

# Canoe focus

No 80. DECEMBER 1992

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World Champion



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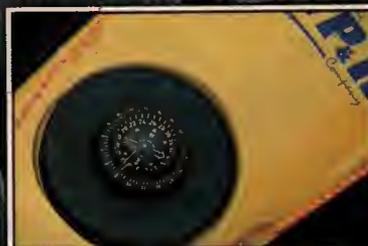
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**Canoe Focus**

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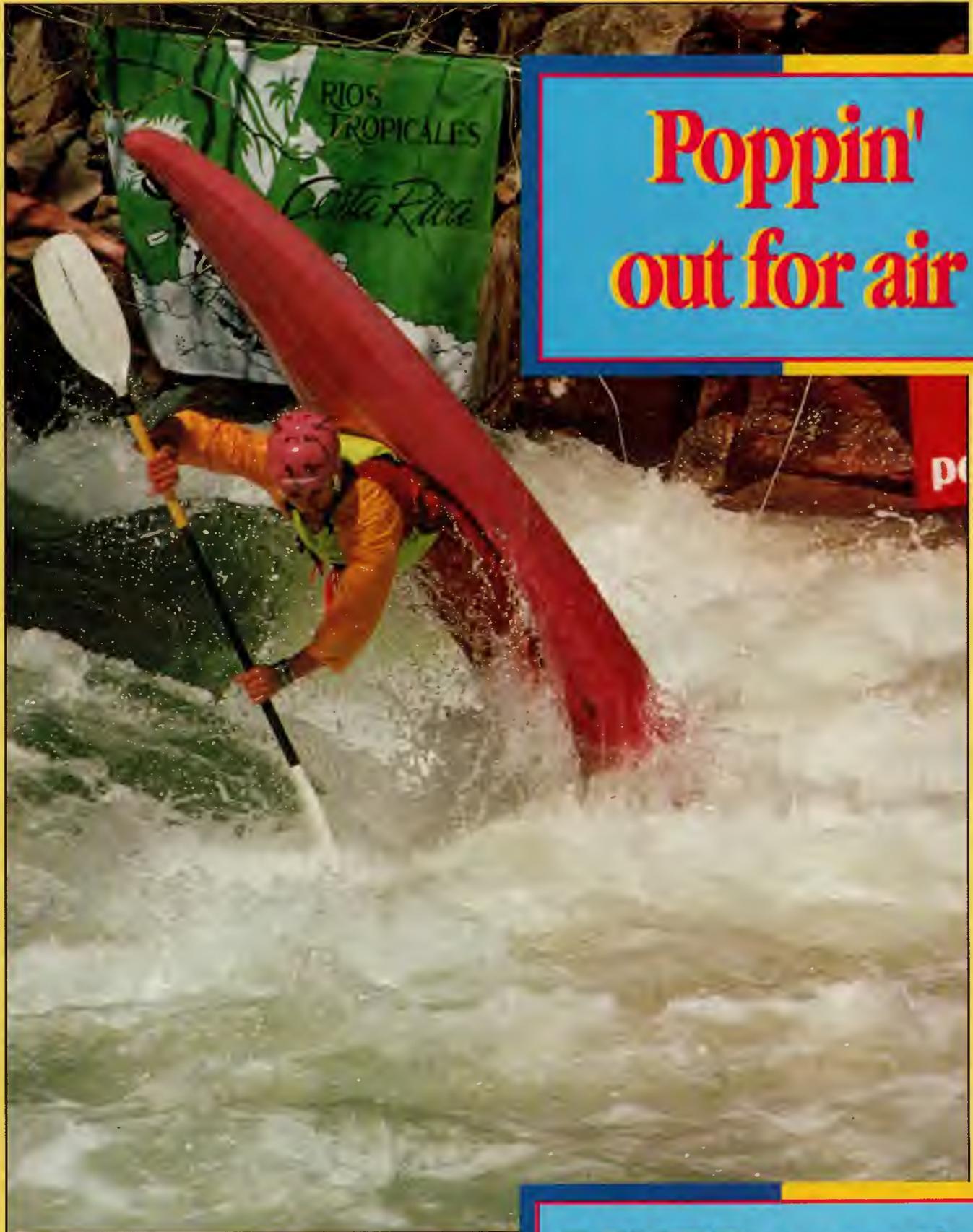
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**Back to the future? A review of the  
new Stunt Bat**

**Front Cover:** White Water Action  
from the Mike Jones Rally captured  
by Richard Marpole. The wave can  
be found at Warden Gorge on the  
North Tyne.

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# Comment

## Director's Comment

Firstly may I offer my congratulations to Ivan Lawler on his magnificent Gold Medal success in the Marathon World Championships and to Maria Blumenthal and Sandra Troop for their Silver Medal at the same event. Full details of the Marathon trip to Australia appear elsewhere in this issue of Canoe Focus.

### ICF CONGRESS

I am writing this introduction as I journey back from the 24th Congress of the International Canoe Federation.

Held in Madrid the bi-annual conference was attended by fifty six nations and Great Britain were represented by Alan Laws and I. Our President Albert Woods was also in attendance in his capacity as Chairman of the ICF Slalom and Wildwater Racing Committee.

Presided over by Sergio Orsi the President of the ICF the congress had been set a demanding programme including the major revision of the ICF Statutes and Standing Orders.

This particular subject was very dear to the hearts of the British delegation as it was up to us to ensure that the tireless efforts of our late President Ron Emes were enshrined into the new working documents.

I cannot address all of the topics here but the new statutes were accepted and of particular note were the following

#### Advertising:-

All restrictions on boat advertising have been lifted.

#### Recreation:-

A newly stated and very important objective of the ICF is to encourage and promote the activity of recreational canoeing.

#### Slalom and Wild Water Racing:-

It was agreed that Senior World Championships will take place in alternate years for each discipline.

#### Polo:

There were many other topics discussed by congress and I can report that Polo has been given World Championship status and the first event will be held in Sheffield in 1994. As a prelude to this, Sheffield will host a European Polo Championship in 1993. During this part of the Congress many World Championship events were agreed and they are set out below.

Amongst the good news also comes the bad and this years gathering of the ICF Family was no exception. From 1994 onwards 10,000 metre races are to be deleted from the World Championship Programme. This was a very disappointing development and the BCU representatives fought hard against this change which is allegedly to attract better spectator and media coverage.

200 metre racing will be included in future regattas and World Championship events.

#### ICF Technical Committees:-

Albert Woods was re-elected Chairman of the ICF Slalom and Wild Water Racing Committee, Alan Laws was elected to the ICF Marathon Committee, Ron Vessey to the Polo Committee and Alan Powells to the ICF Sailing Committee.

