

**INDIAN SUMMER BRINGS FURTHER GLORY:** One of our best contacts in the media, Lindie Naughton, often complains how all the canoeing events hit the pages at once. In a six week block running through August and September, we had the Liffey Descent, and major championships in flatwater, polo and slalom.



The asymmetry of the International season is beyond our control, but just when you thought it was over, we have more good news. Len Kelleher, better known to us all as a Freestyle competitor, won the Worlds event in kayak surf. Neil Caffrey took the British Slalom Championships for the second year running. We also saw an event that highlighted what canoe-sport can mean for our community. The *Blessington 500* combined a National Marathon Championship race with a paddling fundraiser for spinal injuries Ireland. It was a huge success and we commend those involved in the organisation. Canoe-sport can be a sport for all, and this is something we should bear in mind-canoeing is a lifestyle choice not just a pursuit for the elite. Given that I am not in the latter category by any stretch of the imagination, this point is close to my heart. I also wish to report to you our members that we will announce shortly a series of *Canoeing Achievement Awards* (See website), to recognise excellence in canoe-sport, something that is long overdue. Finally, I thank all of you who have put paddle to water, supported or encouraged in canoe-sport this season. Central to our sport is volunteerism and with AGM's across several disciplines this month, I recommend those of you who want a voice to put yourself forward for your relevant committee. Ask not what your sport can do for you but what you can do for your sport!

*Eamon Devoy, President.*

## **THIS ISSUE**

***Freestyle: GOLD FOUND IN WICKLOW***

***Wildwater: LIFFEY PLAYGROUND FOR KIDS***

***Surf: BASQUE SUNSET IS GOLD TINTED***

***News: SUCCESS AT BLESSINGTON 500***

## **FORTHCOMING**

***Club profile: KILCULLEN CANOE CLUB***

***Familiar Faces: Gabor Kulscar***

***News: IRISH INSTITUTE OF SPORT & 2012***

***Paddler Profile: BARRY WATKINS***

**B**LESSINGTON 500-SUCCESS & SUNSHINE FOR SPINAL INJURIES IRELAND: On Saturday 6th October 2007 Spinal Injuries Ireland in association with Sandycove Kayak Club ran an all day kayak event, in which over 100 took to the water, 10 of whom had a spinal cord injury. The hope was to kayak an accumulation of 500 miles or more on the day. Participants collected tokens at check points thus proving the miles done, enabling both first timers along with seasoned kayakers to choose the distance that suited them best. In addition, it was a tribute to Niamh McGrath who died in a tragic accident in 2005. Niamh introduced kayaking as an option for people with a spinal cord injury in 1998. With Niamh's support and endless enthusiasm, kayaking became a wonderful reality for people who have sustained a spinal cord injury and it has been included as an ongoing part of Spinal Injuries Ireland's venture sports activities programme. Conor Walsh and Michelle Verdonck organised the weather among other things, and Kevin Murphy ran the K2 race, which led to an excellent turnout and a final tally of almost 600 miles. Thanks to all those who helped out in organization of the event and to those that paddled in the sunshine and glass-like conditions of the lake. See [www.siairl.org](http://www.siairl.org)



**B**IG BOAT BONANZA-LOCAL FINDS GOLD: Paul McCann from Wicklow took gold, but he had to team up with a Scottish and British paddler to win the BoaterX team event. Second place went to Wild-water paddlers Liz Shouldice, Cillian and Daithi, but the run of the day was unquestionably the winning Womens' team. Ally Campbell, Lynsey Evans and Bledd Lloyd were only a second off the winning Mens' team. Over two hundred entrants baled down Jacksons, at the mid-October event, not always with finesse but with plenty of drama (See Photo left). The number of spectators was vast, almost equal to the number of racers and organiser Shane Cronin says that crowd control measures will be called for in future. See [www.bigboatbonanza.com](http://www.bigboatbonanza.com)



