

# White Water News



ISSUE 20 sponsored by GAYBO

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**CONTENTS INCLUDE :** Div 'A' Reports, Race Evaluation Questionnaire, Pregnancy & Performance, Awe Europa Cup, Paddling Machine Review



**GAYBO GOLD ....** At each of the GRANDTULLY, TRYWERYN AND WASHBURN Div 'A' races : 1st place in Men's K1, Under 21 Men, Under 18 Men, C1 and C2

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Alan Tordoff (National Men's Champion), DRH Taylor (English Open Champion), Ian Tordoff (National Under 18 Champion), Steve Wells (1st Selected C1 for the Worlds), Dave Kay & Jerry Hibble (1st Selected C2) ..... **GAYBO SUPERKINGS**

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## SPRING &amp; SUMMER CALENDAR

This calendar includes the remaining British races plus the 'best' of the 1987 International Calendar. Paddlers wishing to enter Class 'C' internationals (any Div 'A' paddler is eligible) or wanting further information about international races should contact the WWR Secretary (Sarah Swallow, 7 Delves Walk, Deva Park, Huntington, Chester).

<i>Dates</i>	<i>River</i>	<i>Location</i>
25,26 April	Tryweryn	Bala, North Wales
Welsh Open, C1/C2 Final Worlds Selection, Under 18/16 Selection		
2,3 May	Awe	Taynuilt, West Scotland
Div 'B' Ranking, Home International, Mens/Ladies K1 Pre-selection Venue of Europa Cup Final 1988		
15-17 May	Isere	Bourg, France
3 races for Mens/Ladies World Championships Selection		
30,31 May	Tryweryn	Bala, North Wales
British Open, Div 'A' final race		
14 June	Muota	Muotathal, Switzerland
Class C International, GB C1/C2 Team entered		
21 June	Les Dranses	Evian, France
Class C International, Full GB Team entered		
28 June	Noguera Pallaresa	Sort, Spain
Junior Pre-World Championships, GB Youth 'B' Team only		
11,12 July	Moll	Spittal, Austria
European Junior Championships, GB Youth 'A' Team only		
10-12 July	Isere	Bourg, France
World Championships, Full GB Team only		
??6? July	??	Pyrenees, France
French Championships, GB 'B' team & Development Squad entered		
8,9 August	Sjoa	Norway
Class C International, British Universities Team entered Venue of Europa Cup Leg 1 1988		

SCOTTISH OPEN WHITE WATER RACE  
RIVER AWE, ARCYLL  
RANKING DIV B, OPEN, HOME INTERNATIONAL  
MAY 2nd/3rd 1987

This race will be held over the intended course of the 1988 Europa Cup Final. This is your chance to get to know the river with a good water release and under race conditions. The Awe is one of the best and most picturesque race venues in Britain so why not come along and join in the fun.

The full BCU computerised results service will be in use at this event.

The race organiser for this year only is...

SCOTTISH CANOE ASSOCIATION  
Brian Chapman  
7 Greenbank Grove  
Edinburgh  
EH10 5BT

Entries should be sent to me in advance if at all possible although late entries will be accepted up until the Saturday morning.

NOTE... We have entered into an agreement with the fishing interests on the river for unrestricted access for both days of the event. DO NOT put our good relations with these people at risk by paddling during the week prior to the event. Anyone who does this will be DISQUALIFIED from the event. Such selfish actions will put the future of the river as a major venue at risk.

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EDITORIAL- Dave Kay  
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As the British season comes to its finale and attention focuses on selection events and internationals, it has hardly surprising that psychology should be a recurrent theme. All the background training has been done by those who aspire to great things - and there is probably little to separate a lot of contenders (just look at the top 12 Men at the Washburn Div "A"). So the question is how to put the edge on it all.

Speed training and other forms of intervals, peaking and resting are all well understood areas - ask any coach if you want a good training programme. Follow the instructions and (assuming you have the ability) you'll probably achieve a lot of personal bests in training.

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE BIG RACE? So many people impress in training - perhaps they even hold all the time trial records or have won all the preliminary Div 'A' races .... and yet they fail to produce the goods in the end. Why?

Sometimes it is clearly a case of timing. You cannot keep going in a high gear all year so naturally the early winners often fade as others who are fresher come through. Another factor against the early season achievers in Britain is all that intense work in the winter. Nevertheless, perhaps the biggest problems, and certainly the ones that play most part in the biggest races, are in the mind.

The following list is by no means comprehensive but it may help you to focus on areas of weakness.

- Enthusiasm :  
Have you run out of steam after previous efforts?  
Are you tired of racing or of training or of travelling?
- Motivation :  
What are your goals? Why are you doing it?  
How badly do you want it! Are you hungry?
- Adrenalin (Race Day) :  
Are you so cool & layed back that you are off the boil?  
There is a delicate balance between using and losing to your nerves .... 'Psyched up' or 'Psyched out' ....
- Nerves (Race Day) :  
Can you handle the big one  
especially 3 races in 3 days for selection at Bourg?
- Planning :  
You planned your training for a year but did you plan your warm-up and your race?  
How did you perceive the race course?
- Task Focus :  
What were you thinking about at the start line?  
And what about half way down?
- Aggression :  
How do you feel about the opposition?

- Confidence :  
How do you feel about yourself?
- Support :  
Are you out there by yourself in preparation & racing?  
Do you have a coach, mentor, training partner, parent  
or friend who you can trust and believe?

The list goes on and you can probably add many pointers from your own experience. Indeed, you may already have isolated your shortcomings BUT what can be done?

It is certainly never too late, so long as you have the willpower to take yourself in hand. So many great slalom victories have been snatched out of a disastrous first run by a short sharp exercise in self-control and positive thinking. Remember the Fox at Bala (81) and Augsburg (85). In river racing however there is only one run and so all should be in order before you get on the start line.

It takes much practice to achieve the mental superiority and the cohesion of 'body and mind' exhibited by such as Fox and Daley Thompson. However you can start with one or two specifics - and not necessarily your greatest weaknesses.

In the last issue of the 'News' (River Guides Compilation) there was general advice on building up a race plan in the guide to Bourg. In this issue we include a 'Race Evaluation Questionnaire' stolen from the Canadian National Team - why not make some copies and try it out at your next races. For those willing to spend time on long term mental conditioning, a very interesting audio-course is now available through 'Audio Expression' of Chelmsford. The course was developed and proven in Sweden by Lars-Eric Unestahl and was received very favourably at the 1987 BCU Coaching Conference. John Handyside (WWR National Coach) can provide further details and copies of the introductory booklet 'The Ideal Performance'.

The mental side of high level competition is probably the hardest with so many paddlers defeating themselves - no need for opposition 'psyche outs'! It takes a long time to isolate your weaknesses and they probably change from year to year and from race to race. The problems are complex - but real results are there for anyone who can control both body AND mind. Let's see who does it this year in the Bourg selection races!

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**CONCLUSION of Gill Berrow's article 'Parenthood & Performance from pages 30 & 31.**

Whatever, though, I'm glad that having children does seem to add rather than detract from performance as that encourages participation. From my own and other experience it seems that having absorbing outside interests and opportunity certainly seems to help mother enjoy life and their children more and that is, I would say, the highest priority.

#### REFERENCES

1. "Pregnancy and Running" by Isabel Walker in "Running for Women" October 1985.
2. "Running for Two" by Janet Heinonen in "Runner World" September 1985.

