

CANOE FOCUS

No.49 February 1987 – Price 80p

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH CANOE UNION



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Next Issue:

Publication Date: 14 May 1987

Last date for copy: 3 April 1987

Front cover

Morning at the Tryweryn
(photograph by John James)

Canoe Focus is the official magazine of the British Canoe Union and is published bi-monthly by them.

Subscription Rates: U.K. inland £10.00, overseas £12.00 for ten issues.

Advertising Rates and Data are available on application from the Marketing Manager at BCU Headquarters.

Canoe Focus encourages contributions of any nature but reserves the right to edit and condense to fill the space available and unless otherwise stated the Publishers assume no responsibility for the return of unsolicited manuscripts, artwork, or photographs. Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the British Canoe Union, its Committees or members. The printing of an advertisement in Canoe Focus does not necessarily mean that the British Canoe Union endorse the Company, item, or service advertised. All material in Canoe Focus is strictly copyright and all rights are reserved. Reproduction without prior permission from the Editor is forbidden.

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One way to arrive at Holme Pierrepont?

Photo: Tony Tickle



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A man in a red life vest is shown from the chest up, paddling a silver canoe. The canoe has two red and white labels: "Coleman" and "Gold Medalist". The background is dark, suggesting a night or low-light setting.

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The Hall of Canoe Sport

In Hall Two, there are many displays covering the technical aspects of canoeing. These cover the regional organisation, the varied aspects of canoesport, ranging from slalom to touring, lifesaving to expeditions. Likewise there are many other agencies which can assist canoeists by providing services and facilities. There is something of interest for everyone. No visit to the Exhibition would be complete without

taking advantage of the wealth of information available in Hall Two.

Free Programme

In order to help you find your way around, every ticket will automatically entitle you to a free programme on arrival. This programme will include detailed layout of the Exhibition and will serve as a useful source of reference for years to come.

Equipment

At the International Canoe Exhibition this year, you will find even more trade stands than in previous years. There will be over sixty stands displaying an enormous choice of canoes, kayaks, surf skis and related equipment, featuring all the latest designs, many of which are on public show for the first time. The main arena, north balcony, squash courts, top balcony and hall three, are given over entirely to the trade exhibits. At no other time of the year is there such an excellent opportunity to inspect so much equipment under one roof.

On the main concourse, you will find the stand of the British Canoe Union. Here you

will be able to find out about the benefits of membership of the Union and other services offered. If your membership is out of date you can renew, or if, not a member you can join on the spot.

Films/Lectures

A continual programme of canoeing films interspersed with lectures has been planned. The highlight will be the first presentation of the lecture 'Kites and Kayaks - the Dudh Kosi revisited' (with Kayaks and Microlights) by Mickey Coin. The lectures programme will be:

- Saturday 1) Surf and Sashimi by Andy Fleck (previewed on pages 24 and 25)
2) Kites & Kayaks - The Dudh Kosi revisited by Mickey Coin
- Sunday 1) Sea Kayaks around Britain & Ireland by Bill Taylor
2) The British Kayak Expedition to the Roof of the World by Mark Attenborough



POOL PROGRAMME

Saturday		Sunday	
Main Pool			
10.00 hrs	Polo Competition	09.30 hrs	Polo Competition
11.00 hrs	Placid Water	10.50 hrs	Slalom Competition
11.30 hrs	Polo Competition	11.50 hrs	Polo Competition
12.30 hrs	Slalom Competition	12.50 hrs	Club Fun Event
13.20 hrs	Surf Life Saving Association Display	13.20 hrs	Slalom Competition
13.25 hrs	Slalom Competition	14.30 hrs	Women's Superstars
14.30 hrs	World hand-rolling record attempt	15.00 hrs	Corps of Canoe Lifeguards Demonstration
14.50 hrs	Slalom Competition	15.30 hrs	World hand-rolling record attempt
15.35 hrs	Men's Superstars	15.50 hrs	Final of the Polo Competition
16.05 hrs	Club Fun Event		
16.35 hrs	Polo Competition		
Training Pool			
10.30 hrs-17.30 hrs	Come and Try It	10.00 hrs-17.00 hrs	Come and Try It
Diving Pool			
10.30 hrs-12.00 hrs	Slalom Clinic - Premier - Div I	12.00 hrs-13.00 hrs	Slalom Clinic - Premier - Div II
15.00 hrs-17.50 hrs	Slalom Clinic - Div III - Novice	14.30 hrs-17.00 hrs	Slalom Clinic - Div III - Novice

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In the summer 1984, Issue No. 35 of CANOE FOCUS, it was reported that 'The Holme Pierrepont Artificial Slalom Course project, so long an impossible dream,' was at last to become 'a reality', and that 'the green light for the Artificial Slalom Course also enabled the Union to implement its plans for transferring their Headquarters to the Holme Pierrepont National Water Sports Centre, and so provide the opportunity for developing the Centre as the focal point for canoeing activities in Britain.' Well, two and a half years later, the Slalom Course has been completed, and is proving to be even more successful than the most optimistic of forecasters could have imagined. It has given new life to the National Water Sports Centre, and has generated a level of day-to-day activity and interest never previously experienced, since the Centre was opened in 1972. Regrettably, similar progress has not been achieved with the establishment of the National Canoeing Centre, and the construction of the Union's new Headquarters building and the course control centre, which is to be sited between the Slalom and Regatta Courses, and the Winfield Pool. In the autumn of 1986, readers of CANOE FOCUS were informed that 'after many attempts' a deal of compromise, and several hundred drawings, the final design for the National Canoeing Centre had been presented by the Union's architects, Brian Clouston and Partners'. Subsequently, detailed planning approval for the Centre was granted by Rushcliffe District Council, and working drawings and bills of quantity were provided to six building contractors, who were invited to submit tenders. The Council of Management had instructed that the cost of the building was not to exceed the resources available, and it was anticipated that approximately £400,000 would be required, £160,000 of which was to be provided as capital grant by the Sports Council. One month before the closing date for the receipt of tenders for the construction of the building, and the appointment of the successful contractor, the Union were advised by the Sports Council that their contribution of £100,000 towards the £2.2 million cost of the Slalom Course, which had been guaranteed when the original approval for the construction of the Course had been agreed, would be

required forthwith.

Despite the Union's absolute determination to fulfil their commitment to the Sports Council, a polite request for £100,000 at such short notice was, to say the least, unexpected. In their original programme, the contribution to the cost of the Course had been scheduled two years from the date that construction began, which would have been the Autumn of 1987. However, be that as it may, the Sports Council had its own problems, and understandably, the political and financial wisdom of providing a capital grant of £160,000 to an organisation owing £100,000 towards the cost of the Course, had been seriously questioned. In the event, the Sports Council's generous offer was withdrawn. However, all was not lost, and after much discussion, alternative arrangements have now been proposed, which some members of the Union may consider to be even more advantageous than were originally agreed. In particular, and subject to endorsement by their respective management groups, the Sports Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, and the BCU, have agreed -

1. That, subject to suitable financial arrangements, Nottinghamshire County Council will meet the costs of constructing the National Canoeing Centre, situated at the Holme Pierrepont National Water Sports Centre.
2. That the Sports Council will provide grant aid towards the cost of the National Canoeing Centre.
3. That the County Council will lease the National Canoeing Centre to the Holme Pierrepont National Water Sports Centre Joint Management Committee.
4. That the Joint Management Committee will sub-lease to the BCU for an annual rental, or for a capital contribution towards the cost of the building, to be agreed, that part of the National Canoeing Centre necessary for the Union's administrative and operational requirements.
5. That the National Canoeing Centre building shall be constructed to the design and plan prepared by the Union's architects, Brian Clouston and Partners, and no modifications shall be effected other than those necessary to

accommodate the aforementioned alterations in tenure.

6. That the BCU shall pay to the Sports Council £100,000 towards the cost of the Holme Pierrepont National Water Sports Centre Slalom Course, not later than 31 March 1988.

There are of course, several important, obvious and practical effects that arise as a consequence of these proposals. In particular, the programme for transferring the BCU Headquarters Secretariat to Holme Pierrepont will be delayed, at least until the spring of 1988, and possible even later. The construction of the new building is unlikely to begin before mid summer 1987, and the contract will be minimally nine months. There will therefore continue to be temporary buildings on the Slalom Course for control, changing, toilets, refreshments, and reception, for at least a further eighteen months. The uncertainties experienced by professional staff, voluntary officers, and members, which inevitably arise whilstsoever the transfer of BCU Headquarters is delayed, will regrettably continue. The additional financial expenditure that will be incurred by maintaining temporary facilities cannot, unfortunately, be avoided.

On the other hand, the Union can now be absolutely certain that the National Canoeing Centre, even though delayed, will be built, and that the full cost thereof will be shared with the Sports Council and Nottinghamshire County Council, thus relieving the BCU and its members of the responsibility for raising some £400,000. All in all, the possibility exists for the BCU to achieve a very satisfactory conclusion to what has been a difficult and financially hazardous development. There remains, however, the £100,000 to be paid by the BCU to the Sports Council, as their contribution towards the £2.2 million costs of the Slalom Course. Roger Fox, who will be well known to many members of the Union as a past Honorary Secretary, presently Vice-Chairman of the Slalom Committee, and the father of Richard Fox, the current men's K1 Slalom World Champion, has recently agreed to act as the Chairman of a re-vitalised Jubilee Appeal. One of the prime objectives of the small group of enthusiasts led by Roger, and masterminding fund raising activities for the Appeal, will be to assist the Union in achieving a minimum £100,000 target. The help of each and every reader will, of course, be invited, and hopefully, generously given.

In particular, details of the greatest and most spectacular assembly of canoeists to be organised in Britain since the triple World Championships in 1981, are included with this issue of CANOE FOCUS. A mammoth sponsored paddle is to take place on the weekend of the Spring Bank Holiday, 23/24/25 May 1987, at the Holme Pierrepont National Water Sports Centre, Nottingham, together with The BCU Water Carnival, a Divisional Slalom and the Annual Spring Regatta. No canoeist can afford to miss this occasion - there'll be something for everyone.

south



north



Access

ACTION ON ACCESS

At the BCU AGM on 1 March 1986 it was agreed that the Council should review the access policy of the BCU and should explore all means within the law to bring pressure to bear on anglers to get negotiations started to implement the Statement of Intent. The Council considered the matter at its June 1986 meeting but decided that the Access Committee should do more work on the clause dealing with BCU support for members. The following policy statement is the final version submitted to Council in January 1987. At the time of going to press (December 1986) this statement had not received the formal approval of Council. We regret that due to Council being unable to make a final decision last June it was not possible to give details in the October issue of CANOE FOCUS.

BRITISH CANOE UNION POLICY FOR ACCESS TO WATER JANUARY 1987

There is no change to the existing broad policy, which was determined by the British Canoe Union Council of Management in 1982. The policy supports fully the "Sport for All" policy of the Sports Council and the "Sport for All" charter of the Council of Europe.

Over the past four years this policy has been pursued in a restrained manner in order to create the climate in which the "Statement of Intent" initiative could be agreed and published, therefore providing the opportunity for a breakthrough in negotiations with anglers. Unfortunately the anglers have not, as yet, responded positively. The policy will now be pursued at local level as follows:-

Where public navigation rights exist, canoeing is available throughout the year, unless time zoning arrangements have been made in exchange for access or egress points or other considerations.

On waterways where no objections to canoeing have been made, members are encouraged to use the resource fully but reasonably.

All members should collect historical evidence of usage of every waterway to establish the right of navigation.

If an action for trespass is brought against a member on water, where the member has been advised by the British Canoe Union that the Union believes there is a public right of navigation and the member has exercised that right reasonably and within the Union's policy, then the Union will support the member. The form that this support will take will depend on individual circumstances and may include defending the case on behalf of the member in a court of law. Any decision to support court action will be dependent on the resources of the Union and upon the member following all

past, current and future legal advice given by the Union.

On private waters, we seek agreements conforming in style and spirit to the British Canoe Union model agreement. All such agreement should aim to provide access for all BCU members, not just for local clubs. All agreements are made without prejudice to possible rights of navigation.

It is not the role of the Union or its officers to control or supervise canoeing on private waters where there is no access agreement.

Copies of the full British Canoe Union Policy on Access are available from BCU Headquarters. (Please enclose 9" x 4" sae).

ITCHEN NAVIGATION

by David Evans, Local Access Officer

For years the BCU has been trying unsuccessfully to gain access to the Itchen Navigation. The Navigation consists of a series of artificially created canal sections which at times join with the river of the same name; running from Winchester to the sea. Although now disused it is still able to be paddled for much of its length although it is overgrown and shallow in places.

I first became involved in 1979 when John Griffin, a local Scout Leader enlisted my help as the BCU's representative to try and reach an access agreement with the Test and Itchen Fishing Association. Until recently we have achieved little as they refused to concede any access at all and the BCU's legal advisors did not feel that we were in a position to pursue the matter more forcefully.

The 1985 Telling Report commissioned by The Sports Council changed all that. It stated unequivocally that there was a right

of navigation not only on the Navigation but on the River itself. Armed with this information we approached and gained overwhelming approval from the Access Committee for a more positive approach.

The anglers were informed that we were now sure of our position and we would be paddling the Navigation against their wishes if necessary. The first Access Rally took place on 31 July with representatives of the riparian owners standing by. After being told that we had no right to be on the water we were subsequently given permission once we made it clear we intended to carry on anyway. The first evenings paddle passed without incident except for two canoeists who tried an extended roll under a very low footbridge. Although we only paddled a short distance the rally was well attended with both national and local support. Since then we have paddled regularly and have faced threats, verbal and physical abuse, including on one evening two of us being attacked by a bailiffs alsation. Throughout this provocation the canoeists have managed to maintain their self control much to the annoyance no doubt to the other side.

The darkening evenings have called a temporary halt to our paddling but we have come a tremendous way in a short period. The Fishing Association's original position was that they would prosecute canoeists who tried to exercise their right of navigation, whereas after three months of regular paddling their position would now appear to be that its up to us to sue them if we think we are in the right. Although the legal threat has proved to be a hollow one, we have faced continued bullying by one or two individuals. After the dog biting incident statements were made to the police with a view of prosecuting the bailiff for common assault. The complaint was withdrawn following an apology by the individual concerned.

Where do we go from here? It is now possible to paddle many sections of the Navigation without harassment and we intend to continue paddling in the New Year. Our hope is that the threat of intimidation will recede even further once the anglers realise that we are not going away and that the numbers of canoeists who want to use the Navigation regularly are not going to destroy their fishing.



Photograph by John Kayser

FACE THE FACTS!

by
Carel Quaife,
National Development Officer

FACT ONE It is, and has always been BCU policy to seek changes in legislation to secure navigation rights for canoeists. On 19 July 1965 the then BCU President, John Dudderidge, wrote to Mr F Willey MP, Minister of Land and Natural Resources, including the BCU 'Canoeists Charter'. Long term objectives were listed as legislating to secure public navigation rights, provision of launching and landing points, portage rights of way over land, provision of competition sites and provision of regatta courses. The short term objective was that River Authorities should have at least one board member with practical recreation knowledge other than fishing.

FACT TWO In 1973 the BCU provided evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on Sport and Leisure, whose report referred to the conflict of angling and canoeing and recommended legislation to enable negotiations to take place equitably. To date there has been no progress based on this. Seeking success through legislation will be very slow. It is evident that a majority of our legislators are in favour of things as they are! The BCU will continue to seek responsible means of applying pressure to promote a change in the law.

FACT THREE It would be serving its members badly for the BCU to rely entirely on a change in the law. We cannot possibly wait that long and in the meantime we could expect a major deterioration in what we enjoy now. That is why the BCU is also pursuing additional policies in order to make progress in the short term. In a nutshell that means seeking to negotiate agreement with riparian owners and other watersportsmen.

FACT FOUR The BCU supports the principle of securing navigation rights through being able to prove that there has been at least 20 years (in Scotland 40 years) unchallenged use. Due to three major problems this is not as realistic an option as many members assume. Firstly evidence gathered for one river will not be applicable to another. Secondly we have been conspicuously unsuccessful in finding enough members who can give the large amount of time needed to do the research. Exceptions have included the Upper Wye,

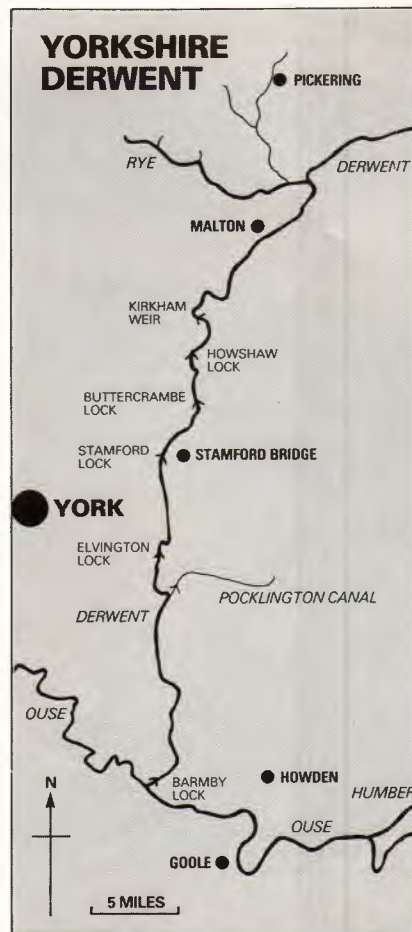
the Upper Great Ouse and the Itchen where members are now exercising, in a reasonable manner, what we believe to be a right of navigation. Thirdly, unless the other parties accept our evidence, we will have to pursue our case through the courts for which the costs will be very high. If this sort of money is available it would surely be better to use it to purchase launching/landing sites!

