
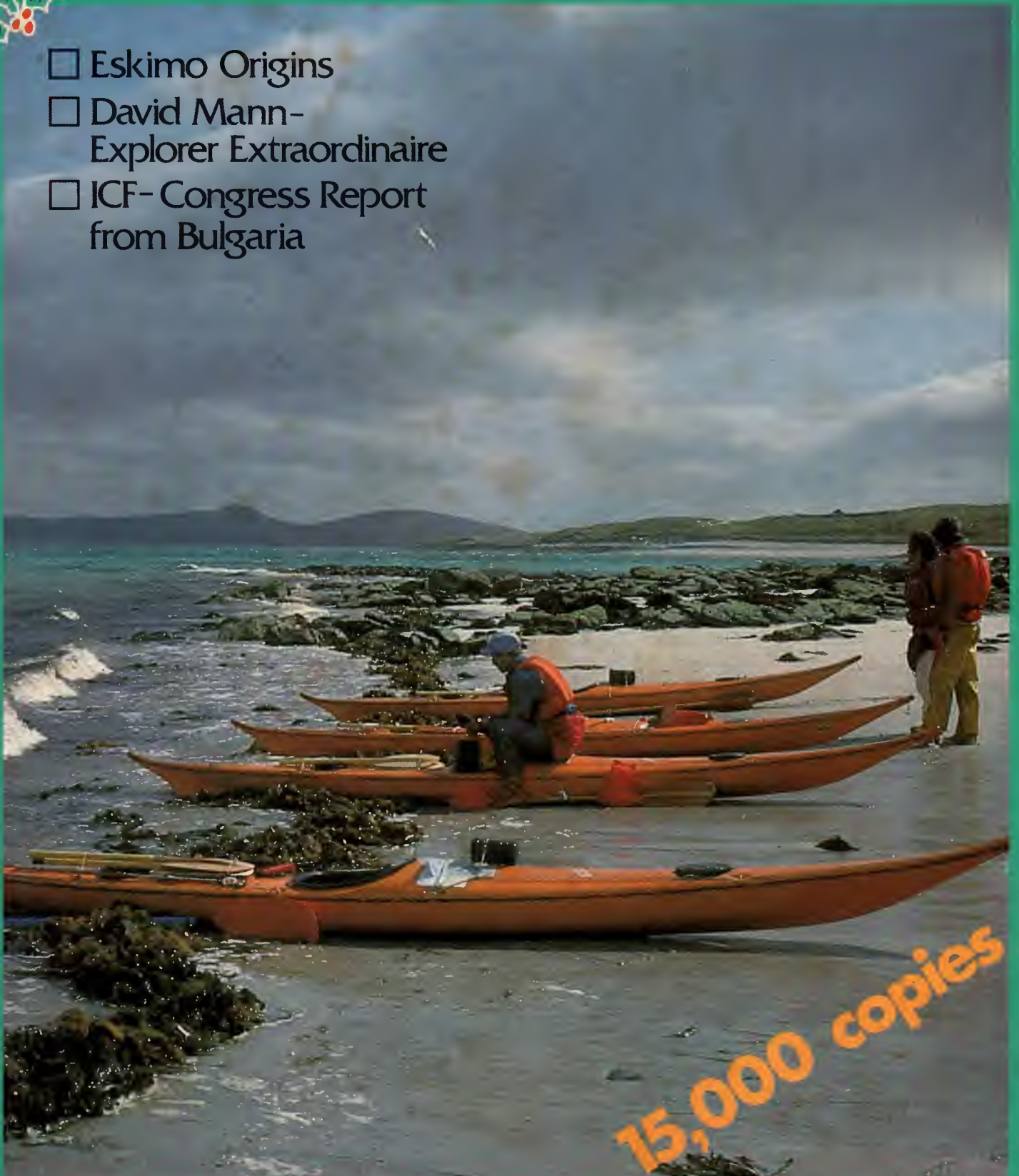


CANOE FOCUS

No. 37 WINTER 1984 · PRICE 75p

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH CANOE UNION

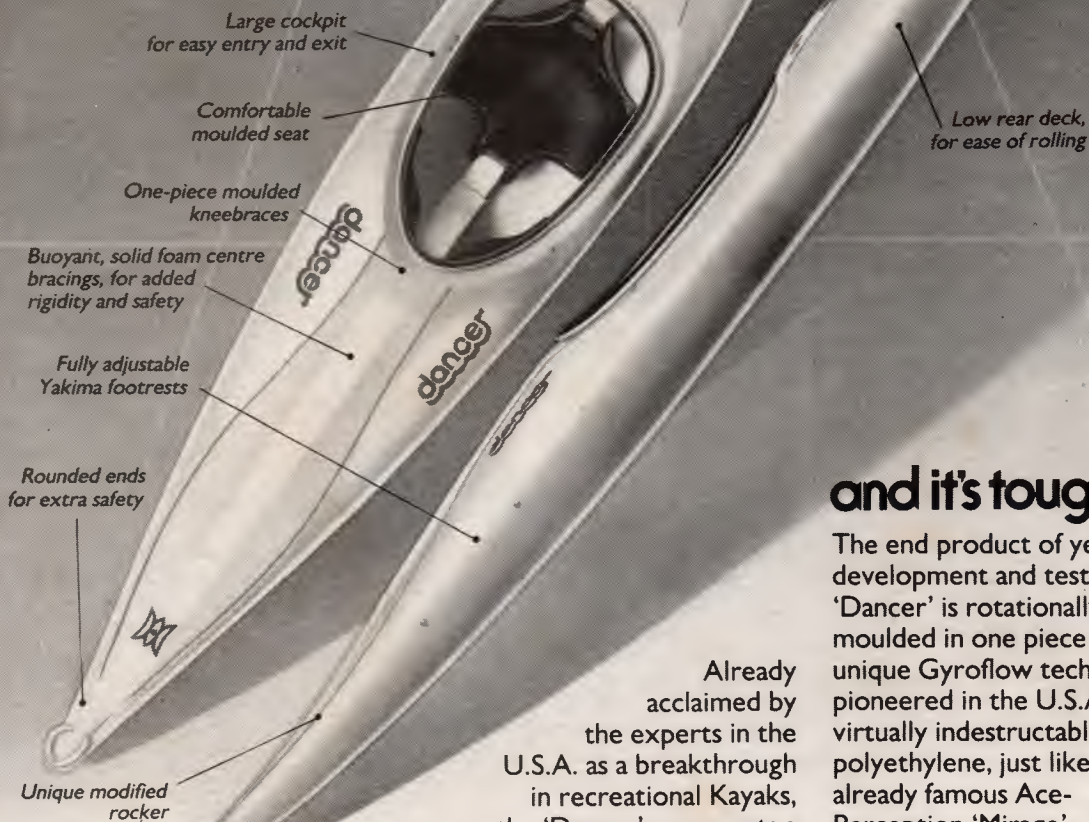
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CANOE FOCUS

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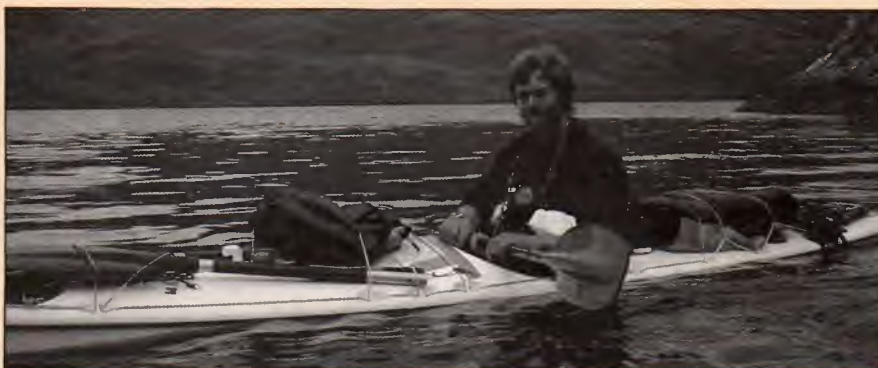
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Slalom: Feedback, R. Fox, 154 Lichfield Road, Stone, Staffs. ST15 8PY.

Surf: Beachbreak, K.G. Smith, 100 Wood Road, Treforest, Pontypridd, Mid. Glam.

Touring: Canadian Canoeist, J.E. Pearton, 42 Fitzjohn Avenue, Barnet, Herts.

Wales: Ceufad, Roger Hayward, Pen y Bont, Corwen, Clwyd.

Wild Water Racing: Wild Water News, John Handyside, 16 Oakley Close, Allesley, Coventry, CV5 9FU.

WHITEWATER COURSES

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The weekends are for individuals or groups, group bookings of ten or more people can apply for 'budget' weekends. These budget weekends have proved very popular with clubs, colleges etc.

If you would like more details of the courses then contact:

Jeff Gill, Outdoor Adventure, Atlantic Court,
Widemouth Bay, Nr Bude, Cornwall
EX23 0DF 028885 312

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THE "INFORMATION GAP"

By RON EMES Director of the British Canoe Union



Earlier this year, the Council of Management had occasion to debate a subject that has been referred to in the popular press, as the "information gap", a term used to emphasise the failure of those who make decisions, to communicate their intentions to those personally affected by such decisions. As we live in an age that produces information at a rate that makes it difficult, if not impossible for it to be disseminated to all those concerned, it is not surprising that from time to time we discover that someone has done something that vitally affects our interests, and has omitted to advise us in the process. A motorway constructed at the bottom of our garden, a block of flats built in the next road, a railway station closed, our dustbins replaced by plastic bags, the list is endless. Needless to say, those who are engaged in the management of the sport and recreation of canoeing, suffer from precisely the same problems as do all those other organisations and institutions who strive to maintain the balance between providing too much or not enough information.

Thus it was, that Councillors, at the conclusion of their debate, acknowledged "that the complex responsibilities of the Council of Management, the Management Committees, and the professional staff, together with the range and variety of developments that have been and continue to be initiated by the Union, have inevitably led to confusion and misunderstanding between those responsible for establishing and executing the policy of the Union, and the membership". In other words, there is an "information gap" and perhaps some would consider, as a direct consequence, also a "confidence gap". Sensibly, the Council, which is the parliament of the Union, and concerns itself with matters of policy, instructed its Executive Committee to investigate in detail, the problems that had arisen, and to recommend measures for their resolution. The Executive Committee have indicated that before proceeding further, they are anxious to obtain the views of the Union's membership regarding the extent to which they would wish to be informed about the management and administration of the Union's affairs.

Before responding to the Executive

Committee's invitation, it is perhaps pertinent to briefly review the existing mechanism for communicating with members and advising them about matters that may be of interest. By means of the written word, we have of course 'Canoe Focus', 'Focus Extra', the nine Regional Bulletins, the specialist discipline publications - 'Beachbreak', 'Breakout', 'CoDe', 'Wild Water News', and other miscellaneous newsletters, committee proceedings, Annual Reports, statements of accounts, pamphlets and brochures, circulated by the Union and its 12 specialist committees. Information is delivered by the spoken word at Annual General Meetings, Regional Conferences, Committee Meetings, and a variety of Symposia and formal consultative gatherings held both for general and special interest groups. In addition members have access to information from their elected representatives who serve on the Council of Management or the Regional and Disciplinary Committee with which they may be particularly concerned. Finally the professional officers and the Headquarters Secretariat are always available for advice and information. So is this enough? Not enough? or, is the balance about right? If you are being told too much, what don't you want to know? If you aren't, what do you particularly want to know? The Executive Committee await your response with enthusiastic interest.



REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT?

The Union's "Programme for Expansion", which was implemented on the 1st June 1984, after three years of discussions and negotiations, identified as its first priority - 'The encouragement of greater participation in the sport and recreation of canoeing by developing regional organisation and the appointment of Regional Development Officers'. To the Union's planners, policy makers, and administrators, the justification for this somewhat generalised and ambiguous statement, is self-evident. To those, however, who have not participated in the development debate, and have not had the opportunity to consider the evidence that finally persuaded the Union to regard Regional Development as the key element in the "Programme for Expansion", an explanation of the rationale involved may be helpful.

Firstly it was agreed that the diverse nature of canoeing, necessitated a devolution of the control exercised over the Union's affairs, from a centralised to a localised authority, thus establishing a more effective relationship



between those who require service and those who provide it. Secondly, it was considered that the objectives and responsibilities of Clubs and Disciplines prevented either from pursuing policies that transcended the well intentioned and quite proper self interest of their respective members, in favour of the non-secretarian aspirations of the Union. Finally, limited resources prevented the devolution of control to geographical groupings smaller than Regions. Thus, the mechanism for achieving expansion, was to be the Regions, which were sufficiently local to understand and respond to the development of the sport in their area, whilst also pursuing policies that would provide benefits for all members of the Union in the Region.

It has been said on many occasions that fundamental to the development of the Union, and of supreme importance to every single aspect of the Union's activity, is membership. Without sufficient members, the Union cannot influence public opinion, cannot finance development projects, cannot promote the sport and recreation of canoeing, and cannot provide the services that are increasingly demanded.

Development and membership are therefore synonymous, and every single strategem devised by Regions for increasing participation in canoeing activity, must always have regard to the vital importance of membership to the Union. It is generally acknowledged that participation in canoeing activity and thus membership of the Union, may be most easily encouraged by local Clubs, who possess the facilities, skills, personnel, and programmed events, that are easily and regularly available, and are therefore most likely to attract newcomers to the sport.

It is accordingly self-evident that the priority of Regional development, the most outstanding opportunity for Regional development, and that aspect of Regional development assured of achieving immediate success is -

1. The establishment of new Clubs.
2. The strengthening of existing Clubs.
3. Improving service, support, and liaison with Clubs.

The priority contained in the Union's "Programme for Expansion", is then Regional Development, and the priority for "Regional Development" is club development. During the next few years, the target group for expansion will therefore be, the Clubs. To assist the Union in devising their strategy for implementing their policies for expansion, a Conference of Club officials is to be convened at the 1985 International Canoe Exhibition, so that views may be exchanged, and ideas submitted. Those directly concerned with Club organisation are cordially invited to attend.

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Telstar	125.00
Sportsman	139.00
Ardeche Double	159.00
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Extras available.	
Diolen Hull	12.00
Double reinforcing	15.00
Glitter Finish	10.00
Gel Seam/Deck flash	5.00 each

POLYETHYLENE KAYAKS.

Roto Bat	115.00
Roto Bat Whitewater Spec	145.00
Moby Dick Swing	129.00
Moby Dick Puncher	139.00
PE Surf	115.00
Rocker 360	129.00
Rocker 390	139.00
Perception Dancer	212.00
Perception Mirage Basic	132.00
Perception Mirage	224.00
Freestyle Centre Spec	198.00
Freestyle Whitewater Spec	228.00

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Nylon Standard	8.50
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CANOE SCHOOL.

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"YOU'VE DONE US PROUD"

BY RUTH PARNELL

As a self-confessed land lubber, with a deep mistrust of unstable craft on any kind of water, especially when its cold, I joined the BCU staff in August, realising that I had much to learn.

After tussling for a few weeks with 'J-strokes', 'Rockers', 'Ferry Glides' and 'Steer Roll's not to mention 'Break-ins' and 'Break-outs' I decided to get down to basics. "Just how good are British paddlers?" I asked, using one of the words from my new vocabulary.

I was immediately surrounded by fellow BCU-ites, including a coaching instructor who had dropped by to chat to Geoff Good, all eager to fill me in. "We won the Europa Cup Slalom K1 Men" said one "And what about ten finalists out of twelve Olympic entries?" said another. I could see that my knowledge was sadly lacking. Here's what you've chalked up this season.

MARATHON

An outstanding performance resulting in a clean sweep of the Grand Prix Series and the International Marathon Cup.



- K1, K2 London in May
- K1 Poznan, Poland in June
- K1, K2 Silkeborg, Denmark in August
- K1 Men)
- K2 Ladies) Carrick on Shannon, Ireland in August
- K2 Men)



- K1, K2 London in May
- K2 Silkeborg, Denmark in August
- K1 Men)
- K2 Men) Carrick on Shannon, Ireland, in August
- K2 Ladies)
- C1)



- K2 Poznan, Poland in June
- K1 Silkeborg, Denmark in August

SPRINT

What an achievement to reach 10 finals out of the 12 entered at the Lake Casitas Olympic Regatta, the previous best being at Montreal in 1976 when only two final places were gained.



SLALOM

You seniors seem hardly to have stepped down from one Europa medal platform before having to climb onto another, while the youths and juniors shone too at the European Championships, despite their inexperience.



- Mens Kayak - Liptovsky Mikulas, Czechoslovakia in June
- Mens Kayak - Augsburg, Germany in June
- Ladies K1 Team - Augsburg, Germany in June
- Mens Kayak - Bourg St. Maurice, France in July
- Ladies Kayak - Bourg St. Maurice, France in July
- Ladies - Spittal, Germany
- Youth Team - Spittal, Germany
- Ladies - Spittal, Germany
- Junior Event - Spittal, Germany



- Ladies Kayak - Liptovsky Mikulas, Czechoslovakia in June
- Ladies Kayak - Augsburg, Germany in June
- Ladies K1 Team - Bourg St. Maurice, France in July
- Mens Junior Event - Spittal, Germany
- Mens Youth Team - Spittal, Germany
- Ladies Youth Event - Spittal, Germany



- Mens Kayak - Liptovsky Mikulas, Czechoslovakia in June
- Mens K1 Team - Augsburg, Germany in June
- C1 Team - Bourg St. Maurice, France in July
- Event - Bourg St. Maurice, France in July

WILD WATER

The seniors produced more Europa Cup honours in the III leg in July.



- Ladies K1 Team - Bourg St. Maurice, France
- The Youth 'B' team went to Silberschild, Germany in June and returned having had a fair degree of success.



- Mens K1 Team
- Ladies K1 Team



Individual Mens K1 U18

The World Cup Canoe Sailing Championships at Skalderviken in Sweden during August, saw Patrick Marshall and Colin Brown gain 4th and 5th places respectively, and David Hellawell and Steve Derwin won an overall first place in the **1984 Classic Canoe Race Series for Canadian Canoes.**

Canoe Polo, a discipline in which we lead the world is now emerging as an international event. England and Scotland were the finalists at the international tournament at the XXth Canoe Exhibition at Crystal Palace in February.



There is no doubt that, collectively, we are the best canoeing nation in the world. To those of you who aspire to the higher echelons of international competition I'd say you have much to live up to. To those competitors who have helped to create this season's fine British record I say, "You've done us proud!"

PGL SCHOOLS RALLY

Two hundred and seventy young people gathered at PGL Young Adventure's hostel and camp site at Hole in the Wall on 15-16 September for the second sponsored schools rally on the Wye.

The down river relay attracted twenty teams, while eighteen groups entered the circular doubles relay, and fourteen competitors undertook the Marathon.

Catering as it does for all abilities, the event, master-minded and organised by Brian Horn, is a popular addition to the British

Change over time on the circular relay

Schools Canoeing Association's calendar.

Some good times were produced by the juniors in the twenty-five mile down river relay – each member of the team paddling about 5 miles.

RESULTS:

Girls Marathon K2 – M2

1st Southfield 'A'	4 hrs 18 min
2nd Haywards Heath	4 hrs 24 min
3rd Sir Winston	4 hrs 36 min

Boys Marathon K2 – M1

1st Writhlington	3 hrs 34 min
2nd Sir Winston 'C'	3 hrs 58 min
3rd Sir Winston 'A'	4 hrs 11 min

Junior Relay R2

1st St. Joseph's High 'B'	3 hrs 33 min
2nd St. Joseph's High 'A'	3 hrs 38 min

3rd Priory High 3 hrs 39 min

Senior Relay R1

1st Henry Compton	3 hrs 49 min
2nd 18th Purley	4 hrs 02 min
3rd Edgbarrow 'B'	4 hrs 04 min

Circular Relay Open Girls CR3

1st Writhlington Girls	39 Laps
2nd Fulham Cross	31 Laps
3rd Southfield Girls	21 Laps

Open Boys Senior CR1

1st Millfield	51 Laps
2nd Besford Court	35 Laps
3rd Odd Bods	33 Laps

Junior Mixed and Boys CR2

1st Writhlington School	45 Laps
2nd Cedars School	44 Laps
3rd Edgbarrow Youth	42 Laps

Start of the senior boy's down river relay



Bunching at the buoy on the circular relay team event



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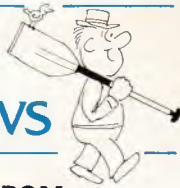
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DO YOU SUFFER FROM FAMILIAL HYPERCHOLESTEROLAEMIA?

Perhaps you don't know! FH for short, it means a tendency to make too much blood cholesterol, which is inherited.

A history of heart disease in the family could be significant but other symptoms include yellow swellings or streaks on the back of the hands or ankles, also in the skin close to the eyes.

The FH Association has been set up to increase people's awareness and help sufferers cope.

Carolyn Bardbeer would like to hear from known sufferers at the FH Association at P.O. Box 612 London W2 2EE or by phone on 01 262 5183.

BEHIND THE TIMES!

An erratum follows in connection with an article which appeared in *Canoe Focus* No. 36 - Autumn '84, Page 14 - "The National Maritime Museum".

- 1) Column 2 line 9 - 1933's should be 1983's
- 2) Column 3 line 25 - 1850's should be 1950's

We apologise to both readers and Mr. Fred Walker for the incorrect dates printed.

BRISTOL BOAT SHOW LINKS WITH GRAND PRIX POWERBOAT RACE

The Bristol Boat Show is to return to the city after a year's absence with a new image and a new date.

Next year's event will be run in conjunction with the Bristol Grand Prix Powerboat Race, the World's premier circuit race. It will be staged from Wednesday 5 June to Sunday 9 June 1985 at the Bristol Exhibition Centre on the edge of the centre Floating Harbour with both dry land and waterborne exhibits.

The Bristol Boat Show is organised by Tony Davies Exhibitions. Further information from Tony Ferrand (0272) 299521.

WATER QUALITY WITH A DIFFERENCE

A Report "On the quality of the water in the River Trent" has been submitted by Dr. G.B. Parr, for consideration by the Sports Council's Holme Pierrepont Artificial Canoe Slalom

Course Project Working Party. Whilst this report is primarily concerned with the quality of the water in the River Trent, it contains the first, and only known comprehensive examination of published literature relating to the quality of water for use by recreationalists, together with the conclusions of the writer. It is accordingly of considerable importance as a reference source for those concerned with the development of water facilities for canoeing activity. The response of the Sports Council's Working Party to the Report is referred to in an appendix attached to the Report. Copies may be obtained by those interested from BCU Headquarters.