**BOURG SELECTION RACES*****Details and Rules applying to Mens & Ladies K1*****1. Dates**

The programme as currently understood is as follows

		Time ??	Time 12noon ?
Sat 9 May	35 cumeecs		
Sun 10 May	35 cumeecs		
Mon 11 May	35 cumeecs		
Tues 12 May	35 cumeecs	French Seln	
Wed 13 May	35 cumeecs	French Seln	
Thurs 14 May	35 cumeecs	French Seln	
Fri 15 May	35 cumeecs		GB Seln
Sat 16 May	35 cumeecs		GB Seln
Sun 17 May	35 cumeecs		GB Seln

**2. Start Order**

1 minute intervals

Race 1 : Lots drawn by Management (as per 1983 & 1985)

Race 2 : Finish Order of Race 1

Race 3 : Finish Order of Race 2

No competitor is compelled to start in more than two races to qualify for selection on points, although everyone is encouraged to race all three.

**3. Boat Weighing**

There will be no boat measuring

Boats will be weighed and marked before Race 1

Random checks will be made at the Finish of each race

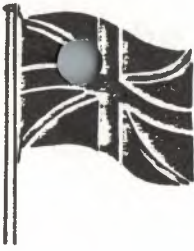
Hopefully there will be opportunity to test weights at the Awe ICF Worlds rules apply (10kgs)

**4. Splits**

Official splits will be recorded but not publicised during the races. They will be made available as soon as possible after each race.

**5. Official Transport**

A van and trailer will be at Bourg throughout the week in order to help wherever possible. However, please bear in mind that all paddlers except those who have payed to travel out in the van are expected to be self-sufficient.



GREAT BRITAIN

# Wild Water Racing

Please reply to

PHILIP L. DEAN  
17 BALMORAL DRIVE  
BRINSCALL  
NR. CHORLEY  
LANCS. PR6 8ST

GREAT BRITAIN JUNIOR WILD WATER RACING TEAM SELECTION POLICY 1987

PLACE: BALA, R. TRYWERYN  
BRENT: WELSH OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP  
DATE: APRIL 25/26  
RACE: SELECTION TAKEN FROM RESULTS IN THE SENIOR RACE ON THE DAY  
ENTRY: AS PER WWR YEARBOOK

A TEAM EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS - SPITTAL 10-12 July

First 2 K1 Men plus 1 as committee decision  
First K1 lady plus 2 at committee decision based on percentage rule.  
C1 & C2 placings to be considered by committee based on percentage rule.

B TEAM SORT 22-28 June

Only open to pladdlers eligible to paddle in the Junior World Championships '88  
First 2 K1 men plus 1 at committee decision.  
Consideration will be given to a further 5 places to cover additional men's and ladies K1, C1 and C2's.

Those eligible for Sort but fall within the election policy for the A team will be given a choice as to which event they wish to attend.

Details of actual trips will be given to selected paddlers as soon as possible after the selection race.

Further information from Phil Dean, Team Manager or Alastair Bayliss, Coach



**ALSO FOR YOUR SUMMER ENTERTAINMENT .....**  
-----**ARCTIC CANOE RACE**

Europe's longest canoe marathon is being staged for the fourth consecutive year between 26 July and 2 August. The six stage six day race covers 537 kms along the Finish / Swedish / Norwegian border, two-thirds of which is above the Arctic Circle. As well as K1, K2 and C2 there is once more a WWR class. Last year two paddlers familiar on our WWR scene, Graham Swadling and Richard Horsley, came second in K2, whilst longstanding WWR C1 team paddler John Goodwin holds the C2 record (set in 1985 with John Court). If you are interested get more details from

Steve Bowles (Organiser)

Arctic Canoe Race, Lukiokatu 10, 95400 TORNIO, Finland

**SJOA INTERNATIONAL : 8/9 August**

Also in Scandinavia, the weekend after the Arctic Race sees an international WWR on the SJOA (Norway). As well as being reputedly an entertaining 'big water' river it is significant as the venue of the first leg of the 1988 Europa Cup. Why not give it a go - John Handyside can supply further details of the race and of other paddlers interested.

**CAMPING IN FRANCE**

No problem .... there are thousands of good sites plus all the laybys and fields etc ....

But if you want to camp at Bourg for the Worlds act now! Denis Cooper (0602-475908) has the details of the Municipal Site and warns that there are not many places left.

On the other hand you may be interested in a recommended site between the Massif Central (Ardeche) and the Med. 'Camping La Tour de Barre' is run by a certain Patrice Gendrier who is a top ski instructor in the winter - that's how I met him and so the plug. He's a fine chap who used to ski with Michel Magdinier (Spital Silver MK1) - small world!

The site is beside the river Gardon (placid) close to ALES off the A9 between Bollene and Nimes. The facilities are good (tennis, swimming) .... Phone 66.61.60.43 for reservations.

# RUNCORN CANOE CLUB

P8

(AFFILIATED TO THE BRITISH CANOE UNION)

13 Bradley Lane  
Frodsham  
Cheshire WA6 6QA

25 March 1987

Dear Editor

Re: Recent Questionnaire on the state of White Water Racing

Having moved within swimming circles for many years and frequently felt frustrated by the extent to which the sport is governed by aged individuals far removed from the grass roots level, it is refreshing to experience an activity which has a young, active executive committed to improving participation and enjoyment of their sport.

However, whilst I applaud the intentions of the questionnaire and the efforts which went into compiling, typing, duplicating, circulating and analysing it, I cannot but help feel that the results achieved were not a fair reflection of what is right and wrong with White Water Racing as it is presently organised. The general consensus that most things were alright with the sport may have been achieved because most of the completed returns came from those who currently take an active interest in the sport and are successful at it. As one who enjoys taking part in the occasional race but finds the travel and cold weather a bit of a bind, I would be interested to know whether there are many others out there who would enter races if they were held in the summer months, if there were better facilities etc., etc.

I do not wish to undermine the importance of these results, but would encourage the Executive not to sit back on their laurels and feel that all is well with the sport, especially if new competitors are to be encouraged. Perhaps further analysis of the results is required to discover which individuals replied to the questionnaire, are they regular competitors or do they also include a fair proportion who have dropped out of the sport because they were not happy with the way things were run? It is surely also important to compare the rate of growth in White Water Racing with that in slalom and marathon racing. Is the sport attracting its fair share of canoeists?, do participants reflect a similar balance of competitors as other branches of canoeing in terms of sex, age, residence, etc.?. Is it managing to retain the interests of those who have tried the sport? etc. etc.

White Water Racing is an exciting and enjoyable branch of canoeing, continuous monitoring is essential to ensure that the sport continues to grow and flourish.

Yours sincerely,

Richard William Cox



British Canoe Union  
Wild Water Racing Committee

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Minutes of the Annual General Meeting Held at Holme Pierrepont National Watersports Centre on Saturday 14th February 1987.

Clubs present included; Birmingham University; Richmond; Nottingham University; Viking; Cambridge; Nottingham Kayak Club; Manchester; Leeds; Chalfont Park; Herts CC; Worcester; ACU.

Apologies for absence were received from Henry Syska, Sarah Swallow.

1.0) Copies of the 1986 AGM minutes had been circulated to the meeting. These were accepted as a true record. Proposed M. Gettleson, seconded J. Lyons.

