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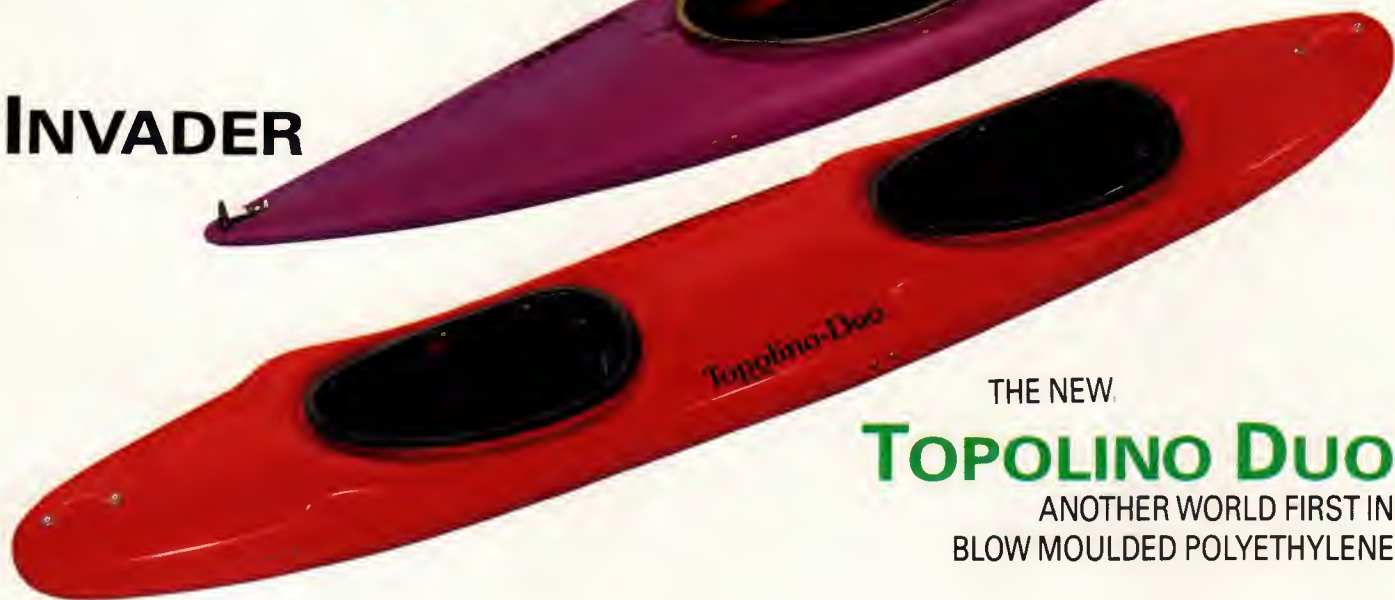
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# CANOE FOCUS

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#### Front Cover

By Tony Ford - Canoeing in the Path of the  
Haida - article on Page 12

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*Who needs paddles anyway? A Kingston Polytechnic canoeist, runs the Town Falls. Llangollen, Mike Jones Tour 1989*

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## Comment

by  
**BCU Director  
Trevor Bailey**



With your last copy of Focus you received the Members Year Book for 1990. Hopefully this will have helped you plan your canoeing year, and in particular you will have noticed an increase in the number of tours in the calendar. We have made our plans to encourage non-members to try canoeing at "Taster" events and to provide an instant membership opportunity for them at the same events. Regional Touring Officers have all the necessary information and supporting leaflets for event organisers. We now seek the full support of BCU affiliated clubs to include as many of their existing low level events (including low level completion) in the new "Taster programme. In addition we hope that there will be many new events added to each region's programme. The help of all affiliated clubs is needed urgently!

After many years of waiting, the BCU has finally moved its HQ to the National Water Sports Centre at Holme Pierrepont. The photo shows the offices just before we moved in, in mid January. The move itself went smoothly, but apologies to anyone who had problems contacting us at the time. Hopefully by now all teething problems have been sorted out.



The move into a permanent HQ, and the removal of the uncertainty that we have had for a number of years, will hopefully mark an important step forward for the BCU. Shortly after the move, the final payment was made for the Slalom Course contribution of £100,000. With that behind us, the move paid for, and a reduction in the level of overdraft, we can look to the future with optimism.

The Council of the BCU decided at its January meeting that the new building should be known as John Dudderidge House. John was involved in 1936 in the formation of the BCU, and has maintained an active role ever since. His many friends, both at home and abroad, will I am sure welcome this recognition of his major contribution to the development of canoeing

### ICE SUCCESS.

Shortly after the move the annual International Canoe Exhibition was held at Crystal Palace. Numbers were slightly up compared with the previous two years, and the general consensus seems to be that it was another very successful show. During the show an open canoe was presented to the Chairman of the East Midlands Region. This region has formed a group to promote canoeing for people with disabilities, and received grants



totalling £1100 from the Jubilee Canoeing Foundation and the James Turner Legacy Fund.

Another presentation was to Dick Grieve, who received the Award of Merit from John Dudderidge. Dick has served canoeing at many levels over the last 15 years and continues to do so. In his own area he is involved with his own club, the Essex Canoeing Association and the Eastern Region committee. On the national front Dick is best known for his work as boatman to the British Racing Team, a post he has held since 1984



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## Noticeboard

### FLARES AT SEA

The BCU's Sea Touring Committee recommends that flares should be carried on all journeys at sea. The leader should carry two parachute flares and two hand held flares, each other member of the party should carry at least one hand held flare; these are the absolute minimum.

### CANOING WITH DISABLED PERSONS

Throughout the BCU's Coaching Scheme are instructors and coaches who have experience and expertise in canoeing with disabled persons. Most of them are very willing to offer help and advice in this field to anyone who needs it.

Advice can be given regarding aspects of programme planning, finding a club, suitable canoes or kayaks, specialised equipment, modifying equipment and training - instructors and leaders - helpers and care staff - disabled persons.

For further details, or to discuss your specific needs, contact the BCU Coaching Office.

### EXPEDITION NEWS

Its holiday planning time again and for some of us this means head for the nearest beach! Others, however, like to go further afield and this year as always there are lots of expeditions heading off to far flung corners of the world. These six have been officially approved by the BCU.

#### *The Atlas Kayak Expedition:*

Led by Godfrey Owen, first descents and exploration of rivers in the Marrakech Region of Morocco.

#### *The Chitral Kayak Expedition*

Led by Bumble Knight, the Chitral team will be attempting first descents of the rivers Yarkhun and Kho in North West Pakistan. Chitral is an isolated district bounded to the North and West by the imposing Hindu Kush mountain range with the Hindu Raj and Karakoram to the South and East. The expedition are sponsored by MI designs and will be using the new MI expedition kayaks, the 380, Adventure buoyancy aids and Blackwater paddles.

#### *Spirit of Canada Challenge:*

A youth expedition to Algonquin Provincial Park in Ontario, Canada, this team comprised of both able bodied and disabled youngsters will attempt a completely self-sufficient 14 day journey, carrying all they need to survive.

#### *Silver Sitka:*

This is phase five of an on going series of sea kayak expeditions to the Pacific coast of Canada, led by Tony Ford of the Army Canoe Union (see article on page 14). This year, the Expedition goes into Alaska and along the outside (west) coast of the Prince Rupert Islands.

#### *Wey Valley School Expedition to Alaska:*

As the name suggests, this is another youth expedition, also to Alaska, taking in both

When Wirral Outdoor Pursuits Centre received an SOS call, there was no shortage of willing rescuers. This 'lame duck' was at Wallasey Central Park and its bill had become entangled in a plastic beer can holder. It had been without food for several days after various rescue attempts had failed. But the Wirral canoeists, more manoeuvrable than other craft

were able to catch the bird, and after treatment from Ranger Richard O'Brien it was set free albeit in a fowl mood.



sea kayaking in Prince William Sound and a 70 mile journey down the Chena River. *Inambari Kayak Expedition:*

First descent of the Inambari and other rivers in Peru. Led by Les Lloyd.

BCU approval is available to any group of BCU members planning an expedition of an exceptional and serious nature (eg the first descent of a river or very committing sea trip). Some grant aid is also available but the amounts of money involved are relatively small (usually £100-£300) - the main benefit of BCU approval is the help it gives in obtaining grant aid and sponsorship from other bodies. There is still money in the 1990 kitty for youth grants, so if you're planning a trip with the under 20 age group, don't be afraid to come forward at short notice. The criteria for Youth Expeditions are less strict but they are expected to be adventurous, worthwhile and well organised. Details from BCU office.

#### **Out of Africa**

Three British paddlers are this month to attempt the first descent of the River Shire in Malawi. The team, sponsored by Current Trends, will be tackling a 120 mile stretch of continuous Grade V water, including two consecutive gorge sections and an elephant swamp. No bank support is possible, and all equipment and food is to be carried in the boats, or bought locally - lets hope they like mangoes! All three (Bill Taylor, John Halton and Andy McDowell) are experienced paddlers and were members of the successful 1988 'Kayaks to Siberia Expedition' (reported in Focus 61).

#### **And Into Finland!**

A group from Atlantic College, South Wales, including four young people who have undergone treatment for cancer, are undertaking a journey by kayak in the Aland Islands off the South West Finnish Coast. The expedition is being run as an extramural project by the college and is supported by the Princes Trust, John Laing Construction, the James Turner Legacy Fund and others.

#### **The Taming of the Lion**

This Expedition, led by John Taylor is now in the Himalayas, attempting the first descent of the Indus River from Skardu in the foothills of K2. Despite two previous attempts, including one death, this part of the Indus has still not been successfully paddled. The Taming of the Lion has been sponsored by Olympus Outdoor World and is being filmed for Channel 4 television.

#### **CROOKESY STRIKES AGAIN**

David Crookes and Phil Blain have completed the first descent of the Fairy Glen (Afon Conwy) by open canoe. They ran the whole Grade 5 stretch on 5 February, took a few swims, two rolls - both by Dave who was 'gobbled in the last drop, flipped onto his non-paddling side, stuffed into the wall, bounced off the bottom and still rolled up!' That's his story anyway. The river was 'quite high' according to Dave, which is possibly an understatement, remembering all those floods we had in February. Dave and Phil were paddling solo whitewater canoes, full of buoyancy, called now wait for it, Emily and Ollie (the introduction of these boats into this country is likely to change for ever the image of the open canoe as a mobile picnic hamper). At the time of going to press Dave was heard mumbling 'Swallow Falls, Betws-y-Coed' - something about the nice scenery around there I expect!

*Emily is a Dagger Encore and Ollie is an Old Town Otter.*

#### **CANOING AT THE BURRS**

A new canoeing facility has been opened up on the River Irwell, just North of Bury in Lancashire. The Burrs Canoe Centre includes a slalom site, training pool, campsite, picnic area and the Brown Cow Public house. A canal runs alongside the river, useful for paddling upstream, and there is also the possibility of a longer paddle - 5 miles along the Irwell Valley Canoe trail from Ramsbottom. The newly reopened East Lancashire Railway even allows you to transport canoes upstream from Bury by steam train! Tel 0204 71561 for bookings.

## Access

### ANOTHER INSTANCE OF THE NORTH/SOUTH DIVIDE?

Not only was the South of England devastated by storms, floods etc in recent months: they suffered a calamity of no smaller dimension when the complete list of Southern Region Local Access Officers was omitted from the BCU members' yearbook. What they did to deserve this is not entirely clear but 'the management' do apologise to all long suffering Southerners for any inconvenience caused. The Southern Region Access Officers are listed in the Yearbook Update enclosed with this issue. Other additions and amendments will be notified through Canoe Focus as we hear of them.

### WATER HERITAGE GATHERS MOMENTUM

As we go to press we have news from the Sports Council that the Water Heritage movement is regarded in high places as "a very positive approach to access to the countryside and its waterways"

'Water Heritage' is an umbrella organisation to unite those bodies whose members seek greater access to the countryside. The stimulus for the launching of 'Water Heritage' was last December's High Court ruling on the Yorkshire Derwent, when the unprecedented ruling was that the Rights of Way Act 1932 could not be applied to rivers. The case is now under Appeal and Water Heritage is looking for the widest possible public support. 'If the judge was wrong, then a great shadow will have been lifted: if he was right, then there could be no greater demonstration of the urgent need to reform the law of water access, in which this country is out of step with every other civilised nation'.

Water Heritage is supported by the BCU, the Inland Waterways Association, the Scout Association, The Rainbow Trust, The Reter Le Marchant Trust, Manifold Trust, Landmark Trust, the National Association of Boys Clubs, Youth Clubs UK and BSES.

### PADDLING ON ANGLESEY?

A request from the RSPB. Please - don't forget the voluntary restriction on paddling close in to the cliffs between South Stack Island and Penlas Rock in the period February to 31 July. This is to protect nesting and breeding birds.

### ACCESS TO THE WHARFE

The Wharfe will open to paddlers on the following 1990 dates:

Hebden to Barden  
6 Oct 12 noon-4pm  
7 Oct 8am-noon  
Burnsall to Barden

28 Oct From 2pm to dusk, the river may be used following the River Race. Paddlers wishing to cruise prior to the race at 12 noon will be required to wear a bib, and, contribute £1. **Strictly no paddling whilst race**

is on. On the above dates, there is no access to or egress from the river at Appletreewick. The falls and gorge ONLY are open for training and general usage every first Wednesday afternoon of every month except August. The dates are: 2 May, 6 June, 4 July, 5 September, 3 October, 7 November and 5 December. The following weekend days are also available: 28/29 April, 16 September and 23 September

### CONWAY AGREEMENT

The agreement on the Afon Conwy ended on 28 February 1990. As such we have no right to paddle until the year has been reviewed and progress discussed. For the sake of canoeing in the North Wales area, please stay off the river; by showing control, we the North Wales access team, feel it will be to the eventual benefit of canoeists on all the rivers of the region where negotiations are taking place. For success we need your support. Therefore, please contact your LAO for details of rivers available in the area. As soon as the dates are set for the continued access to the Conwy, they will be made public.

If you have paddled the Conwy since October and have not informed the Access Officer, can you please send the following information, as soon as possible (like now) to *Phil Blain, The Towers, Capel Curig, Berws-y-Coed, Gwynedd LL24 0DR*. Date, Number in Group, Water Level, Access and Egress. **This information could gain you access to other rivers in the region, failure to help could result in less than satisfactory arrangements.**

### MEETING THE NRA

#### The Bad News....

On 17 January, 3 representatives of the BCU; Trevor Bailey (Director), Mike Twiggs (Access Committee Chairman) and Colin Kempson (Touring Committee Vice Chairman) met Dr Bowman and Dr Swinnerton of the NRA.

The aim of the meeting from the BCU point of view was to ascertain to what extent the NRA intend to exercise their new statutory rights to cater for the recreational use of Britain's waters. In particular it is hoped that the new NRA powers will enable the widening of navigation rights and the possibility of introducing a National Rivers Licence (similar to the BWB canal licence).

What emerged from the meeting was that the primary responsibilities of the NRA are perceived as Flood Prevention, Water Resources and Water Quality. Recreational use of Britain's rivers, surprise, surprise, is a long way down the NRA's list of priorities. In fact, the NRA themselves seemed remarkably unclear as to what their powers are in this area and how they will be implemented.

One hopeful area was in the discussions over weirs. 'Canoeists' you will remember (Access Extra 63) 'are not permitted to navigate over river structures' on certain NRA administered waterways. At the 17 January meeting, the principle of the recreational use of weirs, seemed to be accepted, and the NRA reps promised that canoeists needs would be considered in future weir designs. Where possible, recreational usage would be incorporated on existing structures.

BCU Director, Trevor Bailey described the January 17th meeting as "slightly disappointing".

### And the Good....

More promising was a conference/discussion held on February 16th, with a total of around 20 delegates, including 2 NRA representatives, two RAO's, five Sports Council Regional Directors and members of Regional Rivers Advisory Committees Jim Cornwell, (BCU SW), who attended the meeting has made the following comments

"♦ The NRA corporate plan will include in its next draft a stronger commitment to the cause of sporting recreation - this should be reflected in Regional Plans, and if not, the lobbying must be insistent.

♦ Closer co-operation between Regional Sports Councils and RRAC's in developing Regional Strategies is a prime objective - some Sports Councils have already prioritised this aim.

♦ Restoration of navigations that may have fallen into disuse, not only those that are controlled by the BWB, but others, must be tackled in view of the portability of modern small craft.

♦ John Wheatley (NRA) reiterated the advice to both Governing bodies and the Sports Councils to **lobby hard** at both national and regional levels - eg insist on introducing agenda items at RRAC meetings"

So - is there a light at the end of the tunnel? as the man said, the answer must be that lobbying of the NRA has to continue so that their new statutory powers are not swept under the carpet. With representatives on several RRAC's, the BCU is now in a good position to do this, in the meantime, how about a letter to your own MP or councillor?

### Water Pollution Survey

It has also come to light in discussions with the NRA, that a nationwide survey on river water quality is planned. The intention may be to classify rivers by their level of pollution and suitability for water borne activities. Although it is good news that problems of river pollution are at last being given a higher priority, there is also a danger that classification of rivers in this way may have the effect of actually restricting water available for recreation - 'you can't paddle on there, its too polluted!' Beside the murky waters of the slalom course in Nottingham, we await the outcome...

### EASTERN REGION ACCESS

Good news and bad news on the Great Ouse.

Brampton weirpool, just upstream of Huntingdon, is open for canoeing at any time. The sluice gives a good jet of water when the river is high. The Beefeater pub at the weirpool has a carpark, ask before use and buy a drink before you leave. Otherwise there is a public car park half a mile downstream. Talks are under way with NRA about the use of at least one other weirpool.

Some 'pirate' use of Offord Weir is taking place that is threatening the agreement that Hunts Canoe Club has on this water. Phone David Savage, LAO for the Lower Ouse, on 03543 3161, if you want to use this. Otherwise please resist the temptation and stay off.