DOES THE SOUTHAMPTON INTERNATIONAL BOAT SHOW OFFER ANYTHING TO CANOEISTS?

With only three canoe manufacturers in attendance, Bellway Marine, Granta Boats and Huyland Marine, it would appear that the Southampton Boat Show, held 14th - 22nd September, had little to offer the canoeist.

On closer examination however, when it came to gear and equipment there was such a variety that it was difficult to sort it all out. Thirteen stands displaying life-jackets and buoyancy aids, twenty-five companies offering clothing and waterproofs with satellite-navigation systems, and compasses to interest sea canoeists ensured a wider choice than at other comparable shows.

An impressive representation from Britain's largest sea canoeing complex, Calshot Activities Centre, together with the National Sailing Centre, Plas Menai and two Cornwall canoe schools, guaranteed finding a fellow BCU paddler or instructor with whom to chat or ask questions.

It has even been known for certain well known members of the BCU hierarchy to attend the show and emerge, not with a paddle or kayak, but towing behind them one of those sailing things!

The show is held every year during the middle of September, in the Mayflower Park, adjacent to Southampton Docks. Admission this year was £2 (£1 for children).

BEACHBREAK BACK

Beachbreak the Surf Committee's own magazine written by surfers for surfers is back in business.

With the departure of the over worked Vyv Cox to that strange phenomenon known as "Hobie Catting", (I think that is something to do with sailing!) the future of *Beachbreak* magazine looked grim. Thanks however to a small determined group of masochists the magazine has been revived, complete in all its former glory.

The magazine's easy style should appeal to all canoeists, from the competition

orientated to the recreational paddler, who once a year takes his Division 1 slalom kayak to the hallowed shores to show his prowess.

Editor: Mike Keeble, 20 Horsehoe Close, Middlehill, Wimborne, Dorset. *Distribution Secretary:* Ian G. Smith, 45 Ty Croes, Llanfairpwll, Anglesey.

CANOE POLO COACHING MANUAL

The Canoe Polo Coaching Manual has been written by Brian Barfoot, (Luton Tigers) Honorary Secretary, Canoe Polo Committee and Honorary Senior Coach and Grade I referee, in order to help coaches and players with the organisation of training sessions and in competition.

The manual aims to present a complete and up to date text including not only a comprehensive list of practices for all individual skills, but also information on 'dead ball situations', 'dry land skills', 'team formations and tactics', and 'set plays'.

For a copy of the 48 page manual please send £1 to Brian Barfoot, 18 The Cedars, Dunstable, Beds. Please enclose a large SAE (A5) your copy will be sent by return.

CALSHOT COURSES - A SUMMER SUCCESS

Hampshire County Council's sea canoeing, boardsailing and sailing centre on the Solent, reports on another very busy Summer season with large numbers of newcomers to water-sports, taking their first taste of adventure at Calshot.

Apart from the usual BCU beginners and improvers courses, Calshot has had successful BCU high level coaching weekends, circum-navigations of the Isle of Wight, an expedition to the Islands of Rhum and Eigg and R.Y.A. advanced boardsailing courses. A novelty this year was a weekend open canoe course on the River Wye which proved very successful.

Contact John Kuyser or Lawrence West at Calshot for details of 1985 programme - Tel: No: (0703) 892077.



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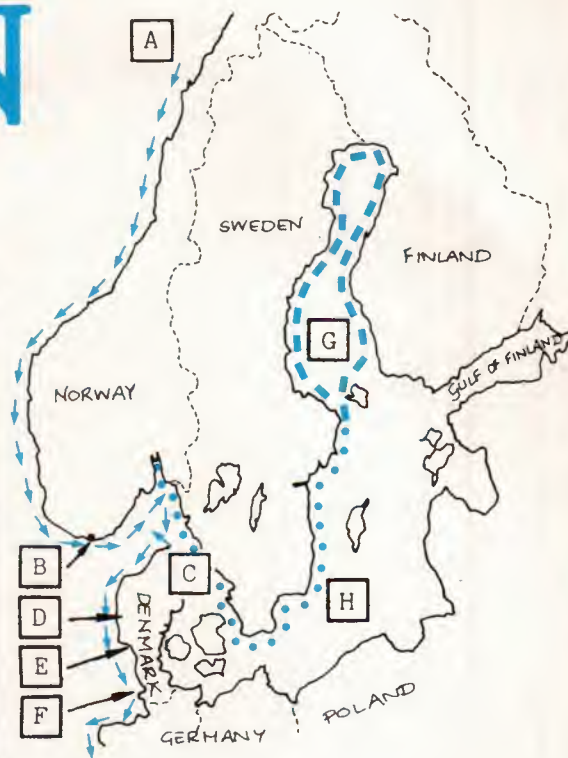
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EUROPEAN MANN



David Mann belongs to a special breed. He is one of those paddlers who alone, tackle journeys of immense length and difficulty.

His remarkable, mainly solo paddles around the coasts of Spain and Scandinavia have now covered a distance of well over 3,000 nautical miles.

David writes:- "The 1976 Biscay project developed with Hans Thompson as my partner paddling an Esky. Hans returned from Gijon which left me with the rest of the Spanish north and north-west coasts and the Atlantic to tackle. With a deterioration in the weather the last parts were both the worst and the best.

In 1977 I returned by invitation to Spain to run the finishing and sailing of a Bronze Age skin boat replica of some thirty-five foot length. This was for Doctor Fernando Alonso Romero of the University of Santiago de Compostella. The boat was named the Breogan - after a local sea-faring but probably legendary hero - and was marked for my frustration in trying to get anyone to do anything. In retrospect the many irritating incidents were not without their own humour.

1979 was fairly finely planned and everything was running nicely at the preparation stage when an old back injury reasserted itself and I found that I could not walk. My own feelings were that I could as well sit in a kayak as a wheelchair so I went ahead. This decision upset the surgeons who had plans of their own regarding my spine, but as the paddling developed there was marked improvement both in and out of the boat so I may have made the right decision.

Morning Orca

I had thought to go inside Nord Kapp but curiosity made me poke my nose round the corner - just for a look - and the twenty-foot odd waves did the rest! One memorable happening, was my early meeting with a lone killer-whale - we just sat there and looked at each other. November and December provided me with the coldest conditions I have yet encountered. To remove a mitten was to lose

the use of the exposed hand. With no feelings at all I finally rounded the southernmost point of Norway at Lindesnes on 18 December and made a landing at a small fishing village a few miles to the north-east.

The 1980 project was made possible by kind friends and was intended as a continuation of the greater plan with, at least, a connection with the Frisian Islands. The crossing of Oslo Fjord was straight-forward, and the west coast of Sweden was delightful. Far fewer power boats, but more graceful sailing craft ghosting along in the light airs. It seems a requirement to have a topless lady sun-bather on the foredeck of these vessels. Perhaps *here* is a good argument for very much larger kayaks?

The crossing of the Kattegat was from Hönö to Laesø and was paddled at night for easier navigation. The distance was some twenty-six nautical miles and took a leisurely nine and a half hours. The wind started to come up within yards of a landing on Laesø and stayed with me for much of the rest of the paddle for that year.

Storm Bound

Reaching the east coast of Jutland was a little hairy, and I had to break the journey at a small island with a light-house. Gales from the western quadrant kept me there for several days, but as the guest of one of the light keepers.

Leaving Hirtshale was rather a shock. Enormous lines of breakers were crashing in, and almost took out a small fishing boat as I watched. After a while the pattern of these breakers emerged and they settled down to three well defined breaking areas. I found that it was possible - and apparently safe - to paddle between these until at one point two lines converged! A laden sea kayak does not surf well, but can be persuaded to move after a breaker sideways. Most of the north coast of Jutland with its breaker-lines compelled crab landings.

If anything the west coast of Jutland was even worse. I spent a considerable time just short of Hanstholm with the full olfactory

KEY

- A Started from the Norwegian/Russian border - 6.6.79
- B Stopped paddling East side Lindesnes (1400nm) - 18.12.79, 1980 - Continued paddling from West side of Lindesnes.
- C Night crossing - 14/15.8.80
- D Finally forced ashore by gales - 29.9.80, Continued journey - 22.6.82
- E Accident - 25.6.82
- F Weather broke from this point, struggled on to Texel until 12.10.82
- G The project for 1984, 1,056 nautical miles.
- H Reserve route - might be possible to extend original 1984 plan, weather & funds permitting.

benefit of the fish factory for company trying to wait out the weather. I finally retired temporarily when a north-westerly storm took my tent out of the ground at three in the morning. I'd had it pinned down with 18" stakes. These pulled out.

A lot of effort but little progress was made thereafter and steady onshore gales forced a retirement on Fjaltring Strand a few miles south of the western Limfjord entrance on 29 September.

Jutland and the Frisians

The 1982 plan was for a continuation along the rest of the Jutland coast and an assault on the Frisians and perhaps yet more onward.

This did not go quite as planned. A bad landing through unseen dumpers kept me off the water for some time. In retrospect it was remarkable that anything survived the very sudden meeting with the beach. A memorable place is Blavanshuk. The sea breaks for some miles off the point - a fact that I found difficult to believe until I tried to paddle around the piling seas. Apparently it has some notoriety.

I spent some time on the most northerly of the Frisians, Fanø. Friendly and helpful people and a fascinating maritime past, though little remains of this now. Fanø was also my first experience of paddling inside the islands. Not an experience for the impatient. It is somewhat difficult to paddle without water under the boat.

20 Miles of Nudes

From there on the boat and I pursued an erratic path. A lot of time was spent wading and towing the boat. This process was to be repeated all too often. Sylt was quite fascinating being twenty sea miles long and covered for most of its western length by naked Germans.

The beginning of the really bad weather began on 7 August while I was camped at the base of a dyke waiting to cross to Trischen and the Elbe estuary. When I finally reached Trischen it was to be met by the renowned German paddler Peter Todt. My crossing proved to have been in brief lull in the weather. While on Trischen quite a fair proportion of the southern island was swept away and we had two foot or so of sea under the legs of the elevated cabin that Peter calls home.

Grosser Knecht Sand is dominated by an elevated bird observatory and a wreck. At low water there is ever such a lot of sand and at high water enough dry ground for a tennis court. Gales and thick fog nailed me again although I did have the company of a visiting bird watcher for some of the time.

The crossings of the estuaries of the Weser and the Jade were tricky. The sea conditions varied from one moment to the next. There was the delightful experience of meeting sea upon sea – both of different size and going in different directions! My landing was an enforced one but the kindly lighthouse-keepers moved me a little nearer the island of Wangerooge by means of a small railway.

The Frisians earned my respect and taxed my ingenuity as a camper. Gales and fog were frequent with visibility down to 12 or 15 feet, and I could only hear where the island met the water.

The journey was finally concluded at the harbour of Oude Schild on the most westerly of the Frisian Islands – that is, Texel, on October 12.

I can heartily commend the Frisians for those with infinite patience, a love of wading, and a passion for sand!"

The last news of David was that, at the end of July, he had reached the northern leg of his passage around the gulf of Bothnia, during a very poor summer.



Duncan with some of the National Youth Wild Water Racing Team (top middle)

TRIBUTE TO DUNCAN EGLIN

Duncan Eglin, coach to the National Youth Wild Water Racing Team, met an untimely death in a climbing accident in the same range of mountains from where he had shortly before been coaching the youth team in the swollen Alpine rivers below.