2.0) Chairman's Report

Colin Henson reported that WWR had had another successful year and was in a particularly good financial situation. CH noted that further impetus for WWR development may come from the proposal to include WWR in the Barcelona 1992 Olympics.

3.0) Secretary's Report

In the absence of Sarah Swallow Dave Williams read the list of Executive members attendance at meetings during 1986.

4.0) Treasurer's Report

Mike Tordoff circulated the WWR accounts with explanatory sheets to the meeting. He reported a balance as at the 31st October 1986 of £21 594 an increase of £2 386 from the 1st November 1985. MT reported the continuing importance of VAT refunds and bank interest to the figures. He pointed out that the previous years decision to increase levies was well founded as the BCU intended to stop paying administration grant. Dave Kay requested clarification of the item of cost to WW News of £442, noting that the magazine was <sup>partly</sup> sponsored by advertisers. MT agreed to subsequently publish details of the amounts which he accepted were not direct costs of the magazine.

5.0) The accounts were then accepted. Proposed K. Bain, seconded M. Gettleson.

6.0) Team Managers Report

Nigel Morley reported that 1986 was a very busy International season with events at Monschau, Kramsach, Evian, Sort, Bourg and Savage. He praised the efforts of the class coaches in supporting the team and noted that a number of new faces were appearing in the team. NM noted that the 1987 season was also to be a busy one and looked forward to the possibility of slalom and WWR canoeing being included in the 1992 Olympics.

7.0) National Competition Coaches Report

John Handyside reported that the WWR timing system was now in an advanced state of development having taken 2 years to implement to the present status of timing with instant results. Further enhancements to beam start/finish systems were to be added during 1987. He voiced his thanks to Mike Gettleson and Adrian Kennard for the work that they had put into the system.

### 8.0) Appointment of Secretary

Sarah Swallow was elected to stand as Secretary until the 1989 AGM. Proposed by Executive, elected nem con.

### 9.0) Appointment of Executive Committee Members

Alastair Bayliss and Nigel Morley had been nominated by Executive. The meeting accepted late nominations of John Graveling and Clive Harvey. There being 4 vacancies on Executive these 4 persons were elected to serve until the 1989 AGM nem con.

### 10.0) Motions

#### 10.1) From Executive, add 8.3 to the WWR constitution

" The Chairman shall record the decisions of the meeting and subsequently publish them. These decisions will be explained at the next full meeting of the Executive"

Dave Williams explained why the motion was requested by Executive. This was passed unopposed.

#### 10.2) WWR rule changes

DW brought to the attention of the meeting the list of rule changes agreed by Executive since the 1986 AGM.

John Handyside reported that the ICF planned to implement the rule that team members must finish within 15 seconds at International events.

It was noted that the ICF weight limit for C2's should read 17kg in the Yearbook.

Dave Williams explained that it was only a recommendation that BCU approved buoyancy aids should be worn - there were no plans at present to enforce this rule

No dissent to any of the Executive rule changes was recorded.

Colin Henson requested any comments from the meeting for Executive to consider;

- i) Dave Kay requested better publicity leading up to the Europa Cup 1988
- ii) Joe Lyons requested shorter Div.C races; but other comments from the floor noted that existing events covered a suitable range of long and short races.

Minutes Prepared by Dave Williams, 15th March 1987

### Post Meeting Note

At the time of preparation of these minutes the WWR accounts were still with the BCU for audit and so clarification of the WW News item discussed in 4.0) of these minutes has not been possible.

The following Rule changes were passed during the last year by the Executive :-

Rule 3.8 - addition reads "Division C competitors must show their BCJ card (or equivalent) to the Division C race organiser on the morning before the race commences, or they will not be allowed to start."

Day tickets coverings BCJ membership may be used on ONE occasion for non BCJ members trying competition. Members without cards at a race may also be asked to pay for these at Division C events." (minutes of 22.3.86.)

Divisional System - Add 4.7 - At Division B and C events additional non ranking events may be held at the discretion of the organiser. Called Introductory Class. Competitors must be BCJ members (or hold day tickets) and may use any class of canoe/kayak within the current regulations (Rules section 6). (Minutes of 22.3.86.)

New Rule - 28.2 - Selection Events - Verification of Selection events would be performed by the relevant team manager or his nominee plus 1 National squad kayak coach plus 1 National Squad canadian coach. Decisions would be by a majority vote. (Minutes of 22.3.86.)

Addition to Rule 14.1 - "Race Organisers must belong to BCJ affiliated clubs with a registered interest in Wild Water Racing. This to be confirmed with the Race Officer." (minutes of 22.3.86.)

Addition to Rule 17.2 - "The interpretation lies with the event organiser and/or the relevant WWR officials."

New Rule - 28.3 - Selection events - The organising body's rules will apply to any selection event ie ICF rules for international events, DKV rules if incorporated into a West German national event for example, and BCJ WWR rules if organised by the WWR Committee. (minutes of 19.4.86.)

Addition to Rule 23.1 - (originally just Rule 28) - Protests add "At Division A races an Executive member will be available should any queries arise." (minutes of 19.4.86.)

Rule 17.2 - Deleted "is there must be a route where a boat may pass without touching the bottom". Rule 17.2 now reads "The course must be navigable throughout." (minutes of 19.4.86.)

Rule 6.1 - Weight limits as recommended by the ICF have been implemented. (minutes of 11.10.86.)

Rule 27.2 - amended to read "....or for races in Scotland only, 50% of levies from Scottish Division A events would go to Executive." (minutes of 3.12.86.)

Rule 3.4 - Division B Ladies be extended to read "At inqurate events, promotion will occur if a Division B Ladies time is within 10% of the time of the last Division B man to be promoted". (minutes of 3.12.86.)

Divisional Ranking System 1.7., 2.8., and 3.8., be extended to read ".... except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. forces overseas and pregnancy for ladies.) (minutes of 3.12.86.)

Divisional Ranking System add 3.2 - "The highest ranked junior Mens Kayak paddler at the end of the season will be declared National Junior Champion". (minutes of 20.12.86)

Divisional Ranking System add 4.7 - "The winner of the the Under 16 and Under 14 Ranking lists at the end of the season will be declared Under 16 National Youth Champion and Under 14 National Youth Champion". (minutes of 20.12.86.)

Divisional Ranking System add 10.5 - "4 ranking results must be obtained to qualify as National Mixed Team Champions." (minutes of 20.12.86.)

Divisional Ranking System - delete 4.3. It is superseded by 4.2. A new 4.6 is added - "A division C ranking list will be prepared and published at the end of the season based on the MS system." (minutes of 20.12.86.)

Rules 7.6 - add "It is recommended that BCJ approved buoyancy aids should be used". (minutes of 20.12.86.)

**BOATS FOR SALE**  
-----

Nomad VISION 3 : Kevlar/Carbon with foam hull weighing 11kg  
£250 from Joe Lyons (021-454-5690)

Gaybo KING : All kevlar under 10kg - excellent condition  
£270 from Steve Wells or Denis (0602-475908)

**The Great Anne Plant (Boat) Sale!**

Anne has been forced to retire from competition paddling on account of a serious shoulder injury. She will be greatly missed in WWR circles - though many ladies will be relieved at her retirement whenever it comes to a low Div "A" race! Best wishes to Anne in whatever sport she wins at next (she is addicted both to sport and to winning) - currently rumoured to be cycling.

