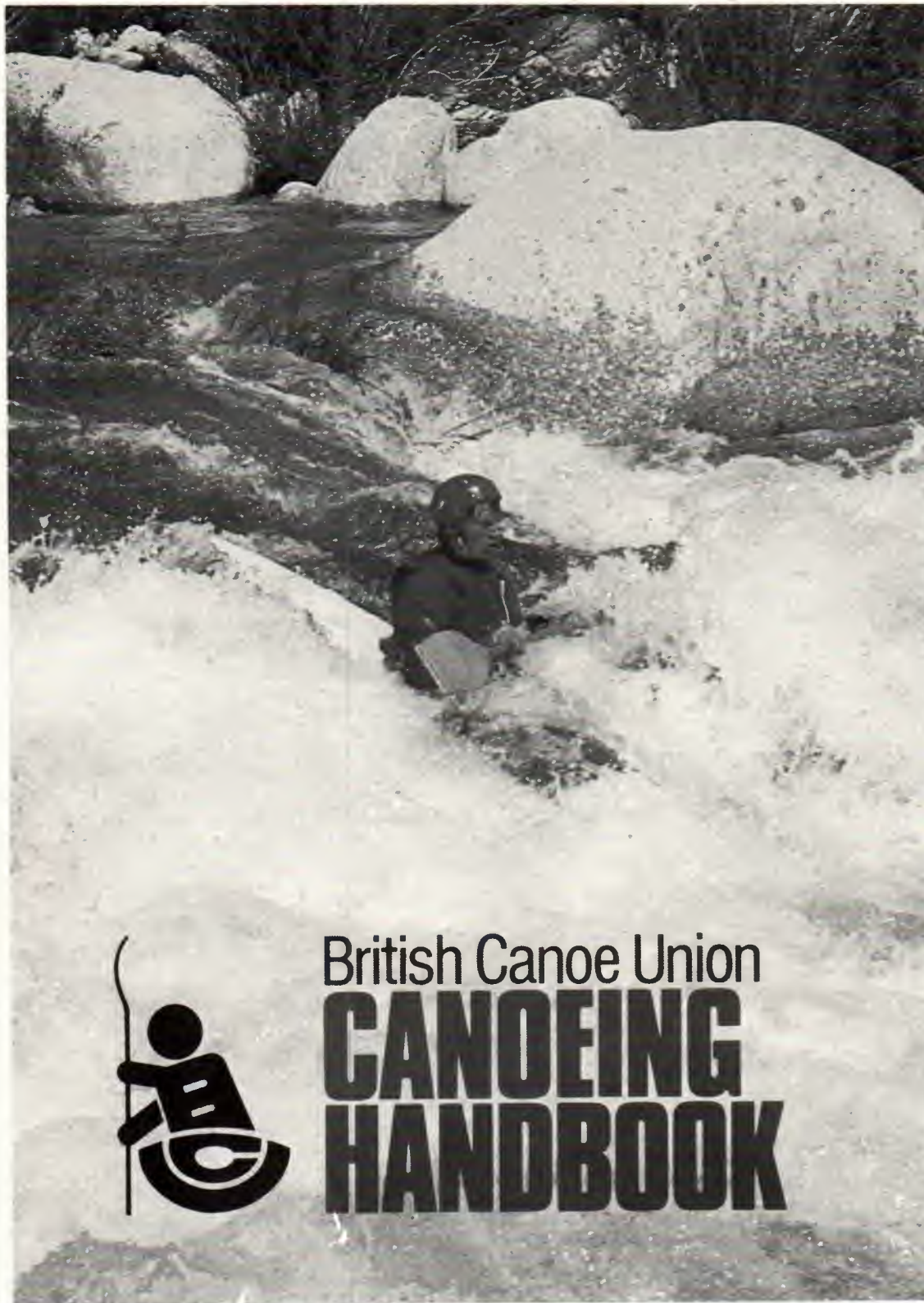


CANOE FOCUS

No.31 SUMMER 1983 · PRICE 60p

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH CANOE UNION





British Canoe Union **CANOEING HANDBOOK**

A cross-section of comments on the new Canoeing Handbook.

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FRONT COVER

An early start on the Torne Alv — Mark Attenburrow

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Editorial

PUTTING YOUR "FOOT" IN IT

Much has been written regarding the intrusion of politics into the affairs of modern sport and recreation, and whilst pragmatists will acknowledge the inevitability of this process of politicisation, it is nevertheless regretted by most. An interest in sport and recreation by politicians, can of course serve to benefit not only those directly involved, but also the community at large, and it would be the worst form of hypocrisy for a governing body of sport, as is the British Canoe Union, to deny that the £100,000 odd of taxpayers money allocated each year for their use, indirectly by politicians, was not of enormous benefit. Indeed, any realistic assessment of the progress achieved by the British Canoe Union during the past 20 years or so, would necessarily acknowledge the substantial contribution of government, and thus the politicians. The Labour party, most will admit, have made the running in the past, when spending on sport has been the issue, though in recent years the present Government have much to be thanked for. Denis Howell as the Labour Minister of Sport in 1972, was instrumental in approving the construction of the Holme Pierrepont National Water Sports Centre at a cost of £1,000,000, thus providing a rowing and canoeing facility unique in Britain and the world. For this, most are eternally grateful, particularly as the recent developments on the site are acting as a catalyst within our sport. But, oh dear!... all those good works, and now the "Labour Plan for Sport and Recreation". It reads as follows —

"Labour will accept responsibility for the provision of a broadly-based leisure service. We will:

- Encourage greater participation in sport and recreation.
- Give incentives to voluntary bodies to involve themselves more widely in the

provision of sport and community facilities.

- Encourage local authorities and other owners of facilities to make them much more available to public use.
- Set up an immediate enquiry into the financial basis of sport and recreation.
- Review the provision of national sporting facilities, so as to secure a fairer geographical distribution.
- Ensure that the sporting talent of the nation receives sufficient support to enable them to bring sporting success to Britain.

We will also provide for the wider use of the countryside for recreational purposes, such as angling. Angling will be given additional support, by ensuring wider access to rivers and lakes, financial assistance to provide a wider ownership of fishing water, improvements in respect of conservation, and action to prevent pollution."

Hardly anyone will disagree with the obvious merits of the plan other than the final paragraph regarding Angling. How is it possible to justify "wider access to rivers and lakes and financial assistance to provide a wider ownership of fishing waters", without reference to the requirements of other water users. Are we as canoeists to exchange the problem of access to private water, currently experienced with the relatively benevolent landowner, for those of the fishing interests? Why have Anglers been identified amongst all the users of water space as necessitating special support? Could it be that the 3,000,000 or so club fishermen are regarded as potential labour voters, assuming a large enough spratt is used to catch their mackerel? Whatever the reason for this unbelievably insensitive undertaking by the Labour Party, it is a gross miscalculation and will certainly serve to mobilise the whole water sports lobby, including a substantial number of Anglers, against a policy which is at best a doctrinaire concern for what is popularly believed to be a working class activity, and at worst a cynical political manoeuvre.

THE YEAR IN YORK

"Now is the winter of our discontent made glorious summer by this son of York" — How could Shakespeare have possibly predicted you may ask, that the 1983 British Canoe Union Annual General Meeting would be held in York, and that if not "glorious", it was a resounding success. How could he have known that whilst the tenor of the meeting could hardly be described as indicative of a "winter of discontent", it was certainly true that some members of the Union were not pleased with the Council of Management's "Radical approach to membership", and they said so, forthrightly and frankly. It is unlikely that Shakespeare, for all his other talents, could

have foreseen the future so accurately, but his lines were without doubt prophetic. The majority of those members who made the journey to York, which for most is the home of the Railway museum, an old Roman town, or the seat of an Archbishop, were pleasantly surprised by the congenial atmosphere of the venue for this year's Annual General Meeting, and impressed by the Victorian opulence of the Conference Chamber. Almost a hundred members were sufficiently interested in the affairs of the Union to sacrifice their valuable Saturday, which incidentally required Rugby enthusiasts to forfeit the opportunity of seeing the Calcutta Cup, and Athletics buffs the finals of the European Indoor Championships!! It was however all well worthwhile, ▶

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ACE



AROUND THE PALACE

CANOE POLO NATIONAL FINALS

Crystal Palace echoed to the shouts and screams of the Canoe Polo groupies throughout the weekend of the International Canoe Exhibition, but the racket that accompanied the final of this year's National Competition was enough to bring the house down.

The weekend got off to a fine start with the International Cup featuring teams from West Germany and France as well as the home grown talent of the United Kingdom. England dominated the competition, basically faster on the water but far better drilled than the opposition. Luton Tigers looked in no danger of losing the title, West Germany got closest to them losing 4-1 in the final in spite of a spirited defence throughout. In the 'runners up' play off Wales despatched Scotland by the same score.

At the end of the day England played an Italian team who turned up at Crystal Palace, hot-foot from Italy, on the off-chance of getting a game. Canoe Polo is in its infancy in Italy and some naive play resulted in the English team achieving a win in double figures.

Sunday arrived with most pundits placing money on Luton Tigers holding on to their national titles in both senior and youth divisions. True to form, in the senior event, Luton Tigers removed Leeds 'B' from the competition with a cricket score whilst Bere Forest scraped through the other side of the draw with a 1-0 win against Cardiff. Far stronger looked St. Albans who knocked out six against Leeds 'A' but when Bere Forest and St. Albans met in their semi the match went to the team from Hampshire by three clear goals.

Tigers despatched Fairthorne Manor 4-1 which left the last match of the day to be fought out between the 'Old Guard' of the young 'Tigers' and the slightly more ageing 'Bere Forest'.



Luton Tigers youth team on their way to a fourth national title.

Mike Whitlock extricated himself from a ban just in time to guard the Forest goal and the rivalry, nee bad feeling, which exists between these teams could be felt around the pool as they lined up for the start.

The term a 'close fought match' succinctly describes what went on for the next twenty minutes. The referees were hard put to control the match but they achieved that end with a rod of, malleable, iron. The din from the supporters was horrendous but through it all, wily Forest stuck to the task of breaking down the Tigers attacks and breaking quickly themselves when they found themselves in possession of the ball.

The final result is easy to say, 2-1 to Bere

Forest, but in no way can it convey the endeavour and excitement generated in the pool. Both teams are carrying Canoe Polo into the realms of a really competitive sport, if some of the European Nations can pick up the pearls being scattered around by our Canoe Polo players then one of these days we will be able to look forward to a really good International Competition which lives up to the quality of our own National Finals.

The first ladies final went west as Gloucester duffed up Stubbers 7-1 whilst in the youth final Luton Tigers nailed their colours to the mast at last by ruining Bridgend's chance 7-1 giving them the win for the fourth year in succession.

Mike Jones Adventure Award

Mark Attenburrow, leader of the Arctic Scandinavia Canoeing Expedition in 1982 received a reproduction gold prospectors pan in recognition of the good which the expedition achieved in Finland. The award was made by a local mayor, dressed in ceremonial costume.

Mark undertook the journey with the aid of the Mike Jones Adventure Award, administered by the Winston Churchill Trust on behalf of the Mike Jones Memorial Fund. Mike, who was drowned on the K2 expedition in 1979, was a Fellow of the Trust.

The Mike Jones Adventure Award has been made this year to Jim Hargreaves, who is leading the exhibition to circumnavigate South Georgia towards Christmas time.

Donations for the fund should be sent to Mark Markham, 22 Wrenbury Crescent, Leeds LS16 7EG.

Applications to the Winston Churchill Trust for consideration for the next award must be during August.



Original Cockleshell in Crystal Palace Parade

Bill Sparks partnered the legendary 'Blondie' Hasler in one of the 'Cockle Mark Is' that were paddled by the Marine Commandos at night up the Durance to plant limpet mines on enemy shipping in Bordeaux Harbour during World War II.

Bill located a 'Cockle' designed at the time, when on a visit to Poole, and has refurbished it ready to repeat the journey in June. He will be partnered by Gerry Lockyer, and is undertaking the re-enactment in aid of Cancer research. The Ministry of Defence have been persuaded to carry the 'Cockle' and its crew across the Channel by submarine, just as the original raid was transported. The canoes were designed to fold down to 4" in order to be passed through a submarine hatch.

Bill, now 60, and Gerry paddled their craft in the 'Parade of ancient boats' during the Canoe Exhibition. Members wishing to support their endeavour should send donations, made out to 'Cancer Research', to the BCU office, for onward transmission.



Malcolm Wright, Group Personnel Director of Cape Industries Ltd, presents a K1 donated by Cape Industries Ltd, to John Stafford, Marathon Organiser for the North East. John collected the boat on behalf of the winner, David Marshall of Gateshead KC, who competed at Wolfreton. The organising club received a cheque for £100.



A



C



D



B

A) Peter Wathen receiving his Award of Merit from the Unions Honorary President J. Dodderidge. The letter of recommendation drew attention to Peters untiring efforts, over many years, which brought to fruition the first artificial slalom course in this country as well as his continuous efforts in representing our sport on outside bodies.

B) Robert Gray had his Award of Honour presented by Dick Jeeps, Chairman of the Sports Council. Originally recommended for the Award of Merit, Bob must be the only canoeist to have an award up graded unanimously in Council. The citation reads 'For Service to the Sport'.

C) Ron Emes & David Wain, President of the Union buy the first tickets in the BCU Golden Jubilee 1986 Lottery.

D) John (David Heliwell) McGregor takes to the water in an 1860's Bond kayak. Hilbury Isl Canoe Club own the largest collection of early canoes & kayaks in the country and graciously loaned this beautifully made example for the exhibition.

