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Success for the South Wales Boat Show

By [Roxanna Maynard](#)



With the sun beating down on the beautiful Welsh country side, it was easy to see why the organisers chose Margam Park to host the *South Wales Boat Show*. On the 17-18th June thousands descended on Port Talbot for the event which could mark the first in a string of regional shows. A range of attractions were offered throughout the weekend including craft demonstrations, a multitude of chandlery stalls and a wide selection of activities targeted at family entertainment.



The 2006 South Wales Boat Show at Margam park, Port Talbot

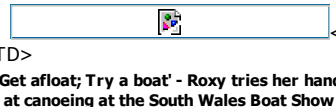
Success for the stalls

There were approximately 150 exhibitors from across the UK and Europe, showcasing everything from boat builders to sea survival - something for everyone. If you didn't take home a bag containing some piece of nautical merchandise, you certainly took back a wealth of knowledge of what Wales has to offer for those blessed with sea legs.

The exhibitors collectively sold over £1,000,000 of boats, equipment and services. One gentleman confirmed he had more interest within the two days at the South Wales Boat Show, which cost £1,500, than the whole of the LBS (London Boat Show), held at Excel, which cost him well over £70,000! The success didn't stop there either; *Cambrian* sold over 6 craft including one on Saturday evening that had to be man-handled out of the show so the customer could catch the ferry back to Ireland!

400 kids launched into the water

Another attraction at the show was the 'Get afloat, Try a boat' stand run by Swansea Water Sports, which launched more than 400 children into the water and received tremendous feedback. There was a range of water craft to try - everything from a canoe to a power boat, and all for free! *Of course* for journalistic purposes I *had* to try them all, my favourite being the Zapcat, which flung me around the lake several times before I stepped back onto dry land while my stomach was still in the boat. It's a hard call to say whether it was this or the Waltzer that left me feeling more exhilarated, but next year I will remember not to eat my lunch first.



Though there was a good turn-out, it was nice to not have to queue for hours on end to take part in the attractions, like some other events I have attended this year. This applied to the climbing wall, paintball shooting range and fair ground rides, which all had less than a 5 minute wait. Swansea Sound in association with The Wave provided sponsorship for the event and even more fun with their range of wacky challenges including the doughnut game, where contestants had to avoid licking their lips while eating a jam doughnut - and a limbo

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Next year looks to be even better

With many of the of the exhibitors already securing their places for next year, the South Wales Boat Show looks as if it is here to stay - and we couldn't be happier about it. Having witnessed a disappointing LBS, and with sights not set high for Southampton, it was nice to see something aimed at family fun rather than commercial opportunism, and the motive being to serve the consumer rather than the industry.

Next year the South Wales Boat Show will be taking part on the 15-17th of June.

For more information visit <http://www.themainsail.com/cl.asp?cn=25>.

To see more pictures from the event, check out the [South Wales Boat Show Album](#) in the MainSail gallery.



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