

CANOE FOCUS

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MAGAZINE



Expedition
Nova Scotia 1990

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CANOE FOCUS

Canoe Focus The official magazine of the British Canoe Union

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Comment



by BCU Director,
Trevor Bailey

The International Canoe Exhibition, a milestone in the canoeing year, is behind us. At one stage it looked as though we might not get there through the snow! Saturday was quieter than usual, but Sunday was the usual hubbub. I was pleased to be able to talk to so many members - some of you had also taken the opportunity to talk to senior voluntary officers on the BCU stand. Congratulations and thanks to everyone who played a part in another successful event.

At headquarters, we are continuing our efforts to provide more support to affiliated clubs - in March every affiliated club was sent a free copy of the first edition of the BCU Clubs Handbook. A second edition is already planned and suggestions for additional items are very welcome, so please send in your comments and ideas. The Access and Touring Officers Handbooks have also been produced recently and these too were circulated free to clubs. Further copies of all three publications are available from Headquarters (£2 to members and affiliated clubs, £3 to others).

The handbooks are designed to help clubs to provide more canoeing opportunities especially at introductory level and to make BCU membership more attractive to the wider public. Hopefully, if events are run more frequently on water close to population centres, then more people will take up canoeing and join the BCU. The emphasis at the moment is on placid water paddling the most common type of water near population centres and a huge untapped market. The British Waterways licence makes

BCU membership highly attractive to the placid water paddler. A seminar at Holme Pierrepont on March 17th, attended by regional representatives, introduced the concept and provided training on setting up more regional activity. In particular, the seminar launched the new BCU Time Trial Badge aimed at encouraging fun paddling on placid water, fast touring and marathon racing. The system is very simple and a trial can be run by any club officer or coaching scheme member. All times are attainable in touring boats. Full information and simple paperwork is available from BCU HQ or see page 30 of the clubs handbook.

As you will read in Helen Mullineux's article, the BCU made a loss in the last financial year. In real terms, the loss was £15,000, the £45,000 referred to by Helen refers to the actual result against budget. Because of oneoff items and certain accounting changes the position is complex, and I intend to write fully in next Focus detailing where the BCU money comes from and where it goes.

BCU COUNCIL

Helen Mullineux reports on February's meeting.

The main problem raised was an unforeseen deficit of £45,000 on this year's budget. The three main areas of overspending were:

1. Coaching this normally breaks even. No increase in star test charges led to income down, expenditure up. Action: raise star test charge to £2.50. National coaching conference

was cancelled due to lack of interest - some expenditure could not be recovered. Update of services: new coaching directory. Action: this was a one off not a regular expense.

2. Publications £20,000 overspend. Action: we are changing to having 'Focus' published by RMG Media who will deal with advertising, layout etc for us at agreed rates. Editorial control is still with BCU.

3. Supplies also made a loss. Action: we have franchised out supplies and are guaranteed a £4000 income.

Naturally the forth coming budget will be under severe pressure. Fortunately we have managed to make a saving of £15,000 on next year's mortgage. Our assets have been reduced, but we are still solvent.

Sports Council is insisting that the running of **Holme Pierrepont** Water Sports Centre goes out to tender next year. As a whole it makes a loss, but the slalom course breaks even. We have set up a technical committee to investigate the BCU having some control over the slalom course (yes, the Sports Council can just ignore the massive financial contribution we made!).

Committees are to discuss the morality of sponsorship by tobacco companies.

Rafting - we can't just ignore it; it will affect canoeing. There was a wide ranging debate, with opinions fed in from affected committees, points made were:

"There will be complications from the access point of view" "But it could be worse if we have no control".

"Commercial rafters could afford to buy access and squeeze canoeists out".

"But if we are governing body for both sports we could ensure that canoeists were written into agreements bought by rafters".

"Commercial rafters are interested in us being their governing body they want something quickly".

"Separation could occur late if appropriate, but we could not necessarily unite two separate bodies later even if it would be for the best this has happened in Switzerland".

"Raft and canoe have one governing body in France. This has brought benefits such as rafters agreeing to keep off rivers when WW Racers are training and competing".

"SCA don't want to cover rafting".

"WCA do want some level of control over rafting".

"Private rafts will be seen as more serious than pirate kayaks and they will be 'our' pirates".

"But at least we can explain about access problems and environmental damage in the pages of 'Focus'. We have a responsibility to educate rafters too".

"The National Watersports Centre have decided that canoeists should be the people to set standards for raft guides."

"Many raft guides are canoeists already".

"White water racing and competitive rafting fit well together and could benefit each other".

The upshot of the debate was that we should cover rafting as well as canoeing. A group has been set up to see how best to do this, to liaise with all affected committees and rafters to finalise details. There will be a further report at next council. Watch this space.

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Noticeboard

RACE THE ARCTIC

A new sea kayak race is being planned by the Norwegian Canoe Federation to take place during the first week in August. A total distance of 280km is to be covered by the event, all within the Arctic Circle, the land of the Midnight Sun, taking in the Lafoten/Verteralen island group. The organisers promise spectacular scenery, including old fishing villages, whales, seals and sea birds. If you are interested in taking part, write to Arctic Sea Kayak Race, Race Committee, PO Box 243, 8001 Sortland, Norway

NEW CENTRE OPENS

Lumbetts Mill Activity Centre has recently opened at Todmorden in the Pennines. The Centre buildings are an eighteenth century mill tower, renovated by the famous steeplejack Fred Dibnah. All the major outdoor activities will be catered for and the Centre has been specifically designed to suit the disabled.



JUBILEE FOUNDATION GROWS

Last year's donations to the Jubilee Canoeing Foundation (JCF) have been announced and they total £4467. The JCF is a permanent grant making fund set up by the BCU to enable and encourage young people and the disabled, to take part in canoeing. The fund started in a small way but funds have been built up progressively to the present total of £17221. Last year, the trustees were particularly delighted to receive some

donations from sponsored events - totalling £765. Initially, the aim of the JCF is to build up funds in the Foundation's early years, giving grants to a sum equivalent annually to the income on investments. The 1990 beneficiaries were the East Midlands Special Needs group, who were presented with £500 from the Foundation. Donations to the JCF, however small are always very gratefully appreciated by the Trustees, please send them c/o the BCU Office in Nottingham, who will also provide advice on applying for grants.

BCU EXPEDITIONS

Four expeditions have been awarded BCU approval this year "exceptional, committing trips in wilderness areas of the world, well organised and likely to bring credit to their members and the sport of canoeing" They are:-

The Anglo-Soviet Northland Expedition to the Tajmyr Peninsula in Arctic Russia; this is the first time a joint Anglo-Soviet sea kayaking expedition has taken place, one of its aims is to paddle around the most northerly continental point in the world.

The Rio Feutaleufu Expedition, to make the first descent of the river from its source, Lake Situacion down to Lake Yelcho. The river descent is about 100km and the expedition will be self supporting, trekking by donkey to the start and carrying all provisions in the boats.

The Rain Forest Expedition to NW Sumatra is to attempt the first descent of the Peusangan river from Lake Tawar to Bireuen.

The island of **Dominica**, in the Windward Isles is to be the destination of another group, led by Brad Lincoln, who also led the successful Atlas Kayak Expedition last year. The island is quite small - only 289 square miles in total - but is thought to contain a large number of worthwhile rivers and the

group hope to accomplish a number of first descents.

Three youth expeditions were also approved; Portway School have organised a trip to **Arctic Norway**, sea kayaking and whitewater rafting; the Yorkshire Schools Exploring Society, including a blind girl, Lisa Boocock, are to attempt the circumnavigation of **Lake Titicaca** in Peru; and Kent young explorers have planned a **"Rhine Challenge"** to paddle the river by open canoe from its upper reaches to the sea - some of the participants in, this expedition are physically handicapped or sensory impaired

RAVING MAD?

Meanwhile back home in Blighty, all has not been totally quiet on the Western front. Dave Crooks, who works for the Open Canoe specialists, Mobile Adventure, and Phil Blain, who also works occasionally, have accomplished the first descent of the Swallow Falls by Open Canoe. The Swallow Falls, at Betws y Coed in North Wales have been shot a number of times by kayak but never before in an open boat. The happy event took place on January 16th and the boat used was a specialist whitewater canoe, the Dagger Caper. Its all on video, or do we mean video nasty, so if you'd like to see it, give Mobile Adventure a call.

INTERNATIONAL TOURS

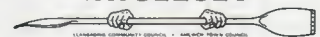
The BCU Touring and Recreation Committee are organising trips to various International tours this year. They are: The Tulip Rally in Holland, 27 - 28 April, the Veluwe Rally, also in Holland, 28 - 29 September and the Tejo Rally in Portugal at the end of April 1992. For details of the Tulip Rally, contact George

Davies, 59 Olney Rd, Emberton, Olney, Bucks, for details of the other two, contact Colin Kempson, 108 East St, Olney, Bucks, MK46 4DJ (0234 711833)

SEA KAYAK CLASSIC

The third Anglesey Sea Kayak Classic (July 27-28) is offering real cash prizes in return for a few hours interesting paddling with the tide along the scenic North Anglesey coast, starting and finishing in Cemaes Bay. This year, the prize money is being doled out for each design of sea kayak entered, first Numbott etc. If only two Numbotts enter, the first home would be that much wealthier! A lone Numbott races against other loners in the Odds and Bods class. To book your wave on the last weekend in July, phone the race organiser (0407)710103

SEA KAYAK CLASSIC ANGLESEY



CANOE THE UPPER SEVERN

The 11th and 12th May could see the waters of the Severn swelling with more open canoes than have been recorded on a meet anywhere else in Britain - last year over 100 crews took part and the event grows year by year. It has developed into a grand social gathering for open boaters, last year even a few slalomists popped by to take a look and couldn't believe so many canoes existed! If you fancy a good days paddle, congenial company and a few beers, give Roger or Sue Drummond a ring on (0743) 365022.



Trade News

FOSTER ROWE

Nigel Foster, Ray Rowe and Andy Middleton have formed a new company, FOSTER ROWE, producing kayaks, buoyancy aids and cagoules for instructors and high level performers in sea kayaking, white water and inland touring. The three make an imposing trio; are all well known BCU coaches; Ray Rowe is editor of the current BCU handbook and author of the acclaimed book, "Whitewater Canoeing"; Andy Middleton founded and is director of Twr y Felin Outdoor Centre, one of Britain's most popular sea canoeing and hot-dogging venues; Nigel Foster runs his own canoeing school in North Wales.

Foster Rowe's products are to include the 18' Legend' sea kayak and a short coastal kayak, the 'Beluga', the Foster Rowe 8KG buoyancy aid - featuring easy access pockets, integral quick release tow line and the innovative Hitch Hiker diagonal back pocket - and the 'Anglesey' cagoule with its 'double cuff' system, a fleecelined handwarmer pocket and wire rimmed hood for improved visibility - available in both Tactel and Goretex.

NEW P&H TEAM

David Crosbee (Mens K1), Lynn Simpson (Ladies K1), Mark Delaney (C1) and Osborne/Shreeve (C2) form the P & H team for the 1991 slalom season. This represents the final phase of P & H's "Masterplan", aiming for P & H to be represented at the Olympic Games in 1992. The Masterplan scheme is open to any paddler in any division, details are available from P & H.

P & H have recently secured the rights to manufacture the reflex Barcelona and moving from the slalom scene, have recently fitted a larger rear deck hatch to all their popular sea kayak models. Kayaks in stock with the smaller rear hatch are being reduced by 33% on current list prices.

NEW OUTDOOR COMPANY FORMED

Chris Hawkesworth Ltd have announced that as from March 1st all their trading interests have been hived off into a new company 'Mont.bell' (UK) Ltd. MB (UK) is a joint venture between the largely family owned Chis Hawkesworth Ltd of Harrogate in the UK with 'Mont.bell' of Osaka one of Japan's largest outdoor companies.

