

CANOE FOCUS

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CANOE FOCUS

Canoe Focus The official magazine of the British Canoe Union

John Dudderidge House,
Adbolton lane,
West Bridgford,
Notts NG2 5AS
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BCU Enquiries to
above address

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Editor: Kevin Danforth

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Cover photograph: Phil Blain Testing Dagger's new Freefall to see how it freefalls?
Full test review next Focus



Nolan Whitesell
surfing and
smiling. See
Video Reviews
on page 30

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The table in Fig. 4 illustrates the range of properties of paddle shafts in current production.

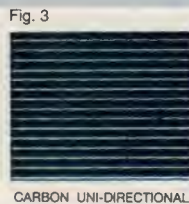
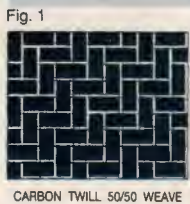


Fig. 4 Tube specification 27mm i/d – Wall thickness 1 to 1.5mm

| Tube Type | Weight 127cm – 50" | Weight Comparison | ← 130cm → 50kg Deflection | Stiffness | Critical Load | Crush Strength |
|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------|------------------|-------------------|
| Epoxy Glass 1 | 230G | 6 | 62mm | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Epoxy Glass 2 | 280G | 7 | 52mm | 4 | 7 | 4 |
| Carbon Grade 1 | 220G | 5 | 53mm | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| Carbon Grade 1F | 172G | 2 | 58mm | 2 | 4 | 7 |
| Carbon Grade 2 | 164G | 1 | 35mm | 5 | 2 | 1 |
| Carbon Grade 3 | 212 | 4 | 29mm | 7 | 6 | 3 |
| Carbon Kevlar | 200 | 3 | 32mm | 6 | 5 | 5 |

SCALE 1 – 7 = 1 Low 7 High



Comment

NEWS FROM HQ

NATIONAL CANOEING DAY - 50K on the day!

Saturday 5 September is the day when every paddler paddles, when every organiser organises, and when every instructor instructs.

Olympic success will bring considerable publicity to canoeing. We want to make Saturday 5 September the day when anyone who wants to can come and join in a canoeing activity. The event could be a 'come and try it' session at the local club, centre, or independent venue; or a time trial; or a rally; or a tour; or a low-key competitive event suitable for complete novices.

Whatever takes your fancy, and you are best able to provide, we are asking everyone to get stuck in and do. Publicity is being organised, both locally and nationally, and co-ordinators appointed. Full details will appear with April Focus. Please reserve the date.

EVANGELISE OR FOSSILISE!

Membership promotion is still high on our priority list, especially the recruiting of basic members. Basic members today provide the seed corn for the international competitors of tomorrow. Greater overall numbers provide the means to develop our sport and recreation. The BCU is a members' organisation so the help of every member is needed! In the 1992 Yearbook there is a BCU application form for you to use to recruit a friend. Photocopy it if you do not want to cut it out. Also in the Yearbook is a list of reasons why it is worth joining the BCU, to which you can add from your own experience.

INQUEST VERDICT.

The jury decided on a verdict of death by misadventure, which was so recorded by the Coroner at the inquest into the drowning of our late Director, Trevor Bailey, held on 18 December.

Because the accident had occurred on purpose built premises provided for sport, the local Environmental Health department was required to investigate. They had issued a report to the Coroner, which was prepared without consultation with the BCU or the ARA, and without copies being sent to either organisation in advance of the inquest. Considerable weight was given to this report.

Among other things it spelled out, and photographed, an experiment to swamp the K2 with its missing rear buoyancy block. The end without the buoyancy sank, and we ended up with the classic 'cleopatra's needle'! As we have known for over thirty

years that this is the inevitable result, and eye witnesses and police photographs had testified to its being the case in this instance, it was difficult to see the purpose of this exercise.

Some weight was also given to varying opinions on the prevailing wind strength, although the significance of this was not identified.

The court paid no heed to the difference between a novice in training, for whom there is a particular duty of care, and an established sportsman who is responsible for his or her own decisions, and the consequences.

Neither did the court address the basic issue of why an apparently fit and healthy 44-year-old, of reasonable swimming ability, should suddenly not be able to swim 40 metres in the comparatively simple conditions prevailing on the day.

The jury was informed by the Coroner that the law prevented them from making recommendations. However, they were invited to make recommendations by writing down anything they wished to say, and then handing the paper to the Coroner after he had closed the proceedings.

The media interpreted all this to mean that the Coroner had ordered an enquiry into public safety at the National Water Sports Centre, and commented accordingly, spiced with the usual groan-making inaccuracies - among other things, Trevor had progressed from being sufficiently experienced, to 'international canoeist' status!

In fact, the Centre had previously arranged a consultation with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, voluntarily opening their arrangements to objective scrutiny. There has been no drowning of a member of the public during the 20 years of the Centre's history, and it has not even been possible to identify a 'near miss'.

There are considerable implications for sport, generally, as well as for the freedom of the individual, through the involvement of the Environmental Health department in this case, and these are matters which we need to continue to address.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DONALD BEAN.

Donald Bean, a canoeist for 60 years, long time member of Staffs and Stone Canoe Club, and still going strong, was awarded the MBE in the New Year Honours List for services to the community in Staffordshire, for which county he was deputy Treasurer until his retirement. Many congratulations to Donald, who typically celebrated with a 'splash' by taking his traditional dip in the Trent on New Year's Day. Long may he continue to conquer the white water.

NEW YEAR GREETINGS.

Although you're long back to work, and the New Year celebration is just a memory, may we take this first opportunity of wishing you a successful canoeing season. Whether your resolution was merely to paddle more regularly, or to win an Olympic medal, our best wishes are with you.

Geoff Good
Acting Director

So why do the Irish always arrive at Ardeonaig at 3.00am in the morning? Still it's a perfect time to set up a quick bivvi and finally get some sleep - at least until 5.00am when the midges wake up for breakfast. Half the team end up back in the bus while the other half brave it outside in the bivvi bags to end up looking like measles victims! Welcome to bonnie Scotland (och aye the noo) lads - get the tents up quick - get the breakfast cooked quick I'm being eaten alive! Still the rain will be putting water in the rivers.

Seaboard Canoe Association is a group of instructors linked to the South Eastern Education & Library Board Youth Service; in N.Ireland - whose purpose is to organise canoeing events for young people. Each year we organise an expedition in Ireland, Scotland or abroad for young people. One of the main aims for this is to be a cross-community venture. (Cross- community, for those not from the fair island - is the bringing together of young people from across the political, social, and religious divide to gain mutual understanding).

Anyway, so here we were being eaten by midges at the Ardeonaig Outdoor Centre Campsite in Perthshire. (An ideal base for a week's canoeing).

Day 1 A short trip on the Orchy. A wonderful river from Grade 1-6! OK so we only did the Grade 1 bits - just to break in gently (so to speak) mind you we did eye up the Grade 6 but the midges were active to spend time shooting it!

Day 2 The River Tay from Kenmore down to Aberfeldy - a nice progression from the Orchy - good Grade 1-11 with the rapid at Chinese Bridge being the most enjoyable. That evening was spent asking the girls in the centre for old pairs of tights, to make flying tadpoles, in case you were wondering! All you need is half a pair of tights (or a tight?) a tennis ball and the ability to tie granny knots and hey presto a flying tadpole hours of entertainment!

Day 3 Back on the Tay this time Stanley to Thistlebrigg (or Stanley to Stanley by road!) Excellent paddling culminating with some lovely surf waves. Forgot/didn't realise this was the egress point and nearly ended up in Perth but some walking and eddy hopping cured that.

Day 4 By now we were all getting quite smelly so a compulsory rest day at Fort William started with the swimming pool and showers at Lochaber Leisure Centre was the order of the day. The slide was definitely Grade 2 although they wouldn't let us take a boat down! By now the team was gelling well and everyone was speaking with silly Ballymena accents - hey!

An extravaganza feast was on the menu for tonight's meal. Each tent group having to buy, prepare and cook a part of the meal all within a limited budget. As the group went their separate ways to



Photo credit: Mike McClure

"Eejit in full flow"

EEJITS IN SCOTLAND

Presto etc. the leaders drank coffee, ate lunch, drank coffee, ate sticky buns and had a competition to find the most overpriced garment in the outdoor shops. Nevisport win with a Patagonia windproof bag of rip stop nylon costing £102.00. Two miles of the same material can be bought by the Blue Peter DIY enthusiast for about 70p at Ulster Weavers!

The leaders then needed more coffee and sticky buns after the shock.

An incredible camp meal was enjoyed that evening comprising of melon starter, pizza with a choice of topping and strawberries and cream for desert all washed down with apple and grape Shloer.

Day 5 River Awe. With 2 sluices open the Awe was going well and skills began to noticeably improve and although on meatier water the swims got fewer. The magnetic rock rapid was the groups first chance to paddle good buoyancy grade 3 water tremendous crack (nothing to do with illegal substances or access campaigners).

Day 6 Back on the Tay this time the White Water course and Grandtully. As it was fairly low, Grandtully was more technical than powerful but was achieved without a swim with all the team looking really relaxed on this level of water.

Day 7 The last days paddling and the groups assessment for their proficiency award. By popular demand it was back to the Awe where the water levels were

slightly higher. Again a superb days canoeing with all achieving their relative award.

A final bivvi having already packed the bus then up at 0600 and we were on our way home again (why do the Irish always leave Ardeonaig at ridiculously early hours of the morning?).

It's difficult to sum up a few words such an excellent venture. The question of religious and political difference didn't feature at all in fact some healthy banter was enjoyed by all regarding the situation in Northern Ireland, anyway it really doesn't matter whether its a Protestant or Catholic rescuing you when swimming down a Grade 3.

As one of the group put it, it was really good to be part of a team, which shows that if both sides of the religious barrier worked together they can get on!

The trip was only a success because of the work and assistance of many people and the group would like to express their thanks to all those concerned and particularly: All the leaders in the Seaboard Canoe Association who helped in many ways including training of the team and fund raising.

The SEELB and Klargester Ltd, for financial sponsorship. Down District Council for sponsorship of Swimming Pool Sessions. Ardnabannon Outdoor Education Centre and Ardeonaig Outdoor Centre (for putting up with our complete eejits!)

Mike McClure

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Remember that 22-23 of February is date of the International Canoe Exhibition at Crystal Palace with all the usual lectures, pool demonstrations, new equipment, competitions, old friends - new friends, trade stands, Pool Slalom, Polo, Squirting and information stands on everything aspect of the sport!

It is also a wonderful opportunity to come along to the many BCU Regional and Competitive and Specialist stands and meet the hard working volunteers who keep the Union and Canoeing alive. Don't forget the Welsh, Scots, and Northern Irish stands either. At the BCU HQ and membership stand we will be offering Instant Membership for those who are not members, renewals for those who were, and chat to those who are! Coaching staff and all HQ staff will be around so come and meet the faces behind that voice on the

Notice Board

phone. You may be pleasantly surprised to find that we are paddlers, just like you. If you have something to say on Focus, or better still, something to contribute, see you at Palace.

This may be the last ICE at Palace for a while: the rumours are true and consideration is being given to move north to Sheffield, although nothing is yet finalised.

New Kayak Club at Newcastle

Despite being in the centre of an active BCU Region the City of Newcastle has no previously had a canoe club outside of the Poly and University set ups. Now it has and it meets on Thursday's at Newburn Leisure Centre. They now need more paddlers, donations of gear, and experienced Coaching scheme staff. The Geordie Social life is good and ceildhs and family barbecues as well as a

varied paddling programme are planned. Ring Nick Doll on 091 2854814

Wharf Accident

There was a tragic accident on the Upper Wharf over the Christmas holiday period. John Howard drowned whilst trying to retrieve a lost kayak pinned on a tree. The coroner recorded a verdict of accidental death and noted that the incident, whilst canoeing related, happened whilst John was out of his kayak using rescue equipment and thus was not technically a canoeing accident. The river the previous day had been running at high spate and was still above the normal level on the day of the tragedy. May we offer our deepest sympathies and condolences to his family and friends. Fatal canoeing accident figures for last year totalled 7, including the Wharf accident. This shows a rise of one over 1990 casualties.



Unofficial World Record

Jonathon Pearson, a member of the First British Grand Canyon Youth Team managed to sit in the bottom stopper at Holme Pierrpont for 30min 05sec to raise money for their trip later this year. Jonathon would like to thank all of his sponsors, particularly Jack Wolfskin and Pyranha. I can think of a few paddlers who think that they have been in that stopper for at least half an hour, but is an long, long time: even for a skilled wave hog. Jonathon would like to know if this has been bettered as stopper endurance could end up in the Guinness Book of Records, and why not? Makes as much sense as pea-pushing I suppose!

BUOYANCY AIDS : 1992 REGULATIONS

From June of this year buoyancy aids offered for sale to the public must conform to the new European standard.

This is similar to the existing BCU/BACT standard in many respects; with, in fact, more stringent requirements for shoulder strengths, and a more detailed 'sizing' specification. The minimum buoyancy level, however, for a person of 50KGS or more (7 stone 8lbs) is set at only 50 newtons (5.09KG). This is reduced to 45 newtons for 60-70KG body weight.

How does this effect the ICF Rule?

A requirement of the standard is that the minimum buoyancy level must pertain throughout the 'reasonable life' of the device. Assuming this to average 3 years, quite clearly manufacturers will need to allow for 'shrinkage'. It is quite likely, therefore, that the minimum buoyancy level will meet the ICF requirement of supporting a 'legalised' 6KG lead upright as its mass in water is only 5.58KG. Manufacturers will also be free to make buoyancy aids to meet specific requirements in excess of the standard, provided the device can still pass the basic tests.

Where does this leave the BCU/BACT Standard?