FOSTER'S DRAUGHT



The Australian for lager



"CANOEING" CANTICLE

Not all readers of *Canoe Focus* subscribe to *Canoeing* magazine of course, but those who do, may have been surprised to note the high church influence on the Editorial contained in the most recent issue. A tract in theological dogma is not what the average *Canoeing* magazine enthusiast really expects from a publication whose reputation it is readily admitted, rests upon the somewhat more plebian values well illustrated on Page 3 of the *Sun*. What then inspired this uncharacteristic outburst of religious rhetoric? Well, it seems that there is only one subject guaranteed to inspire the editorial writer of *Canoeing* magazine with evangelical fervour, and that is the desire to engage in the favourite pastime of some literary giants of the canoeing world, which is, knocking the BCU. What satanic deeds have the Union allegedly committed then. Well, other than having the temerity to set about improving *Canoe Focus* to a standard that will compete with *Canoeing*, the crime they stand accused of is not sacrilege, not stealing the lead of church roofs, but selling indulgences.

What this means is that *Canoeing* magazine is highly upset, or at least the writer of the Editorial is, (and he may well be a renegade priest with a vested interest in maintaining monopolistic control of any indulgences that may be up for grabs), with the Union for seeking to sell their skills on the market in exchange for a useful service. Simply put, the Union are in the process of agreeing a boat and equipment approval scheme, the principles of which have been legitimately established and are widely used throughout sport and recreation. This scheme is not just a money raising gimmick, in fact it will cost money to operate, but will, it is hoped, help to raise standards of safety, encourage good design, and thus the legitimate manufacturer and trader, whilst deterring the back yard builder, and the 'make à quick buck' operator. All of which has to be in the direct interests of bonafide manufacturers, retailers, consumers, and members of the Union. The gospel according to *Canoeing* magazine does not agree of course. For the next episode in this fascinating allegory, watch this page.

DEMOCRACY DENIED!

Much has been written about democracy within the Union by those who believe that the ultimate good of the majority relies upon the decision makers representing the real interests of the masses. They argue for example, that a truly democratic organisation would determine their policies by majority vote, a never ending series of referenda that is. Some even believe that policies having been decided by this cumbersome system, the practical implementation thereof, should also be referred to the membership for consideration and approval by the many. Often no thought is given to the enormous costs in time and money that would be required if the Union were to acknowledge that "people power" was more important than wise and efficient management. Fortunately, the "majority", have traditionally rejected the former Utopian ideal, for the much more pragmatic British parliamentary system of electoral representation. As any student of political philosophy, or indeed reader of the popular press will know, the latter form of government, if it is to be effective, relies upon certain fundamental tenets for success. The representatives must be elected by those whose interests he undertakes to act for. He or she must be aware of, and responsive to the needs of his or her constituents, and finally, and perhaps most importantly, when a number of representatives must together determine the face of those who have elected them to office, their decision must be based on the wishes of the majority. This whole process is, of course, absolutely dependent upon the willingness of some of the "people", to submit themselves to the indignities of popular vote, and the demands of vociferous interest groups. The Union, apparently, have a problem. For if this year's election to the Council of management are a guide it does seem that masochists are in short supply. Five vacancies for the Council, four nominations is not a disaster of course, and it is not anticipated that the whole elaborate democratic infra-structure will crumble, but there must be a message for those who are interested to learn from these things. Has the well finally run dry, do we no longer produce those much maligned "Committee men", who have managed our affairs for the past forty odd years? Those who place "service before self". I don't think so, and I certainly hope not, but time alone will tell.

COCKLESHELL HEROES

For those who are inspired by the courage and resolution of the Cockleshell Heroes, who read of their incredible attack on enemy shipping in the Gironde at Bordeaux, or who subsequently saw the film portraying their deeds on the silver screen, the visit of Bill Sparks to the International Canoe Exhibition this year was a magical occasion. Bill, now in his seventies, who together with Lt. Colonel "Blondie" Hasler, are the sole survivors of the Bordeaux raid, looked fit and well, and had recently returned from unveiling a plaque to commemorate the deeds of his comrades. For those who really don't know, and there surely cannot be many, the "Hasler Trophy" which is the premier marathon Racing Trophy, was presented by Lt. Colonel Hasler to the Union many years ago, and serves as a constant reminder of those intrepid young men who, as members of the Royal Marines Small Boat Section, fought and died in the service of their country.

AMBLING THROUGH THE ARCHIVES

As the Editor has refused Hounddog space for reminiscing about the good old days of canoeing, when men were men, and canoeists didn't use after shave lotion, body perfume, or wear wetsuits and thermal underwear, a new feature will be incorporated within Hounddog's page — "30 years ago — I was there!" Now read on —

"1953 — A Vintage year for Canoe Slalom"

"When we published in the last issue of *Canoeing in Britain* the provisional fixture list for 1953, including eight slalom events, we thought that with this figure being a record, we had exhausted our possibilities for the time being. But we have been proved wrong. In the meantime more clubs have decided to use the unique possibilities that canoe slalom offers for adding an interesting feature to club activities and at the same time creating fresh interest for our sport among the public which never gets tired watching a well run slalom event. 12 slaloms are being planned for the coming season."

Interested? Do you believe it? How about the following extracts from *Canoeing in Britain* 1953.

"Coronation Regatta on the Welsh Harp"

"It was a befitting coincidence that the first full scale canoeing regatta of the year, the Coronation Regatta, sponsored by Willesden Borough on June 6th, was held on the Welsh Harp. It was here where Rob Roy McGregor launched his first canoe some 100 years ago and where the predecessor of today's Royal C.C., the National Canoe Association, had its first headquarters from 1870 to 1897 — before they moved to Trowlock Island, Teddington. A huge crowd watched some first class racing with exciting finishes. In the K1 Senior race Geoff Colyer in a magnificent finishing sprint beat Ray Parker by just a foot — followed only slightly behind by G. Palmer on the third place. Geoff's time was given with 3 minutes for the 1,000 yards course — but a timing error is suspected because despite a following wind the speed did not appear that fast."

"The British Slalom Team for Merano"

"Paul Farrant, Bill Horsman, Bill Goodman and David Campbell have been selected to represent Britain in the Canoe Slalom World Championships to be held on 25th-26th in Merano. Keith White is being entered as reserve. Ron and Bill Crockett have been selected to make up the seven entries permitted for the Individual Championships."

"You and the Fishermen"

"It is hoped that those canoeing down the Eden and other rapid rivers will do nothing to disturb the good relationships which at present exist with the landowners and fishermen. On the Eden the Yorkshire Fly Fishers gave us the use of one of their best waters for the National Slalom, and Sir Gerald Ley gave permission for those taking part in the cruise on the previous day to canoe through his water. He did, however, state that he was somewhat concerned that at Easter several canoes did the trip without any warning. He stresses that he does not want to interfere with our sport and that it is simply a matter of organisation. Had he known that some canoes were coming at Easter he could have made his arrangements accordingly."

It must be said — "There is nothing new except what has been forgotten."

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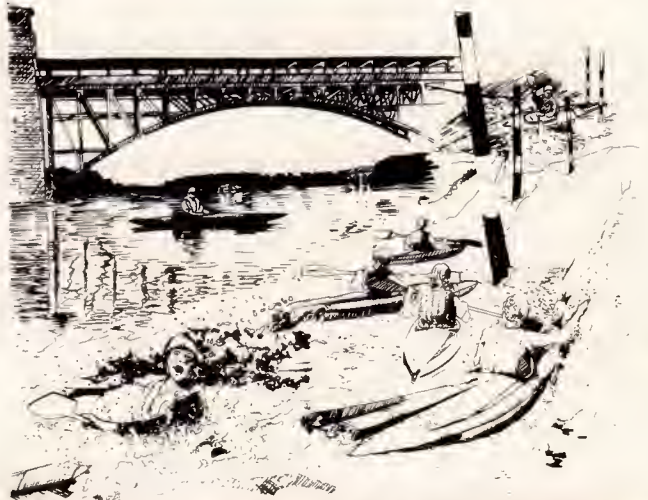
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The two major activities are rock climbing and canoeing but a fantastic variety of courses go on throughout the year. Orienteering, snow and ice climbing, mountain environment, fly fishing, mountain photography, mountain first aid and a whole host of others. The setting is ideally situated to these courses, being close to the best mountains and crags in North Wales. All offer particularly fine and difficult mountain terrain, yet also give some really gentle, easy angled ground, ideal for introducing people to the pleasures of hill walking and rock climbing.

As a canoeing centre however, it is perhaps ideally situated. A shallow sparkling lake for introducing people to small boats lies right outside the back door. This inturn feeds possibly the best medium grade river in North Wales, the Llugwy.

A small grade I fall at the outfall of the lake gives paddlers a first taste of moving water or an introduction to slalom on the permanent course erected over it.

Most canoe courses quickly move down to the rugged, sunwashed coastline of Anglesey where a myriad number of trips offer quiet gentle paddling around Llanddwyn Island, or the first 'bongo' surf rides of Cable Bay and

the more adventurous trips around the North Stack races and the Skerries.

Though not a purpose-built centre, Plas y Brenin does have all the modern conveniences. Pleasant 2,4 and 6 bedded rooms, showers, drying rooms, laundry, lounge and bar. A large and comfortable dining room with good home cooked food, enough to fill even the most adventurous Egon Ronney. Lecture rooms for climbers, canoeists and orienteers and a large general lecture room which sees a side show or film every evening, which anyone is more than welcome to attend. A covered, heated pool provides a useful and much used training aid for paddlers. Basic rescue techniques are also taught thoroughly and in comfort.

Another exceptionally useful and heavily used facility is the dry ski slope. Specialist weekends throughout the year introduce novices to the thrills and spills of skiing, and intermediates to the complexities of advanced skiing and coaching.

All equipment is of the highest standard, particularly canoes, a sport which of course is very equipment orientated. A standard fleet of general purpose slalom kayaks are used but these are supplemented by specialist boats in order to cover every aspect of canoe sport. Top class slalom canoes lie next to river racers, sprint boats, C2's and open canadians to make up the widest range of boats held under one roof.

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ing in the country on Anglesey and the North Wales Coast, there is a comprehensive number of expedition sea kayaks. Courses for aspiring sea canoeists study the problems encountered on expeditions. Some very strong tidal currents and powerful overfalls provide exciting canoeing and practical examples for a very thorough and detailed lecture on tidal planning. In fact all courses have a number of detailed specialist lectures each evening.

There are a number of 'Self Catering Away Courses' that prove very popular. Open canadian touring on the Wye, alpine canoeing in France or in Scotland either on the superb western coastline or the classic rivers of the Tay, Spey and Findhorn.

Plas y Brenin is the national Sports Council Centre for mountaineering and canoeing instruction. Consequently a great number of BCU coaching courses are run, from the Coach Award to SI training, slalom trainer or advanced proficiency. Though the setting and the availability of first class equipment are important, it is the professionalism and experience of the staff that makes Plas y Brenin 'the Canoeing Centre' in Britain. Seven highly qualified and experienced permanent staff and a number of equally prestigious temporary staff ensure that anyone attending a course gets the very best attention, and instruction.

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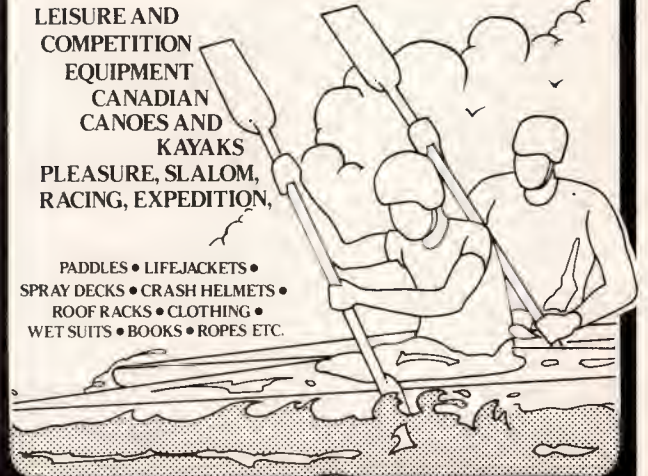
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all to play for

The Sports Council's motto for their campaign, launched in January, to encourage the over-50's to take part in sport, was surely designed around Donald Bean.

Take part at 50? Donald has just celebrated his **fiftieth year** of paddling. Stafford and Stone Canoe Club laid on a dinner, but Donald's other celebration was to lead the club's group on the Mike Jones Memorial Rally in December at Llangollen — he's paddled on all five.

'There was a queue to get down the Pot (before the big falls), and I got pushed down sideways and had a swim. Terrifically exciting this — even more so than canoeing down. But I've swum the Town Falls, and the Serpent's Tail, before, and shall no doubt get my head wet again on this challenging stretch of water, particularly if the river is in heavy flood'.

Donald commenced canoeing at the age of 12 in 1932, and has taken part in most forms of the sport, including paddling a K1 racing boat. His only token 'prize' was collected for a Canadian singles event at a slalom some years ago — his was the only C1 entry! — but his real prize is a life lived to the full. He manages to maintain an allotment, make 400 lbs of jam a year from fruit grown there, attend weekly yoga classes and an annual retreat, swim a mile each week (in 1982 he completed 4,000m and 6,000m non-stop marathons) attend a weekly PE class run by Ken Langford, take part in public speaking, and get involved in various voluntary efforts. In the last three years he has taken or re-taken the RLSS Bronze Medallion, Award of Merit, Bronze Cross and Silver Cross, First Aid Certificate, passed the BCU Life Saving Test and become a BCU Instructor.

'I owe a lot to Stafford and Stone Canoe Club for easing me back into the sport in the mid-70s. I was accepted as I was, rather than as the canoeist I perhaps ought to have been. I must comment specifically about the wonderful spirit of camaraderie and friendship among paddlers — more so than seems to appertain between participants in other sports'.

