



Welcome to our youth newsletter

This is the 10th edition of the Westminster Boating Base Youth Newsletter. Its purpose is to make sure all our youth members know about what is happening around the base, to share our enthusiasm for sailing and kayaking and give young people the opportunity to write.

We will be looking for our youth members to write pieces or send in pictures of kayaking and sailing related things that they think will appeal to the members.

We would really appreciate your feedback and ideas. Don't be afraid to offer your writing. Westminster Boating Base's strength is the enthusiasm of its members.

In this issue we feature: summer of sport, the youth games, a review of some equipment and a look at the Beijing Olympics. Hope you enjoy it..."sails away".



Westminster Boating Base Youth Users Group



The Youth Users Group was set up at WBB in order to make sure the youth members are making the most out of kayaking and sailing. Ben Langton, Charlotte Moseley and Daniel Petev are the reps and they'd love to hear from you with any ideas you have about how to make the base the best possible place for you. We are contactable by email:

enquiries@westminsterboatingbase.co.uk

Summer of Sport

The end of July saw the third year of Summer Of Sport (SoS) at WBB. The program is designed to introduce young people from across the city to new sports and to encourage them to get off the sofa and get active. Here at the base the four day program of Sailing and Kayaking saw 260 young people young people take to the water.

With the emphasis squarely on having fun (and getting wet) participants chose a morning taster sessions in either discipline and got a chance to swap in the afternoon. Everyone was given the all important safety briefing and then under the careful watch of our instructors were taken through the basic skills of kayaking and sailing. It was then on to the serious business of playing games and getting a feel for how much fun being out on the Thames can be!



Judging by the number of kids who came back for more and the record breaking 71 youth users on the last day... the SoS was a huge hit!

Highlights included joyrides down the Thames in our sailing boats (with the main objective of sneaking up on the kayak instructor and soaking them with water pistols), and some giant kayak raft games where almost everyone ended up swimming in the capital's river!

WBB broke its own record with a staggering total of 260 people in one week on the water. Let's see if we can get even more people out there next year!

Laser Vago



The Laser Vago was bought this April in loving memory of Robert Feneck, a much loved sailing instructor who sadly died on 24th February 2007. He is still missed.

The Vago is a high performance boat which is different to all the other boats at WBB. It sails much faster and is more complicated to handle. It is also very unstable as we discovered when we took it out for its maiden voyage and ended up in the water about 6 times! This boat was a great investment for everyone at the club as it can help greatly to improve our sailing - it is so much fun to try out different boats.

Careers in and on the water:

So you thought that it ended here? If you feel inspired by your experiences on the water then why not take your enthusiasm into your future. There are lots of courses out there which focus on marine life such as 'Boat Building' at Falmouth Marine school or why not consider a 'Performance Sports Wear Design' course at Falmouth University? Or perhaps focus on the sporting aspect of sailing or kayaking and look at Loughborough University's 'Sports Science' courses. If it's the environment that you love, then why not consider a get-out-there subject such as Environmental Sciences and choose your university by how close to the water you are.

When you found something that you enjoy it's worth carrying it through to your studies as it is easier to motivate yourself. Remember that all the staff here that the base were young once, some have been white water rafting in Nepal (Chris Shaw), some have sailed the Adriatic Seas (Jackie Rhodes), some have been in Britain's 1st division K1s (Annette Price and again Jackie). The Thames is just the beginning of a whole big adventure and we hope that the base can help to be an inspiration for you.

Remember that commitment to a club or a sport can help you in the future, especially if you write about it on your application forms!!!!



London Youth Games 2008

In June of this year a group of slalom kayakers from WBB travelled to Victoria Docks to compete in the annual London Youth Games. 32 London Boroughs competed for the winning trophy. Victoria Docks was a change from the usual indoor venue of Crystal Palace. The fact that the docks are outdoors meant that the paddlers were beating the wind and rain to win. This year saw a new discipline added— Sprint. This uses exceedingly long thin boats in which competitors race for long stretches at a time. We're particularly proud of our team as Kadeem Macfarlane, Charlotte Moseley and Ben Langton all achieved ranked positions—Silver (2nd) and joint 4th respectively. Pretty good considering it was each of their first attempts.

France Whitewater Trip



This year we changed venue for the first time in over 10 years! The manmade course at Sault Brenaz is located on an island in the Rhone and is not a new course – in fact we went there many years ago for a couple of days and decided it wasn't as good as Saint Pierre, our usual destination! However, with the changes in boat design and the overwhelming enthusiasm that many have for freestyle, this was the choice location for 2008.

We took a fully laden minibus and the trip proved to be a great success. The ease of access compared with Saint Pierre (which involved a 15 minute paddle across a lake at the start and end of each session) was a boon, increasing time on the whitewater and making the timing of meals a breeze without

rushing every day. The course itself has a wide range of features from easy to quite tricky (grade 2 and 3) which was perfect for the younger first-timers to whitewater - and there are several playable features which kept the freestyle enthusiasts busy for hours on end.

Being located north-east of Lyon, Sault Brenaz also lent itself quite well to excursions to other rivers. Unfortunately, water levels were quite low in the surrounding areas so a trip for the whole group was out of the question but an overnighter to Bourg Saint Maurice in the Alps rewarded the older and more capable paddlers with a 4 hour journey down a more challenging river in a wild and natural environment.