Anyway, the following boats are for sale from Anne (021-474-2269) at sensible prices - do not hesitate to ring :

- Delphin 81 (Gaybo) : one reasonable and one good and one excellent condition ... all three are all kevlar
- Interceptor 3 (Gaybo) : good condition, all kevlar
- Cougar Sprint K1 : excellent condition, sandwich construction
- Lazer Marathon K1 : good condition, glass fibre

plus a wide selection of left handed paddles.

**WHAT'S NEW? - Crystal Palace Revelations**  
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The following summary of developments in boats and other equipment as observed at the Crystal Palace Exhibition is probably far from comprehensive. Manufacturers and suppliers who feel left out should make sure that they keep us informed about their products - after all, if the people with their ears to the ground don't know, what chance of the typical WWR paddler finding out what is available? The publicity is FREE - please do us all a favour.

**BOATS - Kayaks**

Gaybo and Nomad have both launched their ultimate Bourg offerings. Both the SUPERKING (Gaybo) and the VISION 4 (Nomad) are boats of considerable volume - but still very practical on lower-volume British rivers. Size is deceptive and often only a psychological disadvantage at home .... the ladies seem to be coping well with the big deck of the Vision whilst the SuperKing performed outstandingly in the shallows at Bala.

Post Merano and Garmisch, WWR boat design has reached a level of sophistication where the simple assumptions of the past no longer apply (Big-fat-stable-slow, Small-thin-tippy-fast, so observe river then choose one extreme or the other). We now have a generation 'multi-purpose' boats (both kayak and canadian) which have fast hull shapes and unobstructed paddling positions whilst offering maximum stability and protection when it counts.

*The Vision 4* is the fourth in a progression of designs by Double Dutch. It is clearly very fast on the flat as well as safe in the waves - though initial observations are the problems of control at the bottom of rapids (pitching), temptation to paddle it on an edge ('V' shaped hull) and sensitivity of trim. These are surmountable with discipline and a small penalty for an outstanding big water boat.

*The SuperKing* is really called the SuperStar by Gil, its French designer. It is a development combining the features of the much-loved King with last year's 'over the top' Star design (paddled to Pre-Worlds medal position by Benezit). The monstrous proportions of the Star have been scaled down (though the deck is still substantial). More stable than the King, the handling is very similar with emphasis on 'lean-steering' and the flatwater speed is impressive. 1st, 2nd and 3rd at the Tryweryn, according to Graham Goldsmith, says it all!

#### *BOATS - Canadians*

Outside of the kayaks, Gaybo remains active - bringing in French designs from *Gil (As II C1)* and *Feuillette (Fluo C2)*. The C2 has been modified at the wings and has a completely new deck on the advice of Feuillette and has been 1st, 2nd and 3rd both 87 Div 'A's. Steve Wells should soon be in the AS II C1 and we assume that 4-times World Champion Gilles Zok has been in it a while.

Thanks to the endeavours of Mike Dalton (Nomad) and Graham Goldsmith (Gaybo) we are in a strong position in terms of boats for domestic use, for the forthcoming Bourg Worlds and for the foreseeable future. Let's hope we can do them justice!

#### *PADDLES*

British manufacturers have led for some time in the area of non-wooden competition paddles. Canoesport (Martin Bosher) started a tradition to be continued by Freeblades and now by MI Designs (Martin Spencer). The influence of the odd passing New Zealander (Fergusson, Martin) has also kept things going in the right direction - both in terms of quality and innovation.

As well as prototyping the now-legendary 'slotted' paddle (not yet for WWR use) MI have come up with a number of small yet significant developments this year :

**SHAFTS** : As well as 60% carbon, there is now a more flexible 25% carbon shaft plus a competition weight epoxy shaft (more flexible) in lurid pink/purple!

**SHAPES** : As well as the popular 'Downriver' shape, cut down versions of the Struer-like 20cms blade are favoured for Bourg - as raced by Alan Tordoff this season.

**CONSTRUCTION** : Injected polystyrene has replaced the traditional foam to enhance the already lightweight 'Epoxy International' construction (the kevlar-carbon ones!)

#### **OTHER KIT**

MI have also extended the range of colours for their 2oz and 3oz cags. The 2oz competition version has neoprene cuffs and neck that can easily be cut for best fit by the paddler. The MI version of the popular lightweight Moby Dick buoyancy aid is also available in the same colour range with foam and fittings to please the BCU!

Meanwhile DRH Taylor is now in production with some very carefully styled clothing. Lycra Canoe/Cycle/Triathlon shorts come in a good range of colours. Shortie and full cags are designed for close fit with maximum mobility.

Martyn Hedges still appears to dominate the spray deck world with a wide range of neoprene designs. He has diligently covered most boats and offers tailored cuts in a number of styles and constructions. This kit is not cheap - but you get what you pay for.

Last but not least comes Chris Hawkesworth who has kept abreast with both fashion and practical requirements with his full range of paddling gear, as worn by Richard Fox - of course. Off the water, the Wild Water weather suits must be the most attractive gear around.

#### **SEALINK DIVISION "A" CHAMPIONSHIP**

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##### ***The Tay : 8th March***

The weather was awful on the Saturday with a strong upstream wind and heavy snow showers. The pre-start run-in from Aberfeldy was an endurance event in itself taking 20 minutes - though the race course was only 15 minutes long!

The Egon Ronay recommended cafe in Aberfeldy benefitted from all this. Certainly eating and complaining were the highlights of the day.

Race day was somewhat better. Tully is always a good rapid despite lowest race conditions for some years and there was certainly plenty of debate over alternative routes on both falls. Right and right seems to have been fastest - by spectacular margins according to Joe Lyons who lost acres after being a clear second place at the bend.

Alan Tordoff paddled the brand new SuperKing nearly 7 seconds clear on its first race run. Joe managed top three for the first time - though closely pressed by dark horse Neil Baxter (another slalomist crossing over). This may be Neil's only race before the Bourg selection - where to retain the fourth slot would be a major coup.

Gill Berrow impressed greatly in the Ladies event - though an error under the bridge nearly allowed the ever-improving Shirley Bain to snatch a win.

Steve Wells returned to the Div "A" circuit after his knee injury with vengeance - 25 seconds clear in C1. In C2 the top four were all close - with Goldsmith/Evans reviving their reputation with a close second place (0.7 down). This was a commendable first Div "A" win for Griffiths/Phillip potentially throwing the championship wide open.

*White Water News 'Man of the Match' Award!*

- Shirley Bain : Keep on pulling till the very last stroke
- John Griffiths : First Div "A" win - and he's a veteran
- Andy Tomlinson : Team run 9 seconds faster than individual
- Alan Tordoff : impressive win in untested boat

**Tryweryn : 22 March**

Saturday was pleasant for just paddling - though the water level had the C2s moaning (again!). The release was apparently about 4% down on usual (241 whatsits as opposed to 249) and that made a difference on Top Site and especially the Dog-leg. Sunday made us all feel at home with typical Bala squalls and rain despite occasionally threatening sunshine.

The results saw two interesting changes. Neil Stamps romped home by 18 seconds for his second Div "A" win of the season. He could now overhaul Alan Tordoff - though Alan has currently one more win. Either way, an Under-21 will certainly win the title, a tremendous achievement and a first since Hibble in the 50s. (oops!)

The Washburn Div "A" may be crucial for C2s as well as Men's K1 - Dave Kay & Jerry Hibble appeared from nowhere in the C2 race. Pre-race talk was of Griffiths/Phillip clinching selection with a third consecutive 87 win. In reality Kay/Hibble and Goldsmith/Evans finished 50 seconds clear and the championship was in disarray with Kay/Hibble marginally leading the Bourg selection table.

