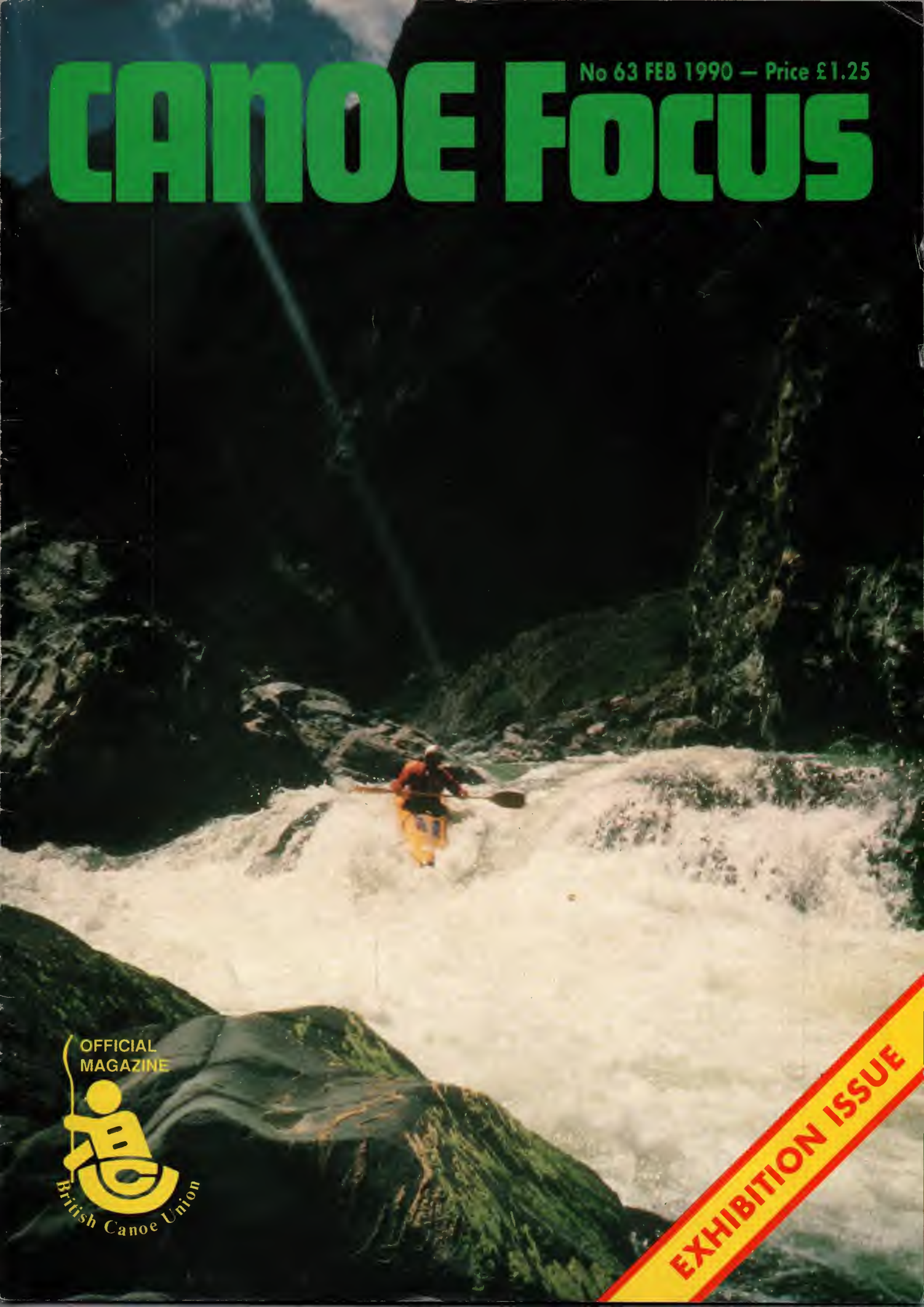


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Canoe Focus is the official magazine of the
British Canoe Union.

ISBN 0953-010X

T J Bailey	Director
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Next Issue 10 April 1990
Latest Copy Date 24 February 1990

Printed by Leicester Printers,
164 Barkby Rd, Leicester LE4 7LF

BCU Headquarters as above for all enquiries except:

Supplies at BCU, The Elms,
National Watersports Centre, Adbolton Lane,
Nottingham NG12 2LU. Tel (0602) 817412.
Assistant Directors of Coaching,
address as above, tel (0602) 455423

Front Cover

Photograph by Fred Wondre - The Colca
Canyon, Peru, see article on page 40

Subscription Rates

UK inland £12.50, overseas £14.50 for ten issues.

Supplied free to BCU members.

Advertising rates and data

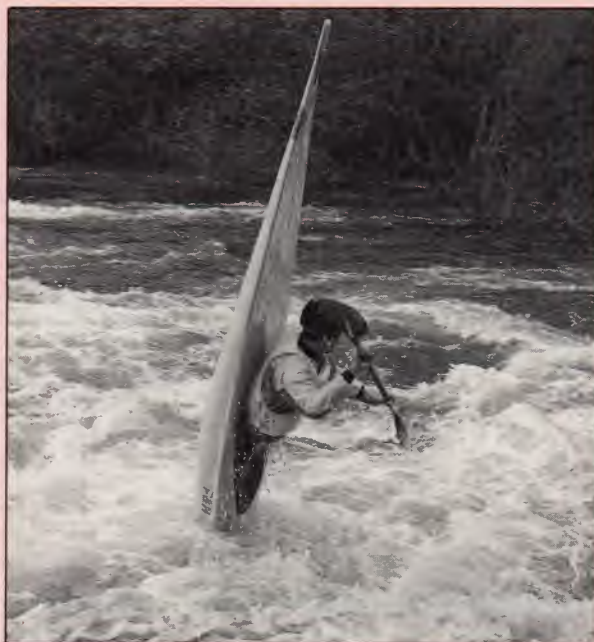
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'Canoeist' is an independent monthly magazine available on subscription from:
4, Sinodun Row, Appleford,
Oxon OX14 4PE

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*On the Dee;
WCA Tour
November 1989,
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Comment



by *BCU Director Trevor Bailey*

Two years ago I wrote in this column about the Mike Jones Rally. I had just attended my first Rally, and had had a really enjoyable week-end. I have just attended my third rally, and this time actually managed to do some paddling. Other commitments meant I could only go on the Sunday, and I had planned a trip from Cynwyd to Horseshoe Falls, a distance of about 13 miles.

The trip was ideal for me, about the right level of difficulty and getting more testing as we neared the finish. I must admit I was tempted to carry on to the Town, but in the end decided to play safe and went via the canal. As a result of this paddle, I have raised £1000 for the Access Fund, generously donated by a keen canoeist who wishes to remain anonymous. If you wish to send further donations to help the Access Committee in their work please send them to me at H.Q.

Having felt rather proud of my success, and having had a really pleasant paddle, I was surprised to hear complaints made about the weekend. A fairly typical comment was "It seems that the old-fashioned ideas of discipline and self control are just that - old fashioned. You should look before breaking in to make sure you don't obstruct anyone coming down, and make sure you have somewhere to go to."

The limited amount of Access to water invariably puts a strain on the water that we have, and the problems encountered by the writer of the above quote are bound to occur. In trying to promote canoeing as the sport for the nineties perhaps we should all bear in mind his comment regarding discipline and self control. Incidentally, the BCU Touring Committee have organised a full programme of events for 1990, on all grades of water - with no access problems, and fewer crowds than the MJW - so how about supporting a few of these during the year. The Touring Programme is published in the BCU Yearbook, enclosed with this mailing.

Before leaving this point may I again thank, on behalf of the many hundreds of you who had such an enjoyable time, the organisers of the weekend for the excellent event.

At the time of writing the final preparations are underway for the move

of H.Q to Holme Pierrepont. The move has been slightly delayed, but hopefully by the time you read this we will have successfully settled in to the new premises. Details of the new address and telephone numbers are enclosed with this magazine.

The move to Holme Pierrepont underlines the importance of the National Watersports Centre to the Union. With the opening of the Slalom course many of our elite paddlers are now based in or around Nottingham, and the two full-time National coaches are based there. There is still work to be undertaken to make it into the Centre of Excellence that we envisage, but we must be very satisfied at the progress made so far. Future developments will hopefully include the provision of event control facilities for the slalom course, and the provision of floodlights. We would also hope to be in a position to start offering BCU courses at the centre in the near future, both for basic instruction and for more advanced courses such as Instructor and Proficiency.

Also in this issue, are details of the Canoe Exhibition, to be held at Crystal Palace 17/18th February. This is the ideal opportunity to see, in one location, all aspects of canoeing and I look forward to seeing many of you there. As I have said on previous occasions I am always pleased to hear the view of members, so if you come to the Exhibition and have any comments about the union I will be delighted to have a chat with you.

You will also receive with this copy of Focus details of the AGM, to be held on 10th March. Like many organisations, the attendance at most of our AGM's is low. We could be complacent and say that indicates that members think we are doing everything right. However, it is your chance to both air your views and to meet your policy makers, the members of council. The move to Nottingham, the inclusion of Slalom in the 1992 Olympics, the detailed Touring Development Plan, and the recent creation of the National Rivers Authority are just a few of the factors which means that the 1990's is guaranteed to be both exciting and challenging to the Union. You can help determine the direction we go by coming to the AGM and making your views known.

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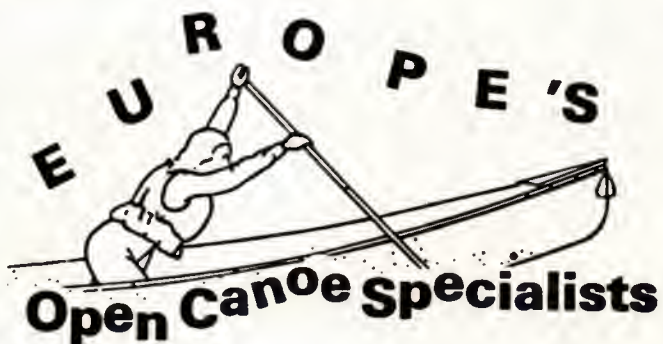
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Noticeboard

BCU SEA TOURING AND COACHING CONFERENCE

This year's conference was held at Plas-y-Brenin in North Wales over the weekend 7-8 October. Eighty delegates attended with many more coming on a daily basis.

A wide and varied programme was enjoyed by all. Derek Hutchinson gave an excellent and amusing demonstration of rolling in the pool while mentioning at the same time that he had just finished 'an excellent little book on the subject - price £14.95 - see me afterwards!' Nigel Foster and Howard Jeffs ran a practical session on rescues at sea including innovations for self rescue of double sea kayaks. Mike Osbourne has recently taken over as the Canoeing Liaison Officer for HM Coastguards and he brought us all up to date with recent changes. Dave Taylor advised us about helicopter rescues illustrated with slides. As an indirect result of the Deal tragedy, a practical demonstration was not possible. Paul Newman talked about signalling devices - an amusing session provoking much discussion about budgie mirrors. Comdr. Chris Furse gave an illustrated talk about expeditioning in Antarctica and using canoes as a means of transport for exploration. Certainly a different approach to keep the purists on their toes. On Sunday morning Brian Greenaway started the day off with recent advances in paddle design and paddling style. Peter Lamont talked about narrow blades and also about using kites to aid progress. This was supported by Keith Stewart who designs kites and he had brought along his most recent inflatable model. The AGM of the BCU Coaching Scheme was held on Sunday afternoon.

Positive measures had been incorporated to encourage family participation. A creche was organised and thirteen children enjoyed skiing, a forest walk and of course, canoeing. Children were able to stay free of charge at the centre. This concept was most successful and hopefully will be repeated in future years.

Plas-y-Brenin did us proud. The facilities including the new lecture room were excellent and the catering was out of this world. Many thanks to all concerned especially all the Guest Speakers.



The new lecture room at Plas-y-Brenin. Chris Bonington (heard of him?) unveils a plaque.



Paddlers at the first annual Historic Canoe and Kayak Rally, on Lake Windermere 30 September/1 October 1989. A variety of craft attended including two PBK double kayaks, a number of wood and canvas singles a pre-war German single folding kayak, and a 1907 open canoe - wooden with wicker seats. Details of the 1990 event will be announced in due course.

NORFOLK AU PRINTEMPS

The Canoe-Camping Club (not so Distant Relations I believe) are organising a meet on the Norfolk Broads over the whole of the Easter weekend.

The Broads, formed in the early centuries by industrious peat diggers, flooded over the years to form a large open expanse of water interconnected by the rivers Thume, Ant and Bure. Most are open to navigation whilst a few are a haven to wild life as closed reserves, home to Bittern, Heron, Reed Bunting and the occasional otter. Contingents are expected from Belgium and Holland and it promises to be an extremely well run event, with a tour and base camping trips available. The canoeing is safe (no monster barges this early in the year) the wildlife abounds and the scenery is peaceful and picturesque. So if you fancy having a go at something a bit different this year, contact P Clark, Herts and East Anglia Group, 8 Wiltshire Avenue, Hornchurch, Essex RM11 3DX for details (SAE please).

EXERCISE SIAMESE DIAMOND

Six soldiers based with the 7th Armoured Brigade Signal Squadron at Soltau near Hamburg in West Germany have canoed down the River Wang in Thailand in 25 stone native dug-outs.

The conditions for the marathon were described as "appalling". During the day the temperature hovered around the 38°C mark - in the shade, and around 30°C at night! It took some time for the team to master the handling of their new canoes as they dug huge circles along the river - a far cry from the team's Master Pyranha canoes they trained in on the River Aller back in West Germany.

A total of 260 miles were canoed in 19

days through uninhabited, inhospitable terrain, in the main, using primitive equipment.

PADDLERS BEWARE

South West Water have added an anti-scour lip to Deam Weir at Torrington on the River Torridge, North Devon. The lip is constructed from boulders and rough concrete: this weir is now DANGEROUS and should be treated with extreme caution. John Hilton, the Local Access Officer has information and can be contacted on Bideford 471577.

SPOT THE PADDLER COMPETITION

A number of readers correctly identified the three paddlers pictured in December's Focus. For those of you still scratching your heads, they were:

1. Mark Delaney
2. Shaun Baker
3. Myriam Jerusalem

The lucky winners were Jo Dutton of Milton Keynes, Robert Soothill of Nottingham and D Mackay of Mid-Lothian, and pairs of NO LIMITS Jumpin' Jack Splash shorts are now winging their way to them. No prizes for guessing the identity of the lady in the shorts, who was of course, Lara Tipper.

A small white water club in Prague, Czechoslovakia is keen to make contacts with similar groups in Britain. As well as their own rivers, the group have paddled in the Alps, Karpats and Soviet Al-tai mountains. Contact J Vohradsky, Skabova 3054, 10600 Prague 10, Czechoslovakia.

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I don't know about anyone else, but the mental image I had of an outdoor centre was a roughie, toughie spartan establishment with cold lino on the floor, up at 6am for a six mile jog and a quick dip in the tarn before breakfast - porridge you understand! And canoeing in November? - Brrrrr

So it was with considerable trepidation that I arrived at "Plas y Brenin", picturesquely situated in the Snowdonia countryside - so it says in the brochure - on a cold wet November night, it could just as easily be the gates of hell. To be greeted with, SURPRISE!, comfort! carpets on the floor, downies on the beds, a single room, and the people seem extremely friendly. Best surprise of all was the bar, of which more later.

The day at Plas y Brenin starts at 7.30am with a bell! Not the best start to a day for slothful types like me, but breakfast is well worth suffering the rude awakening for. Not just breakfast, but all the meals were extremely good, and with the huge quantities provided, there's absolutely no danger of going hungry.

Breakfast over, the serious part of the day begins, which, in our case consisted of descents of some of the classic rivers of North Wales. The course I had enrolled on was called "Wild Water" which sounded, lets say, exciting. To my relief this turned out to be a mixed ability group, some of us had done quite a bit and some had done, well, not quite so much. The actual venues vary, according to water levels; we were unfortunate (or maybe fortunate) in having an exceptionally dry week but we were still able to get five good days paddling - one on the Llugwy, two on the Conway and two on the Dee. Because this is an intermediate level course, the rivers tend to be graded 3 - 4, although this depends on the ability of each group - I didn't ask where the advanced level courses paddled! As well as providing instruction and guiding us down the rivers, the instructors took care to give us all the access information you would need for an independent trip, and were also mines of information on all the other rivers in Wales.

The Conway turned out to be, basically, a mountain stream, rocky and technical with lots of waterfalls and narrow tricky bits in beautiful gorge like scenery if you could find the time to admire it. We paddled two different stretches, I can't pronounce the names so lets call them the hard bit and the not so hard bit - (there's also the even harder bit called the Fairy Glen, which we didn't paddle. We had a look down it and everyone said, "I'm not going down that!") Apart from a fallen tree which seemed ideally placed to decapitate a passing canoeist, the not so hard bit was easily conquered by our star studded team. On the hard bit, we had to portage two rapids (Grade 5), after which everyone understood why the people who shot the rapids preferred this to carrying their boats round them. There is an access agreement on the Conway, which means anyone can go on between October and January and Phil Blain of the Towers OPC, Capel Curig will give details of dates and where to get on and off.

The Dee was—the Dee, everyone who's been on a Mike Jones weekend (and who

ARE WE REALLY GOING OVER THAT ??? Or, the Editor Visits Plas Y Brenin.