Duncan, a student of 24, was attending I. M. Maron College, Liverpool, studying an outdoor education course. He has been coach to the youth team for the past two years and twice saw the team win the European Youth Championships.

His energetic approach to life made him many friends, for whom Duncan's example must surely have made a lasting impression.

He derived great pleasure seeing others, both young and old, gain from his knowledge and experience.

An outdoor pursuits enthusiast, Duncan paddled locally with the Accrington River Race Team and introduced many youngsters to canoeing through his work with the Scouts.

A fund has been set up towards the Scouting Movement and is being collected by Mr. John N. Clayton, Flixton, 20 Shays Drive, Clitheroe, Lancs.

Duncan will be sadly missed by all who knew him and our thoughts are with his family during this difficult time.

Philip L. Dean,

National Youth Wild Water Racing Team Manager



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TOURING: A Swedish Summer

Dalsland in Sweden, land of lakes and forests, is just one and a half hours' drive from Göteborg. It is claimed as Europe's most southerly wilderness.

It's a gentle wilderness however – no wolves or bears, and it's 'organised' in an unobtrusive way. In short, it's an ideal area for those who like the idea of 'getting away from it all', but won't commit themselves *too* far.

A week's canoe touring, with everything provided, costs around £100. This can include a guide, or you may just hire the gear and go. If you wish, you can take your own.

The 'package deal' from a canoe livery, includes the open canoe, cooking equipment, tent, generous provisions, and even a pair of wheels for portaging.

A week spent as the guests of the Swedish

Tourist Board convinced Brin Hughes and myself that the area has a great deal to offer.

A detailed map shows where the camp sites and portage trails are located. The marked sites have a maintained dry toilet, rubbish disposal facility, and plenty of dead wood for camp fires.

Canals, with locks, link many of the lakes, and provide for extended, self-sufficient tours.

For novices, the guided tour provides a marvellous introduction to the real joys of canoe camping, while the more expert can find thorough enjoyment in the atmosphere of self-contained remoteness.

To the cost of the hire must be added the boat fare across. £150 for a family car and cabin for 4. But the 24-hour long cruise on the well-provided ferry is a holiday in itself. The

Smörgåsbord is recommended for a high quality blow-out at minimal cost, while a cafeteria also provides value for money. Drinks are expensive on board, and worse on shore. Beer bought from a supermarket is the answer, for those who feel the need.

If the idea takes your fancy, contact the Swedish Tourist Board at 3, Cork Street, London, W1 for full information.

Geoff Good

From L to R: Lunch time cook-up; Initial instruction on the lake; Wilderness campsite, complete with privy; Continental friends are introduced to 'Welsh cakes'; Morning launch; Sverka, our guide, shows off his 'bear' scar; Portaging made easy; Warning: this kind of paddling can be infectious.



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CLOSED SUNDAYS AND BANK HOLIDAYS

The 1984 bi-annual Congress of the International Canoe Federation was organised by the Bulgarian Canoe Federation in Sofia, on the 6th and 7th October, and was accommodated at what was reported to be the most prestigious hotel in Bulgaria's capital city, the "Vitosha New Otani". The delegates appointed by the Council of Management to attend the Congress were Ron Emes, the Director, Albert Woods, a member of the International Canoe Federation Slalom and Wild Water Racing Committee, Alan Laws, a member of the International Canoe Federation Marathon Racing Sub-Committee, and Peter Wells, a member of the International Canoe Federation Sailing Committee.

The formidable Agenda for the Congress contained 29 motions which sought to amend the Federation's statutes, 57 amending the International Racing Rules, and motions that requested a complete revision of the Marathon Racing, Slalom and Wild Water Racing, and Sailing Rules. In addition there were a dozen or so miscellaneous motions referring to the activity, or lack of it, of the Federation, which were concerned with important matters of principle. As the Congress was also required to consider reports, elect officers and members of the Federation's Board of Management and Technical Committees, approve the venues and arrangements for World Championships and Olympic Games until 1991, establish a two-year budget and approve accounts, the British delegates left Heathrow Airport on the day before the Congress firmly convinced that they would be fortunate indeed to return home in less than two weeks.

This somewhat pessimistic view was considerably strengthened when it was discovered that delegates from 36 nations were present at the Congress, and that the business, although conducted in English, was to be simultaneously translated into German, French, Bulgarian, and Russian. It seemed therefore, that there existed the perfect recipe for international misunderstanding, discord, and total confusion, and particularly so as the Agenda, which was printed only in English, required the I.Q. of a regular Times crossword to comprehend.

By an unbelievable miracle however, the business of the Congress was completed in one day, and for the British Canoe Union at least, the Sofia Congress will be regarded as perhaps their most successful ever. The majority of their many motions were either carried or remitted to the Board of Management for further enquiry, and those motions from other nations or the Board, to which they

were opposed were almost all defeated or withdrawn! The one important exception was the motion submitted by the British Canoe Union Slalom Committee, which sought to prevent the International Canoe Federation Slalom and Wild Water Racing Committee from altering their Slalom Rules, and thus effecting modifications that would change the fundamental character of slalom, and reduce the importance of skill in relation to that of power and speed. On this occasion, the rest of the World disagreed by a majority of 34 votes to 4 votes with Britain, and defeat had to be conceded.

The eloquence of the British delegates did however, help to prevent the Board of Management from imposing even more restrictive rules on those with a commercial interest from participating in Federation activities, fixing a limit on the amount of cash prizes that could be won in competition, and carrying advertising material on the person or clothing of those participating in World Championships and international competitions. Most importantly, the Marathon Racing Sub-Committee of the Racing Committee was established as an international committee in its own right, and will be organising its own World Championships in 1988; the C4 is to replace the C7 as the crew boat for the Junior World Racing Championships (no longer the Junior Continental Racing Championships); and the Board of Management have agreed to expedite action to establish Canoe Polo as an international discipline within their management and control.

Perhaps the most encouraging news of all, was the election of Ron Emes as a member of the Board of Management and one of the four

members for Europe. In so doing he defeated the sitting members from Spain and the Soviet Union, and ensured that Britain once again, following continuous representation by John Dudderidge, our President of Honour, from 1938 to 1980, after a lapse of four years, has one of its members serving on the World Controlling Body for canoeing. In addition Albert Woods retained his place on the Slalom and Wild Water Racing Committee, Alan Laws on the Marathon Racing Committee, and Peter Wells on the Sailing Committee. Following the death of Nicolae Navasart of Romania earlier this year, the Chairman of the Paddling Racing Committee, (re-designated the Racing Committee), Nikola Velez, Bulgaria, was elected as his successor, defeating Marcel Venot from France. Edward Serednicki, Poland, was elected unopposed as the new Chairman of the Touring Committee, replacing Tadeusz Pilarski, Poland, who died a few weeks before the Congress. Mondy Engel, Luxembourg continues as the Chairman of the Slalom and Wild Water Racing Committee, Bjorn Cronberg, Denmark, as the Chairman of the newly established Marathon Racing Committee, and Per Sjöohult, Sweden, replaced the retiring Arthur Neveling, Sweden, as the Chairman of the Sailing Committee.

The British delegates returned from this year's Congress, with the distinct impression that the ability of the British Canoe Union to influence world affairs, which had, in the opinion of most observers of the international scene, declined seriously since the departure of John Dudderidge four years ago, had moved perceptively and positively up a notch. For those who believe that the traditions and philosophies that are uniquely inherent to the character of British Sport, demands that there should be a direct contribution by Britain to the deliberations of the international sporting community, Sofia '84 may be regarded as a propitious occasion.



From left to right, Albert Woods, Alan Laws and Ron Emes, obviously waiting to be convinced by a delegate addressing the 1984 International Canoe Federation Congress, in Sofia, Bulgaria, last month.

THE ENVIRONMENT- INTERNATIONAL ACCORD

Canoeing environmentalists who have waited impatiently for the International Canoe Federation to comment publicly on the increasing pollution of the world's rivers, and the irreversible damage being caused to our ecology, will be encouraged to learn that the following motion was enthusiastically endorsed by the 36 national delegations present at the recent International Canoe Federation Congress held in Sofia, Bulgaria.

"The International Canoe Federation views with rising concern, the increasing stress being imposed on the natural environment. Beside an alarming increase in the damage being caused to our forests, the rivers are also particularly affected.

Canoeists, who are rightly considered to practise their sport in close harmony with the environment, are particularly aware of the appalling change that is being effected in water conditions. On the one hand, an increase in the pollution of waters can be attributed to the release of waste water into rivers, resulting in overacidification, and on the other hand there is the growing use of water-power by the hydro-economy. This necessarily leads to the most beautiful gorges in the world ultimately being obstructed by dams, and therefore rendered uninteresting to canoeists. Also many waters become unattractive, due to increasing pollution and overacidification.

The third danger is that as the remaining unpolluted water diminishes, its use by canoeists will be prevented, by those seeking to conserve them.

The accumulation of these three factors will result in considerable constraints being imposed upon canoe touring and wild water racing.

The International Canoe Federation appeals to the governments of all countries concerned to acknowledge their obligation towards future generations, and maintain their accessibility for canoeists.

Furthermore, the ICF request all national federations to make additional efforts regarding environment protection and to support similar endeavours by their respective nations. In so doing, it will be necessary to provide advice to authorities concerned with hydraulic projects. (i.e. hydraulic structures to be adapted to natural conditions, installation of boat-passages at weirs, and attempts to dam and straighten rivers)."

SKIN, STICKS & BONE

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MISTY ORIGINS

Today's Kayakers, touring coastal islands or twisting down mountain rapids, owe a tremendous debt to the Stone-Age people who made it possible by designing what are simply the world's most seaworthy displacement boats. They had to be. The men who paddled them were predators, trusting their lives to their sealskin kayaks along one of the coldest, most wind-swept and unforgiving coastlines on Earth.

Nowadays, fiberglass, polyethylene, epoxy, and a host of arcane petroleum products, have supplanted sealskin. The resulting plastic hulls are so tough that internal frames, once fashioned painstakingly from driftwood floating across the top of the world from Siberian forests to the Eskimo's treeless land, are no longer needed. But the needle shape of the decked boat and its remarkable capacity for speed and manoeuvrability remain.

The renowned arctic explorer Fridtjof Nansen postulated that the kayak was an adaptation of the bark canoe used further south by Indians, and that decks were added when the Eskimo reached the edge of the continent and found it necessary to make a living from the sea. This, of course, is conjecture, and there are reasons to dispute it. First, the Eskimo also had the undecked *umiak*, or "woman-boat", which comes closer to the bark canoe in form. If anything, the *umiak* would have been the immediate descendant of the bark canoe, but even that is unlikely. Both *umiak* and kayak are built using techniques that are almost the reverse of those used in constructing bark canoes. They both start with a frame and wrap skin around it. Native canoe builders, on the other hand, started with a skin and stuffed it with a frame.

It is not possible to date which came first. Both bark canoes and kayaks are constructed from native materials that decay or disintegrate quickly; few survived to any considerable age. Archaeologists cannot date them as they would stone axes or pottery shards. But Eskimos have proven highly receptive to influences from the outside that raised their quality of life, so it is conceivable that they might have adapted the bark canoe to the slim materials they had at hand.

