

Canoe Focus

The official magazine of the British Canoe Union

No. 5 May/June 1977

Price 25p



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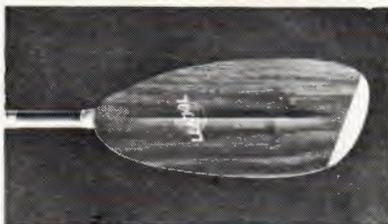
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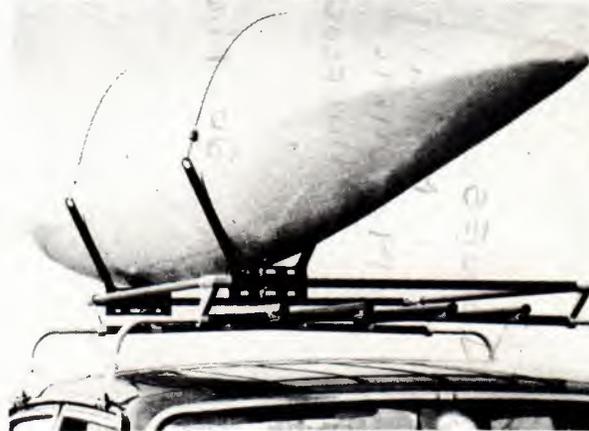
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Crystal Palace International Canoe Exhibition.



Canoe Slalom at Crystal Palace.

**PRIORITY TO MEMBERS OF THE
ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB
Sea Canoeing Symposium
Birmingham,
December 10/11th 1977**

Details from: **J. J. RAMWELL,
85 CARDINAL ST,
CHEETHAM, MANCHESTER 8**

Canoe Focus

Editorial Offices: 70 Brompton Road, London SW3 1DT.
Editor: Gordon Richards, MBE, ACP, FRGS.
Advertising: Colin Higgins, DipEd, MIAM.

Great to have good news — Focus is one year old and celebrates by being available on book stalls with a special "run-on" being made to meet export orders.

The B.C.U. International Canoe Exhibition was the biggest and best yet — thanks to everyone, the organisers, the trade and all those who supported it by paying at the door. What an incredible spectator attraction Bat Polo proved to be, and those responsible for including the Slalom competition must be pleased at the many requests asking for it to be repeated.

"Knock, Knock"

It is high time that British Canoeing got-on-its-hind-legs and played its part in consolidating its warranted and well-earned recognition in international circles — internecine war does not help and has no place in our thinking. So many knock the Establishment — it's time the Establishment, the hard-working majority, knocked back emphasising, not naively, that nobody is perfect. Contrary to a popular, misled belief, there are many canoeists who are not self-employed, students or teachers — consequently there are many of our members who work an eight-hour day. Therefore, to give their time at shows, on behalf of the B.C.U., would mean a considerable financial burden.

"Having said that," everyone in the B.C.U. is grateful to those who have given so freely of their time at exhibitions and shows up and down the country at their own expense. These are the people that are injecting new life into British canoeing. You will see on Page 9 comments regarding "the B.C.U. scroungers", the people who take all from the corporate body and give nothing in return. These are the people to wage war against. No longer is it the amateurish attitude that keeps British Sport in the background; it is the persons who shout the loudest and do the least.

Harmony

"Olympic Harmony" is unique. It is the first film ever to combine the summer and winter Olympic Games. Yet it is not a report, and neither records special events nor identifies the top stars. It is instead an experience, comparing and contrasting in a symphony of movement and music, the skills, courage, energy and beauty of the world's finest athletes competing on snow and grass, ice and track, and in the water — interesting to note that our sport was represented by the sprint CIs. For information about the film write to: The Coca-Cola Export Corporation, Atlantic House, 7 Rockley Road, London W14 0DH.

INDUSTRY SCHEME, to help sportsmen, has been launched jointly by the CCPR and The Engineering Employers' Federation, which has around 5,700 firms in membership and currently employs two million people, and is to offer career advice and employment guidance for national level competitors in sport. The aim of the scheme is to assist sportsmen and women in combining their careers with the demands of training and competition. Jim Fox, Modern Pentathlon Team Gold Medallist and a member of the British Canoe Union, in his statement helping to launch the scheme, said, "At the 1976 Olympics the average age of the British competitors was 23 years and seven months, while the average age of the medal winners was 25 years and four months. In the water events the average age was higher. The great majority of British competitors were in full-time employment and only a small percentage were students." Jim, a regular recreational canoeist, told me recently, "This scheme will help many of my canoeing mates. I know at least two of the last squad were engineers and there must be more coming through." Anyone wanting details of the scheme should write to the CCPR, 70 Brompton Road, London.

On Page 10 we report some of a number of accidents. Although adventure and enjoyment may walk hand in hand, danger is minimised by good practice and care. The B.C.U. coaching scheme offers both the latter — if you are not a member of the B.C.U. this is one reason at least for joining.

Extra copies of Canoe Focus may be ordered from newsagents or direct from the B.C.U. (whilst stocks last), 25p plus 10p post and packing.

Gordon Richards
Editor

FRONT COVER: Down Everest — photo Mike Jones.

CANOE POLO

This year sees the 10th anniversary of the introduction of Canoe Polo in Great Britain, and what better time to have a progress report.

The original inception of Canoe Polo at the beginning of the century was short-lived owing to the damage caused to the canvas covered canoes. The sport was only able to develop with the introduction of the use of fibre-glass in the manufacturing of canoes and with the development of boat designs suitable for use in restricted pool areas.

Considerable standardisation of rules and methods of play have taken place since the game was re-introduced as a piece of "free for all" fun.

The rules have developed and are now designed to be as simple as possible, yet to provide a skilful and safe team game. Unfortunately, many spend their time attempting to find loopholes in the rules, and seek to attain unfair advantages over their fellow competitors. This leads to scrappy games and creates a lack of credibility in the sport to spectators. Equally, the standard of refereeing tends to be too varied and teams play to the referee rather than to the rules!

The finals of the national competition have been held at Crystal Palace for the last eight years. In this time there has been an improvement in the standard of play and sportsmanship with only minor exceptions — the exceptions have always led to a losing team. Bere Forest, who have won many times, were again the winners this year. The Bere Forest Club play a hard but open game and deserve victories. Their advantage seems to lie in being able to play almost the same team each year and continuity is producing the results.

The seeming monopoly of the finals by two clubs may possibly have led to the slight reduction in entries to the championships. There may be a case to make for a National Youth Championships as well as an Open Championships in order to encourage teams with younger members to enter with the possibility of reaching the final rounds held in conjunction with the British Canoe Union Annual International Canoe Exhibition.



The introduction of a National League has so far met with no success. Local leagues work reasonably successfully but there have been very few offers from clubs to run an event for a National League. There seem to be several reasons for this.

The first is a lack of organisers who are prepared to make the necessary arrangements and the second is the increasing cost of pool hire, and the refusal of several pool authorities to allow canoeing.

It might be possible to get around the latter by running the events outside on natural waters but this would pre-suppose the top competitions taking place in the summer. This will go against the present policy of the Executive to retain Polo as an integral sport on its own. It makes an extremely useful training system and has helped develop some of the best canoe rollers in the country who have improved their techniques in training for Canoe Polo.

The British game has developed in a different way to the German and Swedish games, being designed for play in the limited area of a swimming pool. This factor has controlled the maximum length for canoes to three metres, and has restricted the use of paddles. The German game is played on longer pitches and with Water Polo type pools, allows boats up to four metres and allows the use of paddles in rather the same way as hockey sticks. The German season for Canoe Polo lasts from May until September and all games are played outside on lakes and rivers. It might be possible to reach a compromise between the two ideas, but that lies in the future. Such a compromise could lead to some interesting international fixtures. Developments in America, South Africa, Australia and several other non-European countries tend to be based on the British concept.