The Conway - narrow and technical. Photographs by Pete Midwood.



hasn't) knows and loves the Serpents Tail, the Tombstones, the Town Falls etc,etc. So I won't go on about them. What was good about the Dee days was being able to play on the Serpents Tail without wrestling for space with 50 boats, 20 throwlines and 100 drowning novices! Unfortunately, access to the Dee is restricted. Attending a Plas y Brenin course is one way of getting on to this excellent stretch of water without participating in competitions or braving the crowds at one of the open touring weekends held every year.

Suitably refreshed after the day's activities, everyone heads back to base for tea and cake. For those with extra energy, there's usually an early evening pool session to perfect one's fancy rolling techniques, after which its time for dinner and perhaps a little liquid refreshment? In spite of the huge quantities of food consumed at dinner, few can resist the temptation of a pint of Murphy's in Plas y Brenin's very own bar. Here you can rub shoulders with famous mountaineers and canoeists, read well known outdoor magazines and relive the more exciting moments of the day's adventures with your fellow course members - this is the time to think of convincing excuses for failing to roll on the Serpents Tail - "it was so easy I fell

asleep" etc.

But seriously....I'd thoroughly recommend a week at Plas y Brenin. On my course, everyone learnt something, some people learnt a great deal and everyone without exception had a marvellous time. It would be equally worthwhile whether you want to improve your personal skill level, find out about the local water or just spend an enjoyable holiday with like minded people in a beautiful part of the world.

Plas y Brenin is a Sports Council Centre, dedicated to raising standards in outdoor sport and promoting the 'Sport for All' Policy. The courses are highly subsidised and the Centre tries to provide the best quality in all aspects of provision - safety, instruction, equipment and facilities. The Local Community is encouraged to use the facilities which the Centre provides on a non-residential basis, attend the lectures and visit the bar. Advice, information and a weather forecast are always freely available to the casual visitor. The Wild Water Course costs £199 for 5 days canoeing with 5 nights accomodation(full board) and runs through the winter months.



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The British Association of Canoe Traders was formerly the B.C.M.A.

Trade News

COLA EXHIBITION '89

Amongst the tents, cag, bags, boots and sleeping bags at the 1989 Camping and Outdoor Leisure Exhibition were many of the better known names in canoeing equipment manufacture eg Wildwater, Gaybo, MI, Palm, Splashsport, AC, Pyranha, Coleman, Gul, and Crewsaver

The three day exhibition is held every November in Harrogate and has become one of the major events in the outdoor pursuits calendar. Entrance passes are strictly Trade or Press only and unlike that other well known event closer to home, the 4000 odd visitors come to view not to buy: the emphasis is definitely on business as well as pleasure.

Wild water (Chris Hawkesworth Ltd) were displaying a number of items including Richard Fox (a buoyancy aid perhaps?) and Ron Fawcett - I thought he was a rock climber - while Chris Hawkesworth himself presided over the telly watching area, alias Chrisfilm.

On to the Gaybo stand, which compared to their hanger-like space at that other event seemed positively conservative - plenty of boats none the less, all very plastic looking, even the sea kayak version (Chinook) and the slalom (Reflex) model.

Plastic was also much in evidence on the Pyranha Stand, including the new Mountain Bat with safety cage - don't ask the price! Most oohs and aahs here, however, were reserved for the open canoe with sail - namely the Traveller 480, which features a built in mast foot where a windsurfer type sailing rig which Pyranha also supply) can be installed. Green canoes are only one aspect of Coleman's business empire I found out. They also make stoves, lanterns (unleaded petrol by the way) hammocks and torches, to name but a few. Another illusion shattered, the canoes also come in black, red and blue.

Patagonia, not a famous name in canoeing circles but well known for their ski-wear are now showing interest in the canoeing market with their 1990 range, including a sea canoeing cag (Scanorak) and fleece paddling top. Their gear had interesting features like a hood (on the scanorak), mesh pockets (don't trap the water) and 3/4 length sleeves on the inner garments. The material used in the Scanorak is claimed to repel even salt water. Patagonia's gear has a good reputation for style and design so it will be interesting to hear how their paddling tops make out.

We are now in the age of the inflatable canoe apparently and in line with this latest craze Zodiac were displaying the complete Sevytor range. These oversized lilos retail from £100 to £1200 in price and the tougher ones will see you safely down the Grand Canyon.

YAK MOVES

YAK has joined its sister company Playboater in Slough. YAK, can now be contacted at Playboater, Unit 4, The Haymill Centre, 112 Burnham Lane, Slough, Berks SL1 6LZ. Telephone/Fax (0628) 667507.

CANADIAN WILDERNESS HOLIDAYS

Accessible Isolation holidays are offering a range of wilderness trips in Canada, including some interesting looking canoeing ones. Orca watching around Vancouver Island, a 10-day circuit of the Bowron Lakes, a renowned wildlife sanctuary and an 8-day descent of the white water Sturgeon River, Ontario - with 79 sets of rapids apparently! The brochure makes inspiring reading and is available from Alistair McLean on (0730) 812535.

SLALOM SPORTS GO EAST

Slalom sports' canoe polo paddles are going International. Already suppliers to the lucrative German market they have recently won an order to supply Diamond paddles to the Seychelles. As the name suggests, the paddle blades have a slightly unusual shape:

Specially designed for polo by GB International David Brown the manufacturers claim that the 'Diamond' enables much greater acceleration power.

SURFING IN FRANCE

There is a surf ski school and hire business, called SKI WAVE at La Terriere beach, La Trench sur Mer in the Vendee. So if you fancy trying a ski head for the 'ski wave' surf shack. They use quality Tsunami skis and lessons can be arranged if needed.

They are also planning courses in Portugal and Morocco plus a 'Festival of Surf Skis' at La Tranch this winter and spring.

PERTEX FROM PENNINE

Pennine Outdoor, at Holmbridge Yorkshire, specialist suppliers of outdoor fabrics has recently been appointed sole official supplier of cut lengths of PERTEX 4 by Perseverance Mills Ltd.

Pertex 4 is used by manufacturers of sleeping bags, clothing and tents, and is claimed to be extremely quick drying, abrasion resistant, windproof and comfortable to wear



The Band, "America's hottest selling sports accessory" is now available in the UK. The highly adjustable, velcro backed webbing watchband can be worn either over or under the sleeve. It is available in three sizes, a multitude of colours and fits most watches.



The Paradise Rope Knife. A hand held electric unit with heated blade, designed for cutting nylon, polypropylene and other synthetic ropes. The cut ends are heat bonded to prevent fraying. The manufacturers claim that the knife takes only 5 seconds to reach operating temperature. Available from Windsurfing UK, Waterloo Road, Bideford-on-Avon Warwickshire B50 4JH.



CROCODILE MILE II (The

Like all good adventures on the big screen there has to be a sequel. Four years ago Guy Reeve and I had been paddling down the Zambezi, 'Innocently in search of pleasure, naively heading into total danger'. That little 'epic' has been retold many times. The whole gist of it being an encounter with scores of crocodiles leaping into the water ahead of us doing back flips and somersaults and sneaking up behind us and shouting 'Boo!' before disappearing into the inky blackness of the Zambezi.

An experience of that nature would surely be enough to deter any one from returning and it was only after several months of rehabilitation that I overcame my phobia of crocodiles and ceased to jump at the merest ripple in the water even when I was paddling on the Thames. The Zambezi however has attributes that outweigh the risk of crocodile attack and with the passing of the years the rough edges of my memory had been toned down to the mellow smoothness of romantic visions of pleasurable paddling amongst the wildlife of Africa. When the nightmares eventually stopped I began to foolishly consider a return journey.

This time there would be nine of us to share the fear but my own secret plan would be to opt out of the 'crocodile mile' section and volunteer to do the shuttle. The great thing about preconceived plans is that they never work.

The organisation for the trip progressed over several months, Zambian Airways agreed to take the kayakers and McVities 'Hobnobs' agreed to underwrite the costs with a lump sum of financial sponsorship and a dozen boxes of biscuits. To further complicate the details we had been selected for the Mick Burke Award competition to make a film about the digestive habits of crocodiles and the

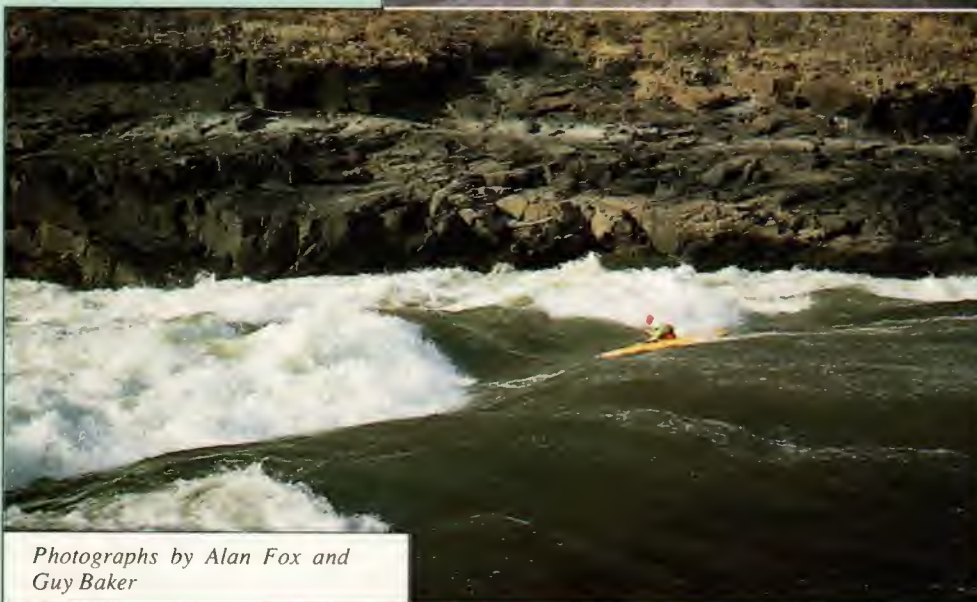
impact of polyethylene upon their diets. So as not to alarm the team members, I briefed them fully with details of the trip, how crocodiles can swim faster than you can paddle, how they can outrun you on land and how the closing force of their jaws is roughly equal to 49 times their body weight. I almost forgot in my enthusiasm, that they can snap a bird in flight with their lightning reactions. Other details about the trip; dates of departure, gear lists etc, seemed unimportant in comparison to these facts.

McVities Hobnobs, wanting to capitalise on the publicity of their sponsorship packed us off to Windsor Safari park for a first hand experience of African Wildlife. Even I wasn't fooled by the life size plastic animals animated by concealed wires but it was a useful lesson in animal recognition; for out in the wilds of the African bush it is essential to know the difference between an elephant and a crocodile or a giraffe and a hippo. Knowledge of this type could well save your life!

A few days later we were in Africa, sitting below the Victoria Falls, looking into the great chasm into which the river drops. It is a sight nothing short of spectacular and it felt good to be back - so far! Downstream of the falls lies 150 km of crocodile infested gorges; I realised then that I had forgotten to mention the rapids to the rest of the team. I looked around at them, their minds obviously elsewhere as they nervously fingered their own personal armories, mini flares, blowpipe missiles, machetes and pea shooters.

The first 10 km of river from below the Victoria Falls contains ten major rapids, these were so awesome that even the crocodiles wouldn't venture this far up river; even being swept off line into the most monstrous hole you had ever seen seemed trivial compared to

'Smoke and Thunder River' Expedition wish to thank their sponsors McVities 'Hobnobs', Pyranha, Wildwater, HF KayakSport, YAK, Zambian airlines, SOBEK, Lamington Travel, Zambian and Zimbabwean Tourist Boards and everyone else who helped make this a successful trip.



Photographs by Alan Fox and Guy Baker

kayakers strike back!) by Alan Fox.



the knowledge that there were no crocs here.

On the third day we were joined by a Sobek raft, partly as support for the kayakers but also to carry the 'live bait' for the crocodiles; it was a shame that Paula, Anne and Louise had failed to read the small print in their contracts.

The helmsman for the raft was Elias Sakala, a Zambian, who had a limitless supply of crocodile stories to fire the enthusiasm as well as a limitless thirst for gin and when that ran out a thirst for whisky. Elias was a big hit with the girls although the psychology behind his encouragement didn't always have the desired effect. At the top of each rapid he'd peer ahead, reach for his cigarettes, scrabble around for a light, check that the gin bottle was safely lashed on and then announce to the girls ... "this one looks bad" or "this looks real bad" or more simply "oh shit!". The anxiety training had paid off - the expressions on the girls' faces looked almost real!

Elias, at the end of the day was pretty cool; he made the 'bad' ones look easy, the 'real bad' ones look vaguely do-able and in the case of 'oh shit' ones there were no mistakes: just clean, calculated and precision rafting. Not to be out done by the kayakers he was running rapids that he'd have had to portage with a commercial trip.

At Chibongo Falls we all portaged, for at the high river levels we were currently experiencing there were no sneak routes as I'd hoped. At this point on the Zambezi work is beginning on a new dam. At five to six hundred feet high this could well back up the water to the very foot of the Victoria Falls, therefore drowning the most spectacular part of the Zambezi. One could sense the blood stained krugerands of South Africa having a part in this monstrous

scheme.

Beyond Chibongo Falls we enter the realms of Crocodile Mile, with those friendly eyes and snouts smiling at us in the knowledge that they could be our 'worst nightmare'. Since arriving in Zambia we had been given other snippets of advice on how to deal with croc' attacks, one was 'don't go near the water'(pretty sound advice!), another advised you to splash and make as much noise as possible when swimming in crocodile infested waters, although why you would want to swim there in the first place is a mystery to me. Other advice was to stick your fingers in their nostrils which will let the water in and drown them or more simply poke their eyes out. Despite all this wonderful advice I'd never met anyone with first hand experience of surviving a croc attack....

'Croc alley' as the rafters prefer to call it is a calmish and peaceful stretch of river. The gorges have mellowed out into steep valley sides with baboons leaping around in the trees and the occasional fish eagle circling on the thermals. On the banks are the crocodiles. Sliding into the water as you approach them...

What happened next and the tory of how Anne nearly ran a croc over in her kayak would be better told in the pub, needless to say, whether you think this is a tall story or not is irrelevant, compared to the proposed damming of the Batoka Gorge. This would destroy Africa's greatest natural wonder as well as the 'the most spectacular white water run in the world'.

The full story of the "Smoke and Thunder River Expedition" will be told by Alan Fox at the Canoe Exhibition on 17 - 18th February - see lecture programme



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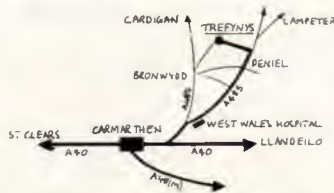
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High Jinks at Low Water

BY JOHN BULL

COMMITTEE NEWS

The BCU Council of Management have made a major contribution to the implementation of the Touring Development Plan with a grant for 1990 of £3000. This is the largest grant ever made to touring and demonstrates the commitment of the Council to encouraging recreational canoeing. This will be sure to support some new events, to enhance information services and increase publicity (particularly to reach non-members).

Members could now play a major part in helping the development of touring and recreation within the BCU by encouraging non-members to attend events and join the BCU as Basic members. New members means more money to the regions and it is there that touring is being developed. Also more practical support for Regional Touring Officers from recreational members would ensure that future programmes reflect their needs. The future of recreational canoeing within the BCU is in your hands... the Council has shown its support and now it is up to the members!

CANOE CORSICA 90

The T&RC have arranged a two week visit to Corsica for intermediate level paddlers leaving about the 14 April. This promises to be a memorable event with an excellent choice of interesting water... and some sunshine! Please contact Simon Dawson, 75 Turney Street, The Meadows, Nottingham NG2 2EG for full details.



Colin Kempson T&RC Vice Chairman receives a small token of appreciation from his employers, Milton Keynes Development Corporation - after years of staunch refusal to 'paddle plastic', Colin has finally succumbed to modernity.



Grim faces and white knuckles were in considerable evidence at the BCU's Open Canoe Rally at Holme Pierrepont in October, as the tyro's tackled the white water course.

The water level was down to its minimum flow to give everyone a decent chance of completing the run and putting into practice the instructions given to them by Dave Crooks of Mobile Adventure who was the tutor for this section of the rally.

Organised by Stuart Briggs and his wife the Open Canoe Rally is becoming a regular feature on the calendar and as with last year's event it took the form of a number of workshops in different open canoe disciplines which were run concurrently and were open to all to attend in any order or as often as they wished. It was all very friendly and informal.

Each workshop was run by its resident 'expert' for one hour sessions although this often appeared to be only a theoretical concept and many people were able to spend considerable time on their particular interest.

As well as white water paddling there was instruction in rescue techniques and lining and tracking. Flat water paddling was coached by Tibor Herbert and Graham Wardle

on the Winfield Pool which was also used by John Bull of Solway Dory for his sailing canoes and Robert Rivington for the gentle art of poling.

The weather for both days was fine and for the most part sunny and the course was crowded from start to finish and even beyond. Saturday evening was taken up with the Canadian Canoe Associations AGM at the nearby Current Trends premises followed by an illustrated lecture by John Bull outlining the development of canoe sailing. This in turn was followed by Robert Rivington talking about canoe poling! In spite of Stuart's consideration in moving the lectures to the adjacent rugby club there was barely time for a well earned drink before bedtime and an early start on Sunday.

