



# THE WRINGER

## H2O-2 Paddle

### H2O-2 PADDLE

€299 £205

INFO: [WWW.IRISHCANOEOUTFITTERS.COM](http://WWW.IRISHCANOEOUTFITTERS.COM)

OR [WWW.H2OPADDLES.COM](http://WWW.H2OPADDLES.COM)

The man behind the H2O is the same guy that brought us Watersticks, so there's a proven track record behind the H2O designs. On top of that they've taken on a ton of feedback and input from their team, which includes Billy Harris and Pat Camblin. These guys are out on the water day in day out pushing the boundaries, so it's fair to say that they've got a handle on what works. We'd heard good things from the UK's very own Pringle, another H2O team member, so we were keen to see what the fuss was about. Colm Healy at Irish Canoe Outfitters, the European distributor kindly packed us of a set of H2O-2 blades on a carbon grip indexed ergo bent shaft for the testers to put through the wringer.



### The Business End

The H2O-2 blade is slightly larger and more powerful than the H2O-Team version and is, in our opinion, probably better suited to river running and paddlers looking for a blade that can do it all. The H2O-2 feature a tough blade material with the ridges of the back of the blade designed to strengthen and stiffen the blades. We're not the biggest fans of plastic blades here as they can often feel too springy, but the H2O-2 blades certainly shattered that misconception. There is a small amount of give, but this is a good thing as it helps to absorb bigger hits rather than sending them straight up your arm. On the water the blade shape provided a powerful and positive stroke, both on the front and back and we were pleased to find that there was no flutter at all. Being summer we were unable to send the H2O-2's crashing down flooded rock-strewn ditches every five minutes, but they do seem to be holding up well to general wear and tear and more than capable of shaking off bigger hits.



### Hand Jobs

We really liked the grips on these paddles. They're made from Santoprene and textured to improve grip and eliminate blisters. They've been designed to work hand in hand (pardon the pun) with the carbon-cranked shaft, which incorporates a unique mating surface that locks together with the grip. This increases paddler comfort and performance but also prevents the grips from twisting or rotating. The testers were a little weary of the grips on first sight, but after a few minutes on the water they were sold. They may have been a rather nasty bright yellow, but they certainly seem to work. The whole package had a nice balanced feel to it and the combination of the crank and the H2O-2 blades gave us all the power we could need.

### The Verdict

The fact that these are one of the first products from a fledgling company is impressive and you can 'feel' the input and experience that has gone into the design and construction. We couldn't really fault them on performance, but the one criticism that everyone who saw or used them went something along the lines of, 'Dam they sure is ugly!' If you want beautiful styling and top bling-bling looks from your sticks then you might want to look elsewhere, as there's no denying that they're anything but pretty\*. But if you want a set of sticks that can provide solid, driving power, comfort and hardwearing performance on the river then take a serious look at the H2O-2s.

*\* Our test models were a kind of baby sick yellow, but we've since seen a set in blue and they look much sexier!*