On the Great Ouse backwaters there was a drowning at Christmas which was generally thought to be a canoeist. In fact it was an enebriated member of the local rowing club, on the water at 1am in an inflatable. The local NRA has been taking a tougher approach on canoeing on the backwaters since then - both it and the old Anglian Water had always taken the



theoretical view that the backwaters were not part of the navigation. Talks are taking place.

The National Federation of Anglers representative has withdrawn from the Angling/Canoeing Liaison Group that was set up to resolve the dispute over the Great Ouse above Bedford. This may seem pathetic. Indeed it is pathetic. But Roger Hardman, the Regional Access Officer, asks members not to over-react because a number of angling clubs are relatively open minded about canoeing on the river, and a majority of landowners have indicated to the Sports Council that they are either in favour of the status quo (informal paddling) or a formal access agreement. He recommends any party should contain at least two adults, and carry a camera to photograph any angler trying to cause trouble; also to paddle past ignoring any provocation. The BCU will not give financial support to defending a legal action, but please inform Roger Hardman\* immediately in the event of action being threatened.

At Dobbs Weir on the River Lea there is some forward movement. Under a rather complicated access agreement, spare days have been allocated to general canoeing. For details write to Ray Croft, 2 Marlowe Close, Stevenage, Herts SG2 OJJ. To get the best out of Dobbs you need to override the new comb sluices installed four years ago, and get the old fashioned drop gates lowered by hand. This gives a good jet of water to play in. Ray has the key.

On the Hertfordshire Colne, an application is being made to designate the Batchworth Loop a Site of Special Scientific Interest because of the wildfowl and the nesting kingfish-

ers. This is probably a good thing, as long as it does not interrupt canoeing, which has been taking place since at least 1946 without any damage to the environment (in fact helping it because of the regular removal of broken fishing line). Would any users of this stretch of river, and anyone with knowledge of its use in the past, particularly in the 1960's, please get in touch with Roger Hardman quickly.

There are vacancies for several Local Access Officers at present. Any volunteers? Also, volunteers are needed for historic research in the summer holidays.

\* Roger Hardman, Regional Access Officer, Cell View, High Street, Markyate, St Albans, Herts AL3 8PD. Telephone (05828) 40285.

## UPPER AVON SUCCESS

Following the withdrawal of financial support to the Upper Avon Navigation Trust Limited by Severn Trent Water the Trust have been seeking other ways of increasing their income from other sources - needless to say we are amongst those other sources.

After nearly three months of consultation by all those members who have become involved at local, regional and national level the matter has now been resolved.

The BCU has negotiated a licencing agreement whereby BCU members displaying the BCU sticker on their canoe and carrying a current membership card can use the River Avon from Alveston to Evesham without paying the public toll of £12 per annum or £2 for fifteen days.

The new deal covers all BCU individual members and also club boats displaying the

club BCU sticker and owned by BCU affiliated clubs. An affiliated club member, who is not an individual BCU member, can benefit from the agreement if paddling a club boat but not if paddling their own boat. However Basic membership of the BCU costs only 12p per week if under 18 years old or 19p per week if an adult - a small price to pay for the use of water (including the 2000 miles of BWB water) and all the other benefits of BCU membership.

Initial funding is coming from the Touring and Recreation Committee possibly with some help from the West Midlands Region. Hopefully in the future the cost will be met, not from central subscription income, but from part of the monies charged at recreational and competitive taster events. Paddlers supporting these events will contribute to regional funds and to a fund which will be used to meet the cost of such agreements. The more support that you give us the more we can do for you in the future.

For some time to come it is likely that most paid access agreements will continue to be paid for in other ways or by the users at the time but we plan to work towards central payment if we receive your support.

Colin Kempson

---

*A big thank you to Kelston Boys Club for designing, building and erecting the new Access Stand (Canoe Exhibition February 17/18) - and a black mark to the senior officer who sat on the table and broke it within the first fifteen minutes!*

---

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## ALL WEATHER CHARTS

Stanfords have introduced four new all weather charts - No 11 The English Channel, No 18 The Solent, No 8 the North Kent Coast and No 16 The Channel Islands. Printed on water and tear resistant Synteapec, the charts are available from chandlers and coastal bookshops.

## CANOEING ACROSS CANADA

Gary and Joanie McGuffin will be lecturing about their 6000 mile Canadian canoe trip in mid April at the following venues

- Fri Apr 20* CAMBRIDGE  
(Reed Canoes - 0223 311411)  
*Sat Apr 21* CAPEL CURIG  
(Plas y Brenin - 06904 214)  
*Mon Apr 23* WARRINGTON  
(Warrington Scouts - 0925 763927)  
*Tue Apr 24* LEICESTER  
(Mobile Adventure - 0533 830659)  
*Wed Apr 25* NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE  
(W Odyssey - 091 234 0259)  
*Thu Apr 26* (to be arranged)  
*Fri Apr 27* NOTTINGHAM  
(Current Trends - 0602 818844)  
*Tue May 1* LONDON  
(River Rats - 01 391 0299)

## BIRCHBARK CANOE

by David Gidmark  
ISBN 091-94-31-44-5, £7.95, Cordee.

Reviewed by Dave Halsall

The book Birchbark Canoe is a thoroughly enjoyable read chronicling the author's quest, first learning how to build, and then actually building his own birchbark canoe. The book contains many golden nuggets of information in an easy to read narrative which, is enhanced by some interesting black and white photographs.

David Gidmark becomes fascinated with the birchbark canoe when he sees one for the first time near Lake Superior in 1976. The book logs his progress over the next ten years as he submerges himself in the culture of the North American Indian. In this period of the late seventies and early eighties the few Indians who continued the old tribal crafts are mostly in the twilight of their lives and their rich characters colour the pages of text. The

younger people in the tribe have been swamped by western culture, many are on welfare and it seems they are uninterested in their past culture. David Gidmark stays with William and Mary Commanda on the Algonquin Indian Reserve and starts to learn Algonquin hoping that he will be accepted and taught to build canoes. William, is a real character who blames everything on the white man and refuses, at first, to teach him how to build birchbark canoes. David eventually overcomes Williams reticence and learns the boat building skills by helping him and Mary in their construction of canoes.

Along with the description of David's learning process there are snippets of information about the use of canoes in North America around the turn of the century. I did not know that there were birchbark canoe factories nor that the material would be harvested and shipped, in bulk, like the raw materials of today. There are many stories of paddlers such as the Indian trapper who, upon loading up his canoe at the end of the season, finds that the water comes to within an inch of the gunwale. He removes some of the cargo and sends his wife off with the lighter load to the town. He walks into the woods with a few tools and starts early in the morning to build another boat. By the next morning he has built himself a serviceable canoe which he used to follow his wife.

If you want a 'how to' book which will enable you to build a birchbark canoe this is not the publication to obtain, but if you want a 'canoe fix' in the winter months, when you are not getting on the water, this is a book to add to your library.

## INSTRUCTORS' 'CRIB CARDS'

Reviewed by Ray Rowe, editor of the new Canoeing Handbook

Bill Lodge of the Yorkshire Coaching Panel has produced a set of 'Crib Cards' to help people who are teaching the basic strokes. It's an excellent idea, which I am sure will be found immensely useful by Instructors, Senior Instructors, and Coaches.

The waterproof memory joggers contain summaries of technique for the basic strokes. There are twelve cards (each 3 x 5 inches) carrying information on both sides, and the print is etched in black on a white background. The cards are hard wearing and just the right size to take with you on the water, into the pool or down the pub. Card number 12 is a blank note pad which takes chinagraph or soft pencil and can be erased with thumb pressure.

It's a neat, functional tool and one which

should be recommended to trainees on all coaching courses. Nice one Bill.  
'Crib Cards' are available from BCU Supplies at £4.95 per set.

## RUN RIVER RUN

by Alan Fox  
ISBN 0-906371-77-5, Diadem  
Available from BCU Supplies, £7.95 members, £8.95 non-members

Reviewed by Roger Drummond

On first hearing the title of this book, RUN RIVER RUN, I expected an account of an expedition or trip.

It is, however, a very well presented guide to what could well be called Britain's classic rivers.

After a pleasant Introduction, there are sections on topics such as Access, Weil's Disease, River Safety and River Gradings - all quite comprehensive, up to date and easy to read. The list of Acknowledgements to the people who helped Alan to compile his book could be taken as the 'Who's Who of Canoeing'.

I found the guide to be well laid out and easy to follow with very clear maps and accompanying descriptions. There is something to satisfy most paddlers tastes from the big, powerful white water right down to more tranquil and pleasant touring water. Some rivers are described from the highest 'put in' point down to the last 'take out' within the tidal range.

There are sixteen pages of excellent colour photographs and I was pleased to recognise the familiar face of a friend who was surprised and amused to see himself in full colour print.

On reading through the book it is evident that the author appears to have done his homework thoroughly. The only disappointing thing to me is the rivers that are not included - only three Scottish rivers - when there are so many to choose from North of the border.

I feel that this is a good, general guide and at £7.95 is a colourful and worthwhile addition to every paddlers library.



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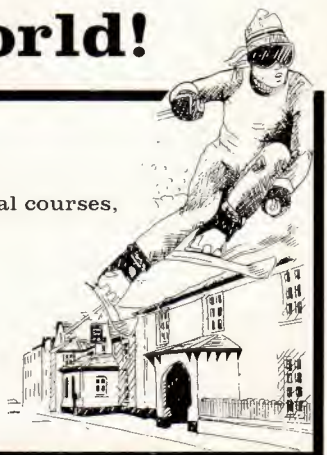
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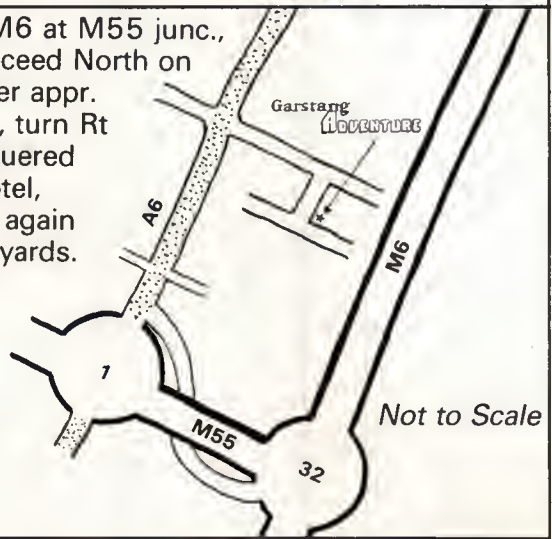
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Not to Scale



**In June and July 1989, a party of five canoeists from the British Army in Germany travelled to British Columbia, in Canada, to carry out a circumnavigation of Moresby Island the southern half of the Queen Charlotte Islands, almost a hundred miles off the north western Canadian coast, just south of the Alaskan border - Expedition Silver Sculpin'.**

The team was led by Warrant Officer Tony Ford of the Army Mountain Training Centre.

The idea of mounting a sea kayak expedition along Canada's West Coast was first conceived in 1985, the overall plan being to paddle from Vancouver to Glacier Bay by the challenging and hazardous 'outside' passage. Expeditions in 1986, 87 and 88 had already covered the coast from Vancouver to Prince Rupert.

The Charlottes have been home to the Haida Indians for thousands of years. They were the masters of the Pacific coast, using their dug out canoes, which could reach up to 70 feet in length, for transporting trade goods, or for carrying raiding and war parties to neighbouring tribes. The Haida were a prosperous maritime nation, whose legends and family crests

are carved into totem and mortuary poles which could reach 60 feet in height. Smallpox, introduced early this century by European traders, reduced the Haida population to under 600; only two settlements survived and their culture and structure was further broken up by missionaries. Now, after nearly a hundred years the language is again being taught, the poles, argillite and canoes are once again being carved.

**“Few have travelled the West Coast of the Queen Charlotte Islands and little has been written on the area”**

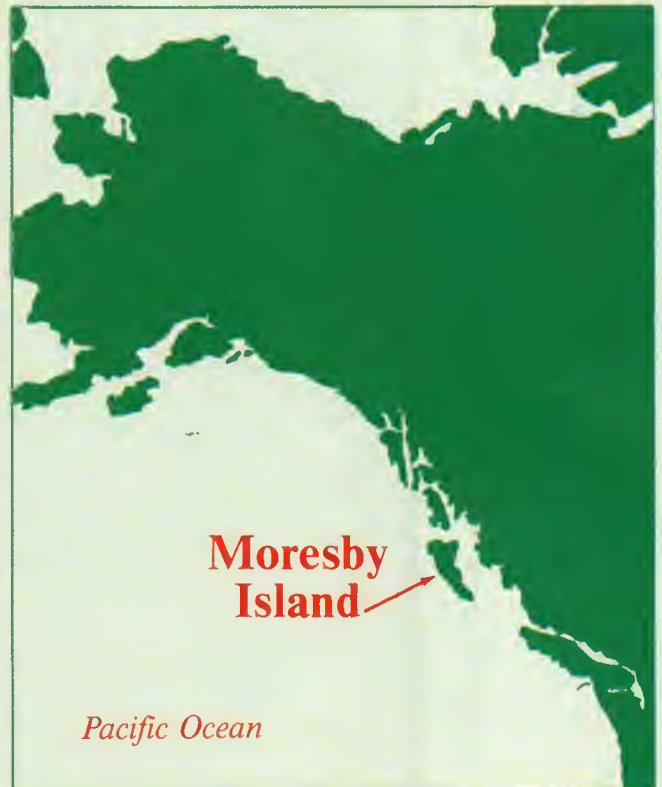
Planning the detailed route for the expedition was left until the islands were reached. At the outset, it had been hoped to complete a circumnavigation of the entire archipelago, however lack of time prevented this. Gathering any information was hard. There are few detailed charts available and land maps only enabled position finding through recognition of specific headlands and inlets. The maps

could not warn of the danger of submerged rocks and sand bars, which create high breaking waves and strong tidal rips and races.

Local knowledge was limited and contradictory. The usual response was a forbidding list of stories of how high the swell, how

# CANOEING IN THE PATH OF THE HAIDA

by Lance Corporal Jim Ross



unforgiving the coast and how nasty the weather.

A real phobia has built up about the west coast fuelled by the numerous sinkings and fatal accidents which have happened to larger and more powerful craft. One thing was for certain; once on the west coast of archipelago, we would be on our own and any loss or damage to the kayaks would result in a long walk out over unmapped mountains.

As a precaution against being stormed in, each kayak carried ten litres of fresh water on the rear deck. Including clothes, tents, radios and other safety equipment and food for three weeks, the kayaks weighed over 300 pounds. It took a five man lift to carry the boats over the rocks to the water's edge. The 20 foot tidal range on the east coast of the islands meant that some mornings the water had completely receded out of the bay you had paddled into the night before.

All the expedition members were experienced white water paddlers; for some expedition members this was, however, to be their

**Some of the tidal rips and races caused eight to ten feet breaking waves; no swimming for shore here. If you went over you rolled first time and hoped none of the kit lashed on the rear deck was washed away.**

first experience on the sea. Some of the tidal rips and races caused eight to ten feet breaking waves; no swimming for shore here. If you went over you rolled first time and hoped none of the kit lashed on the rear deck was washed away.

A big advantage was the kayaks used. The British designed and built Nordkapps have completed many 'first time' or 'impossible' journeys. To us, our boats were elegant and functional, ideally suited to the coast.

Our starting point was Queen Charlotte City on Graham Island, The first week took us South along the more sheltered east coast, passing idyllic islands and channels - a canoeist's paradise. Bald eagles, seals, and porpoises

became a common sight. There is no shock like having a 30 foot Minke whale suddenly surfacing twenty feet in front of the kayaks to blow.

There was no shortage of fire wood. On one beach, near Cape St James, there was so much drift wood that we were hemmed in

between the high water mark and a huge pile of logs extending the entire length of the beach - ten feet high by over thirty feet deep. Caution was needed to see that sparks from the fire we cooked by did not set this enormous wood pile alight.

At Skedans and Tanu, two abandoned Haida villages on the East coast, we were shown round the remaining totem poles and huge log long houses they built to house up to twenty families during the winter months. The forest is quickly reclaiming the land and every year there is less left to see. The Haida can be reserved and silent or friendly and outgoing. At Tanu, the latter was certainly true; after a cold and windy five hour crossing to reach the village site, we were greeted with hot coffee and home made doughnuts. It was hard to force oneself back into the kayaks for another 20km to that night's island site. The hospitality became warmer the further we ventured into the remote areas.

By now, we were becoming familiar with the Charlottes' weather; from idyllic mirrored sea to rain squalls, high winds, and choppy seas in a matter of minutes. Even though the wind was against us as we went south, we knew we were still getting food weather. Just how long would it last?

After seven days paddling, we reached Cape St James, the most southerly point on our journey and the windiest place in Canada. We were now turning the corner and heading up the west coast. The rain fell and visibility dropped; we were alone with the crested puffins as we started our long journey north.

The following day we visited Anthony Island, home to the most war like sub clan of the Haida. Because of its remoteness, the best collection of poles has been preserved, the complexity of the carvings and the stories they depicted left us in awe. The importance of the site has been recognized by UNESCO, when in 1981, it was declared a World Heritage Site.

It was during the next couple of days that we lost most canoeing. The weather fell into a pattern of high winds from the north west, and by two o'clock in the afternoon any further advance along the coast was prevented. The only solution was to get up very early; have a break mid-morning, and complete the day's canoeing before the wind rose, forcing us to pull into a sheltered beach.

Now, after more than a week of paddling our food had been depleted sufficiently to be able to store most of the deck cargo in the hulls. The lightened boats made both manoeuvring around the rocky headlands and carries down the beach easier. The weather further deteriorated to produce two days of thick fog. The skill was paddling close enough to the cliffs to hear the swell breaking, but not being close enough to be caught out by the rebounding waves. All the time, measuring the time and distance covered, occasionally having to go right inside the surf line to confirm our position. The deck mounted compasses were greatly affected by the heavy ore deposits in the volcanic rock, so much so, that if you lost contact with the land, no reliance could be placed on the compass itself. With nothing but the wide Pacific to our west and south, we did not wish to make such an error.