There can be no doubt of the enjoyable nature of such weekends and the value of them in providing an opportunity for individuals to benefit from expert tuition or the availability of specialised equipment that they can try. Sailing canoes, poles, racing hulls and boats of many different manufacturers are not normally there for the trying and the opportunity was not overlooked. Some measure of the appreciation of the rally may be taken from the fact that its participants had come from as far away as Glasgow and Poole in Dorset.



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COMPETITION FOCUS

Wild Water Racing

RAPID RACING 500 SERIES ROUND UP



The Rapid Racing Final on the River Trent at Barnard Castle marked the end of the domestic 500 series that has been running for the last 5 years.

For those that don't know, Rapid Racing is a short event on Wild Water that lasts for 90 - 120 seconds, no gates, only a short, exciting blast down an interesting stretch of water. An event ripe for television that has indeed been covered world wide. Even our domestic Rapid Racing, known as the 500 series had regular coverage on Regional TV Stations.

The concept came about over a period of time with such famous canoeing names as Dave Mitchell and Martin Boshier discussing the idea. The Dee Sprints came soon after but were never that popular. However, enter David Goldstrum in 1984 in partnership with Martyn Harvey, who was party to the original discussion, and along came 'Rapid Racing'

A tremendous event sponsored by Lowenbrau on the Tryweryn launched the concept with very famous canoeing names entering. Perhaps now known in domestic circles for Mike Smith's famous swim on the Mill when he was on the verge of snatching victory, this event was not only very well received by the International Wild Water Racing fraternity, but attracted interest from Marathon, Sprint and Slalom Racers.

A second event, again held on the Tryweryn, attracted an even bigger field and even more television.

Over the first two years of International Racing, such names as Richard Fox, Tony Prijon, Ian Ferguson, Marco Previde and Gernard Peinhaupt competed and went away satisfied with the sport.

The domestic series also took off well and over the years at-



Mike Mills - the famous swim



L - R Neil Stamps, Mick Gillham, Cynthia Berry, Matthew Febrey - 1985 winners



tracted sponsorship from Lowenbrau, MI paddles, Wild Water, Nomad and then Shell. Raced over 6 different courses in the October/November period each year, venues have included the Dee at LLangollen, Grantully, Tees at Barnard Castle, Teme at Ludlow, Holme Pierrepont, Hambledon Weir, Rivers Washburn and Wharfe and even the Trent at Trent Bridge.

Always professionally run, the organisation has been very smooth with times and results available instantly. Credit for this must go to David Goldstrum, Martyn Harvey, Sarah Swallow and the various computer/electronic whizz kids that the event attracted.

The statistics for the events follow. Pride of place must go to Cynthia Berry as the champion of champions with 17 victories, many many more than any other woman or man.

The spread of victors is impressive however with no clear dominant person amongst the men. Even though it was a domestic event, visiting paddlers from other Federations were encouraged to participate and did so quite successfully.

So, even though the 500 series in its present format will disappear I am sure Rapid Racing will go from strength to strength - keep your ears and eyes open.

RAPID RACING 500; THE ALL TIME LIST OF CHAMPIONS AND RACE WINNERS

CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS

Mens Kayak

1984/85	Andrew Martin New Zealand
1985	Joe Lyons, Birmingham
1986	Joe Lyons, Birmingham
1987	Ian Gardiner, Australia.
1988	Jon Royle, Clitheroe
1989	Alan Heaume, Bedford.

Womens Kayak

1984/85	Cynthia Berry, Edinburgh
1985	Cynthia Berry, Edinburgh
1986	Cynthia Berry, Edinburgh
1987	Cynthia Berry, Edinburgh
1988	Shirley Bain, Twickenham
1989	Shirley Bain, Nottingham.

Youth Kayak (Under 18)

1984/85	Neil Stamps, Birmingham
1985	Andrew Curtis, Hertford.
1986	Neil Stamps, Birmingham
1987	Nick Gatland, Hertford.
1988	Andrew Jolley, Ormskirk
1989	Ashley Mason, Leeds

Junior Kayak (Under 16)

1985	Peter Kelly, Durham
1986	Matthew Febrey, Hertford
1987	Ashley Mason, Leeds.
1988	Gareth Jones, Clitheroe
1989	Tim Suggett, Leeds.

INDIVIDUAL VICTORIES - 134 (1984 -89)

17	Cynthia Berry, Edinburgh
9	Gareth Jones, Newark
9	Ashley Mason, Leeds
9	Neil Stamps, Birmingham
8	Joe Lyons, Birmingham
7	Shirley Bain, Nottingham
6	Andy Curtis, Hertford
5	Matthew Febrey, Hertford
5	Peter Kelly, Durham.
4	Nick Gatland, Hertford.
4	Andrew Jolley, Ormskirk
4	Andrew Martin, New Zealand.
4	Alan Torduff, Leeds
3	Ian Gardiner, Australia
3	Alison Hall, Chester
3	Ian Torduff, Leeds.
3	Tim Suggett, Leeds
2	Gill Berrow, Killin
2	Chris Chorley, Chester
2	Alan Heaume, Bedford
2	Jon Royle, Clitheroe
2	Melvin Swallow, Chester
2	Lincoln Taylor, Stamford
2	Dean Thompson, Clitheroe
2	Adrian Trickett, Nottingham.
1	Ken Bain, Nottingham
1	Jim Dolan, Manchester
1	Mike Ellis, Nottingham
1	Jonathon Folland, Sleaford
1	Julie Fryers, Nottingham
1	Mick Gillham, Birmingham
1	Geoff Gilcrest, Australia
1	Fraser Gorman, Glasgow
1	Myriam Jerusalem, France
1	Melvyn Jones, Birmingham
1	Yves Masson, France
1	Ann Plant, Birmingham
1	Ian Rospin, Nottingham
1	Liz Sharman, Bury St. Edmunds
1	Debbie Stapleford, Leeds.

1989 RESULTS; FINAL POINTS AFTER 6 RACES

Mens K1

1	Alan Heaume, Bedford	380
<i>(Points from best three races)</i>		
2	Andrew Jolley, Ormskirk	276
3	Andrew Curtis, Hertford	248
4	Fraser Gormal, Glasgow	224
5	Ian Rospin, Nottingham	180
6	Nigel Stevenson, Lincoln	180
7	Ken Bain, Nottingham	164
8	Jon Joyle, Clitheroe	160
9	Ashley Mason, Leeds	144
10	Mike Ellis, Nottingham	140
11	Julian Bunce, Army	140
12	Alistair Bayliss, Guildford	140
13	Nigel Morley, Humberside	136
14	Gareth Jones, Newark	116
15	Howard Blackman, St Leonards	112
16	Chris Chorley, Chester	112
17	Kevin Campbell, Nottingham	104
18	Shaun Pearce, Newbury	104
19	Mark Williams, Chester	104
20	Dean Thompson, Clitheroe	96

Womens K1

1	Shirley Bain, Nottingham	400
2	Julie Fryers, Nottingham	320
3	Andrea Clayton, Nottingham	240
4	Tina Parsons, Nottingham	216
5	Jenny Hands, Nottingham	196
6	Helen Marriott, Nottingham	240
7	Katie Watt, Leeds	164
8	Carolyn Smith, Birmingham	152
9	Gemma Hargreaves, Blackburn	140
10	Sally Parker, RAF	60

Junior K1

1	Tim Suggett, Leeds	360
2	Dean Thompson, Clitheroe	360
3	Jonathon Folland, Sleaford	360
4	Stuart Brass, Clitheroe	216
5	Michael Mason, Durham	196
6	Stephen Woodward, Clitheroe	196
7	Gemma Hargreaves, Blackburn	152
8	Nigel Bailey, Nottingham	108
9	Andy Stevenson, Knebworth	80
10	Paul Mason, Durham	80

Whilst Tim Suggett, Dean Thompson and Jonathan Folland are equal with 360 ranking points, Tim Suggett is champion by virtue of his 3 race victories to Dean Thompson's two successes and Jonathan Folland's win in the sixth and Final race

Youth K1

1	Ashley Mason, Leeds	400
2	Chris Chorley, Chester	360
3	Steven Peyton, Cambridge	280
4	Andy Tracey, Hexham	216
5	Gareth Jones, Newark	180
6	Tim Brew, M'Mowbray	124
7	Mark Tetlow, Shifnal	40
8	Stephen Warriner, Nuneaton	36

Veterans

1	Nigel Morley, Humberside	160
2	Mike Folland, Sleaford	80
3	Jo Lunn, Mansfield	25

"Plastics"

1	Colin Smith	80
2	Kristian Ward	65
	Spencer Hadley	65
4	Bernard Le-Fevre	40
5	Ian Chatters	15
	David Clifton	15

THE SEASON SO FAR

The 1989/90 Wild Water Racing Season opened with the river levels threatening to cause a lot of problems and damage to boats.

The first Division A Races, however, were contested with low but not desperate water and a pattern is beginning to emerge.

After the Dee, Tees and Dart races we have only 4 winners in the 4 classes. Consistency at the top is being acclaimed by Gill Barrow in ladies K1, Steve Wells in C1, Clough and Clough in C2 and Alan Tordoff in mens K1.

In the ladies championships a scrap is beginning to emerge with only 5 MS points separating Karen Porter, Andrea Clayton, Nicola Weaver and Julie Ashton. Its certainly going to be a battle to see which of these 3 together with Gill Berrow and Shirley Bain will be the three to accompany Julie to the World Cup this year.

The mens kayaks has Robin Murray pushing strongly behind Alan Tordoff 1987/88 National Champions and Neil Stamps 1988/9 National Champion Silver Medalist at the 1989 World Championships. Neil Blackman has risen up through the ranks to push hard behind the longer established stars.

One of the most encouraging performances so far however is that of Tim Suggett who is still at Junior age and is poised in the outside of the senior mens K1 squad by virtue of his excellent results in the first three races.

World bronze medalist, Steve Wells continues to dominate the C1 class ahead of Nick Pink, James Wingfield and Ross Pearton.

In the C2's only Ian and Andy Clough then Scott Simpson and Simon Twigger are clearly slowing. Newcomers from slalom Chris Arrowsmith and Paul Brain are an interesting development but generally the C2 class is not well contested and urgently needs an injection of new paddlers.

British Team members and coaches will be available at the Canoe Exhibition to talk to all paddlers old or young about Wild Water Racing training and competing. Come and meet our medallists in person.

WILDWATER RACING 1989/90 RANKING TO DATE MS POINTS

(as at Dec 89)

MS = $\frac{\text{Contestants time behind winner}}{\text{Winners time}} \times 1200$

MK1 RANKING

1	Alan Tordoff	Leeds	0
2	Neil Stamps	Royal	19.4
3	Robin Murray	Leeds	22.9
4	Wayne Boss	Lichfield	50.8
5	Melvin Swallow	Chester	53.7
6	Neil Blackman	RAF	74.7
7	Dave Kay	Leeds	75.4
8	Ian Tordoff	Chester	82.6
9	James Meldrum	Newark	85.0
10	Andy Tomlinson	Birmingham Univ	85.3
11	Fergus Gormal	Glasgow KC	90.7
12	Guy Sellwood	WTR	93.2
13	Tim Suggett	Leeds	97.6
14	Adrian Trickett	Bath	102.9
15	Nigel Morley	Leeds	106.7

LADIES K1 RANKING

1	Gill Berrow	Edinburgh Uni	0.0
2	Shirley Bain	Nottingham	8.6
3	Karen Porter	Leeds	37.6
4	Andrea Clayton	Nottingham	39.9
5	Nicola Weaver	Nottingham	42.4
6	Julie Ashton	Loughboro Univ	42.6
7	Julie Fryers	Nottingham	66.4
8	Cynthia Berry	Forth	68.7
9	Tina Parsons	Nottingham	75.1
10	Katie Watt	Nottingham	90.6

MEN C1 RANKING

1	Steve Wells	Nottingham	0.0
2	Nick Pink	Llangollen	51.6
3	James Wingfield	Nottingham	56.1
4	Ross Pearton	Herts	59.2
5	Colin Smith	Amathus	88.7
6	Steve Raven	Llangollen	108.9

C2 RANKING

1	Clough/Clough	ICI	0.0
2	Twigger/Simpson	Nottingham	27.8
3	Griffiths/Phillip	Royal	76.2
4	Worne/Harvey	Chelmsford/Nott	87.3
5	Arrowsmith/Brain	Wimps	88.2
6	Stagg/Stanley		89.2

COMPLETE CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS.
An interclub event at Holme Pierrepont on August 18/19 where clubs can show their strength at four racing disciplines. Marathon, Slalom, Sprint and Wild Water Racing will be contested - further details will appear in next issue.

SELECTION POLICY 1990

'A' Team:

To paddle in the 1990 World Cup Races which include the Europa Cup and Pre World Championships. The venues are:

2 June	World Cup 1	Spendleruu Mlyn, Czechoslovakia
6 June	World Cup 2	Jenner Austria
10 June	World Cup 3 + Europa Cup 1	Merano, Italy
17 June	World Cup 4 + Pre Worlds	Bovec Yugoslavia
18 July	World Cup 5 + Europa Cup 2	Albuia Switzerland
22 July	World Cup 6 (site of 1993 World Champs)	Mezanna, Italy

There will be up to 6 mens kayaks, 4 ladies kayaks, 3 C1's and 2 C2's selected, including Neil Stamps, Steve Wells and Julie Ashton, already selected.

Selection for the team will be based on results from the nominated races ie Tay 10/11 March, Tees 17/18 March and Washburn 7/8 April, in which the already pre-selected paddles do **not** count.

The formula to be used will be: Absolute winner of each kayak race, the other places will be based on the best 2 positions attained from the 3 races. Ties for selection will then be resolved on the aggregate MS.

Junior team

To paddle in the 1990 World Championships for Juniors on 14/15 July on River Albula in Grisons Switzerland and compete in further International races afterwards.

There will be up to 3 mens K1, 3 ladies K1 and 1 C1 selected.

Selection for this team will be based on results from the nominated races ie Tay, Tees and Washburn.

The formula to be used will be based on the best 2 positions attained from the 3 races within their age category.

Ties for selection will be resolved on the aggregate MS from the two qualifying races.

B Teams

To race at Axat on River Aude in French Pyrenees on 22 July.

Up to 4 x mens K1, 3 x ladies K1, 2 x C1 and 1 C2 will be selected, the criteria to be announced in the near future.

Development Team

There will be a Development Team selected further details will be available at a later date.

For information contact John Handyside, Team Manager c/o BCU HQ.

JUNIOR ROUNDUP

Tim Suggett is certainly the dominant force amongst the Junior racers at the moment. His 13th place in the senior rankings has certainly taken the class by surprise. He also led the field in the Junior squad selections at Llangollen on 26 November. The silver medal winning team at the Junior Pre Worlds of Suggett, Jones and Thompson will probably be pushed quite hard for selection by the other young aspirants.

JUNIOR SQUAD

Mens K1

Tim Suggett
Dean Thompson
Stuart Brass
Adam Dennis
Michael Mason
Jonathon Folland
Steven Woodward
Steven Peyton

Ladies K1

Claire Daniels
Naomi Bailey
Gemma Hargreaves

Men C1

Andy Tracey

Manager

Don Player

Coach

John Anderson

FORTHCOMING EVENTS IN WWR

Remember! there is an ansaphone service to update you on race status and availability of water (0483) 38221

Feb 24 Washburn Div B
W Fraser, 27 Marshall Terrace, Crossgates, Leeds LS15 8EA.

Feb 25 Upper Wharfe Div C & Schools Champs Final
W Fraser (as above)

Feb 25 Taff Div C
N Dallimore, 3 Gillian Road, Llandaff, Cardiff CF4 2P2

Feb 25 Teith Div C
Mr McMillan, 1st/L4 Rhynie Drive, Ibrox, Glasgow G51 2LE

March 4 Nene Div C
A Rance 89, Lower Adelaide Street, Semilong, Northampton NN2 6BB

March 25 Trent Div C
John Handyside, Glebe Farm, Colston Gate, Cotgrave, Notts NG12 3JX.

There is also a strong possibility of the provisional dates on the Tryweryn on April 21/22 and May 12/13 being confirmed. These events, as all others will have open events. Phone for details (0483) 38221. Remember Div C and Open events are generally open to all BCU members.

Yearbooks are also available with all wild water information from Hazel Tordoff, 15 Eastcott Close, Congleton, Cheshire CW12 4QL.

If you think you are good enough, because of your status in other canoeing disciplines, and you would like to race in wild water events, but don't wish to compete in Div C, why not contact the Ranking Status Officer giving full details of your canoeing history and achievements and he will allocate you to a division: N Morley, 52 Castle Rise, South Cave, Brough, North Humberside HU15 2ET.

MASTERS NEWS (OR VETERANS OR OLD F**TS)

It is becoming more and more likely that there will be a Masters International for Wild Water Racers in Switzerland in July. Why not write to John Handyside at BCU HQ for more details and check your eligibility. This would be an excellent opportunity for ex wild water paddler to take up the sport again, compete in an International and support the British Junior Team in the process.