The 'Wild-Water', YAK, Mont.bell, and Zero Point brand names will all now be manufactured, imported, exported, designed and distributed under the 'Mont.bell' banner. (YAK - the neoprene and playboating company - was taken over by CHL last June).

World slalom champion Richard Fox joins the new company as marketing director.

PALM WIN EXPORT AWARD

Palm Canoe Products have won an Export Award for their performance in 1990. The award was presented by William Waldegrave MP to Palm's managing director, Andy Knight. Palm canoe clothing and accessories have become established as some of the top selling imported brands in Scandinavia, Central Europe and Japan.



THULE ROOFRACKS APPROVED

Thule's roof racks have been given approval by the AA, the first roof rack manufacturer to be so accoladed. The roof racks were particularly praised for their purpose-designed attachments, robustness and easy to follow assembly instructions. The AA test included factory trials and a road test under motorway conditions.



YHA SHOPS CHANGE OWNERSHIP

Two Directors of YHA Adventure Shops plc have spearheaded a management buyout of the retail arm of the Youth Hostels Association. The two are Garry Haydon and Singh Chana, they take on the chain of 14 retail outlets which will continue trading as "YHA". The shops will continue to sell YHA membership and offer discounts to YHA members.

PYRANHA'S NEW ACCESSORIES

Pyranha launched a new range of accessories at the Canoe Exhibition; the Professional Extreme Buoyancy Aid contains over 10kg of buoyancy (recommended minimum 6kg) and incorporates a belay/towing harness, a quick release karabiner park and pockets for throwbag, knife and camera. The Professional Breathable Dry Cag has developed from the very popular standard Pyranha Dry cags. Manufactured in cyclone coated micro filament material, the Professional cag includes a twin seal system for the spraydeck, and cuff protectors to prolong the life of the wrist seals.

PEAK'S NEW BUOYANCY AIDS

Peak Performance Sports have added two new buoyancy aids to their range, a competition polo vest and a junior buoyancy vest. The polo vest is similar to Peak's other competition vests, with added foam protection under the arms and around the chest area, available in a ladies (shorter body) and mens version. Both use a shoulder adjustment system which enables the garment to fit different size people and are available to order in team colours. The Junior buoyancy aid is based on Peak's ladies/youth size, with a reduced width foam panel. The garment has securable shoulder straps which enable the size to be adjusted as the child grows.



NEW WATERSPORTS SHOW

A new exhibition, the Central England Watersports and Boat Show is planned for 9 - 12 May. The Exhibition is due to take place in the grounds of Himley Hall near Dudley in the West Midlands, and aims to promote the affordable end of the marine market. (eg canoes!)

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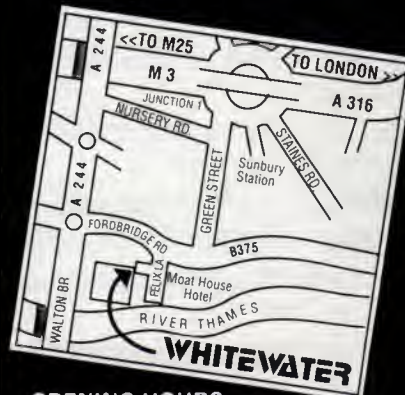
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Regional Roundup

EASTERN

Eastern Region launched its bimonthly newsletter at the beginning of March with a circulation to all BCU clubs in the Region. If there is not a copy on your club notice board ask your secretary where it has got to!

News and information to the Editor Ron Hodgson, 6 Pad-dock Road, Buntingford, Herts SG9 9EY. Copy dates are the last day of April, June, August, October and December for delivery within 10 days (I hope). Please note the following corrections to the Eastern Region Yearbook Page 36: Ron Vessey, 13 Oakroyd Avenue, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 2EH and Dave Rudland, 19a Westerham Avenue, Edmonton, London N9 9BT.

EAST MIDLANDS

Providing opportunities for canoeing for women is a high priority in the region, led by committee member Ann Hart, 1 Denewood Ave, Bramcote, Nottingham (0602 288413) Assisted by Pearl Mulholland (0332 558263) she is planning an early evening fun event in May for teenagers, mothers and families at Darley Abbey. A wide variety of events where any canoe will do - cups of tea for spectators rounders and football for the kids. Newcomers who like the experience can go on to the Midland Canoe Club Star Test session, a few weeks later. Full information from Ann or Pearl, who would be delighted to give help or advice to clubs in the region wanting to run similar events. The region is still looking for a slalom representative offers to Chairman, Reg Robinson (0636 706486)

LONDON AND SOUTH EAST REGION

Congratulations to the winners of the Regional Pool Slalom, held at Alleyn's School Pool on 12 January. The mens K1 was won by Andrew Wronski from Batchworth and the first lady was Louise Hilton from Whitmore. The first London and South East paddler in the C1 event was Steve Hunt and the

C2 was won by G Walling and T Walling from Whitmore.

This years' Regional White Water training weekend at Holme Pierrepont will be held on 10/11 August. There will be opportunities for paddlers of all levels of experience to practise their skills. For further details send an SAE to Paul Newman, 20 The Rise, Hempstead, Gillingham, Kent ME7 3SS.

Congratulations are also due to Meridian who won the National Polo League Division 1 and to Martlet (paddling as "Bucket and Spade") who won Division 3 South.

NORTHERN

The Northern Sports Council Roger Hopson Trophy has been awarded to the BCU Northern Region for development work including access - well done everyone! Minutes secretary needed for Northumbria side of region. Volunteers to Jerry Tracey (0434) 683409. Also contact Jerry Tracey about weekly time trial races at Tyne Green, Hexham. The poorly supported regional wildwater championships were won by R Smith of Barnard Castle (mens K1) and Lisa Rae of Coquet CC (Ladies K1). Contact Eddie Palmer (0434) 27031 for information on Sports Council grant aid. Coaching panel AGM 25 April 7.30pm Ruyton Comprehensive School. Details from Martin Meling for Sea Touring Committee summer meeting in the Farne Islands area 21 - 23 June. Contact Vicky Brown, 27 The Turn, Loansdene, Morpeth NE61 2DU about Coquet CC's "Round the Island" race on Sunday 9 June and other events over the weekend.

NORTH WEST

The Region is arranging for paddlers to have a sweatshirt with their club name, NW Region and a choice of design. A competition is being held to select designs. Send your entries to Suzanne Moore by 2 May at 19 George Street, Patricroft, Manchester M30 0RG.

The Region has use of Holme Pierrepont at Bank Holiday weekend 25 and 26 May. Paddlers from other Regions are welcome. However, parts of the course will be for NW Region paddlers only at specified times. There will be white water coaching, fun competitions and full safety cover.

The Region's Dee tour is on 27 and 28 April, Bangor-on-Dee to Chester camping at Farndon. Organiser Margaret McCulloch of 5 Acuba Grove, Higher Tranmere, Birkenhead L42 5LY.

The Regional Newsletter can be obtained from Mike Burt, 19 Millhouse Lane, Croft, Warrington, £2 for four issues.

WEST MIDLANDS

West Midlands Rally Holme Pierrepont 27/28 April open for all, offering a wide variety of canoeing activity.

Advance bookings £7.25 per day less £2.00 BCU members. Details from Mike Hubbard at 78 Derrydown Road, Birmingham B42 1RT enclosing SAE.

Ackers Trust Marathon 18 - 19 May 35 miles around the Canals of Birmingham - the Venice of England. Details SAE from Dave Bateman, The Ackers Trust, Golden Hillock Road, Small Heath, Birmingham B11 2PY.

Wye Tour, Ross to Monmouth 23 June 20 miles in the valley of the Wye details from Mike Hubbard, 5th Paddlathon, Birmingham and Papworth Heart Foundation Rally River Severn 2 June Bridgenorth - Bewdley 25 miles details from Mike Hubbard.

Upper Severn open canoe rally open canoes only. Details Drummonds outdoor (0743) 365022.

WM Mini slalom, all information SAE from Peter Jones, 14 Chaddersley Road, Halsowen, West Midlands.

YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE

The first River Washburn evening release is on Wednesday 8 May from 4.30pm to 8pm, with subsequent evening releases on Wednesday 29 May, 19 June and 10 July. BCU cards must be produced otherwise paddlers will have to take out Taster Day membership at £3.

The Regional newsletter Yhorkie has been sent to all club secretaries for circulation. Anyone not having received their copy should get in touch with their club secretary and nonclub members can obtain a copy by sending SAE to Marianne Spender, Long Rigging Farm, Booth, Halifax HX2 6SZ.

The Division 4 and 5 slalom at Copley, near Halifax on the River Calder is being revived

and run jointly by Pennine and White Rose Canoe Clubs on the weekend of 18 and 19 May. Entries to R Haigh, Woodhill Gardens, Leeds LS16 7DD (0532 612442).

SOUTH WEST

Good news for clubs - there is no longer a deadline for submitting projects. The Regional Committee will consider supporting suitable plans at any time.

Once again will clubs and other groups please keep the Regional Committee informed of any interesting local projects in which they are involved or discussions with Local Authority Sports Development Officers. Problems too, keep the details coming to the Regional Committee.

The River Barle, downstream from Tarr Steps, as now open until the end of April thanks to the co-operation of the riparian owners.

More training weekends and refresher/upgrading courses for qualified competition trainees are planned for late spring. Details will be sent to listed trainers shortly.

Arrangements are being made to reschedule the Holme Pierrepont weekend from July to 8/9 June. Hopefully, more junior and school clubs will be able to come.

SOUTHERN

1991 is the first full year that the Kennet & Avon Canal has been open. If you did not manage to do the 7 April Devizes to Honey Street Southern Region tour contact Ted Moulding (0908 676343) about the remaining five tours down the K & A, from Honey Street to Reading, on Sundays 5 May, 2 June, 7 July, 1 Spetmeber and 6 October. Each is about 9 miles, followed in some cases by visits to local attractions.

Our thanks to Eyot Boat Club, and the participants, for a most successful series of Hare and Hounds training faces on the Thames in January.

Copies of Southern Region's 1991 Directory can be had from Ian Davey (0252 621381) price 50p (£1.00 by post).

Stop press: Royal Opening of the Basingstoke Canal (by the Duke of Kent) on Friday 10 May.

RIVER TILL - (TRIBUTARY OF RIVER TWEED) NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND

There is currently a difficulty at Twizell Mill, which is just above the road bridge where canoeists have to take out unless they are going on to paddle the Tweed.

The owner is not seeking to hamper navigation, but is suffering from parties using his front garden to portage the large weir right in front of his house. The weir can be a problem, as it is shootable with care in flood, but the sill is often too shallow to shoot. Portage is difficult, as there is a cliff footpath which is a Right of Way which passes around the back of the house and can be used. The owner is particularly concerned when he is in residence and fishing, not so when he is absent.

Will all prospective users please contact the LAO, Pete Clark, at Windy Gyle Centre, 30 West St, Belford, Northumberland. Tel (0668) 213289.

This applies especially to Youth Groups ie, Scouts, Police Cadets, YMCA who have traditionally used the river for years. There are likely to be further changes in this situation during summer 1991.

RIVER EDEN

A success story has emerged from the River Eden Agreement. The agreement collapsed 12 months ago and a free for all situation had developed. The agreement was re-established in January last year, and since then has been working extremely well, with only minimal unauthorised canoeing - a reflection not only on the efforts of Jim Wilson, the Access Officer but also on the goodwill of paddlers who have stuck to the rather complex terms of the agreement. The riparian owners, evidently, are delighted with the way the agreement has been working - the 1991 arrangements have just been reviewed and access to the river has been almost doubled. The owners are now talking about providing a new egress point and a dry field for parking. The access arrangements are rather complicated

ACCESS



DO YOU CARE ENOUGH?

Of the 12,000 miles of river in England and Wales, a small fraction (less than one sixth) are available to you as of right. For the rest, you must plead with often - possessive anglers and landowners for the right to use their water.