### Schedule of World Championship Events

#### Sprint Racing Senior Championships

- 1993 Copenhagen - Denmark
- 1994 Mexico City - Mexico
- 1995 Duisburg - Germany
- 1996 Olympic Games - Atlanta USA
- 1997 Dartmouth - Canada

#### Junior Championships

- 1995 Japan
- 1997 Lahti - Finland

#### Slalom and Wild Water Racing Senior Championships

- 1993 Mezzana - Italy
- 1995 Nottingham & Bala - GB

#### Slalom

- 1997 Tres Coroas - Brazil

#### Wild Water Racing

- 1996 Landeck - Austria

#### Junior Championships

- 1994 Wausau - USA
- 1996 Lipno - Czechoslovakia

#### Marathon Racing

- 1994 Boosbaan - Holland

#### Canoe Polo

- 1994 Sheffield - GB

#### Sailing

- 1993 USA
- 1996 Australia

## Trevor Bailey Award for Endeavour

In memory of Trevor Bailey a special Trevor Bailey Award for Endeavour has been introduced and nominations meeting the criteria set out below are now welcome:

1. The award will be presented to anyone who in any one year, makes a significant contribution to the development of canoeing. The endeavour involved may be at any level, from local community to national campaign.

2. Nominations, outlining the nature of the endeavour involved should be made to the BCU Director at least 2 months before the Ron Emes Annual Awards Dinner (to be held on Saturday 17 April 1993) and may be made by clubs, regional or specialist committees, coaching panels or any 3 members.

3. A panel consisting of a member of the Bailey family, the Chairman or Vice Chairman of Council, and a member of Council will consider the nominations.

4. The award may not necessarily be made every year. In any one year more than one award may be made.

5. An engraved decanter will be presented to recipients of the Award and entries made in the BCU Book of Honour.

## Obituary

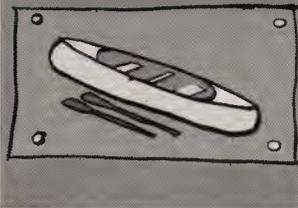
The BCU regrets to announce the death of Maurice Rothwell on 27 October 1992. Maurice was best known to the world of slalom canoeing and wild water racing. He organised the first ever slalom in Britain on the Dee in 1939, and was a key figure in the sport for very many years following. A full appreciation of Maurice will appear in the next issue of Focus.

## Merry Christmas

I would just like to take this opportunity, on behalf of all at the BCU Headquarters to wish all our members a very Merry Christmas and Happy Paddling in 1993.

Paul Owen





# Notice board

## SCOTTISH CANOE EXHIBITION

The Fair City of Perth will be hosting the 1993 Scottish Canoe Exhibition on March 20/21, hosted by the SCA.

The exhibition will be held in Bells Sports Centre, North Inch, with plenty of parking space, restaurant facilities and Perth Canoe Club on hand to assist.

Opportunity to test out new boats on the River Tay only yards away from the Centre, with flat, white water and even a slalom site to practice on.

Come and give the family a day out in Perth while you choose from a wide variety of canoeing goodies or just chat

with your canoeing mates.

There will also be other water sports people there so bring your windsurfing, ski-ing, rafting and outdoor minded pals as well.

*Be where its all happening on 20/21 March 1993.*

*Times: 10am - 4pm.*

### "Wild Water" increase sponsorship for BCU expeditions.

"Wild Water" Mont Bell (UK) Ltd have agreed to donate £2000 worth of equipment each year to BCU Approved Expeditions.

Managing Director Chris Hawkesworth says: "our success in the International Marketplace is mirrored by the successful record of British Canoeing Expeditions over the last few years. We are delighted to be associated with them and of course their testing of our equipment in extreme conditions feeds back ideas that lead to a better product.

BCU Expeditions Chairman, Peter Knowles says: "British Canoeing Expeditions are the envy of other

countries - the problem is that paddlers are too modest, and too busy planning their next challenge to publicise their own achievements! This sponsorship by "Wild-Water" will be a great encouragement and help to future expeditions".

The British Canoe Union approve just a handful of expeditions each year; those particularly worthwhile such as first descents or other similarly committing trips involving exploration in remote areas of the world. It also approves and encourages expeditions for young people and disabled groups.

In the last ten years over 60 expeditions have taken place:

● Almost all have been successful in their objectives.

● Excellent safety record - no serious accidents.

● Established international friendships.

● Carried out scientific and ecological research.

● Undertaken river surveys for foreign governments.

● Publicised environmental issues.

● Promoted canoeing as a healthy exciting outdoor sport.

for further information please contact the BCU or "Wild-Water", Glasshouses Mill, Harrogate, HG3 5HQ. Tel: 0423 711624 Fax: 0423 712493.



### BCU Competition Coaches Conference

The conference will be held at Holme Pierrepont over the weekend 6/7 February 1993. The two main themes will be 'Children are not small Adults?' discussing opportunities development and coaching youngsters, and 'At the Sharp End', creating an environment for excellence. Details from BCU Office with sae.

### BCU Sea Guide for the South West

In his role as Sea touring rep for the South West Region, Nigel Hingston is compiling a sea guide which will cover the peninsula from the Dorset/Hampshire Border to the Severn Road Bridge, including the Isles of Scilly. Nigel could do with some help on the Somerset section from Watchet to Weston-Super-Mare.

If you know this area well or have paddled parts of it please give Nigel a ring on 0626 854175

#### News from Abroad

##### Donald Bean

Donald Bean's swim count is into the 30's for this year, starting with a couple in France in May several more in Turkey in June averaging one a day for 12 days on the Colorado two on the Sun Kosi in Nepal, and he has 10 days in Costa Rica to go. You will no doubt hear more from the 72 year old. One of his swims even made the "Guardian."!

##### Mumbo's Top Tip

Sainsbury's peanut butter jar tops make ideal replacement lens caps for Fuji HDM cameras; crunchy lids are better they're orange! (as discovered by my 18 month old nephew)

##### Flagstaff

Excessive beer and excessive reaction by the police led to three "leading British paddlers" spending the night in jail in Flagstaff USA, after celebrating a trip down the grand canyon watching it was unbelievable - it was just like the movies - I suppose we were lucky we were white & not called Rodney King but seven stitches had to be put into a cut in one chin which had been slammed against the sidewalk by the arresting officers!

##### Payette Race

Payette Race The beginning of ultimate downriver racing? A down river race was held this year on the middle stretch of the North Fork of the Payette (finishing above Jacob's Ladder) Grade V whitewater!

##### Yellowstone

A to be nameless paddler is now banned from Yellowstone Park completely after being arrested for the fourth time paddling the Yellowstone River.