The Wild Water Racing Section was compiled by John Handyside

Polo

1990 OCEANWORLD NATIONAL CANOE POLO CHAMPIONSHIPS

With only days to go before the Canoe Exhibition, the countdown has begun to the 1990 Canoe Polo Championship finals. Six ladies teams will be paddling this year, with White Rose and GVP joining the 'old hands', Woodmill, Luton, St Albans and last year's winners, Wind and Water Mutineers. White Rose are to play Woodmill, Luton play GVP, St Albans and Mutineers are given a bye to semifinals where they play the winners of the first two matches respectively. If Mutineers succeed in defending their title, 1990 will be the fifth year in succession in which they have held the National title. If anyone can stop the Cumbria team, it is likely to be St Albans Ladies, who have been close runners up at Crystal Palace for the past two years: on both occasions the result was only settled in extra time. In the Youth Championship, the semi-finalists are: St Albans play South Avon, Normad play Friends of Allonby. Players come and go constantly on the Youth Polo scene. Last years champion, Viking were knocked

out in the eliminating rounds, leaving the 1990 title wide open. St Albans again are likely to be strong contenders: with 11 teams now in the National leagues, St Albans Canoe Club must have one of the most active polo sections in the country.

Sixteen open teams have come through the eliminating rounds to play at Crystal Palace. Woodmill are to play Tigers A, Meridian B play St Albans B, Bere Forest play Viking A, Luton A play Martlet, Dudley A play Friends of Allonby, Meridian play Humbersiders, Luton B play EDCC Warriors and St Albans A play WASP. Chief contenders in the Open are likely to be Luton Tigers A, who have been National Champions four times, last year's runners up, St Albans A, Bere Forest and Dudley.

As usual, all the Crystal Palace events are arranged on a straight knockout basis - lose a game and you're out.

NATIONAL LEAGUES 1991

All National League entry and re-entry forms to be returned to Jo Kirkbride, 7 Pica Cottages, Pica, Workington, Cumbria CA14 4DQ or hand in to the Polo stand at the Canoe Exhibition.

RULE CHANGES

For details of Polo rules and all other polo information you need a copy of the 1990 Canoe Polo Handbook, only 50p from the Polo Stand at the Canoe Exhibition or Caroline Bluffield, 412 Nutton Lane, Potters Bar EN6 3AT (SAE please).

IOC ACT AGAINST APARTHEID

At a meeting held at Porto Rico on 27, 28, 29 August 1989, the International Olympic Committee Executive Board reasserted its position regarding the policy of apartheid in sport. It adopted the recommendation of the IOC Commission for Apartheid and Olympism meeting on the 26 and 27 August not to admit for the Olympic competition in Barcelona in 1992 those athletes who have participated in sports competitions in South Africa from 1 September 1989 onwards.

Marathon



THE SLALOM COURSE MARATHON

An experimental race incorporating two laps of the Holme Pierrepont Slalom and Regatta Course was run on Sunday 26 November. With the course level set high to enable racing K1s to shoot with under stern rudders, paddlers found the water just about manageable. Most paddlers managed to stay upright the first time round with Mike Ellis of Nottingham Kayak Club well in front of the rest of the field, however he took so long trying to get his spray decks back on for the second run down, that he went back to 4th place, and the lead was taken by Robin Murray in a white water racer. Nearly all the K1s capsized

second time down the slalom course with 3 boats being totally wrecked, mainly due to the boats being too flimsy for the conditions and having inadequate buoyancy.

From the spectators point of view it was an excellent event in that it was possible to view the whole race from one vantage point with many spectacular spills. The paddlers were unanimous in wanting to do the race again, many saying that it had all the excitement of the Exe descent without being too long, and having the water level guaranteed.

by Brian Greenaway



WINNERS:

1st K1

Mike Ellis, Nottingham KC

1st WWR

Robin Murray

1st Lady

Helen Marriott, Nottingham KC



CURTAILED FUTURE BRITISH PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL MARATHON RACING

The "international grant" provided by Sports Council to enable the National Marathon Racing Teams to compete in World Championship and Nation's Cup events has been cut by approximately one third for 1990 and the foreseeable future. Interestingly, the sum provided is only £250 more than that received for international competition in 1978. In order to account for the erosive effects of inflation, the 1990 grant should be approximately four and a half times as large as that for 1978.

As a consequence, both the number of events entered and the size of the participating teams will have to be curtailed. Those athletes who may have expected to gain medals in important events abroad in 1990 may now not be given the opportunity to compete. Apart from the demotivating effect of this upon individual athletes, it will inevitably have a detrimental effect upon future maintenance of an excellent British record in international competition.

Whereas it had previously been proposed to send a total of 85 people abroad for international competition in 1990, it is now possible to send only 48. Details of the proposed composition of teams for the specific events within the curtailed 1990 international marathon racing programme will be published in the Racing Yearbook.

In order to help bridge the gap between the Sports Council funding and the amount required, the marathon committee have appointed Peter Travis to look into sponsorship with a view towards funding the team's future requirements. (Peter arranged the sponsorship with Ron Hill, who generously supported the GB Marathon team throughout 1989).

Anyone able to help Peter in this quest is invited to contact him at 67, Princes St, Oxford.

The Marathon Section was compiled by Paul Owen

IAN POWERS IN

Jane Leigh reports on the Exe Descent, 19 November 1989

The 21st running of the Exe Descent ended with home club Exeter having plenty to celebrate - victory in the blue riband event, the Senior K2

City Paddler Ian Timbrell partnered Dyson Pendle from Norwich to break the six-year domination of the event by the Wells brothers from Richmond after 19 miles of hard racing.

Timbrell and Pendle blasted away from the start to lead the way down the salmon steps at the first weir above Tiverton, and after that the two crews were neck and neck all the way to Cowley. There a burn by the "local" crew created a 200 yard gap, and they maintained that over the last two weirs and across the finish line to come home one minute clear.

Paul and Mike Wells have been the crew to beat in recent years, having won every Descent since 1983 and set the course record in 1986. Timbrell and Pendle spent a fair while on Saturday deciding how to tackle each weir and while things didn't go quite to plan at every obstacle, as the chunks out of the nose of their brand new K2 will testify, they were able to achieve a memorabile result - as Timbrell said "its great to be the ones to beat them"

While this battle was being fought out between the top two crews, 588 other paddlers were also tackling the course.

Exeter scored another victory in the senior touring doubles where Steve Amos and Steve Knowles finished a minute clear of Pete and Chris Lee from Marlow: the city duo made time by shooting Head Weir and

Blackaller Weir at the end of the race, while Lees chose to portage, and finished well ahead.

The low water level claimed a fair number of boats, with Cowley and Blackaller taking the greatest toll of tired paddlers, but the majority of entrants survived the race in good shape.

Spare a thought, however, for the unhappiest canoeist at the end: Nigel Brevitt from Lichfield had been well on course to take the Senior K1 title when, almost within sight of the finish, he came to grief on the final weir. Trying to shoot the Mill side of Blackaller, he got stuck on one of the rocks and lost the race there with Rod Kinch making up a couple of minutes and snatching victory as Brevitt struggled to free himself.

THE WINNERS

Senior K2

I Timbrell/D. Pendle 2.2.34

Junior K2

D Kalis/Clark 2.27.48

Ladies K2

J Hands/ A Clayton 2.27.10

Mixed K2

B. Jones/N Pagon 2.39.38

Senior K1

R Kinch 2.13.50

Junior K1

A. Ford 2.21.39

Ladies K1

R Leech 2.38.05

Senior Touring Double

S. Amos/S. Knowles 2.37.23

Senior Touring single/ww racer

L. Porter 2.25.40

Junior Touring single/ww racer

C. Chorley 2.42.43

Ladies touring single/ww racer

E Bykerk

Canadian double

Murgatroyd/Halsall 2.50.47

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS SELECTION

Three paddlers have been preselected to compete in the 1990 Marathon World Championships to be held in Copenhagen 28 - 29 July 1990. They are; Ivan Lawler, Graham Burns (Mens K2) Steve and Andy Train (Mens C2). This is on the basis of their past performances. The rest of the team will be selected by continuous assessment at a number of events this year; there will also be a specific assessment race.

GB MARATHON RACING TEAM

The GB team will be competing at the following events this season:

13 May

Eindhoven, Holland

9 June

Amsterdam - Grand Prix

28/29 July

Copenhagen - Grand Prix 2 and World Championships

11 Aug

Stockholm - Grand Prix 3.

DEVIZES TO WESTMINSTER INTERNATIONAL 125 MILE CANOE MARATHON APRIL 13 - 16 1990

ADVANCE INFORMATION

Recognised as the toughest, non-stop, canoe race in the world, the event is referred to as the 'canoeist's Everest'. The Devizes to Westminster Race provides a unique challenge to all participants - catering for a range of abilities, a diversity of method (canoe or kayak) and an individual goal.

Senior Singles and Junior (15 - 19 years) Doubles are organised over four fixed stages starting on Good Friday Morning between 0800 hours - 1000 hours. Senior Doubles calculate their starting times to gain optimum advantage of the ebb tide at Teddington. This start time can be anytime between 0700 hours and 1600 hours.

The Veteran/Junior class race is in accordance with the single class.

A rule book is available, covering all aspects of the race including entry forms, send £1 to Mrs J Begent, 87, Hibernia Road, Hounslow, Middlesex TW3 3RL

Entries will be accepted up to and including the day of the race but those received after 23rd March 1990 will be subject to a late Entry Fee. The entry fees are: Senior doubles £30, Junior doubles £30, Junior singles £17, Veteran/Juniors £30

The DW Committee is this year supporting the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust - after a massive restoration programme of a once derelict canal costing over £2,000,000, the Trust is now raising funds for the 'Last Lock' - Widmead Lock in Berkshire. This ancient turf-sided lock is not merely derelict, it has almost disappeared and is to be completely rebuilt as a brick-sided chamber to modern engineering specifications by May 1990.

A number of marathons take place in the months and weeks prior to Easter - intending DW paddlers, who are not regular "marathoners" should seriously consider taking part in one or more of these as "training runs". Details of marathons are published in both the Racing Yearbook and the BCU Yearbook.

Slalom

SLALOM AGM

Following the 1989 Annual General Meeting, several important changes in the rules for promotion, points and placings were made. There were also several other interesting motions put forward, not all successfully. Below are just some of the motions discussed, their results and how it will affect you, the paddler, in ranking slaloms this season.

ENTRY FEES

Prior to discussion on entry fees, it was decided that as the Team Award Scheme had failed to motivate team participation at Premier and Division 1, it was to be abandoned.

The entry fees for all Novice events, both individual and team entries, will remain unaltered.

Division 4 through to Premier individual event entry fees are to be increased by 50p. Team fees in Premier/Division 1 are to be reduced by 50p, and all other teams fees to be unaltered. (This is due to the 50p levy for the team award scheme being cancelled).

Prem/Div 1

Individual £9, Team of three £4.50

Div 2/Div 3

Individual £5.50 seniors, £5 juniors, Team of three £4.50

Div 4

Individual £4.50 seniors, £3.50 juniors, team of three £4.50

Novice

Individual £4 seniors, £3 juniors, Team of three £4.50

DIVISION SYSTEM

Promotion

The new levels of promotion for this season will be as follows:

Novice - Div 4 =	1 in 5
Div 4 - Div 3 =	1 in 10
Div 3 - Div 2 =	1 in 20
Div 2 - Div 1 =	1 in 40

Percentages or points

Following a healthy debate, where the anomalies of the percentage system were highlighted, it was agreed that the extension of the points system to Division 2, 3 and 4 would give a fairer result to all. Calculations as below:

Points = 1,000 (position - 1) x 1,000 / No of competitors
eg in an event with 200 paddlers.
3rd placed to score.

$1,000 - (3-1) \times 1,000 / 200 = 1,000 - (2 \times 5) = 990$ points

$1,000 - (8-1) \times 1,000 / 200 = 1,000 - (7 \times 5) = 965$ points

At the end of the year, National ranking positions to be calculated on the best three results obtained. Division 1 would still be the best of five results to count for final ranking positions.

Canadian Classes - Points Calculations

Last season in the Premier Canadian Classes, the system did not allow for all paddlers to be awarded points, ie in C1 Class only 15 points were awarded for first place and so if more than 15 paddlers competed then there would be several paddlers with no points at all. To redress the balance and maintain interest and motivation for the paddlers, the points awarded will now be increased to equal the number of paddlers/crews in each class in Division, so that ALL paddlers can score points towards ranking positions.

eg If there were 20 C2 crews in Premier Division then:

1st place scores 20 points
2nd place scores 19 points etc

This should be a major boost to Canadian paddlers for this season.

These are only a small part of the overall discussions which normally are associated with an AGM. They are, however, probably more important to the paddlers than any thing else.

The changes will all be clearly laid out in the 1990 Slalom Yearbook, PLEASE READ IT CAREFULLY.

Heres wishing you every success in your quest for places, prizes and points, and a useful New Years Resolution - Correctly filled in entry cards and cheques on time, the organisers dream ...

Joe Mulholland
Slalom Publicity

BIBS

The Bib Issuing Officer for Div 4 Canadians is Andrew Budd, 75 Orion Close, Lordshill, Southampton SO1 8BN. This address was listed incorrectly in Focus 62.

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JUDGING COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Once again, the British Open and the International at Llangollen have come around and once again they have run without any major faults and everyone seemed to enjoy the two events.

Thanks are due to a lot of people who worked hard before and during the two weekends, putting up the course, running out thousands of yards of cable, timing the events and general organisation. As Chairman of the Judging Committee, I would like to thank, in particular, all those people who give up their time to sit on a very wet river bank with a clipboard, the judges. These are the people who are always in the front line for protests and disagreements and who always still turn up, many of them travelling hundreds of miles.

To all those people who judged for the British Open or the International, THANK YOU.

Steve Ackroyd

**CONGRATULATIONS
TO LIZ
RADFORD (NEE
SHARMAN) ON
BEING
AWARDED THE
MBE IN THE
NEW YEAR
HONOURS LIST**



Spot the world champion ... Richard Fox takes time off from his slalom training to do some instructing on the Welsh Dee. The course, 'In Pursuit of Excellence' was set up in November by John and Ruth Tribe, whose company 'The Experience of Adventure' is based in Corwen nearby. The weekend demonstrated that even if you can't learn to win the worlds in two days, you can certainly progress very quickly - from near novice to the Serpents Tail. Richard, who had done little instructing before this, was pronounced a huge success and proved that he can surf a Dancer almost as well as his usual model.

Photographs by Ruth Tribe

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†Patent Nos. 4660498 & 4741284

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Eskimo child; Wales Village



KAYAKS ACROSS THE BERING STRAITS

by Trevor Potts

Featured in the International Canoe Exhibition lecture programme 17 - 18 February 1990, Crystal Palace Sports Centre



On Saturday 1 July 1989 at 1700 hrs, 12 men and two women set off to paddle across the Bering Straits. Nearly 60 miles wide, the Straits separate West from East, Alaska from Siberia. The area is only ice free for about eight weeks each year. The air temperature rarely rises much above 55F. The water temperature is just above freezing at about 40F. There is no record of the crossing ever being done by Kayak although the local Eskimo population regularly sailed across.

The kayak party for the crossing consisted of three separate groups. Four British paddlers, Robert Eglestaff, Greg Barton, Peter Clark and Trevor Potts, paddling McNulty 'Alaskan' kayaks., Seven American residents of Alaska, paddling between them three single kayaks, two 18 foot surf skis and one double kayak. These two groups had paddled together for about 200 miles up the coast from Nome. The last party of three flew in from California, they were paddling a three hole fabric covered George Dyson built Baidarka. They had a film crew with them who were going to film the crossing for Jim Noyes a paddler paralysed from the waist down. The local Eskimos from Little Diomed Island were providing a Walrus skin covered boat as a film platform and were excited about the prospect of making their first crossing to Siberia.

The first part of the plan was to paddle from Wales Eskimo village 28 miles to little Diomed situated roughly in the middle of the Straits. In the summer there is a continuous North going current which averages about two knots but is by no means constant. It can be stopped by the wind or increased to more than double. The wind usually funnels North or South and fogs are frequent and persistent.

1700 hrs might sound an odd time to set off but the party had been waiting for four days for the fog to lift. When it did lift a decision was made to leave immediately. The weather forecast indicated that it would be clear for about 48 hours with a light southerly wind. Four hours after setting off the fog rolled in and visibility dropped to about 400 yards. The wind freshened to a SW force three. With the wind and current pushing the group North at an unknown speed, finding the Island was going to be very tricky if the fog persisted. No one was inclined to turn back even though only about one third of the distance had been covered. If the Islands were missed the Eskimos had said it would be impossible to paddle back to them against the current. As the night wore on and the sun got lower in the sky the fog became thicker and the temperature dropped. Stops became longer as the paddlers struggled with pee bottles and flasks of coffee, others became colder as they waited. Eventually there was talk of hypothermia. The wind increased and the sea became rougher, the waves started to splash the decks, then the hands and occasionally the face. The water was so cold it burned. The Eskimo boat want to change course three hours earlier than planned but the group refused and plodded on. The course was eventually changed at 0130, 90 minutes later than the original navigation plan, to allow for the long stops. At 0230 after one hour on the new course Diomed should have been very close but was not seen, visibility was about 100 yards. The position was now starting to become critical; there was no reliable means of finding a position. It could only be assumed that the speed had been overestimated, so the group paddled on. At about 0500 the fog lifted for about one minute to show the top of a mountain due South. Unfortunately what had happened was that Little Diomed had been overshot by two or three miles and by continuing on the course with wind and current behind them they had pushed on across the International Date Line (and the Russian border). When the mountains of Big Diomed were seen they were about seven or eight miles too far North. There were now a number of choices: head South into a two knot current and a 15 knot wind to Big Diomed Island: head 40 miles East and land somewhere on the Alaskan Tundra: head West about 30 miles and land on the mountainous cliffs of Cape Dezhnev in Siberia. After 12 hours paddling already, with visibility fluctuating between 200 and 400 yards it was decided to carry on towards Big Diomed. Making roughly a 1/2 knot over the ground it would take about 16 hours continuous paddling. After



two hours of paddling into the wind and current, with the wind steadily increasing and the seas becoming steep and confused, little progress was made.