Now the anglers have united with the landowners to threaten those precious few miles. Last year, after a long and expensive legal struggle, Water Heritage (supported by the BCU) secured some modest protection for canoeists rights under the Rights of Way Act. This was too much for the Landowners and Anglers to abide, they are now uniting to pay for an appeal to the House of Lords to have the judgement overturned.

Through scare tactics, they are hoping to gain sympathy by claiming that the Act would allow hundreds of miles of previously undisturbed rivers to be invaded by craft of all kinds. This is plain nonsense, anyone who has read the Act will understand that it only applies to those waters which have in the past, or are at present used as of right.

But 10,000 miles out of the 12,000 is not enough for them, it is evident that they are out to stop canoeists from using the

2000 miles or less which are available to them through the Act.

To defend what we have gained will be expensive. There will be no help from the public purse to defend this case in the House of Lords. Only if sufficient funds can be collected will your rights be protected. The sum required is huge: but on the other hand there are many canoeists who we are sure will recognise that their sport is threatened by rich and powerful bodies who are determined that a sport which causes no erosion, noise or pollution and leaves no trace of its passing should be stopped at all costs.

If each reader of Canoe Focus contributed only £1, your rights can be defended. But please send more if you can afford it, we need your help and support. Contributions should be sent to Water Heritage Rights of Way Fund, PO Box B30 35 Westgate, Huddersfield, HD1 1PA. Note: If a donor wishing to contribute a larger sum would prefer to do so through a fund having charitable status this can be arranged. Please write to the above address for further details.

but there is now access to the Eden of some description throughout the year, although some months, this is in spate conditions only. It is essential to contact Jim Wilson well in advance, as a booking system has to be administered.

RIVER CRAKE AGREEMENT

The River Crake agreement (Nov 1st-March 31st) is also reported to be working well. The Cumbria access team are now investigating other potential agreements, with some encouraging noises from the riparian owners of the river Kent.

THE NORTHERN REGION'S FIRST

BCU Northern Region managed to hold their first ever Access Seminar on the weekend of February 8 10 at Hawse End Outdoor Centre, Derwentwater. This was despite some of the worst weather of the winter, which trapped in all but three of the Northumberland contingent. Cumbria was cold but fortunately more or less snowless!

The group was run by Mike Mills and Eddie Palmer, RAO's, and welcomed as guests Chris

and Jill Bolton from the North West, and Mike Twiggs, the Access Committee Chairman.

On the Saturday afternoon, the work of the NRA was considered and a National Park representative joined in. This was quite a mega session, where the group heard from Cameron Durie, NW. NRA Fisheries and Recreation Divisional Manager about fisheries work in detail, its organisation, and its financing.

In the all BCU sessions, canoeists' dirty linen was washed apropos the problems on the rivers. The region expressed its concern about its own growing popularity with tourists ironically, as lots of people have worked for this but it brings new problems. The Lake District is now saturated, all year round, and Northumberland is now coming under pressure as people discover one of England's hidden corners.



The communication problem came up time and time again how to make sure that access information gets to canoeists, and how to adequately sample peoples' views on what they want, without expensive paper surveys.

The group also went canoeing! (Just to prove that access people can).

CLEAN UP OUR RIVERS CAMPAIGN

The second specimen letter (to your local Water Supply plc) will appear in the next Access Extra (to be circulated with June Focus).

TO CHANGE THE LAW

A special meeting of the BCU Access Committee was held in early March to consider "What Changes do we Want in the Law" Canoeists are always saying the law should be changed, but how? should we be aiming to amend existing laws? completely new laws? can the European Law help? Your views please, and a full report will be in next Access Extra (with June's Canoe Focus)

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Extract from the novel “Vampire” by N. Eckpuncture

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CANOEISTS PARADISE OF THE SOUTH!

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ETC.

Book Reviews

Coming soon The BCU Map

A comprehensive Guide to canoeing sites and facilities in the UK, in pictorial form. The BCU Map is offered free of charge to BCU members! To claim your copy, send an A4 size envelope and 32p in stamps. Non members please send above plus a cheque for £1.50

The Unique Guide to the Countryside

Michael Woods (Editor)
Unique/Templar Publication
ISBN 105-870956-05-2
£11.95



The Otter - once on the verge of extinction

The Unique Group, chaired by Noel Edmonds, have published this handbook with the aim of making a positive contribution to the environment and this is a key element of the Unique Guide. For every copy that is sold, a donation is made to the Woodland Trust, towards planting new broadleaved woodlands. As well as giving countryside information - where to stay - travelling around - suggested walks - wildlife and plant identification guides - a constant theme is the threat to the countryside from pollution, roadbuilding, insensitive agricultural practices and what can be done to safeguard endangered habitats.

The Guide is planned to be an annual, highlighting a specific habitat with each pub-

lication. For 1991, the publishers have selected Wetlands and Lowland Rivers particularly featuring the otter, which has been on the verge of extinction in this country.

The Wetlands section of the Guide is both a celebration of the beauty and diversity of wetland habitats and a practical guide, encompassing species identification, important wetland sites and who to complain to if you find evidence of pollution along your favourite stretch of river. Also of interest to canoeists is the section in the Guide about getting around in the countryside without caus-

ing undue distress to its natural inhabitants. The Guide is quite critical of some of the less sensitive ways of exploring the countryside, and it is heartening to see the canoe hailed as a relatively pollution free mode of transport! The Guide also includes sections on photography, first aid and 100 recommended walks, complete with maps and route descriptions. Main contributors are Michael Woods, Heather Angel, Professor Chris Baines, Dr Johnny Binks, Glynn Christian, John Craven, Judy Halpin, Simon King, Tony Soper, Alan Titchmarsh and David Tomlinson.

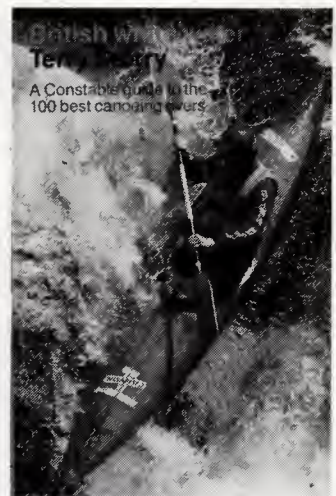
Available from most good bookshops, if you have difficulty obtaining a copy contact The Unique Group direct on (0794)301042.

BRITISH WHITEWATER

by Terry Storry
ISBN 0 09 467770 0
£10.95, Constable

This Constable Guide covers Terry Storry's personal selection of the hundred best canoeing rivers in England, Wales and Scotland and is by far the most comprehensive whitewater guide yet to be published. Terry Storry is a BCU coach at Plas y Brenin, and the guidebook bears testimony to his experience and expertise. As well as the popular classic runs, there are many of the less well known and smaller rivers. The format is similar to Constable's climbing guides, the rivers being arranged by area, with star ratings and a general area description. There are 29 maps, black and white photographs and the book has a waterproofed cover. There are general interest chapters on river grading, hydrology and

access, although Terry Storry's views on the political debate surrounding access may be found controversial by some. No specific access information is given for any of the rivers, but an outline of the general situation is included in the chapter on access.



Gems of White Water of the High Alps

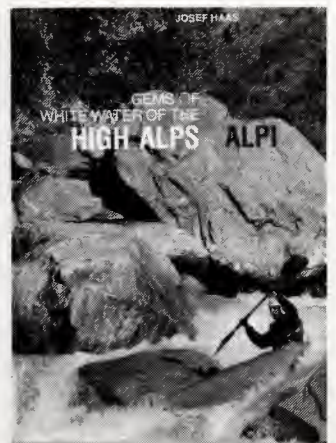
by Josef Haas

English Translation by Fred Wondre
ISBN 3124-87685-124-6
Rosgarten Verlag Publishers

I fell in love with this book before I opened it, alone read it - the photographs on the front and back covers are superb and the book itself (a glossy, hardback, large format affair) is packed with colour photos of the kind that inspire one to instantly pack a car and head for the nearest ferry port. On further investigation, the book is a guide to the Upper Durance Basin, listing and describing almost all the runnable rivers in the Durance and Ubaye basins. It is an Italian publication, but the English translation is printed alongside, expertly and sensitively done by Fred Wondre. There is a map for each river, with gradings, access /egress points and

specific dangers. The descriptions are quite long and describe the scenery, accommodation possibilities as well as the characteristics of the river descent.

Not a book to carry with you on your travels, but a real treat to inspire yourself with before you go. Available from Fred Wondre, Clarendon Lab, Parks Rd, Oxford OX1 3PU



Viewpoint

One person voting 'No' was a canoe shop owner who felt very strongly that it would be human instinct to promote your own interests and the BCU should be kept independent.

Last year I put a survey in 'Focus' on items not resolved at the 1990 AGM - mainly issues that could not legally be put as motions to a Company AGM, but certainly deserved discussing.

Twenty seven people replied, so obviously there was no massive weight of opinion one way or the other. Not everyone answered all the questions, but there were some very strong feelings expressed. Several people enclosed quite lengthy and constructive letters with their survey returns - thanks.

So, here are the results with additional comments taken from the letters.

Commercial Interests

People who have commercial interests in canoeing should be allowed to hold influential positions on BCU committees.

Yes 14 No 13

Many of the people who said 'Yes' actually said 'Yes.....but' for example:

'Yes' - but only one or two'

'Yes' - but a limited number'

'Yes' - but only if you can't fill the post with non-biased people'

'Yes' - providing they don't pursue their commercial interest'

BCU AGM

If the BCU AGM was held at Crystal Palace would you attend a 4-5 hour meeting on the Saturday evening?

Yes 6 No 17.

Comments:

'4-5 hours too long'

'There should be a clear, timed agenda'

'Too expensive to stay overnight in London'

'Hold the AGM at an event or organise a conference around it'

Election Results

Should election results and votes on motions at the AGM be published? (In Focus or Handbook)

Yes 27 No 0

The overwhelming feeling was they should be put in Focus.

Finance

Do you accept that your membership fee covers parts of the sport you don't participate in and is this fair?

Yes 22 No 3

Comments

"...would like a breakdown of how membership fees relate to the branches of canoeing. Does access subsidise slalom or vice versa?"

"...little option but accept it... seems that competition receives far too much attention and finance....this is not fair but I would not want to see different aspects of the sport split up".

"Membership fee should be spent out in ratio to part of the sport that members come from".

"The cost of competition training and events should be paid by competitors or clubs involved and not subsidised by the recreational canoeist".

Access Policy

Should there be a full survey of members on access policy.

Yes 25 No 2

Comments

"Access is the key issue facing paddlers in this country. BCU should give priority funding to it".

"....a simple, tabulated summary of rivers and agreements regularly in Focus".

"Promote the many miles of 'no problem access (eg placid water) we already have"

"No survey, most members won't reply and this will open the door for militants".

"A survey might make the BCU sound less like the voice of authority and more like the voice of members".

"Tell Sports Council/Parliament/European Parliament we have done everything possible to negotiate with anglers; they won't make reasonable prop-

ress so BCU can't take responsibility for paddlers' actions any longer".

Other Comments . . .

. . . not based on the survey:

"...suggest a tendency to promote white water as 'the only activity'".

"SCA is a friendly group, BCU is like a bureaucratic civil service".

"I like the new membership/finance arrangements".

"More details in 'Focus' about forthcoming events, especially touring and social".

Many events in Focus have already taken place".

"...like to see the Constitution more democratic".

"Persuade Council it is heading a union - a collection of individuals and working for their benefit, protecting their rights, not running a glorified club".

"Include a 'road test' of new canoes/kayaks as a regular feature in Focus".

I will be raising these issues for discussion at the next Council meeting.

Sorry it has taken a year to collect the results, analyse them and publish. Wheels grind slowly - I did my best.

Helen Mullineux

BRITISH CANOE UNION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

For use until 31 October 1991 by those living in England. (See over for classes, benefits and notes)

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/lour (£1) in the unlikely event of the Union's liquidation.