There is still a long way to go before Canoe Polo can be accepted by other canoeists as a canoe discipline but interest continues to increase and the number of canoeists taking part in the game is rising steadily, even if many of them, as yet, seem unprepared to help administratively.

K.C.

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Victorious Bere Forest team at Crystal Palace.

PIRATES CASTLE PROJECT

The fortifications of the Pirate Castle now being built on the Regent's Canal to accommodate the headquarters of the Pirate Club, are arousing interest. Pedestrians along the towing path are stopping in their tracks to gaze and admire this impressive stronghold. The Pirates of Camden Town are a familiar sight to those cruising between Cumberland Basin and Hampstead Road Locks.

Founded by Lord St. Davids in 1966, the Club was an instant success and soon attracted a grant from Camden Borough Council and support from ILEA. At the present time facilities include about sixteen small rowing boats, ten canoes, the 'Pirate Queen' galley donated by the Variety Club of Great Britain, and an old barge. This last has served as the headquarters for some ten years but is squalid, totally inadequate and now slowly sinking.

Architects of the Castle, the vandal-proof clubhouse taking shape at Oval Road, are Messrs. Richard Seifert & Partners who have given their services free. When completed later this year the Castle will provide the amenities the pirates need so badly, including a boat repair shop, decent storage, washrooms for both boys and girls, a canteen and space for games such as table-tennis.

Funds for the building programme have come in from both public and private sources but the pirates' own very substantial contribution still has a long way to go despite the constant round of jumble sales, concerts, boat trips, a sponsored row and the regular pirate raids when coins are thrown into the children's little boats by passing trippers.

The Committee of the Pirate Club are hoping to organise canoe/kayak races this summer along the Regents Canal and would greatly appreciate any help at this initial stage. The Youth Club has not attempted this on any scale before but they hope to raise money with the events to progress the building of their new headquarters in Camden Town.



"J.D." in South Africa.

CANOE ORIENTEERING

Event
Sunday, October 2nd
on the Broads

Organiser: Mr K. Gale,
Snaefell, Felthorpe,
Norwich,
Norfolk.

CANOEING IN SOUTH AFRICA

John W. Dudderidge, O.B.E., was recently in South Africa in his private capacity as guest of Mr. William van Riet, President of the South African Canoeing Federation.

The main purpose of Mr. Dudderidge's visit to South Africa is to see how the South African Canoeists run their Marathon events. Mr. Dudderidge is also the Chairman of an International Federation Enquiry into Marathon Canoeing which is at present not one of the disciplines of the International Federation. There is sprint racing, snarl-on, white water, but the marathon style of racing is not recognised internationally. Very large numbers of countries are having marathons, and they are all doing it in different ways because there is no one set of rules. The Enquiry Committee's purpose is to study the sport of Marathon Racing world-wide and to draw up some kind of report to the International Canoe Federation on how it can be most usefully incorporated into the disciplines.

As the South Africans have made quite a name for themselves in this particular discipline, Mr. Dudderidge requested more information from South Africa about their methods of doing things, the types of rivers they use, the types of distances they cover and the types of starts.

"South Africa said: we will send the information to you, but why not come and look for yourself? and that is exactly what I did," he said.

The second reason for his visit is to look at the whole position of sport in South Africa.

"I want to ask questions and not stick my neck out by making statements."

Mr. Dudderidge said that he would very much like to see South Africa back in the Canoeing Federation.

"I am aware that there are big changes taking place in South African sport, and I am trying to find out all about these changes and the general trend."

Mr. Dudderidge is also the Deputy of the British Olympic Association, but his visit to South Africa is not as a delegate of the Association.

"I can see that when South Africa is gathered back into the International fold from the present isolation, I could well see a long distance championship being held in one of your rivers."

Mr. Dudderidge was in South Africa for over three weeks and visited the Cape and then Durban to attend the Natal Doubles Championships before returning to England.

RIVER ADVISERS

The function of the River Advisers appointed by the Touring Committee is to act as an information point to whom members can report objections to canoeing and difficulties over access that they have experienced, and to advise members thinking of taking a trip on a 'difficult' river (i.e. as regards access, etc) whether it is advisable to attempt the trip, or possibly to put them in touch with others, to avoid too frequent usage. The River Advisers' aim is to be helpful, but if they have to advise abandoning a proposed trip their advice should be respected.

Don't forget to "feed back" information to the River Adviser. He needs to know whether you meet objections besides those he advised you of, and even if you met with no objection on the river on which you expected challenge. Such "feed back" enables him to be more helpful to others later on.

On some rivers agreements exist, written or understood, between canoeists on one hand, riparian owners, angling clubs etc, on the other, through the B.C.U. These agreements refer to whether or not prior permission for a canoeing trip will be sought and at what time of the year, or in what conditions (e.g. times of spate) the size of the party, behaviour, whether several weeks' notice is required or whether it is sufficient to telephone a few hours before-hand. River Advisers will advise when such arrangements apply. It is in the best interest of our sport that all members of the B.C.U. should observe the details of these arrangements. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope for reply.

Lake District, Lune, Eden: D. Rushfirth, 44 Bleasdale Avenue, Nr. Blackpool, Lancs. Tel. Poulton-le-Fylde (0253) 886668.

Tees: C. Litten, 36 Mexborough Road, Bolton Woods, Bradford, BD2 1BL. Tel. (0274) 593257.

Tyne, Northumberland & Wear: M. Todd, David Grieve House, Headlam Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne 6. Tel (0632) 650227.

Ribble, Cheshire, Dee, Clwyd: C. M. Rothwell, 21 Windsor Road, Clayton Bridge, Manchester M10 6QQ. Tel. 061-6811374.

Gwynedd rivers (N. Wales): S. J. Baker, Dept. of Outdoor Education, Normal College, Bangor, Gwynedd.

Mawddach & Wnion: S. Farrow, Caerdeon Hall, Bontddu, Barmouth, Gwynedd.

Dovey & Dysynni: R. Tushingham, Plas Einion, Furnace, Machynlleth, Powys. Yorkshire Derwent, Swale Ure, Nidd Wharfe, etc.: W. J. Keay, 17 Westfield Crescent, Riddlesden, Keighley, Yorkshire. Tel. Keighley (05352) 3704.

Trent, Derbyshire Darwent, Dove, Soar: F. R. Goodman, 72 Whittingham Road, Mapperley, Nottingham. Tel (0602) 69931.

Tem: M. J. I'Anson, 4 Cherry Tree Walk, Arley Kings, Stourport, Worcs. Tel. 0349.

Severn Above Bewdley: J. Cooper, Longdon Lodge, Longdon, Nr. Shrewsbury. Tel. Pontesbury 609.

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FROME SOMERSET

YEO, PARRETT, CARY & WESTPORT CANAL MR KEN PRITCHARD
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NEW DEVELOPMENT

At the National Coaching and Development Committee meeting on 5th March a Racing Coaching Sub-Committee was formed. It is made up of representatives of the Racing Committee and the Marathon Committee together with the Director of Coaching, the National Competition Coach (Racing) and the NCDC Chairman. Ron Emes was elected Chairman.

This new appointment should result in the necessary special attention being given to racing coaching as an integral part of the overall coaching service. It will also make it much easier for newcomers, who progress beyond the basic instruction stage, to develop an interest in competitive areas of the sport. It is hoped that in the not too distant future there will be a similar Sub-Committee to cater for the interests of slalom and wild water.

The Committee has appointed Regional Racing Coaches as follows:

Greater London and S.E.
Eastern
East Midlands
Yorkshire and Humberside
West Midlands
South
South West
Wales

B. Greenaway
R. Russell
C. A. Gray
J. L. Oliver
G. Cooper and W. Machin
B. Perrett
M. Kirschener
D. Cook

RACING

AT HOLME PIERREPONT

CONDITIONS OF ENTRIES

Entry Fees

Entry fees for the 1977 season have been set by the Regatta Sub-Committee at:
40p per crew for Espada and Junior events
60p per crew for all other events.