We cannot say for sure, as Nansen did, that one boat is ancestral to the other... or even that they are related. The origins and evolution of both are simply lost in the mists of prehistory. What we do know is that by the time the Norse adventurers encountered the fierce Skraelings of Greenland and North America in the 10th century, the kayak was already a highly sophisticated craft, an incredibly developed hunting machine.

From the raw materials of their culture, ancient Arctic hunters fashioned a tool for survival. So was born the kayak.

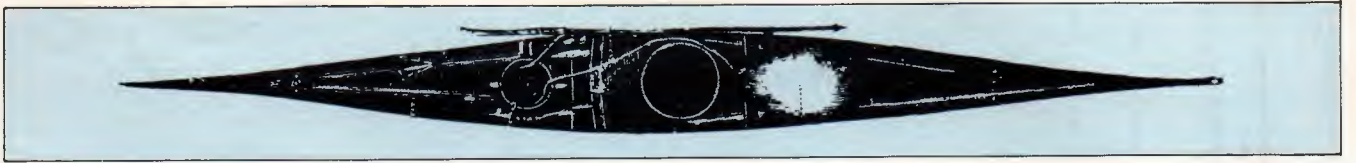
The cold Greenland water of Davis Strait swells like the rib cage of a slumbering whale, hiding the hunter from his prey. Windmilling his paddle, the hunter darts to the top of the next swell, stops, and deftly draws a harpoon from the thongs holding it to his kayak's deck. He fits it to his throwing-stick, cocks his arm, and waits in silence.

The wave subsides, dropping him within yards of an unsuspecting bladder-nose seal. Instantly, the hunter hurls the harpoon with all his strength, and its barb lodges deep. Just as quickly, the shrieking animal dives, but its descent is slowed by trailing coils of line tied fast to the harpoon's head. An inflated sealskin floats behind, marking the creature's course. Patiently, the hunter follows.

A half-hour later, the exhausted and bloody seal resurfaces for the moment of truth. The beast senses he must either kill his

tormentor or die. Jaws gaping, he attacks, but the hunter evades the first rush with a quick spin of his kayak. The seal's second desperate charge ends definitively on the tip of the hunter's lance.

From this death came life. The hunter's family could feast, while his dogs could grow sleek and fat. From this ancient death and others like it came the chance for survival itself. Without the hunter's kayak, that chance would simply not exist. For the Arctic Eskimos, there was no other way.



PRECIOUS DRIFTWOOD

From Eastern Siberia across the top of North America to eastern Greenland, kayaks roamed the coastlines, travelling and hunting. No record whatsoever has been discovered of them elsewhere.

Specific designs varied according to tribe, local conditions and intended use. But the kayak's essential skin-over-frame construction sets it apart from all other watercraft. With impressive ingenuity, generations of Eskimo hunters developed and refined their boats utilising the only raw materials they knew: sticks, skin and bone.

Precious driftwood served for the internal frames. Driftwood ribs were usually tenoned into the wood gunwales, then fastened together with bone pegs. Sometimes, long bones formed graceful upswept stems. Sinew cords lashed together the frames, longitudinal stringers and gunwales. This "tied-together" construction sounds like a strange way to build a sea-worthy boat, but actually it resulted in a surprisingly strong but slightly flexible hull that worked with the sea rather than against it. This rigid-but-yielding frame was the heart of the kayak's success.

Women sewed the skins of sea animals over the frames. The hides, stretched and wet, would then shrink to form a drum-tight hull. In various areas of Alaska, the skins of the beared seal and sea lion were most popular. To the east, the Netsilik and Caribou Eskimos were known to substitute caribou skins occasionally when seal skins were in short supply.

To make the boats watertight, the women rubbed layers of melted fat into the hulls. This meant that every few days the kayaks had to be allowed to dry out, since wet skin rejects fat.

Despite the limited materials, there were numerous kayak designs – some with rocker, some without, some with upswept bow and stern, others needle-shaped, some with arched decks and others flat. Frame design varied, with different numbers of longerous (lengthwise members) and different weights of keelsons. These designs produced considerable variations in performance. Some kayaks tracked well and were fast. Others were better on the pivot. When drifting, some turned bow to the wind, others stern. Anyone who has bought a modern kayak and done some comparison shopping is familiar with round-bottom, V-bottom and perhaps square-bottom designs. The Eskimos used them all.

STALKING AND SLAYING

Nansen refers to the kayak as the "Eskimo hunting boat" and indeed it was. But many Eskimos also used it to transport family and belongings upriver into the interior when the tribe made its Spring migration away from the sea. The Caribou Eskimos even ran rapids with their kayaks, although this was done with a purpose and not for recreation as we do today.

The river-dwelling Netsilik of Northern Canada never took their kayaks to sea, but the Eskimos of Alaska did, and sea hunting also



was a way of life in the eastern Canadian Arctic and Greenland.

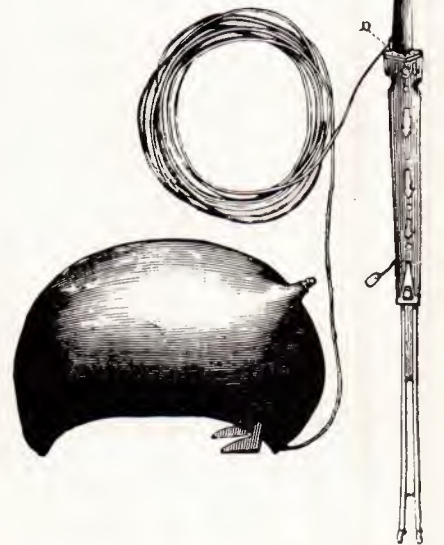
In Greenland, the kayak reached a near-unmatched degree of excellence as a hunting craft. Today's kayakers avoid projections from their hulls that could snag on rocks or branches. They would be shocked at the array of weaponry carried on the deck of a Greenland kayak. Riding abaft (behind) the cockpit was the inflated sealskin float attached to the harpoon line. In front of the paddler stood the kayak stand, supporting the sinew coils of the harpoon line. In easy reach of the hunter's throwing arm lay the harpoon itself, while on the afterdeck rested a lance and long-handled knife. The front deck held two other throwing weapons – a bladder-dart and a four-pronged bird dart. Next to them, the hunter kept his throwing stick. All these projectiles were held fast under thongs that stretched across the decks.

With his weapons, the Eskimo set forth to gather fish and flesh, blubber, bone and skins – which along with stone, snow and a few chunks of driftwood constituted the raw materials of his culture. It was a brutal battle for survival, fought with desperate beasts that often fought back. Dangerous prey such as the walrus and whale were attacked from the kayak, including the vicious grampus (killer whale or orca) with its awesome teeth. A manoeuvrable kayak was critical. Think, for example, of the hunter suddenly attacked from the right rear quarter, unable to thrust his harpoon unless he could first pivot his boat.

Obviously, hunting from a kayak requires the utmost agility. Unlike today's paddlers, the Eskimo had to master dozens of capsize recovery techniques. Since his craft was often exceedingly narrow, capsizing was often exceedingly narrow, capsizing was commonplace. Sometimes it was even intentional, and paddlers capsized deliberately to let waves crest over them to prevent the force of the water from breaking their backs. In the old days, the hunters held rolling contests. It was considered meritorious to right oneself with a paddle; better using one arm with an open hand; still better using one

From breakaway bone tip to inflated sealskin float, Eskimo harpoons were all business.

Illustration by Otto Sindis, ca. 1893



arm with a clenched fist; and best not to need an arm at all.

Despite their expertise, the Eskimos suffered mishaps. But the majority of hunters came home, windmilling out of the sea fog to the cheers of their mates, towing heavy carcasses behind their kayaks, shouting the joy of the successful hunt. As they climbed from their cockpits in the surf, the women flensed the animals on the shore and divided the flesh and organs according to carefully prescribed ritual. And when the hunt was good, stomachs were full and the people rejoiced.

What Eskimo, feasting on liver and seal meat, would have dreamed that the hunting craft to which he owed his life would, in another time and strangely balmy place, become a plaything for 'civilized' entertainment?

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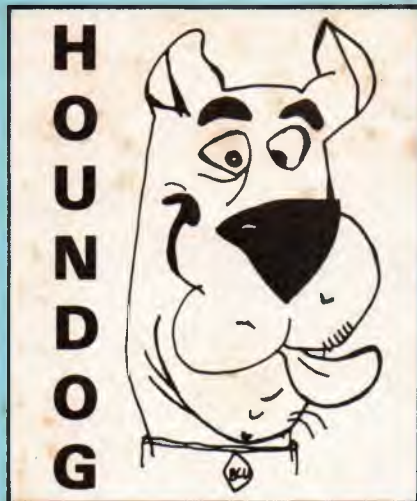
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REMARKABLE ROYAL

Hounddog was very impressed to receive in his post bag a notice convening the 118th Annual General Meeting of the Royal Canoe Club. Those who are inclined to regard canoeing as a relatively brash and recent addition to the expanding programme of sport and recreation that may be enjoyed by seekers after meaningful leisure activity, please note. It's not just the age of Royal that is so remarkable, but their amazing instinct for survival, resilience, and ability to accommodate the phenomenal changes that have taken place during the past 118 years. It is difficult to conceive, that when Royal's first Annual General Meeting took place, the American Civil War was still in progress, real Indians were using real canoes and fighting real cowboys, and the Battle of the Little Big Horn was still to be fought. The first train between London and Birmingham had run a few years earlier, and motor cars were still to be invented.

There were a few other clubs around at this time of course, or shortly after anyhow, and the British Canoe Association saw the light of day in 1878. None survived the First World War but Royal. In 1984, with 118 years of experience to guide them, they are as dynamic and enthusiastic for the future as ever, and have recently embarked on a £50,000.00 development programme which it is anticipated will include the building of a new gymnasium and boat store. Trevor Melham is the Chairman of their fund raising committee and anyone wanting to help should telephone him on 01-641-0059.

FISHING FINGERED

If you like fishing stories how about this one extracted from the 'Inside Track' column of the 'Sunday Times':

"Izaak Walton must be spinning in his grave. In Texas, where the fish of course are bigger, one fisherman has died from gunshot wounds and another fears for his life as the FBI attempt to crack the ring that organises cheating in fishing tournaments where prizes are often as high as \$100,000.

The Investigation began a year ago after John and Archie Wade reported catching large-mouth bass weighing 12 and 10 pounds each in a tournament. Despite Texas boasting bass just don't come that large there. The two brothers failed a lie-detector test, and

laboratory tests revealed the fish actually came from Florida. They were disqualified, and the \$50,000 prize went to the runner-up, Danny Ray Davis.

Davis himself then fell under suspicion, and agreed to co-operate with the FBI and testify to a Grand Jury. The day before he was due to appear, he was found shot in the head by the side of a lake.

The next witness the FBI unearthed has been in a safe house ever since. His testimony threatens to expose a fishing mafia responsible for rigging tournaments all over America."



HAVOC AT HAMBLEDON

It would appear that in the Summer 1984 (No. 35) issue of *Canoe Focus*, the Editor made the age old mistake of confusing Hambleden, the canoeing venue on the Thames, with Hambledon in Hampshire.

Oliver Cock has been kind enough to provide a short ditty which should ensure that we don't make the same mistake again.

"Beware the floods of Hambleden
Where cricket's due today
The stream is up the pitch is wet
The rain has spoilt the play.

So come away to Hambleden
And play below the weir
The rain is down; the river's up
There's nothing here to fear!

The batsmen mourn at Hambleden,
When rain and floods abound.
Canoeists sing at Hambleden
Rejoice and rush around.