Dave Manby



# Hugh Mantle



## NIKE Coach of The Year.

The British Institute of Sports Coaches have again awarded Olympic Slalom Coach Hugh Mantle, the prestigious Coach of the Year award. This is the second time Hugh has won this award and it recognises his invaluable contribution and commitment to the Squad's Olympic, World Championship and World Cup Successes. Hugh has decided to retire after 12 years at International Level, although he will stay involved in an advisory role.

## SEVERN CANALISATION REJECTED

The proposals of the Severn Navigation Restoration Trust to build weirs and locks to enable large powered craft to get up to Shrewsbury have been rejected by Shropshire District Council. A big thank you to BCU Local Access Officer, Sue Drummond, for her hard work looking after the interests of canoeists.

## PROJECTS IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

The BCU office gets frequent requests for canoeing information from school pupils who are engaged in projects for their GCSE courses, and a variety of college projects. The best source of information is of course, the BCU Canoe Handbook. It is a title that should be in all libraries. If you are at school or you are a teacher/lecturer please check to see if your library has a copy. If not, please suggest that your librarian purchases one. Pupils can get information more easily and more quickly if they have the relevant reference book in their schools. The Canoeing Handbook costs £15.95 from the BCU Office including post and packing (BCU member's price £14.50)



MIKE JONES RALLY 1992

7th-8th NOVEMBER, HEXHAM

Many thanks to all who attended and joined in the spirit of the event.

Many thanks also to the many helpers who assisted in making the weekend run smoothly.

Water levels were good though not quite as high as last year.

The turn out was just over 1000 similar to previous years and once again Hexham greeted visitors with a typical northern welcome. The local MP Peter Atkinson also attended showing interest in our sports access difficulties.

General vibes received so far have been very positive with many taking the opportunity to personally thank all involved in the organisation.

Many also commented on the value for money of the rally ticket covering both days paddling, camping, videos, lecture, ceilidh, super rafting, silly race and even hot showers!

Surprisingly a few did begrudge paying £6 (£5) in advance which is somewhat mystifying as by now

## Obituary Ali Cope (1964-1992)

**Ali was tragically killed in the Katmandu Air Disaster on the 28th September.**

It is hard to put into words or portray what a special person Ali was. Ali wasn't a "hard" climber or canoeist but she had a love of the Outdoors which is rarely matched, in an environment where grades seem paramount, Ali's abilities were often overlooked by all, but those of us who were fortunate to have worked with her. Ali's legacy to the World of Outdoor Pursuits is the thousands of people, young and old, she has inspired. Ali had a particular affection for her younger students, no matter what the weather was doing or what activity, Ali's sheer enjoyment and love shone through. The people that Ali climbed and paddled with held a special place in her heart, her students, but especially our friends. She loved the meals back home, the photos and the stories almost as much as the activities.

If Ali had any one love it would have to be the sea and the creatures that lived in it. Ali explored the North Wales

coast by kayak and sailing boat as well as the Scottish Islands and Eire. Her joy and love were most tangible when she talked about swimming and kayaking with Fungi the dolphin that lives in Dingle Bay, Eire.

One summers, moonlit night we paddled from the coast of Northern Ireland for the lights of the Isle of Man, not intent on getting there. Each paddle stroke creating a luminous cascade of phosphorescence, just being there was enough, enjoying each others company and the magical night.

Ali's untimely death happened just as she was about to embark on another adventure. To Ali adventures happened whether shopping in Chester or walking and climbing in the French Alps - in true Ali style she would always come through, if only slightly ruffled. On one such "adventure" on the way to meet a group, she was taking to Norway, Ali found herself in the middle of a riot in Newcastle. It could only happen to Ali, only Ali could cope.

It would be impossible to measure the feeling of empti-

ness that we all have, such a tragic loss, of someone who loved the outdoors so much for what it was, she loved it warts and all, not just as a playground.

Ali meant so much to so many, she will leave a space in so many peoples lives, a gap that is impossible to fill. If we're honest a space we will never want to fill. In time Ali's legacy to our friends will really be the happy memories she has left us all.

Loel Collins



## Katmandu Airbus Crash



Following the tragic loss of four colleagues, Plas y Brenin and relatives of Mick & Sue Hardwick, Dave Harries and Ali Cope have opened a Memorial Fund. Initially the fund will provide a stone to be laid at the site of the crash with all surplus donations founding a bursary, the proceeds of which will assist worthy youngsters in outdoor training which they otherwise could not afford. Anybody wanting to contribute, please make cheques payable to the Plas y Brenin Katmandu Memorial Fund at The National Mountain Centre, Capel Curig, Gwynned LL24 0ET Dave Harries and Ali Cope were both BCU coaching scheme qualified. Pam Muttram from Abingdon who also died in the crash was a BCU member: our condolences to all relatives and friends.

most know that the rally functions as a charity ploughing back the profits into canoeing - even the committee gladly pay for their own tickets!

All profits from the rally are used for the Mike Jones Rally Adventure Award (administered by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust, for which anyone may apply), and also other worthwhile canoeing related projects. Applications for financial support are welcome.

Over the last few years financial support and instant free loans have helped with Washburn improvements, assistance to other touring events, safety resuscitation stickers, the purchase of a club house in North Wales

and the backing of the recently formed Nottingham River Rats.

Next year the Rally is hoping to be in a different location we expect to be able to announce the venue in the New Year - watch Canoe Focus for details.

Lost & Found - write to Mike Jones Rally, c/o Belper Sorting Office, Derbyshire, DE5 1UU

Footnote - A final thank you to the NRA and Tynedale District Council for their support, also to the mysterious blue transit van occupants who took it on themselves to tidy up at Tyne Green before we arrived on Monday morning.

**MIKE JONES COMMITTEE**



## EVERYTHING FOR THE CANOEIST

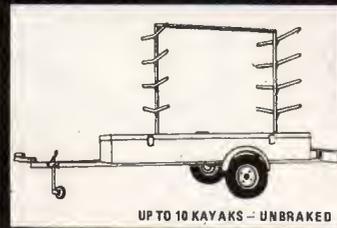


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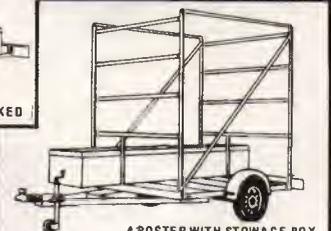


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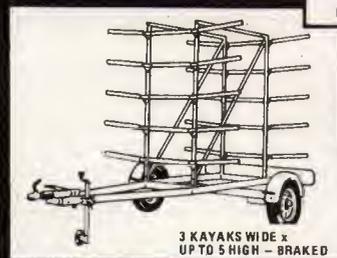
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# Regional round up

## Vice Chairman's Chat

The November round of regional AGM's is now complete and regional committees have been newly elected or reappointed. The BCU Director, or the National Development Officer, attended most AGM's and gave them a brief message, which bears repeating here. It is that the future development of the BCU relies heavily on the efforts of the regions: – to work closely with affiliated clubs, – to promote more local BCU events and activities, – to increase the local visibility and relevance of the BCU, and – to recruit more members and clubs. Communication is a two way affair – so please get to know your new regional committee, make sure that they know about developments and needs in your club and explore all the opportunities there may be for working together. Good paddling for 1993.