FACT FIVE To be able to paddle legally along a waterway is only part of what we need. Firstly, more often than not, it is necessary to cross private land to reach or leave the water or to portage. That means seeking permission and making agreements. Secondly the majority of members want to enjoy their canoeing and not be subject to unpleasantness from those who might object strongly to us exercising a legal right. This all points to the desirability of agreements regardless of the legal position, though in order to be able to negotiate from a position of sufficient strength the BCU must be seen as being prepared to go to law if necessary. Mind you, we are getting fairly clear indications that the anglers are in no more hurry than we are to contribute to the livelihood of the legal profession!

FACT SIX Responsible canoeists and anglers recognise that each sport has its hotheads and uncompromising members who will never support agreement between the two sports. The BCU is now succeeding in establishing itself as a responsible organisation and a climate is starting to develop where responsible anglers can recognise the benefits of talking to and making agreements with responsible canoeists. Progress will inevitably continue to be slow and there is the constant danger that irresponsible action by individuals, born out of impatience or frustration, will undermine years of hard work preparing the ground. Progress can be accelerated by encouraging co-operation between canoeing, angling and riparian owners at local level. This can best be achieved by recruiting more Local Access Officers. If you would like to help in this positive way, please get in touch with your National or Regional Access Officer or with the BCU National Development Officer.

FACT SEVEN More work is going on behind the scenes than can be seen by members. This is inevitable as negotiation cannot be conducted in public if they are to succeed. As soon as agreements are made they will be reported.

FACT EIGHT Plenty of canoeing is taking place, even on some of the sensitive rivers. Whilst anglers may not wish to formally commit themselves to agreements at this stage, many are prepared to turn a blind eye to canoeists at times when they cannot fish. Many Access Officers are reporting that there are more and more fishermen who do not want their sport ruined by conflict and who are coming round to the idea that agreements can be to their advantage also. Consult the relevant Local Access Officer in good time for the up to date position on the water you plan to canoe. The situation is very fluid and there are also waters where frankly we cannot be as optimistic as these facts imply. Keep it cool and we can move forward.



BCU SUPPORT FOR YORKSHIRE DERWENT

The Yorkshire Derwent was made a public navigation by Act of Parliament in 1702 and weirs and locks were constructed. In 1854 the railway company gained control and the navigation was then run down. It is the view of the BCU that the navigation was not extinguished by the Land Drainage Act 1935 and that it is still a navigation. £500 has been contributed by the BCU to the Derwent Trust who are involved in court proceedings to prove the navigation right with the view then to restore the weirs and locks and make the river navigable for power boats up to Malton.

Certain legal points, some of which could be of national significance to canoeists, are to be settled at a preliminary hearing in April or May 1987. It may be determined whether or not land covered by water is the same as ordinary land over which rights of way can be established by 20 years unchallenged use.

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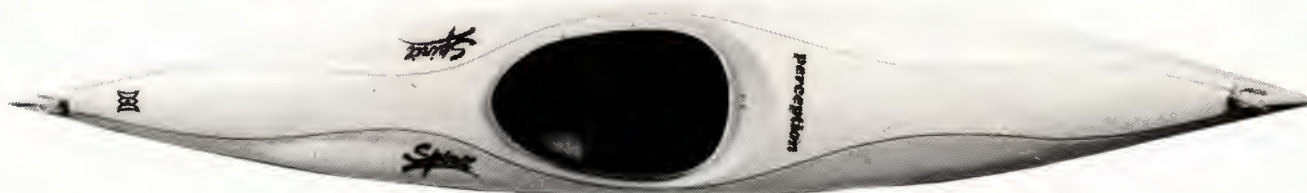
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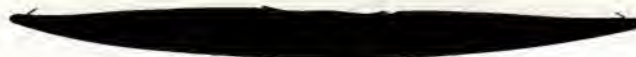
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Notices

NATIONAL CANOEING CENTRE AND DEVELOPMENT APPEAL

The Jubilee Appeal is about to have a new lease of life. Many of the current projects continue but new plans are being put together by a group under the Chairmanship of Roger Fox.

Clubs are invited to set targets for local fund raising during this year. Please send your "Bid" to Roger Fox, Appeals Chairman, c/o BCU Headquarters, Flexel House, 45-47 High Street, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey KT15 1JV - £5 a member should be attainable - members are also asked to offer help, advice and contacts.

Proceeds will go towards the BCU contribution to the Slalom Course at Holme Pierrepont - a roaring success by all accounts, towards additional facilities at the Centre such as floodlighting, timing and communications on the slalom course, other improvements to enhance facilities for racing, polo, coaching, the Headquarters

building and towards general development country wide.

1987 must be a year in which we prepare for the launch of the "1990's" - this is a plan for expansion.

JUBILEE APPEAL FUND ORGANISER

It was with mutual regret, that the Union's Executive Committee and Mike Haslam, appointed as the British Canoe Union Jubilee Appeal Fund Organiser on the 1 July 1985, agreed to terminate their two year contract.

The Executive Committee did not consider that the proposals for fund-raising, submitted by Mike, justified a continuing investment in the Appeal, and it was accordingly agreed that alternative arrangements for the Jubilee Appeal Fund should be initiated. Precise financial details of the Jubilee Appeal Fund, including the costs incurred in undertaking the Appeal, and the income generated, are presently being prepared, and will be published in the next issue of CANOE FOCUS.

DIRECTOR CHANGING DIRECTION!!!

- especially if accompanied by exclamation marks - could give a totally wrong impression. For, though Ron Emes M.B.E., Director of the B.C.U. has informed us that he wishes to terminate his appointment at the end of June 1987, no contretemps, dramatic or otherwise, contributed to his decision. It is all part of Ron's well conceived plan for active retirement now that he approaches three score years. His vice-presidency of the I.C.F. will undoubtedly make calls on his time, and a wider involvement in sport will ensure that his great experience and expertise will in no way be wasted. Ron's contribution to the B.C.U. has been outstanding and there will be opportunities later when we can reflect with admiration and appreciation all that he has done.

Our immediate task is the important one of finding a new Director. We would hope that the person chosen could work closely with Ron for the month of June before taking over the reins completely in July. An enclosure with this issue of CANOE FOCUS gives some details of the post and how to apply. Please note that the closing date for applications is 28 February 1987.

Geoff Sanders
Chairman,
BCU Council of Management.



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For further information contact

Mrs. D. Lawler,
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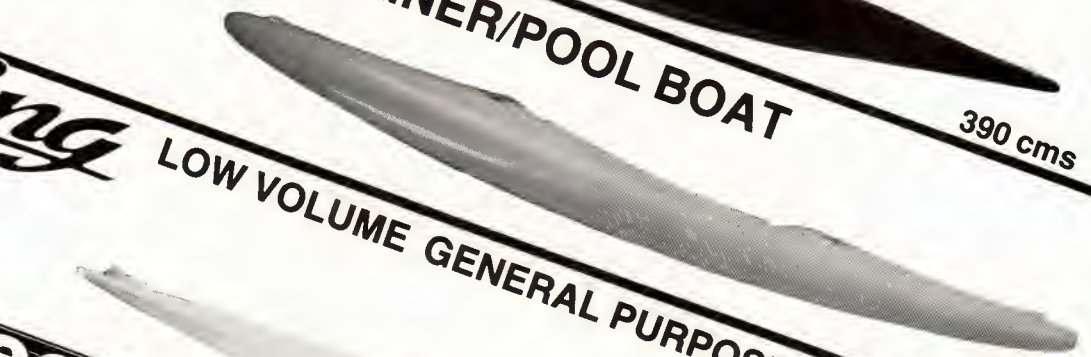
WHITE WATER, ALL ROUND GENERAL PURPOSE KAYAK



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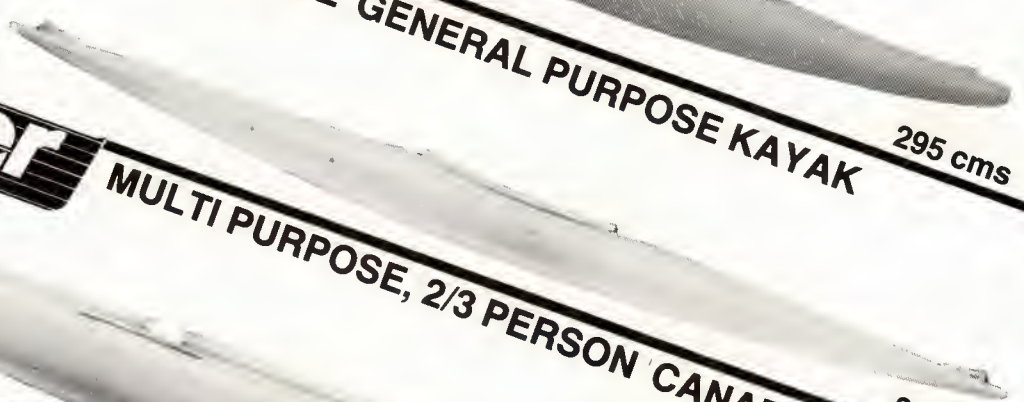
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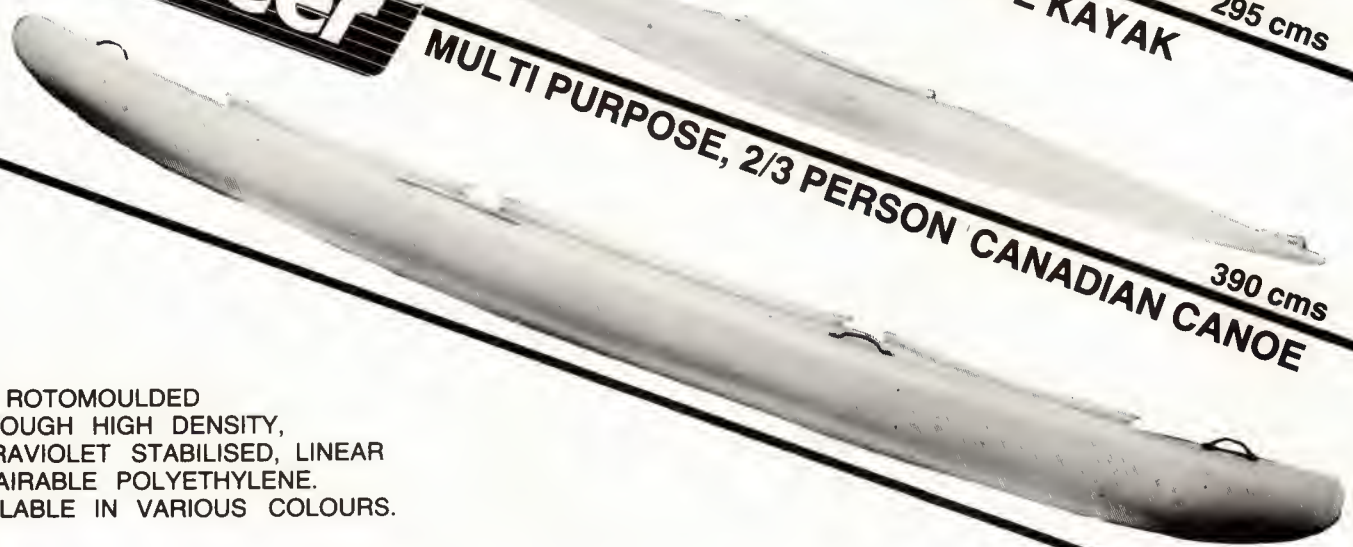
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Second Interim Statement on AIDS AND EXPIRED AIR RESUSCITATION (EAR) TRAINING AND PRACTICE



SEPTEMBER 1986

This statement replaces the First Issue (April 1985) of the guidelines published by The Royal Life Saving Society U.K. in response to fears that Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) might be acquired during EAR. While these guidelines are based on a considered view of currently available evidence and authoritative medical opinion, it is stressed that they can be regarded once more only as of interim status. This is because the disease is currently the subject of considerable research worldwide and new information is continually emerging. The Society will continue to monitor closely all new information and further guidance may then be issued, as necessary.

1. AIDS is a serious and newly-recognised disease which is not yet fully understood.
2. In the USA and in the UK, the occurrence of AIDS has been predominantly confined to male homosexuals and to intravenous drug abusers and to haemophiliacs. In this respect, it is thought that the disease is transmitted through intimate sexual contact or through contaminated blood or blood products.
3. There is no evidence that the disease has been acquired through casual contact with an AIDS carrier or victim.
4. While the AIDS virus has been isolated from saliva, there is no evidence that the disease can be transmitted by this route. No case of AIDS has been shown in the UK or abroad to have been transmitted by mouth-to-mouth or mouth-to-nose resuscitation. EAR does not therefore appear to carry any risk of transmitting the disease.
5. Lifeguards and lifesavers should be aware of the risk of blood-to-blood contact and this should be avoided, particularly if they have any breaks in the skin (e.g. cuts and grazes).
6. In order to avoid direct contact between rescuer and casualty, some authorities have advocated the use of resuscitation airways or masks. It must be remembered that special skills are needed to use these devices safely and effectively; in any case, they do not guarantee protection from the interchange of secretions.
7. There is no doubt that EAR is the most effective and easy-to-learn non-mechanical form of artificial ventilation. The technique has been responsible for saving countless numbers of lives in the past and it is important that EAR remains part of the standard first aid treatment given to non-breathing casualties.
8. Resuscitation training involving the use of manikins is not regarded as in any way likely to lead to the acquisition of AIDS, provided that the recommended hygiene and cleansing procedures are followed. (The text of the Society's advice on the cleansing of manikins is published separately.)
9. Direct person-to-person contact is not recommended during resuscitation training involving live simulated casualties. The Society's current resuscitation teaching is contained in "Resuscitation and First Aid" (5th Edition, 1986), Section 5 of the RLSS Handbook, which is obtainable from RLSS Branches or the Marketing & Communications Department at the address below.

Further enquiries on this subject may be directed to the Society's Medical Advisors at the Technical Services Department, The Royal Life Saving Society U.K., Mountbatten House, STUDLEY, Warwickshire B80 7NN. Telephone: Studley (052 785) 3943.

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Trade News

NOMAD WATERSPORTS CENTRE

Despite the apparent 'Victorian' exterior of Nomad's new and comprehensive site you cannot help but be impressed by the character of the buildings and the potential of the site. A professional team headed by Michael Dalton will be responsible for the overall development and management. One of the most exciting features is the adjacent white waters of the Dee as a permanent site for courses, practise and on-site development and testing of designs. Although progressive, the Company is aware of the sensitive nature of the river. In seeking to promote canoeing at all levels, Nomad is mindful of the importance of the river and its present and future uses. Accordingly, they have recruited the services of Roger Irwin, previously the BCU Access Officer on a consultancy basis. Roger's wide and varied experience in canoeing is seen as a valuable gain. His role will be to develop the use of the waterside activities, including provision for mini-slaloms, promotional events, training programmes and use by schools, clubs, organisations and individuals. Courses will be available for all, with top coaches running the specialist courses. BCU awards will be available by arrangement with the centre staff.

In the short term, development will include provision of adequate waterside car parking, changing rooms, showers and a cafe-snack bar area with views of the river. In the long term the strategy plan caters for accommodation, gymnasium and other related sporting facilities. A series of courses for slalomists will be staged early in the New Year, run by Jimmy Jayes, former British Champion, and supported by other top coaches. Groups, schools and clubs are invited to contact the Booking Secretary outlining their requirements for private courses. During the recent years Nomad has put time and effort into development of its designs that are now recognised as leading the world. With this phase of its growth now running smoothly, the manufacturing company will be concentrating its energies on seeking to produce the finest canoes and kayaks in the world. With all these exciting developments, and the extensive retail showroom, plus a full range of demo boats, Nomad's site is well worth a visit.

BUSHSPORT NEOPRENE SPRAYDECKS

Several new Bushdecks are now available which will be of interest to both recreational and competitive white water paddlers. The new double lined Bushdeck is suitable for plastic kayaks and decked canoes. Careful design and construction, featuring the use of new materials, has overcome the common problem these types of spraydecks

have of coming off easily in white water. This Bushdeck will also be far more durable than those decks that rely on single lined neoprene to grip the plastic cockpit rims.

For the paddler intent on staying warm and dry the Vestdeck is a must. Redesigned this year with the emphasis on extra warmth and flexibility, the use of a new super soft smooth skin in the vest section has produced sensational results. A specialist product, Vestdecks are made only to individual order. Several new fluorescent bright fashion colours have been added to the range.

New coloured smoothskins are also available in Red, Royal Blue, and Silver Grey for those seeking a distinct and unique appearance.

New products for '87 include 'Bushpants' – designer canoe shorts specially produced for comfort and warmth whilst paddling, and also the Bushplug – a boat cover that will keep your boat, and a kit inside, totally dry and safe during transit. Bushsport, 45 Mill Lane, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 5JG (0753 867801)



NEW CENTRE OPENS IN PEMBROKESHIRE

Twr-y-Felin Outdoor Centre opened in June 1986 after the extensive renovation of an old hotel. Its location on the edge of St. Davids is within five minute's drive of some of the best canoeing, surfing and climbing in the country.

The Islands and coastline of Pembrokeshire provide expeditions at all levels, but the area should be treated with respect at all time.

Visiting instructors are always welcome and we will be happy to give tidal information and route ideas to groups visiting the area. Arrangements can be made for group hire of surf skis, boards and windsurfers, use of the assault course, and provision of wholesome food and fine victuals.