We were becoming well accustomed to the wilderness life. The weather cleared as we soaked up the miles northward. The raw beauty of this rugged coastline, with its hidden bays of soft white sand markedly contrasted with the coast outside where massive rock strewn boulder gardens guarded the headlands. The series of caves, arches, and stacks we could have explored on calmer days were endless, but always, it was necessary to keep a watchful eye on the clouds and sky.

The most magical moment came off a series of dangerous points at Kitgoro Inlet. A whale's tail fin had been spotted, and everyone scanned the horizon for a blow. A blow much closer was seen, then there were others. The whales were heading straight towards us. Then, about 400 metres away a killer whale jumped clear of the waves to have a look at us. The incredible sharp contrast between the black and white patches stood out. The tall dorsal fins showed us how fast and effortlessly they can travel. There was nothing we could do apart from fumble for cameras and watch as the whales drew closer. Another spy-hop at 100 metres and still closer the whales came until they were a bare 20 feet away. They look us over and we look back, camera shutters clicking away. Like overgrown dolphins, they cut and roll in the swell. Then, when they had decided that we did not feature in their food chain, these efficient 30 foot killers of the deep are gone as quickly as they came.



We turned the last corner of the triangle and headed east, along the narrow Skidegate channel which divides Noresby Island from Graham Island. The tricky tidal pattern in the channel required careful planning to obtain a tidal stream pattern which afforded the maximum advantage. By the last day of paddling, we made 50km seem like 30 as we raced in front of gale warnings to weather off Queen Charlotte City for the night. Our journey was over; the weather had just started to turn sour, but had held off sufficiently to enable us to paddle 16 days non-stop. No days had been lost by becoming storm-bound as we had anticipated and it would appear from local sources that some sort of record for the passage had been set - we had been advised that to paddle the East coast alone should take three weeks.



*Without assistance from unit and Corps funds and sponsorship from the P & O European Ferries Superstars Award Scheme, this journey of a lifetime would have been made just that bit more difficult to mount. For those who took part in the expedition there is that feeling of gratitude towards the sponsors who made that dream of a lifetime for four young kayakers come true. This is certainly not the end to this series of sea kayaking expeditions to the northwest coast of America - plans are now being finalised to complete, this summer, the last leg of the journey into Alaska, north to Glacier Bay, by continuing along the outside of Prince of Wales, Baranof and Chichagof Islands of Alaska - Expedition Silver Sitka.*

**The Silver Sculpin' Team**  
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1 0.2m	"Rock" Rock showing Shallow EASY EDDY Slow moving	Solid Eddy / Flow Rock shows Boulder with cushion 1. EDDY Flow on fast	SPEEDS UP EDDY SPEEDS UP	1. SWEEP AND PADDLE FORWARD WELL IN ADVANCE 2. REVERSE FERRY 3. LEAN ON ROCK AND PUSH	1. REVERSE FERRY 2. HANGING DRAW 3. BREAKOUT 4. BREAK IN AGAIN	1. HANGING DRAW 2. DRAW INTO POWER 3. CONTINUOUS BREAKOUT/IN LEFT AND RIGHT 4. 'S' MANOEUVRE	1. THREE-STROKE 'S' USING & PROBE COMBINATIONS 2. 180° SPIN BOTH FORWARD + REVERSE 3. 3-STROKE OUT/IN 4. ROCK TURN (RACK)
2 0.4m	"Rock with cushion" Rock just shows Stagnant eddy Upstream flow Downstream flow	1. EDDY Flow on fast Flow on fast Flow on fast Flow on fast	STRONGER EDDY	2. REVERSE FERRY (NOT ENOUGH TIME TO GO FORWARD SWEEP) 4. BRACE DOWNSTREAM IF SIDE-ON 5. AVOID	1. REVERSE FERRY 2. HANGING DRAW 3. BREAKOUT 4. BREAK IN AGAIN 5. STATIC BRACE AND LEAN ON CUSHION	1+2. DRAWS 3. BREAKOUT/IN 4. 'S' MANOEUVRE 5. BRACE SIDEWAYS LEFT AND RIGHT 6. ROCK JUMP (PLASTIC BOAT)	1. 1, 3 + AS ABOVE 5. BRACE ON CUSHION AND MOVE FORWARD AND REVERSE 6. UPSTREAM SURF 7. BLUFF WAVE END IF ROCK IS BIG.
3 0.6m	"Low volume pour-over" Rocks just covered Shallow Fast Flat and strong RECIRCULATION Fast downstream	MAYSEE RECIRCULATION SMOOTH MOUND CREATES IMPRESSION OF A DROP BEHIND IT.	RECIRCULATING FLOW RELATED EDDY POWERFUL STOPPER (FULL DEPTH)	2. REVERSE FERRY 5. AVOID 6. PUNCH AT RIGHT ANGLES AND POWER FORWARD	1. REVERSE FERRY 3+4. BREAKOUT/IN (LOWER DOWN) 6. PUNCH STRAIGHT	1+2. DRAWS 3. BREAKOUT/IN 4. 'S' MANOEUVRE PADDLING CONTINUOUSLY 7. PUNCH 8. NOSE DIP AT EDGE	6. CONTINUOUS BREAKOUT AND ENDER EXIT 7. SIDE-SURF (BOTH SIDES) AND PULL CLEAR (FORWARD AND REVERSE)
4 0.8m	"High volume pour-over" Rock now well covered Mound Very fast Mound very violent eddy Maw surges + boils Very fast	noise Mound HORIZON LINE WAVES FOAM SLIGHT RISE THEN 'HOLE' (Maw)	VIOLENT ELEVATED RECIRCULATOR BIG MOUND MAYSEE BOILS VERY POWERFUL STOPPER, INDEED	5. AVOID "NOT SUITABLE" THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST VIOLENT FEATURES ON A RIVER.	1. REVERSE FERRY 2. HANGING DRAW 7. OTHERWISE AVOID	9. LOW BRACE OUT AND QUICK EXIT 10. 180° SPIN AND CONTINUE 11. GENERAL AVOIDANCE	9. 180° SPIN LOW 11. ENDER EXIT 12. SKI JUMP MAW
5 1.0m	"Surface stopper" Powerful flow Wave Foam falling into the 'hole' Standing waves Strong throughflow	WAVES FOAM SLIGHT RISE THEN 'HOLE' (Maw)	ACCELERATING WATER TUMBLING FORM RISE "GLASSY" SURFACE STOPPER	5. AVOID UNLESS VERY SMALL IN WHICH CASE 6. PUNCH AT RIGHT ANGLES AND POWER FORWARD	1. REVERSE FERRY 2. HANGING DRAW 6. PUNCH (WITH SPEED) 7. OTHERWISE AVOID	7. PUNCH 13. DROP INSIDE-ON (LOW BRACE) EXIT FORWARD OR REVERSE 15. CATCH EDGE OF STOPPER WAVE AND TURN FOR ENDBER EXIT	9. SIDE-SURF 13. 180° SPIN AT ENDS 11. ENDER EXIT (FORWARD AND REVERSE) 15. ROLL UPSTREAM AND TURN FOR ENDBER EXIT
6 1.5m	"Breaking wave" Mound Powerful throughflow Trough May be intermittent	INTERMITTENT BREAKING WAVE RISE BEFORE SUDDEN DIP POWERFUL STOPPER	STEEP BREAK EASY INSIDE CURLING WAVE	5. AVOID UNLESS SMALL 6. PUNCH	1. REVERSE FERRY 2. HANGING DRAW 6. PUNCH STRAIGHT 8. SIDE-ON WITH HIGH OR LOW BRACE IF NOT TOO BIG.	2. DRAW INTO POWER 5. BRACE SIDEWAYS 7. PUNCH 14. TURN IN ADVANCE AND ENDBER	6. UPSTREAM SURF 11. ENDBER EXIT 14. REVERSE SURF
7 2.0m	"Standing wave" Reasonable depth over obstacle Usually a series downstream of obstacle	POWERFUL STOPPER BIG FLOW!	OBSTACLE IS WELL COVERED BIG STANDING WAVES	5. AVOID UNLESS SMALL 6. PUNCH	6. PUNCH 9. USE CREST TO CHANGE DIRECTION 10. SURF WITH STEEP BUDDER IF SMALL	15. SURF WAVES OF ALL SIZES 16. WAVE CREST TURN 17. ENDBER IF STEEP 18. HIGH CROSS IN TROUGH	11. ENDBER FORWARD AND REVERSE 16. UPSTREAM SURF 14. REVERSE SURF 15. NO PADDLE SURF FORWARD + REVERSE 19. CROSSES 20. WAVE TOP SURF TECHNIQUES

Clive Dredger 1989

# UNDERSTANDING WHITE WATER

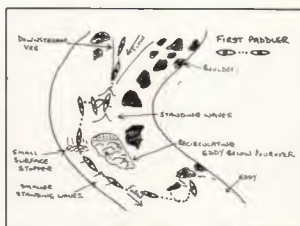
Chris Dickenson, of Ardentinn Outdoor Centre, explains how to recognise key features and react appropriately

The rapid comprised a long left hand bend with a plethora of

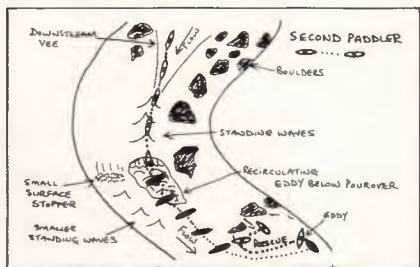


boulders on the inside and a far from clear run through the middle somewhere. The downstream vee led into a series of heavy standing waves where a sharp horizon line ahead signalled a drop with a likely poulover whilst to the right was an easy exit through a small rolling stopper to easier water below.

The first paddler, who was experienced, paddled the vee and kept cool in the standing waves in



order to set the stern to the right for a two stroke reverse ferry, having seen the sharp horizon indicating the poulover, and in a flash had opted for the safer passage through the small rolling 'playhole' on river right.



The second paddler, who was less experienced, also paddled the vee and enjoyed the standing waves, with water crashing across the deck and into the face, and then dropped over the steep face of the large poulover. The boat was immediately caught in the violent maw which flipped the kayak. The backtow prevented the kayak from floating free immediately and the paddler was unable to roll and forced to exit as the boat was shoved clear. An uncomfortable swim followed in the icy water to the foot of the rapid where the first paddler helped the second ashore.

**So why did the first paddler's run succeed, where the second's failed?**

### Three possible reasons

- ◆ The second paddler did not know how to perform a reverse ferry or moving draw.
- ◆ The second paddler knew how to perform a reverse ferry and a moving draw and failed because the heavy standing waves, whilst enjoyable, had created anxiety sufficient to prevent the paddler from using these techniques. In other words, his/her skill broke down under pressure.

◆ A critical difference between the performance of the two paddlers was the ability to recognise the water features ahead, evaluate their implications and then take appropriate paddling action. The second paddler needs to improve the reading of the river and reactions to water features identified.

### IS WATER PREDICTABLE?

*"Every new rapid ..... is like a strange new machine. You've got to operate it, but the operation manual is lost. It could be a twinkie machine, a new fangled toaster oven OR an atomic meat grinder."* (William Nealy: *Kayak* 1986)

Whilst it would probably be true to say that no two rapids are exactly alike in every detail it is also true that each rapid is not strictly a strange new machine either. Water itself is essentially predictable, conforming to the laws of hydrology. Armed with this knowledge the paddler can proceed, confident that he or she can recognise from past experience configurations within a rapid and apply appropriate techniques to cope with them. What the paddler cannot know, with any precision, is the shape of the river bed and banks because much of these are hidden from view. However, water is an agent of erosion, transportation and deposition and the manner in which it acts on the materials forming bed and banks is also to some extent predictable. It is where the river runs over or against the earth's bedrock where the maximum variations are likely to exist because the channel configuration will be as much a product of localised geology, rock hardness and jointing patterns as the action of the water itself.

Consider the case of the shingle flume where the river is acting upon a relatively uniform, graded bed and banks. A gradual, steepening leading to a smooth tongue of water pointing the way down between the narrowing banks and leading to a series of standing waves, gradually decreasing in size. On either side of the waves will be an elongated eddy of slower flow. This rapid is a standard "type" but its scale can vary according to the mean size of the particles making up bed and banks (which will also affect gradient) and the volume of water. Such a rapid "type" may increase from grade 1 to as much as 4 in the case of extremely big volume but the water configurations are still likely to be relatively predictable and the paddler will be able to react instinctively based on past experience of such rapids.

### ARE MIDSTREAM FEATURES PREDICTABLE?

Understanding the nature of midstream obstacles can help in the understanding of features seen in different parts of the same river or in a familiar rapid at different volumes. Look at the colour diagram opposite.

### CONTINUUM

The features shown represent points on a continuum: at each stage changes have taken place which have new implications for the paddler tackling the feature. The measurements and gradient shown are to assist understanding rather than practical measurements. The

examples show an obstacle of fixed size. Apply the logic of the diagram to obstacles of different sizes and think about the implications of different depths of water and the velocity of that water in relation to those obstacles. For example a depth of 0.4m with a given velocity may produce a poulover at a 0.4m obstacle and an easy eddy at a 4m high obstacle.

### INDICATIONS FROM UPSTREAM

The key to success on the river is firstly understanding the features and then being able to recognise them reliably from upstream. You then have time in which to plan your course of action. Experienced paddlers may be planning moves a few features ahead of their position on the river. This is certainly the case where the difficulty merits bank inspection.

### PADDLING OPTIONS

The options open to a paddler are dictated by that paddler's level of expertise and confidence and the diagram seeks to encourage paddlers to experiment with a variety of manoeuvres that are within their capabilities. The paddler aims to move from being the "floating log", having no control over his or her destiny, towards complete mastery of the moving water environment involving perfect anticipation, judgement and technical excellence.

### To conclude:

Moving water follows patterns and features recur again and again, perhaps on different scales. So start with hydrological features-cushions, stoppers, standing waves etc., on a small scale and learn about their behaviour before tackling bigger versions of the same. Try to avoid the idea that "every new rapid is like a strange machine" where past experience is devalued. Many of the features on a new rapid are familiar and understandable, but they may be assembled in a different order. How many paddlers have said, "I hate 'boils', they are so unpredictable", without studying them carefully, first small then not so small, to discover the predictable characteristics of these features. For many expert paddlers the effects of 'boils' on their kayaks are quite predictable and the expert can sit happily in the sanctuary of a boiling super-elevated eddy where the beginner would not last a second.

The paddling options outlined are suggestions and may not be comprehensive but they indicate the huge variety of techniques which can be practised on a relatively few river features. I have seen so many paddlers moving up onto a grade of water where their skill level only allows them to survive the scale of features they find there and yet these same paddlers on easier rapids are ignoring similar but smaller features where they could be developing their skills and understanding for greater things. Slalom paddlers force themselves to make careful use of water to reach gates, thereby increasing the technical difficulty of otherwise straightforward stretches of moving water. The recreational white water paddler does not have the gate to go for but he or she would do well to start setting 'goals' to achieve which test both understanding and skill in order to be better prepared for more difficult, and by implication more serious, rapids in the future.



## Regional Round Up

### EASTERN REGION

The first executive committee of the new year concentrated on the final details of two publications, the Regional Handbook (full of details of clubs and people) and the Canoeists Guide to the East of England. The latter is a second edition and is an enlarged river guide with more maps and detailed information on access to rivers. Available from a number of canoeists shops or from the Regional Secretary. Ring Robin 0279 658612 for details. Feed-back at Crystal Palace was very favourable on both publications.

Whilst marathon and slalom competitions are catered for at both high and low competition level in the region, the regatta officials have again identified the lack of lower feeder levels to sprint competition. The Eastern area has been identified and a number of clubs have indicated that they are interested in participating. WATCH THIS SPACE!

### EAST MIDLANDS REGION

Here is the new look East Midlands Regional Committee:

Chairman	Reg Robinson	0636 706486
Vice Chair/Access	Simon Dawson	0602 868803
Secretary	George Oliver	
Treasurer	Jason Harniness	0522 683677
Newsletter/Slalom	Pearl Mulholland	0332 558263
Marathon	Robert Guest	0522 62394
Polo	Perran Shreeve	
Sprint	James Butler	0602 262209
Derbyshire	C Martin	0629 55046
Leicestershire	K Hampton	0533 674428
Lincolnshire	R Wright	0522 24877
Notts	D Coddington	0602 781972
Northants	T Bloor (temporary)	0604 32446

At Crystal Palace Reg Robinson received on behalf of this Regional Special Needs Group a cheque for £1,100 from the Jubilee Fund. We have also received a cheque for £250 from Leicester City Council, these together have helped us to provide, a comprehensive range of equipment and expertise for all special needs groups within the region. For further information contact Keith Hampton: 0533 674428. To all regional paddlers, as spring approaches we wish you good and safe paddling, and would urge you to have consideration for other river/water users. Please contact any member of the Committee if you have any queries.

### LONDON & SOUTH EAST

The regional Holme Pierrepont weekend will be 11-12 August. Instruction will be available if needed and appropriate water levels will be arranged for paddlers of differing abilities. Application forms from: Chris Childs, 8a Holland Street, Brighton, Sussex BN2 2WB.

A Regional Polo Tournament is being organised again this year. Last season several teams started from scratch and did very well; so this is how to start: Boats and equipment can be provided. Write to: Curly Barker, 43a Sackville Gardens, Ilford, Essex IG1 3LJ.

The Regional Pool Slalom was held at Alleyn's School Pool on 7 January. Winners were - Mens K1 Andrew Wronski, Ladies K1 Louise Hilton, C1 Steve Hunt, C2 Walling & Walling. Top placed Junior was Mark Stevens. Well done all!

Please support the regional touring calendar. April events include the Kent Rother and

Westel Canoe Trial. May events are the Westel Wey Rally and West Sussex Rother (see yearbook for details).

