

UNDER-23 PROGRAMME

THE NEXT STAGE
OF YOUR DEVELOPMENT.

THE DIFFERENCE

AGE ISN'T WHAT DEFINES UNDER-23. OWNERSHIP DOES.

Burners helps young paddlers build strong foundations. Under-23 is where those foundations begin to become increasingly their own.

It's an ongoing development environment for established freestyle paddlers moving into the next stage of their development — combining coaching, training, workshops and a growing responsibility for what happens between them.

We're still there to coach, challenge and support you. But increasingly, you'll be expected to take ownership of where you're going, how you train and what you do with what you learn.



WHY UNDER-23?

A STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT THAT DESERVES ITS OWN ENVIRONMENT.

The introduction of an Under-23 classification in competitive freestyle has given this stage greater recognition within the sport. But it isn't the reason this programme exists.

We've recognised for a long time that the years beyond junior paddling are a distinct period of development. Ambitions become clearer. Competition may become more serious. Life changes. And the relationship between athlete and coach needs to evolve too.

Under-23 exists to support that transition — without rushing athletes out of a developmental environment before they're ready to leave it.

THE TRANSITION

MORE OWNERSHIP. NOT LESS SUPPORT.

As you develop, the coaching
relationship evolves with you.



AN ONGOING DEVELOPMENT ENVIRONMENT.

Under-23 isn't a course you complete or a programme you sign up to for a single year. It's an ongoing development environment for a small group of paddlers who want to keep progressing together.

Athletes can remain part of it while Under-23 continues to be the right environment for their development. As they grow, the programme grows with them.



01 GATHER



COME TOGETHER REGULARLY.

Gatherings take place roughly every six weeks, usually over a weekend, across the UK and at European freestyle locations.

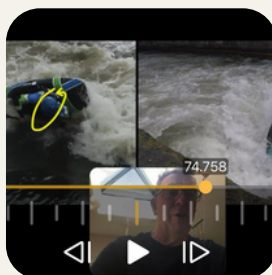
02 TRAIN



PUT DEVELOPMENT INTO PRACTICE.

Water time, coaching and purposeful practice develop skills, explore ideas and connect you with other ambitious paddlers.

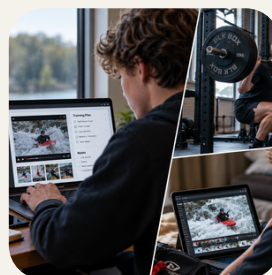
03 EXPLORE



GO DEEPER THAN THE WATER.

Each gathering includes a developmental module exploring how you learn, train, compete and develop.

04 CONTINUE



KEEP THE WORK MOVING.

Between gatherings, development continues through training, reflection, video and shared work.

THE GROUP

SMALL ENOUGH TO KNOW EACH OTHER.

STRONG ENOUGH TO CHALLENGE EACH OTHER.

Under-23 is built around a tight development group of around 8–10 paddlers, supported by Jacko and Sam.

You train together, share experiences and learn from one another — creating an environment where development doesn't depend solely on the coach.



GATHERINGS

Around every six weeks



LOCATIONS

UK + European venues



FORMAT

Usually weekends · sometimes longer

THE CYCLE

THE GATHERINGS ARE THE STIMULUS. DEVELOPMENT HAPPENS BETWEEN THEM.

Each gathering creates direction, challenge and new learning. What matters next is what you do with it.

Under-23 works through repeated development cycles — gather, apply, reflect, connect and return ready to move forward again.



01 GATHER



CREATE DIRECTION.

Train together, explore the module and establish what deserves your attention next.

02 APPLY



MAKE IT YOURS.

Take the ideas into your training and turn them into practice and better decisions.

03 REFLECT



NOTICE WHAT'S HAPPENING.

Use reflection, video and feedback to understand what's working and what needs adjusting.

04 CONNECT



YOU'RE NOT DOING IT ALONE.

Questions, group conversations and coach contact keep the learning moving.

05 RETURN



COME BACK DIFFERENT.

Bring what you've discovered back to the next gathering and begin the cycle again.

INCREASING OWNERSHIP

WE PROVIDE THE ENVIRONMENT. YOU LEARN TO DRIVE THE DEVELOPMENT.

The support doesn't disappear. But increasingly, the responsibility for what happens between gatherings becomes yours.



STRUCTURED. BUT RESPONSIVE.

There's a developmental syllabus behind Under-23, but it isn't a curriculum we simply work through.

Some areas are essential and deliberately revisited. Others respond to the athletes, their training, the competitive season and what we're seeing as coaches.

**The structure gives the programme direction.
The athletes help determine where we need to go next.**

SIX LEARNING AREAS



DIRECTION

Know where you're going.

Goals, planning and review help turn ambition into meaningful direction.



LEARNING

Understand how you improve.

Explore how you learn, practise and make development increasingly your own.



TECHNICAL

Keep developing your paddling.

Coaching, practice and analysis continue to develop your freestyle performance.



PERFORMANCE

Learn to perform when it matters.

Use competition and other performance situations as opportunities to learn.



DEVELOPMENT

Look beyond the water.