Late Entries

Late entries will be charged at:
50p per crew for Espada and Junior events
£1.00 per crew for all other events.

A late entry is defined as "an entry received on the day from a competitor from whom a prior entry, for any event in the Regatta, has not been previously received".

Closing Dates for Entries

The closing date for entries for all regattas, with the exception of the Home International, will be eight days before the event, i.e. the Friday of the weekend before a regatta weekend. For the Home International, this is extended to fourteen days before the event. (See diary dates for details).

Address of Entries

All entries for all Holme-Pierrepont regattas should be addressed to: The Regatta Committee, c/o 128 Greythorn Drive, West Bridgford, Nottinghamshire.

Team Leaders Meetings

Team leaders meetings will be held at 8.00 a.m. on race days in the Lecture Room of the N.W.S.C. for all regattas.

Mixed Crews/Events

Entries from mixed crews will be considered at team leaders meetings and will be allowed provided that there are no objections from those team leaders present and sufficient lanes are available after all allocations to correct status paddlers have been completed.

Selection Events for International Teams

British Senior Teams — all competitors wishing to be considered must enter the appropriate Senior A events, irrespective of their individual racing status.
British Junior Teams — all competitors wishing to be considered (must have been born in the years 1959 to 1962 inclusive) will be allowed to enter the appropriate Junior events, irrespective of their individual racing status.

Accommodation at Holme Pierrepont

The Regatta Committee have reserved 30 beds for each regatta on Friday and Saturday nights. Cost of full board and accommodation will be £5.50 (inclusive of VAT) per day. Bookings should be made at the latest with regatta entries, (cheques payable in advance to the Regatta Committee) and not direct with the National Water Sports Centre.

Meals at Holme Pierrepont

The Regatta Committee have arranged for non-residential needs to be available at the Centre for Saturdays and Sundays lunch and dinner. Lunches will be available between 12.00 - 2.00 p.m. Dinner from 7.00 p.m. These meals must be booked and paid for in advance (latest date with regatta entries) through the Regatta Committee and not direct with the National Water Sports Centre.

Costs: Lunch - £1.50. Dinner - £2.00 (inclusive of VAT).

Cheques to be made payable to the Regatta Committee.

Holme Pierrepont Regattas 1977

Committee Regatta — K4 10,000m championship May 28/29.

National Championships Regatta — 500m 1,000m June 18/19.

Jubilee International Regatta — Seniors & Juniors July 8/9/10.

Inter Clubs Championships Regatta August 13/14.

Services Regatta — Services Championships — September 10/11.

Entries on time are fine, Entries late we hate!!



RACING CALENDAR

1. 3 Harbours Tier 3 race will be on 22nd May, 1977 and not as printed in the Year Book.
2. The race organiser for the Wolverhampton Tier 3 race on July 2nd 1977 is K. Yates, 24a Orton Lane, Wombourne, Nr Wolverhampton.

REGISTRATION SCHEME

The Racing Committee has been concerned for some time over the lack of an efficient communication system between the Committee, competitors, officials and regatta organisers and its inability to ensure that only B.C.U. members compete at regattas. The Committee feels that these short comings will be overcome by the introduction of the Racing Registration Scheme which will also enable it to establish exactly how many active racing canoeists there are in the country, at any one time, and more importantly, be able to contact them, individually whenever the need arises.

Initial Registration

Registration will be carried out on production of a current (1977) B.C.U. membership card when the details of the competitor (name, address, Club, racing status, B.C.U. number, etc.) will be entered into the Racing Register and a racing number stamped onto the competitors B.C.U. Racing Register and a racing number stamped onto the competitors B.C.U. membership card.

Renewal of Registration

Registered competitors will remain on the Register and retain their racing number until such time as they are no longer actively competing or their B.C.U. membership lapses.

Competitors will be required to confirm their registration annually by producing their B.C.U. membership card for re-stamping, at the Canoe Exhibition or at the first N.W.S.C. Regatta that they attend each season.

Advantages of Registration

Registered competitors will be entitled to purchase the Canoe Racing Year Book and other racing publications that may be produced, at a reduced price. In addition, those who subscribe to the Racing Technical Journal will receive their copies post free, on publication of each Journal, and will, of course, be fully up-dated on Olympic Selection policies, team training days, etc. Finally, from the 1979 racing season only registered competitors and Espada paddlers will be allowed to compete in racing regattas held at the N.W.S.C. and in National Championship events.

DON'T DELAY — REGISTER TODAY !

DISABLED?

WESTEL CANOE CLUB were invited by Hounslow Council to take part in a day of swimming for the Disabled on Sunday, 27th March at Heston Baths.

Between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. there was a "shop window" of opportunity to disabled people who may have had apprehensions about their ability to take part in water based activities.

Altogether the club had 10 assorted canoes plus two specially adapted craft brought along by Don Riddle, physically handicapped S.I. Senior Instructor (BCU), who helped greatly with his specialist knowledge. Four members of the Wimbledon Young Mariners also gave greatly appreciated assistance for the whole day. The ages of would be canoeists ranged from about 5 to 40 years. We hope to welcome 3 physically handicapped members into our midst; their problems are entirely different—an ex D.W. paddler who is now minus a hand, another man with only one leg and a young lady polio victim who has lost the use of both legs.

During the slack lunchtime period many members availed themselves of the Hounslow Sub Aqua Club's offer and had their first "go" with snorkel and mask, and then with compressed air cylinders. All agreed that it was great to be able to stay under water without have to gasp for breath.

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DON'T PADDLE IT OFF

I feel it is worth publishing some extracts from an article by Chris Brasher which appeared in an Observer newspaper report together with comments from one or two other sources.

These are the risks athletes run in shuffling off a cold:-

One Sunday in March, Mike Wells-Cole, one of the leading orienteers in Britain, went training while still suffering from the after-effects of influenza. He died that evening of a heart infection.

Ian Thompson, Britain's marathon runner, was attacked by a viral infection and had to take two days off work. Ten days after that he ran in the Olympic trial, "knowing that I didn't feel quite right". It was a hot, sunny day and after only five miles Ian was surprised to discover that, although those around him were sweating profusely, his skin seemed to be dry. At about the same time he felt a tightness, a pain in his upper thighs. Never before or since has he experienced any trouble with these muscles... he was one of the lucky ones.

Most of the medical experts consulted believe that these athletes were suffering from myocarditis (inflammation of the heart) as a result of a viral infection. Dr Griffith Pugh, recently retired from the Medical Research Council and who has had a long connection with Olympic athletes and with the Outward Bound Trust, says his interpretation of Thompson's symptoms is that he nearly had a circulatory collapse. "These viral infections are known to be capable of upsetting the circulation in various ways about which we know little. What happened to Thompson was that the body's protective mechanism shut off the blood flow to the skin to preserve the flow to the brain."

... an extract from the classic book, "Sports Medicine", says — "Exercise associated with an attack of myocarditis, which is often associated with myalgia (muscle pain) can precipitate heart failure."

... Dr Peter Sperry, of the Sports Council, says, "We have all exercised many times with a cold and many of us have used the technique of wrapping up in two tracksuits and 'sweating the cold out'. There are dangers of which we should now be aware..." His own guideline is that if anybody has a fever (i.e. a temperature) then he absolutely forbids training or competition. Training at the time of, or shortly after, a pyrexial (feverish spell) is probably unwise. With squads I have trained I have always forbidden it. I spoke with Dr W. J. Murfin, M.B., B.Ch, the British Canoe Union's Honorary Medical Adviser, and he added the following comments:



CRYSTAL PALACE

Was by any standard a success. The number of tickets sold 9102 was more than ever before. The pool slalom was designed, presented and run in such a way as to make it interesting for the newcomer to canoeing, and for this the Slalom Committee and its sponsors are to be congratulated. Canoe Polo really seems to be becoming a great spectator sport, and the finals at Crystal Palace this year were the best yet.