DATE..... SIGNED

SURNAME..... TITLE..... OTHER NAMES

ADDRESS

..... POSTCODE (very important)

All subscriptions run until 12 months from the end of the month of joining (Residents of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales should apply to CANSISCA/WCA)

Have you been a BCU member previously? YES NO Please give your age group Under 18 18-25 26-40 Over 40

Please tick (✓) the membership required:

Adult Basic £11.50 Adult Comprehensive £20 Life Comprehensive £310 Under 18 Basic £7 Under 18 Comprehensive £10.50

* If you are an adult member your spouse and children under 18 can each be family members in your category. Please indicate the numbers required in the boxes below and give their names overleaf.

Family Basic @ £6 = £6 Family Comprehensive @ £9.50 = £

Please tick (✓) optional extras required -

£500 Canoe Insurance @ £7.50 £500 Canoe Insurance plus £250 Equipment Insurance @ £12.50 Canoeing Handbook @ £14.50

TOTAL PAYABLE = £

I enclose my cheque/money order

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Dear Focus

FOR SLALOM PADDLERS ONLY?

As you can see from my address I come from Lowestoft in East Anglia, not exactly the closest place to either Holme Pierrepont or any decent whitewater. However, I and my friends really enjoy our whitewater paddling and regularly make the effort to travel long distances to good whitewater.

On the 3rd February 1991, I travelled to Holme Pierrepont with a couple of friends to use the artificial whitewater course.

We were somewhat amazed at the attitude of a female paddler on the course, who incidentally was wearing a crash helmet with 'England' emblazoned on it. Just because I was in between the poles on one of the gates when she came haring down the course I was subjected to a tirade of abuse, generally along the lines of:

- "the course is for slalom competition paddlers not for anyone else".

- "recreational paddlers are a waste of time".

- "next time if you do not get out of the way when I want to go through a gate I will do you physical damage".

- "I am insured and you are not so I can really damage you (and your boat) and it won't cost me a penny".

- "all recreational paddlers should give way to slalom paddlers".

As the course was open to the public I fail to see why "recreational paddlers" should be subject to this kind of abuse, indeed, if this is the attitude of "competition paddlers" (and I hope it is not) then in the long run all it is likely to promote is violence between canoeists (hardly good for the sport).

To be honest I and my friends are little impressed with both this kind of attitude from single canoeists and the attitude to recreational

paddlers in general.

At recent "Open Tours" (eg Tryweryn) whitewater racers have been given specific times when they can race (and no-one else is allowed on) yet they still get on the river when recreational paddlers (and Learners!!) are enjoying themselves and expect them to get out of the way. A friend of mine was actually pushed out of the way with a paddle when the whitewater racer came around a sharp corner at speed. I will be the first to admit that there are a small number of recreational paddlers who need to clean up their act as far as safety and good manners are concerned (ie sitting in stoppers for hours on end when others are waiting or trying to paddle through it), [thanks to the kind person who pushed me over on the Tryweryn last year so that they could get back into the stopper quicker]. However, this seems "small beer" when compared to the seemingly growing negative attitude of competition paddlers towards recreational paddlers.

SUGGESTIONS a) When "Open Tours" are arranged, keep them for recreational paddlers, or at least weight the time over the course of the weekend towards them (not so that they can only paddle Saturday night and Sunday afternoon!!!). b) When Holme Pierrepont is open to the public either clear the poles out of the way or make it clear to the competitive paddlers that the course is open to the public and they may not be able to complete all the gates due to people being in the way. Surely good sense must prevail otherwise as I have said before violence will erupt between canoeists - not good for anyone.

Paul Diamon
Lowestoft

SURPRISE AND SADNESS

It was not with surprise but sadness that I read John Hartland's letter in the last issue of Access Extra, nor was I surprised at the way it was presented. I have known John for many years and he is a colourful character around the Club and has, I am sure, a greater knowledge of the requirements of those who sit on the river.

The Canoeists Guide to the Waterways is a good booklet but is somewhat out of date and it is not that easy to get hold of. It is generally bought by people who probably do not belong to the BCU. It is what I would term as a novice information book.

The public landing steps at Monmouth can at times be congested but whether I have been rowing or canoeing I have never personally found any problem and it goes without saying it is safer to be out of the main channel and in the side of the river bank for individuals and groups when there are other craft around.

The rubbish problem at Monmouth is quite interesting as the public carpark attracts many people who picnic alongside the river and the Wye Valley Walk travels within a metre of the Club which many thousands of people use every year and I am also reliably informed by an old gardener that dogs urine can seriously damage grass (what me take thenever!!).

For anyone who does experience problems on the Wye or specifically at Monmouth I am always available for advice on Monmouth (0600) 3461.

G Symonds

WCA Local Access Officer

KINGFISHERS AND SALTY SEA DOGS

Most canoeists know a kingfisher or a mute swan when they see one, and it may make a noteworthy part of their canoeing day when they do so! How many canoeists however, realise that the kingfisher was subject of a national survey this year and that their sighting may have been a valuable record. It isn't long before you meet salty sea dogs who have survived gales, paddled through the grey dog to the Garvelochs, met otters, sea eagles and even basking sharks.

Basking sharks, it turns out, are little understood and at the same time the subject of a Marine Conservation survey. They are, second to the whale shark, the largest fish in the world. Some grow to more than 30 feet in length. Basking sharks are killed for the oil their livers contain and, while they are seen around the British coastline every year, their numbers are falling.

The MCS survey plans to find answers to these questions and asks those who encounter basking sharks to complete a survey card. It is certainly a topic of conversation in the pub at night if you've met a basking shark the length of your kayak that day - the MCS survey could use that sighting, whether 2 weeks or 20 years ago. Details, however scant, are useful but if you can supply date, time, numbers, size, what they are doing, distinguishing marks, scars, precise location (grid ref) then either send to MCS for a survey form or send details to Doug Hardie, who seems to have mey so many of late that he's well practised at filling the forms and could probably collate and assess how big the canoeist contribution to the survey is:

Marine Conservation Society,
9 Gloucester Road, Ross on Wye,
Herefordshire HR9 5BU

Doug Hardie,

Croft End, Plumblund, Aspatria,
Cumbria

Mike Mills,

Cumbria

WOMEN IN CANOEING GROUP

A big thank you from Chris Lawler to everyone who helped out at Crystal Palace -

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the stand was a huge success and at least 600 women filled in the questionnaire. Thanks too, for all the photographs that were kindly donated.

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WORLD STUNT BOAT CHAMPIONSHIPS

The date for the first World Stunt Boat Championships has been confirmed as July 12th and 13th at the "Bitches", St. Davids. To date entry enquiries have been received from 5 countries.

A special deal for spectators has been arranged for the weekend. An all in cost of £10.00 per person covers return transport to the island, landing fee and camping in addition to a boat sticker for those wishing to paddle outside of the competition time.

A variety of Rodeo and play craft will be available for trial over the weekend. A licensed bar and barbecue will also be in attendance with rumours of a live band on the Saturday night!

Due to the high numbers of spectators anticipated the organisers suggest early application in order not to be disappointed.

INFORMATION

White water rodeos have been held in the UK and USA for a number of years and it is this growing interest that has led to the staging of the World Stunt Boat Championships.

Within the competition itself, the competitor's ability to retain control whilst paddling among the surging waves, whirlpools and stoppers will be tested to the full in the following events:

Surfing: One of the most impressive features of Ramsey

Sound is the Big Wave, which only forms when the tide range is high. The speed of the water over the Bitches is so great that paddlers end up surfing below sea level. Juggling, headstands or plain good surfing are all part of the game.

Stopper Riding: The Cauldron stopper is bigger than most canoeists would venture into on a river, yet it is relatively safe due to the depth of water. If there is a groundswell running, the face of the stopper can reach 2 metres. Moves in the stopper usually include pop-outs, pirouettes, hand surfing and such like.

Sprint: A mass start will take the competitors around the Bitches rocks; a short but

highly testing course including racing across 200m of grade IV salty water. It will be critical to get the line right to avoid being washed off course and through the rapids.

Skill Test: Twenty five feet of seal launch will start this event, and the rest is being kept secret, though it is likely to involve bells, hoops and rolling.

Squirt Boats: It is hoped to include an event in squirt boats; one competitor will compete for each country towards the team trophy.

Applications should be made to; World Stunt Boat Championships, c/o Twr-y-Felin, St Davids, Pembrokeshire, DS62 6QS.



It can't be that far from home to work but the lethargic pace of my ancient bike (and even more ancient legs!) gives plenty of time to daydream, especially when the North Wales drizzle merges road and mountain into a dull grey one. I sometimes wonder if there is a heaven for sea canoeists where the seas are calm and skies are blue. Friendly winds, towering cliffs, golden beaches, immaculate surf, caves, passages, arches and stunning wildlife are all part of this dream. There can't be many places and times in this country where such reveries could be realized but this summer a group of Coventry teachers came close to it.

In consultation with Plas Dol y Moch, the city's outdoor education centre, they chose to spend just over a week on Lewis in the Outer Hebrides. The excitement of imagining this place where none of us had been, let alone paddled, rose to a crescendo and culminated with gasps of joy as the van and trailer crept slowly round the final tortuous bend to be met by a view that exceeded expectations.

The camp at Knæp is a small patch of sheep grazed green backing onto the golden strand of Traigh Na Berie. More than just a field this land is known as "Machair" which is a combination of peaty acid soils, loch systems and alkaline deposits.

This unusual juxtaposition does not occur to the same extent anywhere else in Britain and here, only fifty yards from the water's edge, it resembled a high alpine meadow with a profusion of yellow Bog Asphodel, purple Frog Orchids and a riot of Ragged Robin. With crystal clear waters lapping the soft, sandy foreshore and enticing islands dotting the horizon, there was definitely a hint of the Caribbean. Amenities were pleasantly few, the hordes were kept at bay and we shared the small toilet and stand with a handful of locals who happily excused our intrusion. The charge of 35p

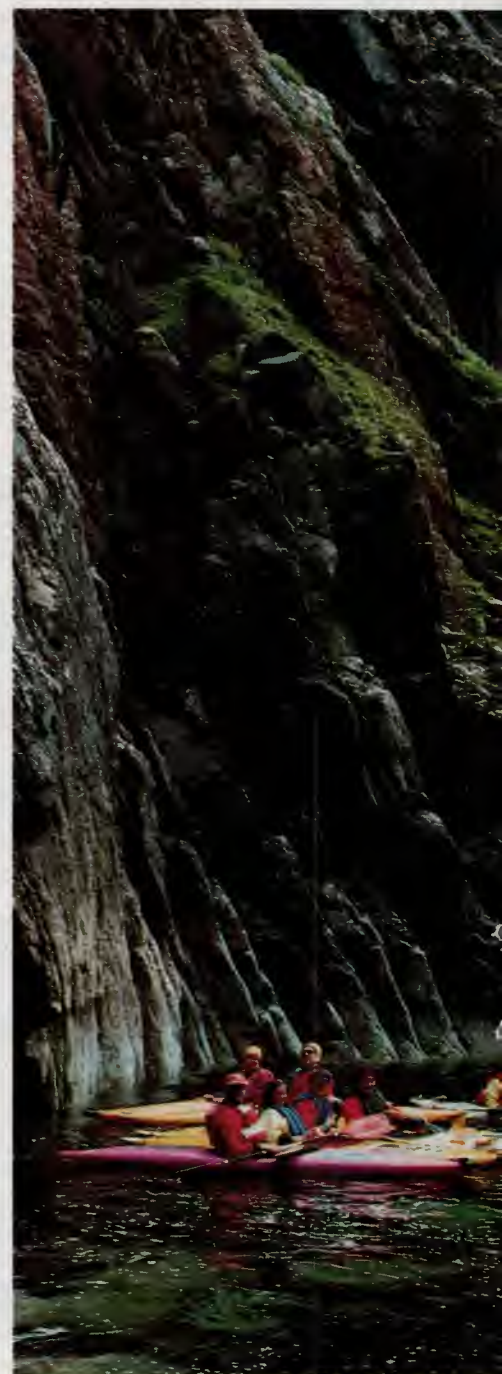
per tent per night brought our total accommodation costs to £17, several pence being deducted I'm sure for helping the crofter one morning collect the seagull strewn rubbish.