So let us pray for rains in Bucks
To keep the rivers high;
But pray for sun in far off Hants
To keep the wicket dry."

CULTURED CANOEISTS

The fascinating report contained on Page of this issue of *Canoe Focus* regarding the 1984 International Canoe Federation congress, does not, as you might expect, tell the whole story. The adventures of the four intrepid delegates, who risked life and limb, and considerable peril, inconvenience and discomfort in loyally fulfilling their duty to present a British perspective at the Congress, will no doubt be published in an unabridged version on some future occasion. However, it has been possible through the agency of a

garrulous mole, to obtain an insight into some of their activities.

Apparently the easiest and cheapest route from London to Sofia, the venue of the Congress, is via Athens. This information was enthusiastically welcomed by Albert Woods, who's relatives Hounddog is advised, constitute a major part of this august city's population. Fortunately, or unfortunately, depending on whether one has relatives in Athens, the delegates were obliged to wait several hours before their plane to Sofia departed, and this provided an opportunity to adopt the role of international tourists. Like most canoeists, always eager for cultural experiences, a taxi was hired, driven by one of Albert's cousins of course, and the delegates immediately headed for the Acropolis and the Parthenon. Having climbed the well trodden hill, and arrived hot and dusty at the top, the Director, Ron Emes, surveyed the classical debris that littered the landscape, and exclaimed with considerable disgust, and a complete disregard for Athenian architecture.

"This here, (the Parthenon) is an exact copy of Birmingham Town Hall!!" He was not serious of course, it was Bradford Town Hall!

PRINTING PROBLEMS!

Those who took the trouble to read Hounddog in the last issue of *Canoe Focus*, will have been mystified by the extract from Sam Llewellyn's book, "The Worst Journey in the Midlands", which, due to a proof reader's brain failure, was almost completely incomprehensible. The piece should have begun with the third paragraph in the first column ... "Modern civilization....", and the first three paragraphs in the first column should have been transposed to the bottom of column 2. Those who understand the foregoing advice, will certainly enjoy reading the revised version.

On the subject of typographical boobs, the following extract from the 1984 International Canoe Federation Congress Agenda seems worthy of note -

"Article 32 - There is a priter's error under (d) Touring Committee".

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Action on access

RIVER GREAT OUSE – ACCESS ABOVE BEDFORD

The Director of the BCU has invited me to provide a short article explaining the precise nature of the access problem that exists for canoeists on the River Ouse above Bedford. My first reaction was that this would further weaken the position created by the current National Access Officer but subsequently I came to the conclusion that perhaps the time was opportune to open the debate on access to the membership.

The River Ouse below Bedford is a recognised navigation. The position above Bedford is more obscure. The river has been canoed without any problems until about ten years ago when some groups (including the Canoe Camping Club and myself) were threatened by anglers (Nene Angling Association) at Turvey with prosecution for trespass.

Subsequently a number of meetings were held, under the auspices of the Eastern Region of the Sports Council, between the Milton Keynes Angling Association (which represents all clubs on this water), the British Canoe Eastern Region and National Access Officers, representatives of the Anglian Water Authority and myself (representing Southern Region interests) to try to obtain an agreement. It was the wish of the Sports Council and the Anglian Water Authority that we should reach an agreement.

At one of our own meetings the National Access Officer advised us that HQ had obtained legal opinion that access existed up to at least Wolverton. He was subsequently asked repeatedly to produce this opinion and to return to Legal Council through the BCU Solicitor to ascertain if this was still his opinion. Nothing happened.

In the meantime we collected a considerable amount of local information about the river and its historic uses but nothing has so far been entirely conclusive evidence of a historical navigation. I understand that evidence that the river was used as a means to transport by earlier inhabitants (e.g. Danes or Romans) is all that is required to prove the existence of a navigation.

Headquarters then concluded the Statement of Intent on Access with the anglers at national level, and subsequently local angling representatives have refused to meet us to discuss access. I understand that our experience is not unique and that other regions have been treated in the same way.

More recently the present National Access Officer has publicised a canoe trail over this water and when his possible error was pointed out, with a request to investigate and not to retract, we have a published 'erratum' effectively withdrawing all support from our local position.

We are left with a choice locally and nationally:

1. To prove our case conclusively and then there will be no need for any shared use agreements.
2. To demonstrate our ability to organise ourselves by a mass turn out of canoeists on undisputed water (in the first instance at least)

at the time of a major angling event and thereby convince the anglers of the need to conclude mutually beneficial access agreements.

The issue has been discussed over many a pint up and down the country with many proposals for extreme action, but the HQ request to 'keep it cool' has always been borne in mind as 'they' were leading the way. On the River Ouse 'they' have shown their hand by publically (and remember *Canoe Focus* is read by anglers) stating that the existence of a canoe trail above Bedford is an 'erratum'.

If any member would care to suggest a suitable venue and date and if just five hundred paddlers (that's under 5% of the membership) will come along perhaps we can then start some worthwhile discussions.

Colin Kempson – 6th September 1984

The National Access Officer replies

It would seem that the misunderstanding that has arisen by reporting the adoption of part of the navigation by the Anglian Water Authority, has caused at least one "Eastern Region sleeping dog" to stir from his slumbers. Although some of the meetings referred to in the foregoing correspondence took place before my appointment as National Access Officer, I will attempt to clarify the current situation.

A chain reaction has meant that the Regional Access team are now firmly back on the map after a period of two years in the wilderness! The appointment of Mark Osborne as Regional Access officer has ensured their place in the controversial access arena. I hope that Colin will become an active member of that team and will strive, with them, to achieve the collective aim of all canoeists – access to more water.

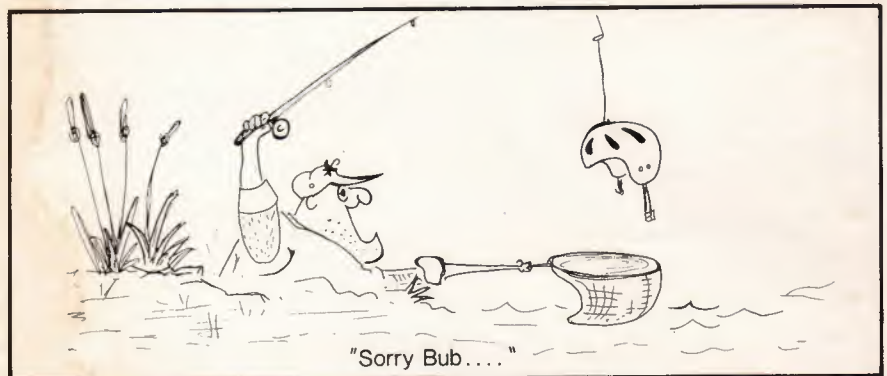
With regard to the specific content of Colin's letter, the facts are as follows. The BCU is advised that a right to navigate the Great Ouse above Bedford exists. This belief is shared by the Inland Waterways Authority. Prior to reorganisation, at the last Anglian Water Authority Recreation Committee meeting, the adoption of the navigation was announced. It is significant to note that both the IWA representative and I asked that it be recorded that, although we accepted the Authority's declaration, we reserved the right, without prejudice, to prove a right of navigation beyond the declared limit at some future date should either body deem this necessary. At the time, we were deeply involved in negotiations on the Statement of Intent. It was therefore not politic to force the issue, nor to seek a hardening of attitudes by the Riparian interests or their leasing angling societies.

The suggestions now put forward by Colin Kempson do nothing to ease the current pressure. The Union has already recognised the option of proving our case conclusively by a resolve at law and the issue is currently being debated in the correct place and by the correct vehicle, the British Access Committee. The second choice is one which is not open to us, for as a governing body of sport, we cannot associate ourselves or the BCU's name with any illegal act.

It is right that the anglers are constantly reminded of the pressures and frustrations being experienced by canoeists, and also right that Colin's letter should appear within these pages, for in his own words, "Canoe Focus is read by Anglers".

I hope these same anglers will now consider very seriously the need to negotiate for equitable use, not just of the Great Ouse, but of all those rivers which are physically, and by good management, capable of carrying more than one recreational activity.

Roger F. Irwin
National Access Officer



RENEWED ACCESS AGREEMENT RIVER TEME

The following weekends were agreed for canoeing in the ensuing season.

OCT 6 – 7	DEC 15 – 16	JAN 26 – 27
OCT 20 – 21	DEC 22 – 23	FEB 23 – 24
NOV 17 – 18	DEC 26, 29, 30	

IMPORTANT – All dates must be confirmed and arrangements notified to Chris Charters, Local Access Officer at X-Persei House, Staunton on Wye, Herefordshire, HR4 7NF. Any canoeist or group wishing to use the river mid-week should make arrangements with Chris at the above address.

SUCCESSFUL REPRESENTATION ACHIEVED

There has been a significant step forward in the achievement of greater access and improved conditions for canoeists.

The reorganisation of the Water Authorities and their statutory commitment to Recreation and the Environment is one contributory factor. In addition the BCU has, through direct lobbying and the support of the Central Council of Physical Recreation, achieved significant representation on the Regional Recreation and Conservation Committees.

First impressions are that this will provide a firm platform for debate and action by all recreational users of water. One "hardened" access worker declared after the first meeting "I've achieved more today in seeking to improve access than in the last five years".

I strongly urge clubs, organisations, individuals and regional groups to use their elected members wisely and to the full, to help improve the organised voice of canoeing.

Water Authority	BCU Regions	Nomination From	Nominee
Anglian	E/E. Midlands	BCU	Nomination approved Name of delegate to be confirmed.
Northumbrian	North	BCU	Not selected by Northumbrian Water Authority
North West	N.W./North	Regional Sports Councils & standing conference of sport and recreation for the North and North West	E.B. Totty (nomination awaiting approval and/or confirmation)
Severn Trent	East Midlands/ West Midlands	BCU	Frank Goodman confirmed
Southern	S./London and South East	BCU	Doug Caffyn confirmed
South West	South West	BCU	Mrs. J. Bradford confirmed
Thames	London and South East/ South/East/ South West	BCU	R.F. Irwin confirmed
Wessex	South/S. West	CCPR Water Division plus the South West Council for sport and recreation	J. Cornwell confirmed
Yorkshire	Yorkshire and Humberside	BCU	C. Hawkesworth confirmed

BOOKS

REVIEWED BY GEOFF GOOD

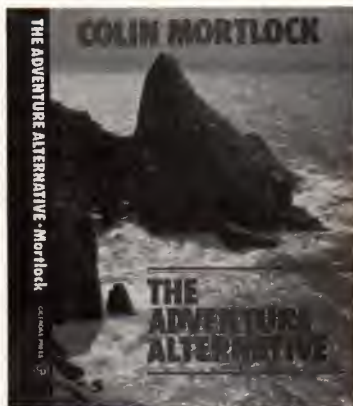
THE ADVENTURE ALTERNATIVE

Colin Mortlock. Cicerone Press 180 cm x 245 cm

116pp £8.95 Hardback

Colin Mortlock is a remarkable person. As a teacher he led groups on climbing and canoeing expeditions at all levels of commitment. As Warden of Woodlands Outdoor Centre he developed his ideas concerning the importance of 'adventure experiences' being an integral part of every person's education. Latterly, as Director of the Centre for Outdoor Education at Charlotte Mason College, Cumbria, he has refined his philosophy and has now stated it in this book.