Twr-y-Felin is a BCU Approved Training Centre. Twr-y-Felin Outdoor Centre, St. Davids, Pembrokeshire, Dyfed SA62 6QS. (0437-720391).

THE NEW TYPHOON TUNDRA

The High Performance Semi-Dry Suit for Cold Weather Wear.

The development of the new Tundra semi-dry from Typhoon, follows on directly from the knowledge gained in developing the Sunsplash and Sunsplash Pro. Having developed probably the most comfortable one-piece suit for summer wear, the main concern was to enhance this into an effective cold weather semi-dry suit which would be so comfortable, strong and effective that the wearer would be barely conscious of wearing it.

Further developments of seaming methods and placement was carried out resulting in dry, strong, durable and effective seams. The wrist and ankle seals received much attention, with the outcome in the form of a seal arrangement which is highly efficient in preventing water penetration. Work carried out on the zip and neck area has given the Tundra a very comfortable, effective and fully integral sealing arrangement, assuring the wearer of insignificant water entry. Also of prime importance was the need for a comfortable and effective shoulder design so that the Tundra can boast full freedom of movement when the wearer is in action and yet no underarm bunching when at rest.

The recommended retail price is only £99.95 inc VAT for the single-lined Rip-stop version and £119.00 inc VAT for the double-lined model.



NEWS FROM BARNACLE MARINE

Seascope – International Code of Signals

An easy learning reference aid to code flags, shown in full colour. The meaning of each flag, its visual appearance, its morse code equivalent, and its phonetic sound will be shown on each side of Seascope when the disc inside is positioned correctly. Ideal for the beginner, or for brushing up at the beginning of the season – or for that RYA examination. Presented in full colour in its own plastic sleeve. Size approximately 6" x 6" – £2.50.

Seascope – Lights and Shapes

On one side is shown the lights as seen at night, by different types of vessels underway with the meaning of those lights, the aspect of the vessel seen and the day shape when applicable. Size 6" x 6" (140mm x 140mm) – £2.50.

Allweather Charts – A Great Step Forward

In future all Stanfords charts will be printed on Synteape, an entirely waterproof and tear-resistant material, which otherwise has the same folding and writing properties as paper. During 1987 and early 1988, Barnacle Marine's Stanford chart range will be transferred to Synteape as they come up for reprint. This will make the first range of British Waterproof charts – and with only a modest price increase to £6.30. The price of paper charts held in stock during 1987 will be £5.75.

NEW SHOWERIGHT WASH CLOTHS

SHOWERIGHT, a combined soap and shampoo impregnated cloth, recently launched by Navalon International of Wellingborough, as part of the Pierre De Navalon range of personal hygiene products, will revolutionise bathing and showering for everyone who enjoys the outdoor life, on land or afloat.

The dry Showeright cloth produces an abundance of rich lather regardless of the type of water available – soft, hard, hot, cold, salt or de-salinated.

Compact, with a week's supply of Showeright weighing just a couple of ounces per person, the dry cloths will pack flat or fold into almost any nook or cranny. Once exhausted, the cloth can be kept as a wipe or, since both the soap and shampoo ingredients as well as the cloth are biodegradable, can be safely disposed of in a flush, chemical toilet or even buried, with no fear of contaminating the earth.

The natural, bio-degradable constituents in the Showeright cloth help prevent the skin hardening and peeling due to the loss of natural oils, even when showers and baths are taken in sea water, whether hot or cold.

When the added luxury of a bath presents itself, the Showeright cloth can be dropped under the running taps and will produce a superb bubble bath with long lasting lather as well as a cloth to rub yourself with.

Showerright is probably the simplest yet most versatile development in personal

hygiene since soap was invented, providing in one product, soap, shampoo, bubble bath, flannel and cleaning wipe. Showeright are available in bulk direct from the manufacturer or from leisure shops, chandlers and sporting good shops.

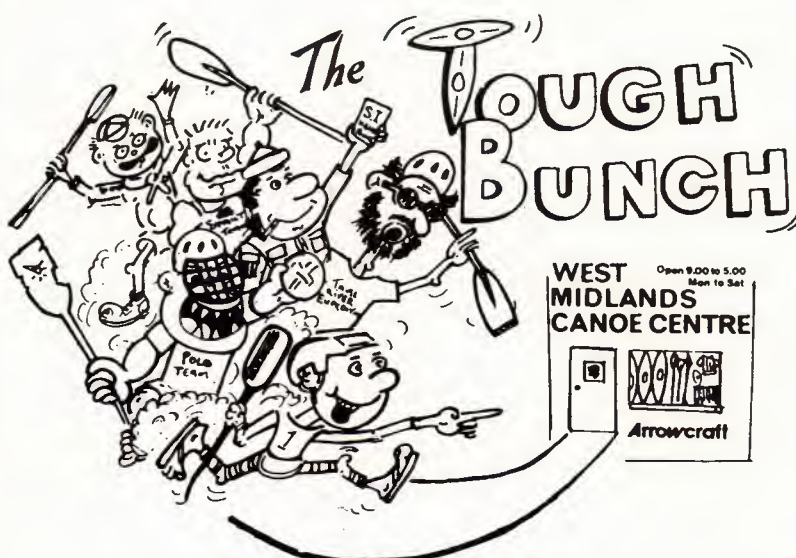
Navalon International Ltd, 6 Baird Court, Park Farm Industrial Estate, WELLINGBOROUGH, Northants. NN8 3QJ. (0933-674949)

WEATHERCALL

A new instant local weather forecast service has just opened, available on your telephone at 25p per minute evenings and weekends and 38p per minute peak times. The number to call is listed in your BCU Member's Year Book.

MORE NEWS FROM THE FAR EAST OF EAST ANGLIA

The Oulton Broad Canoe Club official open canoe builder has now changed. It was DC Boats of Linton Suffolk. It is now WAVENY MOULDINGS, Unit 28, Calville Road Works, Oulton Broad, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 9QS, (Lowestoft 517646). Contact 'Waveny Mouldings' if you want a complete canoe or hull. The club itself does not build canoes commercially. Contact, Dave Hart OBCC, Coordinator, 33 Conrad Road, Oulton Broad, LOWESTOFT, Suffolk NR33 7QD for further details.




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Of high quality and developed in Sweden to cope with the Scandinavian winter, the Warm 'n' Dry yarn is just the job for our changeable climate.

Its knitted loop-pile and unique breatheability give natural insulation against both heat and cold. The fabric's qualities enable it to absorb and evaporate moisture making it quick to dry even after an unexpected soaking, while its soft lining of wool keeps you cosy and warm.

The problem with most thermal garments is that they are clingy, restricting and made from irritating, coarse fabric. Warm 'n' Dry's superior non-irritant wool is superlight and has been especially developed for sports people who need maximum stretchiness and complete freedom of movement so that you hardly know you've got it on.

Wearing Warm 'n' Dry means that you can put on lighter weight outer garments and still be really snug. The whole range can be confidently machine washed and tumble-dried.

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Navy. S. M. £12.20 (Members)

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Navy. Navy, red trim.
Red, navy trim.
One size. £3.40 (Members)

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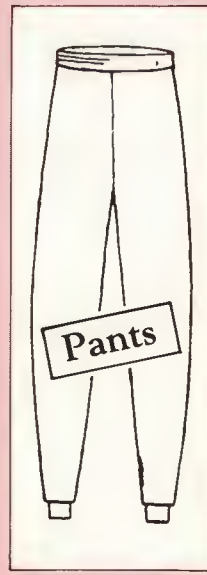
Ski Tubes

Navy. Red. 60cm.
£2.85 (Members)



Crew Top

Navy. M. L. £8.99 (Members)



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Navy. M. L. £8.65 (Members)

How to Order — Use the BCU Supplies Order Form sent with this magazine or send a cheque, postal order or Access card number, stating your address and requirement details to:- The British Canoe Union, 45/47 High Street, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey KT15 1JV. (0932) 41341 - 24 hrs.

Prices — Prices include despatch from Addlestone, usually within five working days, and no-quibble guarantee.

Competition

SPORTS AID

The Sports Aid Foundation and the Sports Aid Trust have announced that Grants have been awarded to the following Canoeists to assist with their preparation and training in 1987:-

Elite Awards

Gail Allen, Richard Fox, Liz Sharman and Jeremy West.

International Awards

Robin Belcher, Heather Corrie, Karen Davies, Guy Dresser, Marcus Gohar, Martyn Hedges, Jim Jayes, Ann Plant, Ian Raspin, Neil Stamps, Paul Wells and Robin Williams.

Minet Awards

Grayson Bourne, Adrian Collier, Alison Crawley, Adrian Croucher, Laszlo Czillaho, Andrea Dalloway, Gary Hall, Eric Jamieson, Ivan Lawler, Janine Lawler, Roland Lucas, David Martyn, Susannah Perrett, Peter Ruskin, Kevin Smith, Andrew Train and Stephen Train.

SAT Awards

Julie Ashton, Jason Benton, Andrew Clough, Gareth Marriott and Matthew Stephens.

Sir Jules Thorn Trust Awards

Andrew Barkway.

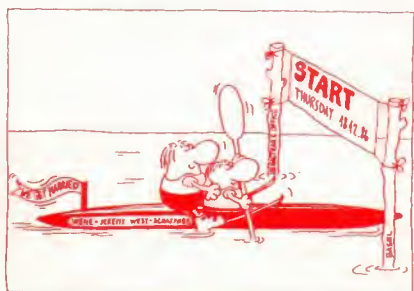
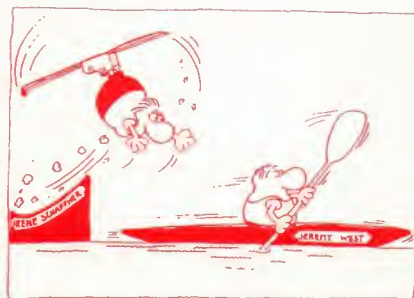
Save & Prosper Awards

Lara Tipper, Alan Tordoff and Ian Tordoff.

Pizza Hut Awards

Lynn Badger, Ian Green and Ashley Mason.

The British Canoe Union is again very fortunate in the amount of support given to its athletes. These grants help considerably in the preparation for International Competition, as well as encouraging up and coming youngsters in our sport.



MARATHON DRAW RESULTS

The winner of the September Draw was C. Brackshaw of Liverpool Watersports Centre, with Certificate No. 18493, issued at the Liverpool Watersports Centre's Monthly Marathon 2. He receives a K1 Kayak from Kirton Kayaks, and the Liverpool Watersports Centre receives a cheque for £100.

Other recent sponsorship from the Marathon Racing Scheme towards the purchase of boats has gone to the Elmbridge Canoe Club (£200) and the Weaver Canoe Club (£100).



The above photograph shows A. Hart of the Hull Canoe Club receiving his X-Lancer K1 from Kirton Kayaks, which he won in the June draw.

THE EXE DESCENT

by Jane Leigh

The river rose and records fell in the 18th running of the Exe Descent organised by Exeter Canoe Club, sponsored by Strand Glass and held on the River Exe between Tiverton and Exeter in November. Heavy rain caused one of the highest water levels in the history of the race and this resulted in some excellent times – and about one quarter of the field failing to finish the course as the hazards claimed numerous victims.

Many competitors came to grief at the first weir, with a low catwalk to duck under followed by large standing waves, and each weir thereafter took its toll. The rapids, providing a switchback ride, also claimed many victims, and even relatively flat stretches of water caused problems, with the current producing huge eddies and whirls to trap the unwary.

Of approximately 500 starters, some 175 boats failed to finish and the river was strewn with abandoned boats and paddles all the way from start to finish. The safety teams were kept busy rescuing swimmers, particularly at Four Pynes and Cowley which claimed 90 per cent of those who tackled them.

Paul and Mark Wells won the K2 class for the fourth consecutive year, beating the 1980 record by one minute 25 seconds, and Keith Owen took the senior K1 title and record, eight seconds faster than Robin Belcher's 1982 time. Another record went in the senior touring doubles class where Lee and Lee of Marlow beat the two hour barrier to take their class title and the record.

DEVIZES TO WESTMINSTER CANOE RACE

The Organisers of this well-known and popular endurance event have announced that they will again be supported by assistance from Lovell's; British Telecom; OKO Bank (Finland) and the British Waterways Board. The race which takes place at Easter is open to any crew between the ages of fifteen and nineteen in the Junior Class and to those over eighteen in both the Senior Doubles and Singles categories. There are no restrictions on the type of canoe or kayak that may be used.

The 125 mile journey commences in the market town of Devizes and follows 54 miles of the Kennet and Avon Canal to Reading. Thence a further 71 miles down the River Thames to finish under the shadow of 'BIG BEN' at Westminster. It includes 71 portages, some of which can be up to three-quarters of a mile long, and includes 17 miles of tidal water.

The Senior Doubles competitors start so that they can arrive at Teddington to gain the full benefit of the ebb tide to Westminster. To achieve this, they start at any time they choose between 07.00 hrs and 16.00 hrs on Good Friday (17 April), whereas Single and Junior crews are started between 08.00 and 10.00 hrs. Single and Junior classes complete the course in four legs of 34, 36, 38 and 17 miles. Juniors sleep overnight in halls at Newbury and Marlow, camping out on the third night at Ham. Both of these classes complete the course to Westminster on Monday (20 April). The last date that entries can be accepted is Saturday 4 April 1987.

To assist Supporters and Spectators a number of Information Centres will be established as follows:

Location	Race/ Distance	Grid Ref	OS/ Map
Devizes	0.00	SU004618	173
Newbury	34.00	SU473671	174
Teddington Lock	108.00	TQ166718	176
Westminster	125.00	TQ308805	176

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Child

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Competition

White Water

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Expedition Gold

Junior Gold

Sprint Sportswear

Race

Sport

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Sport Instructor

Standard Sports

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Splashsport

Challenger Cadet

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Sportique

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Expeditions

CRADLE OF THE VIKINGS

by
Nigel H. Seymour,
Leader of the British Cape Horn Expedition, 1986.

Over the past two years both myself, and a number of associates have been working towards the possibility of linking two sea-going kayaks together to make them into one sailing unit. In April this year this aim was achieved, and 'Kaymaran' evolved. Simple in its construction, capable of separating to function as two individual units, it was decided to take 'Kaymaran' to Sweden, in order to test the boat on canals, great lakes, and the Baltic Sea. The route would start in Göteborg; traverse the Trolhatten Canal to Vanersborg; enter the first of the great lakes - Vanern; traverse the lake in a northerly direction until Sjorthorp; enter the Gota Canal and traverse it in its entirety; circumnavigate Vattern; move into the Baltic sea and sail up to Stockholm. A distance of around 600 nautical miles.

Before I set out, a comment was made to me by a friend to the effect that 'Sweden is soft. Not exactly big water is it? It's just lakes!' Sweden is not Cape Horn or Iceland,

but it does possess unique waters. To quote from my Expedition Report 'It has been the most unusual Expedition, not a Cape Horn, a fast flowing torrent in Iceland not the Grand Canyon, but it was a journey, often dangerous, through some of the most beautiful and desolate landscape coupled with the most unusual waters I had ever come across. Not even at Cape Horn did I see the strange wave patterns I came up against on Vanern or Vattern. Those vast Swedish waters must never be underestimated by the discerning Mariner. Indeed, they have claimed boats which were at home in the big seas of the Baltic, yet when these vessels ventured inland, and into the great lakes, they perished in the unpredictable squalls, being unable to cope with the strange steep wave patterns...'

I don't wish to say more about 'Cradle of the Vikings' but I would like to comment on the purpose of the Expedition. No-one, not even the naval architect who made 'Kaymaran' sail, knew exactly how she would handle in a big sea, a large lake, or any water for that matter. Several trials were done before leaving the United Kingdom, but the sole purpose of the trip was to 'find out' and explore the capabilities of the boat. This is exactly what I did in the two months en route, sometimes alone. Problems in the early stages of the Expedition caused a lot of damage, but single mindedness overcame this - and on Sunday 24 August, after 12 hours on the water, my Swedish partner, Urban Carlsson, and myself, finally sailed into Stockholm.

I would like to express my thanks to all those people who departed from 'purity', if only for several weeks, in order to play a

role in helping create 'Kaymaran', consider Expedition ideas - and generally be driven MAD. A very special thanks must go to Steve Christopher, Pete Collins, Nick Martin, and John Goodie. Next week I set out for South America, where we will attempt to take 'Kaymaran' round Cape Horn Island, and make a documentary which should be screened around February.



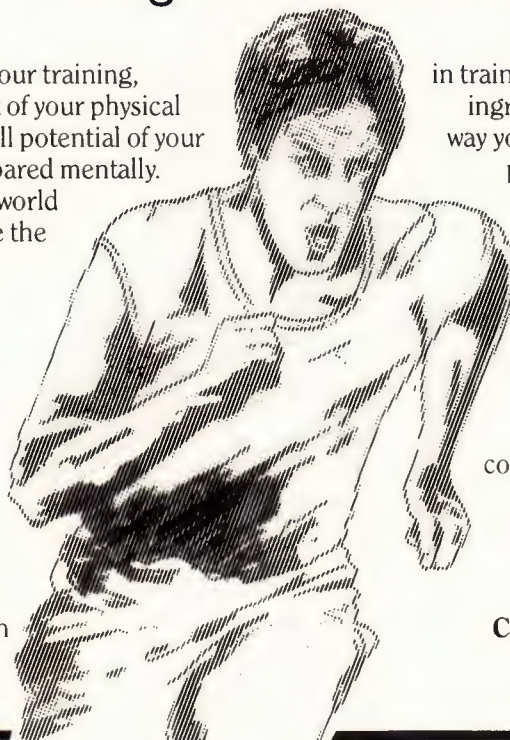
The author with Jon Alexander and the Kaymaran in South Sweden.