There followed a week of exploration, amazement and discovery. Good humour and fun were constant companions. Although these four men and four women had only met a couple of times prior to the trip they proved a caring and sensitive bunch as the expedition T-shirts and early morning cups of tea testified. Rather than cover vast distances the group was more interested in closely following the impressive coastline, rockhopping and creeping into caves searching for sleeping seals. Plas Dol y Moch's fleet of general purpose plastic boats with skegs were preferable to having more specialised craft. Moreover, eight miles from camp was a beautiful surf beach. Mangersta Sands accommodated an impressive Atlantic swell and pushed up well formed "creaming" green waves which crashed majestically on to yet another absolutely deserted bay, pollution free and golden. The sun shone in a big blue sky, gannets dived, canoes looped and on that day paradises were found.

A major attraction of exploring a coastline by canoe is the feeling of being the first person ever to enter a certain cave or to touch a particular rock, along with the sensation of not knowing what lay round the next corner. On a beach two miles from the camp small surf temporarily found our attraction and halted our progress for a while. The longshore wind pushed us gradually and inexorably into the corner of the bay and as it did so everyone became slowly aware of an all-pervading smell the like of which had no register in our 306 years of collective memories! Amongst the boulders a dead sperm whale lay sadly disintegrating, virtually indistinguishable but for tail and jaw between which oozed thirty foot of blubber. Even at a distance of twenty yards the putrid odour tore at the throat and clung to clothes. Holding the nose and breathing through the mouth was a temporary and not totally effective solution.

WE IN D BEHOI HEBR

PHIL ECCLES -
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DREAMS AND THE RIDES

Plas Dol-y-Moch
Education Centre



That evening a gang of four returned to the beach to remove some of the teeth as grisly souvenirs before they were gone forever, washed away by successive tides. To an onlooker the bizarre scene must have been reminiscent of Monty Python as four men, armed with a comprehensive tool box, marched across the sand holding their noses. Of all the equipment at our disposal only the 12" adjustable wrench made any impact on the 6" teeth and then only with an almighty struggle.

As the jawbone had lodged between huge boulders it was only just possible to reach down and fix the wrench, give a couple of twists before the lungs began to burst and the inadequate dentist had to leap clear gasping for fresh air. Defeat stared us in the face. The solution to our problems was a combination of ingenuity and stupidity which must have caused no end of mirth for the others, sat at a safe distance watching our ridiculous activity through binoculars. Dividing into pairs it was just about possible for one man to struggle with the wrench whilst his partner held both their noses!

Two days later found us in the marvellous archipelago north of Great Bernera. In Kyles Campay we were suddenly confronted with four tall dorsal fins flashing through the water at speed about a hundred yards away. For a period of about ten minutes the group experienced both absolute elation and complete fear as the Pilot Whales arched out of the water breathing with a hissing snort. Could they really have been friends with the beast whose mouth we had raided only 48 hours previously? As if completing the investigation of those puny surface animals, clad in garish colours, one of the four cleared the water completely. Thirty feet of whale flying through the air left us all aghast. After that they were away, gone with a flourish.

Behind Pabay Mor, a superb island with an idyllic lagoon on its northern tip, we encountered a scruffy looking fishing boat with a Mallaig registration. A diminutive figure clad in battered oilskins was using a pressure hose to wash down the decks and the 70 foot

boat rocked gently on its anchor chain.

We paddled over to enquire about the weather, thoroughly expecting that the reply might at best be a vague John Kettleism. As I fired an opening greeting the figure turned, revealing a very bonny young woman with a twinkling smile and tassels of long blond hair. "Aye" she said "Sure we have a weather report." From the cabin came the sound of electrical whirring and in a jiffy she was back giving me a weather map of Northern Europe freshly printed out on the onboard fax machine!

All too soon it was time to go. Like Lord Leverhulme, the owner and benefactor of much of the island early this century, we had done a fair amount and yet some of our schemes had failed, foiled by weather and time. A return seems inevitable and fired our thoughts as we slowly hauled ourselves off the Machair and into the van for the last time. After a week on the West coast Stornoway suddenly resembled a major conurbation with what seemed like most of its 21,000 residents out on the streets making the most of the warm soft light of a midsummers eve. There was music in the bars and a carnival atmosphere around the quayside. Perhaps those unenviable dark and drizzly Northern winters cause a burst of euphoric social energy in the summer months. With typical island friendliness a local fisherman handed us a large bag of crabs' claws which we cooked that night by moonlight bivouaced on a quiet headland sneaking a couple of hours sleep before the 0530 ferry back to Ullapool.

As the islands sank slowly into the horizon the conversation drifted wistfully. It would seem that there is a grain of truth in that old Gaelic saying, "You can take a man out of the bog but never the bog out of the man."

Coventry Teachers

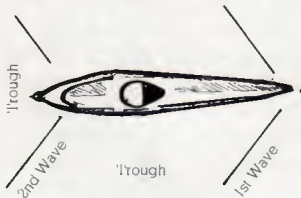
Sandra Arch	Pauline Rowan
Ian Lever	Peter Gaskell
Bobbie Haughton	Jackie Fulton
Keith Clarke	Jim McCluskey



WASH HANGING

The first of a series of articles by Richard Ward, National Marathon Coach, on the skills used in marathon racing. Wash hanging or wave riding is probably the most practised skills in marathon and 10 km racing. It can also prove a useful technique for groups of placid water tourists sharing the work on a long paddle.

The drag created by any boat moving through the water kicks up a series of small waves to the side and to the rear. A paddler riding these waves can gain advantages in much the same way as a surfer rides ocean waves.



Diag 1
The waves created through forward movement

To learn the technique it is best to observe the waves or

wash as it forms behind a racing boat. You will see that there is not just one "Wash" but a series of waves getting smaller the further away the boat gets.

SIDE WASH

To use the waves at the side, position your boat 1*1.5m to the side and half a length behind the leading canoe. When the correct position is achieved the



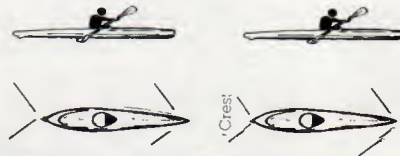
Diag 2
Positioning on the Sidewash

bow will sit lower than normal in the water, and paddling at a given speed will be easier. The bow will also tend to be drawn in towards the leaders paddle so be careful to avoid running it over. At this stage, relax, concentrate on maintaining your position and enjoy the ride.

If you are too far forward, you are attempting to paddle uphill (no advantage)! The bow of your boat will be higher than normal. Too far back and the same will happen, except you will be sliding off the back of the 2nd wave.

THE BACK WASH

The waves to the rear of a boat also provide an opportunity to wash hang. There is not so much pull but steering is easier, especially for rudderless craft.



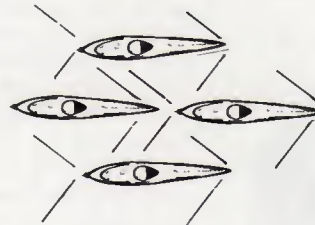
Diag 3
The stern-wash positioning

THE "V" WASH

Riding the "V" is similar to sitting on the stern wash except the lead boat will have boats either side sitting on its wash creating a V shape wave behind. The V wash provides the best pull but can be bumpy.

Diag 4

Sitting in the V



There are however drawbacks of the V wash: it is a long way to the front if the finish is near. Constantly hogging the "V" won't help your popularity ratings either.

The main problems when learning to wash hang are stability and steering. Practise is the only way to overcome this. Try moving around on the wash and get a feel for it. Whilst the washes from canoes are only inches high they provide considerable force on the boats handling, so make sure your rudder is working well before practising. Most important of all be patient with yourself and others when "washing", it takes time to learn.

Slalom

THE ALAN HARWOOD TROPHY

A new Veteran's Trophy has been commissioned by Mrs Pattie Harwood in remembrance of her husband Alan, who was killed in a canoeing accident on the 11th of February last year - just one week away from collecting the veteran's trophy himself. This achievement was not Alan's only ambition, he put a lot of energy into helping other people in Slalom and organised many weekends up in the Lake District and Scotland for both novices and more experienced paddlers.

Besides the new Trophy being commissioned a Trust has been set up in memory of Alan to carry on the work he set himself named The Alan Harwood Trust. Its objective is to

send under privileged children on activity courses, giving them opportunities usually outside their grasp.

To raise money, the trust are this year organising a new event, the Hilbre Sea Race on May 18th, starting from Thurston. The race has classes for K1's, K2's and under 4 metres, entry details from Martin McKetrick, 19 Southcroft Rd, Wallasey Village, Wallasey, Merseyside L45 8QT.

Donations to the Alan Harwood Trust are always welcome, however small, please send them to Vincent Milhench, 9 Belfort Road, Gateacre, Liverpool, L25 2QJ

We all miss Alan, he's left a big hole in Friends of Allonby and Peninsula and I do not think it will ever be filled.



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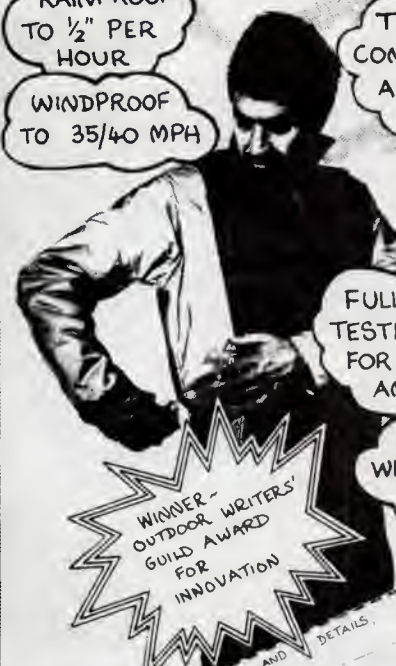
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AN UNFORGETTABLE JOURNEY

The Best of the Zambezi

To many, mention of the Zambezi conjures up thoughts of raging white water, canoeing at its most extreme and expedition style paddling, accessible to just a privileged few.

Paddling in the early morning light with a light breeze blowing upstream, we were now beginning to realise that the Zambezi had much much more to offer than the challenge of white water. Of course, we were later to experience the power of the river and experience what must be one of the world's greatest white water runs, but for now, we were experiencing the best of the Zambezi – unspoilt, scenic, wild, remote and abounding in wildlife. Our journey was neither technical nor physical, but an adventure into Africa.

"You see, the sun sinks into the mud where the river begins, far over there. All night it is washed by the water as it is carried downstream, in the morning it rises bright and clean where the Zambezi meets the sea. Jan & Fiona Teede.



The part of the Zambezi from Kazan-gula in Western Zimbabwe to Kangemba in the east, is generally known as the 'middle Zambezi'. Much of it, including the man-made Lake Kariba, is lined with some of the most beautiful, dramatic, lush scenery and wildlife in Africa, and includes four national parks: Zambezi, Victoria Falls, Matusadona and Mana Pools.

Downstream of Lake Kariba, we paddled into perhaps the finest of these parks, Mana Pools. Everyone was quiet, intense and alert, eyes flitting first across the water, onto the bank, then skyward, in an effort to indulge in all there was to see. Quietly paddling by riverside pastures, feet away from the most prolific game herds in Africa, non-one could have imagined the spectacle of great colonies of carmine bee-eaters nesting on the river banks or in a frenzy of flight above our heads. Goliath herons, yellow-billed and marabou storks harvested on fish stocks at the rivers edge, whilst hammerkops occupied themselves diving for frogs and African skimmers cut the water with their lower mandibles skimming for fish. And above all of them, the magnificent Marshall and Fish eagles swooped in play.