Still a regular competitor in wild water races, Donald has yet to meet an older paddler at an event. During his golden jubilee year, besides his regular paddling and competition, he pursued his white water interest with an advanced week at Glenmore Lodge (the Scottish Sports Council's national centre at Aviemore) and a similar weekend at Plas y Brenin in October. 'Although heavy rain occurred, which raised the water levels more than somewhat, I had only three swims during the Scottish week — certainly below the "average"'. At the end of the first day at Plas y Brenin, we had a rolling session in the heated training pool. This was on video and was screened back later for our entertainment. I am one of those canoeists who eskimo roll



100% in baths, but find that rolling can be a bit hit or miss on the big stuff — just when a roll is specially called for. I must try to do something about this, even though it will eliminate the glorious uncertainty on white water. Certainly a swim from time to time is great fun, and at times can be even more exciting than canoeing! It's now traditional that I do an eskimo roll as an alternative — but sometimes in addition to — being tipped in at the end of the club's New Year's Day race on the Trent'.

At the Canoe Exhibition, Donald was part of the three-man team in the club fun event — there was an age span of 50 years between the youngest and the oldest member of the team.

Often told that he doesn't look like a canoeist, Donald is only 5' 4" tall, and weighs 8½ stone. He served in the Army Pay Corps throughout the war, and currently holds a very responsible job as Deputy County Treasurer of Staffordshire, having served local government for 46 years in the area. Confessing to being able to live an 18-20 hour day, Donald has a full life by any standards. 'I lead a busy professional life, though even without "the office" it would seem fairly full. I



enjoy my work, and find it interesting and absorbing — though at times there is just too much of it. But retirement will give me more time for canoeing in all its aspects, and the opportunity to be of greater service to others than is possible at present.

'My initial ambition on retirement is to take part in some white water canoeing expedition — not too difficult, but involving plenty of wild water paddling and also roughing it a bit. But no crocodiles — just in case one of the rolls fails to gel!

'Part of my philosophy is to work hard and play hard. Canoeing, particularly white water canoeing, has a tremendous therapeutic value in that it concentrates and focuses the mind on the job in hand — certainly one cannot concurrently solve office and other problems whilst on the water canoeing. So one returns benefitting physically, and mentally refreshed. So far, I have weathered well. If asked for the I reason would say "good, wholesome food, ample exercise and fresh air, positive hobbies and interests and adopting a positive attitude, and not growing ulcers for anyone!"'

TARGET GROUP

What an opportunity this year gives our sport. Just think of the help and influence that could be obtained from interesting a cross-section of the over-50s in canoeing.

The emphasis must be on participation. The purpose of the campaign is to encourage people to take part for their physical and mental health's sake. But the potential spin-off in terms of club management and support services, is immeasurable.

The initial approach, and probably for a majority, their continuing participation, needs to be into stable, open-cockpit touring kayaks or canoes. How many clubs or centres cannot round up a small fleet of such craft — a mixed fleet would be perfectly appropriate. Why not stage a course, or a series of courses, during the coming warm summer evenings. Advertise them in your local paper, and at the libraries. Use the Sports Council motif for the campaign and target in: minimum age 45. Many won't commit themselves if they think they'll be competing with 'young white hopes'!

The Eskimo Roll is NOT a requirement. Our aim should not be to produce hundreds of 'Donald Beans', although those who show an interest in which water canoeing should not, of course, be discouraged.

'You don't have to roll like an eskimo to canoe a kayak'

'Canoes can reach the places other vessels cannot reach'

'For health, for pleasure, for peaceful enjoyment, paddle your own canoe'

May we urge clubs, centres, instructors, to take part in the campaign to get the over-50s to take up canoeing. Send for a list of regional Sports Council contacts if you have not been sent one. Give it a try. Feel your way. Don't insist everyone throws themselves in during the first session, or even the last one if they don't really want to. Make sure a local club can and will receive them in. And please write and let us know how you got on.



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
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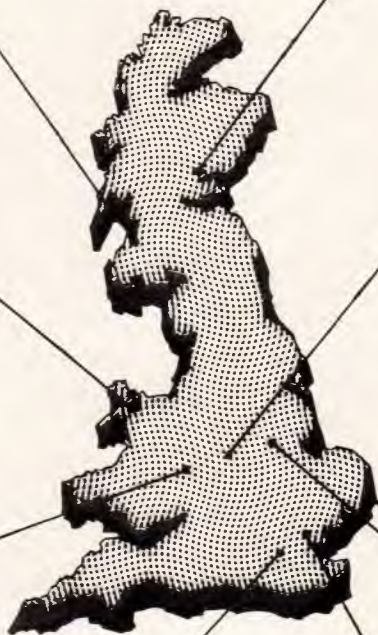
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Action on access

We've landed the big one

Anglers and Riparian owners agree to discussing access to private waters for canoeists.

On 6th April the National Bodies representing the riparian owners and the anglers agreed with the BCU to sign a joint Statement of Intent. An early version of this was sent with Canoe Focus in Summer 1982 and the final version is included as a stuffer with this issue. The BCU is very grateful for the good offices of the Sports Council and the Water Space Amenity Commission, whose efforts have played a vital role in bringing these negotiations to a satisfactory conclusion.

This Statement of Intent paves the way for local access agreements on private water. Progress in this direction will be led by your National or Regional Access Officer, who will work in close co-operation with clubs and affiliated bodies. The BCU British Access Committee will be providing support to all those working at local level to profit from the new situation and volunteers are sought to help tackle the increased workload which we confidently expect. All access workers will be provided with written guidelines to enable them to acquire negotiating skills quickly and to ensure that they operate as members of a close knit team.



NAME THE ANGLER COMPETITION

A BCU supplies token worth £10.00, will be given to the entrant who in the opinion of the editorial board submits the most humorous and fitting name for the "cartoon angler".

The purpose of his creation is to help highlight some of the incidents which occur between anglers and canoeists and using the medium of humour help prevent such incidents happening in the future.

RESULTS

WINNER

John Gibbs, 42 Milton Avenue, Eaton Ford St. Neots, Cambs.

Name of Angler — IVOR PROBLEM
2nd

Paul Harris, 6 Shepherds Walk
Hassocks, W. Sussex.

Name of Angler — HOOKED UP HARRY
3rd

Ashley Heath, Jordans, Lodge Lane
Keymer, Hassocks W. Sussex.

Name of Angler — ARTHUR (Halfa) ANGLER

The commitment of the parties to the Statement is well illustrated by the unanimous decision that the Canoe Access Committee of the NAC shall continue to meet periodically to review progress, deal with any problems and to discuss improvements in the light of experience. The BCU British Access Committee look forward to the members support in these efforts to improve access to private water.

MEMBERS QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Q Does this refer to all inland waters?

A No, it only concerns waters that are private in law.

Q Will we forfeit any existing navigation rights?

A No, in fact it is acknowledged that we shall retain the right to prove other navigation rights if we obtain the necessary facts as proof.

Q Has the BCU given up seeking changes in the law?

A No. But it recognises that this is a long term project and it is vital to safeguard the short term interests of members.

Q Has the Statement of Intent been checked by the BCU legal advisers?

A Yes. We have been told that as a Statement of Intent it is not a legally binding agreement, but that the legal information contained in it is correct.

Q Hasn't the BCU taken too soft an approach?

A No. We are seeking benefits from others who are under no legal obligation or no easily proven legal obligation to grant them.

Q Does this mean that members will have to pay for access to water?

A It all depends on each specific local agreement. The BCU is not against payment in principle, but its policy is to restrict payment levels to be compatible with the actual benefits enjoyed.

Q Do I have to put my BCU number on my canoe?

A Only if you wish or if it is a condition of a specific local access agreement from which you wish to benefit. We expect there to be more and more of these agreements.

Q Will my name be divulged to third parties if a conflict arises?

A Normally if a complaint is received quoting a BCU member the matter will be dealt with between the BCU and the canoeist concerned. If such a transgression is proved the normal disciplinary procedure of the BCU will be followed. The only exceptions will be where persons are legally empowered to demand such information.

Q If I am to be identifiable, should not the same apply to the angler?

A In practice on private water it does. The angler will be identifiable through the club leasing the fishing rights and bailiffs carry credentials.

Q Isn't the Statement somewhat general?

A Yes. But it is intended as a broad



framework within which detailed and specific local agreements will be negotiated. This detail is most important and is why the BCU access team is receiving written guidance.

Q Are agreements for all canoeists?

A No. The BCU can only honour agreements involving its members as it has no contact with non-members. In this context BCU members includes organisations affiliated to the BCU on terms which include participation in access agreements. This policy is fair and practical as anyone is free to join the BCU.

Q Surely the more casual canoeist will find a full members subscription rather high to participate occasionally in access agreements?

A This argument has been noted and a new category of membership is under active consideration.

There will undoubtedly be other questions from members. Your National or Regional Access Officers will do their best to answer them. Do keep in touch with them as it is they who represent your views on the BCU British Access Committee.

This long awaited development is most encouraging and is a tribute to the many who have been involved in its creation. However, it is not the total answer to all our problems. It represents an open door to meaningful progress if we are prepared to work for it. Due to the rapid growth of the sport and the numbers participating there is no doubt that without this accord the access situation would have deteriorated at an alarming rate.

**There is great justification for optimism
Can we all respond to the challenge?**

Information required

Colin Broadway is at present engaged in re-compiling and updating The Guide to the Waterways and requires information on all rivers paddled.

Urgently required by Colin Broadway, information from paddlers who have paddled the Great Ouse/Bedford Ouse during the past twenty years.

Access News in Brief RIVER MEDWAY NAVIGATION (Kent)

In October 1982 the Southern Water Authority Act received Royal Assent. As a direct result of that action the Southern Water Authority will now be levying a series of charges to vessels including canoes for use of this stretch of water from the Leigh Barrier to Allington Lock. Persons now wishing to canoe this stretch should contact the Southern Water Authority, Kent division at Capstone Road, Chatham, Kent, ME5 7QA. The BCU are at present negotiating favourable terms for its members and affiliated groups.

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UPPER WYE

An agreement has been made for canoeing on the Upper Wye between Builth and Glasbury. Canoeists wishing to receive details of the agreement should write providing a stamped

addressed envelope to Messrs. Woosman & Tyler, Dolgarreg, North Road, Builth Wells, Powys. LD2 3DD.

PROPOSED RESTORATION OF THE UPPER SEVERN NAVIGATION

Canoeists wishing to support or oppose this project should contact the West Midlands Regional Access Officer, John Burgess, 3 Willowbrook, Longden, Shrewsbury.

TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF THE NORTH CIRCULAR AQUEDUCT GRAND UNION CANAL

The Inland Waterways Association would like to hear from any canoeists who would wish to oppose any proposals for temporary closure of this section on the Paddington Arm of the Grand Union.

You should write to: Mr. A. Dobson, London Branch IWA, 114 Regents Park Road, London, NW1 8UQ. He can provide further information.

The few months which have passed since I wrote the last article for *Canoe Focus* have been as usual, very quiet in the life of a Sports Photographer, with, what few sporting events occur, being indoors. These events always produce hosts of what we in the trade call 'Balcony Flashers'. The name is self explanatory. These are the people who sit far away from the action in the public seating, yet use the flashgun on their cameras. There were a few at the Fosters Canoe Exhibition at Crystal Palace, near the top of the balcony, attempting to photograph the action in the pool. Unfortunately no flashgun has yet been invented which can throw light the distance required, so the small flash units most people were using had no hope of illuminating the pool. In fact their range is usually a maximum of 20ft. At events like this there is usually sufficient light to shoot without a flashgun, although up-rating of the film might be necessary.

Uprating film is a very straight forward method of 'finding' more light. By increasing the development times, the film speed is effectively increased. Kodak Tri-X film is normally rated at 400 ASA, but by altering the development times it can be uprated to 800 or 1600 ASA. The same method can be used for Ektachrome colour transparency films. ED200 can be pushed to 400 or 800 ASA, EL400 to 800 or 1600 ASA etc. However, always ensure that you mark on each cassette the speed to which you have uprated the film, to enable the Processing Laboratory to know by how much to increase the development times. Unfortunately, for colour-print users, very few laboratories will increase — the development time of Kodacolour films, as this involves far too much work for the few films which require the service. Fortunately, colour-print film is available in a wide range of emulsion speeds which precludes the need for the uprating.

The exception to this rule of increased film speed needing increased development time, are the new films from Agfa (Vario XL) and Ilford (XP-1). By using colour dye emulsions in place of silver, the film is compatible with the Kodak C41 Kodacolour process, and has the advantage that exposures can be made at virtually any film speed — even several different speeds on the same roll — while development time remains standard. However, to achieve respectable results, varying grades of paper are required for the printing. At 400 and 800 ASA, results on these films are excellent. Kodachrome colour transparency film cannot be uprated.

THROUGH THE LENS



By Keith Williams

At Crystal Palace, working at the pool-side I was using Tri-X at 400 ASA and Ektachrome ED200 at 200 ASA. Although the light faded towards late afternoon, during the slalom and the 'Superstars' events the light was sufficient for 1/500th second at F2.8 and 1/250th second at F2.8 respectively. Uprating was very necessary at Llangollen, for the International Slalom, however, as the light virtually disappeared before the second runs, requiring uprating of Tri-X to 800 ASA.

This brings me very nicely to the question I asked in the last issue, as to which of the two pictures were taken with the expensive Nikon combination. The picture seen below was taken with Nikon equipment at Merano during

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last year's Pre-World Championships, while the shot on the right was taken with the Olympus equipment during the World Championships at Bala, 1981. The necessity for the extra expense of purchasing the Nikon equipment is quite simply that the extra speed of the lenses enables the use of Kodachrome 64 ASA colour transparency. The difference in quality between the slower film, and the formerly standard Ektachrome 200, is considerable, when enlarged for a magazine cover or centre spread. The same is true for black and white material. Plus-X being a 125 ASA, the film is far superior to Tri-X at 400 ASA. My advice on films would be to use the slowest film speed possible, while ensuring that there is sufficient light available to give you a workable film speed around 1/125th or 1/150th second with the lens fully open. I'm sure you will notice the difference in quality.