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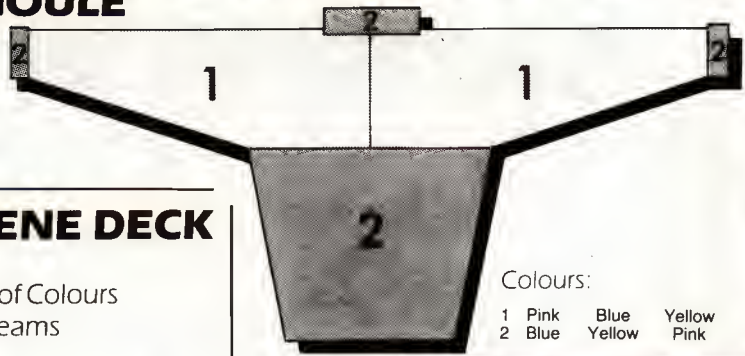
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Dear Focus...

QUADRATHON'S

Dear Focus

Your August FOCUS asked for results from Dudley Quadrathon from canoe club members so here are some.

The event masqueraded under the title of 'Leisure Services!' there must be some subterfuge here. As most of my swimming consists of short sprints to the river bank, I was not well placed in the one mile swimming pool event, especially without a lifejacket. Competitors then transferred to Hinley Park. The fastest swimmer then cycled off first and I was allowed to start 20 minutes later, not quite last. From now on it was a continuous race. The organisers had carefully arranged for a 3 mile climb on each of the three laps of the cycle course – to prevent bunching so they said. Fair enough, because there was a three mile descent as well, and I was glad to wear a canoe crash hat for this. After 20 miles you fell off your bike into your canoe for seven laps of a lake. A wide variety of canoes were in use, from slalom to K1 sprints; perhaps the BCU could provide some handicap suggestions here, because it was a bit hard for people with short canoes, though most serious contenders had some sort of long pointed canoe.

Three miles wasn't far enough to make full use of all the muscles (ha ha) built up on Shrewsbury Canoe Club's summer holiday in the surf at Biarritz. Then came the 6½ mile run, made up of five laps of the park complete with hills – was there no end to what Leisure Services could provide?

Interestingly the fastest canoeist won the event, but he was also the fastest cyclist and runner as well! Unfortunately the results don't indicate what clubs people belonged to. For those who want to start training for 1987 here are the times you must beat.

	1 Mile Swim	20 Mile Cycle	3 Mile Canoe	6½ Mile Run	Total
1st	28.45	56.35	26.57	42.47	2 hrs. 35.04
M. Hope					
2nd	27.47	57.59	27.04	42.27	2 hrs. 36.57
C. Horrad					
3rd	31.10	57.19	30.00	43.44	2 hrs. 42.13
R. Keighley					

My own modest target is to break 3 hrs 10 minutes (for the swim?!)

Mike Calloes
Shrewsbury CC (Veteran!),
Telford, Shropshire

BEHIND BARS!

Dear Focus,

I thought the following information might be interesting and useful to some of your readers. I, and another SI, Mike Conway, ran the first canoeing session for the inmates within HM Holloway Women's Prison this month. The prison has a new swimming pool and it is also possible for the local community to use it, mainly groups with different disabilities. The inmates use the pool for swimming and Life Saving Bronze. We decided to try a few

canoeing sessions to see how it went, and if it went well, to possibly buy a small fleet of plastic Bats which the local community can use as well in the evenings. We had a free hand in running the session, and were not too sure whether to be strict, with straight teaching, or to loosen up and play games (from that really good book on the subject!)

We decided to start with a demonstration on land of how to get in and out, how to hold the paddle, and a few main safety points. Then with ten inmates, and five sets of canoes and equipment, we would let each of them have five to ten minutes to paddle around, getting used to the equipment. Then they could play silly games for the rest of the session, to get rid of any past fears, and have some fun. If the session was a success we could concentrate on stroke work and rolling next time.

Well, the big moment came, we walked into the pool area and heard a couple of cat whistles, but we soon got the session on the way. The women were a little shaky at first, as only one had ever tried it before; but by the end of the session, they were jumping in and out of the boats with ease. Most of the women were young, being under 20, with a couple over, and one about 40.

The session was very easy to run for two reasons, I think. First, they had a lot of respect for people coming in to try different sports, and this included the staff officers who set it up. The other reason is that things are very military, and when we asked term to try a silly game, they didn't really question it, and just got on with it. Mind you, there was a lot of laughter and silly comments "We are doing canoeing in November, and trying snorkelling in December". One woman asked for abseiling down ropes – I think she was serious!

Some people have and will turn their noses up at this, and other projects in prisons, saying that it is a holiday in there (not true) but surely doing constructive activities like life-saving awards, canoeing and helping local community disabled groups, is better than rotting in a cell. Maybe some might become interested in other areas.

Not all prisons here have good facilities, but it might be worth writing to the Governor to find out if your group can use what facilities they might have, eg a pool, gym, workshops. They won't charge, and it's not a lot of trouble to get in (if you behave).

Dave Ruse,
London N19 5OX

RIVER RUNNING SEMINAR

Dear Focus,

I am a co-director of a nonprofit corporation which coordinates a three day River Running Seminar in the tradition of the Old West's Mountain Men's Rendezvous, featuring education, friendship, exchange of information and a good time.

We have meetings during the day on all aspects of river running, safety talks, environmental concerns, latest high tech equipment, first aid, recent accidents, governmental regulation, and "open microphone". In addition there is equipment on display. Our event attracts approximately 300-400 people. On Friday

and Saturday evenings we present major 16mm movies, videos, or slide presentations with a speaker.

In the past four years we have had presentations on "The Drowning of Glen Canyon" A pristine River Run, Expeditions in Chile, Peru and the Far East, and Tributes to Georgie Clark "Woman of the River" a pioneer commercial river runner in the Grand Canyon, Dr. Walt Blackador, big water kayak pioneer, and Richard Bangs, co-founder of Sobek Expeditions.

This coming October I would like to do an evening of programs on a single presentation of one half an hour to an hour. I am interested in any river related presentation from expeditions to historic footage to just plain fun footage. Our problem is locating programs that may be available in your country but not seen or heard of in the U.S.A. We are looking for information on any format of river related programs. We have a limited budget but can pay a small fee for the use of programs. Any information would be of great interest, and should be sent to me at Box 888, Telluride, Co 81435, USA.

Larry Hopkins,
Co-director, River Rendezvous 5.

TOURING

Dear Focus,

A group of us canoed the Treweryn on the 6/7 September 1986 and enjoyed an exceptionally good weekend, although the overall consensus taken from the many swimmers, was that the river was definitely a III and not a II. There are however several points I would like to raise.

1. Checks were being made in an effort to ensure that all paddlers paid and displayed their stickers. There were no checks to ensure that all paddlers were BCU members and therefore no extra charge for non-members was made. I consider that these checks are essential as they can only have two results:

- encourage more people to join the BCU – if only to obtain preferential rates
- ensure that non-members do not enjoy their canoeing on the cheap whilst being subsidised by BCU members.

2. The cost of £5.00 plus car parking gave the impression that somebody was making a fortune out of the tour. Whilst people think this, many will loath to pay and attempt to canoe without paying. Having spoken to one of the Organisers I am certain that it was money well spent. However I feel that copy of the balance sheet for the event published in CANOE FOCUS would explain to members how their money was spent. If this was done members would no doubt be happier paying up and make the Organisers job easier in the future.

3. I have toured on the Leven and now the Treweryn on days when events are taking place. Would it be possible to publish the times and locations of wild water and river races where the section of the river is open for touring either before or after the event. This would ensure more support at the races and enable non-racers to paddle different rivers without any access problems.

Thanks for a good magazine and I hope my observations may give food for thought.

Vince Wells, Bolton, Lancashire.



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Surf and Sashimi



Reflections on a Japanese Summer

by Andy Fleck

Canoes and bicycles have a lot in common – they get punctures, they are slow and they require a hell of a lot of effort to get anywhere. That's how it seems to me anyway. However they also get to the places other transport cannot reach. I had an idea to see the other side of Japan, away from the hi-tech, industrialised society that we associate with that country. I wanted to visit the fishing villages and to find out how old traditions and new technology combined. Canoe was the logical choice of transport and the bonus of paddling on three different seas made the idea irresistible, so off I went.

Osaka greeted me on the 22 July with a brooding summer sky and neon hoardings that screamed silent messages at all who passed. I dodged taxis scurrying back and forth like maddened ants and wandered below vacant windows that stared down from darkened office blocks. The city was alien and unwelcoming so I retreated to the homely atmosphere of the airport lounge where I could at least find a row of seats to lie on. Yet I had hardly found the horizontal when two policemen marched over. "Hotel you?" "No." "Police box!"

Oh hell! what a bloody awful way to start. How do I explain this when I get home. My comfortable row of seats turned into a

neon-lit cell with three glass walls. The police stamped back and forth all night and I expected interrogation to start at any moment. My fertile imagination explored the worst possible outcomes until jet-lag quelled these turbulent thoughts and I slept. In the morning I convinced them that I wasn't a vagrant and set off to find my boat. One taxi ride and £40 poorer I was in the wrong place. Another ride, several phone calls and three hours in customs completed the formalities so that I was free to leave. Free but for the demands of the Japanese Press.

Ping – FLASH – What's going on? It took two hours to establish a few facts that we could all understand. Once away I paddled for an hour until a figure leaping and waving drew me into the beach. "Canoe you. Canoe you." "Canoe me. Canoe me." I agreed. "TV, TV, TV," he explained. "Sleep-U-me." So that night I joined Kiyoshi and his television under a mosquito net on the beach. It was not luxurious but it was better than a cell.

In the following days I passed wharves and factories spewing waste into the water. Polystyrene dinner trays floated past on a poisonous yellow sea, yet flying fish jumped in front of my bow. I paddled on water that alternately splashed sun and salt into my eyes. Tankers and fishing boats ploughed up the channels between islands, ferries chugged between villages where cement works and temples stood side by side. Or were they related? The bell summoned the faithful to the temple and the PA system summoned them to work. What was the difference?

Frequently I was welcomed into small villages – houses clustered round the boats anchored in a tiny harbour. Old people and children would rush down and stand whispering and giggling around the "Gaigin" in his little boat. We might share only 100 common words so pencil and paper in hand we drew our messages back and forth. Each small conversation completed seemed a tremendous and remarkable achievement. In the evening I grappled with their culture that required me to drink soup with chopsticks and eat squid and sashimi that was still writhing on the plate. The Japanese language remained an unbroken code and many of our early conversations left everyone a little confused. "Are you alone?" "No I'm a teacher."

Confusion seemed to be my travelling companion. On one occasion I crossed a prohibited zone under an unfinished bridge. A traffic control station broadcast unmistakable rebukes while behind me construction workers applauded my little boat. Another time I unwittingly camped on the helicopter pad of an executive holiday home. I thought it was a putting green but got told firmly that, "Herri rand here. Campu NO!"

Strong tides and calm water gave me time to adjust to my new circumstances and to the rigours of a nine-hour paddle each day. Hands hardened and my bum numbed but these were insignificant. Each day would bring a new bout of loneliness and insecurity. Snippets of forgotten conversation and pictures of family and friends chased through my mind. Eventually I would return to the same questions again and again.

"Where are they and what are they doing?" and sometimes "What made me

*leave it all?" Emotions ran strongly – my values reshuffled daily and for the first time I realised just how important people really were. Yet as time passed I grew used to my solitary existence. The miles mounted behind me, my loneliness receded and I became more confident. I could understand more words now and even buy ice-cream. With my new confidence came more worries and different fears. *Could I handle the surf in the Pacific? Would I maintain my schedule despite the swells and increasing heat as I moved south?**

I passed through the Kanmon Kaiyō amongst a mass of freighters, tankers, ferries and fishing boats all bustling about their business. Reminiscent of cycling around Piccadilly Circus as I first dodged container vessels thrusting forward against the tide and then fishing boats which changed direction as unpredictably as London taxis. The islands and currents dropped behind me and were replaced by cliffs where traces of the Pacific swell would rush and gurgle through caves and amongst fallen boulders. This was real sea-canoeing and now that I was here my earlier fears seemed groundless. A tail wind put spring in my stroke and I raced flying fish across the wave-tops. Loneliness was a thing of the past, in fact I was surprised that it had ever bothered me. This was my world, I had everything I needed and there were new friends to meet every day. They popped up in the strangest of places.

Yoshimitsu stuck his head out of the bilges of a boat he was mending with concrete "nicked" from a nearby building site. He confided in me that his was "Number One boat," and that "Canoe OK. Number One boat best safe boat." An hour later the tide turned and "Number One boat" still didn't float! Naturally it was the cheap concrete which the government used that was at fault!

"Canoe-san, Canoe-san." Shouts bounced around the tiny harbour on Ao-Shima. The population greeted me as an old friend and beer in hand I was ushered into a house for a bath. Confused by my popularity I soaked while the spaghetti in my head untangled itself. All was made clear when I emerged. Two New Zealand canoeists had stopped here in 1981. They were still very real to my host who spoke of them returning one day and proudly showed me their small badge pinned up over the door. In the morning my small badge joined theirs and I too would become just a handful of memories.

Time and again people gave me far more than they could afford and more than I could every hope to repay. It was at once the high and low point of the trip. High because it was fascinating to meet and learn from my new friends. Low because I suddenly knew that some of the aims of my journey were beyond me. I wanted to get behind the surface veil and see the real Japan, yet how could I with my hundred words of Japanese and privileged position. All I could do was watch, listen and bring back a few blinkered impressions. I stepped in and out of more lives.

Father Hunter greeted me on Amakusa-Shima. "Well, how ya doing there fella? Can you use a tube?" Missionaries and Fosters?! I smiled at the vision of a tall gangling man in the vestments of church who clasped a can of Fosters in one huge hand. That evening the same hands clasped bread and wine during Mass. The Japanese

words turned the familiar service into a strange, slightly chilling ritual. It was the opposite in a small Buddhist temple near Kagoshima where children ran back and forth in a homely atmosphere whilst the temple master and I prayed for the safe conclusion of my journey.

People in little boats on big seas have a habit of asking for a bit of help from "Him up there." I certainly did when I rounded Sada Misaki and started on the most exposed part of my journey. Yet despite my requests Typhoon 13 arrived - 200 miles to the east. "Gentle" Pacific swells rolled under my frail craft and hurled themselves skywards over spray-shrouded cliffs. Bouncing around I kept one eye on the incoming waves and the other on those bounding back off the cliffs. Above all there was a constant roaring sound like a rapid round the next corner saying "Come here little boat..." Landing places were a luxury, each one separated from its neighbour by ten miles of wave battered cliffs.

During my early days in the Pacific new hazards became apparent. A sea-snake lying like a piece of driftwood in the water suddenly came alive and zig-zagged across the sea, its narrow, poisonous head raised in my direction. Tired arms found new energy, my paddle thrashed and the boat lurched forward.

"Must get away, got to get away, it may be after me." Irrational thoughts ran crazily through my mind. I stopped only when my arms were burning with effort and my breathing became ragged. Even then cold shivers ran up and down my spine as I recalled the thin head and black, unblinking eyes gliding towards me over the water. It was after frights like this and on days when wind, waves and currents seemed against me that people once again came to the rescue. Lee and Mitzi Richan stopped their car on an empty stretch of road.

"Do you speak English?" "Uh, I am, er. I am, um, English." I don't know who was more surprised. These were the first foreigners I had seen for weeks. I could talk with them. I could REALLY talk with them! Until now I hadn't realised how much time I had had to think. Now that I had the chance it all gushed out in an orgy of communication. It was a wonderful release to talk about the things I had seen and done. Yet every morning my journey continued and every morning I had to make the break from my new friends.

Days passed and I continued northwards lurching over swells that crested below my boat and then thundered onto the shore. At Miyazaki I debated whether to slip into the harbour through surf that threatened to crush my boat if I gave it the chance. It was only knowing that this was the best landing for 30 miles that made me go in there. Next morning it proved to be a bad choice, the surfers watched as enormous waves scoured the beaches and broke across the harbour entrance. I hated the idea of being trapped there and paddled cautiously to the harbour entrance. An awesome sight awaited me when I came round the harbour wall. Cascades of water charged against the break-water and erupted into fountains of spray. I watched, impressed. Every now and then a few waves didn't break and I edged forward, then more would crash towards me and I paddled frantically backwards. Eventually in a lull I gambled,

paddled quickly forward. It was the wrong thing to do. The first wave halted my seaward dash. The next scooped me up then hurled me down into the trough below. Falling water flattened me against the back deck of my boat and plucked at my paddle. I clung on and rolled up just as the foam was crashing against the break-water. Dazed and scared I surfed the next wave back into the safety of the harbour.

Once there I found it hard to accept that it had been as rough as it seemed. An hour later I had convinced myself that I really could slip out when the waves weren't breaking. After all, I thought it only required careful judgement. Again I hovered cautiously at the harbour entrance but a harbour patrol boat and helicopter blocked my way. Frustrated, but a little relieved that I didn't have to try again, I joined the surfers. It was a lousy birthday present.

For two days I sat with the surfers watching the ocean's convulsions. We never tired of watching this primordial power and all of us felt humble before the forces that this wilderness paraded before us. This was a truly majestic spectacle like a lioness proclaiming her territory.

Until now my schedule had been tight but the enforced stay in Miyazaki had used all my "bad weather" days. I could no longer be certain of going round Shikoku and returning in time for school. Reluctantly I headed back through Bungo Suido towards Seto Naikai.