By the end of the 10 days everyone was comfortably running the course and playing on some of the features. A huge thank you goes to the volunteers without whom it would be so much more expensive and so much harder!



A Look at Sports and “Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner....”

On August bank holiday of this year, a group of sailors and kayakers gathered for a hard day of travelling via wind or paddle-power up to the Thames Barrier and back. This is an 18 mile round trip and requires some serious planning especially when it comes to eating! Lots of young people got tired as they had forgotten to eat breakfast or didn't pack a proper lunch. Our bodies are like cars—if you don't put fuel in the tank they won't go and if you don't put in the best fuel they won't go very well.

We at Westminster Boating Base are keen to have healthy water users so please remember if you're coming down on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays or Sundays to have a meal before you get on the water.... It's worth bringing a healthy snack bar to have with you just in case you get hungry and of course some emergency chocolate! Hungry water users are tired water users and can get colder too.

Some legends from the Thames

Did you know that the original Magna Carta (Latin for the Great Paper) was signed on an Island in Runnymede 20 miles from London along the Thames? “What does it mean to me?” you might think. The answer is that Britain's royalty from 1215 onwards was bound by the law, rather than above it. Its significance is that it protected the people and is the starting point of our modern constitution.

Who does the river belong to? Most people think that it's the Queen. The answer is in fact, that it belongs to the people. Anyone has the right to use the tidal Thames—it's the access to the land around it that is restricted. We are all equal on the Thames!



The Olympic Winners – Bringing home the brass...

The sporting folk of Britain did us proud at the Beijing Olympics. Here we've focused on two winners—Sarah Ayton part of the gold medal winning Yngling sailing team and David Florence, silver winner in the Single Canoe slalom.

On Sarah Ayton's website she writes “I've put my whole life into sailing and I strive to be the best at what-



ever I do". After a bit of telephone interrogation of her manager, the WBB writers found out that she started sailing at the tender age of 6 or 7. That means she's been sailing for 20 years as she's now 27. They say that the course of your life is down to fate—well in Sarah's case she lived opposite the Queen Mary Sailing club in Ashford. She was bored, so one day she walked across the road and the rest is history. Sarah didn't go onto higher education, instead she focused her entire attention onto her number one love—sailing.

She was originally supported financially by her parents and as her professional career developed so did her sponsorship. We asked her manager what other interests she had and the reply was windsurfing, waterskiing, and jetskiing - basically anything wet!!! How she squeezes in anything else after a training schedule of over 10 hours a week in the gym, running and of course sailing, is a miracle. Sarah's first boat was an Optimist, it obviously did well for her.

David Florence won silver for Britain at the Beijing Olympics this year in the C1 slalom. After a little research from his very 'factual' website we at WBB have found out the following...he was 26 on the first day of the Olympics. He started paddling when he was 14. His father was also a Scottish Canoe champion but David did not find this out till he was 14, the same age that he began paddling. David is a full-time canoeist backed by UK Sport with funding in the region of £18,000 a year and is based at the National Water Sports Centre in Nottingham.



David's other dream was to be an astronaut as his degree is in mathematical physics. Despite learning Russian he was not seen as outstanding amongst the 10,000 other applicants to go into space. Surely the fact that he plays the bagpipes as well as charging down some of the world's whitest-waters should have been enough to qualify him? He found out just before arriving in Beijing this August. At Westminster Boating Base, we're pleased he'll be focussing on the 2012 Olympics instead of the moon.

Reporters wanted

We have over 10 instructors here at the base and in each newsletter we're going to focus on one. But we need a young person to do the interviewing. So please get in touch otherwise you'll be depriving all the young people at the base of knowing about what makes Kevin tick, how Annette takes pictures of mermaids, how Jackie can't live without Radio 4 or how Mike and Chris refuse to cut their hair... there's so much you can ask someone when you're interviewing them.

Photography Tips

We are very fortunate to have in our midst a professional watersports / underwater photographer, Annette Price.
<http://www.h2ophotography.co.uk/>

We asked her to give us some tips....the first one is...

Get a waterproof camera. There are some really fun little cameras around that are waterproof to a depth of about three or four meters, small enough to comfortably stuff inside your buoyancy aid and have a good zoom range, which means you can photograph canoeists from a distance and they don't look like tiny ants.

Here are two examples, but there are others:

- Pentax Optio W60 Waterproof digital compact camera. It's a 10-megapixel camera with a 5x optical zoom lens. It is capable of operating underwater to a depth of four metres for up to two hours, and can survive temperatures of minus ten degrees centigrade. Perfect for paddling - costs about 200 squids.

- Olympus Mju 850SW digital compact camera, this is an 8-megapixel camera, which is designed to be incredibly tough, withstanding falls of up to 1.5 meters onto concrete, water immersion to 3 meters and freezing cold to -10C. This one costs about 170 squids.

Alternatively you can buy a normal compact camera and an underwater housing for it. Image quality may be slightly better, but the camera housing will be too bulky to fit inside your buoyancy aid comfortably and will be a lot more expensive.