But a large part of the success belongs to the clubs and amateur associations who designed and built their stands and then manned them, with an infectious enthusiasm for the sport and in my walks around the exhibition this was very evident.

G.R.

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CANOES AT NO. 10

Canoeing was in the lead when over 50 young sports people, representing the governing bodies of sport and recreation delivered a letter to No. 10 Downing Street, on 13th March. The letter, signed by Mary Glen Haig, Chairman of the Central Council of Physical Recreation, was a demand for an end to taxation on sport.



The canoeists, complete with canoes and self-made banners featured prominently in the press reports.

The CCPR policy is to abolish government taxation on sports equipment and to put sport into a special taxation category which would ensure that finances raised by sport remain in sport.

Mrs. Glen Haig, CCPR Chairman, said, "It was a good show by the BCU. I am glad they are pulling their full weight along with other governing bodies of sport. Unless sports bodies get together in this way, we shall be the sad victim of taxation and bureaucracy and British Sport will be unable to meet the demands of the participants.

Thanks are due to the BCU Director, Gordon Richards and Tom Baptie and his gang from Merton Adventure Centre for their help in ensuring that canoeing was a central part of the voice of sport."

THINGS THEY SAY . . .

"Except in shape a canoe is not distinguishable in principle from a curragh, any more than a mule would be distinguishable from a horse where what is in question is the use of a bridleway."

(Said by one of the Law Lords in the Spey judgment)

ACCESS

UPPER WYE. As a result of increased canoeing use of the Rhayader section of the River Wye, restrictions have been imposed limiting canoeing to the months of December, January, February and March. Canoeing will be allowed to B.C.U. & W.C.A. members and affiliated organisations who display B.C.U. numbers and carry membership cards. Leaders of affiliated groups should carry their affiliated certificates (or a photo copy) and be prepared to show them if requested to do so. This restriction applies from the River Marteg and Wye confluence to approximately 1 mile below Rhayader. Other conditions also apply. Further information can be had by sending a S.A.E. (foolscap size) to C. S. Green, Woodlands Outdoor Centre, Glasbury-on-Wye, Hereford, HR3 5LP.

BUILT H WELLS TO GLASBURY. Conditions imposed in previous years will continue for 1977 with the following additions. Access will only be allowed to B.C.U. members and affiliated organisations. These should identify themselves by displaying B.C.U. membership numbers on their canoes and carry membership cards. Full details from C. S. Green, River Adviser — enclose S.A.E. (foolscap size).

RIVER IRFON (Tributary of the Wye). There is the possibility of an out of season and spate agreement for B.C.U. members and affiliated organisations. Further details will be announced as soon as possible. In the meantime please **DO NOT CANOE THIS RIVER.**

RIVER USK. New owners of Mill House at Llangynidr have objected to over-use of the river by canoeists. Objections are based on infringement of privacy and the affect on wild life close to the river. In future, permission to pass through this property will only be granted to a maximum of two groups per day in the closed salmon season. Canoeists will not be permitted to dwell on the rapid opposite Mill House and must pass directly down the rapid. Group leaders may 'break out' on the rapid to act in a safety capacity. The Wild Water Races which are held on this section of the river will not be affected. It should be noted, however, that on Race Weekends the river is not 'open' for general canoeing and is limited to race competitors only. B.C.U. members using this section are strongly urged to respect the wishes of the owners. It is only by displays of discipline and control that respect for the B.C.U. will increase and extensions to the agreement be made. For access details for the River Usk S.A.E. (foolscap size) to C. S. Green, Woodlands Outdoor Centre, Glasbury-on-Wye, Hereford, HR3 5LP.

Your views on access policy and other matters will be welcomed. To stimulate reaction what are your views on:

- being registered or licensed before you may canoe anywhere?
- Wild Water Canoe Touring becoming purely a winter or close season aspect of the sport?
- making a direct payment for canoeing?
- money raising to enable the B.C.U. or W.C.A. to purchase canoeing sites?
- Non-B.C.U. & W.C.A. Members canoeing on waters where access agreements between riparian owner, fishing interests and the B.C.U. & W.C.A. have been made?

JOIN THE ACCESS DEBATE. IT IS VITAL TO THE FUTURE OF CANOEING.

From the Editors Postbag

COLIN RALPH MEMORIAL TROPHY

26 Priory Road,
Fareham,
Hants.

Dear Sir,

We wish to thank everyone involved in the creation of this award; from friends' donations, HAC Heating and finally the design and making of the excellent Trophy.
We both feel very proud.
Sincerely,

Mr & Mrs R. Ralph

Via G. B. Sammartini, 5
20125 Milano, Italia.

Dear Gentlemen,

We received the interesting December 76 "Canoe Focus" number.
We more over pray, if there are articles in Canoe Focus that interest us, to let us publishing them in Italian on Fiumi, of course mentioning you.
We from now permit to publish our articles that our interest you.

Yours faithfully,
Canoa Club Milano,
Il Presidente.

18 The Cedars,
Dunstable,
Beds.

Dear Sirs,

The subject that has prompted me to put pen to paper is one which has amused some, appalled others, and alarmed me for several years now. It is the very low standard of refereeing in BAT POLO Tournaments, and notably the National Finals.

This year we saw some very good refereeing on one side of the pool, with the official concerned stopping the game to speak to both sides about dangerous play. One official however cannot referee effectively.

BAT POLO must be one of the most potentially dangerous of sports, and one of the most difficult to referee. Surely we as polo players owe it to the sport to improve the standard of refereeing which must improve the standard of play, as paddlers become more skilful and less physical. I would like to offer the following suggestions:

- (1) Several rules need more explicit definition, i.e. What is classed as obstruction and what isn't? Does a paddler have possession of the ball only when it is in his hand and not beside the canoe? Is there an advantage rule (as in football)?
- (2) A referee making a decision must be positive. A standard system of signals (as in basket ball) would be useful.
- (3) It is one thing to know the rules and another to apply them. A qualified sports referee is more likely to make a good referee than a canoeist.
- (4) A course should be held by someone respected for their refereeing ability, to standardise and train potential referees. Those "qualifying" being asked to referee area polo rounds and the National Finals.
- (5) Perhaps organisers of competitions (or team Captains) might be asked to assess referees and send reports to the BAT POLO Committee for reference.

Congratulations to Bere Forest who outclassed all opponents at Crystal Palace to retain their trophy yet again.

Brian Barfoot,
Luton Youth Canoe Group.

Dear Sir,
My pupils enjoy your magazine in their English lessons. Friends in my sports club also enjoy it.

H. Kumpf,
Kiel, Germany.

THE EDITOR

FIGHT THE CANOE SCROUNGERS — BCU FOCUS No. 4 FEB 1977

One cure for this type of individual is to evolve a system whereby BCU members are charged standard rates for race entries and non-members are charged at double the rate. Anyone competing in a reasonable number of races per annum would soon realise that it would be as cheap to join the BCU with all the advantages that membership offers.

Anyone winning a race using a fictitious number runs the risk of being asked for their up-to-date membership card or being subject to a "protest" from another competitor.

It is not enough to say, join now in an article in Canoe Focus which is not received by non-members and unfortunately one has to take more drastic action to stop "hangers on".