Gill Berrow and Steve Wells impressed again, whilst Ian Tordoff extended his massive dominance of the Under-18 class. This race was Kayak selection for the Easter Enza/Corsica Tour, and Ian was well inside a bunch of 5 paddlers who finished in a six second slot behind Joe Lyons, the last man selected. Men's K1 Worlds selection still looks frighteningly close with under two months to go.

Birmingham won the Club Team event to clinch the championship with Nomad Racing and Leeds "A" significantly adrift. In Mixed Teams London Ladies restored their championship lead with Leeds Mixed not racing.

*White Water News 'Man of the Match' Award!*

- Jerry Hibble : Who said he was joking!
- Neil Stamps : Show this man some white water .....
- DRH Taylor : New boat, new man - is this the begining?
- Steve Wells : So far clear

**STOP PRESS .... Washburn : 4 April**

Typically wet and windy Washburn weather dominated the event until the results hotted things up! Alan Tordoff won the Men's event to clinch the national Senior and Under 21 titles with one race to spare. This was an impressive achievement under real pressure. DRH Taylor and Jonathan Dunseath took the other medals only just clear of a frighteningly close pack of 9 more senior squad members including Under 18 Champion Ian Tordoff. Fast winning times were recorded in the Ladies (Gill Berrow) and C2s (Kay-Hibble).

The following day's English Open and Regional Championship provided real drama as the scores mounted up. As the final Mixed Team finished the North West were confident of their third successive Regional crown - only to be left clutching a slender 2 point margin representing the difference of a split second over 7 classes and 20 scoring paddlers. Amidst the excitement of the regional struggle, individual placings were reversed by tenths of seconds as Pearton pipped Wells in C1 and DRH recorded his first 1987 kayak win over Alan Tordoff (who was busy proving he could also make the C2 team).

Horrible weather but fine competition with especial thanks to Bill Fraser, Mark Markham, Mike Tordoff and John Handyside for some very professional start and finish organisation.

**NATIONAL CLASS COACHES FOR THE WORLDS**

Dave Williams has taken over the C1 Class after Chris Horrod's retirement from coaching. Dave will now not be paddling for Team selection himself. As previously planned, Dave Kay will hand over responsibility for the Men's Kayaks between the Selection and the Worlds. Nigel Morley will look after the four selected paddlers whilst Dave paddles C2 in the team.



## ENZA / CORSICA SELECTION

After the Tryweryn Div 'A', the following were selected to represent Great Britain at the two Enza and four Corsica races in April (Report next issue).

### *Men's K1*

Neil Stamps (Birmingham Uni)  
Alan Tordoff (Leeds)  
DRH Taylor (Leeds)  
Joe Lyons (Birmingham Uni)  
Andy Tomlinson (Birmingham Uni)

### *Ladies K1*

Gill Berrow (Killin)  
Cynthia Berry (Edinburgh)  
Julie Ashton (Leeds)

Also paddling by arrangement:

### *C1*

Steve Wells (Hounslow)

### *C2*

Kay & Hibble (Leeds / MI)

## ENGLAND MEN'S K1 SELECTION

The following have been selected on the basis of the Tryweryn Div "A" results to represent England in the Home International at the Awe on May 3rd. "A" and "B" Team places will be based on the Awe individual results.

Neil Stamps, Alan Tordoff, DRH Taylor,  
Jonathan Dunseath, Andy Tomlinson, Melvin Swallow

Reserves : Joe Lyons, Chris Humpage, Guy Sellwood

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RACE EVALUATION FORM

RACE NAME \_\_\_\_\_ WINNING TIME \_\_\_\_\_ % 100.00

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ YOUR TIME \_\_\_\_\_ % \_\_\_\_\_

Complete this form as soon as possible (or feasible) after the completion of the race. Remember to experiment with it at preparation races.

1. How do you feel about your performance in this race?

2. Circle your feeling going into the race:

GOAL DETERMINATION

NONE 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 COMPLETELY DETERMINED  
(to achieve goal)

ACTIVATION

NONE 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 HIGHLY PHYSICALLY ACTIVATED  
(charged)

WORRY

NONE 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 EXTREMELY WORRIED, SCARED OR  
FRIGHTENED

CONTROL

NONE 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 IN COMPLETE CONTROL

UPTIGHTNESS

CALM 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 MENTALLY UPTIGHT

FOCUSED ON TASK

NONE 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 COMPLETE TASK FOCUS

COMMITMENT TO PUSH

NONE 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 COMPLETE COMMITMENT TO EXTEND MYSELF

CONFIDENCE IN PREPARATION

LACK 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 COMPLETE CONFIDENCE IN PREPARATION

CONFIDENCE IN ABILITIES

NONE 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 COMPLETE CONFIDENCE IN MY ABILITIES

RISK TAKING

NONE 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 WILLING TO TAKE NECESSARY RISKS

3. Did you follow a previously practiced pre-race plan (e.g. specific warm-up and positive self talk)? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ PARTLY \_\_\_\_\_

If partly, which parts did you follow and which did you not?

RACE EVALUATION (contd.)

4. What were you saying to yourself (or thinking) immediately before the start of the race?

5. Were you able to follow your pre-planned race strategy?  
 YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ PARTLY \_\_\_\_\_

If partly, explain.....

6. Rate your overall effectiveness during the different segments of your final practice run and race run. Use a scale of 0 to 10 where 10 is right on target.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. PRACTICE PRIOR TO RACE _____                     | 2. WARM-UP PRIOR TO START _____            |
| 3. MOMENTS PRIOR TO START<br>(Last 5 minutes) _____ | 4. START RATING<br>(1st 2 minutes) _____   |
| 5. MID-RACE _____                                   | 6. FINISH RATING<br>(Last 2 minutes) _____ |

7. Were you able to fully extend yourself to the limit during the race?

HELD BACK 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 WENT TO MY LIMIT

8. If Yes, what were you saying to yourself in order to get body and mind to work at these limits?

9. During the race, did your focus of attention stay on your race (following race plan) or drift to other things?

DRIFTING 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 COMPLETELY FOCUSED OR ABSORBED

10. When were you paddling best and where was your focus?

11. When were you paddling your worst and where was your focus?

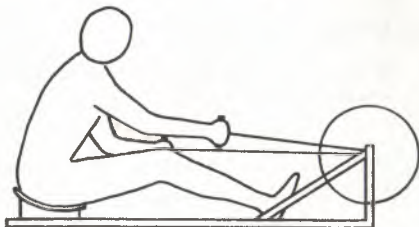
12. Did you have to make a mental recovery at any point in the race? If so, were you able to recover and re-focus again quickly?

13. Did anything unforeseen or unexpected happen (or anyone say anything to you) either before or during the race which may have had an impact on your performance (good or bad)?

## THE PHILLPETTE PADDLING MACHINE

REVIEW by Dave Kay

(assisted by Jerry Hibble)



### PART ONE : Machines in general

Before using the Phillpette, I already had experience of the Lawler paddling machine (the ones you pile the weights on) and used it quite extensively in the winter of 85-86 running upto some reasonable Div "A" and Devizes-Westminster performances.