The pace had become so slow that the Eskimo boat started to pick up the slower paddlers until eventually most people decided enough was enough and they climbed aboard with the Eskimos. Three single kayaks including Trevor from the British party, and one double decided to carry on and head south whilst the others were being picked up. Unfortunately the fog, which had lifted a little, became thicker and they were separated from the Eskimo boat. Those that were picked up tried to tow the seven boats but eventually they became water logged and broke adrift or were cut free. The paddlers sitting immobile in the open boat were now in danger of succumbing to exhaustion and exposure. It was two hours before they arrived on the Russian Island of big Diomed. The Eskimos would only stay long enough to drop off two paddlers to try to explain to the soldiers what had happened. Normally the Eskimos are arrested if they strayed into Russian territory. There was now serious concern for the five paddlers left afloat and Robert and Kelly stayed to try to co-ordinate a rescue. If any kayaks were picked up they would be able to identify whether or not they belonged to any of the paddlers still left out in the straits. The Russians sent their patrol ship to search but the Americans could not send their helicopter from Nome 300 miles away until the fog lifted.

After the five paddlers lost contact with the Eskimos they continued to paddle South hoping the fog would lift and the Eskimos would come back to search for them. As the morning wore on things started to become desperate for the double. Jayne was starting to become de-hydrated through seasickness, hypothermic and totally exhausted. Progress became very slow. The wind increased for a time up to about 20 knots, the sea state was very confused with waves about six feet topped off by a foaming crest. There was a big danger that the double would capsize with a by now semi-conscious person in the back. Consideration was given to try and raft up, streaming a drogue, but it was so cold they would probably have become hypothermic fairly quickly.

After 19 hours paddling, concentration was waning, arms were tired, buttocks aching, wrists seizing up, they could not carry on for much longer. The brain was not so dulled that it did not realise the implications of a capsize, death would shortly follow.

A Russian patrol ship about the size of a minesweeper suddenly appeared about a mile away tooting his horn. It then became a mad panic to find the flares before he disappeared again. Hands barely mobile managed to set off three red flares after rejecting three duds. Garbled Russian was spoken over the VHF radio and the ship altered course. The fog started to lift, the sun came out and the Island was only about one mile away. There was sadness in the party because they were rescued, committing that awful sin of attempting the foolhardy and then having to call out the rescue services. Also elation because they were saved and the thoughts of death could fade into the background. Stern expressionless faces looked down on them from the ship, Russians and Americans face to face (and a Brit). Hours later after a meal in the officers mess the reserve slackens, smiles and autographs were exchanged. Post cards and coins swapped, photographs taken. The Russian sailors had not had so much excitement since they were last re-supplied nine months before.

Post Script

The four British paddlers, with a borrowed double to replace two lost kayaks, completed the second half of the crossing to land in Siberia one week later. The first recorded kayak crossing of the Bering Straits was complete. Two of the Alaskan team, Martin and Arlene Leonard (on their honeymoon) crossed two weeks after that. Eight weeks later two kayaks were picked up 400 miles away near the arctic ice sheet. Robert and Pete's kayaks were never recovered. Trevor's 'Alaskan' was given to a Russian expedition centre. Greg's 'Alaskan' was given to the Eskimos of Little Diomed.

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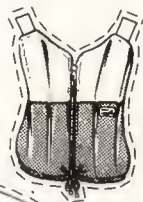
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THE WHITEWATER SAFETY WEEKEND

Nottingham 9/10 December 1989

The reason for the weekend was not really a reason just a mistake. . . .

and by now I should have learnt from it, having made this mistake before! I returned from the Safety Conference in April (?) that Colin Tee and Sam Cooke ran having opened my big mouth and said that I was in the wrong room having arrived in the room and heard nothing but rescue; everything was about rescue and nothing about Safety, nothing about avoiding the need for rescue. Nothing wrong about this except I mentioned it in passing while at home "Ah mum they just took the easy option talking about numbers and how to solve the problem once it had arrived" As I opened my mouth I realised that I had made a mistake, Mum came back with "Who's they?" and from then it was downhill all the way. I'd been down this path before and ended up running a 'Maurice Rothwell thank you slalom' years ago. The argument goes "Who is they?", "the BCU", "who's that" "canoeists" "aren't you one?" (the trick question if I reply no, then I have to find a way round "it's time to stop gallivanting around and settle down and get a job etc) the logic is obvious now! My mother is not one to argue with when she has the moral high ground!

Anyway, off I went to run my holidays in Turkey again thinking that time would solve this problem and I could quietly forget all about it. I didn't. I spent the summer paddling and trying to analyse my paddling to find why it worked, why I managed to stay upright so much. Also people would ask advice about how to do this and how to run that and general camp fire chat got me formalizing my ideas. Then Phil Bibby turned up on one of the last trips and noticed this unusual interest in this sort of thing and said "ere wot's going on?" I saw an opportunity and a volunteer, counted him in as a partner and then it was downstream all the way.

Enough of the garbage, what happened?

About 100 people turned up and paid £18.50 a head to listen to me and Phil and Wolfgang pontificate and put ourselves up on pedestals as experts though we tried to deny it saying that we were only expressing our views. We showed film and videos none of the ones advertised were shown but that did not matter too much as the replacements were better. Wolfgang Haibach's film of the AKC in New Zealand was not finished and Wolfgang did not want to show it unfinished. (Watch this space as I will be getting it over some time as soon as it is ready) instead he brought the 'Challenge of the Rockies' kayaking on the Malign and the first runs of Overlander Falls. If you are in Jasper in Alberta you can catch this film daily in the big hotel there but otherwise its a rare but great film over here. Also the first showing of Claude Castelain's new video of running the waterfalls and very steep rivers of the south of France (Corsica without the expense of the ferry).

Ah but what really happened. The Friday night just served as a gathering of the clans and an invasion of paddlers in a different location in Nottingham. A quick introduction and run down of what was going to happen followed by Claude Castelain's video.

Saturday morning was free for everyone to go Christmas shopping and paddling on the course while Phil and I rushed around getting the final bits organised (I was still organising my 'speech').

2pm and the main event started and kicked off with Phil talking on 'How to get the river Gods on your side'. This was the preparation side of paddling the assessment of risk. Without going into the details of actual grading Phil dealt how the grade, gauge readings and gradient would affect the difficulty of the rapid. Also how the type of rapid (drop pool or continuous etc) equipment, environmental factors and the strength of the group affect the paddlers decisions.

Next I tried to cover the on the water side of things dividing this into paddling techniques and river techniques and including how to organise the group on the water and the need for discipline in

knowing the whereabouts of every one in your group. River technique dealing with positioning and angle of attack on the river. Which way do you want to face on the way down and where and how are you going to run the rapid are you going to eddy hop or crash attack the rapid. Paddling technique was an attempt to try and show people how to paddle on dry land. Starting with the basic that a high brace is how to dislocate your shoulder and get off work on Monday. There is not much more to paddling technique on white water than keeping a low paddle action. You do not need to examine the paddle shaft for woodworm or metal fatigue on the river; you should have done this before getting on the river. Other points mentioned was how that anticipation of the next problem or paddle stroke coming up is more important than paddling flat out no matter what.

Wolfgang Haibach then having been asked to talk on the German attitude rewrote his speech as Phil and I had covered much of the same ground and he felt that he would be just repeating the same ideas. Instead he gave an account of the death of a Friend of his, analysing all the factor that lead to the drowning, starting with the 18 hour drive which not only increased tiredness but also increased the need to paddle to compensate for the drive and then the mistakes in the assessment and execution of the run.

After dinner of pizza and salad (thanks Tracy) thrown together at the last minute as a result of flu wiping out the cooking staff, the rest of the evening was film video and informal discussion (oh yes, some beer was drunk).

Sunday morning EARLY and the hall had to be cleared and day two activities started. This was a four ring circus with groups rotating around. Dr Andy Watt ran a resuscitation course, Phil Bibby ran a throwbag Rodeo with people trying to throw throwbags through pegs in the ground. (Next time we run one of these weekends we will make it entry by successful throw) Graham Wardle and Stuart Wagstaf filled in the rescue bits at very short notice (Saturday night) as a result of a couple of no shows, thanks a million. I dealt with equipment; the questions you should be asking about your equipment. Do you really need that tow line on the life jacket if so how strong or weak do you want it to be. Helmets Ace or Protec or motorcycle? pros and cons of all three types.

If this does not make sense then you should have been there. If you were, then you may have written one of the following quotes about the weekend:

- ◆ Bril - an opportunity to meet new people and get new ideas and shed any remaining vestiges of our clubs mentality.
- ◆ Confirmed some ideas, ruined some ideas - with good reasons and gave some new ideas to try and think about. It worked for me thanks Suzanne.
- ◆ Learnt I'd been doing somethings right but lots wrong but now I know to think. Kevin.

Where to from here

- Run some more to recoup some of mine and Phil's time and money!
- Regular page in Canoe Focus and Canoeist on safety and rescue ideas
- More talk in pubs and clubs discussing (not arguing) ideas and learning from them
- Safety video - Anyone got any money to fund one? It needs lots of money if it is going to be professional and be worth while.
- Remember it is the margin of control that matters 'I only made one mistake before being sucked into a religious experience!'

by Dave Manby



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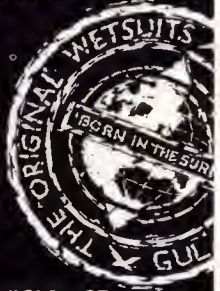
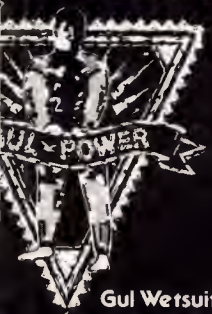
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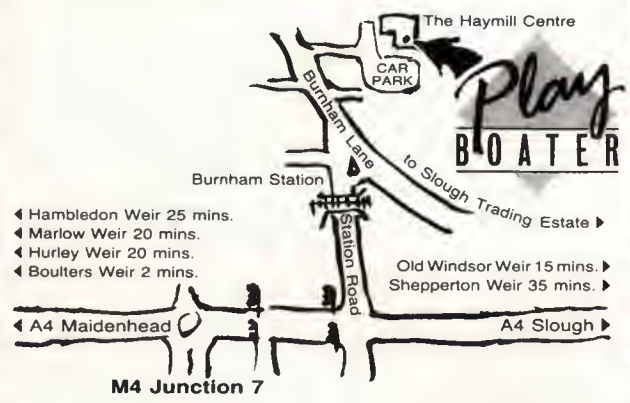
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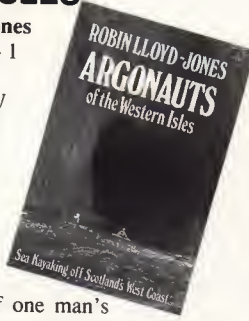
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ARGONAUTS OF THE WESTERN ISLES

by Robin Lloyd-Jones
 ISBN 0 906371-03-1
 Diadem
 Available from BCU
 Supplies £10.95
 members £11.95
 non-members.
 reviewed by
 Nigel Foster



I found this an easy to read tale of one man's exploration of the coast and islands of Western Scotland. The incidents, precious moments and many journeys, often humorously described in this book are gathered from more than 25 years of the author's wanderings in this classic sea kayaking area.

The title refers to the author's first sea kayak, which he named the 'Argos' after the ship in which Jason set out in search of the Golden Fleece. Yet it was on the river Leven that runs into the Clyde that Robin Lloyd-Jones launched on his precarious introduction to kayaking. A herd of wading cows, bricks thrown from bridges, rusty bedsteads, and hails of stones from 'pint-sized cowboys' decided the author and his companion Archie to 'stick to the sea... it's safer'. At first their learning was haphazard, by luck and accident, before they short-cut the painful lessons and joined a training course.

The Clyde being within spitting distance of his home, the author had an obvious base from which to venture out with increasing skill and confidence towards the inner, then the outer Isles. Journeys in many of the classic West coast areas are described vividly. Here is not the world of derring-do or death or glory, but one of human decisions and whims of weather that make up so much of interesting sea kayaking. For example, when at the end of a perfect day the dark hoards of midges descend on newly discovered flesh on the Garvellachs, what better decision might there be than to use the long summer twilight and head for the island of the eternal breeze, Belnahua. Then of course the breeze that held the midges at bay blew to a storm and kept them at bay too. And of course there is no fresh water on Belnahua!

No sea kayaking experience is complete without the off the water exploration, discovery and simple living. The author captures this balance well with tempting snippets of local history, descriptions of things natural such as the flower-rich Machair, the brilliant blues and greens of the shallow waters over the white shell sands, the thick stemmed kelp that shelters the otter, the singing of the Monach seals. And of course companionships, that often lead to humorous moments. It is a book heavy with images that brought me close with my own memories of the Western Isles, the hidden secrets that many hold as their own, and brewing up on driftwood fires.

Eighteen maps and insets give positions to the place names in the narrative, from Ailsa Craig to the south, the Monachs to the west, Lewis to the north and the 'depe holepool' of Corryreckan sucking in the middle. A sample selection of enticing colour photographs are

positioned in the centre of the book.

In all a pleasantly lighthearted book for the armchair paddler and for the sea paddler with places to go.

THE BASIC ESSENTIALS OF CANOEING

by Cliff Jacobson
 ISBN 0-934802-39-4 Gazelle RRP £3.95
 Reviewed by Dave Halsall

The Basic Essentials of Canoeing is an American publication which deals with some of the many aspects of the open canoe. There are chapters on canoe design, construction and accessories, canoe transport, basic paddling strokes, whitewater paddling, other hazards and river rescue. All this information is contained in 64 pages and the shortness of the book and the areas that have been attempted to be covered is the book's major downfall. No book in 64 pages can attempt to cover the rich tapestry that is the sport of open canoeing - not unless the book is contained on microdot! The description of some of the paddling techniques is factually incorrect, the text is at times hard to follow and a few of the diagrams are too small to be seen clearly, unless the reader is using a hand lens. On a positive note I was glad to see that the book contained a description of the "hut" stroke, as used in the sit and switch method of paddling, so many books on the open canoe do not embrace recent advances in paddling techniques.

Anyone wanting to purchase a book to assist them with their canoeing technique would do much better to buy Bill Mason's "Path of the Paddle" from BCU Supplies, this would be a more advantageous investment.

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Regional Round Up

ENGLISH REGIONS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

No, this is not another committee! Council agreed that the Committee for English Affairs should be re-named the English Regions Management Committee.

It was felt that this would reflect more accurately the role of the committee within the BCU and the development of canoeing.

EASTERN

Ron Hodgson was re-elected as Chairman at the AGM for a further term of two years and Mike Lewis as Treasurer has joined the committee. Notable residual vacancies exist for marathon, sprint and wild water representatives. The committee has a core programme and set meeting dates until the next AGM in December 1990. There are most encouraging signs for 1990. The polo section has an active and ambitious programme of development. The touring section is getting co-ordinated and the highly successful slalom side is expecting to maintain its excellent record at home and abroad. With the change in the membership fee structure and the ability to raise revenue directly the region wants to develop a progressive programme of regional canoeing.

EAST MIDLANDS

Following our AGM a decision was made to run the region using five county sub-committees, each representing their own county. This will give you a direct line to your Regional Committee via your County Liaison Officer and team.

This move will give greater involvement and assistance not only to established paddlers but particularly at grass roots level. This is your chance to make your Region work for you. Experienced help is available, just ask!

We will be publishing a Regional Newsletter every two months, which will be circulated to all clubs, but a personal copy can be received by sending a supply of stamped addressed envelopes to me: Pearl Mulholland, 23 Riddings, Allestree, Derby DE3 2GD. Any information, comments announcements etc to me by the copy date 14 March 1989.

Your regional committee would like to wish you Happy Paddling in 1990.

LONDON & SOUTH EAST

At the Regional AGM Brin Hughes, our chairman, was presented with the BCU Award of Merit by Ron Hodgson, chairman of the English Regions Management Committee. In view of the enormous amount of work that Brin has carried out, over many years, on behalf of the Region - never mind the many other canoeing 'hats' that he wears - this award was richly deserved.

Maidstone CC have started building the first stage of their new club house. This consists of the ground floor showers, changing facilities and a boat storage area - costing £23,000. The new building should be open in the spring of 1990.

Don't forget to visit the Regional stand at Crystal Palace for all the dates and details of regional events, including the white water training weekend at Holme Pierrepont.

NORTHERN

David Taylor and Robin Everingham continue as Chairman and Secretary following the AGM on 23 November. The new Vice-Chairman is Jerry Tracey, who will chair the Northumbria group. Many thanks to Paul Kelly who has had to stand down due to job pressures but will continue as a member of the committee. There is a vacancy for Treasurer, which will be filled as soon as possible. A vote of thanks was passed thanking Keith Lambley, who had served as Treasurer for nine years.