I thought this was taking the easy way out but the ocean had a final surprise. I could see Shikoku and thought I would reach the quiet waters of Seto Naikai in an hour. Then the tide changed. One hour turned into two while I battled into the current. A side wind sprang up changing smooth swells into vicious breaking wavelets that washed over me chest deep. I became like a wobbly toy, never falling over but never moving forwards either. Ships barged past bound for Australia and Europe. Far above they knew nothing of my plight nor how helpless I felt, trapped by wind and waves right in their path. Another half hour passed and nothing changed, except that my arms began to ache. More minutes flickered past on my watch and almost imperceptibly I began to creep forward. A transit changed its position and I realised with relief that the tide was slackening. Eventually after three hours in cold, intimidating waves I reached Seto Naikai and the safety that it offered.

Yet Seto Naikai seemed dull and stale after the ocean's sparkle. I had become accustomed to the swells and surf that added excitement and risk to the paddling. Now I found I missed them like a familiar wart that one scratches. Disillusioned I retreated into my memories of the last five weeks. Names, faces and places flashed by and were replaced by an emptiness I could not understand. Why, when I had seen and done so much did I feel deflated and vacant. Miles dripped from my paddle. I drew deeper into my thoughts. Originally I had come to Japan to try and understand this country, where past and present clashed so furiously yet combined so efficiently.

Now I knew how little I had learnt, but in its place new understanding dawned. I had not answered the questions that I set out to solve, but now I at least knew what the real questions were. And maybe, just maybe, the answers didn't matter any more. These new ideas were disturbing and

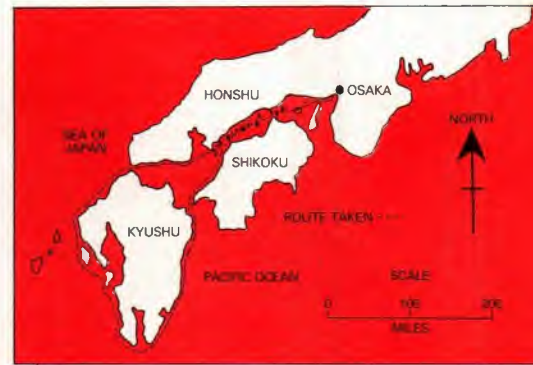


Photo: Andy Fleck

Old Fisherman - Kajura-Shira

contradictory, I felt uncomfortable with them and confused. Returning to my own world from one that I had made my own was not easy. The calm waters of Seto Naikai had given me time to adjust to Japan, now they were giving me time to adjust back. Thoughts of home returned and I paddled long hours as I became anxious to get there. Yet three days from Osaka Typhoon 13 once again halted my progress.

This time it arrived in force. Winds tearing at the sea turned it into a writhing, spitting fury. Trees bent and cracked, doors clattered and thin paper walls flapped. Old men shook their heads and we all waited. It ended as quickly as it began and next morning I could continue quietly on my way back to the beach I had left six weeks before. Even that had changed, now it was congested with windsurfers who looked down on my sluggish travel stained craft. Well they could sneer. I had come further than they would ever sail. A huge grin spread through me - yes it had all been worthwhile.

I paddled alone but could not have done so without many other people. To my family, friends and sponsors; Jay Sea International, Lendal Products Ltd., Manx Marine, Musto Accessories Ltd., Speedo (UK) Ltd., Valley Canoe Products Ltd., Wild Water Centre, and the British Canoe Union Expedition Committee - "Thanks" for your help and support throughout the trip. To my friends in Japan, "Domo Arigato. Ja Matane."

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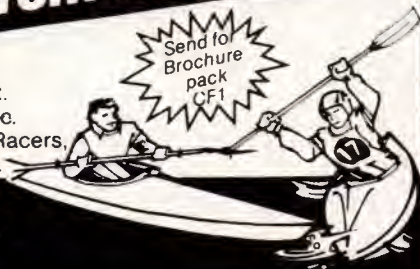
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FEBRUARY 1987

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Regional Roundup

EASTERN

New Officers

At the regional AGM in December a new executive committee was elected. Ron Hodgson (Chairman), Paul West (Treasurer) and Greg Davis (Secretary, 12 Park Road, RAMSEY, Cambs PE17 1BA) are taking over just as our regional development plan is reaching completion. Please give them your full support in its implementation.

Marathon

The first Huntingdon Marathon takes place on Sunday 8 March. It's still not too late to enter this event. Phone Graham Simpkin for rush details (0954 60195).

News

If you have anything you wish to tell the Region either in this Roundup or in Regional Club News, phone Graham at the above number.

LONDON AND SOUTH EAST

Holme Pierrepont Weekend

The London and South East Region is organising a weekend's paddling on the Holme Pierrepont Slalom and Wild Water Course on 18/19 April 1987 (Easter Weekend). The programme has yet to be finalised but it is hoped to include many of the following activities:-

White Water Skills Training (for beginners upwards)

White Water rescue practice sessions

Slalom Skills Training/Slalom competition

White Water racing

Rafting etc

Plus the usual free practice sessions on the course.

The weekend is open to BCU members and members of affiliated clubs in the Region. Full details and an entry form can be obtained from the L & SE Stand at the International Canoe Exhibition, or by sending a SAE to: Chris Childs, 8A Holland Street, BRIGHTON, Sussex BN2 2WB.

NORTHERN

Pool Slalom

The event to select the regional representatives was held at the Dolphin Centre, Darlington. The winners who will represent the Northern Region at Crystal Palace on 21 February are K1L - Ishbel Grant. K1M Adrian Dent and John Hansell. C1 - Greg Kirkbridge. C2 - Murtagh/Hinda. We wish them every success.

New Clubs

Two new clubs have been established over recent months. Dubbon Canoe Club at Barrow, and Tyne Valley Canoe Club at Prudhoe. Good wishes and full support are extended to each club.

Data Bank

Club Secretaries are reminded of the Data Bank being established by Northern Region Sports Council and they are asked to return the proforma sent out in September.

White Water Squad

It is hoped to have a Regional White Water Racing Squad early in the New Year -

anyone interested to contact Mrs. M. Armstrong, Durham Kayak Club, Tele 0385 46118.

New Officers

The following new officers were elected at the AGM. Chairman, Barry Howell from Lakeside YMCA; Vice Chairman, Paul Kelly from Durham KC; Regional Access Officer, Ray Willett; Regional News, Mary Armstrong; and Racing, Jim Stilling.

Outgoing Chairman

Mrs. Claire Allen stepped down from office at the recent AGM as she and her husband will be shortly leaving the area. Everyone in the Region would wish to convey many thanks to her for all the tireless work she has carried out on behalf of the Region. We wish her and her husband every joy in their new home.

Holme Pierrepont

Region weekend 4/5 July - projects and ideas to Don Rospin (Regional Secretary), 28 Cotswold Drive, SKELTON, Cleveland.

Boxing Day Race

River Wear Annual Race organised by Mr. K. Lambley of the Sunderland CC and sponsored by Silverscreen of Newcastle had over 110 serious and fun paddlers taking part. It was a damp cold morning for an eleven am start but all enjoyed the fun of the Festive Season.

SOUTH WEST

Annual General Meeting

The AGM of the Region will be held on Friday 20 March 1987, at 7.30 pm at Exeter Canoe Club. Any motions for consideration should be sent either to the Chairman (J. Cornwell, Church Cottage, The Hill, Lanport, Somerset) or the Secretary (D. Walls, 3 Endfield Close, Exeter) by 20 February 1987.

Club Focus

All Club Secretaries are reminded that items for Club Focus should be sent to the Regional Editor, Peter Lacey, at the Pippins Centre, Lyme Road, AXMINSTER, Devon.

WEST MIDLANDS

Canoe Cavalcade 1987

This co-ordinated series of events takes to the canals of the West Midlands conurbation, for a week, from Monday 22 June. An extended programme is being planned to include some areas not covered last year eg Solihull. On the weekdays there will be sessions including training and testing for Star Tests, Come & Try Canoeing, flat water slalom, women only and canoeing for disabled persons. The weekend will see major events taking place; a family fun and games day, marathon race and flat water slalom are some of the events being planned. Anyone willing to assist in any way, or wishing to take part, should contact the RDO, Ann Gillespie, 13 Spring Hill, WORCESTER, WR5 1BL. Tele 0905 24590.

Holme Pierrepont Weekend

The Regional Committee have booked the artificial Slalom & White Water course at Holme Pierrepont, for the weekend 25/26 April 1987. A variety of activities will be arranged to suit all ability paddlers. West Midlands paddlers will have the opportunity of priority bookings, but

paddlers from other Regions are welcome to apply. Advanced booking will be necessary for car parking passes to be issued, otherwise the National Watersports Centre will charge for parking. For further details and booking forms, see to Brian Porter, 15 Russell Croft, Aston Fields, BROMSGROVE, Worcs B60 3EF.

British Heart Foundation

On Saturday 6 June the British Heart Foundation are holding a sponsored paddle on the River Severn. They will have people paddling who have had major heart surgery and would like the support of Canoe Clubs within the Region. They are hoping for 500 canoes on the water. This is a venture well worth supporting as well as being a superb opportunity to publicise canoeing. Your club will be receiving details of the paddle, but individuals can offer their support by contacting Mike Nicholls, 25 Dunbar Grove, Great Barr, BIRMINGHAM B43 7PT. Tele 021-360 2136. Please help to support this worthwhile fundraising effort.

Regional River Guide

A Regional River guide will be available shortly. The guide will include details of many of the Rivers in the Region. Copies should be available on the Regional Stand at Crystal Palace. For details of cost and orders, please contact Mike Nicholls.

Regional Handbook 1987

The 1987 Edition of the Regional Handbook includes details of canoeing activities within the region, dates of events and courses, reports on regional competitions and a comprehensive club directory. For your copy please send 50p plus a 9 x 6 inch sae to Brian Porter, 15 Russell Croft, Aston Fields, BROMSGROVE, Worcs B60 3EF.

YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE

As a result of the elections at the recent Regional Annual General Meeting the following have been appointed for the current year:

Chairman: Ron Rymer, The Lodge, KIRK HAMMERTON, N. Yorks YO5 8BX.

Vice Chairman: Mike Twiggs, 38, Badgersgate, Thrushfield, SKIPTON, N. Yorks BD23 5FN. (Continues as Regional Access Officer).

Treasurer: Mrs Linda Stanley, 1, Firs Gate, HARROGATE, N. Yorks HG2 9HE.

Secretary: Don Player, 21, The Drive, Roundhay, LEEDS, Yorks LS8 1JF.

NORTH WEST

Halton Access

The fishing season on the River Lune has been extended and canoe access has been altered. We have ensured continued access on Sundays only during February and March, by reimbursing the North West Water Authority for loss of revenue from fishing permits. To recuperate expenditure, bibs will be issued to all who canoe on Halton Rapids, the cost being £1.00 per day plus £5.00 refundable bib deposit.

Centres which provide canoeing courses under the guidance of British Canoe Union Qualified Instructors

Abernethy Outdoor Centre

Mrs. W. Anderson
NETHY BRIDGE, Inverness-shire, PH25 3ED.
(047 982 279)

Adventure Days

Mr. P. Frost
The Waterfront Centre Upper Wharf,
BUDE, Cornwall.
(0288 55551)

Bowl Canoe School

Mr. Dave Ayres
Capel Canoes Ltd, Five Oak Green,
TONBRIDGE, Kent (0892-832128)

Bowles Outdoor Pursuits Ctr

Mr. Mike Thompson
Eridge Green, TUNBRIDGE WELLS,
Kent TW3 9LW (08926 4127)

Calshot Activities Ctr

Mr. John Kuysler
The Spit, Calshot, SOUTHAMPTON,
Hants SO4 1BR (0703-892077)

Camp Windermere (Cumbria)

Mrs. Clare Allan
Low Garth, Millans Park, AMBLESIDE,
Cumbria LA22 9AG.
(0966 32163)

Canoe Cumbria

Mr. Paul R. Hughes
Howbarrow Farm, CARTMEL, Cumbria
(0448 54330)

Carnoch Outdoor Centre

Mr. J. Ducker
Carnoch House, GLENCOE, Argyll PA39 4HS
(08552 350)

Croft-Na-Caber Watersports Centre

Mr. Oliver J. Crane
Kenmore, NR. ABERFELDY,
Perthshire PH15 2HW (08873-236)

Dalguise Centre Glasgow Battalion the Boys' Brigade

Mr. David Judd,
DUNKELD, Perthshire PH8 0JX (03502-339)

Dolygaer Outdoor Educ. Ctr

Mr. C. C. Roberts
Dolygaer, NR. MERTHYR TYDFIL,
Mid-Glamorgan CF48 2UR (0685 5305)

Druidstone Activity Centre

Mr. David Abbott
Druidstone Hotel, Broadhaven,
HAVERFORDWEST, Dyfed
(043 783 221)

Drummond Outdoor

Mr. J. Roger
Drummond South View, 8 Severn Bank,
SHREWSBURY, Shropshire SY1 2JD
(0743 65022)

Folkestone Activity Hol. Ctr

Mr. E. A. Mackenzie,
Marine Crescent, FOLKESTONE,
Kent CT20 1PS (030-55651)

Glenmore Lodge National Outdoor Training Centre,

Aviemore, Inverness-shire PH22 1QU
(047 986 256)

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Mr. Mark Osborne
Burntmill Lane,
HARLOW Essex CM20 2QS
(0279 32031)

Haven Banks Sailing & Canoeing Centre

Miss Janet Bradford
Haven Road, EXETER, Devon
(0392-34668)

Hawkhurst Adventure Camp

Mr. D. R. Langford
Kielder Water, NR. HEXHAM,
Northumberland NE48 1QZ (0660 50217)

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UK Office: 62a Beach Road, HARTFORD,
Cheshire CW8 3AB (0606 782011)

Hilston Park Outdoor Ctr

Mr. Brin Tucker
Newcastle, NR. MONMOUTH, Gwent
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Liverpool Watersports Ctr

Mr. Kevin Lanaghan
Unit 27, Britannia Pavilion,
Albert Dock Village, LIVERPOOL L3 4AA
(051 708 0322)

Loch Insh Watersports Ctr

Mr. Clive Freshwater
Insh Hall, KINCRAIG,
Inverness-shire PH21 1NU (054 04 272)

Michael Mallinson Scout Ctr

Mr. R. G. Ridge
The Charter Road, WOODFORD GREEN,
Essex (0277 228219)

Miles Platting Outdoor Pursuits Centre

Mrs. Pat Mee
Community Education Centre,
Holland Street, MANCHESTER M10 7AF
(061-205 1355)

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St. Michaels College, Venton,
Widecombe-in-the-Moor, NEWTON ABBOT,
Devon TW13 7TF (036 42 346)

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Mr. Colin Broadway
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300 Marsh Road Hilperton,
TROWBRIDGE, Wiltshire BA14 7PL
(02214-68525)

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CRASTER, Northumberland NE66 3TW
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London NW1 7EA (01-267 6605)

Plas Menai National Water Activities Ctr

Mr. Franco Ferrero
CAERNARFON, Gwynedd LL55 1UE
(0248 670964)

Port Edgar Watersports Ctr

Mr. Oliver Ludlow
Port Edgar, Shore Road,
SOUTH QUEENSFERRY, West Lothian
EH30 9SQ (031-331-3330)

Ravens Ait Watersports & Conference Ctr

Mr. R. Hayden
Portsmouth Road, SURBITON,
Surrey KT6 4HN (01-390 3554)

River Wye Canoe Centre

PGL Youth Adventure Ltd
Court Farm, Hole in the Wall, FOY,
Herefordshire HR9 7JH

SARAS/Structured Leisure Services

SARAS Precinct, The Shallows, Saltford,
BRISTOL Avon BS18 3HA (0272-775440)

Scout Dike Outdoor Educ. Ctr

Mr. J. D. Crossland
Huddersfield Road, Penistone, SHEFFIELD,
South Yorkshire S30 6GF (0226 762 285)

Share Centre

Mr. E. R. Huddleston
Smith's Strand, LISNASKEA,
Co. Fermanagh (03657-22122)

Shoreline Holidays

Mr. N. S. Cole/R. Bolland,
Florida Hotel, Summerleaze Crescent, BUDE,
Cornwall EX23 8HJ (0288 2451)

Skern Lodge Outdoor Ctr

Mr. John Watson
Appledore, BIDEFORD, N. Devon
(02372 75992)

Snowgoose Activity Holidays

John & Tina Cuthbertson
c/o Corpach Chandlers, CORPACH,
Fort William, Scotland

Trefil Mountain Centre

Mr. Alan Wilkinson
Trefil, NR. TREDEGAR, Gwent

Twr-Y-Felin Outdoor Centre

Mr. Andy Middleton
ST. DAVIDS, Dyfed (0437-720391)

Whitewater

Mr. A. Jones, Mr. S. Baker, Mr. R. Mortimer,
Shepperton Marina, Felix Lane,
SHEPPERTON, Middlesex (0932-247978)

YMCA National Centre

Mr. Barry Howell,
Lakeside, ULVERSTONE,
Cumbria LA12 8BD (05395-31758)

by Nigel Foster **ROTTEN SHARK MEAT AND GULL CASSEROLE** ANOTHER ICELAND SAGA

Last spring I was approached by a group from Cambridge looking for someone to lead them on a coastal kayaking journey in Northern Iceland. After circumnavigating the island in 1977 and experiencing its utter magic my agreement was fairly quick.