Charles Hicks



## Eastern

Congratulations to Jim Croft for the highly successful Cardington 10th anniversary slalom. Dates for this winter; regional pool slalom 19 December Luton 1pm, winter slalom series; 6 December Cambridge, 13 December Dobbs Weir, 3rd January Harefield, 10th January Northampton; 14 February Fairlop; 28 February Cardington. Essex winter race series; 6 December Sudbury, 20 December Leaside, 24 January Barking Creek, 7 February Harlow. Thanks to all in the region for their commitment and contribution to Eastern Region canoeing over the last year. Your club and event information is needed now for the 1993 Yearbook and canoe exhibition.

Judith Coffin

## East Midlands

Well first of all I would like to wish all regional paddlers a happy Christmas and a sporting 1993. On 16 January 1993 at Bramcote Leisure Centre, Derby Road, Bramcote the regional pool slalom will be held commencing 6.30pm – helpers at the pool at 6.00pm please. For those who have never done an East Midlands pool slalom before you are in for a treat. Visitors to our region are welcome, entries on the night. The region is now running regular tours: information available on our regional hot line telephone 0602 850930 (answer phone). I would like to thank all those members who came to the AGM, and wish the new committee a successful and rewarding term in office during 1993.

Pearl Mulholland

## London And South East

In the regional qualifying events for the Hasler Trophy, the results were as follows: Wey 1st

Elmbridge 2nd, Tonbridge 3rd and Richmond 4th. Congratulations to these clubs for reaching the finals and well done to all eleven clubs that took part in the qualifying races. The regional champions were: Men, S Baker – Richmond; Ladies, A Dallway – Elmbridge; Juniors, A Richardson-Royal. Congratulations are also due to Shepperton who won the national club slalom championships at Cardington in September. The regional pool slalom will be held at Alleyns School on Saturday January 2nd (timed to allow recovery from your New Year hangover). The winners of this event will go forward to the national finals at Sheffield. Details from Vince Lamph.

Chris Childs

## Northern

**Boxing Day race from the Ice Rink, Durham City 11am; details from M Gill tel: 091 548 6803. Training courses, events, organisers and dates for 1993 as soon as possible please to the Regional Press Secretary, for inclusion in the regional programme. Simon Banbury has taken over as Regional Access Officer; his address is 42 Devonshire Place, Jesmond, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE2 2ND. Meetings in January 1993; in Cumbria contact Keith Morris tel: 0539 531758. In Northumbria contact Eddie Palmer tel: 0434 270318.**

Mary Armstrong

## Southern

Congratulations to RLP, Banbury, Warren and Basingstoke Canal CC's for finishing third, seventh, eleventh and fourteenth respectively out of the 29 clubs in the Hasler Finals, and winning the English Regions prize for the first time for Southern Region. In January 1993, on Sundays 10, 17, 24 and 31, there will be a series of training races (Hare and

Hounds) on the Thames at Eyt BC, Henley (contact Charles Hicks on 0252 850657). A full and varied programme of Southern Region touring and recreational events is planned for 1993 – details in regional newsletter soon. Members carried out a canoe survey of outfalls and pollution on the River Blackwater to assist local authorities in their efforts to improve water quality.

Charles Hicks

## South West

The AGM was the last duty of our chairman Jim Cornwell, who has left the South West to live in Scotland. At Millfield School Jim introduced many pupils to canoeing particularly Marathon Racing. On the regional committee, especially as regional chairman, he has had a great influence on the work of the Union both regionally and nationally. The regional committee was pleased that Council recognised this service with its highest award, an Award of Honour. I am sure that Jim will continue to watch the South West from afar, and he has asked me to pass on his regards and best wishes to all his friends in the region. We wish him well.

Dennis Walls

## West Midlands

Congratulations to winners Worcester CC on the Hasler Trophy, to Minver CC on the Regional Slalom, Kevin Campbell on Super Paddler mens 1992, Penny Briscoe on Super Paddler women 1992 and Melvyn Jones British slalom champion. For introduction to sea kayaking courses in January 1993 phone Lester Matthews on 0384 258492. Your new regional committee wish all BCU members a merry Christmas and a wet New Year.

Mike Male



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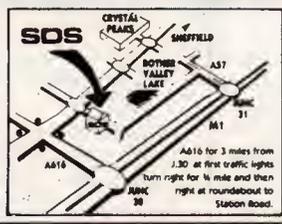
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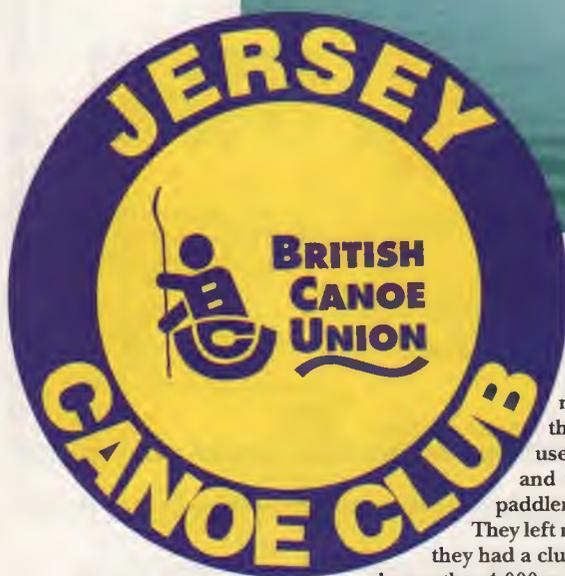


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Dealer ENQUIRIES welcome

In future issues of Canoe Focus it is planned to feature BCU Clubs and highlight the myriad of canoesport activity taking place. The work of clubs in Britain is fundamental to the sport: our grass roots. Would you like to see your club featured here? Contact the Editor for details.



Below: Kevin Mansell and Peter Scott off the west coast of Spitsbergen.

Several thousand years ago a nomadic tribe of Channel Islanders spent part of the year hunting seals off the Minquiers, a reef of rocks 12 miles to the south of Jersey. They used skin covered canoes and were probably the first paddlers in the Channel Islands.

They left no evidence as to whether they had a club structure and it was to be another 4,000 years before the first canoe club was established in the area.