The canoeing calendar for the region is being arranged by Mary Armstrong (7 Dryburn Park, Durham Moor, Durham DH1 5AD). Please send dates and event details to her but before doing so please check that your date does not clash with other events already fixed. We want to avoid a repeat of the clashes experienced in 1989.

The regional wild water championship and training day is on 4 February - details in handbook. Contact Geoff Turner for details for the annual polo league (31 Rathmore Gardens, North Shields NE30 2SX)

NORTH WEST

At the AGM held at Adlington and sponsored by Sunray GP, a vote of thanks was extended to our outgoing Chairman Linda Halton. The new NW Region Chairman is Chris Bolton. He can be assured of the full support of the committee and, we hope, the membership. Chris is an active paddler. Your active support and encouragement will help prevent him turning into a pure administrator!

A vacancy now exists as Regional Treasurer. Clubs are advised that the Committee would welcome a representative to attend committee meetings. If a club would like to host the next AGM, please inform any member of the committee, a full list will be published in the Newsletter.

Manchester CC will be organising a slalom at the start of the season, to give paddlers a chance of getting used to competitions again. Clubs will be informed of the date.

Tour dates: March 4 - Peak Forest Canal and R Tame: May 5/6 - R Dee.

SOUTHERN

The AGM was held at Marlow on 29 November when the Chairman, Charles Hicks, drew attention to the Committee's support for the training of trainers and referees and its belief in the advantages of canoe clubs offering a wide range of canoeing and social activities - so that people who are attracted to canoeing remain in the sport. Particular objectives for 1990 are the creation of a Regional Polo League, more regional tours, preparation of waterways guides, introduction of 'hare and hounds' events and putting the region on a better financial footing. Other officers, elected at the AGM, were: Roy Lawrence, Vice-Chairman, Ian Davey, Treasurer, and Jerry Rogers, Secretary (telephone 0344 775946).

The region has bought shares in Thames Water - to keep in touch with developments and have a voice when required. The Treasurer (telephone 0252 621381) would like to know, in confidence, of members and clubs who have bought shares either in Thames Water, or Southern Water.

SOUTH WEST

Well done the 50 or so paddlers who raised some £250 for the Yorkshire Derwent Trust at the River EXE tour on 29 October. Please note that a tour on the River Torridge is programmed for 11 February. This is a little known river and support for the Touring representatives will help to open up more water for recreation and competition. Details of the programme from Dennis Walls, 71 Butts Road, Exeter. SAE please. Richard Ward's successful sprint/marathon clinics will continue in the New Year. Write to Richard, c/o Kirton Kayaks, Crediton.

We need more instructors who can help with teaching canoeists with a disability. Endorsement courses can be organised so that the Region's canoeists can play a full part in this key priority of the Sports Council. Don't forget to read the SW part of Access Extra, in this issue.

WEST MIDLANDS

The regional AGM was held on 6 December. Officers elected included Chairman - Brian Porter (0886 32227), Vice Chairman - Mike Nicholls (021 360 2136), Secretary - Malcolm Freeman (021 520 7861).

The regional river guide is about to be reprinted. Copies available from Mike Nicholls at a cost of £3.50. The new regional handbook will be available at Crystal Palace or from the secretary. The regional touring and recreation committee has a full programme of events including the 'Doggy-paddle' and the 'Transplant Paddlathon' planned for 1990. Contact Dave Bateman (021 772 3739) for details.

Chris Neale of Kinver Canoe Club won the region super paddler competition at Paddlers Day. The team competition was won by Kinver Canoe Club. Following the success of the 1989 event it will be run on 4 November 1990 at Sneyd Community Centre, Bloxwich. The BCU will be having a stand, manned by Solihull, Canoe Club, at the Birmingham Boat and Leisure Show in February.

Finally, congratulations to Brian and Ann Porter on the birth of a daughter, Heather, on 18 November.

YORKS & HUMBERSIDE

For the second year running members of the region voted unanimously at their AGM to continue with the £10 donation from clubs and organisations affiliated to the BCU to help finance the work of the region. The number of coaching areas has now been increased to seven by splitting West Yorkshire into Yorkshire Pennine and Yorkshire Central and splitting North Yorkshire into Yorkshire Dales and Yorkshire Moors. Any member of the coaching scheme who has not received details of their new coaching area should contact John Richardson (0904 708840) or the RCO Sam Cook (0423 711287). The following courses have been arranged for early 1990. White water racing coach and competition trainer with John Handyside 3/4 March. Race trainer weekend with Brian Greenaway 24/25 March. Slalom competition trainer course Tuesdays 13, 20, 27 February with Alan Edge at Kirkstall 7-10pm. For further details contact Marianne Spender (0422 882908)

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Dear Focus

PIRATES ON THE DART

I am writing to express the anger that I felt on Sunday 12 November, when I saw four pirate canoeists on the Upper Dart. I had just left a group of experienced canoeists at Newbridge ready to paddle the Middle Dart for which they had gained access, along with many others. These canoeists would rather have been on the upper stretch, but were keeping to the access agreement.

Are these 'Pirates' so self-centred and thick skinned that they do not realise that while they enjoy themselves, they are risking the right of other canoeists to enjoy this water at any time. We are continually having to fight for the right to canoe our rivers in the South West - soon we will not have anywhere to go. Will these people be happy then? I expect they won't care.

Kerry Thorne
(secretary Wellington Kayak Club)

SAFETY - THINK ABOUT IT!

One wet and wild day not too long ago I led a group of four persons to paddle the Conwy in North Wales which on the day we went was well in flood! making most of is a Grade IIIc and with drops of IVc, IVd and even Ve! I knew the river quite well and with a bit of studying of the North Wales WW guide and an OS map I was well prepared. I had the route taped to the front of my boat so I knew where inspections of the river were required. My equipment and equipment of my group was well up to scratch and the experience level of the group was high.

I planned to paddle the Upper Conwy from Pennant Farm to Rhydlanfair Bridge. We changed and I left two to look after boats while two of us carried out the ritual of 'ferry the cars' so we had dry kit and a car at the finish. When we reached the farm to get in we had been joined by two other canoeists who asked if they could join our group. They were well kitted out with loads of new gear, asking the usual "wot rivers you dun then?". The answer came "Not too many but we've done the 'INN' in Austria - looks like a good day's paddling is in store!".

We seal launched in and within 4 seconds one of the two lads hit a tree - capsized and was swimming - no real problem, fish him out and start again. During the next 1/2km he has 3 more swims. While he was emptying his boat out I asked his buddy "why this river - a bit ambitious isn't it?" "Yes" he replied, "I've read the North Wales River Guide - it says the Conwy; 's a grade III, we've done grade III before - no real problem".

Paddling over to the one who was

getting back in to his boat I was debating throwing him off the river there and then, for his own safety, but I gave him one more chance - anyway he swam again, lost his boat! I paddled across to him and he had one of those 'I've had enough' expressions written all over his face - this saved me the problem of trying to explain to him that this river is not for him! The rest of us recovered his boat and left it high and dry for him, and paddled the rest of the river. The lad who joined our group thanked me at the end and I think he realised his ambitions were a little high!

The water on the day was in flood, only 2 in the group, no qualified or experienced leader, the consequences of this are not worth thinking about!

The basic rules are:

- 1) Have a qualified, experienced leader
- 2) Minimum of 3 in a group
- 3) Read the water on the day - if its too big for you - no problem, its better to bottle out and drive home than to be driven home by Blue Light Taxi's!

Nig Powell, RAF COSFORD

SEXISM IN CANOEING

I would like to draw the attention of the membership to what I feel is a sexist attitude in canoeing.

I refer to the recent 'Paddles Up' event, in which all the accolades went to the overall winner, Ian Raspin, but the winner of the ladies' section, Joan Cawthray, was totally ignored.

This in no way takes anything away from Ian who won the event convincingly, but to ignore the ladies winner, who incidentally stood in at a moments notice due to the absence of the Russians, was, I believe, in very bad taste indeed. Many of the male paddlers I spoke to were of the same opinion.

Then there is the regionals event held at Llangollen where there are six male paddlers to one female for each region. I appreciate the fact that there are a lot more male paddlers than female, but surely one female is not a good representation of any one region. The very least should have been one lady (senior) and one lady (junior) similar to the mens section.

Many people are making statements of how the standard of canoeing in the ladies divisions is decreasing, I would like to know in what ways! Even Roger Fox at the British Open remarked on how well the ladies had improved in rolling and recovery strokes.

No matter how much the BCU and other bodies deny sexual discrimination, events such as these seem to prove otherwise.

(From Bev Jones)

A LADY CANOEIST!

TO THE UNKNOWN CANOEIST

Last weekend, my husband and I came to visit the Llangollen Railway. Whilst my husband was working, my sister-in-law and I walked along the river watching your canoeists at the Mike Jones Rally. Unfortunately whilst doing so I fell over some barbed wire and must have lost my purse and keys.

I am therefore writing to praise the honesty of the unknown canoeists who found them and passed them on to one of your stewards, who kindly checked the details and handed them over to us.

At the time I was too relieved to really convey my thanks to those unknown persons, which I hope you will do.

Mrs Rogers, Cheshire

CANOEIST OR NOT?

Over the last few years I have read umpteen articles and letters that have been published in 'Focus', concerning access agreements, and disagreements.

Every canoeist, in their own right, will at some time, air their views and ideas that they have on the subject. This is only to be expected, and depending on what form it takes, can be seen as a healthy and productive way to move forward on this traditionally volatile subject.

Now, you don't have to be too much of an intellect to agree that there are more canoeists on the rivers now, compared to even two or three years ago!

When two armies go to war, its not the army with the greater number of soldiers that wins, its the army that has a common understanding amongst its soldiers, whose soldiers understand why they are fighting and who they are fighting. There are however, two other very important ingredients that make up the successful army: All the soldiers understand that they must support each other. They must also be seen to support each other.

At the moment I am very disillusioned about the support that we are giving each other. For example: I live very close to the River Dart. This year, access agreements have changed, because a few isolated incidents last season meant that the riparian owners decided to restrict canoeing even more. However, after many hours of talks, the local Access negotiators managed to agree a longer season than last year on the popular Newbridge section, they also prevented the plan, of canoeists being charged to paddle this section from going into action. There is also a chance of lengthening the season on other sections of the river. And one very prominent riparian owner has been extremely helpful on these issues.

I feel very strongly, that we should protect what we have, and if anyone is not conforming to the new agreement, I have explained it to them. The vast majority of the canoeists are willing to stick to it. The local canoeists want to be able to paddle the river as much as possible for the years to come, and so are willing to stick to the agreements in the hope of a better agree-

ment next year. There are still the occasional selfish canoeists (if they can be called that) who knowingly infringe on the agreement. These single actions completely undermine the work done by the access negotiators, and also jeopardise canoeing for local paddlers and anyone else who wishes to come down here.

We may be paddling rivers for different reasons, but what we all commonly want to do is paddle. If we can't get our 'act' together and give ourselves support on this issue, we will always be a weak body of people, and access will never improve.

I can only see access being squashed even more, so long as there are the few selfish individuals who refuse to think of the rest of us before they act.

If only we would all agree, that if there is an agreement on a river, we need to stick to it.

Nigel Lang, South Devon.

For details of the access agreement on the Dart, contact Kevin Chamberlain on (036) 43215.

PHOTO COMPETITION

Regarding the 2nd place entry in the photo competition published in the December issue. The 'quiet river' that flows through this section of the Roy George is a few miles of continuous grade III to IV (IV-V at high water) with a grade VI portage. Lee Frost notes that 'any one of you could have taken [the photo] had you been there'. Let me elaborate.

1. VANTAGE POINT

The shot was taken from water level, on a partially submerged ledge at the base of a 10-15 ft vertical rock face, on the opposite side of the river from the road. This means that you would have had to rock climb, swim, or canoe to the appropriate vantage point. (I canoed, carrying my 35mm camera and assorted lenses in two dry bags in the back of my boat.)

2. COOPERATION

You have to be with a group that is willing to tolerate your photographic nuances (or risk having no-one to canoe with). This means:

a) Slow-moving: sunny days are helpful, but the best way to keep things slow is to have safety-conscious canoeists who take the time to protect rapids with ropes, harnesses, etc.

b) You have to risk your companions good will by asking them to get out of the way because they are ruining the picture. Never mind the fact that they were there first, and that they quite wanted to see the next guy come down from the best possible vantage point.

c) Only one canoeist at a time on a small rapid like this. Otherwise it is far too likely that one will obscure the other, ruining the composition. Also, the photo can get cluttered, with no obvious centre of interest.

3. LIGHT

This was pure luck. It was extraordinary

that we arrived when the sun was just right. By the time we were gone, the raid was already in the shade.

4. TIMING

This also involves luck, but you have to be diligent as well. Getting the canoeist in just the right spot is hit or miss. The best way to increase your chances is to use a motor drive. I did not have one, and was glad to get one good shot from about 8 exposures.

5. EXPOSURE

I metered off the sky and trees and depended on the canoeist being in the sun. (NB the actual slide was brighter than the printed version in Canoe Focus, which was too dark.)

6. LENS CHOICE

Nothing exotic for the selected entry, (35 or 50) however I did try several focal lengths ranging from 24 to 50 mm.

That's all there is to it! Honest.

PS My congratulations to Brett Story on an excellent perspective of the falls of Leny. I've run and photographed that rapid several times, but it never felt or looked as scary as in his photo!

Mike Uschold, Edinburgh.

(Runner up in the photography competition)

VITRIOLIC REVIEW

I feel I must respond to the review by Bill Taylor of my second book, "Wild Water Canoeing".

He appears to have dipped his pen in vitriol and is playing a political game. We are all well aware that a stopper is a dangerous place, but with foreknowledge of ways of release, the hazards are minimised. In the book, six ways of escape are described and the method that particularly upsets Bill is described as "a last resort". The sentence reads, "If help is not available, then as a last resort remove your life-jacket, throw it over the stopper wave, and dive deep and out, recovering the life-jacket on the other side". He takes a statement out of context which is very misleading.

While canoeing with two other Senior Instructors, we were faced with this situation. No way could we effect a rescue, due to the power of the water and the greasiness of the rocks. My friend was enabled to gain release by using the knowledge criticised and throwing his buoyancy aid over the top and diving through the stopper; without this knowledge, Bob would be "bobbing" now.

High Telemark. If we look at the script, it is suggested that some canoeists move their upper arm behind the head, and it points out the risks. If Bill cannot cope with a bow rudder, a classic stroke, he should not be critical of folk who can develop this into a high stroke.

He also appears to be confused (but there is one in every group) between capsizing drills and confidence techniques for rolls and

rescues. There are, no doubt, mistakes in the text; the mistakes may not be as many as Bill has made in a paragraph, by omitting words and pre-fixes which change the context of the pieces he quotes in the review. To quote a sentence you must quote in full.

Fred Barlow, Cumbria

CANOE FINLAND NATURALLY

After much work over the last few years creating canoeing possibilities in Finland (a land full of waterways and forests) there has been formed a new project idea called "Canoe Finland Naturally".

This project is meant to coordinate all the best events/canoeing routes so that the intending canoeist may receive information concerning all the best possibilities available in Finland. Only quality and proven organisations are cooperating in this "Canoe Finland Naturally" project.

For more information please contact me, Steve Bowles, Laaksokatu 9, 18100 HEINOLA, FINLAND

ARCTIC CANOE RACE

Angus Fitchet made some extremely worthwhile comments in Canoe Focus no 62. However I would wish to expand on a couple of points.

The previous experience required is not that imperative - two of our party completed the D-W in 66 hours in an inflatable C2 (for charity) and entered the ACR to raise money for MS. Myself and my partner had only been paddling a marathon boat for nine months and had never been on white water in a K2 before! Both teams had only mastered the easier half of an eskimo roll and yet all completed the race!

The cost of an adventure to Finland can be very expensive, both in time and money but the financial cost may be minimised by competitors organising their own transport to the race. Ferries to Gottenburg sail from both Harwich and Newcastle but need to be booked about four months in advance (£130 per person, £120 per vehicle)

It is a brilliant race, well worth the entry fee (£30 each) and an experience not to be missed.

I would be very willing to give further information and advice on organising a trip.

Lt David Drinkall, R. SIGNALS, 29 Folly Crescent, Watchfield, Shrivenham, Swindon, Wilts, SN6 8SE.

Arctic Canoe Race details available from Lukiotu 10, 95400, Tornio, FINLAND.

Letters to the editor of Canoe Focus (especially short ones) are very welcome and always replied to, even if space does not permit publication. Write on any canoeing subject to: The Editor, Canoe Focus, British Canoe Union, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5AS

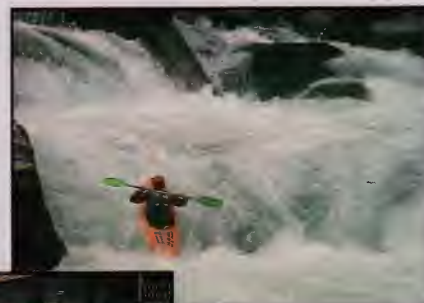


COLCA

Fred Wondre describes a journey down the world's deepest canyon

"Five kayaks Sir? We will have to weigh these". We pushed the lightest one under the baggage counter. "That will be £1200 excess baggage". Chris leapt into action. He has a way with irritating officialdom, after all we had been promised that they would be free. Half an hour later we were seated comfortably and on our way to Peru. After 19 hours we touched down at Lima. We had been warned about Peru and Lima in particular. No valuables on show, don't let anything moveable out of your sight. Dante, the man from the South American Expedition Centre met us. Four of the kayaks were loaded into the back of an estate car, the fifth one went on top. Before we could do anything about it he jumped into the car and they drove off shouting "Take the taxi behind and follow us". We turned round. There was the taxi - with a flat tyre! A fortune in Pyranha mountainbats was disappearing out of Lima airport. The flat was replaced by a slick with a patch at an agonizingly slow speed. But all was well, Dante waited.