I felt the Lawler, like any reputable paddling machine, had specific advantages over no machine at all :

- It kept me out of the cold
- My programme was not interrupted by ice on the canal
- It enforced a disciplined style (rotation and pull)
- It could be used in front of a mirror
- It could be kept at my place of work
- The workouts could be short and sharp (eg 35 minutes)
- I was keen to paddle more when the weather improved

Regardless of questions concerning the specific training use (eg Intervals or Steady Efforts?) and physiological benefits of the machine (eg Fixed resistance v. Isokinetic), the factors listed above provide for me sufficient justification for using it in the winter period. It is a complement to enforced limited paddling with important psychological and socio-economic benefits!

Even if we had good winter paddling conditions, I personally question the viability of an eleven month per year paddling oriented programme. However, to start the season late after a Summer/Autumn break is crazy in our climate. So why not use land-based options to split the season in the middle at the very time when the paddling is least beneficial (eg January-February).

If we lived in France we might ski - though we should note Benezit's reservations about too much non-specific work in the disastrous Merano season. We live in the UK - the canal freezes, the wind blows, gym membership is not cheap, we don't all have transport - so why not train indoors at home or at work?

There may be differences in the quality of the machines we can buy, but none in my opinion are worse than nothing at all - some are cheaper and cruder than others BUT when used intelligently they all work your upper body quite specifically.

## PART TWO : The Phillpette Machine

The Phillpette was developed by Mike Phillip over two years, eventually becoming generally available through Engineering Systems Ltd of Nottingham (0602-475908).

I was very sceptical of the machine when I first heard about it. Designed by a Canadian paddler, I had visions of something lopsided which would require a kneeling position and the strength of an ox. When I saw it I was no more impressed because for the same price it looked no more sophisticated than the Lawler - it was to my mind just another kayaking machine (seated position, two arms, etc).

My partner, one J Hibble, was no more impressed. He didn't even need to see it to decide because he has an aversion to boredom and therefore to machines (unless fuel injected). We were disinterested - period.

Then we got to discussing how to do more training sessions without doubling the time involved and discovered at the same time that the Phillpette has one great advantage over other low cost machines - a scoring system. Suddenly Hibble was keen / mildly interested.

Two machines were secretly imported to Yorkshire from the nether reaches of Nottingham (where they are made by Denis Cooper's company 'Engineering Systems Ltd'). We discovered what a certain Graham Goldsmith could score on the standard 4 \* 6 minutes with 1 minute rest session. The competition was on - the Phillpette World Champs.

Who can score over 4200 in 15 seconds, or 7500 in 30, or 14000 in 60, or 75000 in 6 minutes or (the ultimate perhaps) 280,000 in the 4\*6 session? Can we? Can Gaybo? Can Mike Phillip? How good is Steve Wells? How strong is Alan Tordoff? Can YOU do it?!

I am not going to attempt to explain how Mike Phillip's machine works in mechanical or physiological terms. Suffice to say the mechanics are very simple and that the training effect comes from wind resistance generated by the rotation of two fan blades. Like the much more costly Isokinetic machines (refer to Richard Fox's articles in Issues 15/16) the build up of resistance in relation to effort feels very close to a powerful paddling action.

The Phillpette scores very highly with us for the following reasons IN ADDITION TO the standard advantages listed in Part One of this review.

- It has an optional Scoring System
- The system offers a good measure of performance (16 points per revolution - stroke length cannot cheat it)
- You can challenge your friends ... and your enemies!

- It is very like paddling (more like Kayak than Canadian)
- The reciprocal resistance to effort is like an iso machine
- A realistic stroke rate is feasible (100-120)
- Adjustable fan blades allow variation in gearing
- It is light, easy to store, attractively presented and involves no permanent fixing (therefore good anywhere)

The Phillpette is not perfect - there will always be room for improvements but the additional cost may be too high and one of Mike & Denis' prime objectives is to make the equipment affordable by any racer. However, they might consider the following :

- Add a front to the safety guard therefore making the fan blades totally enclosed (important with children around)
- Add a time readout to the scoring device which can be stopped and zeroed by the same switch as the counter
- Relocate the counter so that it more directly faces the seated user.

Regardless of these development possibilities, the machine is very good value for money. Without the counter the cost is £95 (including VAT). The counter costs a further £50 (inc VAT) and is recommended for maximum benefit from day one BUT can be added at any time without inconvenience. For the cost of two quality competition paddles or one half the cost of a kevlar kayak, here is something that will last virtually forever. We may discover that the odd part needs replacement after millions of revolutions but the overhead must be calculated in pence per year!

### PART THREE : Possible Sessions

- a) Endurance at Threshold : Stroke at 102-108 constantly  
4\*6 minutes with 1 minute rest between each
- b) Endurance with Intensity : Stroke at 120 on burns  
As above but with 4\*20 seconds burns in each
- c) Endurance / Speed mix : Stroke at 114-120 for each effort  
10\*1 minute with 30 seconds off
- d) Speed / Accelerations : Do not within sets  
3 sets of 6 \* 15secs flat out / 45secs steady
- e) Partlek : Whatever you feel like stroking 90-120  
3\*7 minutes with about half work
- f) Musical Chairs! : As intense as you want / can!  
Paddle for a side of a record - preferably with short tracks  
Pause only between tracks (approx 20 minutes effort)

If you have the scoring system each effort can be related to a specific target - but beware of working against the score all the time. Establish some scoring and stroke rate targets once you are used to the machine and then use them to check on pacing with only occasional 'record attempts'.

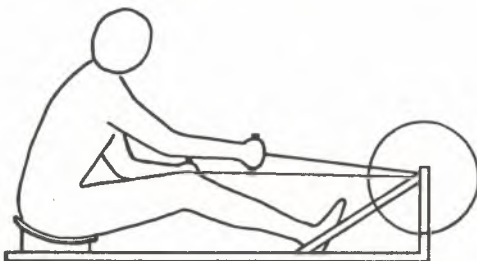
**Phillpette Scoring / Pacing Table (Example only)**

based on the Digital Distance Meter

<i>Seconds effort</i>	<i>Flat out</i>		<i>Threshold</i>	
	<i>Score</i>	<i>Strokes</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Strokes</i>
15 seconds	4200	34	2700	27
30 seconds	7500	63	5400	54
60 seconds	14000	122	10800	108
Pulse		180		150
-----				
180 seconds	39000	354	32400	324
360 seconds	75000	690	64800	648
Pulse		168		156

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1988 EUROPA CUP FINAL

RIVER AWE PROPOSAL

*This document has been produced by the Wild Water Racing Executive of the British Canoe Union to present proposals to stage the 1988 EUROPA CUP FINAL on the River Awe in Scotland.*

### **Wild Water Racing**

Wild Water Racing is one of three competition canoeing disciplines governed by the International Canoe Federation, the others being Slalom and Sprint Racing.

A Wild Water Race is a time trial over three to five miles covering water classified as Grade 3 or above on a scale of Grades 1-6. Paddlers are started individually at one minute intervals and the fastest completion of the course without portage wins. ICF regulations impose boat size and weight restrictions as well as the wearing of safety clothing (helmets and buoyancy aids).

There are around two thousand racers nationally ranked in Britain who take part in a domestic season running from October to May. The calendar is governed by the Wild Water Racing Executive of the British Canoe Union and includes over 80 races in three divisions at venues predominantly in Scotland, Wales and the north of England.