This will have to cease as a standard after June 1992, but it would still be in order for the panel to set requirements, and endorse particular buoyancy aids as suitable for canoeing. Again, they would have to be able to pass the basic tests as defined in the European standard. A discussion as to whether or not to continue the BCU/BACT approval system as an endorsement for canoeing, remains pending. Market forces will dictate policy in this regard.

What about White water Canoeing?

The BACT and the BCU's white water safety panel agreed that a separate category within the standard should be sought for white water buoyancy aids. Harnesses and other attachments would be considered within this specification. Work is continuing on this.

What about existing stocks?

Don't throw them away! Centres, local authority bodies and similar, who come within the scope of Health and Safety at work, are able to continue to issue existing buoyancy aids to staff and paying guests until the end of their 'reasonable' life.

See the Competition page for information on new helmet regulations for Slalom in 92.

800 First Timers!

Another BCU Coaching success. Over the August Bank Holiday West Midlands Region offered 'try it' sessions at the Inland Waterways National Rally, held at Netherton. Over 800 people had a go over the three days. Can any other region better this? National Canoeing day on September 5 may be the ideal opportunity to try.

Canoe Youngsters save Life

Two young paddlers, Christopher Dykes (17) and Donald McLellan (14) saved a man from the River Dee in Chester. The young man, a non-swimmer, had been drinking and had been bridge jumping. The boys pulled the casualty to the surface and then administered First Aid until the ambulance arrived. Their names have been put forward for the BCU Award of Merit.

CANOE TOURING

Calshot Closure

■ Calshot Outdoor centre, one of the oldest in the country, which has been threatened with closure has earned a two year reprieve.

James Turner Legacy Fund

■ When James Turner realised he had cancer and was going to die at an early age, he decided to donate the proceeds of his house sale to further the interests of disabled canoeists. Because of James' generosity, a disbursement fund now exists whereby the annual interest on the donation is used to award grants to projects involving disabled canoeists. To apply for assistance contact the Director's secretary at BCU HQ for an application form.

New Sea Kayak Group

■ The Sea Kayak Group UK is a new organisation founded to promote recreational sea kayaking. Acting secretary Peter Clark outlined it's aims as providing services and support to experienced sea paddlers, including personal accident insurance and a newsletter.

The group is BCU affiliated and will work in harmony with the Sea Touring Committee. Details from Peter on 0402 450596

Welsh Appointments

■ The new manager of the National White Water Centre is Patrick Fitzgibbon who has taken over from the retiring George Davis. Ian Bebbington is the new full time Development Officer. Best wishes to both of them in their new Jobs.

Canoeing for people who are Disabled

■ An open forum will be held at 2pm on Saturday 22 February for all who are interested in the above subject.

The meeting will be held in room G55 at the International Canoe Exhibition, Crystal Palace. The chairman of the Standing Advisory Committee, Geoff Smedley, will report on the years progress, followed by an election for the Committee, and an open forum.

The present Committee members are all eligible for re-election. Other nominations should be proposed and seconded by two current BCU



TOURING AND RECREATION COMMITTEE OVERSEAS EVENTS 1992

April 18- May 2. Corsica White Water grades III-V. Contact Simon Dawson, 75 Turney Street, The Meadows, Nottingham, NG2 2EG.

April 23-26. Portugal. Tagus Rally four day event over 60 miles of grade I-II river. Departing Easter for about two weeks including site seeing, or fly as an alternative. Contact Colin Kempson, 108 East Street, Olney, Bucks., MK46 4DJ.

May 28-31. Dutch tour 'De Kanoverdaagse Zwartsluis - ICF'. Campers welcome from 27 May. Contact Francis Cook, 1 Mooring Road, Tooting, London, SW17 8DN.

June. Dates and details to suit group. 'Canoe France 92' Senior Paddlers tour. Week or so paddling for pleasure, camping eating out and site seeing. Contact Colin Kempson as above.

September 27. Dutch event 'De Veluwe Rally - ICF' Make it a long weekend north east of Amsterdam. Contact Francis Cook as above.

For home events see BCU Members Year Book.

members and forward to the Director of Coaching at the BCU before 1 February 1992

The forum (without the election) will be repeated on the Sunday at 1400.

Le Decathlon De L'Extreme

■ BP France and the Regional Council of the Haute Alps are throwing down the challenge to British teams to enter their IMADE EXTREMES

Competition to be held from June 6th to 13th 1992 in the Ubaye Valley, French Alps.

The event will gather 20 international teams of 4 competitors each competing in 10 events: 6 team and 4 individual sports including Rafting, Hydrospeed and Slalom kayak. Paragliding, rock climbing, Mountain biking, orienteering, hang-gliding and Tyrolian events complete what should be a pretty tiring week in France. Do we have a British team to challenge the Italian, French and Swiss athletes. Contact Kevin at BCU HQ if you would like to enter.

Women in Nottingham

■ Julie Ashton (GB WW Racer) is offering pool sessions for women and girls at the Portland

Leisure Centre, Nottingham at 60p. Give Julie a ring on 0602 821212

Blazing Paddles on Radio

■ 'Blazing Paddles' (Oxford Illustrated Press), Brian Wilson's book of his solo sea trip has been abridged to 5 episodes, and will be broadcast on BBC Radio 4 'Book at Bedtime', 23-27 March 1992. Brian thinks this may be the first time sea kayaking has been used as a cure for insomnia! He is currently working on an account of his solo trip round Ireland.

New Shirt Design

■ BCU Supplies have produced a range of all new trendy BCU 'T' shirts. These are printed in three different designs on 100% Unbleached Cotton and are available now. Colourful, comfortable and environ-mentally friendly: a snip at £9.99

Competition Corner

■ This year BCU HQ is revamping our promotional and publicity material and we are looking for a new design or cartoon which could be used in our leaflets. The previous cartoon of grinning brats used on 'Come Canoeing' is wearing a bit thin now after three years. The prize

PADDLERS ABROAD

Robert Redford on

John Wasson who was on the first attack on the Grand Canyon of the Stikine River in British Columbia and was also part of the Pushing the Limits - A Breath of White Water C4 TV series spent some of the summer '91 working with Robert Redford making a film of the book 'A River runs through it', a family saga revolving around the river and farm house. Much of John's time was spent paddling the cameraman around in the front of a Topolino Duo.

Arlene Burns

One of America's top women white water paddlers, Arlene and Dan 'Greystoke' Dixon who had an illegal bandit run down the top stretch of the Tsampola and Brahmaputra rivers in Tibet several years ago were in Russia paddling rivers for a month before flying to Costa Rica for project RAFT. The attempted coup and Gorbachev's arrest put Arlene and the Russian teams departure to Mauagua in doubt until an influential Russian after acquaintance secured flights

Kayak Drug arrest

Chau Swauziieg (86 Kite & Kayaks Everest Expedition) has been arrested for the cultivation and shipping of Marijuana. He was sending the substance hidden in kayaks across the States.

Slim Ray

Still stateside: Slim Ray was paralysed from his waist down as a result of an accident whilst paddling the Green River in North Carolina (See Video Review Section). Slim ran a vertical drop and landed on his head. Luckily he was paddling with experienced first aiders who floated him on lifejackets to the shore in preparation for helicopter evacuation. Slim worked at the famous Nantahalla O.C. and is known in Britain for his 'River Rescue' book and video.

Dave Manby who compiled this section of 'paddles over the water', will be covering Turkey along with other trips in his 'So you came all this way just to get wet?' lecture at Crystal Palace.

will be one of the new BCU 'T' shirts ! Smarten up your own image : Entries to BCU HQ marked 'Focus BCU Design' by 1 May please.

Focus Palm/Goretex Competition

■ The lucky winner is Dave Pinch of Bromborough on the Wirral. He is a keen paddler and wins a Goretex Dry bag made by Palm.

Sincere Condolences

■ We extend our deepest sympathy to John Dudderidge MBE, President of Honour, for the loss of his beloved wife, Evelyn after so many happy years together.

A memorial service will be held on 4 April. Please send sae to BCU Office for details.

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Please contact Melvyn Jones

Information on all other requirements, Personal and Contract, including Ace, Prijon, Pyranha, Perception, MI, Coleman, Arrowcraft (new Aquabat) and accessories from Chang, Tornado, Helly-Hansen, Javlin, Lendal, Schlegal, Kober, New Wave etc.

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Chairman's Chat

■ New committee leaders have been elected in all regions bringing some new faces to the national scene. Many of the regional officers will be at Crystal Palace (Hall 4) and will be delighted to meet you. Come and see what your region is doing to help canoeing in your area. North West region has just published a four year development plan with the aid of the regional Sports Council, other regions are updating their's - your input and suggestions are invaluable! On the British scene a series of meetings has started between the BCU, ERM, SCA, WCA and CANI developing a relationship to the advantage of ALL canoeists in Britain. I welcome your views!

Ron Hodgson

Eastern

■ After the pessimism of my last report 1992 dawns with a much strengthened regional committee. The opportunities and challenges of 1992 are many and varied; September sees the introduction of the PE National Curriculum including outdoor and adventurous activities; the Eastern Counties Federation for Sport has had a working conference on sport and young people. In order to grasp these opportunities and avoid duplication the region needs to be made aware of what is happening locally, to know what support is required and what policies you would like us to pursue. Come and talk to us in Hall 4 at Crystal Palace; talk to your county or specialised representative, phone or even write to the committee!

Ron Hodgson

East Midlands

■ At the regional AGM in November, Reg Robinson was able to report that the regional act is coming together and there is growing enthusiasm and support amongst paddlers. However not all committee posts were filled, notably county representatives for Leicester and Northampton. The new secretary is Pearl Mulholland and Janet Robinson has taken over as treasurer. The priority for 1992 is to expand low level recreation and fun events throughout all the five counties; contact a committee member if

Regional ROUNDUP

you can help. Paddlers on the Trent Navigation, Witham and Fosse dyke should note the new British Waterways code of conduct including navigation light regulations; details from Simon Dawson. Derwent tour 17 May; details from Derek Coddington.

Simon Dawson.

London and South East

■ At the November AGM the new regional committee was elected to work on your behalf. Two posts remained vacant. If you are involved in white water racing you could help by acting as the representative. Similarly if you would like to serve as the regional access officer, please contact the secretary. The latter is a vital role but you don't have to be a legal expert and advice is available to help you learn the ropes. Why not join in one of the regional touring events this year? A full programme has been organised. Check your Yearbook for details or speak to the touring representative on the regional stand at Crystal Palace.

Chris Childs

Northern

■ Welcome to our new chairman, Eddie Palmer, and new secretary, David Pope. Please let David or myself have details urgently of events and activities for inclusion in the regional diary to be circulated to clubs. There is a new arrangement for canoeing the Coquet - contact LAO Tony Hall - book in good time for the 28/29 March tour as places limited. The North Tyne wild water race on 11/12 April has access permission for race paddlers only - entries must be in by 27 March. Both Cumbria and Northumbria canoeists have fixed their meetings dates for 1992. The next meetings are 9 April in Cumbria and 7 April in Northumbria - times and venues from local BCU Officers.

Mary Armstrong

North West

■ A regional development plan 1991-1996 has now been agreed and professionally

produced with assistance from the North West regional Sports Council, Oldham MBC and BNFL plc. It identifies objectives, programmes for development and potential sites. Clubs have a copy. The vacant posts of slalom representative and treasurer have been filled by Cathy Perkins and John Firth. An answer phone is imminent for up-to-date information on events, amenities etc.

Roy Bradshaw, previously secretary and vice chairman, will be standing for election to Council. The committee seeks a co-ordinated series of mini-slaloms; please let a committee member know if your club has an event which could form a part. There is an open mini-slalom at Marple in March.

Mike Burt

Southern

■ A well attended AGM was held on 19 November. The accounts showed a small surplus and the AGM agreed that grants to assist slalom and flat water racing should be re-introduced. There was a useful discussion on how clubs and the region can co-operate - it starts with keeping in touch, so please contact relevant committee members if you have an idea, or a problem. The chairman, Charles Hicks, treasurer/vice chairman, Ian Davey and secretary, Jerry Rogers (0344 775946) were re-elected. Susan James takes over slalom (0327 60051) and Trix Davey as disabled canoeists representative (0252 621381); Bill Dodwell - regional access officer (0295 710123) and Dick Faulder for sea touring (0252 713878). Thanks to their predecessors for their work for southern region canoeing.

Charles Hicks

South West

■ Any interested slalom or white water racing coach or trainer who has not received a letter from me regarding the regional centre of excellence please contact me. Committee members will man a regional exhibition at Crystal Palace. They will be pleased to see you

and discuss your problems and, hopefully, suggestions for improving canoeing facilities in the region. A more regular Newsletter is planned. Individual members needing a copy should send SAE to the regional secretary. Junior and school clubs can receive copies if they contact the secretary. Club projects requiring financial help must be sent to the chairman or secretary by the end of February to be considered by the Sports Council in May.

James Cornwell

West Midlands

■ Congratulations to Sandwell and Dudley CC for winning the West Midlands Paddlers Day Trophy. River Vyrnwy tour, 15 and 29 February depending on dam release, contact Mike Hubbard 021 356 7619. River Dove tour 21/22 March, limited places, phone A Staples Burton-on-Trent 48889. Holme Pierrepont rally 24/26 April, try this course at different levels, a FUN week-end for EVERYBODY, contact Mike Hubbard. Upper Severn canoe rally 9/10 May, Roger Drummond 0743 365022. Birmingham Century 100 mile marathon, 2/3 May, Dave Batemen 021 772 3739. Get your regional handbook on our regional stand at Crystal Palace or afterwards from West Midlands Canoe Centre. Upper Wye users must contact LAO Chris Charters 09817 308 about egress change.

