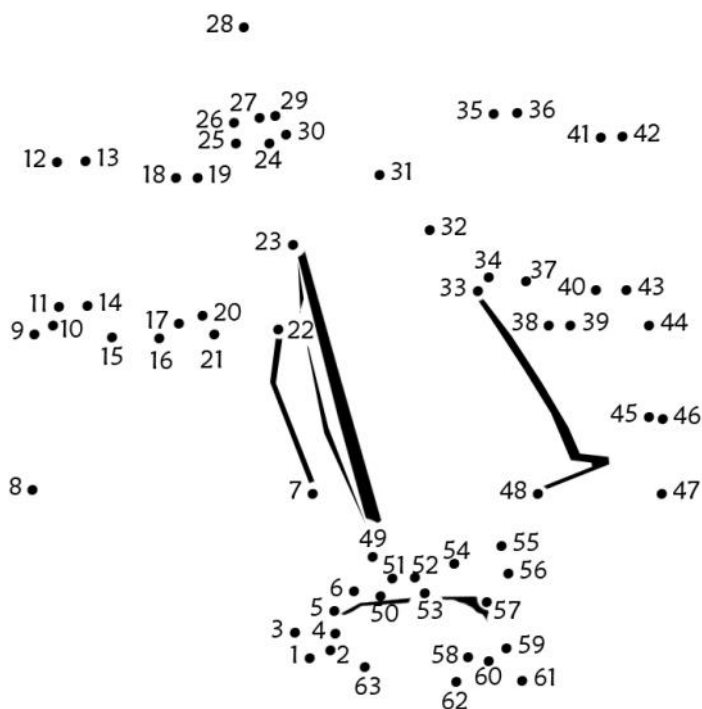
Winter Clothing Regulations

Well the winter season is fast approaching and from the 1st of November to the 31st of March, winter clothing regulations will apply for all paddlers and sailors at WBB.

This means that paddlers will need to wear a summer weight wetsuit (3mm thickness on the body) and a cagoule or a surface drysuit and thermal undersuit to meet our clothing regulations. But also wearing a thermal top, soft-soled neoprene shoes, gloves and a woolly hat will really help to stop the cold biting and keep you toasty warm.

Sailors will need to wear a winter weight wetsuit (5mm thickness on the body) or a drysuit plus other appropriate clothing including soft-soled shoes.

Fun Stuff



What's happening here? Join the dots to find out.....

That sinking feeling....

Joe and Fred are paddling from Putney Bridge to Tower Bridge in an old wooden two-seater kayak. It is a cold autumnal day and an icy wind bites their fingers and toes.

As their little boat passes St Paul's Cathedral, Fred has an idea.

"Hey Joe, are you hungry? I've got a tin of baked beans and a big piece of cake, that will warm us up. Would you like me to share them with you?"

"Hummm yes please" cries Fred. So Joe skillfully builds a neat little fire in the middle of the boat and starts to heat the beans in a small pot.

Unfortunately the fire burns a hole in the wooden kayak and it quickly fills with water and Fred and Joe have to swim to the river bank. This just goes to show that you cannot paddle your kayak and heat it.