There are, Colin contends four stages, or levels of experience, obtainable in any adventure based journey. He recalls his personal peaks, or stage III 'frontier' adventure moments, particularly when soloing on very difficult climbs and kayak journeys. The importance of soloing as part of the process of seeking true maturity through journeying in the outdoors, is stressed.



Colin also draws on a weighty wealth of evidence from thinkers and explorers through the ages, in formulating his proposal that all actions should be based inside a framework of trying to develop *an awareness, respect and love of self*, balanced against *an awareness, respect and love for others*, balanced against *an awareness, respect and love for the environment*.

All who are involved in teaching outdoor pursuits need to journey through these pages.

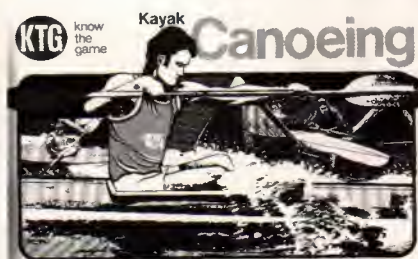
Cosmic Kayak Tours – Foxy

Cosmic Kayak Tours, 45 Bohemia, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP2 5RH
150mm x 110mm. 10 minutes reading for £1.75 inc. p & p.

For those who enjoy satire, laced with smut, this sci-fi themed cartoon book will probably tickle the fancy.

The 'establishment' comes in for some pillorying and so, understandably, the booklet is unlikely to make the 'approved' list.

An alternative 'stopper self-rescue technique' may be worthy of consideration...



"KAYAK CANOEING". 'Know the Game' series.

48 pages. 70 illustrations 203mm x 303mm. £1.10 including p & p.

This inexpensive introduction to the varied aspects of canoeing, has recently been revised.

The sport has moved on to an extent that really demands a complete re-write. Illustrations and text are, however, up to date where it really matters. New-comers to canoeing, for whom it is intended, will probably not notice the old fashioned look of some of the remaining shots.

There is an unfortunate omission of one line of text concerning hand holds on boats, and the picture of a toggle (fig. 23b) is upside down. Hopefully this will not lead to a spate of deck lines being fitted to the hull!

A useful, short but comprehensive introductory booklet, covering types of craft and their use, choice of equipment, and basic skills.

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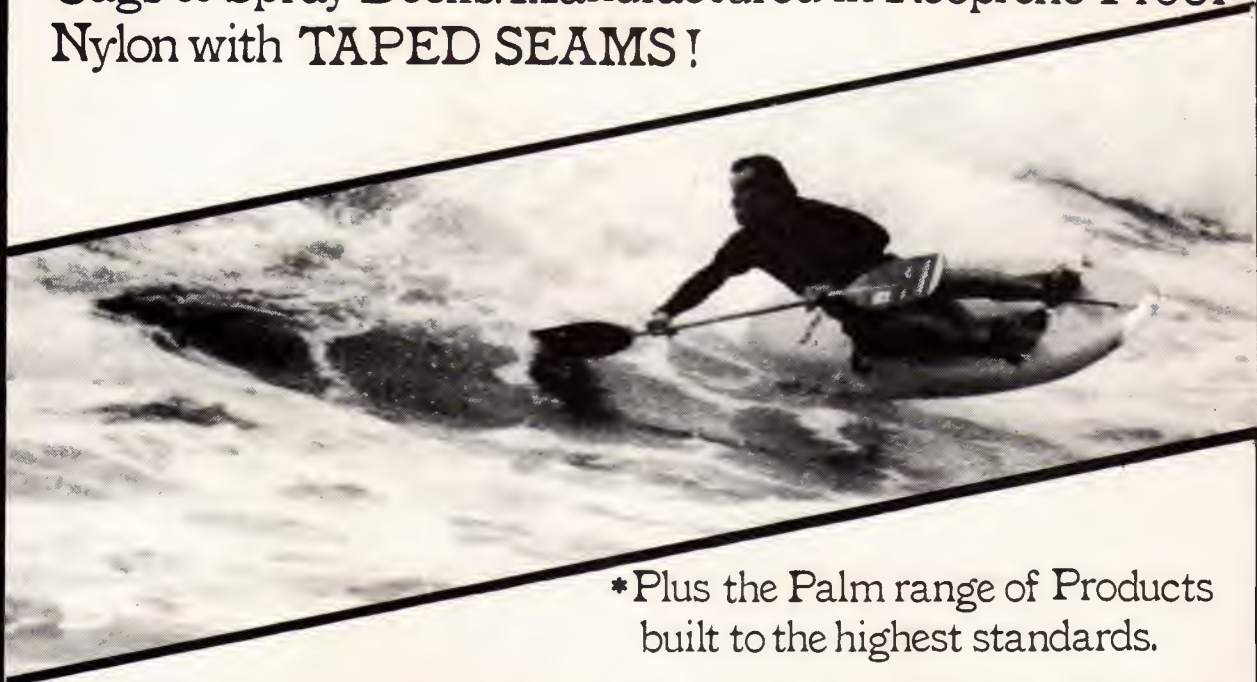
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Dear Focus...

PLASTIC BOATS

Dear Focus,

I would like to mention a few points which I had hoped would be discussed at the recent boat testing sessions and safety conferences, at which plastic boats are being treated as a great break-through in modern kayaking.

Polyethylene boats are very heavy. They are sluggish and slow to manoeuvre, partly, I am told, because of the design limitations imposed by the roto-moulding process, but also because their excessive mass increases the moment of inertia about a vertical axis through the paddler. I believe this is of a serious disadvantage in white water.

I realise that boats must be as safe as possible but, as well as improving the chances of escape from a trapped kayak, why not make it light and manoeuvrable so that a competent paddler can avoid being trapped in the first place? I think that recent interest in escaping from folded boats has stemmed from the trend of committing novices beyond their true ability, and this has given non-canoeists the idea that white water paddlers merely hurtle out of control down rapids, rolling up after the inevitable capsizes, and eventually jamming on rocks and coming to an untimely but not unexpected end. I sincerely hope that they are wrong.

It isn't like that, but the way the canoeing press write about plastic boats implies that this is the way we are heading; pushing novices down major rapids, confident that they will come to no harm because, at the slightest hint of trouble, they will capsize, fall out of the enormous cockpit and swim ashore with no more than a lungful of water to show for the experience. The boat, of course, will pop back into shape after being recovered!

I believe, that although safety is of paramount importance, it should be positive, in that we should concentrate on avoiding disastrous situations on rapids before we go to extreme and very expensive lengths to enable paddlers to escape from (dare I say it?) their own mistakes. We place too much emphasis on saving people from situations that should never have arisen.

William Mattos, Bristol

Graham Mackereth of Pyranha Watersports Centre comments:

There is enormous difference in opinion on safety between countries such as Britain, the Alpine countries, and America, largely because the nature of our white water is generally light and not of extreme difficulty. In Germany and Austria, unless the boat is substantially heavier than the UK boat – twenty plus kilos – they often do not consider it a good boat. They also insist that cockpits are sufficiently large for you to sit on your seat and lift your knees out without having to sit on the back deck. This enormously reduces the tendency of the boat to trap you.

The safety of the paddler, no matter what the river, is entirely dependent upon the decision he makes at the time. As a manufacturer who makes very light competition slalom kayaks, and white water kayaks, I am all too aware that paddlers make many mistakes, and will often buy the wrong

product for what they want to do, no matter what advice is given.

It is possible to offer polyethylene kayaks very cheaply, using low grade material, and fitting them out very simply. We now select both materials and specifications to suit non white water, and white water use. This, however, does not stop customers from buying a model not recommended for white water use, and using it in white water.

Polythene has given us the opportunity to substantially improve the potential safety of our kayaks designed for use in white water, should an accident happen. We have evidence that this has worked to many customers' satisfaction. It is difficult to state that this has saved lives, but we believe that we have made a significant advance, which would not have been possible without the technology of rotational moulding.

Polyethylene kayaks are now being designed to suit British paddlers not far short in terms of performance to modern day competition boats. Partly due to their shorter lengths, the moment of inertia has been reduced, and they are therefore not at a disadvantage in white water.

We are continuing to look at safety and performance together, and thank people like Mr. Mattos for raising aspects which they consider important.

Director of Coaching Comments:

The Safety Conference did not regard roto-moulded boats as the be-all and end-all of modern kayaking. They were accepted as a fact of canoeing life, with certain advantages, but also inherent problems.

Their weight is surely no greater than fibreglass boats made to "centre specifications". A number of useful heavy water paddlers would not, I think, agree that a lack of performance creates a significant safety hazard.

It is probably true that their robustness has increased the trend for novices to be committed beyond their technical ability. That the necessary skills should be present first, is a commonsense view. I have, however, observed the phenomenon with not a polyethylene boat in sight!

Very few novices have, in fact, died through entrapment, but several experienced, competent paddlers have, or have been in severe difficulties in jammed or wrap-around situations.

The implication that no paddler need make a mistake, is surely idealistic. The consensus view of the Safety Conference was that all that can reasonably be done to increase safety, should be investigated. That there are common-sense limits, and that paddlers cannot expect total protection against hazards of white water canoeing, is part of the philosophy.

HOT, IT'S NOT!

Dear Focus,

Whilst I appreciate that four magazines a year included in membership is good value, I really must ask why it is that the information and news is often out of date.

The most recent and, in my view, most annoying example of this was in connection with the Autumn edition. I am a keen slalomist who feels very strongly about the new ICF rules and would very much like to have returned the survey form, which accompanied the magazine, with my comments. I was unable to do so as my copy arrived during the week following the 7th September, the deadline for its return.

I know I am not the only one as several other paddlers in my club have complained about the same thing.

Chris Foulds, Nottingham.

We would obviously like to be able to produce more issues of Focus but owing to the costs involved of printing, and especially postage, it is not possible without increasing membership subscriptions which I am sure would not be popular!

This leaves us in the unhappy position of not only trying to squeeze in three months' news but also of not having the flexibility to give as much advance notice of forthcoming events as we would like.

In the last issue, Autumn, the survey concerning the proposed ICF Slalom Rule changes was scheduled to arrive in time to allow replies. The edition was held however, quite rightly, to bring you the very latest report and results from Lake Casitas. Unfortunately the deadline date for the return of the survey was overlooked, being separate from the main part of the magazine. We apologise to all those who were not able to make their feelings known.



"GRAND PRIX" SLALOMS?

Dear Focus,

Ever since the idea of a 'Grand Prix' Slalom originated a few years ago, I and many others, have not been entirely convinced.

With the Autumn issue of Focus we all received a survey form the ICF, proposed slalom rule changes, which goes a long way, in my view towards 'Grand Prix'.

The feeling of the majority of paddlers in my club, and in the area, is that the balance of skill and speed is lost to the pole bashing sprinter.

Focus Reader, Rode, Somerset.

Reader Note: This controversial subject is covered by the ICF Conference report on page 13.

Dear Focus...

Canoe Focus encourages letters to the editor but reserves the right to edit and condense to fill the space available. All letters will be treated as having been submitted for publication and must include a name and address for verification. Please send all correspondence to: "Letters", Canoe Focus, British Canoe Union, 45-47 High Street, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey, KT15 1JV

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EXPEDITIONS & OUTINGS...

Undertaken this summer by intrepid travellers, boldly going where none of us have been before; well not recently anyway - unless you know different?



RIVER DEEP, MOUNTAIN HIGH IN CHILE

Dee de Mengel and Alun Hughes were a pair off seeking adventure earlier in the year, in Chile, under the pretext of making a film for S4C Welsh Television.