In the summer of 1974 a small group of individuals got together to form the Jersey Canoe Club, several of whom such as Franco Ferrero, Derek Hairon, Dave Thelland and Kevin Mansell are still active in the canoeing world, although Franco is now more frequently associated with North Wales. Prior to this date most of us had been paddling as an informal group of school friends or associates for about five years.

#### COMPETITION

The numbers of people involved with the Club very quickly increased due to an active group of instructors who were willing to give endless hours of their own time. It was during the mid 1970's that the young John Bouteloup and

John Searson arrived on the scene, now more active in the wave ski field, they dominated the competition scene in Jersey until about 1984.

By 1980 the Club had just over 100 members and it had acquired its first property, a small cottage on the north east of Jersey known as Egypt. Fitted out with bunks it is an ideal place to escape from the crowds on a summer weekend as it is probably further from a road than any other building in Jersey. Very much part of the history of the Club it was completely refurbished in the early 1990's by a small group of volunteers, led by Club member Peter Wrigglesworth.

#### A FAMILY CLUB

The 1980's were a time of growth for the Canoe Club, never spectacular but always steady so that today there are just over 200 members. The age structure has also changed from being almost a youth club 12 or 13 years ago to now having a much more healthy mix of ages with many family members. Over the years there has been a regular core of people who have been associated with the running of the Club. This consistency is undoubtedly one of its strengths. Committee members will take a much longer term view of any decisions that have to be made and dealings with outside agencies are far easier if the people are known from previous meetings.

#### VENTURING FORTH

As well as paddling in Island waters the members of the Club have ventured further afield. From the early tentative crossings to the Erehous, a wonderful reef of rocks midway between Jersey and France, the trips undertaken by Club members have become more ambitious. More demanding paddles in a variety of geographical locations; for example, by the end of the 1970's all of the other Channel Islands had been visited. Today many of these paddles remain a serious undertaking, with Alderney the least frequented island in the area. 30 miles north of Jersey it is surrounded by ferocious tidal races. Despite these difficulties it provides superb paddling for the more experienced visitor.

It was in the late 1970's that the first major expedition away from the Island was undertaken. In 1978 John Bouteloup, Derek Hairon and Franco Ferrero completed a circumnavigation of the Outer Hebrides, the southern Danish Islands and the Brittany peninsula.

In June 1981 5 people crossed from the Channel Islands to the mainland of Britain. Paddling from Jersey to Alderney in winds which increased to force 6-7 one weekend and the following Saturday crossing to Weymouth in 16 hours. The 50 metre visibility meant that it was both physically and psychologically demanding. Due to the danger of being run down by the numerous ships it is not a cross-



ing which is to be recommended to further groups.

In 1983 6 members undertook what is probably the most demanding expedition in the history of the Club. Kevin Mansell, Peter Scott, John Hurley, John Bouteloup, Phil Harriskine and Dave Coombs spent 2 months paddling the west coast of Svalbard, reaching nearly 80 degrees North and covering over 600 miles in very poor weather conditions. A further visit to the Arctic followed in 1986 when the annual Club holiday was to Nordkapp. Breaking new ground for the Club, with 3 females in the party, 4 weeks were spent paddling from Tromson north around Nordkapp to finish at Honningsvag. What was important with this trip was that it was the average Club member who took part in it not just the better paddlers.

### WHITE WATER

It is not just in sea paddling that Club members are active. Although the island does not have any moving fresh water there are plenty of tidal races and the skills learnt are fairly easily transferred to rivers. The nearest good quality white water is in southern Brittany. The River Elle, close to Locunole, has been visited regularly since the 1970's by the Club. Since the early tentative moves onto white water, members have gradually increased in confidence and moved further afield. Groups paddle in the Alps each year in the summer with the Massif Central remaining a favourite at Easter. In addition the Colorado, Zambezi and the Himalayas have been visited by members in recent years.

The Club offers a full programme of recreational paddling, competitions and coaching up to the highest level throughout the year as well as an active social calendar. During the winter months the pool sessions provide a mid-week focus complemented by the Sunday morning paddle at different locations around the Island. Members being kept informed by a monthly newsletter and a telephone message service which is available 24 hours a day and regularly updated.

### EGYPT COTTAGE

The summer is naturally the more active time. Tuesday nights are held at the Club premises at St Catherines on the east coast of the Island. Although the cottage at Egypt had been in Club hands for many years it wasn't really suitable as a Clubhouse. Towards the end of 1990 the Club was given the use of the Inshore Lifeboat station at St Catherines, probably the best location on the Island. Easy access at all stages of the tide and protection from the prevailing winds mean that it is an ideal location for introducing beginners and running coaching courses. During the winter of 1990-91 a small group of Club members converted the building, with the downstairs being a boat store and a Club room upstairs.

Tuesday evenings in the summer are now always at St Catherines with up to 60 people on the water each week. Thursday evenings are held at different venues around the Island and a varied weekend programme is also run which includes an annual sea kayaking weekend in Brittany. Acquiring a clubhouse has provided a focal point for the club and its members and has been partly responsible for the increased profile of the sport on the Island.

The Channel Islands have largely been ignored by the

visiting paddler and so following on from the success of the first Anglesey Sea Symposium it was decided that the Club arrange a similar event. Firstly as a service to its members and secondly with the aim of attracting a number of paddlers from the UK mainland to our southern waters.

### 1992 SEA SYMPOSIUM

After a year of planning and preparation the Symposium was held in May 1992.

In addition to local experts there were visiting speakers from the UK, France and Germany. 100 people were involved in the event which lasted for 7 days. The first 3 days occupied with lectures and practical sessions followed by 4 days in which to explore the local waters and offshore reefs in the company of experienced local paddlers. We were extremely fortunate with the weather, plenty of sunshine and calm waters. The Island certainly looked at its best!

What was more fundamental to the success of the whole week though was the amount of hard work that many members of the club put in, not just over the week but in the preceding months. In particular Peter Hargreaves and Bernie Buesnel were prepared to put any number of hours into the organisation of the event. The Jersey Canoe Club certainly thought that it was a success. It revealed the joys of Channel Island paddling to many people and we are planning to repeat it in 1994.

The above is a brief history of the Jersey Canoe Club and some of the achievements of its members. The hard work and success of the last 18 years have provided a strong base for future developments. The horizons of the club members are continually expanding with trips for 1993 already planned to Greenland and the rivers of the United States but it is in the day to day running of the Club that many of the challenges lie. With over 200 members it is necessary to provide a wide variety of sessions of all standards. This requires a great deal of commitment from a large number of people. Events of the last few years have demonstrated that the commitment and enthusiasm are there. As such I believe that this is one Canoe Club that will be able to capitalise on the interest shown in the sport as we move towards the 21st Century.