Mike Male

Yorkshire and Humberside

■ The regional polo championships will be held on Saturday 11 April 9am to 10pm at Leeds International Pool; details from Marianne Spender 0422 882908. River Derwent Cruise, Sunday 9 March, combined with the regional access touring conference; details from Mike Twigg 0756 753101. The Bingley Circular Tour, Easter Sunday 19 April; details from Marianne Spender. The first Washburn Evening Cruise is on Wednesday 15 April 4pm/8pm. The next evening release is Wednesday 27 May until 9pm. 25/26 April Washburn recreational cruise; details from Hugh Pashley. The regional Yearbook will be sent free after Crystal Palace to all BCU members in the region. Contact Hugh Pashley 0742 747874 if not received.

Marianne Spender

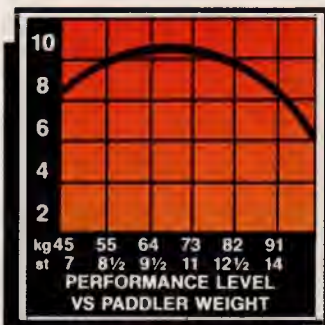


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SCILLIES BY SEA KAYAK

The Scillies lie 28 miles south west of Lands End. Such an exposed crossing in our small lightly built craft would be no mean feat. Selection of a capable group of paddlers not only depended upon a good degree of fitness, but paddlers who were on a similar "frequency" so to speak. To this end Andy Stamp, Pat McCarthy and Ken Hamblin came first and foremost to mind. All belonged to the same club (Port of Plymouth CC) and had paddled with one another as well as myself. As event unfolded regrettably Pat was unable to make the trip.

The plans materialised onto paper: The group would remain small and self contained. Our passage would take us from Sennen Cove to the northern end of St. Mary's in a south westerly direction, with the return on a reciprocal route. The crossing should take about 9 hours, 3 of which would be against the tide whilst the remaining time would be with neap tides and would be more beneficial than springs. We would use a single kayak (Ken's Nordkapp) and a double (my Voyager Sea II).

The summer of 1991 will be remembered for many things, warm not too hot, some rain, not too much. A fairly mediocre season apart from the wind! August was clear, skies blue, but the constant air stream swung from east to west and rarely dropped below force 3. As a result a weekend late in September gave us our first and only chance.

The Scillion

The Scillion pulled gracefully and slowly into Penzance Harbour. Amidst the throwing of ropes, general excitement and mass of passengers crowding to the ferry's port side was the third member of our mini expedition, Ken. After what seemed like an eternity of waiting (but was only weeks) a suitable weather window had appeared and Friday 20th September promised to be a day to remember.

Half an hour later all loaded up we were off to Sennen Cove, our start point for the long haul to the Isles of Scilly. 9.30pm with full stomachs we forced ourselves from the warmth and comfort of the Old Success to walk up to the cliff top overlooking Lands End.



Hugh Town beach

There was hardly a breath of air, the sky was deepest black and countless stars twinkled from this back cloth. To our left, Lands End and to it's right about two miles off, the Longships Lighthouse. To our right, the Seven Stones Lightship and centre stage to all in the far distance, lights from the



Nigel at start

Scillies. Most distinctive of all, Round Island Lighthouse at the northerly end of the isles.

By 12.45am we were on the water and gingerly feeling our way in the darkness. There is always (and will always be for me) a certain mystical magic about night paddling. This night would be no exception. The surf washed over the reef to our right some 400 yards from the harbour. The swell was running little more than 2ft, if it was daylight I doubt if the reef would have been given a secondary glance. Our ears adopted the atonement of a sonar operator. The gentle washing of the surf became a great crescendo of crashing white water somewhere out there, possibly not to far distant, but then again it could be closer.

Longships

The longships loomed up, lying some 2 N. miles off Lands End it would mark our last known fix. The next 2 hours of dead reckoning should get us to St Mary's.

The Longships Lighthouse appeared much smaller than I had imagined even though it stood at 117ft above our

Photo credits: Nigel Hington

minute craft. In keeping with previous night paddles any form, definition or distance was lost.

Our long journey began. A light wind to our stern eased us along. It soon became apparent by our course that the tidal drift wasn't as strong as expected. Minor adjustments corrected our steered course, bringing us around by a few degrees from the Seven Stones Lightship (to our right) to the Round Island Lighthouse (directly ahead). To its left in the extreme distance the loom of the Bishop Rock Lighthouse could be seen.

By now the skies had cleared, the Wolf Rock light slowly passed on our port beam. Phosphorescence drained and sparkled from our paddles whilst dancing on our bow waves. With frequent regularity schools of fish passed under our wake, illuminated like our own fluorescent green light sticks we carried. The marine lightsticks moved with speed, agility and freedom, our lights clung rigid, secured to our bodies. The magic of a night paddle was with us now, intermittently the spell being broken by cries of surprise from Ken and Andy as our marine companions broke from their world to ours of the spraydeck and glass fibre boat.

Kens local knowledge and keen eyesight proved invaluable. At the far northern end of St. Marys a TV mast illuminated by red lights provided a precise marker to our ultimate destination, the road. Again we adjusted course slightly and made for our new marker. Between 4 and 5 am the Seven Stones reef, made infamous by the Torry Canyon disaster, passed amidships on our starboard beam.

With the rising of the sun came a similar change to the wind and a veering to the south west quadrant. This sudden increase caused us little worry, it was about 6am and first land fall was little more than 2 hours away. The islands had taken on a more distinctive form. The black outline had melted away, radiating land colours of green, brown and grey. Trees, fields and rock outcrops became recognisable.

We paddled through the Eastern Isles, Great Ganilly the largest of the group passed to our right. Ken directed us towards a seal colony. Mothers and pups looked on us suspiciously, slowly Andy and I paddled in at the same time easing hidden cameras from pockets. The sight of our lenses was the order to dive, numerous heads appeared and disappeared just before the shutters clicked.

The northern end of St Mary's, Bar Point slid by on our port beam, to our right the island of St. Martin's. The kayaks came around to a south westerly direction. Still with St. Mary's on our left the island of Tresco formed an outer marker. Our course took us along the channel known as the Road, in little



Bishop Rock

more than 5 minutes Hugh Town, the islands capital came into view.

Twenty minutes later we were paddling into its harbour. "Well that's it, we've done it" said Ken. I thought of Sir Edmund Hillary's comments upon reaching base camp in 1953, "We've cracked the bastard" came my reply, it seemed adapt. This was our Everest, our moment of pride and triumph. To our knowledge, this year no one else had made this trip by kayak. The 8 hours we had taken were all worth it.

Landfall

8.50am Hugh Town, after the customary photo the boats were loaded and taken to Ken's House. The emergence of two bicycle wheels on a spindly frame loaned from a neighbour was to be our canoe cart. It became the butt of several jokes from Andy and myself, but what an energy saving God send it became. Minimal unpacking followed by a well earned sleep. By early afternoon smelling clean Andy and I were on the tourist run. St Mary's although the largest island of the group is relatively small (approximately 2 miles by 3 miles) and Hugh Town is little more than a typical Cornish village. A Post Office, two Banks, Booking Office for the ferry (either boat or aircraft), a supermarket, a chemist, 3 pubs, boat chandlers, and of course numerous gift shops.

Final Day (Two)

Saturday was planned to be easy paddling, before catching the 5pm ferry to the mainland. The shipping forecast predicted an increase in wind strength (force 5/6) from the south west over the Sunday and Monday. A return trip would be out of the question.

The sight of the Bishop Rock Lighthouse standing in the distance as we paddled through the Road proved too much. Some 6 nautical miles south west of Hugh Town this lonely sentimental marks the extreme south western extent of mainland Britain.

Into a south westerly force 4/5 we set off. Breaking with our usual tradition

I took the foreword cockpit seat, it was Andy's turn to hurl abuse and directional comments! The larger Islands disappeared leaving smaller rocks to appear in their place all the way out to the Bishop Rock.

Their appearance created a turmoil and turbulence over the open sea. At the same time a 15ft swell from the same direction as the wind kept our concentration to maximum. From the distance the Lighthouse looked small, as we approached its dimensions took on another meaning. A lone solitary keeper stood in its entrance doorway and waved. The human form gave the tower a scale we could appreciate. The Bishop Rock Lighthouse stands at 167ft, we in our 22ft craft against the background of the vast open sea paled into insignificance. It had taken us about an hour and fifteen minutes of hard paddling to reach the Lighthouse.

Our kayak slowly circumnavigated the tower, standing a good 200 yards off we gave the rock the respect it deserved. The swell washed against the rock with a constant regularity, any thought of landing was dispelled.

Due north east return, this time our course would run before the swell. Less than an hour later sitting on St Agnes consuming lunch, talking about our "little" adventures. By 3pm our craft was entering Hugh Town Harbour.

Time allowed us a short stop at Ken's, just sufficient to clear our room, down a cup of tea and thank Connie, his wife for feeding and looking after two salty mainland canoeists.

The Journey Home

Handshakes and goodbyes on the quayside, it had been a good trip. As usual the three of us had got on well.

At the ships rail we waved to Ken a lone canoeist amongst the throng of tourists. The ferry slipped slowly into the Road, familiar landmarks passed by. In two and a half hours time we would be tying up at Penzances: it seemed a life time away. For the moment I would savour the atmosphere, very different way of Island life and remember the last enjoyable 48 hours.

Thanks

Thanks and appreciation must go to four groups of people/persons: All at Kirton Kayaks, for their help over this last successful touring/racing season. Strand (Scott Bader) Plymouth, George in particular. Ken and Connie Hamlin, Ken for keeping up with the two racing snakes and Connie for feeding and looking after us so well. Finally my wife, Michelle for putting up with the many standby dates of this summer and my air of despondency after the dates became non-events!

Nigel Hingston.

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If there's one thing I hate, it's women's only trips. If there's a hen party I'm the one who goes to the stag do. Another thing I'm not particularly keen on are Communist countries, even ex-Communist countries. So what on earth was I doing driving a sparkling new bright red mini-bus off to pick up four friends for a women's only canoeing trip to Czechoslovakia? This thought surged to the forefront of my mind as within 3 miles of picking up the bright red mini-bus, I had crashed it.

"Never mind," I thought as I reversed out of the wall that had crumbled in pieces under the full onslaught of my misdirected steering. "Perhaps we won't have to go." No such luck. The remains of the bumper was sawn off, new headlights fitted, the near side wheel straightened and, provided we didn't turn sharply to the right, the mini-bus was as good as new. Or nearly.

Bag Ladies

Having been strictly limited in the number of bags we were all supposed to bring, it was a miracle the mini-bus doors closed, once the packing was finished. Obviously we all had the same thoughts, carrier bags full of whatever didn't fit into our cases didn't count. Also we had been strictly coached in what to take with us. Food is scarce in Czechoslovakia and queuing commonplace; jeans and western clothing are highly sought after, aspirins are unobtainable, and they are desperate for sterling. So we took 2 weeks supply of food, wedges of sterling, every conceivable kind of drug, bandage, first aid appliance and approximately 1000 years supply of aspirins to trade on the black market, together with a massive pile of jeans stuffed into a large dust-bin liner. Not to mention three spare paddles each - just to be sure.

The journey to Prague - where we arrived 2 days later - was fairly uneventful, except the mini-bus had to be pushed off the ferry because it would not start and the roofrack fell off. I was dead chuffed (and if you look up the dictionary meaning of chuffed you'll understand why) when we found a lovely small campsite in Germany the first night called Feuchtwankan.

Fined !

Prague turned out to be a delightful city. We were camped on the edge of the river Vltava on the outskirts of the city. If it hadn't been for the railway line, the motorway and the proximity of the other campers it would have been idyllic. As it was, we inured ourselves to the fact that we were in the centre of an urban conurbation and set about discovering Czechoslovakia and other canoeists. Anne had made contact with members of the Branik Canoe Club before our departure and we made our way down to their artificial slalom course, not far from the campsite. Whilst driving there we were confronted by a policeman waving a red lollipop. Anne was driving and somehow understood she had contravened some obscure traffic law and we were being given an on-the-spot fine of 20 crowner. "Tell him we refuse to pay and



The adventure begins.....

Credit: Marianne Spender

MISSES AD IN CZECHOSL

we're tourists and we haven't any money," said Caroline from the back of the bus, "He's ruining international relationships between Britain and Czechoslovakia and the tourist trade will flounder if he persists in his attitude. "For goodness sake," Anne interjected, "Get out the kitty and pay up". "I flatly refuse to pay" repeated Caroline. "Its not our fault the signs are in a foreign language". "Quick" Anne said, "Pay the dratted money before we get arrested - don't you realise he's only asking for 40p...?".

And so, 40p the poorer we arrived at the artificial slalom course. At first sight this was merely a dead straight channel diverted from the main river, with a few tyres placed at the edges to make breakouts, and loads and loads of slalom poles placed everywhere a non-slalom paddler wants to put their head. However, once into our boats we soon

discovered this was not quite so straightforward as it looked. The slalom poles were there all right. But so too was the current and if you missed the first breakout, or maybe didn't quite make the second and didn't really want the third then the current took you full pelt and the stoppers, standing waves, holes, poles and tyres rushed out to grab you. Rather like free wheeling down a steep mountainside on a bicycle. The only good thing about it was, as Suzanne so succinctly pointed out, was that you went faster than the sausage-shaped brown things sharing the water with us... The smell of the river had forewarned us to be on the look out for things in the water.

The canoe club in Prague made us very welcome. At least I think they did. Christine, Suzanne and I were given a free trip down the slalom course in their raft. The reason

it was free was because you couldn't have paid anyone else to go in it. Within seconds we were stuck in a stopper, not only stuck but sinking and struggling. Such fun! The only compensation I afterwards discovered, was that Christine at the back of the sinking and doomed craft, had worked out an escape route, however it didn't apparently include Suzanne and myself as it involved leaping over our shoulders and hurling herself to the side, pivoting off our bodies.