The final point on films has arisen from the mail I have received in response to my first column. I've been sent some really excellent colour prints, which shows the standard of canoe photography among enthusiasts to be very high indeed. Below is one such picture of Jez Taylor at the 1981 World Championships at Bala, taken by Neil Gibson of Beccles, in Suffolk. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to do the shot justice as it is a colour print. Virtually all magazines use colour transparencies for their colour illustrations, so if you intend or hope to sell any colour pictures in the future, try and shoot on transparency film. Meanwhile carry on sending in any pictures or queries you think might be of interest to other readers.





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Hambleden Slalom

The 1983 Premier and Division One slalom at Hambleden Weir on the River Thames took place on the date scheduled after flooding in the previous two years. The course was longer than most expected with only Richard Fox managing a run in under 220 seconds. Despite its length most gates were usefully placed and generally kept out of the way of the boils.

All four individual classes were won by the National Champions — which says things both for their quality and that weirs are not in-

herently different. Richard only just beat Jimmy Jeyes who trains regularly on the Thames Weirs but said "I only just won last time at Hambleden — it's enough". Russ Smith looking really fit came third.

In the ladies the old firm — Sharman, Roderick and Garriock — finished in that order with good results from Karen Davies and Gail Allen. Martyn Hedges won the C1 class by nearly 30 seconds from Chalfont Park paddler Bob Doman with Les Williams another 10 seconds away in third place. The superiority

of C2 National Champions — Eric Jamieson and Robin Williams was even more pronounced with a win of just under ONE MINUTE from the two Bobs (Joce and Owen).

Division One saw a return to form by Roy Garriock — smarting under his demotion from Premier — who beat Simon Green — a very promising youth paddler from Manchester — by eight seconds. In the ladies, Penny Briscoe from Telford pipped Sue Hornby with Isabel Joce (just back again from Div 2) in third place.

GRANDTULLY — EASTER 1983

The first selection event for Merano took place in awful weather on the Tay. Snow, wind, hail, rain and all came along between brief glimpses of sunshine on this cold Easter weekend. Some hot favourites came unstuck and the second selection event is wide open.

Those who got through on the first attempt were predictably Richard Fox, Martyn Hedges and the C2 crew of Jamieson and Williams; less predictable was Sue Garriock's win in the ladies class beating Liz Sharman by a whisker — she's still smiling after her first win over Liz in a major event.

Albert Kerr had a bad first run and the elements were against him on the second when the wind blew gate 21 straight down on-

to his boat. The other K1s still in with a chance of selection without having to win are Paul McConkey — he looked fantastic, Roger Manwaring now out of the RAF: 4th placed Andres Gladwin just out of Youth with a dream result and Russ Smith in fifth. Unless someone beats Richard in the second selection it must be between these four for the three places.

In the ladies Gail Allen — a youth paddler from Cumbria — came third and the two Scot's girls got very good results. Jane Roderick — hot favourite for selection before the event will have to work hard on the Tryweryn to get into the team.

Les Williams had an unlucky 50 to put him

out of the top six in C1. Pete Bell got second — his best ever result with Pete Keane, Jez Taylor, Bob Doman and Bill Berrisford (in that order) all coming in front of Les.

C2 results were predictable with Joce and Owen in second and the Smith brothers third well clear of the rest of the field. Tony Ambridge and Gordon Walling got fourth place and despite having a lot to learn yet are beginning to show their potential for the future.

The event was not without its mishaps and the Slalom Executive and the Scottish Canoe Association will have to do some hard thinking if Grandtully is to remain as a selection event.

BCU GOLDEN JUBILEE 1986 LOTTERY

MARCH

1st Prize - £100.00	G. Grier, London
2nd Prize - £ 50.00	S. Dimery, Thornton Cleveleys
3rd Prize - £ 25.00	M. Warren, New York
5 Prizes - £ 5.00	E. Rudd, Bridlington
	T. McVey, Angus
	J. Haynes, Leighton Buzzard
	S. Couchman, Sunbury-on-Thames
	D. Cook, Llangollen

APRIL

1st Prize - £100.00	D. Fuller
2nd Prize - £ 50.00	H. Carpenter, Ilford
3rd Prize - £ 25.00	G. Cosgrove, Chalfont St. Peter
5 Prizes - £ 5.00	T. Knight, Kenilworth
	P. Darling, Marlow, Bucks
	M. Munday, Loughborough
	B. Hapgood, Liverpool
	R. Smith, Wimslow



Ron Emes, Director BCU, & David Wain, President, purchasing the first lottery tickets for the BCU Golden Jubilee 1986 Lottery. The first year proceeds will go to the ASCOT appeal.

JUBILEE EMBLEM COMPETITION

1986 is the Golden Jubilee of the British Canoe Union, and as such the Union will be staging various additional events, throughout the year to celebrate the occasion. The events will include special competitions in all the aspects of canoeing, for the extra special

Jubilee Trophies. Jubilee Tours; an extra special Canoe Exhibition; and the introduction of a completely new competitive discipline.

To mark this historical year we need an emblem. An emblem that can be used for advertising; printed onto 'T' shirts, ties, cloth badges; Canoe stickers/car stickers; made into jewellery, such as brooches and tie pins; etc.etc.

The emblem should be of a design that incorporates the BCU logo and can easily be adapted to the Jubilee Trophies.

Can you design this emblem? Here's your chance to show your flare. Put pencil to paper, on a sheet not more than A4 size, and send it to HQ not later than 31 July 1983. The judging will take place during August and the winner will receive a voucher for £25 of goods from BCU Supplies.

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Dominic Bailey taking a left — English Canoe Surfing Team training weekend at Widemouth, Bude, March 1983.



Derek Rosenberg — English Canoe Surfing Team, Training Weekend at Widemouth, Bude, March 1983 — who said it was cold!

The competitive surf scene got under way this year, with the highlight of the season being held on the West Coast of Ireland at Easky in County Mayo.

The Home Internationals were held on the weekend of 30 April — 1 May. Teams from Scotland, Wales, Jersey, England and the home team Ireland have competed for major individual and team honours.

England as always, field a very strong team for this event, and it is notable that as a non sponsored event all team members have paid their full fare and expenses to attend. In a very short time as team manager, Mike Crispin, himself an experienced surf paddler, has built a highly competitive and dedicated team who are helping to put competitive surfing on the map and gain its rightful position amongst the other competitive disciplines. This dedication is highlighted by the team travelling to Easky for the Irish Nationals the preceding weekend and spending the ensuing week for training and "acclimatisation".

The team felt this essential in view of the somewhat unique break and physical characteristics of this area.

Easky, although situated on the West Coast, faces North, and therefore under normal circumstances would not benefit from the

SURFING

Home Internationals

Westerly swells of the Atlantic, the sometimes huge break however is created by a reef which has developed as a result of deposits of silt and rock which have been carried down the rapidly flowing Easky River. It is worth noting that at its mouth it flows a shallow but consistent grade three, and affords the surf paddler an express ride out via the rip that is created, out beyond the break without the need for getting wet or the usual pounding expected with big surf. It is therefore strictly a place for experts only, this theory is further compounded by one story told by the locals of a surfer who parted company with his boat and was swept seven miles out to sea before being rescued, as they also claim that waves of twenty feet in height have been recorded regularly! This leads me to believe that a degree of "Irish Poetic Licence" has been exercised.

The facts however stand. Easky is an exciting venue for competent surfers creating a

permanent and consistent left hand break, which reaches a true ten foot, (frequently). Tubing occurs, thus creating some of the consistent and technically challenging surf in the British Isles.

Slalom Team

John Hermes; Dennis Ball; Gary Adcock; Mark Richards; Derek Rosenberg; Keith Trudgeon; Tom Copperthwaite (Reserve).

Ski Team

Andy Knight; 'Minnow' Green; Richard 'Paddy' Page; Nigel Dungey; Alan Cole; Kevin Andriessen.

Junior

Dominic Bailey.

Ladies

Clare Major; Sandy Irwin.

For information on surfing contact BCU Surf Committee Secretary or subscribe to the Surf Committees Magazine 'Beachbreak' editor Vyv Cox, both of whom are listed below.

Mr. Mike Keeble, BCU Surf Committee Secretary, 20 Horseshoe Close, Middlehill, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 2UL.

Mr. Vyv Cox, Editor, Beachbreak Magazine, Victoria House, Corwen Road, Treuddyn Mold, Clwyd, Wales.

Solo Round Britain

by Peter Salisbury

I expect that when someone mentions 'Circumnavigation of Britain' it immediately brings to mind Paul Caffyn and Nigel Dennis' trip of 1980. I think that maybe you would be as surprised as I was to discover that a circumnavigation of Britain was carried out in 1933!

A few weeks back Chris Hawkesworth spotted a local newspaper article which contained a few details about this early trip. I did some research and managed to contact the husband of the late lady who had actually carried out the journey.

It would appear that prior to 1933 the record for circumnavigating Britain was held by a German. Then an American by the name of Jack Nolan was going to attempt to better the German time, but had to end his attempt in Scotland due to a medical condition that became apparent during the endeavour.

A German lady by the name of Fridel Meyer came across to England in 1932. Not via British Rail Steamer, but by leaving her home in Kitzgergen-am-Main in a canoe, paddling down the Main River, onto the Rhine, up to the Hook of Holland, down the Dutch Coast to France and then across the English Channel to end her trip in London after paddling up the River Thames.

During 1932 she was a tutor in French and German, and at that time learned of Mr. Nolan's intentions. Not wishing her country's record to fall into American hands, she decided to set out on a circumnavigation by herself — well not exactly alone, as she took her pet dog, a chow named Wu Pei Fu, with her. Her craft was a 14ft Folboat, which cost her the sum of £12.

She set off from Westminster Pier on 2 June 1933, being given a big send off by well-wishers. Her equipment consisted of a rucksack containing a sleeping bag, and a comb!

Paddling down the Thames and up along the East Coast, she stopped off at almost every port and seaside town. The local people would give her a bed for the night before encouraging her on her way. Local fishermen would guide her round dangerous areas. Many adventures happened. On one occasion she rescued a man who had fallen in, and supported him across her bows for two hours before help arrived. She was to marry this man. Fridel sustained concussion twice, and was arrested on suspicion of being a spy. Due to these accidents and incidents it was into 1934 that her circumnavigation was finally completed. In 1952 she married for the second time, to Mr. Glen Dalling-Hay, and settled



Mrs. Dalling-Hay, on the East Coast in 1933, when she canoed round Britain with her dog, Wu Pei Fu.

down in Harrogate. Sad to relate, Mrs. Dalling-Hay passed away almost 50 years to her record making journey.

Of further interest in circumnavigations, there was Geoff Hunter in 1970, Hans Thompson in 1972, Paul Caffyn and Nigel Denis in 1980, Dave Summers in 1981, and this year, in April, Robert McLaughlin is setting off. Another partial canoe circumnavigation starts in early July, with David and Steven Taylor doing England and Wales.

A system has been devised to support Robert McLaughlin's attempt. A £4 donation will bring you a weekly report on his journey with the balance of the cost being used to sponsor him. For further information on this, and other trips, you can contact the International Long River Canoeist Club, 238 Birmingham Road, Redditch, Worcs., B97 6EL.



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SAFETY SYNOPSIS

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR IN SWITZERLAND

A report by Nigel Timmins, Head of Canoeing at Plas-y-Brenin. BCU delegate to the Conference.

Between 2-5 September 1982, the Swiss Federation staged the first International Safety Conference on the Simm, near Bern. It was attended by nearly all the European nations, but unfortunately, due to costs, delegates from America and Australia were absent.

The three aims were:

1. To outline the extent of safety organisations within the different nations
2. Discuss pressing safety problems.
3. Draw conclusions.

At first, the delegate from each nation outlined the structure of its governing body, with particular regard to safety — existence of safety panels, coaching schemes, trade associations. Germany was perhaps the most interesting, since they have on average thirty deaths per year due to canoeing. In 1976 they set up the international committee on safety on white water, ISW, which studied safety helmets and boat construction in some detail in conjunction with manufacturers. Unfortunately this has not continued due to infighting among its members. It was hoped that this meeting would re-ignite the organisation.

Most of the other countries had similar experience to Britain. The Swiss actually had three safety courses that coaches had to attend. The French who are strictly controlled by the government, have twenty-two full time national coaches, and two full time researchers, dealing with canoeing problems.

Boat Construction

A number of individuals then presented papers on their thoughts on important safety problems, or new ideas. Firstly, some thoughts on boat construction, by Holger Machotschek.

He concerned himself with boat construction, particularly in relation to accidents involving boats being wrapped around rocks, and other obstacles.

Incidents A and B can be avoided with good technique. A competent paddler will rarely be in these situations, whereas a poor paddler will stumble from potential A to B incidents quite frequently. A good coaching scheme is therefore obviously required but it would not completely solve the problem. The boat needs to be constructed in such a manner that it is less likely to get into serious situations, or collapse so that it traps the occupant.

He advocates:

- 1 Boats be made shorter (situation A less likely to happen). The 4-metre length is a hang-up from slalom, and wild water touring boats need not have a minimum length. They will of course turn more quickly.
- 2 Boats should be of high volume with rounded ends. Situation B happens less easily with a high volume boat, and situation C less easily with rounded ends, since it is less likely to jam or stick on a projecting rock shelf.
- 3 A very strong area around the cockpit, so that it is far less likely to break at the cockpit

than at the ends. At present the weak point in most of our boats is near or centred on the cockpit.