### NORTHERN

Please help Peter Hanover, Chairman of Tees Kayak Club, who has been elected to the BCU Slalom Executive to promote Novice Slalom. Copeland Canoe Club's sea canoeing and social week-end is on 9/10 June - contact Joe Straker, 4 Merlin Drive, 1 Moresby Park, Whitehaven, Cumbria. Contact Dave Pope, 142 Raby Road, Newton Hall, Durham or your club secretary, for details of the new Wear agreement. The white water championships were held on 4 February on the North Tyne in extreme weather conditions. Regional champions: mens K1 J Tracey of Haefen, ladies K1 Lisa Rae of Coquet, C2 Lunn and Miller of Coquet, C1 Andrew Tracey of Haefen, veterans J Roelick, under 16 Michael Mason Durham CC. Our thanks to the visiting paddlers for their support. Northern region white water series continues - details in racing handbook. 'Pollution Watchdog', a simple guide to river pollution is available from E Palmer Northumbrian RAO - send sae. Finally a 'River Clean-Up' requires your help - details from Northumbrian Secretary, Paul Kelly, or your club secretary.

### NORTH WEST REGION

We extend our sympathies to Pattie, whose husband Alan Harwood from Liverpool died in a canoeing accident on the river Conwy on 11 March. A memorial fund is being established in his memory, to benefit young paddlers in the area.

Committee members manned the North West Region stand at the Exhibition. Particular interest was expressed in the Burrs site at Bury.

The North West Region weekend at Holme Pierrepont, referred to in the yearbook may not take place. It would be advisable to check before going. A decision about this weekend will be taken by the committee.

We have received an enquiry about the vacant Treasurer's position, advertised in the last regional roundup.

Committee meetings will be held at Trafford Watersports Centre, 7 pm on 22 May, 31 July and 25 September. Clubs are invited to send a representative.

### SOUTHERN

The Region is running eight Thames tours starting from Lechlade on 4 March and doing between 12 and 17 miles on the first Sunday of each month (except August) until we reach Runnymede on 4 November. Contact Ted Moulding (0908 676343). A sea-touring interest group is being formed; we have several people interested already. The idea is to develop contacts with other sea paddlers and go on trips together. Contact Charles Hicks (Canal Cottage, Crondall Road, Crookham Village, Hants GU13 0SY). Our first three Southern Region Hare and Hounds training races were held on the Basingstoke Canal in January/February. Turnouts were good and competition keen despite the gales and rain. Rushmoor Borough Council have organised a 24 event 'Olympics' on 14/15 July 1990 including canoe polo, marathon, sprint and pool slalom, and a combined event covering the last three of these. Contact Kit Price (025 126 2568).

### SOUTH WEST REGION

Congratulations to Tony Cox, Vice-Chariman and former slalom representative; Adam Box, currently Regional Access Officer and former Treasurer and Paul Gibbard, former Local Coaching Organiser for Avon and County Scout Adviser, on the award of certificates in recognition of their services to canoeing in the South West Region. The regional training weekend at Holme Pierrepont, including additional fun events will take place on 23/24 June. It is hoped that the costs will remain the same as last year, namely £8 and £5, but a bib charge will unfortunately be necessary. Any club, school and scout groups needing details of the interesting and probably exciting regional touring plan should contact Dennis Walls, 71 Butts Road, Exeter EX2 5EG. The Committee still needs information from members on developments on local waterways, particularly new weir constructions, restrictions on access, or purchases of fishing rights by local angling clubs. Your representatives on the NRA need this information to pursue your interests.

### WEST MIDLANDS

The Holme Pierrepont rally on 28/29 April is an opportunity for paddlers from the region to get together and try all types of canoeing, including: Slalom, Hot Dogging, Canadian Canoeing and Sprint Racing, Tours, Rafting and much more. Camping available. Discount for parties of 4 or more. Come for the weekend, or for a day. Bar-B-Q on Saturday evening. Details from Mike Hubbard (Recreation Officer) 78 Derrydown Road, Birmingham B42 1RT. Details on all West Midlands Tours in the BCU Yearbook from Dave Bateman (Touring Officer) Ackers Trust, Golden Hillock Road, Birmingham B11 2PY.

WANTED: People to adopt a piece of their local river or canal. To watch for any problems on access, pollution, etc and to feed the information to the Regional Access Officer. We need to know what is happening on all the water in the region and to do this we need your help! For further details contact Mike Nicholls (Regional Access Officer) 25 Dunbar Grove, Birmingham B43 7PT.

### YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE

The first Washburn evening release date is Wednesday 9 May. The evening releases are aimed at recreational paddlers and evening dates are on Wednesdays 30 May, 20 June, 11 July and 5 August from 5 pm to dusk. West Yorkshire canoe club are organising a cruise weekend on June 9/10. Further details for all recreational releases from Don Player, 0532 667397. Particular thanks go to Sheffield Canoe Club for their second donation - this time for £125.80 - towards the Washburn development fund. It is hoped other clubs will also help raise the necessary money to build the toilets and improve the car parking, especially as work on these projects is soon to begin.

The region's development plan is being rewritten and updated. The initial plan has been very successful in obtaining new sites for canoeing and includes development on the rivers Don and Ouse, Grimsby docks plus the North Yorkshire Moors and Dales having included canoeing in their development strategies. Any other sites possibly suitable should be notified to David Gené 0484 518913.

The West Riding Cup Polo Tournament is again to be held at Armley Baths on Saturday 19 May - further details from Marianne Spender 0422 882908.



## The Conwy Ascent 1990

24 June

A must for every paddler's diary. Last year's formula of a tourist trail followed by a race proved to be very successful, so we propose to do the same again.

The course is approximately 12 miles, starting just downstream of Conwy and following the flood tide up river to Dolgarrog. The river conditions can be very variable and the going can get quite tough if the wind blows from the South so it is worth doing a bit of training beforehand.

For details and entry forms send an SAE to: Kevin Coleman, 36 Bryn Castell, Conwy, Gwynedd LL32 8LF. or pop into Pete Weston's kayak shop in Llandudno Junction, Gwynedd, when you're passing.

## The BCU Touring and Recreation Committee

organise a complete programme of recreational events and tours which is published in the BCU members yearbook. BCU members receive a discount on entry fees on production of a current membership card, and instant membership is available for those who want to join on the spot.

National Events include:

### The Tryweryn Open 12/13 May

This is for experienced canoeists who wish to do the full length of the River, which is graded II-IV. The Tryweryn is a river that flows from a holding dam above Lake Bala into the Lake itself and the releases for the weekend course are as far as possible guaranteed; an ideal opportunity for people who want to improve their white water skills.

Details from John Gregson, BCU National Tours Officer, Dorinda House, Wick, Pershore, Worcs WR10 3NU (please send a large SAE).

### Plymouth Sea Touring Event 2/3 June

A new event this year. Details from Mike Wood, 5 Mill Hill Drive, Sandbach, Cheshire CW11 0PW.

### Rodeo and Squirt Boat Event 2/3 June

This event was held for the first time last year and was a huge success, enjoyed by competitors and spectators alike. Details from Simon Dawson, 75 Turney Street, The Meadows, Nottingham NG2 2EG.

### Avon Camp Weekend 7/8 June

A fun weekend, catering for individuals, groups and families regardless of their canoeing skills - with games, bar-b-q and beer.

### Try Tryweryn 1/2 September 1990

This first full weekend of the month, giving the benefit of late summer is the time to take part in this event for all paddlers of varying skills. TRY TRYWERYN is specifically designed to teach, encourage, and develop the white water skills of each and every person, young and old alike.

For further information send a large SAE to John Gregson, BCU National Tours Officer, Dorinda House, Wick, Pershore, Worcs WR10 3NU.



Photograph Courtesy of Mobile Adventure

## HOLIDAYS

### USSR

At last! a chance to experience Glasnost first hand! Canoeing as a sport hardly exists at all in Russia - but all this is about to change. This year for the first time, Sporting Travel Services, in conjunction with Mobile Adventure, are offering open canoe trips down the River Neris in Lithuania, River Chuya in Karelia and the Chara, Baikal Lena and Kaa Hem in Siberia. No access problems here and plenty of interesting paddling, dramatic scenery and friendly natives.

### Nepal

Sporting Travel Services again. This time on the Himalayan rivers Trisuli and Sun Kosi. These are big water rivers with plenty of playable holes, stoppers and standing waves - only competent paddlers are accepted.

### Yugoslavia

Nigel Foster Canoeing Ventures offers warm sea kayaking among the Elaphiti Islands of the Adriatic. Historic towns, picturesque islands, hidden coves and warm clear water!

### Newfoundland

Wilderness travel in open canoes, down river to the sea, followed by an island cruise, with kite power (wind permitting). Again organised by Nigel Foster.

### Canada

A whole variety of canoeing and kayaking holidays/expeditions are organised by the Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association (alias SOBEK) from sea kayaking (on Lake Superior!), whale watching and other wildlife spotting to serious whitewater rivers. Book through Sporting Travel Services or send to Sobek for their full colour brochure.

### France - surfing

A wave ski centre, 'Biofun' has opened up on the west coast of France, 70km north

of Biarritz. Good surf is more or less guaranteed with uncrowded beaches, sun and French food and wine. Sounds idyllic! Biofun will arrange accommodation, equipment, instruction or any combination thereon.

**Headwater Holidays** offer open canoeing holidays on the rivers Cele, Lowe (Jura) and Creuse. The emphasis is on freedom and flexibility: there are no organised 'groups' or 'leaders' but accommodation, equipment, advice and detailed information packs are all provided. Most holidays are run on a 'move a day, rest a day' basis, with transport for gear arranged by Headwater. The trips would make an ideal family holiday suitable for beginners as well as the experienced paddler. The Cele and Creuse are placid water trips, the Loue is grade 2.

### Alps/Norway

Plenty of companies to choose from here. There are specialists such as Alpine Canoeing Holidays and most outdoor centres organise at least one trip a year. Try Current Trends, Plas-y-Brenin, Bowles, Twr-y-Felin, all BCU approved centres, or send an SAE to the office for an up to date list.

### Addresses

Alpine Canoe Holidays, PO Box 86, Lincoln LN5 8TP (0522) 540723  
Biofun Loisirs, 3 Rue de Montreux, 68300, Saint-Louise, France  
Current Trends, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5AS  
Headwater Holidays, 146 London Road, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 5HH (0606) 48699  
International Adventure (Sporting Travel Services), 7 Melbourn Street, Royston, Herts SG8 5TD  
Nigel Foster Canoeing Ventures, 5 Tan-y-Bwlch, Mynydd Llnadegai, Bethesda, Gwynedd LL57 4DX (0248) 602058  
Sobek Expeditions, 157 Main Street, Unionville, Ontario L3R 2G8  
Twr-y-Felin Outdoor Centre, St Davids,

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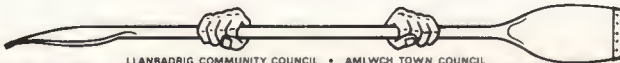
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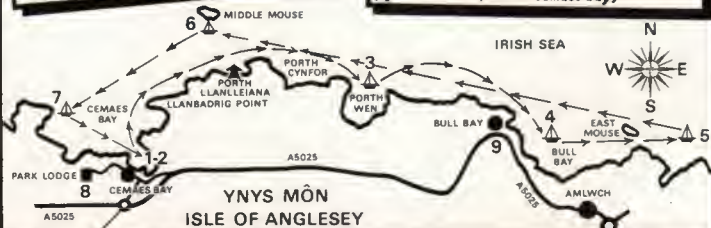
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1st LADY**

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### by Mike Bruce

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**Where to Go?** Austria has large rivers, but means quite a lot of driving between rivers. Switzerland is excellent around the Thun area, but tends to be expensive. Italy has some good rivers, but these tend to be spread out; the Dora Baltea can be paddled, when paddling the Isere in France by going over the Col du Petit Bernard, which usually opens late May/June. For Italy, you need an Italian translation of the UK green driving licences - FOC from the AA. The area I recommend is the Durance basin in France which has 9 rivers close together with the Ubaye, Drac and Severaisse within easy driving distance for a day.

**When to Go?** The Alpine rivers are up from Easter until early August. **Beware** - some sections which are easily canoeable in July/August, may be several grades higher or impossible in April/May/June, due to the extra volume of water. This is particularly true after a good skiing winter. The Ubaye is a good example of this, the photo was taken at the beginning of July, but in May, the whole river bed is usually covered and the water grey/brown.

**Budget for** - Car ferry, Green card, Car recovery insurance, Personal insurance, Canoe insurance, Petrol, Motorway tolls, Accommodation, Food and spending money.

**Ferry crossings:** Choice of routes from Dover, Ramsgate, Folkestone, Newhaven, Portsmouth, Poole, Weymouth, Plymouth, Hull and Felixstowe. Felixstowe is good for travelling from the North of England and Scotland, avoiding the South East of England and adding only about 12 miles to the overall journey. Portsmouth and Poole are good for paddlers from the South, West, Wales and Midlands, again avoiding the South East, and saving up to 60 miles at the other end.

**Green Card:** This is an endorsement to your UK car insurance, (UK insurance, even if comprehensive, only gives third party cover abroad). Check with your insurance company: some give free green cards, other charge around £20.

**Car recovery insurance:** This is worth taking; most trips total around 2000 miles in 2 weeks. It saves your holiday being ruined by accidents, breakdowns, fire and theft. Hire cars are supplied if necessary, extra expenses are met and problems sorted out for you.

**Personal insurance:** For medical expenses, personal baggage, loss of money, legal expenses, personal liability, disruption of schedule transport etc. A DHSS E111 form is advisable and gives free or reduced cost medical treatment in most European countries. Details in DHSS leaflet SA40 available from DHSS and some Post Offices,

allow 1 month for admin. Using E111 can save excesses from Insurance companies eg France £50 bill, E111 refund £45. Insurance excess £20/25.

A special policy for BCU members is available from Mid Surrey Travel, underwritten at Lloyds with car recovery (about 1/2 the cost of AA 5 Star) and personal insurance including whitewater canoeing. (5 Star excludes whitewater canoeing at normal rates).

**Canoe insurance:** Is available through the BCU for Western Europe at 1-16 days £12.50, 17-30 days £20 for boats up to £500 in value - contact the office for details.

**Petrol:** Costs about £2.40/gallon or £1.80 diesel. Cheapest to buy from supermarkets. Calais to Briancon is about 600 miles and including stops takes around 12 hours, depending on traffic.

**Motorway tolls:** Are payable in France; getting to the Alps will cost about £40 return.

**Accommodation:** Camping costs about £2 per person per night at reasonable sites. There are plenty to choose from by rivers, booking is advisable from July onwards. Mid Surrey Travel, have details of apartments for hire in Serre Chevalier, Briancon, Vallouise and Les Orres (May to July from £100 for a fortnight)

**Food:** Is similar to UK prices, beer and wine cheap. Eating out is good value also.

**Spending Money:** Visa/Access can be used to pay for most motorway tolls, petrol and in many supermarkets, plus cash advances. Eurocheques are not accepted by many French banks without handling charges, if they do not display the Eurocheque symbol. Traveller cheques are changeable at most banks.

If you fancy a day's skiing, Les 2 Alpes, Europe's no 1 summer ski resort and largest skiing Glacier, is close by. There is whitewater rafting, eau vive (swimming down rapids on a float), paragliding off the mountains, hangliding, windsurfing, climbing, horse riding, tennis, swimming (in swimming pools), ice skating, mountain biking, etc. Or why not spend a week on the French Riviera as well, 150 miles away.

**Useful reading** - Terry Storry's Alpine Whitewater, available from the BCU for £3.60 for members. Also useful is the latest Itineraries Pedestres et a Ski 1:50,000 maps, which also shows river gradings and beginnings and endings for canoeing sections, available in most villages in the area for around £6. There are two good canoeing shops in the area - L'Artisan du Sports at Embrun by the Durance and Jausiers on the Upper Ubaye, stocking Prijon, Ace, Perception, Schlegels, Romer etc.

Have a good trip.

*Mike Bruce is a BCU Senior Instructor, AIK. He lives in Les 2 Alpes and offers guiding and instruction to groups in the Durance area from £30 per day. He can be contacted by phoning (0703) 893502, most evenings and leaving a message.*

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\*National Marine Manufacturers Assn.  
†Patent Nos. 4660498 & 4741284

For further details please contact: The Coleman Company, Parish Wharf Estate,

**COLEMAN®**

LENGTH - 156 IN BEAM - 36 IN DEPTH AMIDSHIP - 14 IN WEIGHT - 67 LB NMMA\* MAX. WEIGHT CAPACITY - 475 LB  
 MAX. PERSON CAPACITY - 440 LB MAX. HORSEPOWER - 3 HP WARRANTY - 1 YR



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Foxy & Reeves Photography

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# COMPETITION FOCUS

## Wild Water Racing

### TRYWERYN RACES ARE ON

The Wild Water Racing Committee AGM was held near the River Washburn on Saturday 24 February. The outcome of the meeting was the election of a new Chairman and the re-election of 4 Executive members. The full Exec is now: Chairman Brian Tipper, Treasurer Mike Tordoff, Secretary Joe Lyons, Exec Members Dave Williams, John Anderson, Dave Kay, Jeff Parker, Nigel Morley and Matt Caunt.

In the subsequent Open Forum a number of issues were raised for action later in the year by the Exec. They are: A revision of the points system for Division B Paddlers, a revision of the way in deciding the National Under 14 and Under 16 champions and a complete revision of the National Team Championships especially the points scoring, the qualifying races and the splitting of ranking team events away from some of the Div A ranking races.