After a days sight-seeing in Prague we set forth in search of the renowned white water rivers to the east of Czechoslovakia in the Tatra Mountains. Anne had gleaned as much information as possible from the other canoeists, but none of us had a clue what to expect. The roads, we had been told, were terrible. The roads, it turned out were straight, smooth, empty and wonderful, and there was so little traffic they didn't even have any roundabouts.

By this time, we had also discovered the wonders of pivo. Pivo is Czechoslovakian for beer and not only did it cost 16p per half litre, but it was 12% alcohol. Pilsen beer comes from the town of Pilsen in West Czechoslovakia and Budweiser also originated in Czechoslovakia prior to some foreigners from America getting hold of it, and since it is pronounced 'peevo' it is also probably the derivative of something else as well.

Fir Cones ?

We didn't arrive at our camp site, set in the middle of a dense, dark forest, until well after dark. Caroline, as usual was the last to emerge from her tent in the morning and looked around and exclaimed, "Fir cones".



Credit: Marianne Spender / Anne Palmer

A couple of scenes in Czechoslovakia

VENTURES OVAKIA

Very obvious. "Thank goodness." We all looked at the fir cones liberally scattered round the campsite wondering what was wrong with them. "Actually," she expanded, "Last night when I went off to the loos, I had great difficulty knowing where to put my feet in the dark, as I couldn't really see what these funny oblong shapes were, and there seemed to be rather a lot of them outside the toilets..."

Caroline and Suzanne set off to collect some water and explore the noisy mountain stream. They were back within seconds. "You won't believe what we've just seen" exclaimed Suzanne. "A real live wolf - it was just over there by the stream." "I refuse to go paddling" said Caroline, "I'm terrified of wolves, I hate animals and I'll get attacked. I'm staying at home."

"You're just as likely to encounter one

here in the campsite as on the water," Anne said "You'll just have to paddle fast and make sure you don't swim." Something every canoe instructor has been telling me for years, I thought. "Well, I'm definitely not going to portage anything, and I refuse to change on the bank, and you've got to look after me." Caroline insisted - Caroline who climbs mountains, paddles anything and yet was afraid of wolves.

Wolves

Our first Czechoslovakian river trip was a real adventure. We chose the river Bela which, when we tried to inspect it, was densely hidden by undergrowth and trees with no roads and tracks but we were reliably informed (or so we thought) there was nothing dangerous. It turned out to be a rocky river, in need of more water which

would have made it into a very lively Grade 4, as it was, it was probably Grade 3ish. Caroline, notwithstanding the wolves, led with Anne following and the rest of us behind. The main problem we encountered was a low-lying mist floating up from the river which made it impossible to see downstream when looking into the sun, a phenomena the two leaders took some time to appreciate after waving paddles frantically for us to follow. There was something very strange about paddling

the Bela. There was absolutely no question of us being the first people to paddle it. But we might have been the first people this year, or maybe someone had paddled it yesterday. We didn't know. It gave us an odd feeling. As almost as odd a feeling as the sight of the first fallen tree blocking our way. The portage wasn't particularly difficult except the undergrowth was dense and nearly reached our waists. I wondered if anyone had brought any anti-snake bite stuff with them, but quickly shoved it out of my mind. There can't be snakes in Czechoslovakia, someone would have warned us. Progress was slow, the river was comparatively long and the river bed particularly bumpy but we got out at our destination without any mishaps and were congratulating ourselves on our first successful river trip when Anne casually remarked

Continued on page 22

"Oh look, there are some wolves going by". "Ha! Ha!" we said in unison, "You can't fool us -". "EEEEEEEEEEEEEEK!" shrieked Caroline, "There are wolves". Oh my God, I thought, she isn't joking. Nor was she as three rather large Alsation-type wolves galloped by, and disappeared into the undergrowth. Oh well, we'll take Caroline to the artificial slalom course at Liptovsky Mikulas tomorrow, there can't be wolves there and then she'll probably forget about them.

The slalom course was fun. Once again, at first sight it wasn't very prepossessing and was merely a diversion from the main, wide flat river. But in this case it had two parallel channels, one harder than the other which merged together in the middle. We had fun paddling the slalom course, it was entertaining and testing, longer than Holme Pierrepont and more natural.

We decided to settle on doing the river Cierny Vah which was nearby and which we could see from the road in places. We were told this was a Grade 3 - 4 river with a steep gorge section. We found the gorge, only we couldn't get near it to have a look at the river and so, taking heed of Anne's husband's warning that, under no circumstances, were we to paddle anything at all without reeking it first - we set off, boats piled high with rock climbing equipment, carabineers, and crampons in case we had to climb out. This river was a real education. Round the first bend, guess what we found. A tree across the river. Out came the boats and round the tree we trekked. And then, round the next bend and - gosh another tree. And so out came the boats and round the tree we trekked and then, round the next bend - yes, another tree. Only this time the boats stayed in the water and we jumped over it and the next tree we climbed under. The next tree we shoved through and the next one we took a run at and ski-jumped over. The water was flat, with a steady current. "The river has got to descend at some point," Caroline said. "We're coming up to the gorge section and there must be some rapids or something". There was. More trees across the river, but the river never descended, there were no rapids and the Grade 3 - 4 bits had obviously evaporated. The scenery was nice though. Very rural with animal tracks coming down through the trees to watering places (don't tell Caroline) and our way was blocked at one point by a local farmer watering his horses and cart - or rather, probably only watering the horses, not the cart.

Half way through the night I was awoken. Not by water, nor a leaking tent. But by the sound of something around the campsite. There was a clatter of a saucepan, a few minutes later a clunk as something moved against the side of my tent. EEEK. What is this? A marauding Bohemian farmer nicking our Trangia's? I was too tired to investigate and went back to sleep. "For heaven's sake, don't tell Caroline" were the words I was greeted with in the morning, "But you know the food we left out for breakfast, it's been eaten!" Gosh, I thought, poor starving Bohemian farmer.

"It was the wolf" Suzanne explained in rushed whispers "There's blood all over the saucepan and the tins are all over the campsite where it's been trying to get into the remains". "Oh well," said Caroline, "I'm sorry to be leaving here, but at least I can say I've seen a real live wolf".

After half a day's travelling, our arrival at the Dunajek, between Poland and Czechoslovakia was dramatic. We had passed a large coach with a massive trailer full of canoes, so our hopes were high. We peered eagerly for our first sight of the river. "Look!" we cried "There are rafts, this has to be a great river" Or so we thought. Upon closer inspection we noted the rafters were not wearing buoyancy aids or helmets, nor were they helping steer the rafts but were decked out in their Sunday best and the raft guide, sitting at the back, was dressed in national costume and was happily strumming a guitar. The river was as flat as a pancake. Grade 5 indeed.

"There's nothing for it" Anne said. "There just doesn't seem to be any water anywhere. This isn't even worth taking the boats off the roof for. Let's just have a swim across the river to the other side, and let's set off for Austria where we know there's some water". We agreed. Christine and Suzanne opted to stay with the mini-bus whilst Anne, Caroline, and myself clambered into our wetsuits and cags and set off for Poland, wading knee high across the Grade 5 river.

It turned out to be a worth while trip for us. The village was like going into the middle ages. There were storks in the chimneys, old-fashioned wooden well heads outside the houses, geese, chicken, goats and cows wandered around the village green. Also, unbeknown to us, there were border guards with binoculars and machine guns staring across the river at the mini-bus and Christine and Suzanne, who were having forty million fits expecting us to be arrested and carted away, never to be seen again. The Poles we passed took not the slightest notice of us although I had a distinct feeling we must have looked like Martians strolling around the village in our garish wetsuits and cags, but we were left unmolested and unarrested by the Police, and cheerfully paddled back across to the Czechoslovakia side of the river.

Bag Ladies

Having made the decision to leave Czechoslovakia, we had a minor problem getting rid of our Czech Cronor. We decided to use up our money by treating ourselves to a meal out in the border town of Bratislava. Even Caroline's voracious appetite could only eat her way through four courses and 71p of food. We had a trip round the indoor market. This managed to rid us of approximately £2 each and included sunglasses and champagne glasses. There was nothing else for it. We retreated to a small roadside cafe and started loading up the mini-bus with crate upon crate upon crate of pivo until our supply of Cronor was used up. If it hadn't been for the dustbin liner full of jeans, we could prob-

ably have fitted in yet another crate (who was it who told us jeans were much sought after in Czechoslovakia?). Thus armed we regretfully headed for the border and left Czechoslovakia behind us. The country had been fun, although the Czech's hadn't been especially forthcoming, no one was unfriendly, just very wary of us. Everything was exceptionally cheap, although it was depressing to see the contrast between the Czech's and ourselves - none of the slalom canoeists had any decent gear or boats, there were very few lights on in the houses after dark because they couldn't afford the electricity and few cars were on the roads because the cost of petrol was prohibitive.

Austria should really be chapter two in our efforts to prove we could do without the fellas and pioneer a womens' only trip into territory unknown. Obviously Austria wasn't territory unknown and as for trying to do without the fellas, well, we had a distinct disadvantage. Our arrival at the campsite in Landeck caused a little ruffle and must have gone something like this. "Hey fellas, guess what! You see that bright red minibus -" Sorry, try again. "You see that tatty ole red mini-bus with the bashed in front. Not only is it full of birds but it's stuffed to the roof with - BEEER!"

And so, our final day arrived and we started packing, leaving the empty pivo crates behind as seats. We were pleased with ourselves. We had achieved what we set out to do - or sort of - in that we had planned and executed a trip canoeing with women on our own, and had enjoyed ourselves. The fact that we weren't exactly on our own in Austria, and there hadn't been any water in Czechoslovakia, was neither here nor there. Nor was the fact that, upon checking our return tickets before leaving the campsite, I realised we were a day late and should have left Austria yesterday in order to catch our ferry booking... but then that's just good planning and another story!

Marianne Spender

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank Suzy who provided us with throw-lines and supported us in the preparation of the trip. Also Anne's husband Tim Palmer, and Graham Wardle both of whom coached us endlessly and probably despairingly, and finally our thanks to Chris Hawkesworth (of Mont-Bell) without whom we would not have travelled thousands of kilometres with a dustbin liner full of jeans and 1000 years supply of aspirins.

THE MEMBERS OF THE TRIP WERE:

Anne Palmer the leader (and whose idea it was) who is a full-time primary teacher. Caroline Tombs: Ex-Editor of Canoe Focus, who is now working part-time for Leicester City Council as a canoe instructor and raft guide. Suzanne Moore: An Architectural Technician and part-time youth worker. Christine Lawlor: who works for Sheffield Education Department and is a Manager of a residential centre. Marianne Spender, who is a landlady, but not a pub...

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ORGANISED CHAOS

AT THE MIKE JONES RALLY

Warden gorge, awesome stopper, ten foot waves, black holes, repeat fifty times : would I ever sleep? I lay in our B & B bedroom having nightmares about tomorrow's paddle. It was made worse by our club chairman tossing about the bed making whooping noises like a sinking destroyer in the gulf war. The club had descended at Hexham at all hours of the day and night over Friday and Saturday morning. Our chairman using all his unmanagerial skills as befits a doyen of British industry had arranged for everyone to meet in Sainsburys' car park on Saturday morning.

Chris, Alan and Andy arrived Friday and rock-hopped the Allen. Unbelievably Alan got pinned in two inches of water on the natural weir and had to be rescued by Andy who swears fish were jumping over his boat in the stopper (piranhas he reckons). At the end of the run Chris had to walk back up over to get their car. Ha Ha; the foot path disappeared into the river, into the weir and into the woods, he wandered the woods for two hours in the dark and emerged a gibbering wreck, claiming there were ghoulies after him.

Traffic Warden

Johnny, Chris and Debbie travelling late Friday night in torrential rain, it was sheeting down (Geordie), arrived dejected with a smashed end to Johnny's car. He tried to ferry glide a bend on the A68 and attempted a rock splat on a bridge.

Cas and Rhoda left early Saturday morning and parked up in Hexham market place for Cas to fill his gut with buoyancy. When he came out the cafe a traffic warden gave him a £16 ticket. Not a bad price for breakfast. Trying to talk his way out of the fine using all his manly charm, Cas noticed the warden was not looking at him, but staring at the rear window of his car. He only had an effigy of a traffic warden hanging by its neck in his window. QED.

So to the North Tyne at Chollerford on Saturday morning; where was everyone? The chairman and I sat in Safeways' car park, wet suits on raring to go. Picture the scene, 20 odd club members hanging around Hexham popping in shops, pubs, garages toilets, stopping policeman, rally organisers. "Can you tell me where Sainsburys' car park is please".

There is no Sainburys' in Hexham. Like a panto audience they replied "Oh yes



Lisa Rae surfs the Warden Gorge waves

there is", we have a written instruction from our chairman. Some idiots even went into Safeways' to ask. At last it dawned; had he cocked it up? Did he mean Safeways? What a plonker.

In the river at last we shoot the weir at Chollerford, no problem except last man down, me. Wrong line, ended up in the trees. Luckily I had my pruning saw and soon cut a way out. A steady paddle followed with lots of jokes, splashing and chants of England, Australia etc. The morning was fine and cold, the scenery magnificent. The only problem to disrupt the peace was the nightmare, the Warden Gorge (its OK for you experts). We came to a rough bit of water with 20ft waves and 10ft holes. (Editors note: These must be Southern measures. As a Geordie who was there, these waves were no more than a Northern 2 metres ripple) I shut my eyes and cried Geronimo. At one point I opened one eye and saw Johnny 10ft above me on top of a wall.

I screamed obscenities at him and he disappeared as if by magic. The water eased and after a little surfing we arrived at the confluence with the South Tyne. Paddlers coming down the south Tyne came over and asked me what the gorge was like. What

gorge, I said, we haven't got there yet. Great hilarity from my fellow fools. The nightmare had passed and I hadn't realised. Time for a celebration roll.