Kevin Mansell



**Top:**  
Derek Hutchison at Ile Agois. A stack off the north coast of Jersey.

**Middle left:**  
Raft of over 100 canoes at St. Catherines on National Canoeing Day.

**Middle right:**  
Derek Hairon playing at Tour de Rozel. A tidal race off the north coast of Jersey.

**Bottom:**  
Creighton Dolbel playing in the rocks off the north coast of Jersey.

**Right:**  
Sea kayaks at the Ecrehous during the Jersey Canoe Club Symposium.



*On the Edge!*

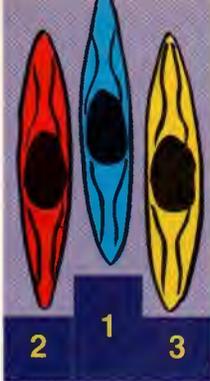


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# Competition *focus*

## Marathon World Championships Brisbane, Australia



**T**he team arrived in Brisbane, Australia, over a period of two weeks, with the last arriving a week before the race. The time before the race was spent learning the course, finding out the best places to cross over and where you could go under jetties. This was important, as it was anticipated that we would be paddling half the course against a strong tide, and any time saved could be vital. For those of us who predominately paddle on canals we had to spend time getting accustomed to the water moving, large boat washes, and the big waves caused by wind against the tide. We had been forewarned by the Australian paddlers it was a tough course, and in the pre-race week we found out what they meant. Not only could the river produce rough conditions, but for some reason known only to the organisers the race had been extended from 42km to 45km (some people think it was closer to 49km).

### SHARKS

On the Wednesday night the news headlines were dominated by the death of a surfer at Moreton Island. He had been eaten by a shark. We were unconcerned until it was pointed out that Moreton Island is at

the end of the estuary we were to race on. The next day one of the Australian paddlers reported seeing a shark at the Gateway Bridge, (this was the bottom end of the course). The local newspapers were claiming that the competitors were more worried about the sharks than the other paddlers

### MENS K1, C1 AND WOMEN'S K2

Saturday was race day for the mens K1, Womens K2 and Mens C1. The team was in high spirits, looking forward to some

into the race. The driver decided if we stopped here we would miss the finish of the Mens K1, so he dropped a couple of people off, went to turn around in the bus turning circle, only to find a supporter had blocked the way with his car. In trying to get past the car the 'bendy' bus jackknifed, so we did see the paddlers through this portage. Good and bad news here, Ivan was still with the leaders, but Greg was suffering and had lost contact, he eventually finished 8th. Sandra and Maria lost a bit of ground

deserved title and the result of a lot of hard work. I have to say Ivan always looked like he had the race under his control, he raced in his normal cool, calm and collected manner.

Could the girls K2 follow Ivan's lead? As they came into view there were three boats together, who would have the best sprint finish? It was very close but the Germans just managed to get a small lead over the Brits with the Danes just further down the wash. It was an exciting finish and an excellent result for Maria and Sandra. They had just won the first medal of any kind by British Women in Marathon or Sprint world Championships. Bernie and Rachel had done well in their first World Championships coming in in 7th place. Marcus had unfortunately succumbed to his injuries and was unable to complete the course.

The course was rough in places, but nowhere near as bad as during the pre-race training. The organisers had managed to shut the river to all traffic except the regular ferries, this meant there were practically no boat washes at all. Also the wind was with the tide so there were no waves from this



**Above:**  
Ivan Lawler  
K1 World Champion  
**Right:**  
A young Ivan Lawler

good results in the K1 and K2, sadly Marcus (C1 paddler) was injured in pre-race training so he was not expected to do much. I had decided to follow the race on the bus provided by the organisers. After seeing that all the Brits had good starts and were in the lead groups I jumped on the bus. As the race progressed it became clear that Ivan and Greg were doing well in the K1, and that Sandra and Maria (K2) were in the leading group, with Bernie and Rachel not too far behind.

Through the first portage (approximately 15 miles into the race) and our paddlers were still in contention, back on to the bus to the second portage approximately 24 miles

on this 100m portage, and Bernie and Rachel were moving up through the field.

### WORLD CHAMPION

A new bus arrived so we dashed off to see the finish, as expected we had missed the mens K1 but luckily they were announcing the results. Yes, Ivan had won, great, our first World Marathon Champion in the kayak events. This is a well



source. Two ladies had got away ahead of the main group. At the first portage this group split into ones and twos. I found myself paddling the rest of the course with Jeanette Knudson the Danish paddler, and we managed to overtake an Australian and Italian paddler, before finishing, Jeanette was 7th and I was 8th. The race

# Marathon World Championships

Brisbane, Australia

had been as long as I expected, about four hours, but not as rough in terms of the conditions, and no sharks.

I was told the Train brothers had finished 4th again, after being caught by a ferry wash, which caused them to come adrift of the group fighting for 2nd, 3rd and 4th places (the Danes were 10 minutes ahead). This happened about a mile from the finish. The K2 crew of John and Steve were very unlucky, they broke a paddle in the middle of the river about 20 miles into the race. The relatively untrained boat of Ian and Mark did well to finish 16th. The shock of this race was that the Danish K2 World Champions from the two previous Championships did not complete the course, they retired exhausted at the first portage whilst in the leading group.

All that was left to do was to attend the celebration dinner, where it is traditional for the Mens K1 World Champion to give a speech. In full knowledge of this, Ivan had spent the day carefully planning a detailed

speech. Unfortunately for Ivan, Professor Sergio Orsi (President of the ICF) did his first, and covered all the items that Ivan had intended to talk about. Still this did not fluster him, he thanked Brisbane for kindly holding the World Championships and for the people being so friendly. He also included the compulsory joke, "going to school in England we are taught that Australia is full of kangaroos and criminals, but I can honestly say, and my team mates will back me up, we haven't seen any kangaroos". Well us Brits thought it was funny, but the rest of the gathering were unsure. However, the master of the ceremony thanked Ivan "on behalf of all the criminals". I think Ivan would say this was the worst part of being World Champion.

So some of us had to head for home and work, whilst the rest of the team headed towards Melbourne and rain. (It had been snowing whilst we were in Brisbane.)