S. F. Holtorp,
Senior Instructor
7/003829

Dear Editor,

Through your magazine I would very much like to express my sincere thanks to all members of the canoeing fraternity — canoeists, professional and amateur canoe builders, for all the courtesy, consideration and help they have shown to me over the past eight years. I have many happy memories of numerous occasions, events and, of course, people; and I am sure that I have not said good-bye to the latter. As, however, I am moving on to a new business, I would not like to leave without acknowledging my appreciation to the many friends I have made over the years.

With best wishes,

J. J. CRANE
Trylon Limited

Sea Touring

An informative booklet
for sea canoeists

Written by John J. Ramwell, B.C.U. Coach.

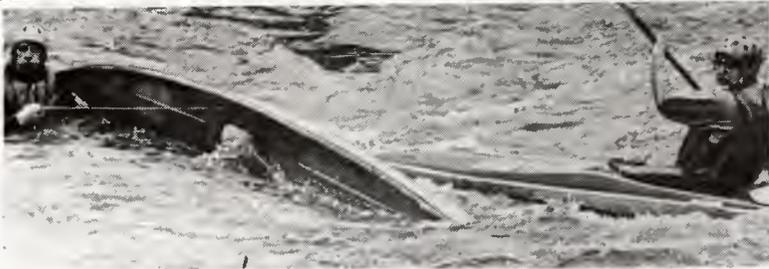
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CANOE DRAMA

A 16-year-old canoeist was dragged semi-conscious from the River Dee at Llangollen on Saturday, after a friend dived into the swirling river to save him.

Bill Frazer from Leeds jumped into the river after Andrew Boreham, of Chebington, Norwich had been dragged 200 yards.

He was rushed by ambulance to Wrexham War Memorial Hospital, kept in overnight and released on Sunday.

The incident happened during the River Race. The swollen rivers of the Dee led to



a number of other minor accidents and overturned several canoes.

The accident happened on a stretch of water beneath Castle Street Bridge, Llangollen. Andrew's canoe capsized and he was dragged along to behind the Ponsonby Arms.

Said Police Sergeant Gareth Jones "Bill dashed 400 yards up the side of the river and dived in, he got him out in the nick of time."

DROWNED AT SEA

A Torquay man and a 12-year-old boy, were drowned on a weekend canoeing trip in Torbay.

They were 47-year-old Mr Leslie Leonard Miller, whose parents live at Barton Road, Torquay, and Martin John Down, of Forest Road, Torquay.

Their canoe was found smashed to pieces on rocks at the north end of Broadsands beach during a large scale air, sea and land search which involved police, coastguards, Torbay lifeboat and an RAF helicopter from Culdrose, Cornwall.



Police began the search for Martin at 3 a.m. when his mother reported him missing. He had left home at 10.30 on Saturday morning on his bicycle, and his mother had not seen him since.

He frequently visited Mr Miller, who was a close family friend, and often went cycling and canoeing with him.

All efforts to trace Mr Miller failed until his Dormobile was found parked at Torre Abbey Meadows, Torquay. Martin's bicycle was on the roof rack, but Mr Miller's canoe, which was always kept there, was missing.

When reports came in that a man and boy had been seen paddling a canoe in Brixham harbour during Saturday afternoon, coastguards at Berry Head were alerted. Together with police officers they searched the beaches in the area.

Torbay lifeboat was launched and the helicopter called in when coastguards received an anonymous telephone call that there was a body floating near Princess Pier, Torquay. But the call was a hoax.

The lifeboat and helicopter searched along the coast, and the helicopter crew spotted the canoe and radioed the lifeboat which went in for a closer look. But the sea was too rough to pick up the broken canoe and police and coastguards rescued it from the land.

The search was called off as the light began to fade and Mr Miller's brother, Kenneth travelled from his Shaldon home to identify the canoe.

VIEWING DATES

BBC 1: MAY 2nd, 6.30 pm, Question of Sport, SPOT THE MYSTERY CELEBRITY IN A CANOE.

BBC 1: JUNE 13th, Question of Sport, WATCH HILARY PEACOCK WITH "OUR ENERY."

BBC GRANDSTAND: MAY 7th, SLALOM & WHITE WATER SELECTION RACE.

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CANOE AUSTRIA 77



Hilary Peacock.

In July the small Austrian town of Spittal will have completely adjusted from the winter ski scene to host 20 nations, coming, from both hemispheres, to the World Championships in Wild Water Racing and Canoe Slalom.

The River Leiser in Spittal was the venue for the 1963 and 1965 World Championships. It has been chosen again because of the spectacular nature of the course, together with its degrees of difficulty.

For the British, this World Championship will be an indication as to whether the progress made two years ago by the Wild Water Race team can be maintained. The tally of the medals at that time was three — one of each colour — all won in the ladies' events. This time there is optimism that the British team can win medals in the other classes.

The men's kayak team, headed by Alan Stall of Leeds, looks to have medal potential; the men's C1 team also seems to have a

chance. Together with these, the ladies will be defending our only world title, which in total gives us a possibility of three World Championships team medals. In the individual events our best chance would seem to be with Hilary Peacock, who has shown the gains from two solid years of experience since she won the individual Bronze medal in the 1973 World Championships.

The British team will be making several excursions into Europe this summer. The programme of preparation includes a race in Dusseldorf in May followed by two weeks' acclimatisation training at Spittal culminating in another competition in Switzerland. This punishing programme is concluded approximately one month before the World Championship. The British team will be flying to Spittal on 9th July for one more final week's training before competing on 18/19th July.

TRAPPED

The accident to Brian Springthorne, who was trapped in his canoe for six hours, brings to mind the customs of the Old Brigade, whose canvas-covered canoes had a nasty habit of bending themselves round trees. In those days canoeists always carried knives with which they cut great gashes in the bow or stern. This relieved the water pressure, allowed the salvagers to bend them straight again and get them off the tree. Ought we to carry axes now, to achieve the same results on our g.r.p. canoes? Quite a small axe will do the trick if the blow is struck right near the end.

As a matter of fact the spate of accidents that has occurred in the recent floods makes one realise that canoeists aren't used to these peculiar water conditions. The smooth-surfaced water looks innocuous enough, but it's running fast and is very, very heavy. It wants to be treated with more than ordinary respect.

NORTH WALES SURF

The North Wales Surf Championships that were held most successfully in September of last year when Phil Dean was Surf Champion and Andy Sutherland was the Kayak Class winner, are to be held again this year.

The event is planned for the Spring Bank Holiday weekend (June 4th to 7th) at Hell's Mouth, Abersoch. The event will consist of all normal classes, surf race, Slalom Kayak handling and surf kayak handling.

The date has been well planned as there is time for spectators and canoeists to travel the short distance from the Tryweryn Slalom in time to compete.

Details and entries from: VYV COX, VICTORIA HOUSE, CORWEN ROAD, TREUDDYN, MOLD, CLWYD.

WATER EVERYWHERE

Water is the most important item on the athlete's diet sheet. Dr D. F. Hanley of Brunswick, Me., told a session on sports medicine at the Ontario Medical Association convention recently:

"Nutritionists say there are three classes of food — carbohydrates, proteins and fats — but, when you are talking about athletes there are six classes, and number one for performance is water," Dr Hanley said.

The Bowdoin University doctor said water is required for everything an athlete does: it transports nutrients, antibodies and waste products, which are all in the blood serum. Without water the body cells don't function as well.

"You could stop one-third to one-half of the deaths in sports in the United States if you controlled water intake," Dr Hanley said.

Carbohydrates are the major fuels for energy expenditure. Fat requires more oxygen to burn, so it is a slower and inefficient fuel for athletics. Protein is used for energy production only after all glucose and fat have been used up; that is, during starvation.

"You are using up as much protein now, sitting there, as you would in running a marathon," he told his audience.

He said carbohydrate is second in importance to water to the athlete because it is stored in the body. An average person stores 110 grams in the liver, 250 grams in the muscles and 15 grams in the blood. An untrained person burns up that 375 grams very quickly, but after a few weeks of training an individual can extend that period five times.