Time for a jar or three in the Wheatsheaf in Corbridge and story time, or was it the Barley Corn in Hexham. Ask the Chairman. Stories of the day and night abound. Pete forgot the keys to his trailer tent and despite a friendly camp site boss giving him a bucketful of old keys, he had to chisel the locks off to get at his bed and claim his conjugal rights (wishful thinking). Following resuscitation from cider drowning Pete and Cas entertained the campsite to Cossack dancing before falling over and sleeping in the grass, so much for his lost keys.

Pirouetting

Sunday soon dawned and after the rain it was the Allen again, a much different river to Friday.

The sun shone on the righteous or should it be riotous and the scenery was never more stunning, the brown and orange leaves falling gently into the sparkling waters. Ah!

With Debbie insisting on getting out and surveying every rock, log, and bend the main obstacle of the natural weir arrived. Everyone out, huddled on the bank checking the tow back. Chairman Bob was asked

to jump in to see how strong the stopper was, he declined muttering he had a wife and four kids somewhere in East Leake! I wonder if there's a Sainsbury's in East Leake?

By a unanimous decision, made by Johnny, it was shoot the weir or you buy the beer. Pirouetting at the top in his typical show off style he punched through the middle with no problem. All went well until Debbie, trying to emulate Jan Kelner in the Bitches, came down backwards, lost her paddle and proceeded to initiate the nodding dog in the back of Johnny's car. Her exhibition of land rolling was superb, but with her back to the bank her cries of help, throw a bloody line (or something like that) went unheeded. Eventually the bank crew got bored watching the handrolling exhibition and threw a line. This resulted in a competition to see who could win by the greatest distance or reach the highest tree branch.

Eventually some clever soul won and Debbie was rescued with a bleeding finger the only mishap of the weekend. The only problem now was to extricate Bob from the clutches of the eddy beyond the stopper. He had sat there happily going round and round for ten minutes or more with nobody taking a blind bit of notice of his screams. At last someone noticed his hallucinations due to dizziness, he was pulled to the bank, out of his boat given a brandy and put back in calm water to drift down to Plankey Mill. So ended a marvellous weekend and many thanks to the organisers.

Carl Hind Draycott Canoe Club



Kirsty Wigglesworth, Winner of the bath race



Victim of suspected dislocated knee after capsiz

Credit: Richard Marpole

THOUSANDS STAY AWAY

More than 10,000 canoeists stayed away from the Mike Jones Rally this year as on 13 previous occasions. The clever plot to move the Rally to Hexham somewhere North of Wetherby, was unveiled at the previous 12.5 Mike Jones Rally. Some of the underlying questions about this move are here suggested.

- 1) Was it an attempt to encourage paddlers to negotiate rapids on the left instead of the right side of rivers? Yes, there was too much of it on the Dee and it was thought that the other side of the body needed exercise too.
- 2) Would Ted from the Bridge End at Llangollen move to Hexham as was hinted? No, he didn't, but he would like to see the Rally back in Llangollen again sometime in the future.
- 3) Was the reason for choosing the wider Tyne Rivers an attempt to bolster the sales of the already flagging long range green slime throw bags? Emphatically denied.
- 4) Would the faithful guests of the Llangollen school bike sheds be able to find suitable alternative bike sheds for over nighting in Hexham? Yes, they would, they were even sign posted!
- 5) Was it ALSO possible to drink a Northern pub dry as had been done on countless occasions at the Llangollen Rallies? No, not this time.
- 6) Could the average paddler survive a weekend in the North without a phrase book or interpreter? Yes, in fact there was a very warm welcome from the local inhabitants, many friendships begun and even impromptu quizzes, locals versus the visitors.
- 7) Would the rivers around Hexham offer as much sport or as much excitement as the Dee? Yes, the South Tyne was similar to the upper sections of the Dee, the North Tyne had large playwaves in the Warden Gorge, the River Allen was a very popular, technical excursion and the Tees was at its unrivalled best.
- 8) Would the taps be turned on that weekend? Yes!
- 9) Was it possible that Hexham would attract as many followers as the previous Mike Jones Rallies had been known to? Yes, estimated around 1200 paddlers and a total of about 2000 people attending.
- 10) Would paddlers miss read the information and still turn up at Llangollen? Yes, there were

reports of canoes on vehicles in Llangollen and the odd tentative enquiry for bed and breakfast?

11) Was it possible to increase interest in other disciplines by racing Dragon boats at Tyne Green? Yes, though sadly the river at Tyne Green was running too swiftly for the boats to be put on the water and the challenge from Mr Midwood senior and crew to Reg Jones and crew had to be shelved - maybe next year?

12) Would an evening lecture by Nolan Whitesell on big American white water in an open canadian boat, be of any interest to the European Paddler? Yes, despite initial problems with the acoustics of the large hall, many found the lecture very interesting and situations for paddling open canadians in big water enlightening to the somewhat bizarre, our visitors from formerly East Germany, Austria and Germany thought so too!

13) Might Kirsty Wigglesworth veteran competitor of the silly races, end up on stage again at prize giving on Saturday evening? Of course she would, even if she hadn't entered.

14) Was it possible that a Ceilidh for over 600 people could be held in a local leisure centre with everyone enjoying themselves? Very much so, a great success.

15) Was the rumour true, that the Rally Committee is undergoing a spate of resignations and change? Yes it is, Jerry Tracey (local liaison) and Mike Watchorn (safety) joined the committee this year and put in a great deal of hard work to help the smooth running of the event, as did also the other committee members. Pete Knowles has decided after ten years on the committee and four years as Chairman to stand down to enable younger members to take on the responsibilities. There must be hundreds of thank you's owing to Pete for his enthusiasm, vision and untiring work over the years, many many thanks Pete, we're sorry to see you go.

16) Would local paddlers welcome the drastic increase in numbers on their rivers? Yes, more than that, local paddlers welcomed us with open arms and put in a fantastic response to the appeals for help with organising the event.

Many thanks to you also, the event was a total success as a result.

Pete Montgomery



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THE OTHER GAZZA

Gary Linton known to his friends as Gazza, (but not because of his soccer skills) one of Great Britain's longest serving polo players and captain of the A team, played his last International match in the final of the Scottish International where England A beat Scotland A to win the trophy for the third year in succession. Gary, an inspector with the Hampshire police and known by hundreds of polo players the world over has decided to retire from the International scene after captaining the GB and England A teams for the last 3 years. His vast experience however will not be lost but put to good use as a coach with the squad.

His playing career began some 21 years ago when as a young lad of 14 he joined Bere Forest Canoe Club. He soon became a proficient paddler in both slalom and polo and has played in the National Canoe Polo Championships every year since the early 1970's. He was founder member of the GB squad and has captained the A team to victory in 14 of the 22 Internationals played since. No other European team comes close to this fantastic achievement and the Canoe Polo Committee are grateful for the commitment and leadership he has shown and would like to thank both Gary and his wife Karen for their support over the years.

SCOTTISH INTERNATIONAL 30 NOVEMBER - 1 DECEMBER 1991

This the 9th Scottish International was once again extremely well organised by Brian Moore and the SCA. A total of 16 mens and ladies teams were present representing Scotland, England, Ireland, Belgium and Germany. After the ladies first round matches England A headed group 1 with Ireland. A second; England B headed group 2 with Scotland A second.

After the second round, leaders in the ladies competition were

Competition FOCUS

England B followed by England A Scotland A and Ireland A. The semi-final draw was to be England B v Ireland A and England A v Scotland A.

In the mens competition the top four teams were England A who were to play Belgium in the first semi-final and England B who would play Scotland A in the second.

Results in these semi-finals went as follows. In the ladies England B beat Ireland A 6-1 and England A beat Scotland A 5-2. Scotland went on to beat Ireland in the 3rd/4th play off. The ladies final would be England B (the 1990 holders) against England A.

The first of the mens semi-finals was an extremely close game with England A and Belgium finishing at 1 - 1 after extra time. The first Belgium player missed his penalty, the 9 other players all scored and England A were in to the final. In the second semi final England B took an early lead and were 2 - 1 up at half time. The Scots fought back however and not only equalised but took advantage of a poor corner to win the game 3-2. England B regained some of their pride by beating Belgium 1- 0 and taking a well deserved third place.

The ladies final was one of the best ladies games I have ever watched. With both English teams well matched the game exceeded expectations. The A team scored the first three goals, the B team pulled back to 3-2 before half time and 3-3 at full time. After the first period of extra time 4-4 was the score followed soon after by a score line of 5-5 as the game went into penalties. It was England B who eventually won with the scoreboard showing 9-7.

The mens final got off to a fast and furious start with end to end play, the deadlock being broken when Gary Linton made a long pass to Alan Vessey, Alan played a superb dummy followed by an angled shot into the top of the Scottish net. Alan scored again before half time with a lob shot over the keepers paddle. Scotland

scored their first and only goal after a mix up in the English defence which left Dave Fancourt stranded off his goal line. England responded with an interception near their line by Greg Smale who then paddled half the length of the pool and calmly placed the ball over the Scottish keepers blade and into the net. Paul Harrison sealed the game in the last five seconds with a cheeky over the shoulder shot after intercepting a Scottish goal throw. International canoe polo has certainly improved this year with less teams playing zone defence and more teams playing without goal keepers. The ladies game in particular has improved greatly thanks to the efforts of people like Dave Brown (National Ladies Coach) who should be congratulated on the standard of play his teams have reached this season.

It was a pleasure to compete in Scotland where all teams played fast exciting attacking polo which is both enjoyable to watch and play.

**Brian Barfoot
National Coach**

FINAL RESULT TABLE

| MEN | WOMEN |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1 England A | 1 England B |
| 2 Scotland A | 2 England A |
| 3 England B | 3 Scotland A |
| 4 Belgium | 4 Ireland A |
| 5 Ireland A | 5 Scotland B |
| 6 Germany | 6 Germany |
| 7 Scotland C | 7 Ireland B |
| 8 Scotland B | |
| 9 Ireland B | |

SLALOM

HELMETS APPROVED

The following helmets have met the requirements of testing procedures carried out by the DKV, BSI or Birmingham University, and may be used in UK slalom competitions.

Helmets not included on this list may not be used. A sample may, however, be submitted for assessment and, if successful, will be included. Send SAE to the BCU office for full details of the testing procedure and cost.

Ace/Palm AP 2000
Cooper
Protec
Romer (full range)
Rosebank Wild Water (full range)

Ace (full range) due to their significant numbers in use may continue to be used during 1992.

STAFFORD & STONE MINI SLALOM

The series continues with the last race on 23 February. In the event of bad weather the reserve date for any events cancelled in the series is 1 March. Contact Steve Parsonage on 0785 56233 for details.

MARATHON

NOT THE HUNGARIAN WAY

Paddling in the eastern block countries of Europe has never been all that difficult and what ever team was selected a result or two has always come up. But on a recent trip to Hungary things were a little different, but then the Hungarian's have always been difficult to beat, maybe that's why countless amounts of paddlers and trainers have spent time there trying to find the secret within the Hungarian team.

The race we took part in was a three day event taking us from Vienna in Austria paddling K4 to Bratislava in Cheq day one. Day two took us from Cheq to Hungary K2 and on day three K1 to Budapest all on the Danube River. If you have ever spoken to somebody or been there yourself the River Danube is almost undecipherable in terms of paddling a K1 down it or K4 come to that.

Indeed the first day of the race was cancelled because of fear of the K4s breaking-up and not due to the fact you

could or could not physically paddle which brings me back to the Hungarian paddlers.

I've never classed myself as a particularly fast canoeist but have always thought I have some ability of how to handle a boat even in rough water and I've paddled some rough conditions, for example Copenhagen Harbour is a Grand Prix Circuit race and there are quite a few British paddlers who would rather not race there. But even this is not a match to the river Danube on the start of the last day everybody paddled K1. Four British and many others, including the Hungarian team and a number of club paddlers. The start was downstream with about 10 knot flow finding your way through the transport barges and hydrofoils - it was that type of water with "now you see me, now you don't" type waves most canoeists wouldn't even take to the water and many would be British.

Using all the ability I thought I had, to try to get a place on the start line all the Hungarian paddlers seemed undisturbed at this. At this point I thought this lot don't even care, they can do all this stuff and paddle very fast and don't need a wash after 1000m because they are very strong and able to cope with this kind of paddling. I also learned that there are a lot of clubs all along the River Danube and they paddle on it all the time. Not only senior men but young lads right through to older men and women - it just didn't seem to present a problem at all.

So next time all the paddlers sit in the club house wondering whether it is too windy or rough to go paddling they should take the opportunity to improve on your ability to handle a K1. And let's face it you always blame a bad time trial or 1000 on the weather conditions, it's just your inability to handle the elements which are making you unstable and unable to pull hard.

Dyson Pendle

READING K4 MARATHON

It was not the warmest of days that heralded the K4 race which was being held at

Reading. The race was one of the series of four for which the venues were Royal, Nottingham, Reading and Woodmill. It is unusual to see K4s in any number on the water in a different location from Nottingham. K4s being relatively expensive items means that a lot of clubs are unlikely to have one amongst their stock of club boats let alone two which can be used in a race.

The K4 races were the ideal opportunity for members of clubs to participate and in many cases have their first go let alone race in one. At Reading the planned event had been for two starts but due to the popularity of the event it had to be changed to four! This did mean that the turn around for the boats had to be quick and there was an element of waiting involved. However that aside an enjoyable day was had.

The Men's A race over a distance of 10 miles (and a little bit!) saw an entry of 9 K4s. The competition was strong and despite the fact that several crews had not trained together the results were interesting. The first across the line was the Olympic Racing Squad and in hot pursuit were Nottingham and Reading having a battle for second place. Reading took third place which proved to be a pleasant surprise.

The Men's B race was divided up for the purpose of the prizes and as well as a Men's B winner a Veterans' prize was also given. The winners were Royal.