**Alison Thorogood**



## MENS K1

1. Ivan Lawler - GBR 3:20:23
  2. Stefan Gustarsson - SWE 3:20:30
  3. Rug Canlio - POR 3:20:55
  4. Tony Beauchop - NED 3:21:17
- Other GB. Gregory Slater - 7th place

## LADIES K1

1. Susanne Gunnarsson - SWE 3:34:36
2. Ursula Profanter - AUT 3:34:53
3. Jane Hall - AUS 3:44:11
4. Kerston Niclaus - GER 3:46:01
8. Alison Thorogood - GBR 3:49:15

## MENS K2

1. Ramon Andersson/Steve Wood - AUS 3:06:19:0
2. Bruno Jannis/Werner Jannis - BEL 3:06:19:9
3. Magnus Skoldback/Tommy Karle - SWE 3:06:20
4. Robert Herreveld/Neil Evans - RSA 3:06:21
16. Ian Timbrell/Mark Gibbins - GBR 3:16:05

## LADIES K2

1. Anette Schuck/Antse Manruni - GER 3:31:00
2. Sandra Troop/Maria Blumenthal - GBR 3:31:00
3. Hanne Slemer/Bettina Larsen - DEN 3:31:02
4. Agnes Groddi/Andrea Bird - HUN 3:31:41
- 8th Bernadette Pagon/Rachel Bland GBR

## CANADIAN C1

1. Gabor Kulozsvari - HUN 3:49:32
2. Paul Petervari - HUN 3:49:33
3. Paul Bednar - TCH 3:49:43
4. Stig Jepson - DEN 3:52:50

## CANADIAN C2

1. Arne Nielson/Christian Frederikson - DEN 3:21:22
2. Istvan Gyulai/Zsolt Bohacs - HUN 3:30:38



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# book & video

## White Water Nepal by Pete Knowles & Dave Allardice

**L**ove 'em or hate 'em guide books are here to stay. Arguably if you ever need one at all, you need one for Nepal. Pete (Green Slime to his mates) and Dave have produced a mountain of information for a mountainous country - a very varied landscape with more white water than you can shake a paddle at. The guide's strength is its readability: information is presented in a paddler-friendly format, which scores over the factual grades and maps approach we are often used to seeing.

White Water Nepal is factual, so much so that it is obviously the massed collective experience of almost every Western paddler who has ever been there. I hesitate to say this but this guide looks definitive - a dangerous statement. The book covers so much 'off the water' experience it stands as a travelogue for Nepal in its own right. Added to this anecdotal accounts of previous trips it amounts to a history of

kayaking and rafting in the area.

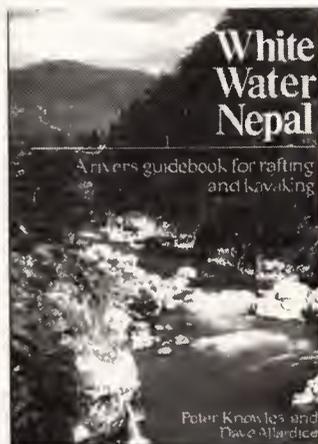
Visiting a region so alien to Westerners can be fraught with dangers and complications. Simply patting a small child's head could land you in big trouble as the head is sacred in Nepal. The guide is conservation friendly and deals sensitively with our encroachment on another culture in the name of recreation. Hopefully with this amount of good advice on everything from health through to food, transport, security, and religion we can avoid problems caused by lack of understanding. On the water it is hard to fault the guide. Clear maps, water table profiles, photo's and the odd Foxy Cartoon well presented in Slime's enthusiastic and humorous conversational style.

The merits of self contained trips versus Commercial Raft supported trips are discussed in full and the financial advice given here has not been obtained easily. The authors experiences here alone make

the cover price worthwhile.

If you plan to visit Nepal you cannot afford to be without this guide. If you have no plans for a visit the guide will probably change your mind. This work sets the standard for future guides to be measured against. Please can we have one for the whole of Europe in the same style?

*Published jointly by Rivers Publishing UK and Menasha Ridge Press. Price £11.95*



## CANADIAN CANOEING DEMONSTRATION

**M**obile Adventure have located and revived a film which we feared was lost to posterity. It features Reg Blomfield,



an open canoe title holder in America, Canada and Internationally. The boat in which he demonstrates is clearly nearer a racing C1 than the conventional touring canoe of today, and in this light and lively beast he

performs with a level of skill and cool competence which leaves one well impressed. During 20 minutes the film takes us through some basic skills, white water skills, surfing and running the wash of a large steamer - changing position, including standing up, whilst maintaining his position on the wave! There are also fun moments, including a gunnel walk - something I have yet to see performed in modern times.

Made in 1934 by the Province of Ontario Film Company, and transferred to video, the film is in black and white, and does not have the crisp clarity of a modern production. The sound track has suffered a little, but in spite of this, it is a gem not to be missed by the true enthusiast of the open canoe. By the way, if you are sitting on the original 16mm version, please own up!

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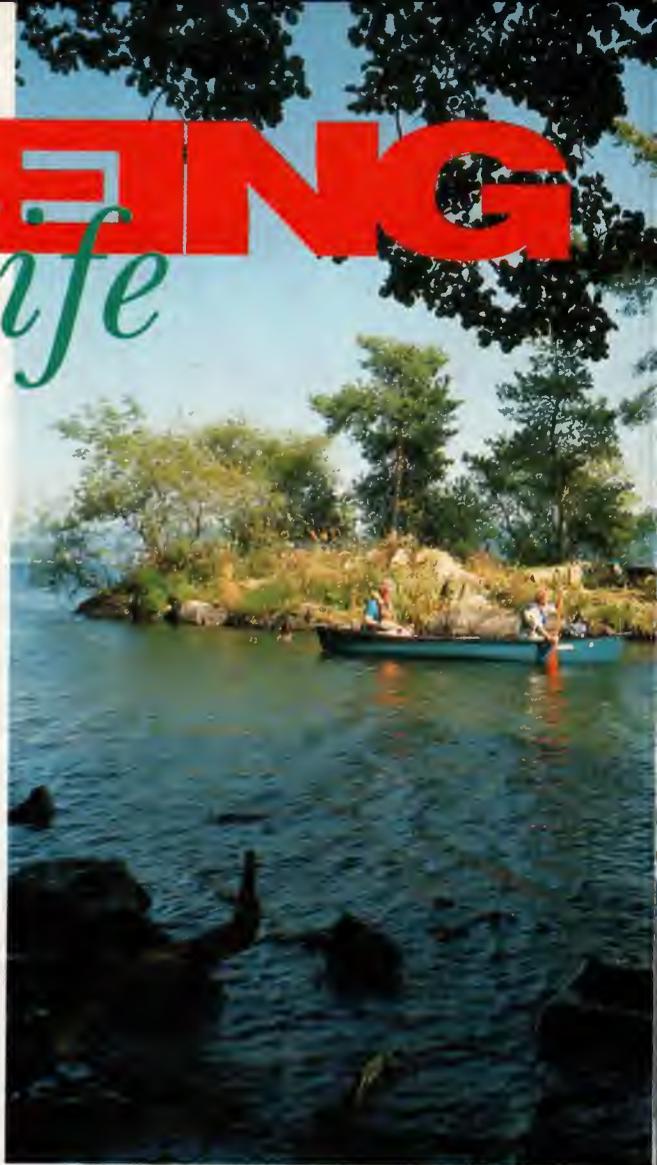
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# CANOEING with Wildlife



across the bow of our Canadian canoe to settle on a reed. A type of damselfly related to, but smaller and lighter than a dragonfly, it allowed quite close approach. "I doubt if we'd have got this close approaching from land," confirmed Elspeth, covering her face with fine, black netting to melt herself into the background of swaying phragmites.