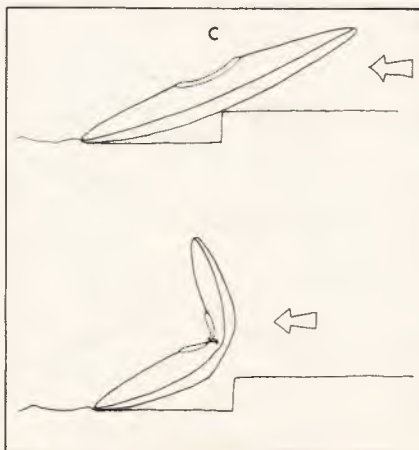
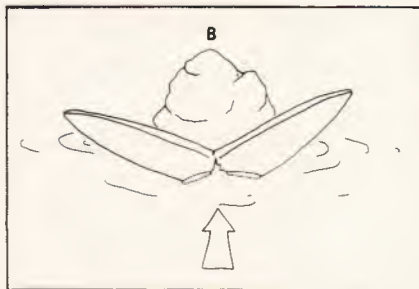
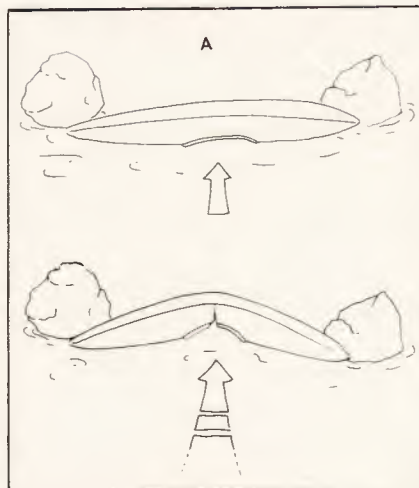
4 In certain instances such as C, the only way of making the boat safe is to have a large cockpit — where the deck and hull are quite high — so making escape even for the largest paddler quite easy. Cockpit lengths should be:

Length 85cm

Width 45cm

Height 25-30cm

Considerable discussion took place on his ideas, and generally there was a lot of agreement about some of them.



Practical Tests Some testing of boats then took place on the river with three boats. 1 an old Diolen Kayak. 2 Prijon new plastic (blow moulded) kayak. 3 A boat designed on the above principles, belonging to one of the organisers, Peter Bani. Each boat was placed in turn on the upstream side of a rock, cockpit facing upstream. The water flow round the rock was 10 kph.

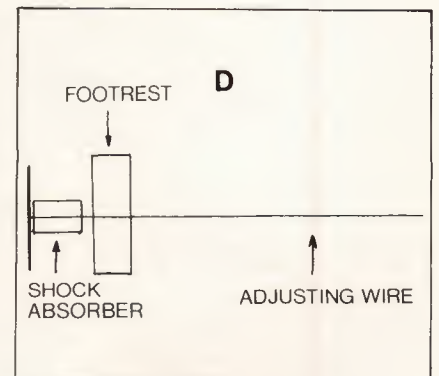
The first boat folded and would have trapped the occupant. The second boat did not fold, but the cockpit area did collapse slightly. Due to the large cockpit, the occupant would have been able to escape. The third, Peter's boat, was extremely difficult to locate. Every time it hit the rock amidships, the boat did not deform but appeared to bounce off, or only the ends would catch. Even paddling it did not help — in every single case the paddler would easily have extricated himself.

There was just one complaint with this test — and that was that Peter's boat had a large air bag in the rear, whereas the others had no buoyancy at all. When I pointed this out, I was told a similar test the week before, with no buoyancy in the Kayak, had given the same results?

Despite this complaint, which I do feel needs further investigation, it was still an impressive test with interesting results. Perhaps we should be looking along the same lines with regard to boat construction and cockpit size, particularly as we are now seeing more and more kevlar or plastic canoes — neither of which will break in a wrap-around situation.

Footrests

The Germans have recently seen a spate of serious leg injuries, due to people shooting waterfalls that do not have deep plunge pools. A few footrests were shown which incorporated small shock absorbers. Simply first — a plate footrest, with three-inch shock-absorbing foam on it. Secondly, a plate footrest adjusted from wires attached near the cockpit — common in many German boats — with a small bobbin of rubber placed behind plate (See diagram D).



With waterfall shooting getting more popular, something else we ought to be thinking of perhaps.

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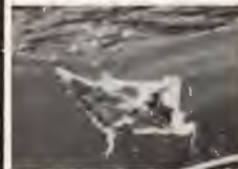
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Rescue techniques

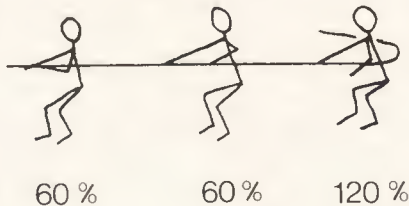
Finally, a very interesting article was presented by Peter Treithmaier, an Austrian, on river accidents and rescue techniques. I shall just mention the important factors.

He felt we cannot study rescue techniques without first knowing our enemy — the forces a river puts on man and boat. He had measured the speed of several very different rivers, and surprisingly found that most rivers flow at 10 kph. The very fastest was 17 kph. It seems that we have been grossly exaggerating the speed of rivers? He then measured the forces on a rescuer and/or his boat in the water. Man in the water (speed of river 10 kph in every case) — force on rope holding him approximately 50 kilo-ponts. The best position to attach the rope to a rescuer having to enter the water, was found to be to his back, between the shoulder blades. This caused the rescuer to float with his head high, with a pressure wave round the back of the head, leaving a small hollow near his mouth — though at much over 10 kph, a pressure wave completely covered the head!

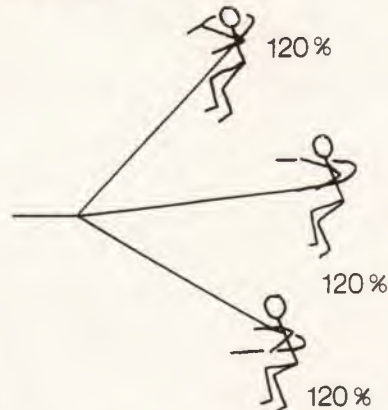
The idea of a rescuer entering fast water with a rope tied round his waist was anathema to the majority of delegates. In certain situations the water pressure could cause the person involved to fold up helplessly. A boat cockpit facing upstream produced forces of 400 kilo-ponts. What was of great interest was that if the speed of the water doubled, there was a quadrupling of the force on the boat or paddler, in a ratio of 4:1. Half the speed results in $\frac{1}{4}$ of the force.

The forces that a man can apply to a rope, were then measured. We discovered that fitness played a very small part — what was more important was weight. Using a shoulder belay — with an 8mm rope — most subjects could apply 120% of their body weight. On a

6mm rope this was only 110%. If the subject merely held the rope the effort went down to only 60% of the person's weight. So a number of people pulling on a rope normally only appear a very moderate force eg:



It would be far better if these people were arranged thus:



To summarise, the forces that a river subjects on a man or boat are not that great — the difficulties of rescue originate from the very moderate forces we can apply to a horizontal rope. If we could rescue from above things would be much easier, and we therefore need

to develop methods and techniques to make use of this. Secondly — an even more difficult disadvantage — is the lack of attachment points on victims. It was advocated that paddlers should all wear chest harnesses in Grade IV water or above.

Thirdly, we should all go out and practise rescue techniques. It is not just enough to read about them. The paddling team should be familiar with techniques and implement them immediately. Where a large team is involved 3 or 4 people should perform the rescue, but others should at the same time be organising a second rescue procedure to take over should the first one fail.

Never tie yourself onto a rope — a quick release chest harness is required.

Some situations are so dangerous that a rescuer can do little to help. We must be able to recognise these instances. Never take risks (Blackpool Police drowning incident)!

Drowning

Though no scientific evidence was available, several recorded experiences led delegates to believe that a drowning person may enter a quiet phase — a period where the need for air disappears. Panic dies down, and one can think clearly about the escape and the predicament (eg caught in a stopper). Instead of fighting for the surface it may then be possible to swim to the bottom of the river and away underneath the stopper.

If you would like a copy of the items presented at this meeting please send a sae to Nigel Timmins at Plas y Brenin, Capel Curig, Nr Betws y Coed, Gwynedd, North Wales

All in all this was a very interesting meeting. Another conference will take place in two years' time. A British Safety Conference is planned for January 1984 at Plas y Brenin. Details from Plas y Brenin or BCU office.

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Suffolk Canoe Expedition to Arctic Scandinavia 1982

Phil Hunter

After 42 hours of almost non stop driving we arrived in Narvik. Our heavily overladen Ford Transit found the going quite tough with the road deteriorating into dirt tracks. We spent a couple of hours in Narvik stocking up on a few essentials, such as mosquito repellent, before heading west to Lodingen on the Lofoten Islands. Situated off the end of the Ofot fjord on the west coast of Norway some 200 km. north of the Arctic circle. Our aim was to canoe from the Norwegian Sea, across Norway and Sweden to finish in the northern end of the Gulf of Bothnia on the Finnish border. A distance of some 450 miles.

Our journey fell into four sections: i) The Ofot fjord ii) A mountain section leading to: — iii) The Tornetrask (a large lake 64 km long and 9 km wide) iv) The Torne Alv. (river Torne). To cope with the difference types of water we were to encounter we had chosen to use Everest canoes which proved excellent, surviving the expedition with hardly a scratch.

Ofot Fjord

The canoeing started in earnest on July 30th. We headed eastwards towards the mainland with a force four wind on our beam. The dramatic mountain scenery was blotted out by low cloud.

On entering the fjord the channelling effect gave us a following wind which in turn produced a four foot swell. Although the swell was helpful, trying to surf on the waves for hours tested the groups fitness. We made camp at about 5.00pm. Time had little meaning as it didn't get dark until 11.30pm.

We set off again at 6.00am the next morning to catch the tide. The day turned out to be sunny and warm with only a slight breeze and by 10am we had covered the days allotted distance of 15 miles. As the conditions were so good we decided to push on for the head of

the fjord. This meant paddling against the current for a few hours but the end of the fjord was reached late that evening and we were one day ahead of our schedule.

Mountain section (*Riksgransen to Bjorkliden*)

This next section was to be the start of the really testing canoeing. A number of small mountain lakes were connected by fast flowing streams with a number of grade four and five rapids. These streams gradually increased in size and power before disappearing into the 2 km long Njuraatno canyon and eventually spilling into the calm, cold waters of the Tornetrask.

From the head of the fjord up to Riksgransen in the mountains is about 20 miles. As there is no road the only way to get our mini bus and equipment over the mountains was to load it onto a train. It would have to continue another 100 miles beyond Riksgransen to Kiruna. We decided to split into two groups, one group would take their canoes as hand luggage and get off the train at Riksgransen while the others would carry on to Kiruna and get the mini bus off the train, then drive back as far as the roads would allow. This group would then walk into the mountains, inspect the Njuraatno canyon, and then rendezvous and report their findings to the canoeing party.

The canoeing party paddled across the first lake and made camp by the first rapid. Everyone was feeling very excited. The 'real' canoeing was about to start, also our running battle with the mosquitoes. They seemed to thrive on the repellent: licking it off before biting us.

The next morning a number of difficult rapids were negotiated. One of these was the grade six ??? which rather resembled a water-

fall with the only possible route blocked by a large boulder over which the water cascaded. This was the only rapid portaged on this section. Camp was made late that afternoon while the arrival of the walking party was awaited. Although the day had gone well tension was mounting with thoughts of the coming canyon which had already claimed the life of a German canoeist.

The walking party had had a much more difficult task. In order to inspect the canyon they had had to fight through dwarf birch forests, which grew horizontally at chest height, wade through bags and chest high grass. The mozzies were everywhere. The only clothing which gave any sort of protection were waterproofs.

They arrived exhausted, physically sick and in a state of collapse. It had been a long day and there were many tales to tell.

A briefing was held round the camp fire later in the evening. The canyon was 90% canoeable although it would be desperate. The biggest problem was a very nasty, narrow drop at the end and should anyone capsize there would be no chance of a rescue. There was only one reasonable break-out in its whole length; half-way down behind a large rock fall which partially blocked the river. If the canyon was to be canoed the problem was how to get out before being swept over the last drop which we had dubbed the 'washing machine'.

With a few miles of canoeing to do before the canyon was reached, Mark, Bob, Paul and Steve set off at 8.50am. The volume and power of the water had now increased and a number of exciting rapids were encountered. The practice of unpacking canoes and carrying equipment to the bottom of rapids was abandoned as too time consuming so they were paddling canoes weighing around sixty

The Team at the finish. Phil Hunter, Bob Murray, Pat Stebbings, Ken Dobson, Steve Macfarlane, Paul Dainty, Jackie Martins, Mark Attenburrow.



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Above the Njuraatwo Canyon (Photo Mark Attenburrow)



pounds. The top of the canyon was reached at 12 noon.

The walls were high and steep. The water entered the canyon in a turmoil of frothing white water and vanished round a bend. There was no way this could be undertaken in laden canoes. They decided to carry their equipment to the bottom of the canyon, inspecting the river on the way and in particular the 'washing machine' at the bottom. They had to fight through a jumble of twisted dwarf birch trees and scramble up and down loose rock walls. Most of the time the river was 100 feet below them. Even from this height it looked very big and fast. At the bottom they dumped their gear and studied the 'washing machine'. It was immediately obvious that anything which went in was not going to come out. Not in one piece anyway. A search upstream found a rather small eddy. It would be desperate but just possible. The eddy was at the foot of a cliff some eighty feet high. It was this or nothing although one of them fancied trying to carry their canoes through the birch forest. Tying hand loops into a climbing rope they dangled it down the wall into the eddy. This would help them locate the eddy in plenty of time and give them something to grab at should they be in danger of being swept past. This was more psychological than

practical. They would then have to climb up the wall and haul their canoes up behind them. By the time they paddled into the torrent at the top of the canyon it was 4pm. Each with his own thoughts. High on one of the canyon walls was painted a yellow cross in memory of the drowned German.