Sharon and I took the landrover and trailer via the Shetlands and Faeroe Islands, seeing James Moore and David Taylor off at the start of their circumnavigation of the Faeroes, and collecting 'Mac' Angus (the Noo), one of our party, from the Shetlands. Then followed a bumpy drive for three saddle sore days along the 'M1' of Iceland which closely resembles a farm track.

The rest of the group (30 in all) flew to Keflavik on the SW corner of Iceland and caught a high clearance 'coach' to a spectacular valley site in the mountains called Thorsmork. From this area, after some initial exercise, one group headed across the interior desert to the North coast on foot. A second group crossed the Vatnajokull icecap on ski and the third with Sharon and I drove to the North West peninsula.

Our journey over the next ten days was made in general purpose kayaks, most of them with skegs fitted, whilst the landrover provided support by carrying most of the equipment to a pre-arranged meeting point each day. Deep calm fjords surrounded by 2,000 foot high ridges alternating with bold rocky headlands with rough seas and wheeling seabirds, punctuated by only occasional farms or clusters of houses. One such tiny settlement is Gjogur, a place where Geoff and I had stopped on our earlier circumnavigation of Iceland and had become acquainted with an elderly man called Axel, who seemed to always wear a greasy flat hat, indoors and out, and who took snuff in large quantities. Ultimately the snuff would cause a brown stain to creep down onto his upper lip where it would remain as a permanent fixture until the next snuff-taking session. Geoff and I had helped him with his hay-making that year, whilst waiting for less windy weather for a long crossing towards the East.

This year as our flotilla of 'little kayaks' surfed around the corner towards Gjogur with a confetti shower of shrieking arctic terns around our heads Axel and his family were there waiting with warm greetings and nostalgic photographs. As I was paddling a stable 'mirage' instead of my usual 'Vyneck' I encouraged Axel to have a go in my kayak, which he did, complete with greasy flat hat and jacket, although I think he still prefers his fine wooden fishing boat.

The day that Mike performed his first ever loop was also the day that the delights of 'gull' on the menu as an alternative to freeze-dried food fell to my hand in the form

of an immature black-backed gull with a broken wing. Mac Angus (the Noo), being a little more adventurous than many of his fellow travellers as far as food was concerned, cooked a pot of 'gull casserole' over the fire, whilst Sharon and I fried our 'steaks' with tyme from the hill. By the time Angus considered his stew ready to eat, most of the others had gathered round in 'Bisto' fashion, drawn by the appetising smells, and I feel it fair to say by a degree of morbid curiosity. Nevertheless by the time the vultures had finished there was not a drop left!

A day's break followed, to explore the mountains, to gorge ourselves on plump berries or to sleep, like Sian, perchance to dream of calm seas. Those of us who scaled the mountain peaks were rewarded by magnificent views stretching for over 40 miles in the clear air; views of more mountains, ice-cap, fjords and ocean.

Our next camp spot was at the edge of a shallow fjord that was cut almost in half by a broad bar of sand, enclosing a salt-water lagoon. The inhabitants of one of the two houses in the fjord greeted us as they made their way towards the lagoon to fish, and with typically Icelandic generosity gave us a bucketful of superb sea trout. We paid for it next morning when we were summoned for coffee and were subjected to the fruits of many months of labour. This particular

speciality of theirs was shark meat. The shark is cut into manageable chunks and buried in the beach gravel for a period or six months by which time it is well rotted. Then it is dug up, rinsed and hung in a well aired drying shed for a further four to six months to 'dry'.

The quick slash of a sharp knife revealed a putty white interior to the amber chunk, and with the exposed flesh thrust under my nose for my early-morning approval I felt a strong urge to vomit. My face gave everyone else a good excuse to laugh. The putrid flesh proved less aggressive to the palate than towards the nose, and, thankfully, almost melted away to the flavour of strong ripe Camembert cheese. After a few moments all that remained in the mouth was a small obstinate knot of gristle.

Never can a tale be told of Iceland without mention of hot springs. This year for our convenience there were hot springs right on the beach itself, making it a pleasure to soak our hands in the sea! Most of the group took advantage of this facility, the 'hot pot', and smelled a little sweeter as a result!

With panfuls of mussels and fried puffballs, our culinary delights carried us right up to Holmavik where we reluctantly left the water and headed for Akureyri on the North coast to meet up with the other parties and to indulge in a little sightseeing. Massive waterfalls, boiling mudpools, yellow sulphur crystals and roaring steam vents rewarded our efforts, but all too soon it was time to retreat into the comfort of our 'Henri Lloyds' and head back through the gales and blizzards to Seydisfjordur while the rest of the group made their way to the airport in the South-east.

Coincidentally we met up with James and David again on the Faeroe Islands, well content after their successful circumnavigation of the island chain. Devouring their 'doggie bags' of delicious pilot whale meat and raw blubber we all joined in the singing of that haunting song, 'whale meat again, don't know where, don't know when ...'

Editor's note: Nigel Foster has recently launched his new business 'Nigel Foster Canoeing Ventures' and would like to explain that groups or individuals attending his courses do not have to display an ability to eat rotten meat.

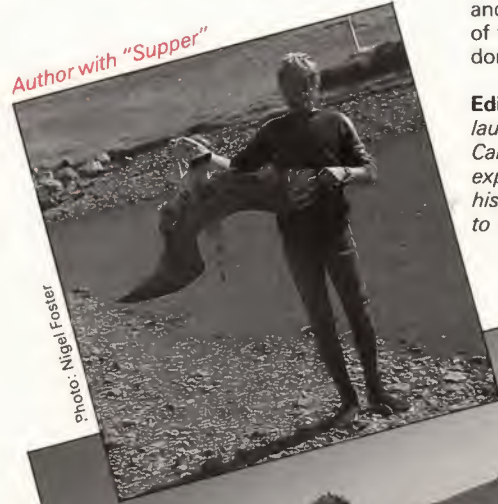


photo: Nigel Foster



Photo: Nigel Foster

Dan near Nordurfjordur

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1987 Programme and Charges at the Holme Pierrepont National Water Sports Centre

1987 will be a particularly exciting year for white water canoeists, many of whom will have their first opportunity to paddle on the newly opened Slalom and Wild Water

Course at Holme Pierrepont. Full details of the programme of events to be organised by the British Canoe Union at Holme Pierrepont during the year is published

below and details of organisers are contained in the 1987 Members Yearbook and Calendar of Events, distributed with this edition of CANOE FOCUS.

DATE	ORGANISATION	FACILITY	ACTIVITY	DATE	ORGANISATION	FACILITY	ACTIVITY
JANUARY				JUNE			
3/4	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Intermediate Slalom Squad		Committee		Squad
10/11	Wild Water Racing Committee	Slalom Course	Division C Race	13/14	1. Racing Committee	Regatta Course	Regatta
17/18	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Junior Slalom Squad	20/21	2. Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Senior Slalom Squad
31/1	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course Centre	Slalom Organisers Conference	27/28	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Divisional Slalom
FEBRUARY				JULY			
7/8	1. Coaching Committee	All Centre Facilities	Competition Coaches Course	4/5	Northern Region Committee	Slalom Course	Activities & Competition Training Courses
	2. Wild Water Racing Committee	Slalom Course	Division C Race	6/12	1. Racing Committee	Regatta Course	International Regatta
14/15	1. Racing Committee	Regatta Course	Olympic Training Squad	12/17	2. Racing Committee	Regatta Course	Olympic Training Squad
	2. Wild Water Racing Committee	Slalom Course	Division C Race	11/12	3. Racing Committee	Slalom Course	Activities & Competition Training Courses
28/1	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Junior Slalom Squad	18/19	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Divisional Slalom
25/26	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Divisional Slalom		Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Divisional Slalom
MARCH				AUGUST			
7/8	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Senior Slalom Squad	1/2	North West Region Committee	Slalom Course	Activities & Competition Training Courses
14/15	1. Racing Committee	Regatta Course	Olympic Training Squad	8/9	East Midlands Region Committee	Slalom Course	Activities & Competition Training Courses
	2. Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Divisional Slalom	15/16	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Divisional Slalom
	3. Wild Water Racing Committee	Slalom Course	Wild Water Racing Squad	22/23	Wild Water Racing Committee	Slalom Course	Wild Water Race
28/29	Wild Water Racing Committee	Slalom Course	Division C Race	SEPTEMBER			
APRIL				5/6	Racing Committee	Regatta Course	Regatta
4/5	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Premier Division Slalom	12/13	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Inter Clubs Slalom
11/12	Southern Region Committee	Slalom Course	Activities & Competition Training Courses	19/20	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Divisional Slalom
18/19	London/South East Region Committee	Slalom Course	Activities & Competition Training Courses	26/27	Wild Water Racing Committee	Slalom Course	Wild Water Race/ Wild Water Racing Squad
25/26	1. Racing Committee	Regatta Course	Regatta	OCTOBER			
	2. West Midlands Region Committee	Slalom Course	Activities & Competition Training Courses	3/4	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Divisional Slalom
MAY				10/11	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Divisional Slalom
2/3	Committee for English Affairs	Slalom Course	Activities & Competition Training Courses	17/18	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Divisional Slalom
9/10	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Divisional Slalom	24/25	1. Wild Water Racing Committee	Slalom Course	Division B and C Race
16/17	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Senior Slalom Squad		2. Coaching Committee	Slalom Course	Open Canoe Rally
23/24	1. Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Divisional Slalom	31/1	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Divisional Slalom
	2. Racing Committee	Regatta Course	Regatta	NOVEMBER			
30/31	Coaching Committee	Slalom Course	BCU Water Carnival White Water Rescue Techniques Course	7/8	Coaching Committee	Slalom Course	National Coaching Conference
JUNE				14/15	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Senior Slalom Squad
6/7	Wild Water Racing	Slalom Course	Wild Water Racing	21/22	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Intermediate Slalom Squad
DECEMBER				5/6	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Junior Slalom Squad
				12/13	Slalom Committee	Slalom Course	Senior Slalom Squad
				26/27	Coaching Committee	Slalom Course	Activities & Competition Training Courses

The Holme Pierrepont National Water Sports Centre has now published its revised charges for use of the Centre facilities. These were agreed at the most recent meeting of The Holme Pierrepont Joint Management Committee who are responsible for determining all policy matters relating to the National Water Sports Centre, and its facilities. The Centre's Director and Management staff are responsible for implementing these policies. The Joint Management Committee is composed of representatives from the two funding bodies for the Centre, that is the Sports Council and Nottinghamshire

County Council.

The British Canoe Union, together with other Governing Bodies who use the Centre's facilities, (The Amateur Rowing Association and British Water Ski Federation) have no direct representation on the Committee. However the Sports Council, in order to obtain expert advice and assistance from users of The Centre's facilities do nominate a representative from each of the Governing Bodies concerned, to occupy three of their six allocated places. The representative nominated by Sports Council from the British Canoe Union is currently the Director, Ron Emes.

The new charges for casual users (ie, those not taking part in an organised competition or activity) applicable from 1st January 1987 are detailed below.

Regatta Course

£2.50 per Session Adults
£1.25 per Session Under 18

Slalom Course

£3.00 per Session Adults
£2.00 per Session Under 18
£5.00 per 2 Sessions Adults
£3.50 per 2 Sessions Under 18

Here and There



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HAZARDS ON AUSTRIAN ALPINE RIVERS

The following reports are extracted from the DKV journal KANUSPORT of the 16 October 1986:-

TRISANNA. A little above the road-sign 'Kappl-Holdernach' level with Hotel Alpine a row of vertical iron stakes extends right across the river-bed, some only 80 cm (32 inches) apart. 20 metres lower down there is a second row. Only visible at low water. This has already caused a serious accident. (Note. Comparison with the Austrian and Bavarian White Water Guide (1982) and the DKV Foreign Rivers Guide Vol. 1A (1985) suggest that this is downstream of See on a stretch that the DKV Guide advises should be regarded as impracticable because of the construction of rows of iron stakes obliquely across the river to slow down the movement of boulders and stones in the "Gfäll gorge". It is however not clear whether it is above or below the weir mentioned in both guides).

SANNA. The weir above Landeck (at km 6.5 in the DKV River Guide Vol. 1A) is broken down and no water flows over what remains of the weir-crown. There is a strong flow to the left to the weir passage, where a number of iron objects project out of the water. Close inspection is needed before attempting the passage. (Note. In the Austrian and Bavarian White Water Guide this is the weir described as "near the edge of Landeck which canoeists shoot just to the right of the concrete sluice gates". It is upstream of Landeck camp site).

RIVER ÖTZ (Ötzaler Ache). Obstruction on the "middle stretch" of the Ötz. At the cataract above the first road bridge a high tension mast has fallen into the river. With a water level of 125cm at the gauge at Tumpen there was 20cm (8 inches) headroom. Previous inspection essential. (Note. According to the DKV Foreign Rivers Guide Vol.1A, a level of 125cm at Tumpen indicates high water. The "middle stretch" of the Ötzaler Ache is not described in the Austrian and Bavarian White Water Guide, 1982 edition. The DKV guide describes it from Langenbach to Tumpen as Grade IV, V and VI followed by worse, and warns about rapid rises in water level during the morning and afternoon on account of snow and glacier melt-water).

MISSING CREDITS

In the last edition of CANOE FOCUS, we carried a number of articles covering different aspects of canoeing holidays. We were very grateful to the authors concerned and wish to thank Colin Broadway of Mobile Adventure Ltd (Open Canoes); Richard Fox (North America); and Alan Miller of Sporting Travel Services (Scandinavia). For those wishing for further information, the address of Mobile Adventure Ltd was on page 6, and Sporting Travel Services can be contacted at 9, Teasdale Close, ROYSTON, Herts, SG8 5TD.

YOUTH AFLOAT

The 'Come and Try It' festival of water-sports - 'Youth Afloat' will again be held in Poole, Dorset, during the weekend 26-29 June 1987. Besides canoeing there will be the opportunity to try board sailing, rowing, dinghy sailing, sea angling, water skiing, and sub-aqua. Information from Youth Management and Associates, The Knoll, Park Road, POOLE, Dorset BA15 2RJ.



INVITATION FROM THE AZORES

A group of young people interested in promoting international sporting links have formed themselves a club called "The Youth of the Green Island". They would like to establish links with Canoeing Clubs in the United Kingdom, and invite anyone interested to write to them "Os Jovens de Lha Verde, Rua Do Negro, No. 14, 9500 Ponta Delgada, Sao Miguel-Acores, AZORES, Portugal".

Expedition Training

In an effort to encourage candidates who wish to undertake their Duke of Edinburgh Award Expedition by canoe, arrangements have been made for two-day training courses in the use of the open canoe to be run by Stuart Briggs a BCU Coach. The dates for 1987 are 11-12 April and 9-10 May. These two-day courses are designed to give candidates sufficient training in the loading, paddling and control of an open canoe, to permit them safely to undertake a suitable journey on the river such as the Wye or Severn. Candidates will need to be self-contained camping-wise, thus keeping costs to a minimum. Canoes and equipment will be provided. For full details of the courses apply to Mr S. Briggs, 127 Church Road, Stretton, BURTON UPON TRENT, Staffs, BE13 0HF.

Canoes Available

PGL Holidays have agreed to make open canoes available from their Ross on Wye base, to candidates for the actual D of E Award journey. These will be free of charge, but subject to availability. Recovery of the canoes at the end of the journey will normally be included.

Severn-Wye Panel

The Severn-Wye D of E Award Expedition Panel have produced a comprehensive guide to journeys on the Wye and Severn, and can offer specific advice, besides being available to undertake the assessment of the journey. Write to Mr F.A. Winnall, Frank Chapman Centre, Park End, Ribbesford, BEWDLEY, Worcestershire DY12 2TY.



The photograph shows HRH Prince Edward on a recent visit to Calshot Activities Centre, during the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme Silver Jubilee Celebration, where he successfully completed "The Calshot Pier Jump", to the admiration of the waiting crowd.

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SILVER SPOON TO THE RESCUE

Lifesaving 1,2,3 is the latest way to learn to lifesave. Sponsored by British Sugar, the Royal Life Saving Society launched Silver Spoon Lifesaving 1,2,3 on 18 January 1987 in an effort to reduce the annual drowning toll of 600. Sugar's logical association with lifesaving stems from it being a natural source of energy, vital for all sporting activities. With its nationwide community links, British Sugar is keen to help save lives by promoting a wider practical knowledge of lifesaving techniques.

Lending his support to the scheme is Commonwealth Games swimming gold medallist Adrian Moorhouse. "Many people learn to swim and enjoy a wide

range of water sports", says Adrian. "But it is vital that they should know how to act in an emergency. Lifesaving 1,2,3 is a must for anyone, whatever swimming ability or age, who ventures into the water".

Not only does lifesaving training equip people with certain valuable skills which could help save someone's life but it is an excellent form of fitness training. The three stage progressive format of Lifesaving 1,2,3 is designed to fit into any school or college curriculum and covers the new GCSE syllabi in physical education.

For details of the campaign, Silver Spoon Lifesaving 1,2,3 leaflets are available from local RLSS Branches or from RLSS Headquarters, Mountbatten House, STUDLEY, Warwickshire B80 7NN or telephone Studley (052 785) 3943

BCU WATER CARNIVAL

Following the success of the Jubilee Water Carnival held last year at Holme Pierrepont National Water Sports Centre, it has been decided to repeat the event in 1987. This has been arranged for the weekend of the late Spring Bank Holiday at the same venue. So book the date now - 23/24 May 1987.

CALLING ALL COACHES

Details of courses being organised by the National Coaching Foundation in 1987 are now available, from the Director of Coaching at BCU Headquarters. Please send SAE for details of Courses in your Region.



