

# Lowri Davies

Lowri Davies is one of the UK's most accomplished boaters; 2006 European Freestyle Champion, four times British Freestyle Champion, Level 5 Coach and global white water kayaker. And she's not just a talented paddler; she runs her own coaching business and has a Masters in Software Engineering (haven't we all??). And if that's not impressive enough she's achieved all of this by the age of 28. Ceufad managed to catch up with her (on her way back from coaching in Austria... ), to find out the secret of her success...

Rio Negro in Chile  
Photo: Adam Dumolo

**Your paddling career seems quite focused; did you always have a master plan or have things just evolved this way?**

Ha! Well I guess a bit of both... If I had a true paddling master plan I wouldn't have a masters in software engineering?! I set myself particular goals along the way but I haven't had a solid long-term master plan. You have to have space in your plan for random life events or exciting unexpected opportunities!

**What gives you the most satisfaction; competing or coaching?**

They are two very different feelings! Competing is quite a self-indulgent thing really and for me is about pushing myself to see what I can do. These days I compete in more extreme races than freestyle events, which are super fun. My favourite races involve some argy-bargy and jostling!

On the other hand coaching is all about the students. I absolutely love seeing the look of pride and joy when people achieve something new or overcome a fear. One of the most satisfying parts of coaching comes months or even years later... When people proudly send you a message about something they've just paddled, thanking you for the skills/confidence they gained in a session with you.

But mostly going I enjoy going boating: wherever, however!

**So you obviously love going boating and are an experienced expedition paddler, what's the best river trip you've been on?**

For me the four borders expedition to Siberia, Mongolia and Kazakhstan was my first trip of that kind and a real turning point. We paddled some awesome, remote, big volume multi-day rivers and experienced 3 different, interesting cultures... With a great crew. Without that opportunity I might never have got into expedition paddling, which would have been a real shame!!

**Given all of your achievements what's your career highlight?**

Probably being flown from France (where I was running FlowFree trips) to appear on a live CBBC Saturday morning TV programme called WILD as their 'star guest' earlier this year. It was so much fun and I can only hope I made a few kids want to give paddling a try.

**What advice would you give to someone who wants to make a career out of competing, coaching or expedition paddling.**

Understand you'll never be rich (well, not financially), but if you work out where your strengths lie, seize the opportunities that present themselves and enjoy the variety of people you end up spending time with then you will have a lot of fun! And no doubt end up with many great tales to tell!

**You must have paddled with a lot of people, as a freestyle paddler, expedition kayaker and coach; who's your favourite person to boat with (and why)?**

Again, I'm fortunate to paddle with some really lovely, fun people! But if I had to pick my dream team it would definitely include my brother Jon Davies and best mate Fran Kohn. Why? It's the amount of time I know I'll spend laughing and smiling, whatever we paddle!

**Final question – if you've achieved all of this by 28, what do you hope to achieve by the time your 38???**

FlowFree will take over the world... Just you wait!!

**Lowri Davies runs FlowFree coaching, offering kayak coaching and river guiding in North Wales, across the UK and overseas. For more information visit [www.flowfree.co.uk](http://www.flowfree.co.uk)**