The entrance to the canyon was dramatic. There were large boils and boulders everywhere, and the noise...?? Sweeping into the canyon the pace quickened. The canoes plummeted into large holes three or four feet deep and were smashed into stoppers and standing waves. The canoeing was instinctive. There was no time to think. More than once canoes were tossed into the air.

Mark reached the break-out behind the rock fall. Bob and then Steve joined him. Where was Paul? The noise was deafening. Steve shouted that he had seen Paul bounce off a rock and capsize. There was nothing they could do but wait. After a few anxious moments Paul bounced round the corner. He later explained how he had had to roll twice before regaining control. We regained our composure and swept off down river again. The canoeing was exciting and very frightening. We found our rope and managed to extricate ourselves from the clutches of the canyon with difficulty but without mishap. We

Phil Hunter on Kengis (Photo Ken Dobson)



eventually got back into our canoes below the 'washing machine' at 6.00pm. It had taken six hours to cover just 2 km of that time only ten minutes was actually canoeing. We were all very tired but greatly elated as we paddled the last few miles into the Tornetrask and made camp at Bjorkkliden.

The Tornetrask

This provided a complete contrast. The lake was beautiful but the water was painfully cold. It took just over two days to canoe its 64 km length.

The Tornealy

Where the Tornealy drains the Tornetrask is a large grade IV/V rapid named Terrakoski. Here we got our first taste of the type of problems which were ahead of us. The river was about 300 metres wide at this point and we quickly learned how difficult it was to judge the size of the stoppers and holes when everything is on such a large scale. We devised a system of signalling to guide one another onto the correct line. To be committed to a wrong line in this type of water could prove costly.

Mark was the first to discover our error of judgement. After very careful consideration we agreed on a line and subsequently guided Mark onto it. A few metres into the rapid was what looked like a patch of foaming water but when Mark hit it he all but vanished into what was in fact a shoulder high stopper. Fortunately it was washing out at one end and after a few anxious moments he manoeuvred his way out. Had he been stuck, there would have been little we could do to help. Paul followed and gave a demonstration of how to roll using only one hand. Although we thought we had learned a lesson from this incident we were to underestimate the size and power of the river on a number of occasions during the following days.

The scenery had now changed dramatically, we were now passing through unending forests of majestic lush green, conifers which seemed to cover almost every square metre of land.

The canoeing became a routine of long flat stretches of still water. The river at this point was a series of long narrow lakes joined to one another by large bouncy rapids.

We arrived at Jukkasjarvi, back in civilization, and were able to have a hot shower and proper food for the first time in a couple of weeks. The local rafting company took great delight in explaining the difficulties which lay ahead. They were particularly enthusiastic with their description of one rapid — KENGIS (King).

The next few days were quite relaxed as we paddled fast flowing flat sections with frequent rapids of grade II to IV. One notable rapid was Merasinka Falls. A 3 metre drop with some very nasty stoppers. Patrick was forced to roll after tackling one of these head on. There were also a number of long (2km plus) grade III rapids which gave good sport.

On our 18th day we arrived at the top of Kengis. The rapid is about 1½ kms across at the widest point and has a large island in the middle. The approach to the rapid is defended by a maze of rocks and boulders stretching a kilometre upstream. The power and speed of the water was tremendous. To the left of the island all the water passed over a drop about 20 metres wide with a force which could have smashed our canoes to pieces.

The route on the right hand side of the island was promising but ended in a rocky drop. It would also have required a great deal

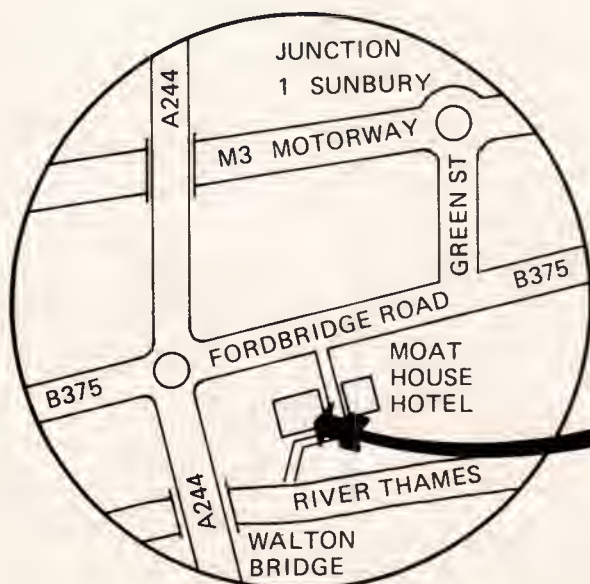
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of luck in negotiating a series of fast, narrow shoots, stoppers and boulders. We decided not to trust to luck.

Not to be beaten all together we agreed to attempt a line on the left but starting just below the first large drop. This still left us with some very difficult canoeing to do. From below the first fall there was about 200 metres of very fast, confused water complete with the usual boulders and stoppers to negotiate. The river then disappeared over a large drop which we estimated to be in excess of 20 feet. Because of the configuration of the banks it was not possible to see what was below the drop. However, there was an alternative. Part of the river flowed off to the left and then round to the right to emerge at the bottom of the fall. Rather like a wet, bumpy helter skelter. We couldn't see much of this route either but it seemed the lesser of two evils. At least we could see it wasn't a vertical drop.

We pushed mark off first (well the expedition had been his idea). In order to avoid two hands of stoppers we had to ferry glide to an eddy on the far bank. Drop down stream a few metres and then ferry glide back to the near bank. This enabled us to get lined up for the bottom part of the rapid. The water was very high and turbulent. A capsizing, even if followed by a quick roll would have resulted in canoe and occupant being swept over the main fall.

Mark was directed too far to the right and was close to being swept over the main fall before he realized it. A frantic piece of back paddling (which had little effect) and a well placed boulder (which had a big effect) saved him and he was able to get to a better position. Following Marks lead the rest of the group made an exciting descent. Shortly after Kengis the Torne Alvis joined by the Muonia Alv. The increased volume of water swept us effortlessly towards the coast.

Matkakoski proved to be tremendously ex-

hilarating. We shot it to the right of a large rock island in the centre. It was fairly straightforward, consisting of a series of huge standing waves. The first of these was about 10 feet high with a folding top. Steve was back looped on the top of this, making for some exciting film. He declined a re-take.

Day 22. Our last day. We were at the top of Kullolaforsen and oh what headaches some of us had. We had a celebration meal at a local hostelry, which overlooks the rapid, and when we suggested that £2 a pint was rather expensive for beer, the manager, who was impressed with our venture, agreed with us and supplied a few free rounds.

Kukkolaforsen proved to be big and bouncy and lots of fun, provided the stopper at the top was avoided. A local canoeist who shot it with us didn't pay it enough respect and had a fifteen minute swim before he could be got to the bank.

Sixteen kilometres later we rafted up and drifted under the bridge at Haparanda singing Rule Britannia and drank a bottle of champagne. We had reached the Baltic.

Expedition Members Mark Attenburrow (leader), Jackie Martins, Paul Dainty, Ken Dobson, Phil Hunter, Steve Macfarlane, Bob Murray, Patrick Stebbings. We would like to thank the undermentioned for helping to make our expedition possible: Symru Canoes, Wild Water Centre, Phoenix Mountaineering, Leisure & Camping (Norwich) Ltd, Gunton Hall Country Club, Colman Foods, South Pier Leisure, Lowestoft, Briar School of English, Nabisco Ltd, Days Garage (Lowestoft), Bayer Chemicals, Fred Olsen Ltd, Tor Holidays, Persson Transport Shipping, Paul Magnus Transport, Shepperton Design Studios, East Anglian Daily Times, Davis Decorators, Deben Printing Co., Phoenix Label Co., John Gray Studios, Adams Brewery, Kellogs Ltd.,

TRIATHLON TRAUMAS

Ron the Run, more formally titled the Director of the Union, is currently reflecting on the foolishness of hasty decisions and the bravado that comes with middle years, and the desire to create a "macho" image. The invitation extended by 'Houndog' to readers of *Focus*, seeking a "charley" to run half-marathons in aid of the Holme Pierrepont Artificial Slalom Course Fighting Fund has encouraged a whole range of invitations to our venerable Director, to perform prodigious feats of endurance and daring. Some of those are frankly indecent and unmentionable, others have obviously been sent by those seeking his early demise, and yet others were obviously pinched from the labours of Hercules. Amongst the more reasonable proposals is an invitation from Drew Manwell, well known in Scottish canoeing circles to compete in the Highland Triathlon series. These events, which have been perfectly refined to produce the maximum possible physical pain, without so I'm told actually causing death, consist of 13 miles running, 10 miles canoeing, and 35 miles cycling, not in a month, or a week, but in one day, one after the other, continuously, without stopping, 58 miles. This extreme form of punishment has the added advantage for those seeking out suffering of a particular sophisticated nature, in that it costs £7.50 to enjoy. There are two events remaining this year, and those who are "peculiar" enough to read on, will be fascinated to learn that Loch Tay will be held on the 27th August and Deeside on the 1st October.

Oh yes, Ron the Run, well he did complete his first half marathon at Lincoln in very adverse conditions, and is presently bragging about his time of 1 hour 50 minutes. With luck he will be persuaded to undertake a Triathlon on his next outing.

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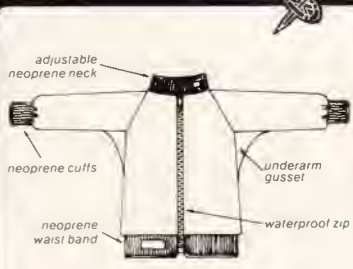
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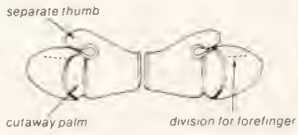
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Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race 1983



Paul Owen

This was to be the year that the annual Devizes to Westminster Canoe Marathon lived up to its reputation as the toughest race of its kind in the World. At 7.00 am on Good Friday a cold wind was blowing on the Devizes Wharf and with snow forecast for later, entrants were beginning to wonder what the remainder of the weekend had in store. Records were certainly the order of the day; Record Senior and Overall entries, record number of teams, record female competitors and even a record number of overseas crews.

This year's favourites, Peter Watson and Justin Rosling, of Bradford on Avon Canoe Club, departed at 7.15 am 13 minutes behind the Royal Engineers pair of Wood and Heath, both of these crews intending to paddle for the evening tide. A feat that this year, to stand

any chance of success, would almost certainly need yet another record. Teddington by 19.00 hrs. Most senior crews would choose to aim for the Saturday morning tide, this would mean leaving Devizes during the afternoon and paddling all night.

After watching the 68 Junior competitors start we caught the leading pair at Dunmill Lock. Watson and Rosling had forged ahead and were now 16 minutes clear taking 29 minutes out of the service pair in 26 miles. Rumours abounded that the Bradford on Avon crew had not taken refreshment since Devizes and a few miles later they were to withdraw after a disagreement. Watson apparently returned to Devizes in the hope that he would find a new partner and could start again, in this venture he was unsuccessful.

The Engineers were about half an hour clear of the rest of the field by Newbury. The stretch of about 8 miles prior to this point proved to be the undoing of many crews. Two Junior pairings withdrew with hypothermia, one crew member having to be taken to hospital after receiving treatment from a senior competitor who lost 2 hours and effectively ruined his race schedule. Canoeing veterans commented that they felt many crews were inadequately dressed considering the chilling nature of the wind. Wood and Heath passed through Newbury at around 12.30 about half an hour slower than Greenham and Cornish's record schedule. We caught up with them at Blakes Lock, Reading which has been for so long the traditional place to stop and change before paddling onto the Thames. This year local difficulties meant that we were unable to use the Lock Island. The next leg from Reading through Henley to Marlow demoralized the Service crew and by Marlow they were 2 hours down on a record schedule and were slipping away from the chance of reaching Teddington at a reasonable time. At Marlow they chose to change into warm clothes for the remainder of the night. By Bray morale had been re-kindled, and by the taste of the coffee the support team gave me I can see why. Bray at 20.00 hrs was not very pleasant, driving rain and icy winds meant that I was quite glad to return to the warmth of the car.

The leg between Bray and Teddington was paddled at a brisk pace and the tideway was reached at midnight, a time that did not seem possible at Marlow. Nevertheless, this tired crew were faced with 17 miles of paddling against the tide, a difficult task at the best of times. Eventually Westminster was reached at 03.30 hours on Saturday morning. The target time for the rest of the field had been set.

The camp site at Westminster was able to doze back into a night's sleep before the next crews finished at a touch past 9.15. Between 9.15 and 14.00 about 40 of the remaining crews passed under the shadow of Big Ben. These included every type of canoe team from crack service crews to pairs that were amazed that they had joined that elite band of people who had paddled the race in under 24 hours. Just outside 24 hours with a time of 27 hrs 45 minutes a team from Highfield School who were certainly dressed as ladies, with long dresses and flowers in their hats.

The Irish crew of Delcan O'Donovan and James Kennedy made Westminster just before midday. Their time of 19 hrs 56 mins 50 secs was quicker than the Engineers by 34 mins. The race had been won and lost on the tide. Senior crews arrived at Westminster at all times of day and night up to Monday morning. The sting in the tail for many crews was to be the snow showers on Saturday night.

The most memorable performance was that of Mary Garrett and Sheila O'Byrne who smashed the Devizes to Westminster Ladies record with a time of 21 hours 47 mins 57 secs. Fastest mixed crew was Rosemary Purkiss and Angus Fitchet of Poole Harbour with a time of 22 hours 22 min 02 sec. Only 86 senior crews out of the original 172 starters finished, this included two blind competitors who competed in the London Running Marathon in April.

56 out of 68 Juniors completed the course. This race was also won on the tideway by L. Chretien and P. Wright of Stubbers/Havering Canoe Club in 17 hrs 37 mins 56 secs. Eight crews from the two Reading clubs of Warren and Leighton Park School finished in the top 12.