Dr Hanley discounted "blood doping" in which a transfusion of an athlete's own stored blood is given back to him on the theory that the extra red cells will provide greater oxygen-carrying capacity.

Rowers and canoeists who must have tremendous cardiac reserves because their muscles must be able to respond instantly to demand if the stroke is increased, have low haemoglobin levels, which defeats the theory of "blood doping." A thin solution (rather than the thicker blood containing higher haemoglobin) is needed to pass rapidly through the membranes in the tiny air sacs of the lungs where the blood picks up its fresh oxygen supply.

Dr Hanley said "crass commercialism" is most evident in athletics, because athletes and coaches will try anything if they can be convinced it works. Some use royal bee jelly and "natural organic vitamins, whatever they are."

By JOAN HOLLOBON

MARATHON GOSSIP

Even at the start of the year, it was obvious that 1977 would be something of a watershed for long distance racing, with a record international season just behind it, a fight for international recognition ahead, a change of name and a new venue for the National Championships after six years.

Perhaps the most important single item from that list is the campaign for ICF recognition of marathon canoe racing, as it is now called.

Most of us would like to see a fully independent ICF Marathon Racing Committee, but a possible compromise would be a marathon racing sub-committee of the ICF paddle racing committee. It remains to be seen what John Dudderidge's committee of inquiry set up after Congress in Montreal will recommend and, indeed, what the ICF will decide at Congress in 1978. Clues seem hard to come by at the moment.

The re-naming of the LDRG as the Marathon Racing Committee paves the way, likewise the re-naming of a number of our long distance events, and we must all get into the habit of using the new term.

It's still too early to tell if the international successes of 1976 can be repeated. There already seem to be indications of good things to come, judging by race performances so far. To quote one marathon committee member, "A lot of able new faces seem to be emerging, the quality is getting more even and youth paddling is continuing to gain support."

A date for your diaries is the Bedford-St Neots 25th Jubilee race on May 8. A classic event, site of the 'Nationals' in the late '60s, a good course and a traditionally well-organised race run by the Bedford club. If any event this season deserves a good turnout this one does, and let's hope it gets it.

Loch Lubnaig marathon takes place on June 5. This is the first time a long distance international selection race has been held 'north of the border' . . . an historic occasion. Good luck to the organisers, the Trossachs Canoe and Boat Club.

The 'Nationals' leaving Worcester this year after six seasons on the Severn course (a marathon if ever there was one) to return to the Trent at Nottingham.

Why the move, when so many thought Worcester might become a permanent home for the 'Nationals'?

In view of marathon's bid for international recognition, and the use of wooden boats in that context, it was decided that the Trent course, which doesn't involve the shooting of weirs, is "more acceptable internationally", although it is stressed that the move is provisional.

The attraction of having the National Watersports Centre, Holme Pierrepont, as base can't be underestimated and, this year, the 'Nationals' will also be unusual in the sense that the hosts will be the Marathon Racing Executive, rather than a local club as at Worcester.

The course will be run mainly on the Trent plus local canals, although it is not yet finalised. The races take place as usual over the August Bank Holiday and for further details of this and other marathon matters . . . watch this space!!

ICELAND 1977

In June 1977 a small group of canoeists will set out in an attempt to circumnavigate Iceland in 18 foot glass fibre kayaks. The distance to be paddled is approximately 1500 miles and is expected to take nearly three months. The variety of conditions will present a considerable challenge to personnel and equipment, especially as there will be no accompanying support party, and the group will be operating in cold wet conditions for a long time and distance.

The south coast of Iceland, backed by the Vatnajokull icecap, is exposed to heavy Atlantic surf and subject to dust storms of glacial sand. There are no harbours or natural shelter. Icebergs are prevalent near the west coast, where the weather is notoriously unpredictable due to the depressions which sweep up the Denmark Strait. The coast in this region is of sheer rock cliffs which are over 2000 feet high. To the north the route passes north of the Arctic Circle. Along the north coast there are massive overfalls and tidal races, whilst further to the east the water temperature is near freezing and fog can be expected one day in four. Throughout the journey magnetic anomalies will cause large compass variations, adding to the difficulties of navigation.

An aim of the expedition is to assess the physiological and psychological effects on the participants of the stress and isolation involved, and to develop and test equipment and techniques to suit the conditions. This will be especially interesting in view of the recent technological development of materials, food and packaging as the comfort and wellbeing of the participants at all times will be of crucial importance to the success of the venture. As everything must be packed into the kayaks it must be lightweight, of low bulk and be capable of resisting sea water and low temperatures.

Much development has already been done, particularly with regard to canoeing equipment, and a new glass fibre kayak, designed with the aid of a computer especially for the expedition, was tested in prototype form on the sea during the winter of 1976-77. It is to be manufactured by Kama Canoes, at Whitehaven, Cumbria.

Several manufacturers have expressed a desire to contribute equipment for the use of the expedition, and any further advice or offers to help would be welcomed. It is hoped that regional press, radio and television will include short features about the journey, and both the Sunday Times and the Observer Colour Magazines have expressed an interest. Film and progress will be sent back during the journey, a subsequent report will be published, and a series of lectures is envisaged.

All the participants have accumulated extensive canoeing experience, both on Wild Water rivers and the sea. All have completed many extensive sea journeys by kayak, some of which have been accomplished alone, and their wide knowledge and experience provides a basis for their present venture.

NIGEL FOSTER

The expedition leader and organiser, Nigel is an Instructor at East Sussex Outdoor Pursuits Centre, Burwash Place. His sea canoeing experience includes two night crossings of the English Channel, one of them a two way crossing, a two way crossing of the Minch, and a lone journey from Newquay around Lands End to Brighton, some 450 miles, which he paddled in 10 days. He had used the knowledge gained to provide ideas for the design of a new sea kayak for the expedition.

GEOFF HUNTER

A British Canoe Union Senior Instructor and a self employed building surveyor, Geoff received considerable publicity for the first lone circumnavigation of Britain by kayak. He survived a night clinging to a buoy in the Solway Firth after breaking his paddle, and swam the five miles to shore in the morning. After replacing his canoe, which was also lost in the incident, he continued to complete the journey, receiving an entry in the Guinness Book of Records. He was also a leader of a team engaged in surveying part of the Iceland icecap for the Geographical Society.

IAN MATHESON

A British Union Coach, and an Instructor at the Cleveland Education Authority Outdoor Pursuits Centre in the Lake District, Ian has climbed in the Alps, and in Corsica in winter. He has undertaken a one man expedition to Pakistan and Kashmir to make a reconnaissance of the Indus Gorge between Nange Parbat and Haramosh, on behalf of the British Himalayan Canoe Expedition, 1976, which was later abandoned as a result of the information obtained. Amongst many journeys by kayak in Britain he has led a crossing of the English Channel, and has made a complete circumnavigation of the Outer Hebrides.

CANOE CAMPING

Is a section of the Camping Club of G.B. & Ireland and is the largest national canoeing club concerned almost entirely with touring.

The Club operates through regional groups, each of which organises a year round programme of outings to rivers in its area. All members are welcome at any group meet. They can therefore choose from a wide range of organised events and these will be on many different types of water throughout the country. A typical month's programme might include meets in East Anglia, Morecambe Bay, Chichester Harbour, the Yorkshire Dales, the Thames and Welsh Rivers.

The Club is noted for its national tours organised at Easter, Spring and August Bank Holidays. The Easter meet is probably the largest canoe-camping event held by any club and is of such long standing that it is almost considered a "rite." It is held on rivers or canals. The organisation is thorough, providing for ferrying cars, base camping and a social. The meet is essentially a family event and presents great opportunities to talk to fellow enthusiasts from all parts of the country. Great care is taken to ensure that parties going to sea are under the supervision of experienced sea canoeing members. The Club believes in safety and insists on high standards of safety at all times. Novices are welcomed at all meets other than those on open sea or the wilder rivers. Whilst formal instruction cannot normally be provided, care is taken to ensure that novices enjoy the care of experienced members.