Richard Fox after receiving his MBE from Her Majesty The Queen on the 5th November 1986.

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NORWEGIAN STOPPER TRAINS BRITISH SERVICES

Southern Norway might have been designed for no other purpose than the sort of challenging outdoor activities the Armed Forces likes to encourage as invaluable peacetime training. Certainly the Services have been very lucky in having access to this rugged and beautiful region by means of the British Outwood Bound Centre which celebrates its Silver Jubilee in a couple of years time. Every year something like 1300 servicemen and women take advantage of the marvellous natural facilities for mountain trekking, cross country skiing, rock and ice climbing, off shore sailing, and all types of canoeing, from sea-going and Canadian to white water.

Canoeing activities are based on the BOBC Headquarters just west of the southern coastal town of Kristiansand. Here the head of the Isefjaer fjord provides ample scope for novice canoeists to practice paddling and safety procedures before travelling to more challenging waters inland. Alan McGory, a 24-year-old Lance Corporal with the Royal Engineers in Dusseldorf, said unequivocally: "Without doubt, the most exciting thing that I have ever done. Yes, it is very frightening but once you realise you are in the stopper it is tremendous". As another young soldier put it - "It certainly gets the old blood pumping around". From the Services point of view this is really the object of the exercise.

During peacetime military training usually has to be hedged about with all kinds of restrictions and it cannot really provide the demands on the nervous system that active service often produces. In these circumstances the stopper on the Syrtveit rapids has its part to play in teaching individual servicemen something about themselves.



RIVER ETIVE

Alisdair Macpherson of Midlothian has passed on a warning to any paddler intending to canoe the River Etive in Scotland. The pool below the 6th sizeable waterfall of the middle section (Scottish W.W. Guide) has a rock hidden below the surface. The rock lies left of centre and at certain levels you drop straight onto it. Allan Kerr (EUCC) knows, he smashed through both J and R footrests in a Mirage. The 30ft (?) waterfall is only 18ft and has been paddled (see CANOEIST Nov 85). There may also be a 15ft telegraph pole lurking around on the river at some point.



CHESHIRE RING CANAL WALKS

Cheshire County Council are in the process of publishing a number of booklets covering the Cheshire Canal Ring (i.e. Bridgewater, Macclesfield and Trent and Mersey Canals). Whilst primarily designed for the walker, they do give a lot of useful information on the waterways and provide graphic description of places of interest close to the canal systems. Those so far published are

Walk No 1	Marple - Macclesfield
Walk No 4	Kids Grove - Wheelock
Walk No 5	Wheelock - Nothwich
Walk No 10	Manchester - Ashton-under-Lyne
Walk No 11	Ashton-under-Lyne - Marple

Each booklet costs £1 (discounts on orders of £15 or more) can be obtained from the Countryside and Recreation Division, 1st Floor, Goldsmith House, Hamilton Place, CHESTER, Cheshire CH1 1SE.

Competition Late report

THE THIRD PEOPLES CANOE MARATHON 1986

Third time lucky!

Elmbridge Canoe Club, organisers of the 26.2 mile trial held on the first Sunday after Christmas, were in luck this year. There was every chance that this event might suffer the same fate as last year and be postponed due to flood conditions, but the water dropped just in time for Christmas and everything went ahead as planned.

Improved publicity and better weather conditions attracted more participants than ever before; a total of 260 paddlers set out from the Longridge Scout Boating Centre at Marlow, 238 completed the course to Weybridge (74 singles and 82 doubles).

The variety of paddlers entering the trial was very pleasing to the organisers, who had set out to create an event which would appeal to a large cross-section of the canoeing public, who did not necessarily want to race but at the same time would enjoy paddling with others. There were slalom canoes, Canadian touring doubles, a racing Canadian double, whitewater racing kayaks and a variety of racing K1s and K2s; there were all ages from 14 to 70 years old; some took as long as 6 hours to complete the journey, some raced through in less than 3 hours.

The National Marathon Racing Team was well represented by members both past and present. Alan Williams, World Champion 10,000m in 1983 was the second fastest single over the course. At the other end of the scale were those who were treating the event as a family day out... father and son crews, husbands and wives, boys and girls... this year saw a great increase in the number of mixed crews...

DINNER IN HONOUR OF JEREMY WEST

The Royal Canoe Club are to pay tribute to the achievements of Jeremy West in becoming a double World Champion, by holding a Reception and Dinner in his honour. This is scheduled for Saturday, 11 April 1987, and all are welcome. Tickets at £10 each, can be obtained from Grace Barnard, The Secretary, Royal Canoe Club, Trowlock Way, Trowlock Island, TEDDINGTON, Middlesex.

MARATHON OPEN CANOE TOUR

Norwich to Oulton Broad over the weekend of the 18/19 April, an alternative to the 'Westminster/Deveizes' at a more leisurely pace, camping half way, near a pub! Starting from the centre of Norwich the tour takes you eastwards along the river Yare down the cut from Reedham onto the Waverly, SE to Oulton Broad and Lowestoft. The distance is about 30 miles. Further details from Dave Hart OBCCC, 33 Conrad Road, Oulton Broad, LOWESTOFT, Suffolk. Tel: 0502-69787. This is a Canadian Canoe Association run event, but you don't have to be a member of anything to come on it.

so much so that prizes were given in this category.

As usual many of the participants underestimated their ability, and chose to start earlier than necessary... so arriving at the finish before the official logging in time and not qualifying for prizes. The strong flow on the river may have upset calculations to some extent and it certainly contributed to some new record times.

The fastest single was Guy Dresser from the Royal Canoe Club in a time of 2hrs 49.56mins (13 minutes faster than the previous record). The fastest double was Guest and Quittenton from Lincoln in 2hrs 53.16mins, another new record. John Day (Bradford on Avon) took the veteran singles record from Peter Lawler (Elmbridge) in a time of 2hrs 57mins. The mixed doubles record was set by Alan Bennett and Jackie Eastwood from Newham.

Other prizes were awarded as follows:

J. Farnese (Maidstone)	Ladies Singles
Dee/Turvey (Royal)	Ladies Doubles
H. Robinson (Independent)	Ladies U16 Singles
O. Morgan (Royal)	Men's U18 Singles
P. Thibault (Marlow)	Men's U16 Singles
Ayres/Lovell (Royal)	Men's U18 Doubles
Dorrell/ (Tonbridge/)	Men's U16 Doubles
Quittenton (Lincoln)	Doubles
Davies/ (Lincoln)	Mixed U18 Doubles
Bailey	Doubles

Prizes were donated by Jubilee Windows of Ashford, Middlesex, who also gave souvenir pennants to all who completed the course. A good day was had by all and both competitors and supporters worked off the Christmas weight gain and made resolutions about a fit and healthy New Year. The organisers would like to thank all those who took part and welcome any enquiries about next year's event.

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100 MILE Canoe Test Saga

The following report was received from Darren James a member of the Norwich Lads Club who took part in last years 100 Mile Canoe Test sponsored by the National Association of Boys Clubs.

"Yes", we thought Arnie was really off his trolley when he asked us if we would like to go on the 100 mile canoe test. Does he think we can canoe all that way? We've got no experience and no training but we did say "Yes" - we must be cracked! Arnie started on at us - get training, daily trips to the Mere, carry your equipment and canoe for at least two hours - two hours? - "Yes two hours". That was thirty six laps of Diss Mere, then he said do it again. He then trusted us to do it again. Then in the rain - it poured, we got soaked and he wouldn't even take our canoes back to the centre. Was he joking when he said plan the menu and equipment - NO - as soon as we said what we wanted he had it typed and ordered. I kept telling myself we would not go, it's all a dream, but Arnie kept on at us, get organised, train, rest, train, make sure you've got all the equipment - Do this! Do that!

When the day came we packed the trailer not only once, but twice, not satisfied, he made us pack it a third time - just who does he think he is? Sleep - we couldn't sleep, we were so excited or scared!! At 4.00am on the 27 May 1986 the nightmare came true, we travelled to Stone on the River Trent and arrived at the "Welcome Hotel". Arnie told us we had to canoe up stream - ough, the current was belting down that there river. We launched with difficulty and we were on our way - "Where to - heaven knows!" Four hours later we were beckoned off the water. My arms ached, my back hurt and I found some muscles I never knew I had. Arnie wouldn't let us rest. Pitch camp, cook a meal, clean the minibus out, wash out the canoes and kit - "Leave off, I'm knackered". Immaculate our camp was, then he let us go to bed.

5.30am I'm tired - for the first time in my life I got up at this hour, washed and had breakfast, good old Arnie and Chris made the tea. Then he told us the good news, only 10 hours canoeing and 38 miles!, two weirs and three rapids. "ME LEAD" - not on your life! Where's Arnie? Please God help me. Arnie was everywhere, one minute out in the lead, next minute at the back - "keep going our team will get there". Joke, Joke!! No he is serious. How come he's got all this energy - WEETABIX again!! No, must be a spare box of Marathons - "NO" Mars left over from London. Every stop have a Mars mate! he was no mate of mine, I capsized getting out and he laughed "You'll learn" - must be his Youth Service motto.

Chris was a bloody marvel, every road bridge he was there, only 30 miles, 26 - 24 - 19 - 10 - 7 miles - here he brought us an icecream, don't get out of your canoes, keep going. I was knackered, again, NUMB BUM - NO ARMS - WET - COLD. I'm giving up with the others, "tell Arnie I'm not going any further". Another Weir, that disappeared into nowhere - a 40ft drop. No only 14ft, yes fourteen feet. Arnies gone 'must be O.K. - heart in mouth, paddles in hand, eyes closed - go!' "Paddle you twit, get out of that stopper". I opened my eyes, waves everywhere - at last I was safe. How many more miles? NONE. Heck we've com-

pleted 38 miles in 10 hours. Arnies buying the first round "Coke", he congratulated us all.

5.30am Monday 29 May, 1900 and 86, Arnie had the strength to pull me out of my sleeping bag "the man's bonkers", why don't his arms ache like ours - next YELL "breakfast" 2 lbs of mueseli - yes eat it, cheerful Arnie, Ya boy gave us the good news only 34 miles, 6 locks, 2 weirs and 7 power stations. After three miles its no good I was definitely going home next check point. I jack in!! Arnie was there again, in front, then behind, get behind me Satan - yes he was - "you can do it". NO DEFINITELY NO - NO - NO. YES, YES, YES, YES, DEFINITELY YES was the firm constant reply.

This was the day for "spot a power station", seven hours later we saw another. No the same one, I was delirious, locks, locks and more locks. Arnie helped us in and out, this time I failed, slipped - he grabbed my hair, pulled me out and then dived in for my canoe and sandwiches, all were rescued from a watery death. Lunch was lovely on a river bank in the sun, it was good to be alive. Next it was Duncan's turn, a freak gust - "man alive a hurricane". It hit us and Duncan was upside down trapped, Arnie and Martin came from nowhere and rescued him before a 6000ft barge sneaked down the river to nearly drown us with the wash. Yes, industrial barges and narrow boats became our next hazard, they appeared from reed beds and swamped you with bow wash. Another lock, we portaged round but those bloody barges came through the lock and swamped us again. Talk about cats with nine lives - Chris is here again, more sandwiches and a cuppa. "Eureka" we've finished the third day.

Day Four. "Dear Rackham's please make my coffin canoe shaped; I would feel more at home. Dear Mum, all is forgiven; your cooking is wonderful. I promise to wash up and make my bed." 5.30am Arnie brought us a cup of tea - he must want something. Only 10 more miles - a world record raft-up with canoes, pack up camp, get all the equipment packed. Tony at the helm. Arnie map reading, we found our last days start point - "I'm packing in". O.K. put your boat back on the trailer - quick second thought. Go for broke, when I get my certificate that will be the proudest moment in my life. I will have learnt a lot about myself, other people, hardship and pain. The last ten miles seemed like a 100, a leaking boat already twice repaired, a cold wet trip, wind blasting in your face, other canoeists all over-taking. No fun.

We eventually arrived in Nottingham, the river looked wonderful. I actually appreciated the trees and the birds. I was so wet, cold and miserable I just wanted to get out of this HELL. We had to wait over an hour to get rafted up for the World Rafting record. Arnie lashed us all together with a rope. The siren went and the record broken. Next the presentation, nobody could wait, the Mayor and all the Dignitaries were at the County Hall waiting. 30 teams had completed including two poor sods who had wrist injuries. Arnie spoke to one, he was deaf! When Duncan represented our group and received the certificates my heart was beating so fast - NOBODY could take away the jubilant feeling that raced through my body, Journey home.

Mum I've made it. Yes all 100 miles. - NORFOLK YAR BOYS.

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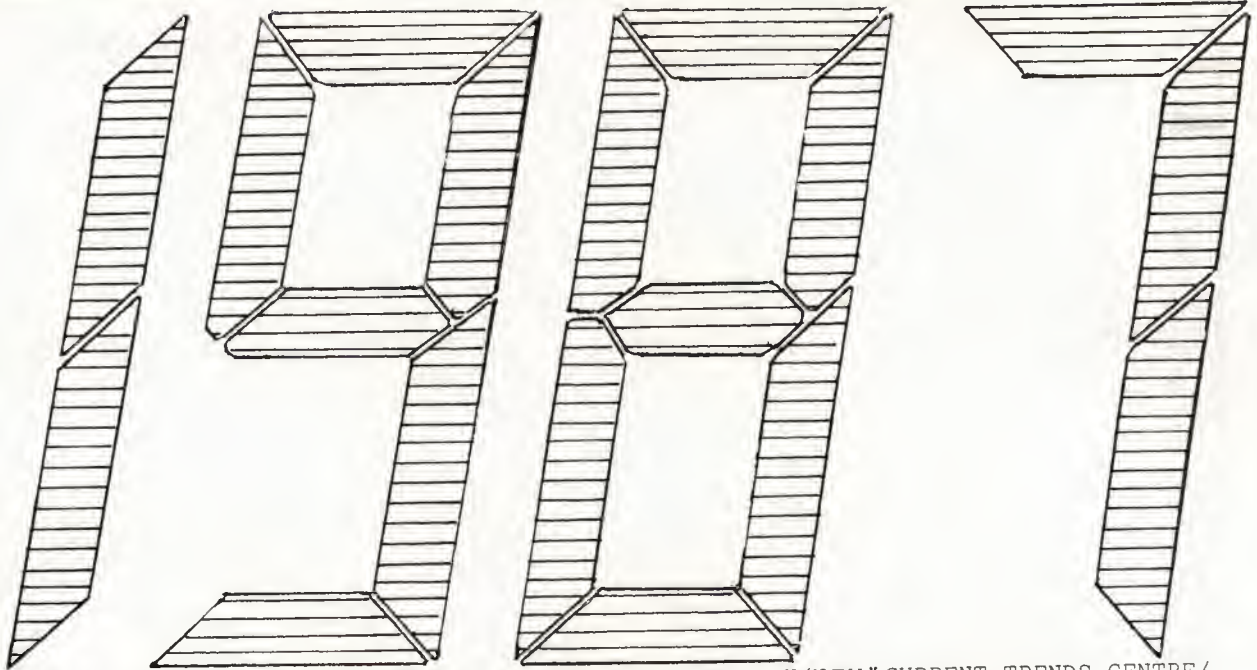
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OBITUARIES

RON MOORE



Ron Moore joined the BCU in the early 1960's and worked with enthusiasm and vigour to promote and develop two important areas of the Union's activities: to provide canoeing opportunities for the disabled, and to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to do this successfully. His involvement in this specialised aspect of the sport led to him running an annual week's canoeing camp for disabled persons, every year since 1976, at which he also undertook the training of Instructors in the provision of canoeing for the disabled.

He provided groups and demonstrations at the International Canoe Exhibition and was a member of the Water Sports Committee of the British Sports Association for the Disabled. He wrote articles for CANOE FOCUS and other canoeing publications and was the author of the chapter on Canoeing for the Disabled in the BCU Canoeing Handbook. In 1981 Ron gained a Churchill Fellowship to study the subject in Minnesota, USA, and in 1982 was Advisor to the British Disabled Canoeing Expedition to France. He was consulted on new equipment being developed by designers and manufacturers of canoeing equipment for disabled individuals.

After becoming an Instructor in 1966, and a Senior Instructor in 1968, Ron took over the post of Regional Coaching Organiser in 1972. He developed a strong and growing Coaching Panel in Devon and Cornwall, himself running Inland and Sea Senior Instructor Training and Assessment Courses, as well as introducing and coaching on many other canoeing occasions. In keeping with his untiring efforts and dedication Ron qualified as a Coach in 1979. He was a positive contributor to the development of the Coaching Scheme, as a member of the National Committee. A founder member of the Port of Plymouth Canoe Association, and their first Chairman, Ron was later President. He was involved in access work prior to regionalisation and in the evolution of the Regional Committee.

In 1983 Ron was presented with the BCU's Award of Honour for his outstanding services to the sport. He loved canoeing, but fitted several other interests into a busy and positive life, which involved tireless effort on behalf of others. Ron impressed everyone who worked with him or who was taught by him, and will be missed by all who knew him. His motivation, enthusiasm and energy were difficult to resist. His legacy was a joy for life, and a joy for canoeing, which will continue to influence and enrich the lives of the many who count it a privilege to have known him.

Sharon Lambert



It is with deep regret that we report the death of Paul McConkey in a car accident on the 16 December '86.

PAUL L. McCONKEY — A tribute to a friend.

Everybody liked Conk, he was big, strong and cuddly with a warm heart. He used to give me bear hugs when we hadn't seen each other for a while. We did a lot of things together at the Club in Stone, paddling on the Trent, Isokinetic sessions, circuits, running and the odd game of squash. He was the best person in the world to train with, he gave off lots of energy, huffing and puffing, cursing and swearing. It was always 100% from the start with Conk, he would set off like a steam train with enormous power and the only way to follow was at a safe distance.