RESULTS

Senior

1. D. O' Donovan/J. Kennedy	Argonauts KC Cork	19 hrs 56 mins 50 secs
2. T. Wood/A. Heath	Royal Engineers CC	20 hrs 30 mins 58 secs
3. T. Lankester/J. Anderson	Gillingham CC	21 hrs 03 mins 02 secs
4. A Parsons/M. Pritchard	Birmingham	21 hrs 14 mins 39 secs
5. R. Davidson/N. Wright	Royal Engineers CC	21 hrs 47 mins 34 secs
6. Mary Garrett/Sheila O'Byrne	Richmond & Argonauts CC	21 Hrs 47 mins 57 secs

Mixed

1. A Fitchet/Rosemary Purkis	Poole Harbour	22 hrs 22 mins 02 secs (11th Overall)
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Female

1. Mary Garrett/Sheila O'Byrne	Richmond & Argonauts CC	21 hrs 47 mins 57 secs (6th overall)
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Team

1. Royal Engineers CC	Crews 251, 252, 254	65 hrs 09 secs 03 secs
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Juniors

1. L. Chretien/P. Wright	Stubbers/Havering	17 hrs 37 mins 56 secs
2. T. Kendall/M. Cottam	Leighton Park School	17 hrs 41 mins 45 secs
3. H. Topham/S. Challacombe	Warren CC	17 hrs 46 mins 50 secs
4. H. Wyatt/L. Glass	Leighton Park School	18 hrs 13 mins 41 secs
5. T. Whitmore/A. Battenberg	Leighton Park School	18 hrs 24 mins 52 secs
C. Newey/A. Matthes	Warren CC	18 hrs 40 mins 59 secs

Team

1. Leighton Park School	Crews 62, 63, 64	54 hrs 20 mins 18 secs
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THE SEVERN BORE

For those who have never quite been able to make their minds up as to whether they are sea, surf, or river paddlers the Gloucester Canoe Club may be able to offer advice which could help you make up your mind.

We refer of course to the phenomena known as the 'Severn Bore' which is created in the estuary of the River Severn where it meets the waste flood tide of the Bristol Channel. This water pushing its way up the even banks of the Severn creates a standing wave which holds the distinction of holding the world record for the longest single wave ever surfed.

Although not recommended for the solo paddler small groups of 'Proficiency Plus', standard operating with experienced leaders can gain considerable enjoyment from participating in this unique experience.

The usual place for picking up the bore is at Newnham on the A48 South West of Gloucester. Access for vehicles and canoeists is readily available. The experience begins with the sound of a distant rumble which to the uninitiated can be quite unnerving. It is however quite easy to pick up the bore at this point as the river is wide and hence the wave produced is well formed and moving com-

paratively slowly. To part company with your boat at this stage results only in a well supervised rescue, or at worst a swim to the bank. Such groups should aim to be off the river by Westbury, as beyond this point the river narrows dramatically, the wave steepens to some four feet on a large bore, the banks steepen from the continual scouring of the bore and overhanging trees create further problems.

For the totally committed and experienced canoeists, the bore can be ridden to Minsterworth and beyond to Gloucester Wier which covers on the larger bores.

The size of bores is dependent on the respective ranges of neap and spring tides, this can of course be further affected by prevailing weather conditions, it should therefore be noted that the listed predictions for size and times of medium and large bores are only approximations.

For further details of the Severn Bore canoeists should contact: Phil Dingsdale of the Gloucester Canoe Club, 4 Gifford Close, Longlevens, Gloucester G12 0E1. A stamped addressed envelope should be provided for any replies required.

Month	Date	Day	Time AM	Prospect	Time PM	Prospect
August	10th	Wed.	10.05	Medium	22.20	Medium
August	11th	Thur.	10.50	Medium	23.00	Large
August	12th	Fri.	11.30	Medium	23.45	Medium
September	7th	Wed.	09.05	Medium	21.20	Medium
September	8th	Thur.	09.50	Large	22.00	Large
September	9th	Fri.	10.25	Large	22.40	Large
September	10th	Sat.	11.05	Large	23.15	Medium
October	6th	Thur.	08.45	Medium	21.05	Large
October	7th	Fri.	09.25	Large	21.40	Large
October	7th	Sat.	10.05	Large	22.15	Large
October	9th	Sun.	10.40	Large	22.55	Medium
Gloucester Bore Race						
November	4th	Mon.	07.25	Medium	19.40	Medium
November	5th	Tues.	08.05	Medium	20.20	Medium
November	6th	Wed.	08.40	Medium	20.55	Medium
November	7th	Thur.	09.15	Medium	21.30	Small

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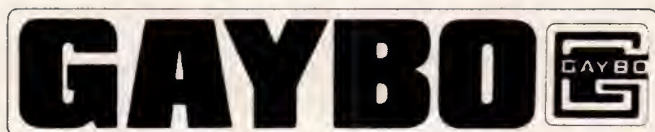
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In recent years everybody and anybody who is anybody in sea expedition kayaking has departed these shores like droves of lemmings, for the frozen wastes of Alaska. Upon their return spine chilling reports and lectures have appeared extolling the skills, virtues, guts and tenacity of these modern day trail blazers. Tales of close encounters with Killer Whales, crushing pack ice, sub zero conditions and that most ferocious of beasts the grizzly bear abound. Fortunately, however, the encounters no matter how close and well related by some of our more experienced expeditioners, have never resulted in an eyeball to eyeball confrontation, although I do recall one lecturer who photographed one at a local zoo "to set the mood" as he put it!

However, all is not lost for the BCU ever mindful of the need to make a dollar or two to offset the ravages of inflation have acquired a fine example of a grizzly bear, which may be hired from BCU supplies for the "staging" of your more adventurous action photos, or to "set the mood" at your next lecture. Caution should however be exercised as the beast is not yet house trained.

The photograph shows one of the BCU executive staff suitably disguised as a pioneer with the pre-requisite beard as required by all outdoor types, collecting the bear and demonstrating just how friendly he is.

All requests for hiring should be addressed to the Intensive Care Unit, Addlestone General Hospital.

Signed: Envious of Addlestone

On a 'more serious note, there are some excellent illustrated lectures and reports available via members of the BCU. Some of the more notable ones appear right.



EXPEDITION REPORTS

Fraser River:

Peter Knowles, 125 Hook Rise South
Surbiton, Surrey

Aleutian/Alaska:

Derek Hutchinson, 18 Marina Drive, South
Shields, Tyne & Wear NE33 2NH

Nordcap/Baffin Island/Cape Horn:

Frank Goodman, 72 Wittingham Road,
Mapperley, Nottingham NG3 6BH

Iceland/Dire Straights:

Nigel Foster, 5 Tan y Bwlch, Mynedd
Llandegai Nr. Bangor, Gwynedd

Norway:

Colin Mortlock, Old Fisherbeck, Old Lake
Road, Ambleside, Cumbria LA22 0DH

Sea Expeditions Generally:

John Ramwell, (Advanced Sea Kayak Club),
4 Wavell Garth, Sandall, Wakefield, Yorks.

Inland Expeditions Generally:

Peter Salisbury, 238 Birmingham Road, Redditch,
Worcs B97 6EL (Long River Canoeist Club)

5th International Sea Kayaking Symposium 1983.

The Sea Kayak Symposiums are held every second year and bring together many of the country's top sea kayaking devotees. Guest speakers will talk on many varying topics although the general theme of 'Expeditions' will run throughout.

The event will take place at Ullswater Outward Bound School, Nr. Penrith Cumbria on the 12th and 13th November 1983. Further details and application forms can be gained from J.J. Ramwell, 4 Wavell Garth, Sandal, Wakefield, West Yorkshire. Closing date 1 October 1983.

ADDITION TO THE 1983 'BUYERS GUIDE'

AC Canoe Products (Chester Ltd) supply to retailers the 'Mirage' and 'Quest' kayaks made under licence from the Perception Company of the USA.

Due to recent increases in prices Kayaks will now be supplied at retail prices of: Mirage — natural colour £270.25. Black, yellow or blue £281.75.

Quest kayaks are not expected to be available again until late summer when they will be produced in the British factory. A.C. Canoe Products (Chester) Ltd, P.O. Box 62, Chester (Telephone 311711).

CUMBRAE

The Cumbrae National Watersports Training Centre is run by the Scottish Sports Council at Largs on the Firth of Clyde.

Apart from an extensive range of dinghy and keelboat sailing courses the centre also runs a variety of sea canoeing courses in some of the most interesting water around Britain's coast line.

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For application forms and brochures contact Cumbrae National Water Sports Training Centre, Inverclyde, Largs, Ayrshire KA30 8RW (047557) 4666.

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SLALOM COACHES EAT MEAT

Hugh Mantle, National Competition Coach for Slalom, put together a very 'meaty' course for Slalom coaches at the end of January. The venue was Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham. The theme: 'Towards Advanced Performance'.

Dr Craig Sharp, one of the country's leading exercise physiologists maintained maximum interest throughout the Saturday as, with his unique gift, he translated into layman's terms the extremely complex functions which are involved in the body's response to hard training. The importance of analysing the requirements of the sport, and the individual athlete, was stressed.

In the evening Hugh Mantle presented a spirited and well thought out analysis of the problems facing the Union as it seeks to provide a proper coaching structure. He questioned whether other truly world class paddlers were in fact being produced in strength, and urged the coaching needed an immediate infusion of funds to capitalise on our current happy state. The employment of a full-time coach to consolidate the present gains was vital.

Alan Edge, recently British Team Captain, outlined the various situations of water and land which can be utilised to train for sustained technical precision. He made the important point that when training for strength, the paddling rate should not be slowed overmuch. There is a theory that if you train at a rate slower than your competition rate, then you will compete at the same rate!

The establishment of squads has made a significant contribution to the development of excellence. Chris Davies, from Eastern Region, presented a detailed survey of the squad system, and gave a number of pertinent and helpful pointers to those seeking to establish county and regional advanced training squads.

The inimitable John MacLeod brought to bear his vast experience as both a paddler and a coach, and outlined his very specific views on developing advanced technique. The difficult task of getting that tiny extra percentage of improvement in top class performers, which makes the difference between 1st and 2nd place, including how to deal with the 'bogey' gate, was the substance of the British Team Coach's remarks, which concluded a most worthwhile weekend.

In closing the conference, the Director of Coaching paid tribute to the quality and dedication of those involved in producing the current slalom coaching structure and expertise, and thanked the speakers for the very good presentations which had been made. Hugh Mantle's work, in arranging the conference, and even more particularly for the success he had made of the job of national coach, deserved all our tributes. The points made concerning the needs for the future, were being pursued. An emphasis on increasing membership was a major key to the funding of the provisions we all agreed were badly needed.

Please send £1 for a full 36-page copy of the papers presented at the Conference to BCU office. The 1984 Conference is now being planned, and full details will be published in the next issue of *Focus*.

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RNLI SAVES 23 CANOEISTS LIVES DURING 1982

Dick Richards, the BCU's Coastguard Liaison Officer, and Regional Controller for HM Coastguard, Swansea, has produced an analysis which shows that in fact HM Coastguard instituted search and rescue procedures on 23 occasions during 1982, involving 63 paddlers. The assessment 'lives saved' is made when, in the opinion of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, but for the service of the Lifeboat, lives would have been lost. There were 2 fatalities from canoes.

In comparison, sailboards required help 177 times (97 lives saved) and sailing dinghies 194 (109 lives saved). There were 221 launchings to rowing, rubber dinghies, inflatables and other manually propelled craft (135 lives saved).

Shoreline, the RNLI membership scheme, is the most popular method of supporting the

work of the RNLI. Minimum subscription is £5 (family membership £7.50). Members receive the quarterly magazine *The Lifeboat*, and are entitled to wear attractive insignia, ties, sweaters and other goods. Details from RNLI, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1HZ.

A reproduction of Dick Richards' report and recommendations is available from the Sea Touring Committee, on receipt of a sae at BCU office. He is particularly concerned that 'sillies' number large among the statistics, and writes as follows:

"Under my Coastguard cap I was at Barmouth last week and received pleas on this subject from both the Harbour Master Evan Jones (who is also the Auxiliary Coastguard in Charge there) and from Hugh Roberts the Snowdonia National Parks Schools Liaison

Officer. Evan in particular was concerned that as they had had several experiences of groups launching within the Mawddach Estuary when either weather or tidal conditions were unsuitable and subsequently getting into difficulties when local angling boats were asked to assist. When this situation occurs more than once or twice the local boatmen begin to complain and the local authority who run the harbour and collect dues from the boats begin to get restive and seek ways of supervising access or charging launching fees. Part of trip preparation surely should be the establishing contact with, in this instance, the Harbour Master at Barmouth; those who get into difficulties through no fault of their own are one thing but those who show lack of responsibility can soon cause adverse criticism and worse for the sport."

De-grading experience

During a recent foray into Scotland for a dose of white water, the old argument of white water grades reared its head. Our local guides carefully explained the river giving its most difficult rapids a Grade III. Off we went happily, and a few minutes later we were tackling a rapid slightly larger and three times as long as the town falls in Llangollen. On casually mentioning this to our guide as he tried to prize my fingers from his neck, he qualified his assessment by stating that Llangollen was an easy Grade III anyway.

While we were staking him out to the mercy of the midges, we began to realise the difference between the Scottish grades and the Welsh/English grades. You quickly realise that people calling those vampire bats midges are also capable of calling Bala Mill flat water

suitable only for novices.

Both systems are equally correct and useable in their assessment as long as you realise which system is being used, although there does tend to be a modern tendency to down grade, as in the climbing world.

The danger lies in an inexperienced party of canoeists getting into difficulties due to them underestimating the standard of a trip.

In school we have introduced our own system mainly to cope with the younger boys' everlasting questions on the standard of rapids. They are keen at their age to be canoing harder grades as this is a positive sign of progress. As they may take time to pass through one grade of rapids, we have subdivided each grade into three parts. The system works along the lines of the climbing

system. Each grade is maintained on a scale of one to six using the old International grading system (Table One).