Only the Lady runs to form

The first of the wild water selection races produced surprises. Ian Freestone, strongly fancied to win the men's K1 was beaten by Alan Hall into second place. Martin Harvey shot through many other favourites to finish third. In the men's C1 Chris Horrod beat Martyn Hedges (who has just received another sponsorship from Colgate/Palmolive) by one second. The only paddler who ran true to form was Hilary Peacock who convincingly beat Anna Plant (2nd) and Sarah Wain (3rd) in the ladies K1. George Parr/Dennis Cooper (C2 winners) have already been selected by virtue of their position in the ranking list. The last selection at the River Trewenyn on the 30th April/1st May is now critical for those not yet selected.

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CANOE TOURING IN BRITAIN

Are you a touring canoeist? The touring canoeist provides most of the BCU's subscription income, though you mightn't think so from the contributions to most canoeing magazines or if you counted the number of separate BCU committees or looked at the main interests of the members of the BCU Council. You might have thought that only competition or coaching really matters.

Of course competitors and coaches can also be canoe tourers, and many are. But how many BCU members have thought seriously about a summer canoe touring holiday? And of these how many, in these times of a devalued pound and of canoe access problems have thought of one in the British Isles? But there are fine possibilities.

First, what sort of holiday canoeing? Sea? Wild water? Or easy paddling in an interesting countryside? With or without mountain or hill walking?

Forget England and Wales if you must have wild water; usually there will be access difficulties and mostly the rivers are too shallow in summer for a long enough trip, anyway. But in Scotland the access situation is easier. The House of Lords recently upheld a right of passage by canoe down the Spey; the grounds for the judgement suggest that there are other Scottish rivers where the situation may be similar. But first get the up to date advice on the position from the Scottish Canoe Association's river advisers (addresses on page . . . of this issue) or their General Secretary, 8 Frederick Street, Edinburgh 1.

The Spey runs through the attractive Speyside holiday area from Newtonmore to the sea with rapids here and there up to Grade III; and there are the Cairngorm mountains to the south to be explored. The Tay from Loch Tay to Perth is not much shorter, again with some Grade III rapids. On both rivers the salmon fishing is important and valuable, so canoeists should show the utmost courtesy and consideration when approaching a fisherman, especially in midstream.

The House of Lords judgement made it clear that the public had only a right of passage, not a right to cross from the road to the river and back without permission, nor a right to play about on rapids and pools (which can disturb fisheries), nor to drive vehicles to the river or into fields.

What about the sea? The sounds and sheltered waters behind the islands and in the sea-lochs of the west coast of Scotland provide an almost inexhaustible cruising area in incomparable scenery similar to parts of the Norwegian coast. Even the most sheltered waters must of course be regarded as "sea canoeing" because there is always a long enough travel for wind to create awkward water conditions from one quarter or another. Some of the passages (e.g. in the Firth of Lorne from Oban to Mull) are open to the Atlantic swell and need settled weather conditions, and there can be dangerous tidal races between islands and off headlands. So adequate precautions must be taken and the tides and tidal streams studied beforehand, and all canoeists should have learned sea rescue drill in case of a capsized away from land. Two hundred yards can be a long way, and so can two miles. There are, for those interested in wild life, porpoises and basking sharks, which are harmless except when they playfully come up and break the water surface under a boat! So you must also cruise in groups, to help each other.

Because of the sparse population and the paddling distances, provisions need to be carried for several days, and camping is essential. So the boats must be suited both for sea canoeing and for stowing tents, provisions and personal gear, and have spray decks and buoyancy. Although there is plenty of sheltered water the party may be held up for several days by bad weather in an isolated camp site, even on an island.

In spite of all this, given good weather, the area can provide a fine holiday, and as much rough walking in amongst as anyone can wish. Typical cruises are —

From Fort William by Loch Eil, Loch Shiel, Moidart, Mallaig and Lochalsh to Skye; 2 weeks.

From Dunoon by Rothesay, the Kyles of Bute, Loch Fyne, the Crinan Canal and Seil Sound to Oban and Loch Etive; about 10 days.

From Oban to Fort William and by the Caledonian Canal to Loch Ness and by river or canal to Inverness; 1 week.

In the Oban area don't fail to explore Loch Etive and remember the two-way tidal Falls of Lora at the entrance, and, if you are a wild water canoeist, that the River Awe flows from Loch Awe into Loch Etive. And if the wind at sea is too strong, there are inland lochs like Loch Lomond not far away.

And now, about easy holiday cruising. A less ambitious, but equally enjoyable, week's holiday can be found in England on the Wye, the Severn and Stratford Avon, the Thames, the Bedford Ouse and fenland rivers or the Broads. Little excitement perhaps, but attractive in a different way. Londoners may regard the Thames as the local "ditch", but some living in other parts of Great Britain may be surprised to find it's a real holiday river in summer with boats of many kinds throughout its 130 miles from Cricklade to the outskirts of London, and with particularly attractive countryside between Wallingford and Windsor and especially near Henley and Marlow.

There is good canoeing too both in Northern Ireland and the Republic, and a pound is still a pound. Both are easily reached by car ferry. In the Republic "access" is not a problem, and there is a group of rivers in the south that taken in order from west to east give a full fortnight's cruise equal to one on the Wye and the middle Severn. These are the Blackwater from Mallow in County Cork, the Suir from Caher, and the Nore from Thomastown. The Irish Canoe Association — address Ard Brugh Lodge, Cunningham Road, Dalkey, Co. Dublin — could undoubtedly suggest others.

There is information about all the above waters in the BCU Guide to Waterways of the British Isles, which the BCU Office will be pleased to supply if you send them the cash. The West Coast of Scotland is covered by the Clyde Cruising Club Manual.

DIDN'T WE DO WELL D.W.

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2 **MAKKER**
3 **MIRAGE**

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JUNIOR

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2 **MAKKER**
3 **MIRAGE**

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K2

The Gauntlet

by Andrew Morton

Well, we're not exactly throwing it down; let's say we're laying it down gently. On June 4 the British K1 10,000m Championships are being held north of the border in 'wood' country. The event is at Strathclyde Park, the new watersports centre just south of Glasgow, and we are delighted to be the hosts at this event.

On the following day competitors travel north for an hour to the Trossachs, where the Loch Lubnaig Marathon is being held. This event is one of three used for selection of a British team going to Norway this summer.

We are indebted to the two B.C.U. committees for initiating this move northwards as it will inject a great deal of enthusiasm and interest into Scotland. (The B.B.C. are expected to be at Strathclyde). However, we would like to think that the move north has its advantages to our friends in the deep south. We appreciate the travel problems, after all, for 95 per cent of the time it is we who do the long drives; but the Slalomists have always enjoyed their Bank Holiday weekend at the 1st Div. Slalom at Grandtully and we would like to think that as in Slalom, there is one weekend in the year when our English friends can come to Scotland and have a full weekend of first class racing. In the past they might have felt that competition of any standard was lacking in Scotland, with the notable exceptions of Alistair Wilson and Willie Reichenstein. Now the situation is changing and I would like to think the gauntlet is worth picking up. See you then.

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WINCHESTER

The novice ranking Slalom scheduled 25/26 June in Winchester is also to be the site for a national bat polo training event.

Canoeists are invited to descend on Winchester in large numbers for this weekend, as visitors, as campers, as caravanners. The camping facilities are first class, adjacent to the waterway and including changing rooms, showers and toilets and the Sports Centre. Support this event in large numbers as it will help to justify the plans to develop Winchester as a major water activities centre — the canoeing voice and lobby needs the support.