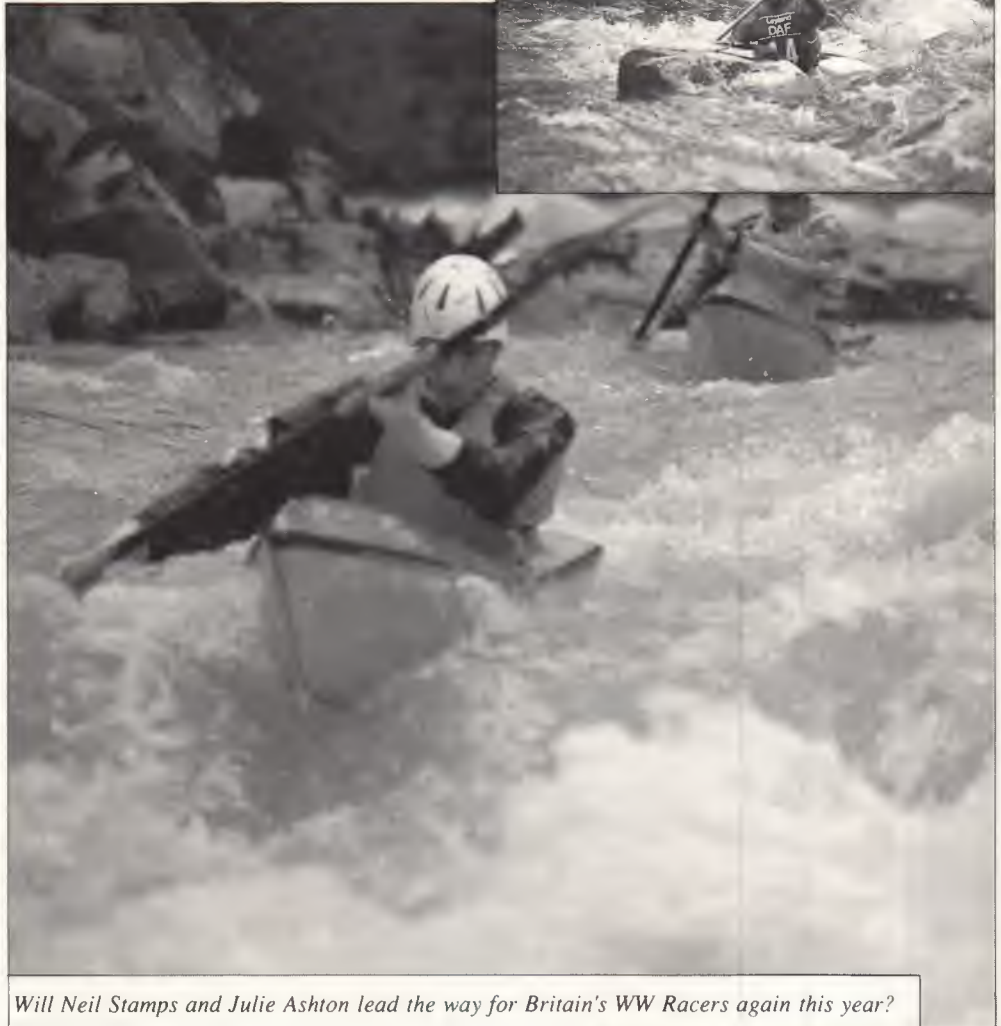
The races on the River Tryweryn are on - YES ON ! - 21/22 April is the Welsh Open, entries to Nick Pink, 5 Penry Street, Rhos, Clwyd, North Wales LL14 1DF. The event is a Div B and Open Event with a class for plastic boats. Entry fees are £5.00 for Welsh Open Event, Div B £3.00, plastic £2.50 and youth/juniors in all events £1.50.

The British Open Race will be held on the Tryweryn on 12/13 May as yet the organiser has not been confirmed, details will be released later however, regarding this event.

Other races on the calendar are: 28/29 April on the North Tyne, organiser Mary Armstrong, 7 Dryburn Park, Durham Moor, Durham DH1 5AD. Div A, Open and Team.

Colne Valley Div C, Open and Team 28/29 April (2 races). Organiser: N Armstrong, 110 Northolt Road, Northolt, Middlesex UB5 4PJ.

River Trent (Nottingham) Div C Open and Plastics 27



*Will Neil Stamps and Julie Ashton lead the way for Britain's WW Racers again this year?*

Photographs James Wingfield

May. Organiser: John Handyside, Glebe Farm, Colston Gate, Cotgrave, Nottingham NG12 3JX.

A reminder from John Handyside, National Competition Coach that courses for coaches and trainers can be organised to suit the requirements of clubs and individuals, contact (0602) 892313. Training weekends can also be organised in your area to suit or at the National Water Sports Centre, Holme Pierrepont.

### GB SQUAD TRAINING WEEKEND 10/11 MARCH

The first full squad training weekend of 1990 took place in Nottingham on 10/11 March. Perhaps the most strikingly different aspect of the weekend was the venue, thanks to John Handyside the squad were based in the luxurious Holiday Inn. All rooms being provided with en suite bathroom, remote controlled television inc satellite and radio channels. The Saturday evening meal was an opportunity for paddlers to learn of the 1990 selection policies and International programme. This

was accompanied by an eat all you can meal, as you can imagine the staff were rather astounded by the sheer volume consumed squad members.

Whilst the hotel was warm, dry and extremely comfortable the weather was the reverse, with the Trent very high, most paddling sessions took place on the canal. The squad worked in class groups for most of the time with sessions incorporating, video analysis of technique, endurance work and a large amount of team based racing.

Once again the squad worked very well together, showing that members are mature enough to support one another towards consolidating on 1989s International success.

## By the waters of the Wye

BPSA Whitewater Race, 24 - 25 February



Hatfield Poly - the winning team



After two consecutive years of holding a white water walk on a drought-stricken river Dart, the BPSA hitched up its skirts and settled by the sweet waters of the Wye for its annual weekend of canoeing excellence.

The chosen section for the white water race was that stretch above Builth and below Rhyadar that includes the town falls and railway rapids where an honest paddler can usually find at least a paddles depth of water to capsize in.

After the recent climactic upheavels that, at times, left the Wye licking its lips and lunging over trembling banks it was a bit disappointing to see it performing business as usual in a bubbling picturesque fashion, but then, it was pointed out, a poly student can capsize and swim anywhere - no problem.

Fourteen polys duly pulled up on Saturday morning, (Leeds being the exception, after finding the firm they had hired their buses off had had them all commmandered by the police as ambulances,) the control caravan was stranded in the fast growing swamp at the finish, the starters and finishers were wrapped in plastic and sent to shout abuse at contestants and everything was ready.

So, while co-organiser Chris Colman sat looking decidedly peaky and ready to throw up in control, and the rain decided to lash out specifically in that period between 'event start' and 'event finish', the teams chundered off.

In the expert class Liverpool A romped their way to a thirty second lead over Hatfield A while Portsmouth's reprobates slid into third place.

A fallen tree was presenting some problems, so half way through the day George Cherry, fellow organiser with Chris Colman, had to rush off and orchestrate some tree surgery as the event continued.

Next, Plymouth 1 and 2 sandwiched Lancaster A in the novice class and then, in the ladies, Hatfield A stormed down for a win by two minutes over Portsmouth C with Portsmouth A in third.

With the first day over any

serious minded competitors were wise to steer clear of Saturday night and the Worlds End Lodge at Staunton on Wye. Here the staff had been preparing for our arrival for over a week, and they'll probably need that long to clean up again after the traditional BPSA party.

A marquee had been added to the side of the building and a bar extension until some unbelievable time in the morning had been arranged. People poured in and keen competitors were seen to drop their normally strict health regimes to indulge in a drink or two and a chorus or ten of some respectable old folk songs.

The next morning dim memories of figures climbing in the roof of the marquee and the odd head-ache from one or two drinking games must have retarded a few people's water reading abilities.

In yet more rain, wind and, by now, hail, L Butty of Leeds won the novice event with R Miller of Wales coming second and R Garbutt of North Staffordshire in third.

The ladies results sheet was headed by S Deeks of PLC with F Collings of Plymouth and K Rossington of Leicester in second and third. Most of the ladies put in very fast times that had many of the men reaching for next years training logs and pencilling in the bit extra.

The experts class was won by B Stephenson of Hatfield while P Kelly and M Smith of Leicester came second and third.

The over-all event was won by Hatfield with Portsmouth second and Liverpool third.

All credit to Chris Colman and George Cherry for the organisation, and Barclays for donating the trophies, and lets hope Chris's dad can get the mud out of his caravan.

*Photographs by Kevin Whibley*

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***The Wildwater Racing Section was compiled by John Handyside***

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# Slalom

## 1990 NATIONAL POOL SLALOM CHAMPIONSHIPS CRYSTAL PALACE, 17/18 February 1990

This year's slalom finals gave the fans a real taste of drama, sportsmanship and excitement which has become the feature of this magic event.

The large crowd were again sent away breathless, as the finals came to a great climax.

Many favourites did not make the finals, an indication of how competitive this event has become.

### The one that got away!

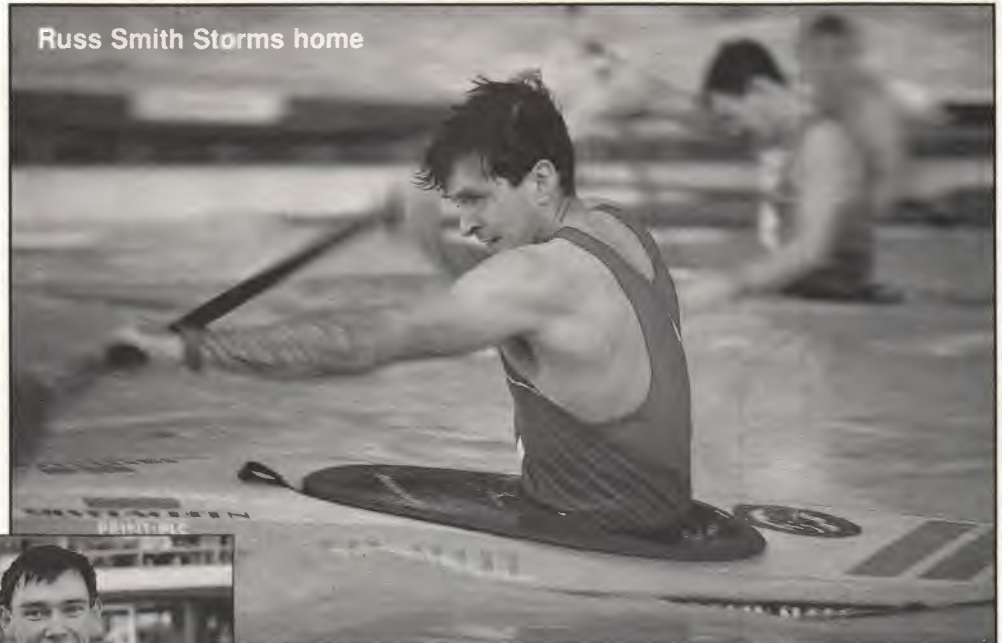
Top marks for sportsmanship went to Russ Smith in the semi-final with Rob Soothill. As the gun went, Russ flew off from the start, and on completing the first gate realised that Rob had problems - his paddle had snapped on the first stroke. Russ stopped to allow Rob to sort out new paddles and got a great cheer from the galleries for this gesture.

In the C2 event, Arrowsmith and Brain swept all before them. In invincible form, they stormed home in 72.70 seconds, seven seconds clear of Smith and Brown, who had to settle for second place.

In the C1 class, there was a tremendous display from Bill Horsman, making the 720° spin in classic C1 fashion, to take first place from Simon Twigger, in a time of 71.36 seconds.

The race of the day was the Ladies K1 final between Maria Francis 1989 British Ladies K1 Champion, and Lynn Simpson 1989 Gold Medal winner at the Junior Pre Worlds.

The intense rivalry was evident from the start. The first half was evenly contested as both girls went into the reverse move at the start of the final loop. Lynn just edged it and went into the 720° spin fractionally ahead of Maria and came through to win in 70.97 seconds



Russ Smith Storms home



Lynn Simpson's winning run

Photographs by Joe Mulholland

to Marias 72.22. A tremendous race found two of our top female paddlers in a head to head battle which had the crowd cheering all the way.

The mens K1 final paired Russ Smith with Carsten Nillies of West Germany who had looked impressive in the previous rounds. However, it was to be Russ's day. He stormed home with a clear run in a time of 62.51 seconds to take the title, which was just reward for some great paddling, and generous sportsmanship.

The winners trophies were presented by Liz Sharman MBE, who received a tremendous ovation from the large, and still very excited audience. Well done to everyone.

### Final Results of the International Pool Slalom 1990

	Time	Pens	Total
<b>K1 Men</b>			
1st Russ Smith	62.51	0	62.51
2nd Carsten Nillies	65.04	6	71.04
<b>K1 Ladies</b>			
1st Lynn Simpson	70.97	0	70.97
2nd Maria Francis	72.22	0	72.22
<b>C1</b>			
1st Bill Horsman	69.36	2	71.36
2nd Simon Twigger	73.29	2	75.29
<b>C2</b>			
1st Arrowsmith/Brain	70.70	2	72.70
2nd Smith/Brown	75.14	4	79.14



**MBE's Together Liz Sharman MBE, Richard Fox MBE**

## **LIZ SHARMAN MBE - ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY**

Liz Sharman, one of the world's foremost lady paddlers, who has been awarded the MBE in the 1990 New Years Honours List may not be paddling in this seasons competition.

Following an operation on her injured back Liz is now on the long, slow road back to full fitness.

At a recent dinner, held by the Slalom Executive Committee to honour her achievements in the sport, Liz announced that she was to 'hang up her paddles' for the time being.

Whether this will have to be a permanent decision, only Liz will know, but, with the lure of the 1992 Olympics around the corner it must surely make sense to take a year out and aim for a return to full fitness.

It would be a pity if our top lady paddler were to miss out on a complete 'set' of gold medals, by rushing back too soon.

The season won't be the same without her but I'm certain that we'd rather look forward to seeing Liz on the Olympic podium in 1992.

## **SLALOM ORGANISERS CONFERENCE**

The large contingent of organisers attending this year's conference at Holme Pierrepont were treated to a busy day, having to cope with Judging test, timing and course design among many other things.

A full and varied day had been prepared by Conference Organiser Barry Peake, to high-light problems, (and give solutions), to organisers of this seasons events.

Practical sessions, as well as discussion groups were held to encourage problems to be solved **before** the events start...

There were plenty of chances for discussion of key problem areas at the Division 4/ Novice end of the sport, and at the open forum the main topics of concern were:

The lack of finance available due to low numbers of paddlers entering some slaloms. It was suggested that when clubs have no sponsorship to help, and often run slaloms at a loss, then the BCU administration fee should be waived. This would

be a big help to smaller clubs running events, and may release money for better prizes etc.

Boredom was a big problem for some parents who may be new to the sport and felt unable to judge etc. They were then reluctant to waste a whole weekend and bring 'little Jimmy' again. (Help from publicity required - judging information, rules made easier to understand etc.).

Plastic Boats - plenty of discussion on this one - the rules allow use of these boats at lower divisions, but they can't compete on the same terms with fibre glass slalom boats. So would it not be possible for them to have a separate class to compare like with like - better to encourage them than turn them away as poor relations! Slalomists must learn to break down barriers and encourage rather than reject them.

The amount of water time at some events is too short, so families may feel that it is not worth coming away for a weekend for only a few minutes race time and not much more practice time on the water.

The 'Starter/Taster Ticket' for BCU membership should be encouraged for Novice Paddlers. This will allow them to have a go before splashing out (no pun intended!) on an annual subscription. (Does it really matter if a novice just gets on and has a go?).

Not enough effort is being made to encourage canoeists to take up slalom, lots of people take canoeing courses, 1 star tests etc these paddlers are not being targeted, to take up slalom. (One of the publicity sections' ideas is to send slalom information to this group.)

The overall theme was that a lot of people put in a lot of work and are pleading for sensible help and guidance in the development of their sport, from the Executive. We disregard this plea, and their comments at our peril.

## **SLALOM CALENDAR**

The definitive version is in the Slalom Yearbook - the dates given in the BCU Yearbook were provisional.

## **THANK YOU**

We would like to say a big 'thank you' to everyone who helped on the Slalom Stand at Crystal Palace, and to old friends who came along to say 'hello' A special 'welcome' to all newcomers to our sport. We wish you all a successful season.

## **SOUTH WEST REGIONAL SELECTION**

The selection will be held in conjunction with the Holme Pierrepont Div 1, May 18 - 19. Any paddler other than Div 1 wishing to be considered for selection will enter the officials event and judge. please send entry cards, marked judge and selection, well in advance, to the organiser of the event

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*The Slalom section  
was compiled by  
Joe Mulholland*

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# Marathon

## THE WATERSIDE SERIES

Having suffered one of the wettest and windiest months it was most unusual to see the sun up for the first of the Watersides.. Waterside A.

Great Bedwyn was its usual crowded self with a lot of noise and activity with cries of "Nice to see you again..." and "are you preparing for THE RACE".

The Waterside Series is a set of 4 races which this year have been changed so that each race is an individual event and in addition there are cumulative prizes being awarded at the end of all the series. The series covers the Kennet and Avon canal from Devizes to Aldermaston which is not only beneficial to the paddlers who are continuing their winter training but also of great help to those paddlers preparing for the Devizes to Westminster Race. The Watersides are an ideal way of practicing the portages and the route prior to the event.

The race was well attended and it started on time at 1000hrs with pairs of paddlers setting off from the start line under the bridge. The canal had not suffered from the storms too much but there was the odd tree or two which had been blown across the canal. Those of us who were more brave (or more stupid!) just aimed the canoe at the tree, paddled hard, shut our eyes and fought our way through the foliage!

The sun began to burn as the muscles began to ache...but apart from the odd angry fisherman, the competition was fun and it was lovely to see beginners and experts alike taking part in a canoeing event.

The race ended at Newbury Wharf where there were showers and food for the competitors. The final stretch of the race was interesting to say the least as the canal at the end combines with the river and after the slow sluggishness of the canal it was a bit of a shock to find bubbly water where one had to remember what a support stroke was!