To this we have added a sub grade denoted by a letter so that Grade I is now split into three parts IA, IB, IC and similarly with the other grades.

This now allows rapids to be more accurately described, but, of course, does not prevent individual assessment from varying.

We base our assessments on taking local rapids as a mean fundamental. For example, we grade the Serpents Tail on the Dee as a 4a, the Town Falls a 4b. A typical 3a we take as Beaver Pool, while Forestry Bridge by Jim Hargreaves' shop gets a 1c.

If you are only a humble Welsh paddler and intend to visit Scotland for the "White water experience of a life time", listen to the experts, then add one to every grade they mention, especially if they have rope burn marks round their necks.

H.W. Lomas.

Table One Wild Water - Grades of Difficulty

Grade I Not Difficult	Grade II Moderately Difficult	Grade III Difficult	Grade IV Very Difficult	Grade V Extremely Difficult	Grade VI Limit of Practicability
	passage free	route recognisable	route not always recognisable Inspection mostly necessary	inspection essential	generally speaking impossible
regular stream	irregular stream	high, irregular waves	heavy continuous rapids	extreme rapids	possibly navigable at particular water levels
regular waves	irregular waves	larger rapids	heavy stoppers whirlpools and pressure areas	stoppers, whirlpools and pressure areas	high risk
small rapids	medium rapids small stoppers, eddies/whirlpools and pressure areas*	stoppers, eddies and whirlpools and pressure areas			
simple obstructions	simple obstructions in stream small drops	isolated boulders, drops and numerous obstructions in stream	boulders obstructing stream, big with undertow	narrow passages, steep gradients and drops with difficult access and landing	

* Pressure areas refers to water piling up against a rock or other obstacle (sometimes called 'cushions' in this country).

N.B. Weirs are not classified as wild water and as such are not evaluated. They are (either) easily navigable or (very) dangerous.

Dear Focus...

Dear Sir,

I am worried by the plan to increase services to members of the BCU if the new canoe insurance scheme is an example of this policy.

I do not believe that one insurance policy can cover the differing requirements of all the Unions members. The risk of damaging a canoe depends on what it is used for. A boat which is used principally for flat water paddling is unlikely to suffer any more than very minor damage. Boats exposed to 'serious' white water canoeing (grade III+) are easily written off if a mistake is made. Given the difference in risk, how does the Union hope to attract members from the many thousands of casual paddlers who would never dream of going near a grade III rapid? Under this scheme, these casual paddlers are to be expected to subsidise the inexperienced white water paddler.

I believe that the new insurance scheme has other serious faults. Quite apart from the way some groups of canoeists will be expected to pay for the boat wrecking forays of others, the insurance is inadequate to cover good quality competition boats. The £150 cover offered by the basic scheme would only pay for a very cheap slalom boat, while the £10 per boat minimum charge for extra cover would mean that the scheme is no longer low cost. Also why does the scheme make no provision for covering other canoeing equipment such as paddles?

If the British Canoe Union wants to attract new members, I suggest that it should scrap the new insurance scheme as soon as possible and use the money saved to reduce the membership subscription. In order to improve benefits to members, the Unions management could start by looking at Canoe Focus, which usually appears late and so is of little value as a source of information about forthcoming events.

Canoeists will join the Union when they see it providing an effective leadership for the sport, schemes such as compulsory canoe insurance will only serve to further alienate the touring canoeist at a time when there is a need for a strong central organisation to press for improved access to rivers.

M.C. Gillham, Moseley.

Dear Sir,

The fact that Mr. Gillham is worried is obviously to his credit in that he shows a concern as to the genuine well-being of the Union. I agree that one Insurance policy can never completely cover the differing requirements of all Union members, the important word is the word completely. The object of the scheme is to provide a very cheap basis utilising the bulk purchasing power of the total union membership. If one is to apply scientific under writing to canoe insurance then obviously differing premiums will be required for high level competitive slalom and white water canoeing as opposed to 'pottering'. However as is common practice with many subjects it is possible to calculate the statistics to show an overall rating taking into account all the various contingent aspects to

arrive at a net rate. It is true that casual paddlers are therefore in effect subsidising white water and slalom paddlers but then this is true of every insurance as it is the corner stone of the Insurance principle in that many provide for the misfortunes of the few.

The level of cover as far as boats is concerned was pitched at the average cost rather than catering for wooden K1 which in its turn would lead to over insurance for many paddlers. A large proportion of the membership have home built canoes where the £150 limit is quite satisfactory.

The £10.00 cost as a minimum for the Excess scheme again is an average of rating if one compares what was previously available. If it were for flat water then the previous rating would be cheaper, if it were for white water and slalom then the previous rating was proportionally more expensive. Although the present cover has the same deduction of 10% for each year of age, to a maximum of 50%, there is no restriction for white water use and the full value will be payable upto £150, after taking into account the deduction of age.

Therefore, for white water to obtain a relative 'like for like' premium, a further proportion must be added to the previous premium.

Reflecting on these figures therefore it would seem that for a large proportion of the competitive element of the membership the deal is particularly good.

It is appreciated at this present moment that the lack of cover for paddles and gear is a defect, and we are at present in negotiation with several companies to rectify this situation. Regrettably the previous company's experience with claims payments has not made the insurance market see the risk as particularly attractive.

The general consensus from membership that I received indicates that at last the BCU is offering something tangible for its membership, certainly the people who have had claims payments express considerable appreciation.

It should be emphasized that the scheme was designed to incorporate three constituent parts all of value, and whilst a number of comments have appeared concerning the boat insurance, it seems that very few have considered the value of the two other sections, namely the personal accident benefits, and the public liability, which the latter has been with us for some years.

Under the Public Liability section, the cover provided is as wide as could possibly be required, particularly with the latest increase in the limit of indemnity to £500,000. Both the personal accident and the boat insurance schemes provide a basis of cover at a very cheap rate, and it should be emphasized that the Insurers will be looking very hard at the relationship of claims to premiums when considering the renewal for the 1st November 1983.

If I could now remove my Insurance Brokers hat and don my BCU members hat I would further comment that Mr. Gillham's comments on Canoe Focus to me appear as

though he never reads it. I consider Canoe Focus to be of considerable value to the membership, and always provides me with information and entertainment as any good magazine should.

Finally, I can only disagree totally with Mr. Gillham's view that compulsory insurance schemes will further alienate the touring canoeist.

A.L. Laws, Weller & Co.

Dear Sir,

May I through your columns say a very big thank you to all those good friends who contributed towards my Testimonial Fund. I have not been given a list of what must have been a considerable number of people who so kindly subscribed, so I hope they will all take this as my best way of showing my gratitude to them.

I had been hoping very much that I might be able to join the British Slalom Team as one of their supporters when they go to Merano in Italy in June this year for the World Championships. It was there in 1953 that the British team did so badly that they decided they must have a team coach; and back at Hambleden later on that year they offered me the job. As history relates, things began to look up for us, and now this fund enables me once more to return to that lovely place, even if it is only as an onlooker. I know I shall enjoy myself hugely.

Thank you again, very much.

Oliver Cock, Wargrave.

Dear Sir,

I have been introduced to whitewater paddling in the form of the 'Exe Descent' — great fun. But I was surprised to see the lack of crash hats on some of the more experienced paddlers. This sets a bad example and I consider it irresponsible of the BCU to allow this to happen.

I can well imagine more people moaning about more rules and regulations, but in this instance I feel justified in writing.

D.J. Summers, Southampton.

Dear Sir,

Exeter Canoe Club has been organising the Exe Descent for some 14 years. During this time there has been only one serious incident: This involved a competitor being trapped in a stopper and there were no actual injuries. There have been several cases of minor head injuries, mainly cuts and bruises, although we have no information as to whether helmets were being worn at the time, or any further details.

During the ten years that I have been involved in the organisation it has been our policy to 'strongly recommend' that competitors wear crash helmets.

From my observations I would say that the slalomists and white water racers are happy to wear helmets, as it is a normal requirement of their discipline. It is the marathon paddler who normally paddles without a helmet or personal bouyancy, who is reluctant to wear them at our event. In the early days many marathon paddlers probably did not own helmets or bouyancy. However, with the cross over of disciplines which is now more common, most paddlers have both available.

I obviously cannot speak for future organisers, but I feel that it will probably remain our policy to 'strongly recommend' that helmets be worn and that paddlers must wear personal bouyancy.

Dennis Walls, Exeter Canoe Club.

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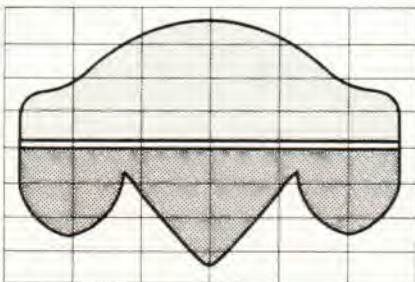
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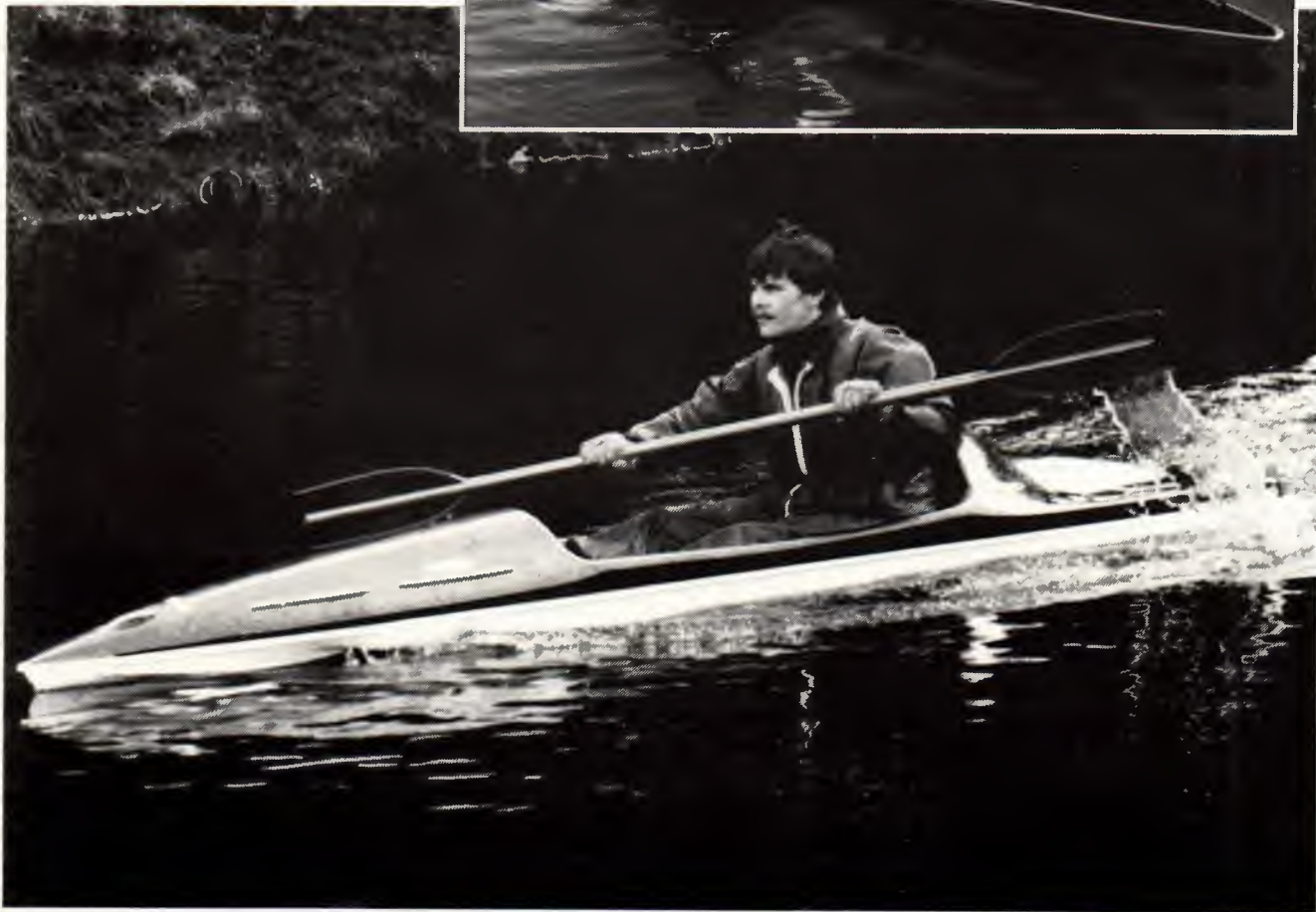
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The Cataract Kayak Expedition

PHOTO REPORT BY CHRIS TAYLOR



A



B



C



D



E

A) Preparing for a swim to cool off. The colour of the water was caused by silt. Water purifying agents could not work properly with the amount of sediment in the water. The only way was to boil it and we didn't have time or equipment for the 8 gallons that we used each day. We purified the water with iodine in the end, hoping that we wouldn't catch anything too bad.

B) During the first week we paddled 30 miles a day. This left enough energy to visit various archaeological sites such as the pyramids and a Merowe.

C) Pete Vickers, Sharon McKenzie, Simon Molesey and myself paddled the Blue Nile between Kartoum in the Sudan and Cairo in Egypt.

D) In spite of the flood levels of the river, on the whole it proved to be disappointingly easy. The biggest problems were the debilitating effect of the heat and bacillary dysentery.

E) The hospitality of the people was special in spite of their fasting as part of the religious month of Ramadan. The expedition thanks go to them, Peckham Building Society, Stockwell College Old Students Association, Pyranha and Mark Gees for making the trip possible.

A brief copy of the report is available from BCU headquarters if you send a SAE.