The Great Britain National Team is grant aided by the Sports Council and the leading paddlers by the Sports Aid Foundation to participate in the international season (April - August) with especial emphasis on the World Championships, the Europa Cup and the American Cup. Currently Britain has the European Junior Team Champions and the World Junior No.2 (Neil Stamps of Birmingham).

Great Britain has previously hosted the World Championships (1981) and has for the first time been invited to hold the Final of the Europa Cup - in Scotland in 1988 (provisionally 7/8 August). The proposed venue is the River Awe which already hosts a national ranking Wild Water Race run by the Scottish Canoe Association each May.

### **The Europa Cup**

The Europa Cup is a biennial two-leg competition involving canoeing nations in Europe and beyond - the title simply denotes the venue! In 1986 teams from New Zealand, Canada and the United States participated.

Since the first Europa Cup was staged in 1974, only one race has been held in Britain. Since that race at Bala (Clwyd, North Wales) in 1978, the venues have been :

- 1980 *Garmisch (West Germany), Breil-sur-Roya (France)*
- 1982 *Simental (Switzerland), Lofer (Austria)*
- 1984 *Bovec (Yugoslavia), Bourg St Maurice (France)*
- 1986 *Kramsach (Austria), Sort (Spain)*



Continental venues have been predominant because they can guarantee glacier fed "wild water" in the Summer. In Britain we do however have an increasing range of dam controlled rivers - and it on this basis that the British Canoe Union have been invited to hold the 1988 Final on the river Awe in Argyll (West Highlands of Scotland). The first leg race will be in Norway.

### The Competitors

The competition will typically attract national teams from fifteen nations. This means around 120 competitors divided between the four classes of "wild water" boats :

*Men's Kayak Singles, Ladies Kayak Singles  
Canadian Singles, Canadian Doubles*

The French and West Germans have dominated the Gold and Silver positions in recent years with lively competition between Britain, Italy and Switzerland for the bronze. In 1986 the British Team finished overall 4th behind Italy.

Current European class champions are

*Men's Kayak : Rolf Killian (West Germany)  
Ladies Kayak : Karin Wahl (West Germany)  
Canadian Singles : Gilles Zok (France)  
Canadian Doubles : J L Ponchon & F Durand (France)*

In 1986, Britain fielded a full team which included three Scots, Kenny Fraser (Hawick), Cynthia Berry (Edinburgh), Gill Berrow (Killin) - and it is to be hoped that Gill will be able to take advantage of her home water in the '88 Final.

### The River

The Awe has for several years been accessible to canoeists through agreements with the Inverawe Fishery Board (representing the fishing interests) and the Scottish Hydro Board (providing water releases).

Canoeists are welcomed on Sundays (when fishing cannot take place) and by special arrangement on other days (notably outside the fishing season). The traditional programme of releases provide the best river levels for racing between May and October, which coincides with the international racing season

Whilst the river runs from the Inverawe Barrage to Loch Etive, racing canoeists usually restrict themselves to the "race course" section which is proposed for the Europa Cup Final. The Start is at the western end of the barrage pool with the finish at the Inverawe House suspension bridge. This leaves suitable pre-start and finish pools in slack water.

There is no requirement for racers to shoot the tidal weir nor any of the preceding step drops. Therefore the potential hazards recognised by all in that section of the river need not jeopardise the race.

To provide a race of Europa Cup potential a "freshet" release (eg 800+ cufecs) would be needed for some of the daylight hours on the appointed Saturday and Sunday. Additional access would be required for practice on a least the two preceding days. On every day, however, the number of hours could be carefully restricted to satisfy other prerequisites.

### **Facilities**

Canoeists using the river on a casual or training basis need few facilities. Lay-byes offer adequate parking - whilst eating, sleeping and sanitary facilities are well provided for any visitor to the area.

However, in order to cater for 120 competitors plus officials, involving as many as 80 vehicles, a Europa Cup Final would require special provisions. Additionally we might expect perhaps 500 specialist spectators plus whatever local and tourist interest that might be generated.

Therefore if the venue is approved by the local interests, we must look to resourcing of facilities with the help of a combination of bodies.

#### **- Major Requirements :**

- Water release for race (Saturday & Sunday)
- Water release for practice (Thursday & Friday)
- Controlled access to river
- Controlled access to river banks for spectators
- Race Control Centre (at Finish)

- Car Parking Space & Officials at Start, Finish & between
- Traffic direction on the public highway (Sat & Sun only)
- First Aid support (Sat & Sun only)
- Sanitary arrangements at Start & Finish
- Venue for Opening & Closing Ceremony (including parade)
- Bookable accomodation for competitors & officials

#### **- Bodies potentially involved**

- Inverawe Fishery Board
- Scottish Hydro Board
- District Council
- Police & Ambulance
- Landowners
- Mr Campbell-Preston (Inverawe House)

Hoteliers, Guest Houses  
 Mrs Douglas (Taynuilt Campsite)  
 Local voluntary groups (scouts, etc)

Wild Water Racing Executive  
 British Canoe Union  
 Scottish Canoe Association  
 The Sponsors of Wild Water Racing (Sealink Ferries, etc)

### First Steps

Clearly the first step is to approach the Inverawe Fishery Board and the Scottish Hydro Board for approval and to negotiate the necessary mutual guarantees with them.

However, the provisional Race Organising Committee feel it is important to inform ALL local and national interests of the potential benefits and responsibilities at the earliest possible stage - hence this outline of the nature of the proposed event and with it our assurance that we should like to cooperate in every way for the mutual benefit of all concerned.

We trust that local interests will regard the proposed event with the same pride and enthusiasm as we do within British Wild Water Racing - and look forward to arranging meetings at the earliest opportunity and to local representatives joining the organising committee.

If you have any queries or recommendations (or simply want to be kept in touch with developments), we should be most grateful if you would contact the committee through the Chairman who will be glad to provide further information.

### The Organising Committee

CHAIRMAN - Mike Tordoff  
 (Treasurer of British Wild Water Racing Executive)  
 15 Eastcott Close, Congleton, Cheshire  
 Telephone 0260 273743 (Evenings)

MEMBERS - Brian Chapman  
 (Scottish Canoe Association Representative)  
 John Handyside  
 (National Coach for Wild Water Racing)  
 Martin Spencer  
 (British Canoe Trade)  
 Albert Woods  
 (International Canoe Federation Representative)



# Pregnancy & Performance ?

- by Gill Berrow - Ladies Champion '87

David Kay's comments in White Water News that 'childbirth' must be good for you prompted me to write a little about this fairly extreme training method that only women can try!

Evidence is certainly building up to suggest that childbirth, rather than marking the end of a woman's sporting involvement may in fact herald improved performance. Noone seems to know just why this is but it is suggested that physiological changes in pregnancy may improve a woman's potential as an athlete. Some East German coaches apparently encourage female athletes to have children as they believe it will lead to improved performance.

The physiological changes in pregnancy certainly do seem, on the face of it, to alter several factors in ways which should increase performance. Haemoglobin levels rise leading to an increased capacity for transport of oxygen, metabolism steps up and also anabolic steroids are apparently produced naturally in the body.

However, these changes are done to first and foremost provide the foetus with a good oxygen supply and also to help cope with the mother's increase of weight. So in spite of these changes it is likely that a pregnant woman who keeps up her involvement in sport will find herself managing alright but a bit short of breath and doing everything a bit slower.