The reality of our journey was that we were witnessing the October gatherings

of elephant, buffalo, eland, impala, zebra, kudu, baboon and many others close to the river for their first watering of the day.

Whilst not particularly having to be concerned about the technical aspects of paddling, the river flows swiftly being wide and open, and a healthy respect had to be paid to the basking crocodiles and hippo 'pods', the content of the latter varying from sighting a couple of pairs of ears and not much more, to the number that made one paddle somewhat faster.

This adventure was an escape with idyllic days spent on the most magical of rivers, long lunchtime siestas to evade the intense heat of the day, and spellbinding evenings spent under the stars and mosquito nets. As dusk fell and turned to night, the call of the wild was ever present.

More than any river, the Zambezi epitomises everything canoeing has to offer the paddler whatever their level of experience. After our open canoe safari on the lower river, we flew to Victoria Falls via Jabulisa – a game lodge on the edge of Hawange National Park, to embark on a two and a half day kayak safari covering two main sets of rapids – Sansimba and Kandahar. As on the lower river, there is a proliferation of animal and birdlife on the banks and both in and by the river. But in contrast, the rapids on this section provide an alternative exhilaration and the terrain changes to intriguing islands as the Zambezi flows with force over shelving river beds, and calmly through narrow channels.

Mike and Julie Devlin



These canoeing and kayaking adventures into Zimbabwe offer the perfect means of exploration and wildlife viewing in the remotest of situations. They need not be the exclusive pleasure of the hardened, experienced and skilled paddler. The Current Trends Zambezi Explorer trip, run in conjunction with Temp Travel Ltd and Shearwater Adventures (Zimbabwe) covering both canoeing and kayaking safaris is open to the complete novice or improver and also provides the chance to raft the superb Zambezi gorge (one day). Further details of this and other adventure paddling trips can be obtained from Current Trends, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5AS. Tel: 0602 818844.

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MARATHON

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS 1992

HASLER FINALS 1992 & 1993

Any club wishing to host either of the above events should contact David Green C/O Kirton Kayaks, Marsh Lane, Crediton, Devon, EX17.

RACING HANDBOOKS

The 1991 Canoe Racing Year book is now available priced £3.00 including postage and packing from David Green at the above address.

MARATHON INTERNATIONALS

Britain is sending teams to the following Internationals this year:

Portugal - Lisbon 24th April to 29th April

Holland - Eindhoven 10th May to 13th May

London - Royal 16th August to 18th August (Grand Prix 1)

Germany - Berlin 26th September to 30th September (World Cup)

Czechoslovakia - Bratislava 3rd October to 6th October (Grand Prix 3)

India - Asian Grand Prix 24th October to 31st October

The teams have yet to be selected, but selection will be on the basis of continuous assessment at the following events.

Oxford Doubles 7th April

Reading Singles 28th April

Fladbury Singles 26th May

Oxford Doubles 23rd June

Medway Singles 14th July

Royal Grand Prix 17th August

National Championships 24th/25th August

The Oxford race 7th April together with races earlier in the season and the Devizes to Westminster will form the basis of selection for Portugal. Selection for Eindhoven will take

place after the Reading race on April 28th whilst the team for the Royal Grand Prix and India will follow the Medway marathon on 14th July. Final teams for Berlin and Bratislava will be confirmed after the National Championships 24th/25th August. It should be stressed that selection for any event will be based on Continuous assessment at the races leading up to the selection date. Selection Forms are available from Jim Rossiter.

The Sports Aid Foundation have given grants to a number of marathon paddlers for the 1991 season. They are: Ivan Lawler, Graham Burns, Paul



Photo: Blinkhorns Photography

Wells, Chris Ballard, Gregory Slater, Jackie Eastwood, Alison Thorogood, Sandra Troop, Steve and Andy Train.

ASIAN GRAND PRIX

A British team is to attend the Asian Grand Prix - a twenty six mile race on the Ganges Canal in India. The event takes place in late October and the team will be selected from paddlers of a suitable standard who are prepared to pay their own air fares. Mobile Adventure have arranged for sponsors of the accommodation and subsistence costs in India and are negotiating for a reduction in Air Fares from AIR INDIA who have already agreed to transport boats free of charge. Additionally they will sponsor the selection event.

Anyone interested in being considered for the team should contact Colin Broadway, Mobile Adventure Ltd, Bridge Works, Knighton fields Road West, Leicester LE2 6LG.

INTRODUCING....

A new face on the Marathon Committee is Richard Ward, newly appointed National Coach with responsibility for developing marathon coaching at Regional and Club level. Richard plans to set up a network of representatives for disseminating information and supporting local initiatives. Local training days are planned for paddlers and club team leaders.

OH DEAR!!

The last Canoe Focus contained some adventurous name spellings so apologies to Marie Ward more widely known as Barrie Ward, Rod and Lesley King/Rob Kaven better known as Rod and Lesley Kinch. Also the dignitary who received the D/W scroll was Baroness Blatch CBE Minister of the Environment.

NEW TEAM BUS

At long last the Marathon Committee has acquired a new team bus. Purchased from Leyland Daf the Committee was able to buy a G registered vehicle at a heavily discounted price.

FOR SALE

I bet you can't guess? Yes, one blue "82" Sherpa Mini bus with 2.0 litre petrol engine for £1600 including racking system. Enquiries to Jim Rossiter, 101, Whyteleafe Road, Caterham, Surrey. Telephone (0883) 346631.

SPONSORSHIP

Thanks to Pete Travis the new Marathon Sponsorship brochure has been completed. The four page document is available to send out to prospective sponsors and is available from Pete Travis, 3 Fane Road, Marston, Oxford, OX3 0RZ. Telephone (0865) 727388

DIVISIONAL SYSTEM

The Marathon Committee have established a working party to examine the Divisional System and to make recommendations of improvements that can be made. One idea is to have standard times for courses on which promotions can take place and a move towards promotion on performance and ability rather than on just winning races.

COACHING

Tibor Herbent is to run an Instructors Coaching Course for Canoe Racing techniques. The course will take place on

11th & 12th May and full details are available from Tibor 4, Chiltern Leys, Coundon, Coventry, CV6 1BL.

Competition Focus

MARATHON (cont.)

SO WHY WEREN'T YOU THERE?

Each year I attend the International Canoe Exhibition At Crystal Palace and I must say for each of the past three years I have gone home on the Sunday wondering if its all been worth while. The exhibition has degenerated into a bring and buy sale and the so called Hall of Canoe Sport is so detached from the main exhibition that it is often missed. Many of the volunteers sit either chatting amongst themselves or holding ad-hoc committee meetings. The number of admissions passing through the gate has decreased as have the quality of all of the stands with very few exceptions.

From a flat water point of view I met no one that I didn't already know. A presence at Crystal Palace even for a voluntary committee is an expensive activity and from a personal point of view one is left to conclude that it is money better spent elsewhere. So why weren't you there and why didn't you bring a dozen of your friends? The exhibition committee is looking at the possibility of changing the venue in future years and I am sure that they will be examining the whole layout and organisation. I believe that we are in danger of changing the venue but not the leopard's spots. It is your exhibition and should be the show case of our sport and so what can be done to re-establish it as such and attract you there next year?

Editor's Note

A survey, conducted at this year's Canoe Exhibition, asked visitors for their views on the future format and venue of the Canoe Exhibition. If you have strong views and were not at the Exhibition, or did not fill in a survey form, please address your comments to: the Exhibition Organiser, International Canoe Exhibition, British Canoe Union, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5AS

CANOE POLO

NATIONAL LEAGUE DIVISION ONE - COVENTRY 26 JANUARY

The Climax of the 1990/1991 division one season was once again a tense and very close affair. Luton Tigers, Meridian, St Albans A and Dudley all began the tournament with a chance of taking the league title. St Albans were a pre-tournament favourite, but after Meridian ended Lutons' challenge beating them 2 - 0 in the first match, St Albans' game against Meridian became crucial to the outcome of the championship. St Albans' piled on the pressure in the first half, but Meridian defended patiently, counter attacking when possible and half way through the second half took the lead. St Albans' began to attack with more urgency, but made an uncharacteristic mistake which enabled Meridian to score again into an unguarded net. St Albans' scored a very late consolation goal, but it was not enough to stop the title race swinging Meridians way.

St Albans' subsequently lost 2 - 0 to Bere Forest to all but end their challenge and Meridian went on to beat Dudley 1 - 0 to finish The Midlanders' chances, and they then sealed the championship with a 3 - 0 win over Viking. St Albans'

defeated Dudley 6 - 1 in the last match of the season to take second place, with Dudley third and Luton fourth.

Meridian are now the only team other than Bere Forest or Tigers to have won the league in its eleven year history. Meridian's striker, Paul Harrison, also took the top scorer award.

Andrew Leafe

FINAL POSITIONS - DIV ONE OPEN 1990-1991

	POINTS		
1 Meridian	48	7 Viking	34
2 St Albans A	46	8 Humbersiders	25
3 Dudley & Sandwell	43	9 Tufty	24
4 Luton Tigers	42	10 Athletico Chicken	21
5 Bere Forest	42		
6 St Albans B	34		

26TH JANUARY RESULTS

Luton - Meridian	0-2
Dudley - Humbersiders	5-0
Bere Forest - Viking	2-1
Meridian - St Albans A	2-1
Humbersiders - Luton	0-1
Dudley - Viking	2-1
St Albans A - Bere Forest	0-2
Viking - Humbersiders	3-2
Dudley - Meridian	1-2
Luton - Bere Forest	3-2
St Albans A - Humbersiders	3-0
Dudley - Luton	1-0
Bere Forest - Humbersiders	0-1
Meridian - Viking	3-0
Dudley - St Albans A	2-6



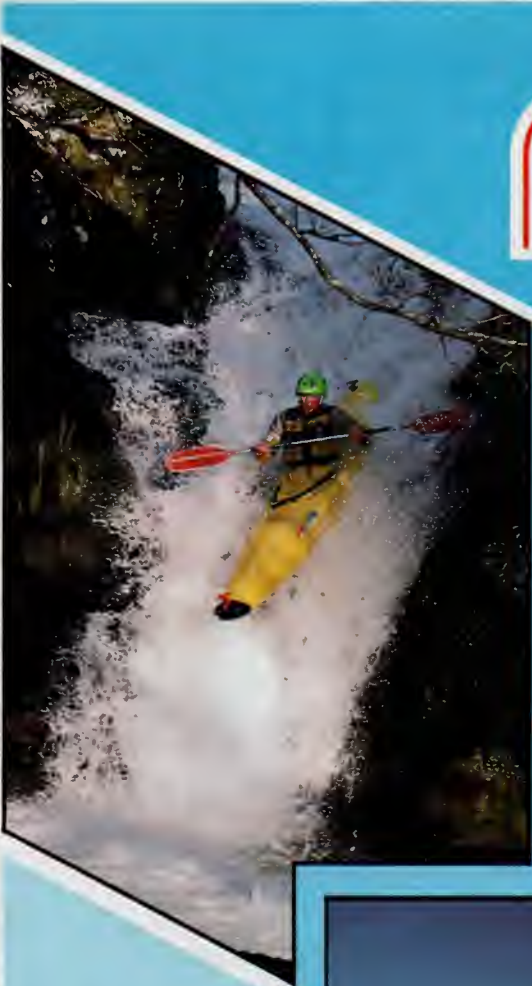
RACING



Steve Jackson receives the keys for the GB racing team's brand new minibus, purchased with assistance from the Everard Foundation

pyranha

Canoe the World



◀ Dave Newbould
Pyranha photo competition winner
River Afon Croesor



▲ Cam McLeay
Belynd Kiik River (Russia)



◀ Lake Windermere

CANOE POLO 1991 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Andrew Leafe

The polo knockout championships were once again held at Crystal Palace, and unlike previous years' the first round of the senior competition on Saturday produced several surprises. Defending champions Dudley went out of the tournament after drawing with Meridian B and then losing on penalties (no extra time being played this year) and St Albans B lost on penalties to second division side Friends of Allonby. The 1986 champions Woodmill also went out to the seeded Luton Tigers who were fourth in the league this year.