The only slightly disappointing aspect of the day was the fact that the results took a long time to come out but there

were several of us who were polite enough to wait and congratulate the winners.

## RACING SCHEME CERTIFICATES

There is a new Racing Scheme Certificate and Clubs or Race Organisers holding stocks of the old style Certificates should contact Lesley Kinch and arrange to trade them in on a one for one basis for the new version.

The old style certificates are no longer valid.

## MARATHON AGM

At the Marathon Annual General Meeting held in Bedford a number of new Committee members are elected. Each member of the committee has a specific function and is listed below.

Alan Laws	Chairman
David Green	Secretary
Paul Owen	Treasurer & Publicity
Guy Dresser	Paddlers Liaison
Dave Enoch	Calendar
Lesley Kinch	Certificate Scheme
Rhod Kinch	National Coach
Roland Lawler	Juniors & Ladies Coach
George Oliver	National Championships
Jim Rossiter	Team Manager
Barrie Ward	Race Records
David Yates	Hasler Trophy

## DAY MEMBERSHIP AND MARATHON RACING

The day ticket system has been simplified and a new two tier pricing system introduced. Race Organisers should charge an additional £2.00 to all participants who are unable to provide proof of BCU membership. £1.00 of the surcharge is to be retained by the club and £1.00 is to be sent to BCU headquarters with a copy of the results.

Results should be clearly marked ET in the BCU number column for all event tickets issued. Please note Hasler points will not be available to event ticket holders.

## FUTURE EDITIONS OF FOCUS

Articles and news to be included in the Marathon section of Focus should be sent preferably typed to Paul Owen, c/o The Editor.

## SPONSORSHIP

The Marathon Committee is actively seeking sponsorship for a variety of activities including The Great Britain Team, national Championships and the Racing Scheme.

If you can help with this venture please contact Peter Travis, 67 Princes Street, Oxford, Oxon.

## 1991 & 1992 HASLER FINALS

Any club wishing to host either of these two events should apply to Dave Green at the above address.

An application in principle has been received from Yorkshire and Humberside region but the details still need presentation and consideration alongside any other applications.

## RACING HANDBOOKS

The 1990 Canoe Racing Handbook is now available priced £3.00 including post and packing from David Green c/o Kirton Kayaks, Marsh Lane, Crediton, Devon EX17 1ES.

## 1991 BRITISH NATIONAL MARATHON RACING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Nominations are invited from clubs wishing to hold the above event during the August 1991 Bank Holiday weekend. Any club wishing to host this prestigious championships should read the criteria and rules set out in the Racing Handbook and apply for consideration to David Green, Poole Cottage, Long Barn, Crediton, Devon. All applications should be made before the end of May and the venue will be decided by the half year AGM in August.

## CALENDAR AMENDMENTS

The organiser of the 1990 Exe Descent is Eric Lodge, 40 Elaine Close, Exeter, Devon and not as advertised in the 1990 Racing Handbook.

The Kielder Water Race will take place on 8 July not 7 July.

The Bristol race will take place on 24 June not 3 June.

## SELECTION PROCEDURE

The dates of internationals to be supported by the Great Britain team are as follows:

*Portugal*  
Lisbon 28 April to 1 May  
*Holland*  
Eindhoven 12 May  
*Holland*, Amsterdam  
Grand Prix I 9 June

*Denmark* - Copenhagen  
**World Championships**  
28/29 July  
and Grand Prix II

*Sweden* - Vaxholm  
Grand Prix III 11 August

The two Grand Prix events in Amsterdam and Vaxholm will include a new competition for Juniors.

Selection will be on the basis of continuous assessment at the following events:

Oxford Singles 18 April  
Elmbridge Doubles 14 April  
Reading Singles 29 April

Two assessment events to be run by the committee:

Oxford Doubles 24 June  
Nottingham Singles 30 June

The first three races will form the basis for selecting the teams for Portugal and the two internationals in Holland. The team for the World Championships in Copenhagen and the Grand Prix in Vaxholm will be based on performance at the events in Holland and the two committee organised races.

Steven and Andrew Train are pre-selected for the Amsterdam Grand Prix and the World Championships. Ivan Lawler and Graham Burns are pre-selected for the World Championships.

Final team sizes and selection forms are available from Jim Rossiter and should be returned by 14 April for Portugal, Eindhoven and Amsterdam and by 17 June for the other events.

## WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Marathon Racing team moves into a new decade with great enthusiasm, despite drastic reductions in Sports Council funding. This year will see the second World Championships in the sport and also the introduction of a Junior Grand Prix Series.

The World Championships will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark over what is becoming a standard distance of 42km. Our greatest opposition will be from the Danes who the home course is bound to favour, the Hungarians and the Australians. The Great Britain team will feature many Gold Medal hopes. In particular Steve and Andy Train the defending World Champions and Ivan Lawler and Graham Burns who won silver medals at the inaugural event in Nottingham. These performances and Gold medals for both crews at the World Cup event in Portugal last year have earned them pre-selection for the World Championships.

Last year saw the emergence of our new generation of first team paddlers who will take up the mantle from the greats who have provided special memories in the past. The British assessment races will be hard and undoubtedly potential medal winners will be left at home, however, one thing is sure the new GB team will continue to take international marathon racing from strength to strength.

The first Grand Prix will be held in Holland on 9 June and offers an ideal opportunity for supporters to see the GB team in action. The venue is only twenty minutes from Amsterdam and for the more energetic independent entries of international standard will be accepted.

Further details from, Jim Rossiter, 101 Whyteleafe Road, Caterham, Surrey.

# Racing

*World Championships, Silver Medallists Ivan Lawler and Grayson Bourne were recently awarded Sports Aid Foundation Elite Grants in recognition of their achievements.*



## JUNIOR RACING

The coaching and management personnel of the Junior Olympic Racing Squad are looking forward to entering a team at the next Junior World Championships in Vienna, Austria in July 1991. Before that a major event will be held at Holme Pierrepont from 3-5 August this year. At this regatta most of the Western Nations are expected to enter junior teams.

In preparation twelve junior men kayak, six junior men canoe and four junior women paddlers were invited to training weekends at Holme Pierrepont during February and March.

They have also been meeting together regularly for crew training.

At the regatta on 21/22 April a junior team will be selected to compete in Boulogne, France the following weekend. There will be opportunities to compete in other international regattas during the year if performances are of a sufficiently high standard

*Racing Veteran Eric Farnham recently celebrated his 80th birthday. Eric still races regularly and has paddled a total of 2,500 miles in the last 2 months.*

**SPRING SALE!**

EX DEMOS; SUB & NON-STANDARD REDUNDANT STOCK, DISCONTINUED ITEMS, BANKRUPT STOCK (WAVESPORT) INCLUDES CANOES, KAYAKS, ACCESSORIES, THERMALS, CAGS, BDH'S, PADDLES, DRY BINS

- Complete Range.
- Kits or Ready built.
- Wood or Glassfibre.
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**Sunday 8 April  
10am**

Grand Entertainment  
Centre, Ramsey, Nr.  
Huntingdon

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This year, for the first time for over half a century or even longer, we shall have open sailing canoes racing in Britain. This has always been a popular class in the United States and now the British Canoe Union have formulated class rules and a calendar of events for this country. The weekend meets are partly social and partly competitive, one day being given over to a rally and a social cruise the other to racing. Entries are expected from the major suppliers of open canoes, Mobile Adventure, Pyranha possibly Granta and Solway Dory so there will always be some keen racing but the real excitement will come from the individual entrants. Don't be afraid to have a go, nobody knows very much about it at the moment. So far there are four events confirmed for this season and a possible fifth, they are well spread around the country so that everybody gets a 'local' event and hopefully will travel to the others. Your support is most important if the class is to become worthwhile.

*April 28/29* The Ullswater Marathon, a twenty-five mile mountain lake classic. Organised by Carlisle Canoe Shop, 41 Wigton Road, Carlisle. Camping at Waterside, near Pooley Bridge, Penrith.

*May 26/27* The National International Canoe Championships. Stone, Essex. The open canoes will race at the same venue as the IC's, this is an estuary course. Enquiries to John Bull, Solway Dory.

*Sept 1/2* Round the buoys racing at Wanlip, Syston, Leicester, an inland lake. Organised by Mobile Adventure, Bridge Works, Knighton Fields Road, Leicester.

## Open Canoe Sailing



*October 13/14* Racing on the River Thames at Teddington. Organised by the Royal Canoe Club. This is a classic venue, the RCC were the first canoe club in the country with MacGregor and the Baden-Powells as founder members. Enquiries to John Bull, Solway Dory.

The basic requirements for a sailing canoe are a rig and a leeboard, steering can be done with a paddle. Sailing rigs can be bought from Mobile Adventure, Leicester; Pyranha, Runcom; Avoncraft, Welwyn Gar-

den City; Lendal Products, Prestwick and Solway Dory, Kirkbride, Carlisle. The basic price is around the £250-£300 for a complete rig and leeboard, fitting is usually straight forward and takes about 45 minutes. If the boat is being set up for single handed sailing and steered by a paddle then the mast is best fitted close to the end of the boat to get the maximum leverage for the steering paddle. Fit the mast to the after thwart and sail the boat 'stern' first. For double handed boats where the crew are at each end anyway and for boats fitted with rudders the mast

can be stepped about one third of the way back from the bow.

There is no reason why you should not make your own rig, they're very straight forward and the sail can be made on a domestic sewing machine. Detailed drawings can be obtained from Solway Dory, priced £5.00 or the sail only can be bought for £58.00 and the rest made at home.

See you on the water.

**John Bull, Solway Dory**



### *Interested in entering surfing competitions?*

*Contact*

*Simon Discombe,*

*8 Wordsworth Close, Chelston, Torquay, TQ2 6EA,  
(0803) 211121 (day)*

*(0803) 614 722 (eves)*

# Polo

## HUMBERSIDERS STORM IT

National Div 2 North -  
Kendal 13/1/90

The final Div 2 North fixture of the season saw Humbersiders run away with the title with one of the best records of recent years. They finished the season with 16 wins and 2 draws from 18 games and look like a good bet for National Div 1 next season.

Going into the tournament there was a great deal to play for as 3 teams had a chance of making the top two spots for the play off's. Derwent Warriors had already played all their matches and had to wait to see if Lakeland and Humbersiders would overtake them.

Whilst Humbersiders had no difficulties in winning all of their 5 games, Lakeland faltered by losing 1, drawing 1, and winning 2, they eventually made the play off's by virtue of goals scored.

The other teams there were mainly playing for the pride of finishing in a reasonable position, however Dudley B only fielded 4 players and as a consequence finished 2nd from bottom of the league. The fight for 4th, 5th and 6th places was between Headingley Panthers, Matlock Rams and Trent Valley Bees with Headingley Panthers coming out on top thanks to a 3-1 win over Trent Valley, 2-0 victory against West Coast and a 1-1 draw with Lakeland.

The shock of the night came in one of the last matches which saw West Coast Breakers beat Lakeland 3-2 in a thrilling end to end contest.

Despite Dudley B being down to 4 men they fought bravely and at one stage were 2-0 up against Trent Valley, but they finished on the wrong end of a 2-4 scoreline after having a player sent off for dissent.

**Ian Needham**

### Div 2 N Final League Placings

1	HUMBERSIDERS
2	LAKELAND A
3	DERWENT WARRIORS A
4	HEADINGLEY PANTHERS A
5	TRENT VALLEY BEES
6	MATLOCK RAMS
7	W COAST BREAKERS
8	MUTINEERS
9	DUDLEY B
10	LEEDS POLY A



Woodmill took the Ladies' Trophy to Scotland for the first time

Photograph J A Bright

## Ocean World National Canoe Polo Championships

Crystal Palace 1990 saw the twentieth National Canoe Polo Championships begin a new decade for the sport, as well as witnessing the last tournament for 'Tigers'. The team dominated the eighties with six wins at Crystal Palace and seven National League titles, and were undoubtedly the Liverpool of canoe pool.

In the youth competition St Albans A beat Avon Assassins 4-1 to earn a place in the final, while Humbersiders defeated Nomad 2-1 in the other semi-final. The youth final took place on the Saturday this year and it provided excellent entertainment. Only two minutes into the game, St Albans missed a penalty, but David Smith eased their nerves with a goal towards the end of the first half. The second half continued at a very fast pace, and with Humbersiders pushing hard for the equal-

izer it was no great surprise that St Albans should concede a penalty. Humbersiders missed it however and with it went their best chance of getting a result. They never recovered and St Albans became 1990 Youth Champions, taking the Tony Brown Trophy to the club for the fifth time.

The early senior rounds saw Tigers win through to the final by beating Woodmill (in extra time), Meridian and Bere Forest in an epic semi-final. Dudley also reached the final after beating 'Friends of Allonby', Meridian A (in extra time) and the much fancied St Albans A.

In the ladies competition Woodmill defeated 'White Rose' and St Albans A (on a penalty shoot-out) to reach the final, while Mutineers 3-1 victory over Luton ensured their fifth successive final appearance.

The ladies final started sur-

prisingly, when Linda Scott put Woodmill ahead after just twenty seconds, but Mutineers are a vastly experienced side and they had scored the equalizer within two minutes of the restart through Ginny Coyles. Both teams continued to play well, but it was Mutineers who made the breakthrough shortly before half time with a Jo Kirkbride goal. Half way through the second half the Scottish team produced a thoroughly deserved equalizer with Linda Scott again applying the finishing touch, and it was enough to see the game into extra time. One and a half minutes of extra time had passed, when Mutineers made the mistake of fouling dangerously under their own goal and the referee had no hesitation in awarding a penalty. Jackie Moore made no mistake with the shot, and the Ladies Trophy was on its way to Scotland for the first time.

Congratulations to Woodmill who turned in an entertaining and impressive performance.

Mutineers will be disappointed to lose the trophy that they have held since 1986, but can approach the new season knowing that they will provide the nucleus of the Great Britain Ladies squad.

The mens final was a fitting stage for Tigers' last match and a large section of the crowd were urging them on to beat Dudley, relative newcomers to top level Polo.

The first half began as expected with the Bedford team pressurising the Dudley defence, but they paid the price of playing five men out when Dudley broke quickly, and Tigers' Mark Wolkenstein was forced to make a desperate block with his paddle. Unfortunately for him the referee awarded a penalty and Matthew Bennett calmly put Dudley into a one goal lead. Tigers did not seem unduly worried, but as the first half drew to a close it was evident that neither team could really break down the others defence. Tigers began the second half at full speed, and Dudley's well organised defence did well to hold on. Half way through the second half, Dudley did the sensible thing, and slowed the game down in an effort to sit on their lead and run the clock down. It was not a popular tactic with the crowd, but it was effective and with Greg Smale's last shot just missing and with only thirty seconds left to play, it was apparent that Tigers would not finish on the high that they had hoped for.

Congratulations to Dudley for winning the 1990 Ocean World National Knockout Championships and in joining the elite band of only seven clubs to have won the trophy in its twenty year history.

**Andrew Leafé**



Photographs by Carl Goulding



# AN OPEN CANOE

## IS AN OPEN CANOE



Photograph courtesy of Mobile Adventure

The question has often been asked of us, when paddling descent races, that if we fill our Open Canoe with Buoyancy Bags, how can it still be an Open Canoe?

And now that we are offering a range of Open Canoes for slalom, in which any sensible paddler will fit additional buoyancy into, the question will be asked far more often.

Well just what is the answer?

I would like to offer our thoughts on this subject:

Just what is an open canoe?

It is generally accepted that a canoe is a craft that is propelled with a single bladed paddle, and that traditionally you kneel in a canoe, but sitting on the seat has become acceptable, and is generally considered the norm, except in whitewater. (After all, the vast majority of canoes have comfortable seats fitted).

Why do people paddle Open Canoes?

It is suggested that one of the biggest advantages that an open canoe has over other craft is that you can stand up in it and walk about, or even lay down and make love, and that whatever happens you can't get stuck in it.

Our answer taking the above into consideration is, that the boats are still open canoes.

We still sit or kneel, and we still use a single bladed paddle.

Paddling in the whitewater environment of a slalom or descent race, we aren't going to want to get up and walk about in the boat. And even if we wanted to make love, on the type of water that requires extra buoyancy, we would probably pull over to the bank, and not try doing it running grade 3 or 4 water.

We see that one of the biggest advantages of paddling an open canoe, and especially on whitewater is that you can just get out of the boat by stepping over the side, so of course we don't fill the area

around the paddling position with buoyancy.

On one occasion, in the 1985 Arctic Canoe Race, I was paddling down the Aijankoski rapid, grade 4, capsized and the spray deck ripped off. We saved the boat, and ourselves from a long nasty swim, but just righting the canoe and climbing on top of the buoyancy bags and paddling the remainder of the rapid in that position. All the buoyancy bags do is to keep water out and float the canoe higher.

Many traditionalists would argue that we are still wrong in our thoughts, but were there Canadian trappers, when paddling home with a boat so full of furs, that they couldn't walk around or lay down and make love, still paddling open canoes, or were they paddling open canoes?

I think the criteria is: if the water requires it, fit additional buoyancy. And as long as the paddling area is open it's an open canoe.

Now spray decks are another matter.

Colin Broadway (Open Canoe Coach and Director of Mobile Adventure)

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## Trade News



*We-no-nah say "this canoe is like no other that we make". It certainly attracted some interest at Crystal Palace when Dave Crookes (of Mobile Adventure) and his partner demonstrated how easy it is to roll. The Edge comes in two sizes 15' and 13'2" for doubles and singles paddling respectively and is designed specifically for whitewater play and slalom. Also featuring in the open canoe whitewater display was Mike Devlin who rolled the Dagger Encore and wee Chris Wetzig who rolled the Edge single version. Chris is aged 14 and not an enormous laddie, so if he can do it...*

### WHITewater CHANGES HANDS

Whitewater Sports of Shepperton have gone into voluntary liquidation. The decision was announced on 12 February by Alan Jones, who started and built up the business. The premises and assets were taken over by Windsurfers World Ltd, shortly prior to liquidation and the shop will continue to run as a canoeing and windsurfing specialist. David Ridgway, the new manager, described the takeover as 'very amicable' and said that the only difference that customers might notice was the absence of Alan and some new faces in the shop. Jean Jones, Alan's wife, will continue to help out on the canoeing side.