BOB YORKE

Canoeists all over the country were deeply shocked when they heard of the tragic death of Bob Yorke, of Chelmsford and Windsor Canoe Club, who died in an accident at Raymill Weir on the River Thames in February.

Bob, who was an electronics student at Brunel University, started canoeing in 1971 with Northampton Canoe Club. He reached Division One in a season and was a Master Class competitor in Slalom. He was a keen competitor in all discipline of canoeing and represented Bristol Universities and Zwichau. To say he was a potential international is an understatement; with his determination he could not fail.

On behalf of the B.C.U. and my fellow competitors I would like to extend deepest sympathy to his parents and two sisters in the knowledge that "Yorkie", "the big fella" will be sadly missed by everyone.

JOHN BROWNE

John Brown joined Birmingham Canoe Club 18 years ago, graduating from canoeing with the Scouts; he took up canoeing's wider challenge and it became his first sporting love among many activities. His natural talent for leadership, fun of life and the ability to put as much into canoeing as he got out of it, meant that he became one of our most prominent canoeists, at club level and nationally. Setting high standards for himself in canoeing, he never tired of imparting his skills and knowledge to others. He served on club committees and was treasurer and chairman of the B.C.U. coaching committee for some years. Rising in his profession to Chief Accountant, for NORWEB, he was in the public eye, a spokesman and diplomat involved in our national energy requirements. He was a fisherman; this made him tolerant and an excellent negotiator in the conflict on access.

Judging at our top slaloms, he was deeply interested in the performance of the stars and at 56 years old, John the old timer was paddling this winter's high water with the best of them. He died, of natural causes, in February, whilst canoeing with his family and friends. His loss is deeply felt by all who knew him.

T. Rowntree

Carel Quaife, Chairman of The National Coaching Committee, commented:

"The death of John is a great loss to us all, as he has been a prominent member of the coaching scheme for many years and he has contributed a great deal to canoeing in general and coaching in particular.

"John was one of the key people in our coaching scheme, but he did not make the mistake of losing touch with the canoeists on the water. He was immensely popular with all those with whom he canoed and his wit and enthusiasm were infectious.

"John was an example to us all in the way that he was continually working to improve his canoeing skills and to broaden his experience. His willingness to pass on his knowledge and the way he went about this has been in the best traditions of our scheme.

"We mourn the loss of a very good friend. Let us demonstrate our feelings by continuing with John's work."

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SCHOOL COACHING

Sprint racing events in kayaks have been included in the Olympic Games since 1936 and regular international competitions have been held since then. They are carried out over set distances of 500, 1,000 and 10,000 metres. Long distance kayak racing has been pioneered by this country and copied by a number of European countries; it is hoped that it will in the near future be recognised by the International Canoe Federation and thus given full status for international competition.

Canoeing has been one of the most rapidly growing activities in schools in this country over the last two decades, though the main concentration has been on slalom competition and touring rather than paddle racing. In 1970, therefore, the British Schools' Canoeing Association, in conjunction with the British Canoe Union, the governing body of the sport, introduced a one-class design racing kayak (K1) . . . the Espada, in order to encourage the development of racing in this country's schools and youth groups. With it they introduced an 'Espada Award Scheme,' which recognised achievements by youngsters in the age groups 12-18 in both sprint and long distance events.

The scheme has progressed well and the increase in the number of young paddlers in racing kayaks has been gratifying. The British Schools Canoe Association, with the full support of the BCU, would now like to go forward to take advantage of this increase in interest, and to arrange coaching courses for the young, with a follow-up to encourage continued training and participation in events. In this way we believe that a continuous flow of talent would be available for national training squads for international and Olympic competition. We are also mindful of the fact that international school competitions in canoeing may well be organised in the near future.

DEVIZES TO WESTMINSTER

The Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race which is held at Easter each year was this year won by Brian Greenaway and John Fowler (Royal Canoe Club) setting a record time of 16 hours 56 minutes. The previous record of 17 hours 50 minutes was set in 1975 in flood conditions.

The Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race is considered to be the toughest race of its kind in the world.

The 125 mile course runs to the Kennet & Avon Canal from Devizes (Wiltshire) to Reading and then on the Thames to Westminster.

For the past 15 years the race has been dominated by service crews, with the Royal Engineers, Royal Marines and the Parachute Regiment normally picking up the individual and team prize. But this year the Royal Canoe Club, who mounted a military style operation, took the team prize with three crews finishing in under 18 hours, taking 1st, 3rd and 4th positions. The club's 4th crew finished the course in 23 hours after capsizing and breaking a seat fixing at Reading. The crews combined times still managed to take 3 hours off the old record.

1st Greenaway/Fowler — 16-56 min. Royal Canoe Club.

2nd Williams/Harding — 17-03 min. Royal Engineers.

3rd Greenham/Cornish — 17-47 min. Royal Canoe Club.

4th Phelps/Farrel — 17-57 min. Royal Canoe Club.

The Richmond Canoe Club pair of Andy Duncan/Jake Blake won the Junior event, which is held over 4 days in 17hrs 16mins.

SLALOM REPORT

The Slalom held at Shepperton Weir on 5th/6th March was the first event of the 1977 season. In complete contrast to the 1976 Shepperton Slaloms this event took place on good, testing "White Water". Last year was notable for its drought and Shepperton suffered worse than most slalom sites, the four 1976 slaloms at Shepperton were held on completely flat water. However the winter rain has now more than compensated for the drought and the main concern was whether or not there would be too much water. In the event there were six sluices on the weir open and a fast stream of water which tested the control of the competitors. Luckily, lack of practice on turbulent water last year does not seem to have affected paddlers rolling ability, and although there were a number of capsizes there were few swimmers.

The event was ranked as Division 2 and it is perhaps a measure of the problems posed by the water, that there were only four clear runs in the Men KI Class. This was won by Ken Langford National Competition Coach (slalom and Wildwater Racing), who was relegated to Division 2 at the end of last year for failing to compete in 1976. He duely goes straight back to Division 1 along with K. Howell, M. Thompson and J. Rennocks who were also promoted. In contrast to the men's event, the ladies KI produced a very clear winner. Gillian Brennan of Birmingham University won with a total score of under half that of the second lady and was in fact the only lady to gain a percentage of less than 250%. The others all had considerable difficulty coping with the water and on the first run only two managed to finish, even Gillian's worse run would have won the class by 125 seconds, although she did not do well enough to gain promotion.

There was a small entry the Division B Canadian classes. The CI was contested by eight boats and was won by George Dawson from Patrick Thorn who had led after the first runs.

Although the results do not compare too well with the KI scores they reflect creditably on the paddlers who were competing on a difficult course for their style of canoe. The entry for C2 was abysmal. Only two crews entered and if this is to be repeated at other events in 1977 will cause speculation as to the future of this class in Slalom.

The team event was won decisively by the home club Shepperton S.C.C. teams finished first and second, giving proficient polished performances. The Shepperton B team did however get badly mixed up at one stage on their first run and as a result one paddler got "lost" and went clearly through a "reverse" gate forward! This cost them first place. The other incident of note occurred when one of the R.A.F. team members rammed and sank another of his team members.

They were a couple of regrettable "off water" incidents on Saturday a car belonging to a local resident was damaged. The offending vehicle did not stop. On Sunday the same car was moved, without the owner's consent, and again damaged. The organisers are trying to discover who was responsible for these incidents and to take appropriate disciplinary action. In addition one paddler was disqualified for failure to comply with a request to move his vehicle. These incidents put the future of slalom at Shepperton in jeopardy.



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John Fowler (front) and Brian Greenaway of the Royal C.C. Winners of the Devizes to Westminster race.

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