Three of the quarter finals of the senior competition were played late Saturday afternoon and again provided a major shock. Warriors came back from a goal down to draw with league champions Meridian and then the division two (north) side knocked out the tournament favorites on penalties. St Albans A, runners up in the league this year fared no better. Bere Forest made no mistake however and cruised through to the semi finals beating fellow division one side Viking 4-1.

Friends of Allonby defeated Meridian B 3-2 on Sunday morning in the last quarter final, to give a semi final line up containing two second division sides and none of the national leagues top three.

The ladies quarter finals saw St Albans A and Mutineers come through comfortably against Dragon and White Rose respectively. This was then followed by the youth competition which was already at the semi final stage, following regional eliminating rounds. Tynemouth beat Nomad 3-1 and Friends of Allonby defeated Taunton 5-1 to make it an all northern youth final.

The ladies semi finals again saw St Albans A win comfortably, beating Humbersiders 5-0. Mutineers had a closer game against St Albans B but still came through 3-1 winners.

The senior semi finals saw first division triumph over second when Bere Forest defeated Warriors 2-1 and Luton Tigers beat Friends of



Photo: Richard Janulewiz

Allonby 1-0. Both games were very close and the second division teams did themselves great credit, both playing positive attacking polo, and Luton could consider themselves particularly fortunate since their winner came with only forty seconds of the match remaining.

with only one minute left and two goals down they were forced to throw caution to the winds. Mutineers caught them on the break to score into an open net to give a 4-1 final score and Mutineers their fifth national championship victory.

The youth final was also a little one sided, with Friends of

later was given the news of his selection for the Great Britain polo squad.

The open final began with Luton Tigers having much of the early pressure. Bere Forest goalkeeper Richard Spicer was forced to pull off several good saves to keep his side in the game. The match remained goalless at half time, and the second half started unusually with Luton penalised for not being ready on time. The pace of the game quickened, and play became more open, switching quickly from one end to the other, until, in the third minute, Forest finally broke the deadlock, Dave Fancourt finishing off a neat move. Luton fought back, but gave away a direct free throw which Gary Linton fired into the net. Forest withstood a late surge from Luton to win 2-0 and claim the national championship for a record eighth time.

Congratulations to Mutineers, friends of Allonby and Bere Forest for winning their respective classes, and for contributing to a very entertaining tournament.

The canoe polo championships yet again provided great entertainment for visitors to the exhibition, and although the penalty shoot out may not have been popular with leading players it enabled some real cup giant killing to take place. The 1991 tournament may well be remembered as the year of the underdog!

Photo: Peter Astles



The ladies final was expected to be a close game, with St Albans A having beaten Mutineers 4-2 to win the league three weeks previously. On this occasion however it was Mutineers who took the early initiative with two goals in the first half. St Albans fought back in the second half but could not quite find the net and Mutineers went further ahead from a direct free throw two minutes into the second half. St Albans finally got the goal they deserved for their efforts, but

Allonby scoring three goals in three minutes in the first half against Tynemouth. Tynemouth had a good spell of pressure in the second half which resulted in a goal, before Allonby scored again from a controversial penalty to win 4-1 and take the national youth title. It was a double celebration for two Allonby Players, since Ginny Coyles also played for ladies champions Mutineers and Stuart Moffat had also played for Allonbys bronze medal winning senior team and



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16/17 FEBRUARY CRYSTAL PALACE POOL SLALOM 1991

Once again the National Pool Slalom proved that it doesn't need to be rough to be tough!

On Saturday, the regional qualifiers and some invited prominent paddlers raced in a head-to-head knockout competition for places in round 4 and the finals on Sunday.

The pool slalom is renowned for tight aggressive competition with more than the odd shock for paddlers and spectators alike - this year was no exception. On Saturday, 6 K1M, 5 K1L's, 5 C1's and C2's were to go through to Sundays event out of the 66 starters. Ambridge and Rouch headed the C2 class, Bill Horsman ran a good 2 seconds clear of the C1 field, Junior Sally Masters topped the Ladies class by 3 seconds, and Sooty just won the mens event by 0.3 seconds. A good number of juniors pushed through, including Junior Worlds Silver Medallist Peter Buckley, J16 Champions James Croft and Corrie Johnstone and J14 Champion Clare Fox. Out went more top names than there is room to mention and so to Sunday.

In round 4 on Sunday, the regional qualifiers took on the cream of the nations top paddlers.

Drama ran throughout the Mens K1 event; first off were Richard Fox and Rob Wright, only to be called back for a re-run after a faulty start. James Croft nearly took Melvyn Jones scalp, then made an error on the last gate. Back at the Fox/Wright rerun, Fox hit a gate and Rob Wright hit form to knock the World Champion out of the finals.

Clear runs were the order for the day for the Ladies and C1's, Lynn Simpson and Bill Horsman leading their classes into the finals and Arrowsmith/Brain heading the C2's even with a penalty.

The final - round 5 - with the pool a fever pitch of excitement, as was Albert Woods



Photo: Chris Worrall

who set the scene from the commentary box.

The C2 event was packed with quality and well won by Arrowsmith and Brain. No better spectator sport than C2's pirouetting and rolling! C1 Peter Orton nearly brought the house down with an inspired win, justifying his promotion to Premier this year.

Lynn Simpson just lost to Lisa Micheler in the final, the pirouette and roll again proving decisive.

In the mens K1 event, the absence of the world champion in the final promised good hard racing for the title and that we got, with Rob Wright winning a dramatic final against the National Champion Shaun Pearce.

Junior trophies went to Peter Buckley, Corrie Johnstone and C2's Burt and Elsworth.

Congratulations to Don Raspin for a very well run event helped by Tony Arrowsmith's excellent timing, a challenging course from Alan Edge and a team of hawk-eyed ICF judges.

Ray Croft

POOL SLALOM RESULTS FOR SUNDAY 17 FEBRUARY 1991

- C2
1st Chris Arrowsmith/Paul Brain
2nd Rich Osborne/Perran Shreeve
3rd Andy Smith/Tony Brown Junior
John Burt/Richard Elsworth C1
1st Peter Orton
2nd Chris Wilson
3rd Bill Horsman Ladies
1st Lisa Micheler
2nd Lynn Simpson
3rd Heather Corrie Junior
Corrie Johnstone K1 M
1st Rob Wright
2nd Shaun Pearce
3rd Ian Raspin Junior
Peter Buckley

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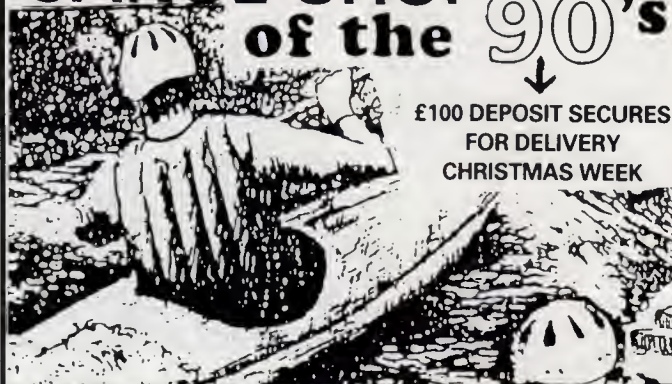
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Canoeing and Water Quality

One of the major anxieties in the sport of canoeing is water quality. Are we going to catch Weil's disease from rolling practice in the local canal? Is it a good idea to capsize in all that algae? Recently a number of letters appearing in the canoeing press, with tales of illnesses attributed to canoeing in polluted water, indicate that there is a very real problem.

With the exception of Weil's disease, most of the infections which can be contracted from the recreational use of water are considered to be minor, although at the time they seem anything but minor! Compared to the risk of drowning, the risks associated with contracting an illness from canoeing may be very small. However, before paddling a new stretch of water, most people inspect it and judge from previous experiences before reaching a decision on their chances of surviving unscathed. Unless there is an obvious source of pollution, it is very difficult to reach a similar decision with regards to health risks.

At the end of 1975, the UK adopted the EC Directive on the quality of bathing water (75/160/EEC). This introduced maximum levels of various indicator bacteria which are legally allowed at designated bathing waters. After a slow start, with only 27 bathing areas designated, the UK now has over 400 marine sites. Last season, 78% of these complied with the faecal indicator bacteria standard of the Directive. Unfortunately for the inland canoeist, the UK has no designated freshwater sites.

A team from the Centre for Research into Environmental and Health (CREH) is proposing to carry out a study on the health effects from the use of fresh recreational water using the artificial slalom course at Holme Pierrepont, and the River Tryweryn at Canolfan Tryweryn as their study sites.

The study will involve a detailed questionnaire, and brief medical examination given to participants, on the morning of each event. During the study 6 extensive water samplings will take place, with the samples being analysed for a range of bacteria and viruses. A brief questionnaire, designed to assess exposure, will be given after the days' activities. Symptomology will be determined by follow-up questionnaires one and four weeks after the initial exposure.

It is hoped, that by comparing two different sites, and the differing illness incident rates between canoeists and non-canoeists, the degree of risk can be assessed.

The study will take place on the following weekends:

April 27/28
West Midlands Rally
Holme Pierrepont.
May 11/12
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If you are planning to attend either of these events, and would like to participate, or even if you are just curious, please contact (enclosing a SAE):

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"You must be crazy!"

How many times did we have to explain our apparent insanity to incredulous friends when, in 1989, we announced plans to paddle the West Coast of Nova Scotia and hopefully cross to Newfoundland. For some it bordered on the suicidal, many thought we would never return.

It had taken us the best part of 18 months to prepare and train for our once in a life-time trip. No dignitaries to see us off, but here we were sitting in London Gatwick departure lounge, pinching ourselves to check it wasn't all just a dream.

The paddles belonged to Dave Bowman, 25 years old, and to be a father for the second time whilst on the expedition. Mal Adams, 29 years, known to his friends as Grizzly, and myself Mark Albutt, expedition leader, and old man of the team at 31 years, completed the trip.

The plan for the expedition was to paddle approximately 320 miles along the East coast of Nova Scotia (Canada) from Halifax to Cape North (Cape Breton), from there to St Paul Island, and then on to Newfoundland, a combined open sea-crossing of approximately 65 N miles.

I think it is important to point out at this stage that all the fancy working tools used for diamond hourly plots, tidal vectors etc are not necessary. The direction you travel is dictated by the wind. This was predominantly SW during the summer months, changing to NE as we moved into September. The only other factor affecting us was the tidal current around Cape Breton which moves in an anti-clockwise direction and can reach a maximum of 2 knots. This meant that there would be no ungodly hour starts, or late night paddling to catch the tides.

We had planned to take our own kayaks, courtesy of the RAF, but Saddam Hussein put paid to that. So we rented them from Scott Cunningham, a Canadian paddler we had previously met on a Nordkapp weekend.

After an eight and a half hour flight, Scott's wife Gayle and other local paddlers were there to greet us. Our first impressions of Canada were of beauty and vastness. Quaint wooden houses and churches were sparsely spread along road-sides, surrounded by ragged spruce forests, and vast areas of water dotted with islands. Our first encounter with nature aroused great excitement, a bald eagle, osprey and a porcupine. We also had what was to be the first of many encounters with the blood-sucking mosquitoes, who wasted no time in reducing us into a mass of itching volcanoes.

Our first day began at 0500 hours, 0900 hours in England, obviously we hadn't quite adjusted to the time difference yet. The sun was up and I was again surprised by the immense area of unspoilt beauty. My second surprise was to find Dave had prepared coffee and breakfast whilst I had been admiring the great outdoors!