### VALLEY EXPANDS

Valley Canoe Products is expanding within the next few weeks when a building program to add over 4000 sq feet of storage, workshop and assembly space begins.

Demand for VCP boats is increasing annually, says director Frank Goodman and 1990 shows an unprecedented increase in orders. This is due, in part, to rationalisation of their export business in both Europe and the USA which has taken place in the last eighteen months.

Frank recently sold Current Trends, the Holme Pierpont based Canoe School/cafe to Mike Devlin and Graham Wardle and this has helped with the finance of Valley's expansion project - two buildings, complete with canteen and office. With the growing demand for squirt boats, it looks as though one of these buildings may be devoted entirely to this branch of the sport.. Late news is that the Aeroquatic, which is now unobtainable, after a disastrous fire in, the States is being replaced by a new boat within the next six weeks. Ring Valley for details.

### LOCK TIED

A new idea from Avoncraft: telescopic boat locks, adjustable in length, which fit lengthways in the cockpit of any kayak. The locks are made of hardened steel (a match for most bolt cutters) and enable a BCU type padlock to be attached for fixing to car roof racks. So even if a thief succeeds in removing the canoe from its roof rack, there will still be the minor problem of getting into the boat.

### DOUBLE TROUBLE

Also supplied by Avoncraft is the new double Topolino, this time in blow moulded plastic. It opens up a range of interesting possibilities for tandem paddling - eg - novices can sit in front of a more expert paddler and experience all the excitement of hole riding etc in perfect safety.

### DESPERATELY SEEKING OLD TOWNS?

Old Town Canoes are trying to track down all current owners of their canoes so they can be sent the Old Town Owners newsletter, starting this Spring. They're particularly keen to hear from owners of older models and historical wood/canvas canoes. Please send your name, address, model of canoe and its serial number to Old Town Canoe Company, Newsletter Department, 58 Middle Street, Old Town, Maine 04468 USA. Contributions to the newsletter are welcome, especially photographs and accounts of your paddling experiences.

## ALL ABOUT BUOYANCY AIDS



Crewsaver's new buoyancy aid, the XE1, was launched at the Canoe Exhibition. The XE1 is designed for advanced white water paddling, with 8.2kg of buoyancy, chest harness, cowtail and shoulder lifting straps.

Crewsaver are specialist manufacturers of buoyancy aids and lifejackets: better known for their sailing and windsurfing products, they are expanding their range to take in the canoeing market.

Avoncraft have also brought out a new buoyancy aid, specially designed for white water rodeos and playboating. It is called 'Rodeo' and designed to combine the comfort of a competition jacket with safety features such as the integral harness (500kg breaking strain). The foam is flexible, 'all in one' and cutaway under the arms, similar to slalom vests. 6kg buoyancy is incorporated (the recommended minimum) which would be plenty for UK or alpine paddling, but not suitable for really big water such as Norway or the Himalayas. In suitably fluorescent colours: Lilac, Turquoise, Black all with bright yellow straps. Very jazzy.

The 'Adventure' from MI was attracting a lot of interest at the Canoe Exhibition. This is a new MI product and one which looks to be very useful for whitewater expeditionists and sea kayakers. It is well-cut, roomy and nicely-shaped. A quick release back pocket enables a throwline to be carried and there are pockets on the front as well (a nice touch on the pockets is the nylon-mesh drainage flap)

The BCU/BACT have a buoyancy aid testing panel which ensures that the buoyancy contained is sufficient and the garment generally is strong enough for the purpose it was designed for. Make sure yours is BCU/BACT approved by checking the label, the recommended minimum buoyancy is 6.2kg.



Palm's new Canoe and watersports boot incorporates many features found normally on the more expensive models. The boot is constructed from supple double-lined neoprene with a semi-flexible sole and full length YKK zip, with a single lined inner seal. £22.95 from Palm dealers worldwide.

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# A Shark's Fin - and a permanent smile

Andy Crofts describes his experiences of paddling with dolphins

A 'whoosh' of breath and there he was again, his dorsal fin just in front of my canoe. As I put in a few hard strokes, I saw his body squirm with excitement below me, give a couple of flicks of his powerful tail and there I was....surfing along in my canoe, on top of a wild dolphin! On his next approach, he cruised slowly up, belly uppermost, persuading me to scratch his belly with my paddle. I looked down through the clear water into the intelligent eyes of Fungi, the Dingle dolphin.

I have found that paddling a canoe is an ideal way of getting close to wildlife. Of course the kayak was developed to get close to animals on the sea, to hunt seals and whales in the arctic. Getting to know nature in a more benign way has always been one of the attractions of canoeing for me, but I never dreamt that one day a wild dolphin would come to share some waves with me. It first happened to me some years ago when surfing in the beachbreak at La Baie des Trepasses in Brittany. One day we arrived to find a fin occasionally appearing in the waves there. Our fears were calmed when we heard it breathe, and realised that it wasn't a shark! But whatever it was, it was interested in us and seemed to want to play. The favourite game was synchronised surfing, both canoeist and dolphin sharing the same wave, both manoeuvring to keep near the point of maximum energy, where the wave was breaking.

I was fascinated by the whole experience. We returned to the same place the next day, but there was no sign of a dolphin. It wasn't until the next year that we met again, when in calm seas we swam and played other games, mostly of the dolphin's invention. It seemed to me that we had been approached by a wild animal in an attempt to communicate, a concept which I found hard to handle at the time. At the simplest level, the experience of playing with a large friendly animal was exhilarating, whether in a canoe or in the water. Seeing her size underwater and her obvious strength, I realised what control and restraint she has showed in her encounters with us.

Research showed her to be a female bottlenosed dolphin. The local fishermen had named her Jean Louis on first sight, their slang for a blue shark. The name stuck and she was, until her disappearance last year, their faithful friend for over ten years. According to them, even improving their catches of fish and lobsters! I also discovered that our experience was not unique, as other dolphins had approached boats and swimmers in similar situations. In the last five years there has been a sudden increase in the number of reports of friendly dolphins particularly those solitary ones interacting with people over several years.

Anyway I was hooked and for me a canoe proved to be the ideal way to get to know dolphins. The extra speed of the canoe seemed a great attraction to them over the slowness of swimmers. When doing an action that Jean Louis had perhaps never seen, such as a capsized, I could be sure of her fascinated attention.

On my first meeting with Fungie, I tried a capsized, wearing a mask. His fascination with this and my subsequent roll back up, was obvious from the look in his eye, but I was still surprised when I realised that the new game was him trying to tip my canoe over. After an hour of trying, by various means, pushing down and lifting up the end of my canoe, sur-



Innocently resting his chin on the front of my canoe

prising me from unusual directions, he finally succeeded, as I tried to take a photo of him innocently resting his chin on the front of my canoe. The next I knew I was upside down, camera around my neck with Fungie grinning at me! Though they have a permanent 'smile', I could tell that he was overjoyed with his efforts. This encounter confirmed my belief that every dolphin's character is as different as ours. They do seem though to show amazing sensitivity to us, sensing when people are really scared, and moderating their rough play with those who don't want it.

For the last five years, Fungi has taken an interest in the varied human behaviour around his adopted home, by the mouth of Dingle harbour in Ireland. Solitary dolphins seem to be 'coming in' worldwide, but particularly around Europe, apparently forsaking their close family groups for the company of humans. Why this is happening and the reasons for their behaviour, it is too soon to say, but for many people this provides an amazing natural experience. Personally I have been amazed and deeply affected by them.



*Now, I wonder if anyone has surfed with a whale...?*

*All of the organisations listed below are dedicated to whale and dolphin conservation and research. If you have had a close encounter yourself, or simply would like to find out more about these fascinating creatures, write to:*

◆ *Project Interlock International, Wade Doak, P O Box 20, Whangarei, New Zealand.*

◆ *Project Interlock Europe, Stableyard Flat, Thrumpton Hall, Thrumpton, Nottinghamshire NG11 0AX.*

◆ *International Dolphin Watch, Horace Dobbs, Parklands, North Ferriby, Humberside.*

◆ *Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society, 20 West Lea Road, Bath, Avon BA1*

◆ *Greenpeace, 30-31 Islington Green, London N1 8XE (01 354 5100)*

*or the author of the Article, Andy Crofts, 15 Pickering Street, Hoole, Chester.*



## STRAND TOURING AWARDS 1989

The winner of the Strand Touring Award draw for 1989 was Roger King of Totnes C in Devon, who has been canoeing since 1984. Roger canoed on the Thames and the Severn towards his award, a plastic canoe, which was presented at the Canoe Exhibition by Mr Mark Potter on behalf of Strand



The first ever inter-club touring award was won by the Canoe Camping Club: whose members had logged the highest mileage during 1989. Between them, 10 members of the Canoe Camping Club clocked up a total of 8,675 miles, including the efforts of 5 members who took part in the Tour International Danube, paddling 1300 miles apiece. The highest score of 1,751 miles was achieved by Rodney Baker, but just as important were the 50 miles paddled by Victoria Baker, aged 9, who accepted the award on behalf of the CCC.

When applying for awards or touring log books please note that the award administrator is now Mike Hubbard, 78 Derrydown Road, Birmingham B42 1RT.

Coloured posters of the award scheme are now being produced and will be circulated soon.

**CANOLFAN TRYWERYN NATIONAL WHITEWATER CENTRE** wishes to appoint an **Assistant Manager/Is Rheowr**. An initial 3 year contract to be taken up immediately. Normal working hours will be 42 per week and the nature of the work will require unsocial hours to be worked. Time will be allowed for personal training. Applicants should be 20 years or over, able to drive, fit and enthusiastic. Essential qualities include canoeing experience and skills to undertake general maintenance duties. First Aid and lifesaving skills would be an advantage, the ability to speak Welsh is desirable. Letter of application and cv by April 22nd, The Manager, Canolfan Tryweryn, National Watersports Centre, Fron Goch, Bala, Gwynedd, LL23 7NU.

## JOIN THE BRITISH CANOE UNION

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(for use until 31 October 1990 by those living in England)  
I/We wish to apply for BCU membership as indicated below. I/We agree to be bound by the rules and regulations of the Union. I/We accept liability for my/our £1 in the unlikely event of the Union's liquidation.

Date.....Signed.....

Surname.....Title.....Other Names.....

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

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Have you been a BCU member previously?  Yes  No

Please tick the membership required:

- Adult Basic £10  Adult Comprehensive £18
- Under 18 Basic £6  Under 18 Comprehensive £9
- Life Comprehensive £280

If you are an adult member your spouse and children under 18 can each be family members in your category. Please indicate your requirements in the boxes below.

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Names of Family members

1..... 2.....  
3.....

Please tick optional extras required:

- £500 Canoe Insurance @ £7.50
- £500 Canoe insurance plus £250
- Equipment insurance @ £12.50
- Canoeing Handbook @ £12.95

Total Payable £

Please return form and remittance to British Canoe Union, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5AS

- I enclose my cheque/money order
- I would like to pay by Access/Visa and I have given details below



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# Dear Focus

## POETRY IN MOTION

Well, I'm a most experienced crawler  
I've crawled throughout The World  
From the Thames and Nile Delta  
to the little known Umbi-Vold

I've got super-crawler T-shirts  
and a maxi-crawler bag  
I support all the firms with stickers  
on my canoe and on my bag

So was it so surprising when  
I heard from one of my charges  
that a BCU poetic praiser  
was required for Focus pages

Yes, I 'snatched' (that's Technospeak)  
my paddle and some ink  
Then put blade to paper  
to explain the way I think

So, well done BCU!  
so long a figurehead  
You've dragged complacent Brits  
to World status, where we've led

However hard others try  
to undermine our fame

As a BCU canoeist  
I can help you with acclaim

Through your inspiring leadership  
you've led us to a state

Where, recreating (?) or competing,  
canoeing BRITAINs really GREAT.

**T Martin, TM Water Activity Training**

## AN EXTREMELY SEXIST ATTITUDE

I am a 16 year old female canoeist from Ipswich, Suffolk. I am writing to complain about the low status demonstrated towards the women in today's canoeing. I am not sure if the situation is the same nationally, but recently I encountered an extremely sexist attitude at a local event. The event to which I am referring was the first of the winter races organised by the Suffolk Water Sports Association. There was a good turnout of about 20 paddlers, 7 of whom were women. The ladies race was a close competition in which I was just beaten into second place, and most of the other female competitors were also pleased with their results. However, at the prize-giving the organiser (a man, incidentally) gave out the trophies. There was one prize for the ladies class - ONLY a first prize. All the men's classes, although there were smaller numbers in individual classes, received 3 trophies - a first, second and third prize. The ladies were disappointed and resentful and it was particularly disappointing that, having attracted a good turnout, the ladies' achievements were undervalued and didn't receive due acknowledgement. How are women supposed to be encouraged to start or carry on with the sport if they are not treated as equals?

**Rachel Smith, Ipswich**

## CANOEING HANDBOOK

To help publicise our sport and the BCU every member should - even if they already have their own copy - go to their local public library and ask them to get a copy of the 'Canoeing Handbook'. Quoting the reference ISBN0-900052-04-6 will be of help.

**John Kingsley, Trustee, Marlow Canoe Club**

## THANK YOU SIMON

Your December edition of Focus mentioned that the BCU seem to come in for a fair bit of stick and that a few compliments would not go amiss. Could I therefore redress the balance and express my gratitude to Simon Dawson, our regional access officer who represented the BCU at a recent Public Inquiry.

Plans have been submitted by British Coal to 'divert' (destroy the natural river form) of several kilometres of the winding River Erewash in order to make way for a huge opencast coal mine called 'Shilo North'. The river is currently a meandering water course which flows thorough meadows and washlands with Kingfishers nesting in its mudbanks.

British Coal plan to divert the river, straighten it and incarcerate it in a stone/wire mesh basket. This would mean the loss of what is currently a valuable amenity to local people and canoeists.

At the recent Public Inquiry, the BCU stood alongside local action groups and other groups such as the Ramblers Association, Fishing clubs, Country Wildlife Trusts and the Nature Conservancy Council in opposing British Coal's plans.

As a member of the BCU and a member of the Shilo North Action Group, could I again convey my thanks to Simon Dawson and the BCU for presenting such a good case at the Public Inquiry.

**Kieran M Lee, Shilo North Action Group**

## HEAR HEAR BEV!

I am writing in support of Bev Jones (the lady canoeist). Like Bev, I too appreciate that there are many more men in the sport than there are women, but see no reason why this means that womens events and successes should be overlooked.

What I would like to question is why there are so few women who paddle and I would argue that generally the sport is not aimed at women. If the BCU, as Bev suggests, denies sexual discrimination, then why do they persist in discriminatory practices?

Canoe Focus is the official magazine of the BCU. That accepted, then the respon-

sibility for it's contents must surely rest with the BCU. One glance through a few of the past copies leaves me in no doubt who the BCU are talking to and it certainly isn't women. Very few articles are about women or are written by women. 'But women aren't doing anything and there are no women writers' I hear you mumble. Wrong! You just aren't looking very hard. Surely the need for positive discrimination must be recognised if the BCU seriously intend to try to attract more women into canoeing. Perhaps also, a quiet word with one or two of your advertisers would not go amiss. Their copy is hardly aimed at both sexes and a couple of them are blatantly sexist in a way which I personally find offensive.

Write me off as a 'raving feminist' if you will - a powerful male way of feeling justified in totally disregarding anything that has been said. But don't then repeat the old puerile refrain of 'there aren't many female canoeists' without asking yourself - WHY?

**Liz Wade, a woman who canoes!**

*To which I can only add that I am also a woman who canoes! The Editor.*

## SICK OF ACCESS

Unlike a number of your readers I do enjoy receiving and reading Canoe Focus.

There is one subject which I am sick of reading about, that being 'access'. It appears that no matter how hard people try to sort it out a number of members are still unhappy.

I am in a fortunate position in that I have no 'access' problems in the area I live. No access officers to moan about, no BCU to criticise. Many may want to know where this Canoeing Utopia is. Well come to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and if you did geography at school you will realise I live in the only country with no permanent river! The nearest rivers are in Iraq and Iran, bullet proof buoyancy aids a must.

There would be an additional problem if canoeing was possible and that is, men only. I am afraid the ladies dress would be considered just too revealing. Besides unrelated men and women are not supposed to mix.

Living here is my choice but those who are forever griping, consider yourselves lucky you can go canoeing at all. The way some of you act you may lose some of the better rivers for good.