After childbirth it seems that the mother gets a physical boost as blood is recirculated from the uterus and also the adaptations of pregnancy do not disappear immediately. However in the week following childbirth it is thought that the body does revert to its normal non-pregnant state and so it becomes more a mystery why mothers continuing their sport seem to improve, particularly in endurance events. Craig Sharp has suggested that this is because 'pregnancy can be likened to a form of very gradual resistance training which forces the cardio-respiratory system to become more efficient'. He, too, seems to see this as short term though, giving an advantage only to mothers who resume sport very soon after childbirth.

To talk of the physiological gain immediately following the pregnancy is all very well in theory but in practice I think it must be very exceptional for a mother to leap back into her sport immediately. Not only does childbirth itself, as a physical experience, leave few women ready to pick up running shoes, or even a swimming costume straight away, it also demands a huge readjustment to many aspects of life. Particularly with a first baby, settling into life with a new little person to care for is far more urgent and important for most women and their partners.

I thought that pregnancy would be the hard bit in terms of staying fit and active. However, the changes and experience of pregnancy may seem dramatic but beside those of birth and motherhood they are small and very definitely short-term.

In pregnancy, I ran regularly until about seven months and canoed throughout still happily paddling on gamefully and doing the Leukaemia marathon (slowly) in the weeks just before Fiona was born. After she was born I realised how much freedom I had taken for granted. The demands of a new-born baby are great and particularly if breast-feeding, a new mother will have enough to do without trying to fit in time trials or fitness tests to see whether it really has left her fitter!

Recipes for sporting success vary widely but I have yet to come across one that advocates interrupted sleep over prolonged periods as a good training in competition background. I know that some babies sleep well almost from birth but many do not. I know that at nine months Fiona rarely slept for more than two and a half to three hours at a time and I was almost despairing at my lack of sleep and general tiredness. At 21 months old, she now occasionally sleeps through the night.

But, aside from learning to cope with tiredness, I have also had to learn a lot about independence and the lack of it. I suppose in common with most sportswomen I'm a fairly independent person. With a baby though you cannot be unless you wish to do nothing but evolve your life around him or her.

Now it may be a very unfashionable, non-feminist thing to say, but I can't imagine ever achieving anything in my life that compares with giving birth and being the key figure in the developing life of a child but that does not mean that it is all I want. I do though recognise that I am privileged to be able to work and compromise. The nature of my job and my employers allow me to job share with my husband enabling me to keep in touch with work while sharing childcare. My particular situation with home and work allows me to continue training but without the backup of my parents I would be unable to compete in any serious regular way. So motherhood involves an acceptance of dependence on others for a freedom that those without children can take for granted.

Many mothers in Britain just do not have the support to allow them to continue in competitive sport to any great extent. Although many must just be unable to afford it because children also inevitably make you considerably worse off financially. Extra expenditure is only part of it. Losing a salary makes an enormous difference and to participate in competitive sport may be a luxury many just could not afford.

However, over and over again, mothers who do find ways to maintain their involvement in sport, at whatever level they choose, report how glad they are to be able to do so.

Parenthood is a highly demanding job that brings lots of its own rewards but which can also isolate, depress and exhaust mentally and emotionally. Sports participation may be vital for mental health as well as physical well being and it may be psychological, rather than physiological factors which lead to women improving their performance after childbirth.

Certainly Craig Sharp seems to conclude that 'it may be that the main reason for improved performance after childbirth is psychological. It is possible that having gone through the experience of pregnancy and birth, women are simply tougher' I think I perhaps agree with him but would take it further than just the experience of pregnancy and birth. In East Germany it may be different and perhaps in different sports in this country too, but to maintain involvement in a minority sport with its big commitment of money as well as time, is hard. The determination needed to find the time, energy, babysitters and money is great and perhaps this determination and commitment also shows itself in competition and so in results. Or perhaps it is just that childfree time is so little and so valuable that it is put to better use. Having a baby perhaps makes you put things in perspective, make you prioritize time and effort.



# Fédération Française de Canoë-Kayak

17, route de Vienne 69007 LYON

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Information Documentation 78.61.32.74

## Thierry Laffreux.

We have been extremely fortunate in obtaining a copy of the master's book of thoughts and reminiscences about sport and canoeing entitled simply "Pensées." and published in France by Garnier. This work has long been an inspiration and soul uplifting to the very successful French river racing team and we offer some of the choicest extracts to warm your hearts in the pain of training and competing. Laffreux is currently engaged on research for a major work entitled "A la recherche des descentes perçues" but not too busy to make a first visit to our own River Washburn - "a little river where the choices are narrow" - and he also proposes to surprise the Scots at the Awe in May.

## Pensées.

"Canoeing is an art form - ... le kayakisme, c'est un art où la beauté s'exprime dans l'unité entre l'homme et la rivière, l'homme faisant partie du fleuve dans toutes ses sinuosités et le courant entrant dans l'âme de l'homme avec tous ses éclats."

Or, as Thierry himself would express it : 'The canoeist becomes part of the river so that he achieves the ultimate descent, pure and free, touching no rocks, flowing with the water, never fighting it.'

In this context Thierry sees no winners or losers as such - "... dans une descente il n'y a pas de gagnants ni de perdants, sauf ceux qui chutent dans l'eau, car la course c'est une affaire personnelle et individuelle, entre l'homme et la rivière. Le courant mettant toutes sortes d'obstacles dans la descente pour essayer de faire échouer l'homme qui n'a que son art et son courage pour résister aux attaques et aux surprises de la rivière."

In other words : 'The last to finish is as worthy as the first for each has overcome the dangers and obstacles of the descent, demonstrating his skills and courage in a personal battle with the river. Timing the run is falsifying his communion between the canoeist and the river, a thing for the men only, not for the soul and satisfaction of the self. When the time becomes more important than the form of the descent, then the sport in its pure sense is the loser.'

Watching a top paddler descending a rapid such as Mill Fall with precision, never faltering, flowing effortlessly and smoothly with the water, then one can see the sport in a completely different light - perhaps there should be marks for style à la ski jumping or ice skating, but then that would mean judges and juries and we all know and empathize with Thierry's feelings on that subject. So the next time you are watching your spouse/old friend/rival racing down the river, for example, just take time to appreciate the style and beauty of what he/she is actually doing instead of just worrying about the time or splits.

"Ce qui compte, c'est l'art, car sans l'art, il n'y a pas de sport. En faisant le sport avec art, l'homme réussit la beauté - l'homme et la nature, unis dans le moment de cette expression. Tout le reste n'a vraiment plus d'importance réelle. Et l'homme s'exprime dans la joie, mais cette joie est dans son âme."

We leave you to work that last one out for yourselves. At least we hope that these few items may provoke your own thoughts about the worth of what you do, perhaps helping you to cope with what is regarded as 'failure' i.e. not "winning" !



SAVOIE OLYMPIQUE  
1992



CHAMPIONNAT DU MONDE 87  
HAUTE TARENTAISE

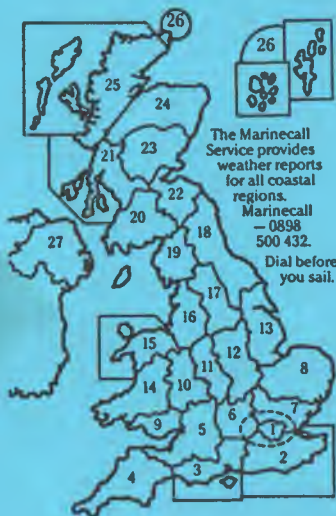


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