Expedition No

The majority of the day was spent loading the kayaks, final endorsing of charts, on the water for 1530 hours. En route to Tangire Island, our destination, we saw an osprey's nest, and many cormorant colonies. It was interesting to see how the guano from the colonies had decimated and stripped the foliage from the trees, often reducing them to just stumps. This appeared to be an ongoing process with the cormorants moving to fresher areas leaving the ravaged area to recover. We spent the evening collecting mussels, clams, periwinkles and redcurrants to feed and nourish us with

our evening meal. Lobsters were also plentiful but we had received a stern warning about these monsters. To catch one is a jailable offence, that is if the fishermen don't decide to deal with you themselves. Remembering this we thought it best to leave them alone. It soon became apparent that this was one of the few remaining areas of the world where you are able to sustain yourselves from the land and survive, as native food along the coast was abundant.

During the days to come on our journey along the jagged shoreline and numerous islands, far too many to men-



Photographs by Scott Cunningham

Nova Scotia 1990

tion all in detail, we found there were plenty of places of interest. On many of the exposed islands such as Bald, Laney and Pumpkin islands, we came across a wide variety of seabirds; black-backed and herring gulls, double-breasted cormorants, terns and the common eider. The latter of these, Pumpkin, a grass-covered island, was home to one of the largest beaches of petrel colonies on the eastern shore. This tiny seabird nests in burrows and travels by night. It feeds on plankton far out to sea. Their eerie calls and erratic flight close to ground during a misty night can be disquieting to the

uninitiated. On the less exposed islands we found numerous remnants of previous habitation, some fairly recent, with stone walls, root cellars, degenerating fields and hidden roads, all told tales of yesteryear. On Liscomb Island we came across a gravestone and money pit, supposedly belonging to the notorious pirate who went by the name of Kid, but whether they are really associated with the infamous pirate is unknown.

At Canso, a once thriving fishing port but now sadly in the latter stages of decline, a local told of the geological diversity of this coastline. Geologists

worldwide travel to study the granite outcrops at the eastern extremity which once formed part of Africa. Also here is Grassy Island where excavations are underway to examine one of the earliest permanent European settlements of North America. Another place of geological interest is Long Island, a narrow island which depicted the eroded relics of ancient crustal folding which occurred as the plates of the great continents collided centuries ago.

On many other islands and headlands, wild life consisted of moose, deer, harbour and grey seals, osprey, bald eagles, porcupine, mink, pine martyn and snakes. On one occasion whilst camping close to Sonoar we awoke to find a long, limbless reptile taking advantage of the heat generated by our sleeping bags. Three of the quickest exits from a tent soon followed, hearts pounding we watched as the grass-snake slithered away into the undergrowth.

Byne Head

Here we came across a large rusting Liberty Ship which was firmly secured atop a sharp reef. We spent some time paddling through the gaping holes in the hull, a sure sign that she was slowly succumbing to the sea.

Saladin Point

Here was the end of one of the bloodiest mutinies in Nova Scotia. It is said a ship crashed upon the rocks of this harbour island point, with only 6 sailors remaining. The rest had been butchered and thrown overboard. Some believe that the silver bars she carried remain buried under the breakers.

During the 3 weeks we had paddled over 230 miles along a winding route of inlets, islands, headlands and harbours where the only constant was the unknown. Life for us had leapt from one unpredictable event to another. We were battered by violent storms, squalls, suffered under the intense rays of the sun, found ourselves navigating whilst shrouded in the densest of fogs, and were caressed by moonbeams dancing off ebony waters, as we camped on isolated islands, with only the seals, seabirds and the incessant lapping of the waves. Our only regret being not able to attempt the open sea-crossing by being forced ashore by a hurricane out to sea that was producing 20ft waves. Nevertheless we had viewed some of the most spectacular scenery in North America, as few have a chance to see it.

Mark Albutt

We wish to thank the following people for without them the trip would not have been possible:

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Nova Scotia – continued

A Sea Paddler's Paradise

The province of Nova Scotia juts into the Atlantic ocean off the northeastern tip of North America, a peninsula about the size of Ireland (but a population of only 875,000). It has a long and colourful history that far predates the arrival of John Cabot on its shores in 1497. The original inhabitants, the MicMacs, migrated into this region following the last ice age. They lived mainly along the coastal areas where food was plentiful and the sea served as their highway over which they made raiding and trading voyages as far south as New England in their birch bark canoes.

Nova Scotia's meandering coastline is so extensive, with its myriad coves, bays, inlets and headlands, that unravelling it would take you across the Atlantic and most of the way back. Nowhere in the province are you more than 55 km from saltwater. The contrasts are exceptional; within a few hours you can travel between an exposed, rocky Atlantic shore and the sandy beaches and warm water of the Gulf of St Lawrence.

The paddling season in Nova Scotia runs from spring through fall and the weather is moderate. Early spring is frequently wet and foggy, but in the summer there is plenty of sunshine, when the daytime air temperatures range from 65°F-75°F (10 degrees higher inland). The water is chilly, sometimes frigid. In the spring, a spill can be life threatening (it is considerably cooler than along the coast of Britain, affected by the Gulf Stream). The water is the warmest and the weather is the best in the fall, when a paddle under the colourful maple trees of Cape Breton Island can be a real treat.

The prevailing winds are from the southwest and in the afternoon sea breezes can be brisk (over 20 knots). The coastal highways usually allow for an easy takeout at the end of the route so you won't have to retrace your path upwind. Weather forecasts can be picked up on any pocket transistor radio but they are not prized for their accuracy.

Tides and currents are a fact of life along the coastline but in Nova Scotia they are usually not critical for the paddler. Even in the Bay of Fundy, where tide ranges can exceed 45 feet, I have found tide tables useful only up to a point, and opted to paddle against the current almost as often as with it. Of course, caution is vital in tidal channels and around headlands where flows in excess of 10 knots can be encountered.

Topographical features tend to be obvious, making a compass seldom necessary except in fog and the highly serrated shoreline offers many safe landing places. Under the cliffs of Cape

Breton pocket beaches are common and the Atlantic coast is sheltered by the offshore islands.

Camping is seldom a problem. Much of the land is crown owned and most of the rest is uninhabited. You can put in and takeout just about anywhere.

The Atlantic coast of mainland Nova Scotia is young, in geological terms, scoured by the recent glaciation and left rugged and highly indented. The protruding bedrock is either quartzite, or granite. There is a stark and compelling beauty to this environment. You will be on your own except for seals and sea-birds; even fishing boats are scarce after the lobster season.

Cape Breton Island

The highlands, lakes and place names (Inverness, Loch Lomond, Glencoe) of Cape Breton give it a distinctive flavour of Scotland. The paddling possibilities are numerous, both along the rugged east coast and the more protected, salt-water Bras d'Or Lakes. However, the gem for the initial visitor is certainly the highlands.

This 'mountainous' plateau on the northwestern tip is a remnant of an ancient chain formed as Europe collided with North America eons ago. They are still the highest in Nova Scotia and offer an impressive sight erupting from the Gulf waters. Waterfalls cascade down steep escarpments and deciduous slopes stretch up to the fir forest on the plateau where the moose forage. In late summer, schools of mackerel migrate along the coast pursued by pothead whales and observed by bald eagles from nests high up the cliff face.

The Bay of Fundy

If you have heard of Nova Scotia, you have probably heard of the Bay of Fundy and its extreme tides: the highest in the world. The upper reaches, with gently inclining bottoms, lead into extensive marsh systems where, at low tide, vast flats of soft mud with a labyrinth of winding channels are exposed. The incoming water races over the flats with surprising speed and, more than once, with tragic

results for bird hunters who had wandered out, oblivious to the dangers. At river mouths the tide funnels into a bore which can travel upstream for miles.

At the mouth of the Bay is Brier Island, the most westerly point in the province. Nutrient upwelling here results in high plankton productivity and attracts pelagic seabirds, seals and whales. This is one of the best spots on the coast to view the large marine mammals. Humpback, fin, right and mike whales feed close to shore and can be observed either from the kayak or a local tour boat.

Travel Tips

Nova Scotia is easily accessible by air from Britain. Regular flights connect London and Prestwick to Halifax. Charter flights are often available during the summer season. Outdoor stores in Halifax stock most camping and paddling equipment, as well as marine and topographical maps. Rentals are sometimes available, but confirm in advance. Outfitted and guided trips exist for those who prefer.

Local paddlers are a scarce lot but those you meet will share information. Fishermen can be helpful with local water and weather conditions, but their knowledge of kayaks approaches nil and they won't have much faith in your 'tippy, unseaworthy' craft. Expect considerable scepticism.

You can pretty well paddle where, and when, you please. No special rules apply to sea kayakers. But don't expect coast guard coverage similar to that in Britain. Nova Scotia isn't the Far North but I wouldn't depend upon flares attracting much attention. A VHF radio would be handy but, again, coverage among the islands or under cliffs is less than ideal and I wouldn't count on reaching someone on the other end following an unexpected swim in our chilly coastal waters. Your technical skill should be up to scratch.

A detailed route guide is available for the Atlantic coast (eastern region). Rentals and tours are available. Contact: Coastal Adventures, PO Box 77, Tangier, Nova Scotia BOJ 3H0. For general information on the province, including highway maps and accommodations, contact: The Nova Scotia Dept. of Tourism, PO Box 130, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2M7. **Scott Cunningham**



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Marlin WWRK1 full kevlar, 12 months old £260, Bushsport Pro-deck to fit £15 each. Proceeds to school. Tel: (0203) 348513 evening. MI 370 slalom Floe full expedition spec including compass. Reason for sale new personalised Ice Floe on order from P & H £275. Tel (0203) 665829

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LOST AND FOUND

Lost on the R Dee North Wales during the Welsh Canoe Association Tour Saturday November 10th. One pair of M I Slalom paddles, kayak, epoxy shaft and marks Helen. Last seen at about 4.30pm just below the Town Bridge. Tel (0734) 481425

Reported lost: One orange Rotobat, 3 ABS paddles, 2 Schlegel paddles. Found: 1 SLR camera, 1 Canadian paddle, 1 pair of glasses and other smaller canoeing items. Please send a full description and a stamped addressed envelope to: Mike Jones Rally, c/o Betws Y Coed Sorting Office, Bews Y Coed, Gwynedd LL24 1AA.

WANTED

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Slalom kayak, low volume G/F for repair project. Must be cheap. Any condition considered. Tel: (0761) 70496

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To advertise in Canoe Focus Classified:

Boxed advertisements £6 per column cm (semi-display).

Lineage 30p per word (min. 20 words).

Contact: Tracy Simpson, Raven Marketing Group, New Road, St. Ives,

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B.C.U. members private sale advertisements are free of charge

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Contact: BCU (classifieds) Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford

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at outdoor centre in North Devon. Phone 0237 477637 for details.

Outdoor Pursuits Instructors required for summer 1991. Multi-activity programme based in Cheddar Somerset, particularly canoeists, cavers and climbers. Contact Mike or Ruth, Country Wide Weekends, 'Driftway' Drive Road, Old Couldsden, Surrey CR5 1BN. Tel: 0737 551530.

Canoeing Instructors and Directors.

Residential and non-residential vacancies at children's watersports centres in Surrey and Hampshire. 3-6 weeks in July and August. Good salaries, further details: Leisurework Limited, PO Box 367, Woking, GU21 1AH. Tel: 0483 721211.



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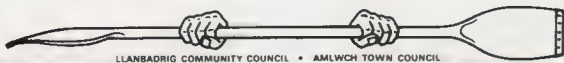


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CASH PRIZES **28th JULY 1991** TROPHIES

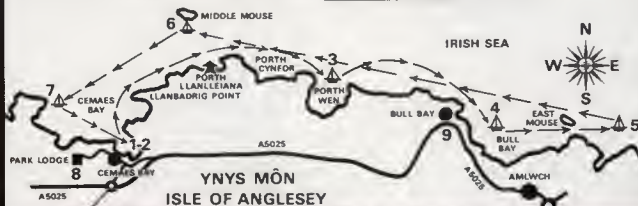
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27th JULY 1991

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