**D Alexander, Saudi Arabia**

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, Nottingham NG2 5AS



# LENDAL

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<b>BKS03 'Canoeing'</b> by John Brailsford & Baker.	4.50	3.50
<b>BKS25 'Up the Creek'</b> by John Harrison.	4.70	4.20
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<b>BKS40 Canoeing - Picture Library Series.</b>	4.85	4.25

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<b>BCU01 Card Organiser.</b> Blue with silver logo design, holds membership card and up to five other credit/business cards.	1.30	1.00
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<b>BCU04 Key Ring.</b> Leather, blue with silver logo design, holds several keys.	1.05	.85
<b>BCU05 Members' Sew On Badge.</b> Oval shaped cloth members' badge, blue logo and edging on white background, colourfast.	N/A	1.00
<b>BCU06 Blazer Badge.</b> Square cloth badge for blazers, embroidered logo in silver, black background.	N/A	1.50
<b>BCU07 Members' Tie.</b> Navy blue with two diagonal stripes and logo depicted in white, machine washable.	N/A	3.90
<b>BCU08 Tie Pin/Lapel Badge.</b> Stick pin suitable for ties or lapels, blue logo on silver coloured metal disc.	N/A	1.50
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<b>BCU11 Cadet Badge.</b> Round cloth badge for cadets, pictures smurf canoeist in colour on a white background, colourfast.	N/A	.50
<b>BCU12 'I ♥ Canoeists!' Button Badge.</b>	.30	.20
<b>BCU13 'I do it . . . with the British Canoe Union' Button Badge.</b>	.30	.20
<b>BCU14 Keepsafe.</b> 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
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	Non-Members Prices	Members Prices
<b>STA07 Exhibition Postcard.</b> Colourful scene depicting the Canoe Exhibition at Crystal Palace.	.15	10.
<b>STA08 Pendant Pen.</b> Ballpoint pen with a handy rope for wearing round your neck with BCU logo top.	1.60	1.40
<b>STA09 Pencil Rubber.</b> BCU logo in blue.	.45	.35
<b>STA11 'What Breakout?' Poster.</b> Full colour, 590 mm x 420 mm (portrait).	Temp. unavailable	

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<b>GAM35 Rivers of Cumbria.</b>	5.40	5.25

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	Non-Members Prices	Members Prices
<b>STK01 'I love Canoeing' Sticker.</b> Strip Design 215mm x 45mm, for windows, red heart, blue letters.	.60	.50
<b>STK02 'God Went Canoeing' Sticker.</b> Wording reads '... and on the seventh day God went Canoeing' strip design 185mm x 70mm, self-adhesive reverse, three colour canoeist.	.60	.50
<b>STK03 'Go Canoe a Kayak' Sticker.</b> Strip design 185mm x 70mm, for applying to windows, three colour depicting a canoeist.	.60	.50
<b>STK05 'I'd Rather Be Canoeing' Sticker.</b> Strip design 310mm x 45mm for windows, red and white.	.60	.50
<b>STK06 'Oceans are Free' Sticker.</b> Strip design, 185mm x 70mm, self-adhesive finish on reverse, sea canoeist silhouette, three colours.	.60	.50
<b>STK08 'I do it... with the BCU' Sticker.</b> Circular design, 100mm diameter, black and yellow, for windows.	.60	.50
<b>STK10 Graphic Surfer Sticker.</b> Strip design 185mm x 70mm, self-adhesive finish on reverse. Features graphic silhouette of a paddle surfer, four colours.	.60	.50

## GET INTO GEAR

<b>CLO01 Competition Cag.</b> 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
<b>CLO02 Recreation Cag.</b> Lightweight waterproof top with drawstring hood, velcro strap cuffs and neck fastener, elasticated waist and sleeve ends, red and royal blue with contrasting stripe, BCU Members' badge sewn on. Sizes: S, M, L.	19.70	18.70
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<b>CLO22 International "I'm a Paddler" T-Shirt.</b> English cotton shirt, white with round neck. Logo and "I'm a Paddler" printed in four languages, depicted in blue. Sizes: 30-32, 34-36, 38-40.	5.10	4.10

## GET INTO GEAR Cont'd

	Non-Members Prices	Members Prices
<b>CLO23 International "I'm a Paddler" Vest.</b> Cotton vest. British made, white. "I'm a Paddler" in four languages with BCU logo, depicted in royal blue colour. Sizes: 30-32, 34-36, 38-40.	4.80	3.80
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<b>CLO31 Thermal Longpants.</b> Navy. S, M, L.	12.25	11.25
<b>CLO32 Thermal Headover.</b> Navy, Navy/Red, Red, One size.	5.55	4.95
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## BOOKS Cont'd

	Non-Members	Members
	Prices	Prices
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- Under normal circumstances, goods are despatched within 3 days. We may sometimes hold up a consignment if 'out of stock' items are expected soon, otherwise these will be sent on later. If we cannot deliver within 28 days we will notify you. If you have not received your order or notification from us within 28 days, please telephone us immediately.
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## HOUSE PUBLICATIONS

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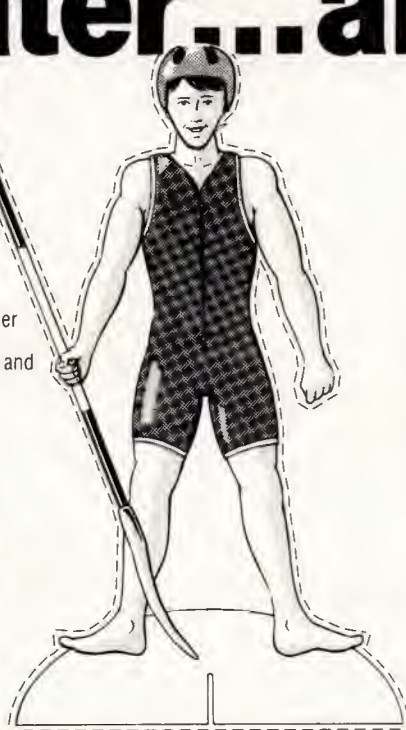
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Please contact Tim Houghton

Telephone: 0902 634567

West Midlands Canoe Centre,  
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Kestral K1, kevlar construction, red deck, natural hull, light weight, good condition excellent marathon boat. £170. Tel Anthony Wynne (0732) 833590.

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Reynard Tourer Open Canadian, £150 'Angmassalik' sea kayak and Granta 'Surface' surf shoe

both in Marine Ply. No reasonable offers refused or swap for double kayak. Adrian (01) 693 4826.

Rotobat good condition complete with airbag and spraydeck, linear plastic £100 (0782) 617754.

Sabre kayak good condition £150 ono. Lazer surf ski, used twice. £200 ono. Tel Paul (0228) 37658.

Slalom kayak (fibreglass) medium to low volume, excellent condition £80 ono. Tel (0202) 393578.

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Sprinter wild water racer. Full kevlar race spec. very good condition £200. Dominator slalom kayak, kevlar, fully repaired and ends modified. A bargain at £75. Tel Jerry Tracey (0434) 683409 weekday evenings.

Two sea kayaks - 1 Huntsman, fully rigged, fair condition £100 ono, 1 sea Hunter, fully rigged, excellent condition £250 ono. Contact Steve or Pete, Sunderland Outdoor Activities (091) 565 7630.

VW Camper, 4 berth, cooker, toilet, table, 12 volt electric point, full elevating roof. MOT, no tax. 'Group 1' insurance. Ideal for slaloms/surfing. £1500 ono. Tel Neil (0454) 772025 after 6pm.

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Baron Scimitar and Gaybo Interceptor 4 wwr's. Tel (0962) 848371 daytime or (0703) 456001 evenings.

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

Edge 75/85 Kevlar or carbon kevlar construction. Tel Pete (0602) 221197.

Islander expedition sea kayak in good condition. Tel Richard (0678) 756369.

K1 GRP for scout group, good condition, Sheffield/South Yorks area (0742) 449941.

K2 suitable for DW race. Tel Chris (0634) 201014.

Ottersport two seat tourer. Tel (0525) 385182.

Rotobat or Master. Tel Dave (0782) 617754.

Volunteer needed to set up and maintain the BCU photo library. If you are Nottingham based and have a few hours a week to spare please contact Caroline Tombs, c/o BCU, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5AS

## LOST AND FOUND

Found at the Exe Descent, 36 Exp - 35mm colour film. Contact Miss K Bloom, 6 Robere House, Radstock Road, Woolston, Southampton SO2 7QW.

Lost left handed MI paddles on the river Usk in Wales 2 December. Will the group who picked them up at Taly-Bont please return them to Dave Halsall, 24 The Fairway, Blaby, Leicester so that he can go paddling again! Expenses will be refunded.

Right handed paddles, white blades, alloy shaft. Found on the Orchy on 3 February. D Forbes (0506) 844516.

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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, Bleenau 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.

Sunray GPs 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 Road, Adlington, Nr Chorley, Lancs (0257) 483362/480680.

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).

## COURSES

### Canoe courses

- rolling, whitewater, residential weekends on site and transport inclusive packages to Devon & Wales.

Bowles Outdoor Centre, Tunbridge Wells (0892) 665665.

**Canoe courses** and adventure holidays on sea, surf, river and Dartmoor, Youngsters, adults and family multi-adventure courses, including canoeing, sailing, water-skiing, climbing, yachting. Specialist sea canoe courses, proficiency to advanced. See our video. Please contact Mr K Garland, Courtlands Centre, Kingsbridge, South Devon TQ7 4BN (0548) 550227.

**Canoe Surf** sun and fun on the Atlantic SW Coast, Vieux-Boucau, France. Introduction or advanced courses from Easter to October. Equipment for hire - accommodation and div. services available. Come in groups it's much more fun. Example of price: 10h introduction course £80 included equipment, instruction, video, insurance. Information: Biofun Loisirs, 3 Rue de Montreux, 68300 St Louis, France. Tel 010 33 89 67 24 18.

**Exciting whitewater kayaking** weekend courses and 5 day holidays on local waters (Severn, Dee and Tryweryn) and Spanish Pyranees. Friendly qualified experienced instructors all based at excellent hotel with good food and well stocked bar. Other activities include Mountain Biking, Paragliding and water ski-ing. For further details write to Supersports Adventure Holiday Breaks, 17 Oak Street, Oswestry, Shropshire or tel (0691) 657577.

**Expedition** planning for advanced sea kayaking. 28/30 September 1990. A course led by John Ramwell for planning your 1991 expedition, with lectures & demos on advanced sea techniques. For details write to Courtlands Centre, Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 4BN. Tel (0548) 550227.

### WIRRAL OUTDOOR PURSUITS INSTRUCTOR TRAINING CENTRE

BCU British Canoe Union  
BOF British Orienteering Federation  
CCPR Central Council for Physical Recreation  
RLSS Royal Lifesaving Society  
MLTB Mountain Leader Training Board  
**Interested in Outdoor Activities?  
A desire to work in the Leisure Industry?  
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Bookkeeping, typing, order processing, wages, reception, plus canoeing! All this - and we'll pay you too. Computer and word-processing experience desirable but not essential.

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Phone or write to Robin Goodliffe, Valley Canoe Products Ltd, Private Road, Colwick Estate, Nottingham NG4 2JT (0602) 614995

## ACCOMMODATION

**Llandysul**, West Wales. Bunk house barn, sleeps 30. Heating, drying room, hot showers. 1 miles from slalom course. Tel:(055 932) 3200.

**Millhouse B&B**, or cottage. Sleeps 6. Special off peak rates. Drying rooms, 2 miles from Bala, close to white water centre. Tel (0678) 520101.

**South West France**. Cottage for hire with private launching spot onto River Isle. Ideal touring rivers Dordogne, Vezere 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.

**Wester Ross**. 19 bed, self-catering, heated, bunkhouse overlooking Summer Isles at mouth of Loch Broom. Ladies and gents showers and toilets. Sea and river canoeing available in area. Also self-catering cottage, sleeps 2. Tel Achiltibuie (0854 82) 215.

## SITUATIONS VACANT

**Full time** instructor required from July onwards. Working with schools, YTS groups, families and management courses. Drivers only, minimum age 21, BCU, MLC an advantage. Wages £80 per 5 day week plus board and lodgings, 26 days paid holiday per year. Please send your CV to: J Novak, Mount Severn, Llanidloes, Powys SY18 6PP. Tel (05512) 2344.

**Instructor Wanted** for multi-activity/personal development/management training courses. Over 21s. Also required, catering assistant. For application details phone (0273) 506955 or (0860) 536793.

**Instructors** required. Climbing, canoeing and sailing. Min Grades BCU SI and RYA tidal. Experience in other activities preferable. Min age 21 years. Driving licences essential. Season vacs March-Nov and July-Sept. Apply with CV and recent photo to the Director, Courtlands Centre, Kingsbridge, South Devon TQ7 4BN.

## 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:-



Jobs 18-30's

Application Department  
PGL Young Adventure Ltd  
820 Station Street  
Ross-on-Wye HR9 7AH  
Tel: 0989 764211



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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 0NW  
Tel: 0562 882151

## SEASONAL VACANCIES FOR INSTRUCTORS ADVENTURE TRAVEL INTERNATIONAL

Multi-activity, rafting, sailing, canoeing and climbing instructors required for seasonal vacancies from March to October 1990. We require committed and qualified staff to join our existing Instructor teams in the UK, France and Spain.

For further information and application form please phone (058 473) 367 or write to:

The Personnel Manager  
ATI Ltd  
The Manor  
Seifton  
Nr Craven Arms  
Shropshire SY7 9B



## RIVER DART Canoe Courses 1990



*Beginners Kayak and Open Canadian:* 1-3 June, 13-15 July.

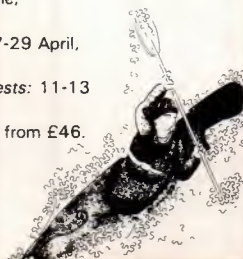
*Beginners Whitewater Skills:* 9-11 March, 27-29 April, 14-16 Sept.

*Instructor Training/Assessment, Proficiency Tests:* 11-13 May.

All courses include full board accommodation from £46.

For details of courses, accommodation and instruction contact

Mountain Stream Activities,  
Wydemeat, Hexworthy, Yelverton,  
DEVON PL20 6SF. Tel: 03643-215



# THE BCU - A YEAR ON

## a report by a novice to the members

The management of the British Canoe Union lies within its various committees and in particular with the Council of Management and its Executive Committee.

The Council is made up of its officers, representatives from the various specialist committees, national associations and regions together with 10 elected members. Of these it must be said that some appear to also be the representatives of specialist committees so reducing the directly elected 'independent' council members. The reason for having independent elected members is that they are responsible to the membership as a whole and not just to their own specialisation. Clearly those who are also representing specialist committees have a primary duty to those committees and perhaps this dual role should be reviewed.

It must be duty of the elected members to report back to the electorate (even if they were only elected by about three hundred of you). Perhaps this may be the first of a series of reports by elected independent members of Council.

I have been particularly lucky in that I have seen all of the following in action:

- Council of Management
- The Councils Executive Committee
- Access, Coaching and Recreation Management Committee
- English Regions Management Committee
- Access Committee
- Touring and Recreation Committee

I feel that for this reason I can report back to the membership on the state of 'the BCU, the organisation'.

There is undoubtedly much room for improvement in the way most of these committees (or rather the participants) conduct their business. Members are easily side-tracked and agendas are generally too long for the time available. This usually leaves too little time to debate the really important issues properly. Perhaps the biggest problem is an inability to express their views without a long speech and I have to admit that the President sets the worst example. It would be seen as a restriction to apply strict rules of debate so I can only hope that committee members' performances will improve as a result of these comments. Additionally a number of regions do lose out by not ensuring that they appoint officers who will actually attend national meetings but that is clearly your responsibility.

Most of the chairmen are quite good but could improve if they were to be clear as to their function in the committee (any good text book or the BCU's own guide-lines would help). I think that Geoff Sanders is probably the best.

What does matter is that I have been very reassured by seeing what goes on and can confirm that, contrary to common opinion, both the full time staff and all those volunteers who give their time to the organisation do so in a very responsible and conscientious way. There is very little evidence of power seeking amongst voluntary officers and a very real recognition of the fact that they are working for canoeing. Whilst efficiency and clarity of purpose are perhaps lacking in most committees there is no lack of enthusiasm. These are very dedicated people.

Our full time staff have continued to run the union despite changes of location and personnel and their service is improving all the time. (I know they are not perfect but their performance really is improving...certainly far faster than the membership and committees performance).

There is a real problem at the top however which is currently under review following a consultants report. The Council has the absolute responsibility for all policy matters but because of its necessary size to allow for full representation it cannot (and I guess its members would not wish to) meet sufficiently often to deal with details or urgent matters and this is usually delegated to the

Executive Committee. This is actually a sub-committee of the Council whilst in practice it has to resolve and implement the details of issues that have been approved as broad policy by the Council. This inevitably leads to it being seen as exercising power far beyond that apparent from its organisational position. At the present time the current Chairman is acutely aware of the limits of his authority but this may not always be the case. The Executive meets about once a month in the evening, it may have to be given more authority and its position in the organisation changed. It will be necessary to ensure that a check is maintained on its activities by Council which probably means increasing its membership very slightly.

There is another side of canoeing that needs to be reported upon. As you will realise from the above I consider 'the BCU, the organisation' to be fairly healthy but I must record that 'the BCU, the membership' is in poor shape. The vast majority of you do not exercise your democratic right to elect your regional officers or your national officers. In the latter case you even have a postal vote so there is no possible excuse.

I know, and you know, that there are a lot of people about who could help if they were encouraged by you to stand for office either within the club or region or even nationally. Why don't you look around and ensure that 'you' get the very best representation from the paddlers who are most able to serve your interests.

Our real problem is in the apathy of 'the BCU' and by that I mean 'you' the paddlers who bear the real responsibility for the state of our recreation and who have the real power.

Something also needs to be said about money. Apart from the Sports Council grant, which is clearly directed towards the Olympics this year, our money comes from subscriptions and this has to run the Union. Frankly it is just not enough and the Union only survives because most of its voluntary officers do not claim their full out of pocket expenses. Having now seen the amount of work that is done by voluntary officers I find our reliance on both their good will and their pockets unjustifiable.

There are two ways out of this. The first is to provide even less organisation, service etc. The other is to increase subscriptions or membership. You paddlers lead us to believe that you won't pay higher subscriptions so we must go for more members. If this can be achieved then there will be a little more money for us to use to achieve a little more.

Your support for low level regional competition or recreation events is essential to help us build our income and our membership. Come along and pay your entry fee knowing that much of it will stay within your region. Bring along your friends who are not members and they will soon realise that the discount being offered to members is enough to justify joining. Instant membership will be available, voluntary officers permitting, at all events listed in the Members Yearbook.

**So: PLEASE GO AND RECRUIT AN OFFICER  
PLEASE GO AND SUPPORT AN EVENT  
PLEASE GO AND RECRUIT A MEMBER**

The active support of you 'the membership' is absolutely essential if we together are going to make anything of 'the BCU'. You simply must not stand back any longer if you ever want to see anything achieved. **Its your union...its your responsibility!**

**Colin Kempson**

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