No doubt about it he was a great club man, a hot shot racer in his time and one of the boys. He was also someone who would miss a session to fix up floodlights, light fireworks on bonfire night and throw people in the river at the New Years Day Race. When there was fun and action Conk was there and part of it. We all shared his success at the World Championships in Merano. The gold medal he won in the team event belonged to everyone at Stafford and Stone Canoe Club. Conk was the local hero and a big banner was put up outside his house to welcome the Champion home.

The joy and disbelief of winning a gold medal was certainly the high point of his great paddling career. The early days saw Conk in a Blue Olymp V and more recently he was seen with Bill Berrisford in a C2 submarine which they steered down the course of Cardington and again at Nottingham to help Stafford and Stone become National Club Champions.

Even as he began to lose his edge as an individual competitor he could still hold it together for a good team race. McConkey, Fox and Berwick kept the youngsters at bay for quite a while in the National Team Championships. For winning the Championships, we had a great trophy to share — the Wilkinson Sword and as far as I can remember it always held pride of place on Conks wall — he deserved it. His experience, understanding and feeling for technical

movements also made him a valuable coach to the National Mens Kayak team.

Outside of paddling he was a big kid at heart, often miles away in a dream world of fighter planes, science fiction movies and racing cars. He could spend hours totally immersed playing with windsurfers, computers, cameras, even kids with their own toys. He was very practicable too. It was always Conk who fixed the Isokinetic machines and made the benches and roof-rack uprights. He was like a dad for me in that respect. Have a problem — Conk could fix it. But the quality which stands out most in my mind about Conk was his appreciation of something very simple. I remember we were travelling back from Scotland after an event and we stopped at a service station by a lake. I started to doze off in the Spring sunshine while Conk was watching seagulls, fascinated by the way they swooped and carved through the air, effortlessly using the airstream like a great paddler uses the water. I had never paid any attention to seagulls before that day, and it seems strange now, but I always think of Conk when I see a seagull playing with the wind.

Richard Fox

FRED BRISCOE



Many members will be saddened to learn the death of Fred Briscoe, in Australia on the 29 November. Fred emigrated to Australia with his wife about a year ago, having retired from the Sports Council, where he was for many years liaison officer for the British Canoe Union.

TRAGEDY AT BRIDGE OF OYKEL

by Jerry Tracey

I have a gift for story-writing. The right words normally come to me fairly easily, but not this time. This story, though, must be the best that I have ever written, as it is the story for Stewart.

It is no easier for me to tell now, than it was, when I sat in the police car. How could it have happened on such a glorious day of sunshine and sparkling white-water, amid the splendour of the North Highlands, at the height of a superb trip? How was it that when we came to Bridge of Oykel, Stewart Griffiths died?

Packed like sardines with our camping gear in a white transit bus we had driven to the far North of Scotland. We arrived with the October weather of night snows high up, which melted to rush seawards each daytime. There were ten of us and we had come to seek for new white-water rivers. Kayaks were piled high on the roof of our bus and brave confident signs on its doors proclaimed 'Sutherland River Project' to the world.

Early in the week, we found some magnificent wild mountain rivers in the far north-west and we enjoyed some excellent paddling. On the Tuesday, we shot the Falls of Shin. This was thought to be a first descent and infused all of us with a rising tide of exhilaration and high-spirits. The expedition was going extremely well and the little known rivers of Sutherland were exceeding our wildest expectations.

On Wednesday, 22 October 1986 we were on our way to explore and attempt a river called the Inver, when we chanced to cross the Oykel. The bus was stopped by unanimous demand as we had glimpsed some extremely promising water. Using the irresistible hand of fate, this river drew us slowly but surely into its snare. From each of two bridges and from the bank as we walked upstream, we saw large, fast and continuous rapids. They were challenging, but possible. This was the type of water of which dreams are made. Pure and clear mountain flow foamed and broke in large haystack-waves, as the sun warmed the surrounding white-jewelled hills. Line upon line of translucent waves sparkled and flashed in a myriad of colours in the soft sunlight. Autumn shades gleamed in the valley and offset the impressive ruggedness of the highland ridges all around. Further downstream the river became quiet and wide and could be seen as a shining mirror in the distance, which balanced the grandeur of the mountains with a rippling tranquility. The symmetry of the flow of the

rushing water in the rapids beside us, and the play of light on the dancing waves, completed a scene of powerful and intense beauty. It was the last setting on earth in which I would have expected to be confronted with a disaster, which will live with me always and probably change me forever.

Eight of us decided to enter the water that day, about a mile further upstream where the river flowed flat but fast. We were joyful and eager for excitement in rapids which we had seen to be within our capabilities. All of us were highly skilled paddlers of great experience. My wife and son returned to the two bridges to photograph us as we came past. Expecting large and continuous white-water, we organised ourselves into a 'buddy-system' of close pairs. We knew that there was a short section which we had not surveyed, but after each bend where we expected to meet possible hazards, we found nothing of consequence.

The rough-water which had been so long in coming arrived at last and we all made the same mistake. Each pair of us, in succession, entered what we thought was the start of the rapids which we have studied so closely. By the time that we saw the monstrous waterfall on the sharp bend, we were already committed and it was too late. We were not organised for an attempt on a fall; there were no catch boats or rescue-line throwers in position and we found ourselves all on the way down at once. In a split second on this descent which had seemed so promising, the dream trip turned into a nightmare of chaos.

When we saw Stewart in difficulties, all of us did everything that possibly could be done to rescue him. Several people put their own lives at risk in the process, but

alas, it was all to no avail. When Stewart was finally pulled from the river, resuscitation was attempted and kept up in relays, but by then it was already too late.

There was first shock and disbelief and then the 'What-ifs?' started, with each bitter question in my mind being always inevitable followed by another. In a numbed trance, we set about doing all of those things which had to be done and we came to the long and silent journey home with each of us lost in the private turmoil of our own thoughts. There next followed attempts to pick up the threads of life, with all normal concerns of work and business seeming futile and trivial in comparison with what had happened at Bridge of Oykel.

Despite all, certain memories of the trip shine through the black gloom, like the tiny glowing embers that remain when a cheery campfire is suddenly doused with water. There was the stag which stood for a few seconds, proud and defiant in the moonlight only yards from us, before ambling slowly away from the narrow road. There was the superb lighting and scenery in the wilds of the far north-west and the icy clarity and crystal brilliance of 'the rivers at the end of the universe', near Cape Wrath. There was the soaring exhilaration and the supreme elation of Stewart's last day, when we became the first to shoot the Falls of Shin. There was the tremendous group identity and cheerful camaraderie of Stewart's last night, when we used the map printed on the drinks-table in the pub to reminisce and plan.

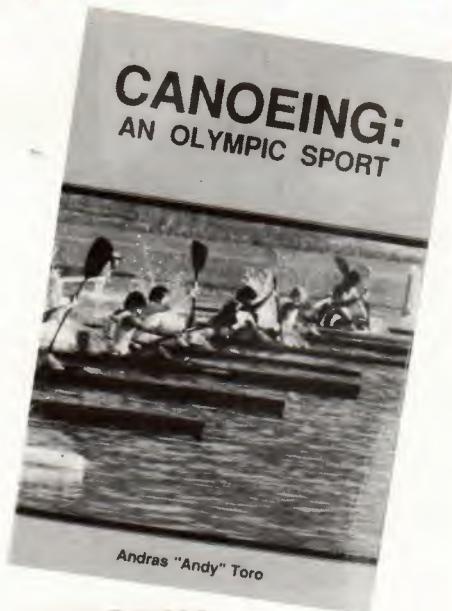
There are, of course, also memories of Stewart himself. He was extremely amiable and was very well-liked. Always cheerful, he possessed a witty sense of humour and he could somehow find fun in any situation, no matter how adverse the circumstances, without ever using his wit at anyone else's expense. He also held depths of thought and of creativity at which I, at least, can only guess, since I was never given the chance to know him outside of the narrow context of canoeing. Stewart will be very sadly missed by his family, his many friends, and by all who knew him.

Finally, I serve notice to the River Oykel. Someday soon we shall return. We will launch below the fall and run the rapids that we had intended to do, but which we never reached. At Bridge of Oykel there lies a magnificent stretch of white-water and its trap is now known. On a day when the river is once again running high, we will be back to descent those rapids. We will paddle the Oykel for Stewart.



Stewart Griffiths shoots the Falls of Shin, on the day before his death.

Book Review



CANOEING: AN OLYMPIC SPORT

by Andy Toro

Available from BCU Supplies at £16.50 (members) and £18.50 (non members), both prices inclusive of postage and packing.

Reviewed by Ron Emes

The demand from enthusiastic students, committed trainers and coaches, and dedicated practitioners of that oldest and noblest of all canoeing skills, Olympic Racing, for more information regarding their chosen discipline, is about to be satisfied.

Flat water aficionados have awaited, possibly since the time of those first regattas on the River Thames in the early nineteenth century, an authoritative treatise that advises, explains, and demonstrates, in clear, concise and simple terms, what their sport is all about. With the publication of 'Canoeing: An Olympic Sport' by Andy Toro, many of the previously justifiable complaints, that books are never written about racing canoeing, and on those rare occasions when they are, never in English, can now be dismissed. The only two previous publications with a sufficient reputation to qualify for comparison with this new book. Ivan Granek's 'Paddling Canoes and Kayaks' (1966), and Franz Csonka's 'Canoeing Training for Children and Young People' (1976), are both long since out of print. 'Canoeing: An Olympic Sport' does not merely fill the gap that the non-availability of these two publications has left, for it is more than just another book about canoeing. It is a vast compendium of technical data, scientific principles, and streetwise wisdom, concentrated into some 400 pages of print, and totally dedicated to racing canoeing. It brings together, for the first time, accumulated knowledge, gathered from a vast range of sources and personal experience, into one volume.

There are specialised chapters on the canoe and the kayak, and the individual skills associated with paddling these craft; on biomechanics; hydro dynamics, physiology; psychology; kinesiology; meas-

urement and instrumentation; the application of training methods and techniques; history and organisation of canoeing and racing strategies.

The Appendices, some 150 pages long, will provide the canoeing statistician with a reference source previously never available. Anyone who aspires to paddle, teach, or coach the skills of propelling canoes or kayaks as quickly as possible between two points, and in a straight line, must buy this book. At this price it is the bargain of the century.

ANDY TORO

Andy Toro, the Author, is currently the General Secretary of the United States Olympic Committee, a member of the International Canoe Federation Board of Management, and an Olympic Bronze Medallist in the C2 1000m event, at the 1960 Rome Olympic Games. As a regular member of the Hungarian team in the early 1960s, he defected, immediately following the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games, to the United States. He is undoubtedly amongst the most knowledgeable and experienced of racing canoeing authorities in the world today, and it would be extremely difficult to identify any other author within the international canoeing community who has both the technical understanding and the respect that Andy Toro enjoys – qualifications which are a necessary and essential part of the successful writer's tools of trade.

WHITE WATER TRIPS

(for Kayakers, Canoeists and Rafters in British Columbia)

by Betty Pratt-Johnson

Published in 1986 by Adventure/Pacific Press

Available from Adventure Publishing Ltd, PO Box 46119, Station G, VANCOUVER BC V6R 4G9 at Canadian \$21.45 inclusive of postage.

Reviewed by Mike Sunderland

Having spent endless hours exploring and running rivers in British Columbia, it was a joy reading through this guide book relishing the thought of perhaps one day I might return to Canada to enjoy some of the best white water the world has to offer.

This book is the second in a planned series of five guide books, covering 157 White Water trips in British Columbia (Canada) and the State of Washington (USA). The author, Betty Pratt-Johnson, is a professional Outdoor Sports writer with an impressive track record of publications. She is a paddler of experience – enthusiastic, vibrant and full of energy. After meeting this young enthusiast I found it hard to believe that she was a mature lady with over 50 years of life behind her.

In the Introduction/Disclaimer the author states that the purpose of the guide book is "... to entertain, encourage and entice". It is a good description that reflects the spirit of the book. The text is amazingly comprehensive and I know for a fact that all the details are from first hand paddling experience of the author and do check out accurately with my own paddling knowledge of the rivers.

26 rivers are featured (37 different runs) and one tidal surf area. The guide covers "Greater Vancouver through Whistler,

Okanagon and Thompson River Regions". None are more than a days drive away from Vancouver. Names such as the Cheakamus River, the Capilano, the Nahatlatch, the Chilliwack, the Clearwater and the Thompson are all to be found.

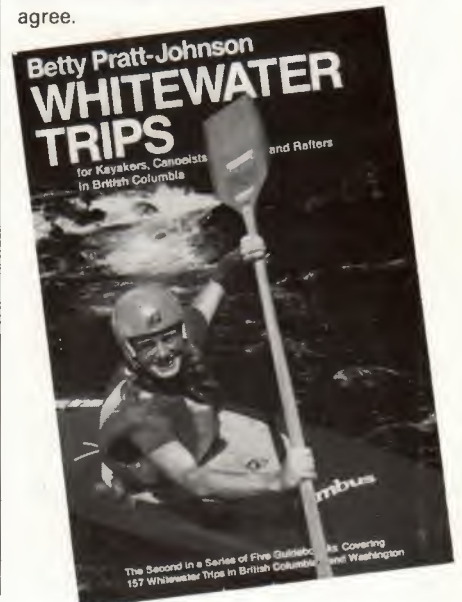
Each run is dealt with under the same headings. Those useful for quick reference are: *Who it is suitable for* (novice, intermediate and expert kayakers, canoeists and rafters); *Water to expect* (grades 1-6 plus a brief but informative description); *Length of run* (in kilometers and miles plus hours); *Shuttle one way* (again, distance and time); *Season* (details of what to expect at different times of the year); *River Profile* (bar graphs showing seasonal flow in cubic metres and feet per second) and *Maps* (of each river – black, white and grey, drawn to scale and very clearly marked with names but not grades.

Those details that give a complete picture of what to expect and allows the paddler to plan ahead with confidence, helping to maximise time and enjoyment on the water are included under the following headings: *Why Go*; *Topographic Map* (references to mainly 1:25000 and 1:50000 maps); *Facilities to be found in the area* (camp sites, toilets, shops, hot springs, picnic sites etc); *Guidelines to the river runs* (giving detailed descriptions in a colourful North American style and reference to grades 1-6) and *Access to take-outs and put-ins*.

An interesting glossary of river running terms (helps bridge the language barrier) at the back of the book, together with a thoughtfully planned index makes using the guide easy for all interested parties. One minor disappointment is the quality and relevance of the black and white photographs that illustrate the book. The only coloured photograph is to be found on the front cover, an unusual choice for such a professional book.

An added bonus to the purchaser of every guide is the free poster/roadmap, again black and white, full of useful information for any paddler planning a trip to British Columbia.

Finally to sum up, this is a must for any paddler that may have been and for those who are aspiring to explore the white paradise of British Columbia, Canada. You will be "... entertained, encouraged and enticed ...". Quote "... among the best I've seen ..." The Midwest Book Review – and I agree.



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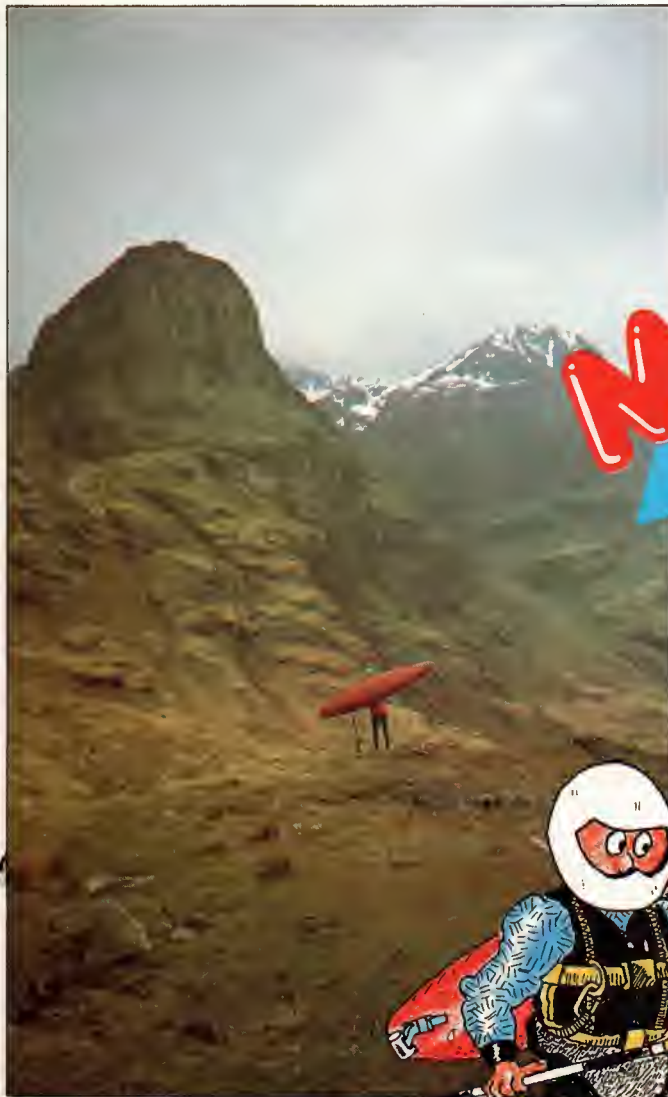
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Width: 66 cms	



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FEATURES

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