The approach to Lima stunned us into silence. Most of the buildings were unfinished. 20ft high factory walls were surmounted by concrete pill boxes with submachine guns.



The army was out in force at the scene of yesterday's guerilla attack. We flew out to Arequipa the next day.

We sat on the lawn of the Casa de mi Abuela, sipped beer in the hot sun and planned our assault on the Colca, the world's deepest canyon. There was a slight problem, there was no bus the next day. Half an hour on a dark street corner by a traffic light solved that problem. Every truck that stopped was accosted with "Huambo 50 dolares". Alfredo in his Nissan pick-up agreed to meet us the next day at 08.00 hrs. He turned up at 10.30, about right by

Peruvian standards. Kayaks were tied on, kit was thrown in, then we climbed on top. We set off in sunshine and drove through some of the driest desert in the world. Eight hours later, after a few detours into remote valleys, we rolled into Huambo at dusk frozen stiff and shaken up by the dirt roads. There was no hotel. We met three Scots guys who had been negotiating for donkeys all day. They lit a candle in the police station to register our passports. We crowded into Susan's, the only 'shop' which doubled as a 'restaurant'. Nick keeled



over half way through the meal. The medicine woman revived him with a mysterious potion kept under the counter. We had a look later on and found a bottle with dead snakes in a white liquid. They found us sleeping accommodation where they bedded us down on the floor between Llama skins. They take recycling seriously in Huambo, there are no loos, public or private. You go and fertilise the fields behind the house. About lunch time the next day the Scots moved out with three donkeys. Negotiations continued for ours. We insisted on moving out today, typical gringos.

Finally it happened. We set off through stunning scenery of a vast expanse of terraces spread across the valley high above the Rio Huambo. We walked until it was too dark to see. At 4am we were rudely awakened, time to move out. We crept out of our down sleeping bags and bivvies. The two Peruvians had sat under the trees with a blanket. Breakfast consisted of sweet fried bread and tomatoes. We continued our walk along precipitous bare mountain sides on a path only a few inches wide in places. Sometimes there was only a steep scree slope of fine slippery sand. We walked for 8 hours following the intestinal machinations of donkeys at close quarters. The one behind me would drop back then pick up speed and gallop up behind me with a loaded kayak strapped to its back protruding over its head! Finally we reached Canco, a wonderful green oasis by the Colca river, in this vast barren landscape.

A leisurely lunch supplemented by fresh trout from the river preceded the inevitable moment of terror at the start of any long hard river: where were we going to put all the stuff lying scattered about? In the end it all fitted and we adjusted to paddling boats full of kit. There was a wonderful sense of security in feeling the laden mountainbat push through deep holes. Our first day was an easy warm up of 2 hours. The campsite was idyllic. Pristine sand with clumps of bamboo 2.5 miles down in the inaccessible Colca Canyon. Visited only by Condors, otters and very occasionally by small groups of an extremely rare semi-aquatic biped species which sheds its skin every night. Naturalist are not quite sure why this happens but have observed that the creature quickly resumes its normal appearance after coffee in the morning.

The second day was glorious, and uninterrupted series of hard, grade V rapids. Each of us would take a turn at leading rapids when we felt good. Visions of churning white water between rocks, carefully studied and analysed. Then the total commitment as theory was tested in practice. Closely spaced drops, water pounding into rock. Stoppers that drag you back in and then loop fully loaded boats clear of the towback. Soaring crumbling canyon walls baking in the sun. Condors circling high above eyeing the intruders in their domain. The smell of sulphur from hot springs. Small mineral laden streams cutting deep gorges in the canyon walls. The sharp lung-bursting strain of fighting a wave. The icy shock as the world goes dark. The elation of a hard rapid run well. These filled our day and left us with tired aching limbs. We sprawled around the campfire with the minimum of movement. The woodsmoke curled upwards into a dark

sky filled with strange stars.

The next day the inevitable happened. We had entered a narrow section of the canyon with smooth vertical walls. The water was fast and just ahead it disappeared over a perfectly smooth edge. Dark canyon walls loomed beyond. We crowded into a tiny eddy. This was 'Blind Rapid'. Our instructions said 'grade V, right, middle, right'. Not very reassuring really. Somebody tried climbing up the rock, took one step and fell in the water. There was no point in putting it off so we went for it. Chris disappeared over the edge. There was no scream, no flailing paddle, no wildly looping boat. Just the ominous roar of the river filling the canyon. I followed close behind. We met briefly in a wild eddy and decided I would take the next drop first. We met up again behind a large rock in the middle of the river. Nick came past at speed. He seemed to get pinned on a rock wall. Ian came past and took the last drop, then Terry. The last drop was the biggest and had a corkscrew stopper at the bottom. We regrouped in a quiet eddy.

After that the river eased. At the end there was a flat 20km paddle out. We livened this up by drifting down rafted up and spinning off the banks. Until we hit some Mangrove and three of us rolled under in quick succession. Images of submerged roots filled the mind as we frantically groped for paddles - any paddle - to roll up again.

From Apalao we took a bus back to 'Civilisation'. Life on the river had been beautifully simple and free of stress. Still we were in need of coffee and cream cakes to get ready for our next Peruvian river.

The Colca Team:

Fred Wondre, Terry Dawson, Mick Hopkins, Chris Sladden and Ian Walsh.



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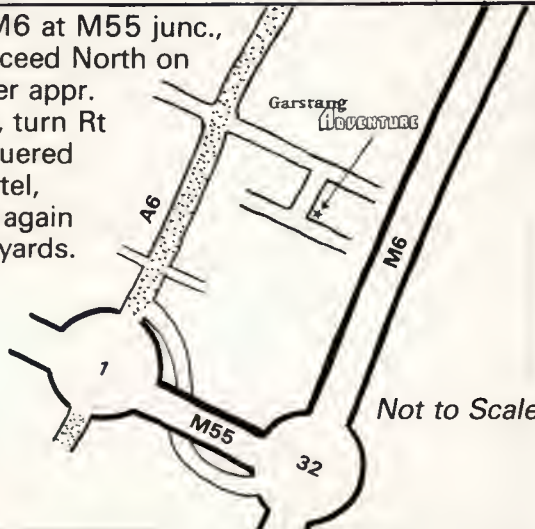
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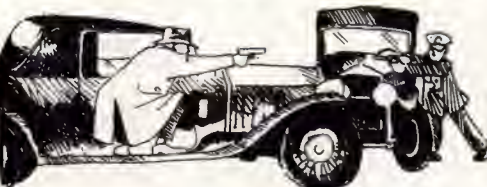
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At the Canoe Exhibition, you will find:

THE TRADE STANDS

At least 100 stands will be present packed full of lovely gear, the latest goodies, everything you've ever wanted in the way of plastic, fibreglass, neoprene, fluorescence, buoyancy etc etc will be on display. Its the best chance you'll get all year to convince yourself that you really do need that extra boat, pair of paddles, wetsuit, nosewarmer and its only money after all, so get down there and spend it!

THE VOLUNTARY STANDS

Every single BCU Committee in the whole world (and that's quite a few) has a stand at the Canoe Exhibition, so if you've been trying without success all year to contact the Secretary of the Surfing Backwards on a Yellow Lilo Committee, now's your chance, they'll be there, in Hall 4, along with Slalom, Marathon, Racing, Access, Coaching, Lifesaving, Expeditions and much, much more.

CANOEING FOR PERSONS WHO ARE DISABLED

An Open Forum for all who are interested in the provision of canoeing for persons who are disabled, is to be held at 1400 on Saturday 17 February at the International Canoe Exhibition. The venue will be confirmed in the Programme or on the Canoeing for the Disabled Stand (Indoor Football Pitch)

BCU HEADQUARTERS

You can even renew your membership! - bright and early in time for the summer season - meet the BCU staff, tell them how wonderful they are, and if you **do** have any problems, there'll be someone on hand to sort you out (in the nicest possible way).

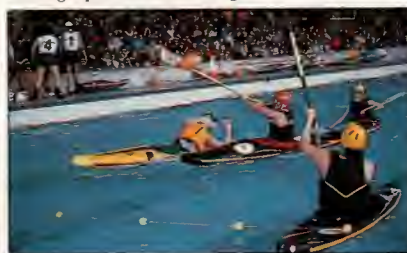
THE LECTURES

You can hear about all the exciting things done by the people who were organised and went away canoeing last year. This Exhibition, the lectures include "Smoke and Thunder River" (the Zambezi) - see page 12 and the story of an eventful crossing of the Bering Straits - see page 28. Jochen Schweitzer will also be appearing, with his innocuous sounding "kayak show", featuring the various things one can get up to in a Topolino (should I rephrase that ??Ed), by popular demand, the film, 'Family Mad', and finally Jim Hargreaves, with 'Polar Walking' (what kind of canoe's that)

THE POOL

If you're not a canoe polo fan already, after watching the 1990 Oceanworld National Canoe Polo Championships, you'll be hooked for life. This is your chance to see polo at its best, in a world class pool with world class players. These girls and boys mean business - (when they retire from polo, they often take up nice gentle games like ice hockey). As well as polo there are old favourites like the national pool slalom finals, hand rolling competitions, 'come and try it' - eg try out a squirt boat and discover for yourself why everyone raves about them so much. AND this year for the first time will be a display of Open Canoeing Skills: if you thought it wasn't possible to roll these babies, you might just be.... but I won't give anything else away, find out for yourselves on the 17th.

Photograph Carl Goulding



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BCU02 Diary Wallet. Blue with silver logo, incorporates Diary/Year Planner, large pocket compartment for personal notes and two credit/business cards.	1.80	1.50
BCU03 1990 Year Planner Insert. Year Planner only. For use with diary wallet.	1.00	.80
BCU04 Key Ring. Leather, blue with silver logo design, holds several keys.	1.05	.85
BCU05 Members' Sew On Badge. Oval shaped cloth members' badge, blue logo and edging on white background, colourfast.	N/A	1.00
BCU06 Blazer Badge. Square cloth badge for blazers, embroidered logo in silver, black background.	N/A	1.50
BCU07 Members' Tie. Navy blue with two diagonal stripes and logo depicted in white, machine washable.	N/A	3.90
BCU08 Tie Pin/Lapel Badge. Stick pin suitable for ties or lapels, blue logo on silver coloured metal disc.	N/A	1.50
BCU09 Canoe Lock. Tough plastic coated cabling, length 11 feet, to be used with a padlock for securing canoe and paddle(s) on roof rack or to a fixed point ie. tree. Approved to the standard required to validate BCU Membership insurance. Padlock not supplied.	6.90	5.90
BCU10 Smurf Canoeist.	2.25	1.75
BCU11 Cadet Badge. Round cloth badge for cadets, pictures smurf canoeist in colour on a white background, colourfast.	N/A	.50
BCU12 'I ♥ Canoeists!' Button Badge.	.30	.20
BCU13 'I do it . . . with the British Canoe Union' Button Badge.	.30	.20
BCU14 Keepsafe. Brightly coloured water-tight cylinder, screw-top, can be conveniently worn around the neck. Colours: Dayglo orange, Dayglo pink, yellow, red, royal blue.	1.80	1.50
BCU16 Hip Flask. Smart 4oz flask, blue leather outer with BCU heraldic emblem in gold.	12.50	10.50
BCU17 Darts Case. In blue leather with BCU logo.	2.95	2.25

STATIONERY

STA01 KANU '90 Calendar. Twelve high gloss, full colour views capturing the calm and serenity of backwoods travel and the rage and thunder of white water. 555mm x 300mm.	11.50	10.50
STA03 Greetings Card. "Shooting the Rapids" colourful print of the Mattawa River, blank for special messages.	.80	.65
STA06 Licence/ID Sticker Holder. This clear plastic, self-adhesive envelope enables the transfer of your sticker between your boats. One required for each boat.	N/A	.35
STA07 Exhibition Postcard. Colourful scene depicting the Canoe Exhibition at Crystal Palace.	.15	10.
STA08 Pendant Pen. Ballpoint pen with a handy rope for wearing round your neck with BCU logo top.	1.60	1.40
STA09 Pencil Rubber. BCU logo in blue.	.45	.35
STA10 Kanu Alpin '90 Calendar.	11.50	10.50
STA11 'What Breakout?' Poster. Full colour, 590 mm x 420 mm (portrait).	2.45	1.95



GUIDES AND MAPS

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GAM01 Guide to the Waterways of the British Isles.	4.50	3.50
GAM07 Canoe Touring in East Anglia.	3.10	2.60
GAM10 Broadlands Map.	1.30	1.25
GAM11 River Thames Map. Lechlade to Richmond.	2.80	2.35
GAM12 River Severn Map.	1.30	1.05
GAM13 Canoeists' Guide to the River Wye.	1.55	1.20
GAM14 River Wye Map.	1.30	1.05
GAM15 Austrian & Bavarian River Guide.	7.00	6.00
GAM16 Alpine White Water Guide.	4.60	3.60
GAM17 French River Notes.	.50	.30
GAM18 Canoeists' Map of French Rivers.	8.85	7.85
GAM20 River Allier Guide. French text.	5.00	4.10
GAM21 River Eyre and Leyre Guide. French text.	4.25	3.50
GAM23 River Cele Guide. French text.	5.55	4.80
GAM24 River Charente Guide. French text.	.30	.20
GAM25 River Yonne Guide. French text.	.30	.20
GAM27 Where to Launch Your boat.	5.05	4.25
GAM28 A Canoe Guide to Northern Ireland.	2.95	2.25
GAM29 A Scottish White Water Guide.	3.50	2.50
GAM30 River Thames Guide - Ordnance Survey.	5.50	5.35
GAM31 Home Pierrepont Users' Guide.	2.20	2.00
GAM32 Guide to Rivers of the West Midlands.	5.40	4.40
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GAM36 Canoeists Guide to East Anglia.	3.00	2.50

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STK01 'I love Canoeing' Sticker. Strip Design 215mm x 45mm, for windows, red heart, blue letters.	.60	.50
STK02 'God Went Canoeing' Sticker. Wording reads '... and on the seventh day God went Canoeing' strip design 185mm x 70mm, self-adhesive reverse, three colour canoeist.	.60	.50
STK03 'Go Canoe a Kayak' Sticker. Strip design 185mm x 70mm, for applying to windows, three colour depicting a canoeist.	.60	.50

STICKERS Cont'd

	Non-Members Prices	Members Prices
STK05 'I'd Rather Be Canoeing' Sticker. Strip design 310mm x 45mm for windows, red and white.	.60	.50
STK06 'Oceans are Free' Sticker. Strip design, 185mm x 70mm, self-adhesive finish on reverse, sea canoeist silhouette, three colours.	.60	.50
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CLO01 Competition Cag. Lightweight with Scotsguard proofing and PU coated, velcro strap cuffs and collar fastener, elasticated waist and sleeve ends, striking red and royal blue with contrasting stripe, BCU Members' badge sewn on. Sizes: S, M, L.	19.70	18.70
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BLT26	Canoe Lifeguards Manual. Eight booklets covering awards and training, equipment, first aid, accident prevention and reading water and weather conditions presented in a ring binder.	11.50	10.50
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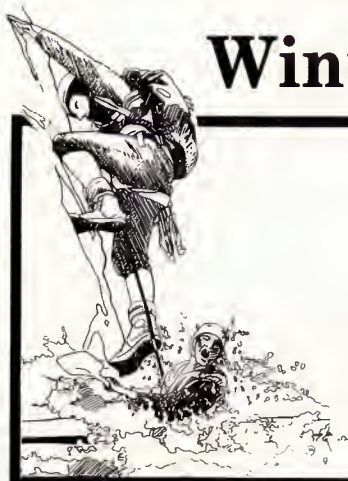
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National Centre for Mountain Activities

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 - 10 March: KARAKORAM CLIMBS 1989; Doug Scott
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A SPORTS COUNCIL CENTRE



Classified

Advertise in *Canoe Focus Classified* for only 25p per word (plus VAT). (BCU members private sales ads are free of charge). Boxed ads £10 per column cm. Write to *Canoe Focus Classified*, Adbolton Lane, Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham NG2 5AS, cheques payable to British Canoe Union. Please note only pre-paid ads are accepted.

FOR SALE

Arrowcraft/Pyranha. Flyte slalom kayak. Radical design with exceptional forward speed and acceleration. Only 2 months use. Diolen construction. Telephone York (0904) 659277.

Canadian 21ft Jensen Marathon C2 in kevlar. Used only 3 times, virtually new. Cost over £800, will accept first sensible offer. Lewes (0273) 472760 evenings..

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Coleman canadian canoe as new £250. Pyranha C2 Diolen construction good condition £120 ono. Telephone (0594) 36618 near Symonds Yat rapids.

Delphin 'Maxi' white water racing kayak. All kevlar - built by Gaybo. Well used but sound - an ideal training/beginners boat. £70 ono. Contact - Graham (0442) 219532 or (0923) 38472 (Hertfordshire).

GP GRP Kayak, good condition (foot rest) £70. Telephone (0602) 817609.