For once there was a considerable number of ladies out on the water. The start line had 9 K4's. For some it was the first time they had been in a K4 and because they were local to the club had come down to have a go. The race was won by Olympic Racing Squad. It was lovely to see so many of them out there so come lets get more women out so ladies only races can be developed further.

The junior event provided some smiles as the youngest K4 team of the day wobbled out just barely being able to see over the cockpits and although they were the last in by a long way this team of under 12's certainly seemed to have had the most fun. The junior event was won by

POINTS TABLE

| | |
|--------------|-------------|
| 1 Hereford | Points = 69 |
| 2 Royal | Points = 52 |
| 3 Elmbridge | Points = 51 |
| 4 Fladbury | Points = 46 |
| 5 Wey | Points = 38 |
| 6 Woodmill | Points = 36 |
| 7 ACU | Points = 32 |
| 7 Nottingham | Points = 32 |
| 9 ORS | Points = 27 |

Reading and Leighton Park who finished well in front of the next crew.

Paddling a K4 is an exhilarating experience and highly recommended for those who have not had a go so perhaps next time there is a K4 race or the Jeremy West Trophy finals it would be worth having a go.

The autumn K4 race series administered at Nottingham on 3 November, following events at Woodmill, Reading and Royal. Twenty-two crews raced at Nottingham, bringing the total to 119 crews over the 4 races. The series has proved so popular that it is to be repeated next autumn with the addition of a 5th event at Worcester.

The overall club points competition was won by Hereford Kayak club from 26 other clubs.

Hereford received the "Silver Galleon" trophy presented to the marathon committee for K4 team racing by Nottingham Kayak Club who originally won it as team champions in the 1990 Bella Descent in Spain.

NEWBURY CANOE CLUB

24th Waterside Series 1992

From late February next year Newbury Canoe Club will be running the 24th Waterside Series.

The series comprises 4 marathon canoe races held at fortnightly intervals over increasing distances. The 1991 Series attracted an entry of over 1000 paddlers over the 4 weekends and we are hoping that next year's series proves as popular. The 4 races are an ideal build up to the famous Devizes to Westminster race which, as you probably know, is held on Good Friday of each year. Newbury Canoe Club medals are awarded after each race but those paddlers who have completed all 4 races of the series also qualify for the highly prestigious end of series trophies and shields.

Details of the race dates and distances are as follows:

Race A Sunday 23 Feb
Great Bedwyn to Newbury
13.5 miles

Race B Sunday 8 Mar
Newbury Circuit 17.5 miles

Race C Sunday 22 Mar
Pewsey to Newbury 23 miles

Race D Sunday 5 Apr
Devizes to Newbury 34 miles

If you would like further details and an entry form please write enclosing a large stamped addressed envelope to: The Race Organiser, Newbury Canoe Club, The Studio, Newbury Wharf, Newbury, Berks, RG14 5AS.

TRANS-PENNINE CANOE MARATHON

A race on a par with Devizes to Westminster. The 30 May 1992 sees the start of the 9th Trans-Pennine Canoe Marathon. Starting at Leeds Basin, the event will be competed over 114 miles of the Leeds to Liverpool Canal to finish at Haghull on the outskirts of Liverpool.

The Leeds to Liverpool Canal passes through some of the most beautiful of northern countryside. Rising from the urban sprawl of Leeds, the waterways climbs high over the superb hills and valleys of the south Yorkshire Dales, right across the top of the Pennines, to descend down into the industrial heart of Liverpool's dockland.

Along the route there are great sections to portage, not the relief-giving spaced locks of the Kennet, but great flights of locks crammed together. A superb flight at Bingley. Five rises altogether - a flight over a hundred feet high and an angle to climb of 60 degrees. Other gentler six and seven-lock flights, but over the top and the descent towards Liverpool there is the massive Wigan flight! All downhill, but 23 locks in just 2 and a quarter miles. A 7 lock flight at Nelson, 6 lock at Blackburn, another 7 locks at Chorley, plus two tunnels - one over a mile long - make the Trans-Pennine Canoe Marathon an event to tax even the most hardened ultra-marathon paddler and presents a challenge on a par with that of the Devizes to Westminster event. Entry forms and race details are available from: Trans-Pennine Canoe Marathon, Merseyside Youth Challenge Trust, Allerton Tower Outdoor Activities Centre, Kenlove Avenue, Liverpool L25 7UL.

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BOOKS

World and Continental Championships

1933-1988 Poster Book ICF

Price £14.95 (Members) from BCU supplies

The International Canoe Federation have produced this compendium of most of the posters produced for Canoe and Kayak world championships. The cover on my review copy is very bland, almost in the style of a 'Fly Fishing by J R Hartley': very 1950's, which is a shame because the material on the inside is well worth a look. I have always been a bit of a poster buff (so what, some people go train spotting!) and I was fascinated by the variety of creative styles and imaginative flair portrayed here. It is amazing how many of these original images and symbols have cropped up elsewhere in the canoe world. Basically an ICF archival publication it will be appreciated by anyone who likes graphic design and those like me who have struggled for ideas for Club logos and Newsletter covers. Andre Vanderput, who compiled the work is to be congratulated. Quality print, quality paper, quality material: shame about the cover.

Reviewed by Kevin Danforth.

Handbook for Women Travellers

by Maggie and Gemma Moss

Published by Piatkus. Price £6.95

This book aims to give practical information to the female traveller operating outside the world of the organised package tour. These can be dangerous times to travel, and a book like this is unfortunately, necessary. Anecdotes from women travellers highlight the underlying message of the book: trav-

Reviews

el safely and sensitively. Try to fit in with local customs, cultures and dress codes and you will be rewarded with a trouble free trip. Travelling solo and in company is included in some detail., setting out advantages and disadvantages. The chapter on practicalities is essential reading. Paperwork (money, visas etc) can be shrouded in red tape, but this section covers most of the questions that arise. I enjoyed (if that is the correct word?) the humorous and fascinating section on the toilet habits of the rest of the world, essential reading if you do not wish to offend the locals.

As the mother of a three year old I welcomed the advice on travelling with children, along with pregnancy, health care and sexual harassment. There is an enlightening section on the fictitious husband ploy, a tried and tested anti-harassment technique. Some women in canoeing must already feel they have fictitious husbands, the amount of time they are off canoeing! This book is essential reading for women, and some men would find help and advice. Pack it in your kayak or rucksack, and don't leave home without it.

Reviewed by Jane Danforth.

VIDEOS

Gorilla

Price £14.99 (members) from BCU Supplies.

The Upper Green is North Carolina river of Awesome reputation in the USA and this video by Terry Sheils certainly shows some fine steep water. Unlike many upland British rivers this is tight gorge stuff and high volume white water. A case of not only but also!

The style of paddling across the water and equipment used is interesting and shows a marked contrast to the European ethic of harness, short boats and faceguards. The 'hair'

boaters in this footage show quality white water boating in a rural setting. (How much did you say that plane ticket was?) The class act amongst this crew is not the wee girl with the scrappy roll (no exit allowed) but the team's disposable probe: the C1 paddler. His support strokes and antics had me wincing, bracing, and hyperventilating in my living room. They must have been working on the principle of 'send him down with one blade: if he copes, we can manage with two blades. The probe is very game however, and sticks his face in some hairy places. The Green was the site of Slim Ray's unfortunate accident (see Noticeboard) so this river is one to be taken seriously. Proceed with caution.

The Green on this occasion was run by a mixed bunch of boaters including Rob McDonough (who visited Britain last year for the Rodeo World Championships) with the common bond of enjoying the water. Rob was also responsible for some of the camera work. I found it refreshing to see that no paddler used exactly the same type of kit as the others, showing individuality and flair, unlike the Motorbike helmet/Spud clones we see on the Etive or Fairy Glen.

Typical American commentary and interviews: The second time I watched it I turned the sound off and put some good music on the Walkman. Overall the video comes across as first rate home movie: a bunch of mates out for a paddle. The river is the real star, not the paddlers, and that for me is the strength of the video. My only criticism is that it is short, but so sweet.

Niagara

Price £14.99 (members) from BCU Supplies.

Nolan Whitesell is noted for being the catalyst to the Rollin' Open Boatin' fashion fast gaining followers over here. Nolan's adventure in this video features

himself and Canadian canoe tackling Niagara Gorge (No...not that bit... the section after the bit where Superman rescues the little boy)

The water sure is big but our man Nolan is up to it, although he does look a trifle excited at times. This all sounds trite All American macho hero cliché, but there is no inflated ego here. The guy is just having fun. Serious fun, and very watchable. Nolan does the commentary himself and is easy listening. Those who met him at Hexham at the Mike Jones rally will know that he is a nice guy with sound views on the way Open Boating is going. Hell, if this was a Western, Nolan would definitely be wearing the white stetson.

The music almost caught me out here, but delving into my long distance driving tape collection I remembered the soundtrack. 'The Pump' by Jeff Beck. Great guitar music for some great paddling. If you think you have seen holes and wave trains take a look at these. At one point Nolan's scale looked unreal: was this one of those bad animation/model sequences from a low budget movie? No. The water really is enormous.

The biggest hole swallows him and must be the one Nolan talks about at the beginning of the video: the hole the river gods keep for punishing video pirates. You have been warned. Whitesell must not be a pirate as he blurts out of the back of the haystack a much relieved man.

Nolan has his mate run part of the gorge too, in a squirt boat. This is the best scrap I've seen since Tyson was last in the ring. The rest of the video shows Whitesell running the North Fork of the Payat in Idaho, heavy water and technical with it. There is some delightful moments of Nolan surfing and the cutest open boat hand roll. The interview is worth listening to. 'Paddlers should be limited only by their own ability, not the equipment they are using' I look forward to more from Whitesell, as promised.

Essential viewing.

PS Liked the T shirt 'Niagara-Boats, Barrels and a few Weirdos!

Reviewed by Kevin Danforth.

Jersey Canoe Club

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177 Quennevais Park, St. Brelade,
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Paddlers GEAR



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DAGGER CROSSFIRE

I first came across the Dagger's Crossfire at the World Rodeo Championships in July 1991. The boat's co-designer, Chris Spelius had brought a prototype down but a lack of time meant we were unable to put the boat through it to test. A week later I took the Crossfire to Augsburg for the AKC Rodeo and started to get the feel of this new playboat.

The Crossfire has got well-defined rails that feel good carving into eddies and a high volume upturned nose that



keeps the boat on course through stoppers and haystacks. Whilst looping and pronating, the

Crossfire initially felt strange compared to the predictable performance of an Aeroquatic; it didn't take long to acclimatise and I soon felt very comfortable.

A couple of days later I was paddling in Austria with a white water group from Twr-y-Felin; many people tried the boat during the week and all liked its performance. For a boat that's slightly lower volume than many of its counterparts (10% less than the Dagger Response), it performed beautifully in big water with positive acceleration through stoppers that would slow down or stop many other kayakers. Carving into powerful eddies was getting to be really enjoyable.

I got to grips with the Crossfire's stopper riding ability on my home ground of the Bitches and loved it. The boat was very controllable, hand surfed well and back surfed better than anything else I've paddled. When the autumn swells picked up, the Crossfire was put through its paces at Whitesands in a range of surf conditions from 2-6 feet where the kayak was nippy to paddle and caught waves easily. Once on the face of a wave, the low volume backend really comes into play: the boat edges well and turns surprisingly quickly for a craft of its length. Cut backs were a delight!

The Crossfire is light to carry at 16.8kg and is well fitted. The

seat is comfortable with well positioned foam knee braces the low back deck took the pain out of rolling and popping and a back rest is easily fitted. There are five strong gear loops well placed in the cockpit - a 15m throw line fits very securely in front of the seat. Broach loops are fitted in front of and behind the cockpit and are both easily reached when sitting. The end grabs are made of looped tape and seemed comfortable to use.

Overall, this new kayak is very much at home on white water and will prove popular with rodeo, river and surf paddlers. Try one out before you buy your next play boat.

Available from Mobile Adventure, Leicester. £408.88. Full plate footrest available at extra cost.

Andy Middleton

CROAKIES

No, not frogs: little gizmos for keeping your spectacles on in the watery environment. What is a gizmo? A gizmo is a British word for a gadget or good idea, usually cheap and simple. Croakie comes from the Colorado ski guides in the Rockies who used a neoprene band to secure those 'Joe Cool' firmly on the face for Milk tray commercials. A simple cheap idea that works well, these commercially produced neoprene whatnots are available in a huge range of designs patterns and colours. Just think of the number of times we have fiddled about with bits of string to do the same job!

There is now an add-on to the Croakie. What do you need if you drop your specs and croakie in the water? A croakie floater which is a simple neoprene float for the croakie. Aren't simple ideas the best.

Available from Specialist Optical Services, Gerrards Cross, Bucks SL9 7LJ.

VALLEY

Geoff Blackford, now retired in Hampshire, spent part of his canoeing career at Plas y Brenin, and the at Calshot, but he is probably best known for his work on the Anas Acuta back in the late sixties. This classic Eskimo kayak has been manufactured by Valley Canoe Products

Continued on page 34

NOOKIE EXTREME DRY TOP



Most dry cags for canoeing these days are starting to follow sensible design patterns. This well made offering from Nookie is no exception: generous cut under the arms, and a good double waist tube which is designed to dovetail with single tube and sandwich decks. Much like the Palm drysuit (Focus 74) the latex wrist seal have a tough Neoprene overcuff, a combination which works really well and extends the life of the seals. This cag is popular already with the surfers and has a range of options including Mens and Ladies sizings. Fabric choices are: Neoprene-Nylon, Breathable Taslan and Breathable twill. Described as a 'happening' garment (whatever that is), the best feature for me is the waist band shockcord and cordlock combination. I remember surfing in my first dry cag and a jet of salt water shot up my deck and up the waistband of the cag. The wrist and neck seals held the water in beautifully! I am glad things are progressing.