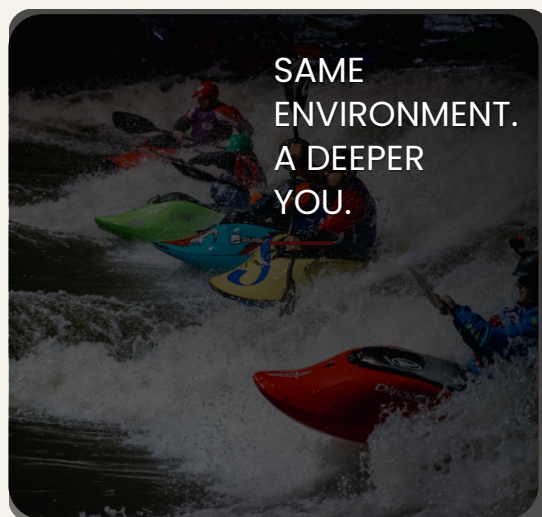
Explore the wider habits, behaviours and choices that influence your development.



REFLECTION

Make sense of experience.

Learn to notice, evaluate and adjust rather than simply waiting for someone else to tell you.



**SAME
ENVIRONMENT.
A DEEPER
YOU.**



THE ESSENTIALS

SOME THINGS ARE WORTH RETURNING TO.

Planning, goal-setting, review and other fundamentals aren't things you complete once. They're deliberately revisited as you develop.

The questions may be familiar. Your experience, ambitions and understanding won't be.

**YOU DON'T GRADUATE FROM THE FUNDAMENTALS.
YOU GET BETTER AT USING THEM.**



IF YOU CAN'T ATTEND

Where an Essential Module can't be attended, we'll provide an alternative body of work with appropriate coach support so that part of your development can continue.

Missing a gathering doesn't mean missing the learning.



THE DECISION

IS UNDER-23 RIGHT FOR YOU?

Under-23 isn't defined simply by age or competition level. It's about being at a stage where you're ready to take increasing responsibility for your development.



THIS IS FOR YOU IF



YOU'RE ALREADY AN ESTABLISHED FREESTYLE PADDLER.

You have a good range of skills and you're serious about continuing to develop.



YOU'RE READY FOR GREATER OWNERSHIP.

You want to become increasingly responsible for your training, decisions and progress.



YOU'RE PREPARED TO ENGAGE BETWEEN GATHERINGS.

You're willing to train, reflect, complete developmental work and stay connected to the group.



YOU WANT TO DEVELOP ALONGSIDE OTHERS.

You're ready to contribute to a small group of paddlers who care about getting better.

IT MAY NOT BE RIGHT IF



YOU'RE LOOKING FOR BEGINNER FREESTYLE COACHING.

Under-23 assumes you already have established freestyle skills and experience.



YOU ONLY WANT OCCASIONAL COACHED WEEKENDS.

The work between gatherings is an important part of the programme.



YOU WANT SOMEONE ELSE TO DRIVE YOUR DEVELOPMENT.

You'll be supported, but increasingly you'll be expected to take responsibility for what happens next.

A FEW THINGS TO KNOW



AGE

UNDER-23 IS A STAGE, NOT A BIRTHDAY.

The programme is primarily for paddlers around the Under-23 stage. Some may join slightly earlier or continue beyond 23 where it's still the right development environment.



COMPETITION

IMPORTANT. NOT DEFINING.

Competition is an important developmental arena within Under-23, but you don't have to be defined by competitive results to belong here.



TRAVEL

THE PROGRAMME MOVES.

Gatherings take place in the UK and Europe. You'll need to travel, but we'll help make it work — coordinating shared travel, accommodation and local logistics where possible.

READY TO TAKE GREATER OWNERSHIP?

Under-23 provides the environment, coaching and challenge. What you do with it increasingly becomes yours.

DEVELOPMENT HAPPENS BETWEEN PEOPLE

Under-23 is led by Jacko and Sam, but the environment is created by everyone within it.

Coaching, conversations, shared experiences and the different perspectives within the group all contribute to how people develop.



'JACKO' JACKSON

COACH & PROGRAMME DESIGNER

I've spent more than four decades coaching freestyle paddlers, from young people taking their first steps in the sport through to World Champions.

My work increasingly focuses on helping athletes understand their own development — becoming better at learning, making decisions and taking ownership of what happens next.



SAM WILSON

COACH

Sam's journey from Burners athlete to Burners Head Coach — and 2025 Squirt Boat World Champion — gives him a unique perspective on development.

Having competed for Team GB since 2014 and coached since 2016, he brings experience, creativity and calm authority, helping paddlers develop their skills, thinking and increasing ownership.

THE GROUP

THE ATHLETES ARE PART OF THE ENVIRONMENT TOO.

A small group of around 8-10 paddlers means people get to know one another properly. You train together, challenge each other, share what you're discovering and bring different experiences into the programme.

You aren't simply developing alongside the group. **You contribute to what the group becomes.**



YOUR NEXT STEP

READY FOR THE NEXT STAGE?

If Under-23 feels like the right development environment for you, see What's On for upcoming gatherings, locations and current details — or get in touch if you'd like to talk it through first.



WHAT'S ON

burnersbasecamp.com/whats-on

QUESTIONS?

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