Their plan was to combine canoeing and climbing and with their spare energy obtain some exciting footage on two 8mm cine cameras!

From the airport at Puntón Arenas the route was to the beach at Pta del Hambre, across the Magellan Straits at Cabo Forward to Tierra del Fuego. Crossing Seno Keats they camped at the foot of Mount Sarmineto. During the six weeks they were treated to magnificent scenery - high mountains, deep

water, ice on the sea, at Seno Agostini a glacier flowing into it and even an inquisitive pair of Condors.

The pair opted for Nordcap canoes but regretted that timing had not allowed for rudders to be fitted, finding it difficult to keep on course in a following sea.

Canoeing, climbing and filming poses other physical problems, those of gear and available space. When each of the two boat's watertight compartments were crammed full, they had to revert to water-tight bags lashed on deck, which didn't do much for stability.

Dee warns of the Magellan tidal enigma. The morning high tide in these parts is a good three feet higher than in the afternoon. They found out the hard way by receiving a drenching from water pouring into their tent and

narrowly avoiding the loss of their canoes containing all the food and most of the equipment, which had to be rescued from eighteen inches of water down on the beach!

Crossing Seno Inman they had a narrow shave, caused partly by a brief island stop following a call of nature! In five minutes the wind had increased whipping them in the water round the rocky, unsheltered shore. They had to seal-launch the boats, and paddle directly into a force 8 wind blowing them back onto the rocks. Managing to turn their canoes beam on Dee describes their full time job to keep them the right way up. Luck was with them and, as quickly as it had sprung up, the squall abated.

Dee also speaks highly of the Chilean people; of the holiday makers who plied them with Goulash and wine from their barbecue while they packed their canoes on Pte del Hambre beach, and the friendly fishermen at Seno Agostine who welcomed them into their tin shack camp, where they helped with the collecting of scallops and king crabs destined for sale in Puntón Arenas.

Dee and Alun arrived back fitter, thinner, and they say, still good friends!

A more detailed report and advice for other potential Chilean explorers from - Dee de Mengel, 14 Castleton Road, Hope, Sheffield.

ALSEK ADVENTURE

Top on the list of degree of difficulty was the Alsek Expedition undertaken by some brave lads out in Alaska. While the rest of us were sweating it out at home, Marcus Bailie, Phil Bibby, Mike Hewlett and Peter Knowles were attempting a lightweight, unsupported descent of the Alsek - generally regarded as Alaska's most spectacular and committing white water wilderness river, and jolly cold too - being fed by the biggest icefields outside the Polar regions! They are grateful for the equipment donated by sponsors, White Water Sports and Northern Wild Water Centre.

Floods in the Yukon, compounded by good weather made for very high water levels and what the team describe as "bouncy rapids". There was disappointment, in that they had to portage across Tweedsmuir Glacier to get around Turnback Canyon - what they call "a memorable two day experience"!

The team saw plenty of bears (there's approximately one bear every three miles down the river), but no other humans on their ten day trip, apart from a photographer from the National Geographic Magazine who flew in by helicopter to take some shots of ice cliffs collapsing on passing kayakers!

Full details of the preparation plans and the descent itself can be obtained from Mr. Peter Knowles, 125 Hook Rise South, Surbiton, Surrey, KT6 7NA.

INTERNATIONAL LONG RIVER CANOEIST CLUB CHARITY PADDLE

For the third summer in a row, canoeists gathered at Plymouth to take part in the 'Plymouth to Eddystone' in which funds are raised, through individual sponsorship, for the Cancer and Leukaemia in Childhood Trust, CLIC for short.

Safety for this year's 39 paddlers was considered very carefully. All participants wore buoyancy aids/lifejackets and were fitted with pumps and decklines. Two doctors

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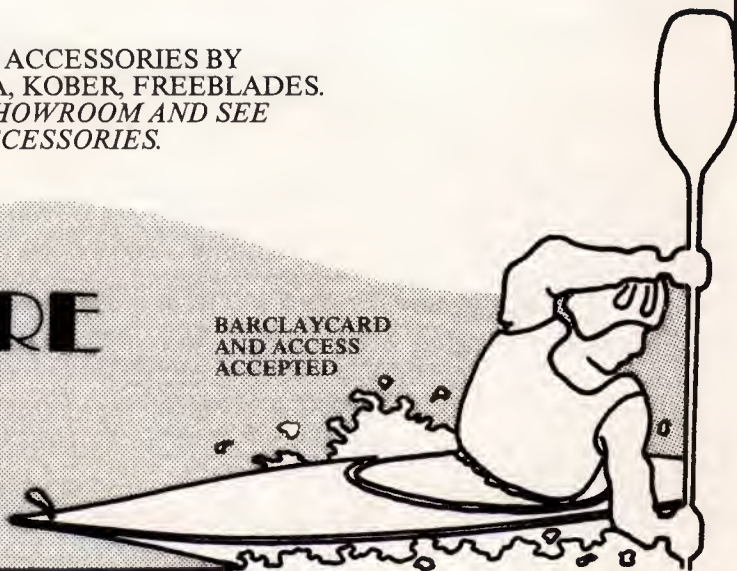
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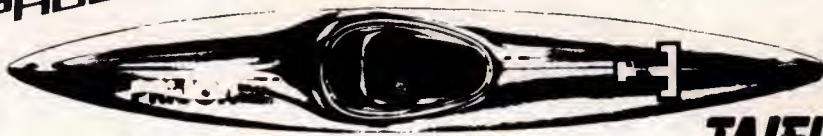


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who travelled on a large RAF Air Sea Rescue Station vessel with its five-man crew briefed the canoeists about the dangers of dehydration etc. In addition were two large, fast cabin cruisers with an Avon inflatable and four Rigid Raiders from the Royal Marine Raiding Squadron to act as 'Shepherds'. Peter Salisbury kept an eye on proceedings from the control ship with the aid of powerful binoculars, checking off each paddler on the master sheet.

The group set off for Eddystone Lighthouse at 10am sharp and at the two mile point made final adjustment to kit. They reached the lighthouse at about 1pm where there was a couple of feet of swell, but otherwise perfect conditions. Peter notes the cheery waves and smiles indicating a great time being had by all.

First man back was Dave Appleby and the first ladies were A. Jennison and S.M. Dixon with times of 5 hours 28 minutes and 6 hours 46 minutes respectively. John Powell, the most senior paddler at 74, clocked up a respectable 7 hours 38 minutes for the 24 nautical mile journey arriving at 5.38pm. T. Gardener, by completing the trip raised a highly commendable £500 for CLIC. Only three of the 39 were unable to complete the full distance.

A most enjoyable day was rounded off by presentations in the Mayflower Yacht Club of carved lighthouses to the first home and Strandglass 'Eddystone' T-shirts and certificates to all.

The organisers wish to say 'thank you' to those people responsible for the comprehensive safety cover provided, to those who made it down to Plymouth on that Saturday but most of all to those who raised the cash, over £3,000 in total. Well done all.

Peter has the last word. "1985 will soon be with us, make a date in your diary for June and enrol with either me: Peter Salisbury, International Long River Canoeist Club, 238 Birmingham Road, Redditch, Worcs, B97 6EL or have a chat with Geoff Bladon on the ILRCC stand at Crystal Palace next February at the International Canoe Exhibition.. get the 'Plymouth to Eddystone' under your belt!"

PLYMOUTH TO PADSTOW In twelve, not-so-easy moves

A group from Plymouth Polytechnic Canoe Club headed by Chris Broadway and varying between ten and twelve in number, set off on 18 August from Plymouth to paddle round the Lizzard to Padstow.

They had an eventful twelve days and Chris's account gives some points to bear in mind by anyone attempting a similar route.

"Radios can be useful when coming into a surf beach, but unreliable with headlands and tricky to operate in Force 5 winds if one wants to keep hold of one's paddle!"

"We found on many occasions that we had travelled faster than we had intended, and could have paddled further before the tides changed. However, having given detailed plans to both a contact in Plymouth and the Coastguard, we felt it unwise to follow our urges."

"The trip was all planned on the direction of the tides, but there is nothing quite like having the wind with you all the way as well. You can't plan that."

"At first we started sleeping in the open on beaches, but having been woken by rain in the early hours and heavy dews, fly sheets started to be erected as the trip progressed.

Sleeping between kayaks was also popular as this gave shelter from the wind, which was often more important."

"For the last 3 days of our trip we were having to cope with swells of between 4' and, as we rounded Trevoise Head, 12'. One day we were paddling for 3 hours in a Force 5 South Westerly, with 8' waves as the norm. The sea crossings are at least made 'interesting' by this type of water. However, getting on and off the water deserves another term: 'worrying'."

"We will all have our different memories of the trip, with the second part giving more than the first. However they do include 3.5' wide jellyfish, basking sharks, Cornish fishermen and sand that got everywhere."

Chris would like to thank all those who made their trip possible and the paddlers themselves. He has a personal log of each day's events which he offers to those interested from: 34 Sheffield Road, Fratton, Portsmouth, Hants, PO1 5DP.

The group consisted of: Chris Broadway (Organiser), Sue Roberts, Steve Farnill, Simon Page, Cliff Hart, Ian Ruse, Jayne Lewis, David Lawton, Martin Bell, Alison Mann, Mark Rhodes and Dave Liddle

Other potential explorers and we at Focus are always pleased to hear about your expeditions and outings, be they international forages to undiscovered backwaters or just fun days out. Details particularly helpful to others who might like to follow your route or join in next time are: types of craft used, planning involved, gear chosen, food taken, times, distances and speeds clocked, events that happened and problems encountered along the way. Keep your reports coming in.

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Trade News



Dennis Davis Designs – OJIBWA

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The DD 9 Ojibwa canoe is 15'6" long x

31" beam, 13" mid-depth, and end height of around 20", hull is symmetrical.

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Gaybo's New White Water Racing Kayak

Gaybo's new White Water Racing Kayak – the Delphin Maxi – is now in production.

This kayak (known in Europe as the Delphin 83-II-III) was used to win first and third places in the Mens' K1 event in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, won all three legs of the Europe Cup Ladies K1 races and took first three places in the Silberschild Rennen (on

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flat water.)

The hull is "V'd" in the bows but more rounded in the cockpit area than the '81. This design feature leaves a fairly narrow waterline in easier conditions but the buoyancy comes into play when necessary in rough water. The Delphin Maxi, unlike many boats, is less prone to bouncing in small waves. Prices and further details available from Gaybo (International Canoes and Kayaks) Ltd, of Uckfield Tel: (0825) 5891/2.

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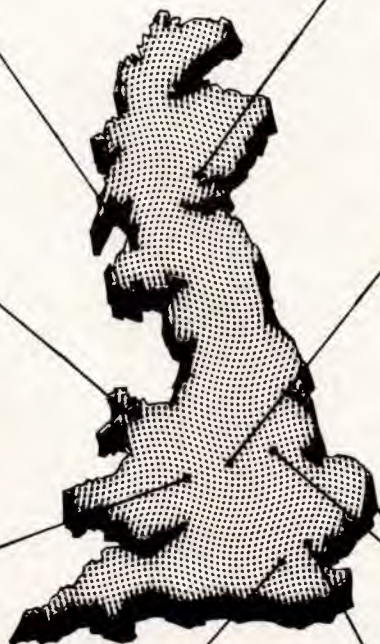
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