Available from Nookie, Clearbrook, Yelverton, Devon. PL20 6JD

of Nottingham ever since then. After the success of the Anas Acuta, Geoff went on to design a 'junior' version which he called the Anas Acuta Chick. This boat was in response to his own offspring, who were too small to paddle a full size Anas. The boat is small enough to take youngsters up to 90lbs. in weight. It doesn't have hatches, although it can be fitted with deck-lines and R.D. fittings etc.

Geoff is keen on V.C.P. making a few Chicks for this junior market, but the snag is that there is a fair amount of work to do on the mould to bring it up to a saleable quality. In fact, a new plug needs to be made and then a brand new mould taken off for production.

In the present economic climate it is not easy whether this would be worthwhile, as the outlay would appear to outstrip any income. However, Valley are prepared to go ahead if there is any chance of breaking even. The question is, how many Anas Acuta Chicks could be definitely sold? The basic boat would cost £350.00 without V.A.T. Deck-fittings etc. at normal

NOOKIE CUSTOM BLADES

Nookie are now producing custom slalom paddles with a pattern incorporated in the layup as the photograph shows. Paddles can be made to customers requirements on supply of cotton, or polycotton fabric which should be close weave. There are two lay-ups, standard and extreme and they are available in any length and feather. **Details from Nookie on 0822 855400.**



V.C.P. rates would be extras. **NOW'S YOUR CHANCE!!!**

Anyone who would really like to buy a Chick for their children, should send a deposit of £100 to Valley, with a request giving details. Valley will send you a receipt for the money, and if, when the offer closes at the Crystal Palace Exhibition in February '92 they have had a reasonable response, they'll go ahead with the new plug. If the response is not viable, they'll return the deposit.

PEAK WINTER WEAR

Peak Performance have used their race and design experience to produce a range of winter paddling wear. This range comprises of dry cags and neoprene wear.

Breathable dry and semi-dry cags. Both these garments feature high performance, competition styling which in turn gives unrestricted paddling movement. The garments are manufactured from 'MILAIR' breathable fabric,



all seams are tape welded throughout, all latex seams are both sewn and taped, plus with a wide super soft smoothskin neoprene waist band which is carefully sized as to provide minimum water entry.

The semi Dry cag is based upon Dry cag but with a neoprene neck replacing the latex one. This garment gives the comfort of a high performance race cag but due to its latex wrist cuffs offers increased dryness on those arm submerged paddle strokes. These features make it perform excellently in white water competition and also in instruction and touring.

Standard colours are combinations of Jade and Black and the dry cag costs £63.95 and the semi-dry £53.95.

Peak are also producing neoprene shorts and trousers manufactured from 3mm high stretch Japanese neoprene. The waist is cut high at the back and low at the front for comfort and warmth in the sitting position. Both are available in smooth or double lined neoprene with two colour flash on the leg.

Shorts are £22.95 and trousers are £44.95.

JERIK SPEEDWIND SPORTS GLASSES

Paddlers use sunglasses more and more these days for a number of reasons. Grinning brats use them for pose value in rodeos and stopper riding near impressionable young ladies. When paddling in bright sunshine on the sea it is lunacy not to wear some thing to block out the sun. Despite the abuse received from fellow paddlers I have worn them in the Alps for the last few years because I can read the water easier through UV filter and, like most fairskinned folk, suffer from sun induced headaches.

Skiers and Mountain Bikers have influenced a new breed of 'sports glasses' and the wrap around style is really good for blocking out the unwanted rays.

The Jerik speedwind is a high tech model with an alloy frame, and Polycarbonate, non-scratch lenses. The lenses are interchangeable and allowing replacement and variety of lens tints. Full UV block is standard.

An unusual feature is the extendible arms which open out to 180 degrees enabling the wearer to put them on over his helmet!

I found the glasses comfortable and unobtrusive in that they did not interfere with peripheral vision during activity. They were best worn without a helmet as the alloy arms dug in bit under the helmet. Used with a Croakie or similar, on the outside of the helmet they worked well enough, but looked a bit strange: sort of 'Eddie the Eagle goes paddling'. Canoeing is unfortunately an impact sport occasionally and the poly lenses are shatterproof. I failed to destroy the shades under test (and



that included sitting on them). If like me you usually buy 5 Korean £2.00 glasses over the year, this may be an alternative, although they cost £30.80. This is about half the cost of the much publicised American version, largely because Jerki have not paid huge sums for cricketers and tennis players to for endorsement.

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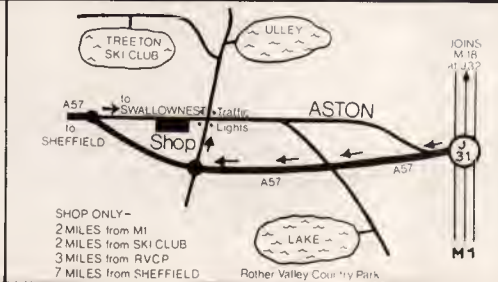
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Jerry is a well respected member of the White Water racing fraternity and what he has to say on reading water will be useful to many recreational paddlers.

Reading

The ability to read water fast! decisively and accurately is an essential part of the down-river racers repertoire. This aspect is given less emphasis elsewhere in the canoeing world; developing skills in this area is however of great value to all who wish to travel happily and effectively down rivers.

Though it may be revision for many readers, it is worth outlining some basic ideas on the behaviour of water in flowing rivers of whatever standard of difficulty. The following refers to natural rivers and does not encompass weirs and other artificial constructions. Much has been written on these elsewhere, the Canoeing Handbook, for example, has a very good section on weirs.

Look for V's

A rock or other fixed object in fast moving water creates an effect like the bow of a

TOP TIPS

and handy hints

RIVER ROUTE FINDING

by Jerry Tracey

ship, forming a V-shape of white water facing upstream. A similar V of turbulence is formed by an obstacle hidden just below the surface. Between such obstructions, tongues of dark fast water facing downstream are formed. It is a good idea to learn to recognise these, since they indicate a clear line. At the downstream end

of such a tongue of dark flow turbulence is formed where the fast water starts to become slowed. This turbulence normally takes the form of a series of standing waves of steadily decreasing size. Though such a line of waves may appear to the layman to be the roughest and most dangerous area of the rapids, a 'down-the-middle' run through this type of water normally gives a safe but exciting 'switchback-ride', even if such standing waves are very large and have impressive foaming crests.

Stoppers

However, where a step-like drop occurs, the first standing wave below the chute of smooth water may become sufficiently powerful to fall back onto itself and collapse into continuously circulating white-water. This forms a situation rather like a surf wave just after it has broken, except that the power remains constant without the dying off in energy which occurs as a sea wave moves up a beach. Such a river wave is known as a 'stopper' because it can stop and hold anything buoyant which arrives from upstream, including unwary paddlers! Playing in such stoppers and the 'holes' formed in front of them can be great fun and very good training, so long as there is a safe exit route. Nevertheless, they should always be

treated with caution and given a healthy respect. Where passage through a difficult and powerful stopper is unavoidable, it is best taken at right angles with a burst of speed. There may be a 'suckback' pulling back upstream immediately below the stopper wave itself. It is important to continue fast forward paddling until this suckback has been cleared!

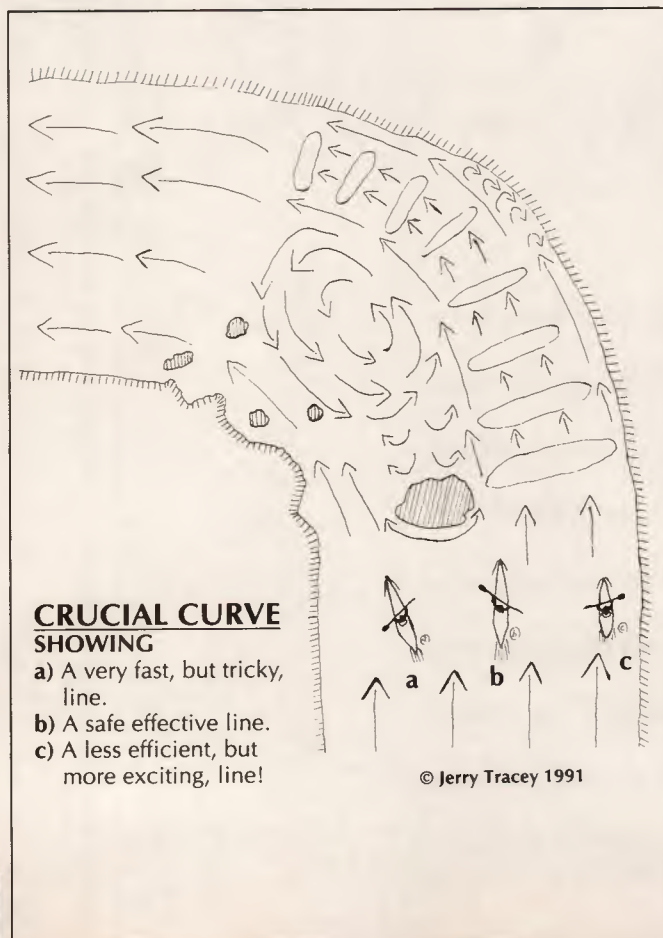
Eddies

Where space permits, slower up-river currents will tend to form at either side of a jet of fast water. These are known as 'eddies' and they are mainly found behind rocks, bridge piers and similar solid projecting objects. Eddies can provide useful places to pause for rest and are often valuable vantage points for scouting the water ahead. Strong turbulence may occur however at the 'eddy-line', the boundary between the eddy and the main downstream flow. Such places may present serious problems, depending on the balance between the standard of the paddler and the difficulty of the water!

A bend in a river will tend to cause the main current to move to the outside of the curve, unless formations in solid bedrock are an over-riding factor. Erosion will normally cause the bank to the outside to become steep or even undercut, whereas the inside of the bend normally has slack water and deposition, leading to shallows. The most effective line around a curve is usually down the inside edge of the main body of fast flow, striking a balance between being swung out into the slack water on the inside and being flung across towards the bank to the outside.

Entrapments

One final common situation deserves a mention, with a strong note of caution. Great danger can be posed by anything wedged or anchored in the river which allows fast water to pass through it. The most common examples are partially toppled trees with their branches in the flow and jammed piles of driftwood left behind by



RIVER ROUTE FINDING

subsiding flooding waters. Although not spectacular, this type of hazard in a strong current can be very nasty since the paddler may become inextricably pinned. The American term of a 'strainer' for this type of river feature is nicely evocative of the problem! It is wise for paddlers on a first run down an unknown or seldom-used stretch of water to keep the possibility of a sudden encounter with a strainer firmly in mind, particularly when travelling fast and winding rivers through areas of woodland.

It is worth remembering that the most suitable line down through a particular section of water will not only depend on its features but will also be affected by whatever is coming up further downstream. A skilled and experienced river paddler normally has an almost intuitive feel for the pattern of the water, not only immediately around and in front but also taking account of the constantly unfolding situation further ahead. The actual line chosen down a particular

section may well largely depend on the exit angle needed to give a good approach line to a hazard coming up immediately downstream.

Like all skills, the ability to read water and to pick a suitable line can only be learnt and improved through practice. This practice will not be gained by always exactly following the line taken by a more experienced paddler. This approach is best avoided, unless safety considerations make the following of an exact line set by the leader crucial in particular circumstances.

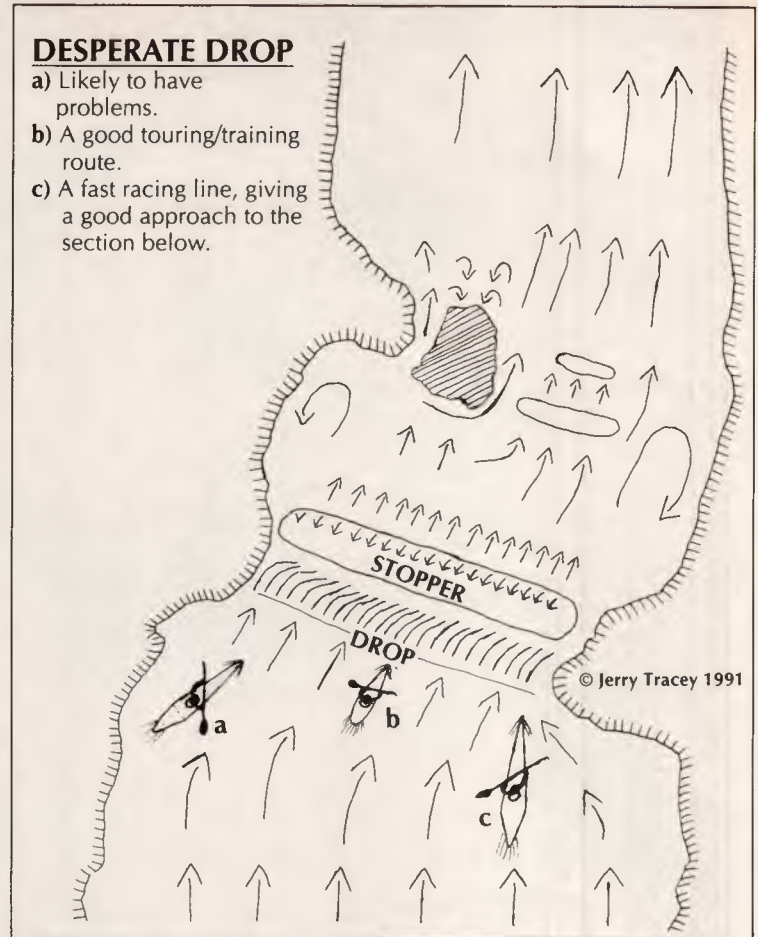
Leading

All paddlers can benefit from taking turns to lead the way down rapids and by experimenting with variations on the routes taken by others. In this way the ability to assess the oncoming water pattern and choose a good line will be encouraged to develop. This decision making skill is essential both to exploratory paddling into unknown waters and to high performance under the pressure of serious competition.