**M**ARATHON MOVES–SEASON ROUND–UP: Salmon Leap took the Ribadesella trophy this year and they achieved further success through the medal winning performance of Barry Watkins at the Junior Worlds. Our representation at Worlds level is on the increase with Peter and Jenny Egan, and Neil Fleming in the Senior ranks complimented by the junior team of Barry, Brian Keogh, and Dara Fleming. In the 23 races across the season several hundred paddlers have taken part in the regular season ranking events. Of note was the success of the junior series events which is the pathway for the next generation of paddlers. Of course, it's not over yet with the Turkey race to come in December. Pictured right are Malcolm Banks and Dermot Hudson who won, not only the Liffey Descent, but also the National Championship race at Blessington. Gary Mawer won the overall National Championship title, Kevin Pierce, of Wild–Water Kayak Club, won the one–day Championship race. See [www.irishmarathoncanoeing.com](http://www.irishmarathoncanoeing.com)



**W**ILDWATER WAVES–LIFFEY PLAYGROUND FOR KIDS: Kevin Pierce showed his racing pedigree continuing his form from last season with an emphatic win at Castletown Sprints. Liz Shouldice continues to dominate the Womens' event and increasingly paddlers are moving from wavehoppers to composite boats. In fact, this season has been notable for the emergence of new junior racers, both boys and girls. The work of Martin McCarthy in developing the next generation of wild–water paddlers is evident in the large number of entries in this age–group. Also prominent are the more established young racers from Salmon Leap and Celbridge who are looking competitive in this challenging discipline. Sean McCarthy and Fintan Mitchell showed potential and the racing scene hasn't had such numbers in over a decade. Forthcoming events on the Shannon at Castleconnell offer an excellent challenge and give paddlers the chance to experience the World Cup course from 2005. Pictured above is Sean McIntyre at the World Cup Final in Ivrea, Italy who is off to New Zealand to do the big stuff—we wish him well. See <http://www.eeng.nuim.ie/~jringwood/wwracing/>



**S**URF'S UP-KAYAK SURF BAKIO MUNDAKA 2007 (WORLD CHAMPS): Len Kelleher, our only finalist, took gold at the World Championships held in Spain on the 28<sup>th</sup> of October. Competing in the long boat category in the International class, he out-performed over 30 rivals to take the title ahead of local paddler, Edu Etxeberria. While the initial days of competition were plagued by calm conditions it wasn't long before the big stuff arrived. The team swear that it made the surfing ads for the Black stuff look tame. In total, thirteen teams competed in the event and Ireland had an entourage comprising six paddlers and several supporters. Arguably, only *aill Na Searrach* could offer a more spectacular setting for a surf event. Well done to all concerned and Lenny shows us all that multi-disciplinary paddling is worth its weight in gold. See <http://kayaksurfchampionship.blogspot.com>



| FORTHCOMING EVENTS THIS NOVEMBER:   |                       |                                 |  |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Dates   | Event                 | Venue                           | Contact  |
| Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | Wildwater Ctte AGM    | Sport HQ, Parkwest, Dublin.     | <a href="http://www.canoe.ie">www.canoe.ie</a>                     |
| Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup>  | Slalom & WW Sprint    | R. Lagan, Shawsbridge, Belfast. | <a href="http://www.cani.org.uk">www.cani.org.uk</a>               |
| Friday 9 <sup>th</sup>  | Training Unit AGM     | Sport HQ, Parkwest, Dublin.     | <a href="http://www.trainingunit.net">www.trainingunit.net</a>     |
| Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup>   | Freestyle Ctte AGM    | Sport HQ, Parkwest, Dublin.     | <a href="http://www.irishfreestyle.com">www.irishfreestyle.com</a> |
| Sat-Sun. 17 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup>   | WW Classic & Sprint   | Castleconnell, Co.Limerick      | <a href="http://www.canoe.ie">www.canoe.ie</a>                     |
| Sat-Sun. 24-25 <sup>th</sup>  | Coaching Assimilation | Green Isle Hotel, Clondalkin.   | <a href="http://www.canoe.ie">www.canoe.ie</a>                     |
| See <a href="http://www.canoe.ie">www.canoe.ie</a> homepage for upcoming events and our competition calendar. |                       |                                 |  |

Editors Note: The medal winning Ireland U21 canoe-polo team also benefited from coaching by Mark McCormack at Kilcock Canoe Club.