Junior Olympics (2), very good condition, diolen hulls, metallic jades, pink-purple and copper-brown. £100 each. Ripon (0765) 3925.

Kestrel sandwich construction, high performance sprint/marathon boat, with full wooden Gees seat, under stern rudder & footstrap, good condition, ideal for light-weight paddler under 10 stone £150 ono. Ziggy first, kevlar construction high performance slalom boat, cut down slightly in height making it an ideal boat for a smaller paddler, good condition and very light £140 ono. Dunstable (0582) 604361 after 9 pm.

Marine ply touring kayak with wooden paddles, very good condition £65 ono. Telephone Lincoln (0522) 537293.

Olymp TS Kayak, kitted out for instructing £180 ono, good condition. Telephone Michael Wardle (05395) 31888.

One red and yellow kevlar reinforced Snipe instructor canoe with sunken loops for decklines. Foot rest and buoyancy. Good condition. £70 ono. Telephone S Chard (0460) 20046 evenings and weekends only.

Open canoe 18ft 6in. We No Nah White-water X. Kevlar & PVC core stiffened Jensen design. Ideal from big water Arctic Canoe Racing to family tripping £500. North Wales (0248) 601032. Collect Crystal Palace?

Perception Sabre, little used £200. Also Snipe expedition £40. Rare seafarer sea kayak £40 and Bat Mk V mould £40. Telephone (0260) 279730.

Purpose built canoe trailer designed to carry 6 bat boats. All steel construction. Light board included. £80. Telephone (0706) 824454.

Pyranha Master, white water spec. 8 months old, peach, full plate footrest, ethafoam and airbag buoyancy, excellent condition, £250 no offers. Telephone Waltham Cross (0992) 38317.

Pyranha Premiere II, blue, immaculate condition, £250 ono. Telephone (0423) 780456.

Tim Ward 'Imp' Kayak and kit. Suit under 7 stone/5 foot individual £59 includes spray deck and paddles. Also: Helly Hansen long sleeved vests sizes small and medium, £1 each, wetsuits (small and medium) £5 each (little worn - purchased in error). All in sound condition and clean! will deliver within reason. Julian Stoelker (0494) 712164.

Thule roof rack for Austin Maestro £20. Telephone (0892) 823900.

Trailer, 6 boat spaces. Mini wheels, tailboard and lights £125 ono. Lancer K1, overstem rudder, translucent red. Old but good condition £125 ono. Telephone Medway area (0634) 389469.

Trailer, for 8 boats and gear £200 ono or swap for T-Canyon or similar. C1 slalom, tatty, glassfibre, £50. Dancer holed and roughly repaired £100. Telephone Shropshire (05884) 419.

Triango Trailer Tent, 4 berth, low weight, very good condition. Rack will take 5 slalom kayaks. All 4 berth sleeping area is above ground. Will deliver up to 50 miles £500. Telephone Scunthorpe (0724) 733168.

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WANTED

Due to so many requests for information from people wishing to collect, exchange or part with various magazines, books, archive material & memorabilia about canoeing, either for the BCU archive & library or for private collectors please contact Clive & Felicity Gritten for further details on (069) 260 877.

K2 for scout group - reasonably competitive. Please ring Brian on (021) 706 9359 with details & price. Birmingham area.

Klepper Aerius II with or without sails. (0895) 449638.

Owner of two-seater Aerius folding canoe seeks partner for international Danube Tour in 1990. Telephone (0544) 318275.

Plastic kayaks for general purpose use. Dancers or Europas ideal. Must be good condition below £200. Can be collected. Contact Carolyne on (021) 451 3726.

LOST AND FOUND

If anyone has any information concerning the location of two canoes: white Perception Mirage and yellow Pyranha Master, which went missing from the bank of the Llugwy

River by Jim's Bridge in Capel Curig on the 29 October 1989, please ring this number (0492) 593968.

New Wave paddles found at Symonds Yat. Telephone Alan Carter (0932) 762167.

Would the C2 paddler who lent me a roll of tape on the Exe Descent please contact me so that I can return it. Telephone S E Brown (0494) 22908.

PERSONAL

Asian Marriage and Friendship Bureau, welcomes non-Asians, multiple advantage, wider choice, Dept canoe, 181 Melton Road, Leicester. Telephone (0533) 610266.

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Canoeing Fabrics, breathable waterproofs, PU, neoprene coated nylon, polycotton, waxed cotton, Cordura, Ventile, pile, fleece and stretch fabrics. Buckles, webbing, shockcord, velcro and much more. Patterns for all outdoor gear. Discounts. For samples/prices stamp please to Tor(Ca), 3 Fryer Street, Runcorn WA7 1ND.

Canoe store for all your canoeing needs. Gaybo, Coleman, Perception, and all leading brands. Sailing canoes and accessories. Tuition, hire for Sussex/Hampshire area. TM Water Activity Training, 2, The Green, Rowlands Castle, Hants. (0705) 413366, 412144)

Carlisle Canoes, everything for the canoeist from beginner to advanced white water paddler. All leading makes in stock including Prijon, Schlegel, HF, Pyranha, Ace, Wild Water, Old Town, Coleman, Palm, Perception, New Wave. Open 7 days (Sunday by arrangement). Contact Carlisle Canoes, Pennywise Shop, 41 Wigton Road, Carlisle, CA2 7AX. Telephone 0228 31703/37658.

Eskimo's Canoe Store: sea kayaks and accessories from the country's leading manufacturers. Demonstration boats from Valley, North Shore, Pyranha, McNulty and P&H. Open 7 days a week, 12 months a year. Eskimo's, Twr-y-Felin Outdoor Centre, St Davids, Pembrokeshire 0437 720391.

Isosport Training Systems. Isokinetic equipment for fast development of strength and power. Unit 1, Blaenau Gwent Workshop, Bryn Mawr, Gwent NP3 4BL. 0495 312239.

Performance Sports Outdoor Centre for all canoes and accessories, slalom/GP Boats, top brand names for all canoe equipment. Club discounts available - Mail Order Service. Telephone, write or call our showrooms at Tolegate Lane, High Street, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 4TG.

Special Offers/Sea Kayaks We quite often have demonstration sea kayaks for sale or, occasionally, kayaks with a slight cosmetic fault. Send an SAE today for our up to date computerised list of kayaks available. The P&H Company, Station Road, West Hallam, Derby DE7 6HB. Telephone 0602 320155.

Sunray GP's Canoe Shop supply canoes and accessories for all. Discounts for clubs and groups, schools and colleges, scouts and guides. Demo boats available. Write, phone or call Sunray GP, 4a, Bolton Rd, Adlington, nr. Chorley, Lancashire (0277) 483362/480680)

ACCOMMODATION

Bredwardine Lodge residential centre near Hay-on-Wye welcomes large and small groups whether self-organised or requiring activities led by our qualified and experienced staff. Accommodation includes centrally heated bedrooms, large dining room/lounge with log fire, showers, drying facilities and good food. For colour brochure please contact: Bredwardine Lodge Centre, Bredwardine, Hereford HR3 6BT. Telephone 09817 510.

Island Cruising Club, Island Street, Salcombe, Devon TQ8 8DR. Telephone (054) 884 3481. Canoeing base available April, May and June on board converted Mersey Ferry EGREMONT moored in the middle of the scenic Salcombe Estuary. Facilities include showers, a lounge saloon, the Pugwash Bar, launch and rescue service. Island Cruising Club is a recognised RYA sailing school offering courses at all standards for Dinghy, Keelboat and Windsurfing enthusiasts. Why not try sailing!

South West France. Cottage for hire with private launching spot onto River Isle. Ideal touring rivers Dordogne, Vézère and Dronne within 50 minutes drive. Camping/ advice on access also available. Contact (0460) 21058

The Management and staff of the White Lion Hotel, High Street, Bala, Gwynedd, welcome all canoeists and visitors. Bar meals available 12-2pm and 6-9pm. Weekend rates for supporters.

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SITUATIONS VACANT



An experience for life!

Instructors required for our centres in France, Spain and the UK for Summer 1990 (May - September). Qualified, experienced canoeists, windsurfers, climbers, landyachters, should contact:

Acorn Venture,
137, Worcester Rd, Hagley,
Stourbridge, DY9 ONW
Tel: 0562 882151

Camp Windermere, an outdoor activities training camp for young people, located on the shore of Lake Windermere, invites applications for the post of Centre Warden. The Centre Warden will be fully responsible for the day to day management and administration of the Centre. The Centre also requires instructors for the 1990 peak season for canoeing, mountain activities and sailing (short term Mid May - Mid July, long term Mid May - September). Please write for details enclosing 9 x 6½" sae to the Director, Camp Windermere, Low Wray, Ambleside, Cumbria LA22 0JJ.

Edale YHA Activity Centre requires qualified and/or experienced instructional staff for 1990. Short and long term vacancies available. Apply now to the chief instructor, Edale YHA, Nether Booth, Edale, Derbyshire S30 2ZH or telephone (0433) 70302.

Instructors: Outdoor Pursuits Centre in Pembrokeshire. Experience essential, qualifications preferred. Required for 1990 season. Contact Sealyham on (0348) 840763.

Multi-Activity/Computer Centre.

All year childrens' centre requires fulltime residential staff.

Versatile and energetic people with relevant experience/ qualifications in this field.

Call Glen on (09074) 6002.

Seasonal instructors required RYA, BCU qualified. Land based skills an advantage. Send SAE for details to Kielder Adventure Centre, Kielder Water, Hexham NE48 1BS. Telephone (0434) 250232.

Senior Instructor required for the Longridge Scout Boating Centre. The successful candidate will lead a large team of volunteer instructors and plan and further develop canoeing at the centre. This is a full time salaried appointment and residential accommodation will be provided. For further details and application form contact Sheila Sharps, Bucks County Scout Office, The Coachhouse, Green Park, Aston Clinton, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 5NE.

Three canoe instructors required for period March to October 1990. BCU qualifications preferable, but will provide training. Up to

£90 per week plus accommodation. For further details please contact Stephen Cole. Adur Water Activities Centre, Brighton Road, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex BN4 5LT. Telephone (0273) 462928

Wanted: Canoe Instructors/Reps to work in the summer in France. Spoken French desirable and full clean driving licence required, together with experience/qualification in teaching Canadian Canoeing. Minimum age 18 years, wages up to £105 per week plus free accommodation. For further details and an application form, please write to: Personnel Department, Headwater, Bass Travel Ltd, 146, London Rd, Northwich, CHESHIRE CW9 5HH

**The Sports Council for Northern Ireland/Canoe Association of Northern Ireland
POST OF CANOEING
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER AND
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Salary Scale Instructor Grade II
£12,088 - £13,657 pa (inclusive of additions)**

Applications are invited for the above vacancy to:

- (i) Develop the sport of canoeing in Northern Ireland;
- (ii) Instruct on canoeing and other outdoor activities at the Northern Ireland Mountain Centre.

Applicants for this new and challenging post should be qualified Senior Instructors in one or more canoeing disciplines; have E1 examiner status; have a sound knowledge of competitive canoeing and proven organisational and administrative ability. Experience in another outdoor activity eg mountaineering or orienteering is essential.

The successful candidate will be appointed for a period of 2 years initially.

A clean driving licence and use of a car is essential.

Completed applications must be received by close of business 21 February 1990 and should be made on the appropriate form. This together with further details can be obtained from The Personnel Department, The Sports Council for Northern Ireland, House of Sport, Upper Malone Road, Belfast BT9 5LA.

Telephone (0232) 381222.

All applications will be acknowledged.

This is an Equal Opportunities appointment.

WE WANT PADDLERS

PGL require B.C.U., S.I.'s and other canoeists with considerable experience to instruct children or families for long or short periods between March and October. Minimum age is 18 for the U.K. and 20 for France. Applicants for France should have Canadian experience. All posts are residential.

Details and application form from:-



Application Department
PGL Young Adventure Ltd
820 Station Street
Ross-on-Wye HR9 7AH

Jobs 18-30's

Tel: 0989 764211

SELECTING THE RIGHT OPEN CANOE

by Colin Broadway

Less than a decade ago, if you wanted to purchase an Open Canoe in the United Kingdom, the choice was easy; few designs were available, with very little difference between them. They were all 16ft long, built in the same construction and within a pound or two they were all the same price. The only real choice we had was the colour.

During the second half of the 1980's the scene began to change. The BCU started its award scheme for the Open Canoe, and Mobile Adventure started producing and importing a wider range of boats. David Train included Open Canoes in his Placid Water Scheme, and the Canadian Canoe Association of Great Britain found new life.

Now in these first few months of the 1990's with over 200 models of open canoe available to choose from, colour is the least of the choices. Canoes are available in lengths between 12 and 21 feet, in a wide range of materials and weights. Designs are available for solo paddling or suitable for a family of four, with models suitable to be paddled in any situation varying from family touring to international marathon racing to big volume whitewater. Some are even suitable for Open Canoe Slalom!

CANOE DESIGN - SOME BASIC RULES

Canoe design is always a matter of compromise; even at the top competition level the skills of the designer are compromised or at best restricted by the rules of the race.

- The longer the waterline, the straighter the canoe will run. A shorter canoe, especially with added rocker is more manoeuvrable.
- The wider the waterline width, the more stable the craft, but a flat bottomed boat only gives initial stability.
- All canoes should be light enough to portage.

HOW DO WE CHOOSE ?

Bearing in mind the above rules, and that every canoe design is some sort of compromise, it is best to sort out right from the start what you are likely to want to do in your boat. Once you have made your mind up, then the following guidelines will help you select a canoe most suited to your needs.

For Activity Centre and General Purpose Paddling we are generally looking for the ultimate in versatility. Fortunately this is where the biggest range of designs are available.

The canoes that generally fit this category resemble the canoe developed by the British Traders in North America. They are 15ft 6ins to 17' long and about 33ins wide on the waterline. The hull shape should be somewhere between a shallow arch and a shallow V in shape with only moderate rocker.

This is the sort of canoe that you can do almost anything in, but if you have a more definite idea, then you should read on and select a canoe more suitable to your requirements.

For **Fishing and Hunting** the same rules apply, except that as we are likely to want to stand up and walk around, a wider canoe with a flatter bottom would be more acceptable.

A **Square stern** may also be considered if an outboard motor is a preferred method of propulsion, but do avoid a full transom end as these canoes are really hard work to paddle. A better design is a spanish gallon stern where the transom sits out of the water, retaining the standard canoe hull shape on the waterline.

Instructors Canoes: Canoe Instructors tend to require a boat that can be paddled solo, be of sufficient volume to carry additional gear, and at times an additional passenger. Their boat will need to be manoeuvrable and tackle almost any type of water. Again the

recommendation is to stay with the traditional designs, somewhere between 15 and 16½ft long, with a moderate rocker to allow for manoeuvrability.

Tripping and Lightweight camping: If your aim is to travel from A to B with a minimum of effort then a Cruising Canoe is required. You should go for a longer boat, long on the waterline, up to 18ft for doubles and 16½ft for solo paddling with waterline width of 33ins for doubles and around 23ins for solo. Cruising Canoes should be asymmetrical in shape, which will give you a fine bow and volume at the stern. The most efficient shape which will allow you to travel further for the same amount of effort.

These boats are of course harder to turn - but then most of us when travelling only want to turn the boat round once during the day!

In such a canoe you will be able to enter in the Touring boat class in local marathon races in Britain, where the rules simply state that touring canoes are up to 18ft in length.

Whitewater Paddling: This calls for a manoeuvrable canoe with extreme rocker and some depth to keep the water out. Not more than 16½ft long for doubles and down to 13ft in length for solo paddling. These canoes aren't touring canoes, and attention to detail is required in their fitting out.

Marathon Racing Canoes: The design of these boats are governed by race rules, and usually the International Canoe Federation rules apply. A maximum of 21ft 4ins for doubles and 17ft 0ins for solo. Minimum widths apply and concave sections are not allowed.

And finally, we have seen recent published advice recommending a keel and even bilge keels, to assist in keeping the boat running in a straight line. If it's straight line paddling you want to do - then go for a straight line boat without a keel. Keels are unnecessary in this day and age, they were there for one of two reasons - to protect a canvas or skin craft from abrasion or to give strength to a bad design. All they do is stop you turning, and stick out below the boat giving a single wear point in a position which is difficult to repair.

But really, at the end of the day, before going to purchase a canoe, try some out. And if your local canoe shop just offers you the one he has on the shelf think about looking further afield. The choice is now available.

Colin Broadway is an Open Canoe Coach and Director of Mobile Adventure Ltd, Europe's Open Canoe Specialists, based in Lei cester.

OPEN CANOE DISPLAY

There will be a demonstration of open canoeing in the pool at the Canoe Exhibition - why not come along and see the experts in action.

Main Pool, 1.50 pm Saturday, 11.50 am Sunday

Palm

CANOE EQUIPMENT



Palm's own polyethylene craft include the Aquabat and Falchion. Moulded in high quality linear polyethylene and available in a variety of specifications and colours these popular boats are established favourites of both clubs and individuals. The Aquabat is designed for swimming pool and polo use with a sports version for fun in whitewater. The Falchion is a medium volume all round kayak suited to a wide variety of water and paddlers, a favourite of schools and clubs due to its performance, handling and stylish good looks. The AP2000 and 3000 helmets from Palm provide maximum protection with the benefit of an adjustable cradle. Produced in a wide variety of colours and available from dealers world wide.



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