Watching and studying (any) moving water and thinking about and

DESPERATE DROP

- a) Likely to have problems.
- b) A good touring/training route.
- c) A fast racing line, giving a good approach to the section below.



discussing different lines and their possible consequences can also greatly aid this learning process. To encourage this, diagrams of three typical

though entirely fictitious sections of river have been included with this article. The starting positions for some possible lines have been added. It is hoped that these scenarios will encourage thought amongst readers on this subject and that an exchange of ideas will be stimulated on the skills and techniques of down-river paddling, whether in an adventurous or a competitive context. As with real rivers, there are not necessarily any right or wrong answers, just some lines that are more effective than others for particular paddlers!

If in Doubt, Get out

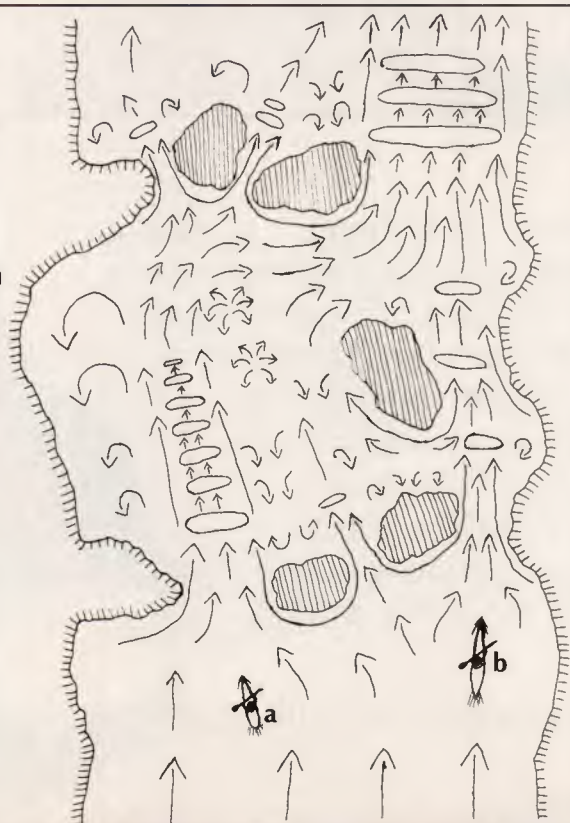
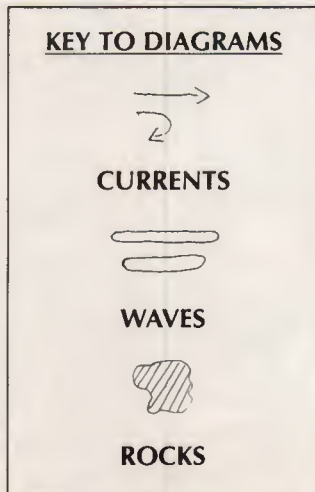
It is hoped that readers will feel encouraged to travel by canoe or kayak and be inspired to explore rivers. They are however advised to land and inspect from the bank whenever a clear line cannot be seen from the water. They are then reminded that there is then no shame in a portage if doubt still exists!

Happy Paddling
Jerry Tracey

GRUESOME GRAVEYARD SHOWING

- a) A good route for play and practise, that makes the most of the water.
- b) A fast racing line.

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OGWEN SKATEBOARDERS

✍ I am writing about some good news and some bad news. The good news is that in the last edition of Ceufad, the WCA magazine there was an interview with Richard Howell the NRA Conservation and Recreation officer in which he stated that NRA bailiffs were being made more aware of the needs of canoeists and other water users and that "It was not their role to become involved in disputes between fishery owners and canoeists, as these are essentially private issues relating to trespass or the subjects of agreements between the fishery owner and canoeists". Refreshing news as in the past water authority bailiffs invariably backed fishing interests to the hilt.

Mr Howell also stated "bailiffs would only become involved if spawning fish" (read also spawning beds) "were liable to be disturbed". Which is fair enough as it is a criminal offense and a necessary conservation measure. The bad news is that I have recently come across groups of 'paddlers' who on arriving in North Wales find the rivers so low that you would need roller skates to get down. They then decide to 'paddle' any-way, and then boast about their 'achievement'!

I would like to point out that this practice ought to be heartily discouraged for 3 reasons.

1) There are plenty of alternatives in N Wales that will have water and are much better value than a river bed. These are: the swellies, four mile bridge (Tidal) Surf, the Nomad site on the Dee (mature river) and the Tryweryn, all of which and more are in Terry Storry's N. Wales guidebook.

2) Hearing in the pub "Yes, we did the Ogwen today it was a piece of duff". When I know that there wasn't any water in it and that these same people would take one look at runnable levels and go shopping for the rest of the day, it makes my blood boil!

3) If the rivers are so low that you are constantly bumping and scraping and having

Dear FOCUS

to push off the bottom you are without a doubt disturbing spawning salmon or their beds. Quite apart from inviting a criminal prosecution people concerned may well set back recent favourable developments in the access position. Most fisherman will concede, off the record, that in a spate river canoeists couldn't possibly disturb salmon. Unless this skateboarding down river beds is discouraged we will be providing the unreasonable fisherman with all the ammunition they need.

Franco Ferrero
BCU Coach & Grassroots White water paddler (Outraged of Mynnedd Llandegai)

PAST MASTERS

✍ Over recent weeks there have been a number of articles and comments in various canoeing publications from 'past masters' on the state of slalom today.

Many of the writers comment on the alleged removal of skills from the sport by the rule changes, the specialisation of equipment, and the cost, linking all these to the falling number of competitors.

In his letter in the October issue of 'Canoe Focus' D J Wilbraham stated that "much less skill, gate technique and reading of the water were required" after the removal of reverse gates, along with other changes revising the length and layout of the course, and imposing further boat regulations.

I would suggest that paddlers who retired after only a year, or less, of compet-

ing under the present rules did not give them a fair chance, as during this time course designers were experimenting with providing sequences that did force reverse moves. The result was that during the early days of the new regulations, perhaps some courses, of all divisions, were too straightforward.

Today the principles are still more or less the same. An upstream gate or stagger sequence of forward downs still needs to be negotiated in the same way in 1991 as in 1985. The only difference is in the removal of reverse gates, and this has added a new dimension to the sport, namely deciding whether to perform a reverse move in a tight sequence of gates, or use your skill to save time by negotiating all the gates forward. The boat control skills are still the same, as is the ability to read the water and decide on the fastest way to complete the course.

Why it should take longer to learn to paddle proficiently under the old rules than today, I fail to see. In fact I would contend that with the increasingly more 'professional' attitude among competitors in the top divisions today, it would take longer to progress through the sport and develop the skills and fitness required to keep up with the high standards of performance now required to obtain good results.

The equipment required is naturally more specialised, as manufacturers try to design boats to meet the paddlers' needs, which applies to all forms of canoeing. Would DJ Wilbraham use a sprint boat for rodeo paddling or a surf ski for river racing? As for the high cost of gear these

days, that is just the same as for any product isn't it?

With regard to the falling numbers of competitors this year, I believe many people are barking up the wrong tree in blaming the nature of the rules for this. In these days of recession a weekend away at a slalom can be an expensive matter with accommodation and petrol to be paid for. Come improvement in the economy, numbers are sure to rise as the public finds more money in their pockets.

I was sceptical of the rule changes, and how I thought they would ruin the sport, but now look back and think on reflection they have improved slalom competition. Perhaps, these 'experts' from days gone by should remember that many paddlers today cannot remember anything other than today's regulations, and enjoy the sport as it is. The rest of the world has to race under these rules and so do we. If you don't like them the answer is simple, don't paddle, but leave the sport alone for those of us who enjoy paddling as it is today.

A final thought, maybe people look back on the old days through rose coloured glasses. Have the judging nightmares of deciding correct presentation in the gate line been forgotten, and how many paddlers honestly do not remember protesting a 50 second penalty on a reverse gate, because they were sure the gate judge who saw them sideways must have been blind?

S P Green

ONE BIG THANKYOU

✍ Back in March 1991, the Taunton Canoe Boathouse was broken into with the theft of a substantial amount of equipment including canoes.

As a result, an intensive fund raising and scrounging year was organised. We would now like to thank, Taunton Leisure, Alternative Surf/Palm, Wessex water, Sainsburys (Taunton), Nuclear Electric in sponsoring us for new canoes. Chippenham and Worcester

canoe clubs also kindly donated several canoes. The Princes Trust, Exeter and Newbury canoe clubs and Mrs & Mrs Collins donated financially.

Last but not least, the tremendous amount of support & effort from club members and families has enabled the club to continue the encouragement of canoeing throughout the Somerset area

K Sinclair,
Chairman, TAUNTON CANOE CLUB

GAZZA RETIRES

✍ Please allow me to use your letters page to say thank-you to all my friends in Canoe Polo. After many years of Polo Competition I have just competed in my last event as captain of the GB A team and in order to give my growing family more time I have now retired from international competition.

It would not be possible in this short letter to thank all those who have helped make canoe polo what it is today, but having being involved in the sport almost from it's start (in this country) there are a number of people I would like to acknowledge; Oliver Cock, Colin Midgley, Geoff Good, Dick Davies, Dennis Dear Brian Barfoot and Ron Vessey to name just a handful who have helped the sport and in some cases my participation in it. Finally, should this magazine get to such far flung paddlers (I know it does occasionally) let me thank those paddlers who have made the competition so hard and so professional in recent years; the players of France, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, and Australia and of courses, their coaches and team managers. For the most part I hope to help coach the National side and continue to support Canoe Polo.

Gary Linton

CORSICA

✍ I would like to make comment on the recent Touring article about Corsica. To me this information seems

misleading. Paddlers with some experience of white water will have extreme difficulties, paddling the Corsican Rivers. If the committee wants to give proper information they should also check the water levels. I was paddling in Corsica at the same time as the writer of the article. I was there with friends who were paddling for the fourth time, and they have never seen such low water levels, and even so, it's not all grade 2/4. With the normal water levels you'll find lots of 4-5-6 + sections.

Of course it depends on which sections of rivers you paddle: do you travel that far to do the easy sections? I've seen too many crosses of dead paddlers along the rivers in Corsica to say 'You don't need much experience to paddle there' My advice is, before people spend a lot of money to go to Corsica they should check with an experienced paddler they know. I have a lot of English paddling friends and one very important thing I've learnt from them is to treat white water with respect. Let's keep it that way.

Tineke Rensen
Holland.

CAN YOU SWIM

✍ I was shocked and saddened to read of the death of Trevor Bailey.

I wonder how many of us thought "there but for the grace of God go I". When I started canoeing many years ago I could pass the usual swimming tests and sometimes in the summer swimming seemed as common as canoeing. On reflection I have not swum for possibly 10 years, and frequently canoe alone, in deep water, and without a buoyancy aid.

From now on I will think twice and wear a buoyancy aid.

If enough of us take this, or similar action some good may come from this tragic accident.

D J Lewis
Stratford.

MOBILE ADVENTURE PHOTO COMPETITION

Colin Broadway of Mobile Adventure reports a good entry response and, with difficulty and much deliberation as always in Focus Competitions, here are the winners and runners up

- 1st Caroline Windley (High Wycombe)
- 2nd Nick Whittingham (Barnsley)
- 3rd Ray Goodwin (Fairbourne)

RUNNERS UP

- A Alister Clark (Wingerworth)
- B Malcolm Smith (Wokingham)
- C John Tompkins (Leicester)
- D Ray Goodwin (Fairbourne)
- E Ian Dennies (Ashby de la Zouch)
- F Steve MacDonald (Perth)

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| N | P | C | A | R | W | O |
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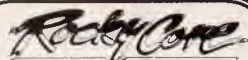
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For further details & an application form contact:

Nick Willis, Edale Youth Hostel,
Rowland Cote, Nether Booth, Edale,
SHEFFIELD S30 2ZH.
Tel: 0433 670302

Orkney. Jack or Jill of all trades wanted for small activity centre from 1st May. Must be qualified to take charge of parties of Canoeists at sea. Driving Licence essential. Please write in first instance to Evedale Centre, Evie, Orkney. KW17 2PJ Scotland.

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Acorn Adventure, 137 Worcester Road,
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Details from Application Department,
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Aiton Court,
Penyards Lane (820)
Ross on Wye
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Tel: 0989 764211

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Closing date for applications 21 February 1992 -
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Instructors required. Climbing, canoeing and sailing. Min grades BCU SI and RYA tidal. Experience in other activities preferable. Min age 21 years. Driving licence essential. Season vacancies March-November and July-September. Apply with CV and recent photo to The Director, Courtlands Centre, Kingsbridge, S. Devon TQ7 4BN

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MI 370 Slalom Sports purple 18 months old £200 ono. Mrs Vernon Tel: 0477 500508.

MI 415 Tourers (1 blue, 1 yellow), 3 years old, GC, £95 each. Available N London or W Herefordshire. Tel: B Jack 081 883 2835.

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Prison Invader yellow, bulkhead, footrest, GC £200. Ace Valeta yellow GC £150. Tel: I Tofield 081 773 8587 (evenings).

Pyranha Master, white full white water spec, GC, £220 ONO. Tel: G Cartledge 0925 791593.

Pyranha Master canoe, yellow, whitewater spec, 3 years old, light use only, VGC, £225 ONO. Tel: P Huskisson 051 327 7984 (evenings).

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STOLEN

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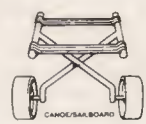
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**Dave Manby, Wild River Trips,
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I'll be covering Turkey along with all my other trips in my "so you come all this way just to get wet" lecture at Crystal Palace.

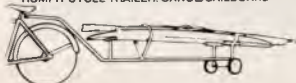
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