## TOLERANCE OF PEOPLE

"Waterside wildlife seems to be more tolerant of people on water. Animals expect humans from the bank" she smiled, nodding towards a mallard duck escorting her newly hatched babies, like khaki-coloured corks, rising and falling on the swell of a passing boat, as they headed into the safety of the reeds.

"Sea canoeists in Scotland have been seal watching from sea kayaks for years and I think, especially here in Lakeland, that using the Lakes environment to experience nature in close proximity will prove successful."

Her environmental field courses are proving particularly popular with schools up to and including GCSE standard. These incorporate freshwater and woodland ecology with much emphasis on the impact that recreational use has on the environment and the types of recreation which not only conflict, but compliment it. In Lakeland, motor boats and jet skis conflict. Canoes and sailing craft do not.

In terms of wildlife, there are parts of Lake Windermere, especially along the East shore, that are very sensitive. These places are protected and, hopefully, don't get the full impact of general tourism.

The River Brathay which runs into Lake Windermere from Langdale, is a beautiful water to walk. Canoeing it depends upon factors such as: access permission and water level. The Kendal-Lancaster canal is a wonderful course. It is one of the few clean canals left and, because it is enclosed, is without boat traffic and rich in wildlife.

With rivers, one can go with the flow. Elspeth suggests waters like the Eden and the Kent, below the difficult bit near the motorway – a grade five.

Although the River Leven is grade 2/3, it is a private

**I**f you have ever wondered just what that butterfly was that skimmed over the bow of your canoe or the owner of those spotted eggs in their reedbed nest, Elspeth Nicholson will probably have the answer.

She is senior tutor of Mere Mountains, an outdoor pursuits centre where the environment is high on the agenda. Supported by several freelance outdoor specialists, instructing in their own field, Elspeth concentrates on her love of canoeing and nature using them as a teaching tool for serious study or general nature watching.

Her wildlife canoeing courses are really quite an experience, as I discovered on Lake Windermere. Canoeists tend to see wildlife without intention. Who wouldn't take a long, lingering look at a kingfisher darting by on electric blue wings; a dipper bobbing and curtsying on a mid-stream rock, or a fine stand of pink, Himalayan balsam growing along the bank?

"we are in an ideal environment for nature watching. Our slow, quiet movements are a definite advantage when it comes to communing with nature. In a canoe, the paddler is at one with nature – closer to the environment." said Elspeth.

Those new to this aspect of wildlife watching will, like me, relish the experience – the slow pace of the course ensures that and gives you time to stand and stare and take stock of nature around you.

A bright red darning needle with gauzy wings gyrate



**Right:**  
If you are  
really lucky,  
you might  
see a  
Kingfisher.





**Right:**  
**In a kayak**  
**you are short**  
**of space and**  
**to get steady**  
**shots as**  
**Gareth**  
**Edwards**  
**attempts here**  
**with a video**  
**camera, you**  
**need good**  
**control. For**  
**better quality**  
**it is better to**  
**stop.**



would be working in fairly shallow water of not more than knee or thigh depth, and, for additional safety, beginners should not go out alone. You just have to be sensible and judge the water."

**Left:**  
**This could be**  
**somewhere in**  
**the Canadian**  
**Rockies. But**  
**in fact is a**  
**quiet corner**  
**of Lake**  
**Winderemere.**

The kayak is small, lower slung and more manoeuvrable; ideal for getting into small inlets. But with a spraydeck on, it is very hard to have all your equipment to hand. With a Canadian, you can bring not only a rucksack and camera gear, (put into neoprene wetbags with roll-over tops that clip tight) you could pack a picnic.

Another plus for Canadians is that you can put in non paddlers immediately and they are great for the disabled, many of whom can perform on equal footing, with adaptations.

Canadians have been used as sole boats in the Rockies for hundreds of years, but here the rule is don't go out alone. It all boils down to where you are and what you are doing.

A shallow, slow-moving river or a shore where you can wade might well be acceptable, depending on individual experience. In either event, you need to be proficient in self rescue techniques whichever type of canoe you use.

Between November and March, kayaks would be a problem in terms of cold water and you would need to be a fairly competent paddler to cope in such weathers. Cold inhibits binocular and camera operation. Also, it is easier talking into a pocket tape recorder than trying to write on a moving canoe. In a Canadian you can dress warmer. It all depends on experience and ability.

Come prepared with the correct gear; a repair kit if you are in the kind of terrain where puncture is possible; dry clothes and, most importantly, good fitting buoyancy aids. Wildwaters' 'Kojack' is excellent, being multi-sized; a spare paddle with everything tied in the boat. But perhaps the most important requisite is common sense.

You should go out in the conditions the weakest member of your party can cope with. Whenever possible you paddle upwind in the morning and downwind on the return. Or, if you are really unlucky and the wind changes at lunchtime – upwind in the morning and upwind in the afternoon.

If you are concerned that to go ashore might cause disturbance, using Canadians you needn't. Two or three rafted together gives not only more working area but extra stability.

"On a river, you have to make provisions for embarking, and how you are going to get the canoe back to where you started.

Local weather reports should be followed, if in doubt, stay close to the edge. The worse that can happen is being forced to land on a private beach and someone will get upset and give the sport a bad name. . . but it's better than drowning."

**Michael Edwards**

More information on Wildlife holidays from Elspeth Nicholson on Mere Mountains 05395 31000



fishing river and canoe access is limited. Lakeland canoe club has organised Sundays here and actually issue bibs. Contact the local BCU Access Officer for details of all Lakeland Rivers and the current access position (address in yearbook).

### KAYAK VS CANADIAN

Rusland Pool, a river between the Crake and Leven, is especially rich, having a tidal estuary. "We have canoed and coraled this water. The main attraction is that you have both salt and freshwater habitats and a brackish section where the two meet. I always thought that it would be interesting to discover just how far up river estuarine flat fish will not only travel, but thrive, and this is one aspect we intend to follow up in a future programme."

"It is always dangerous recommending anything to anybody, but I prefer to use Canadians. Invariably we



**Left:**  
**Elspeth**  
**Nicholson**  
**watches**  
**intently with**  
**her**  
**binoculars**  
**resting on her**  
**rucksack.**  
**This you**  
**could not do**  
**in a kayak.**

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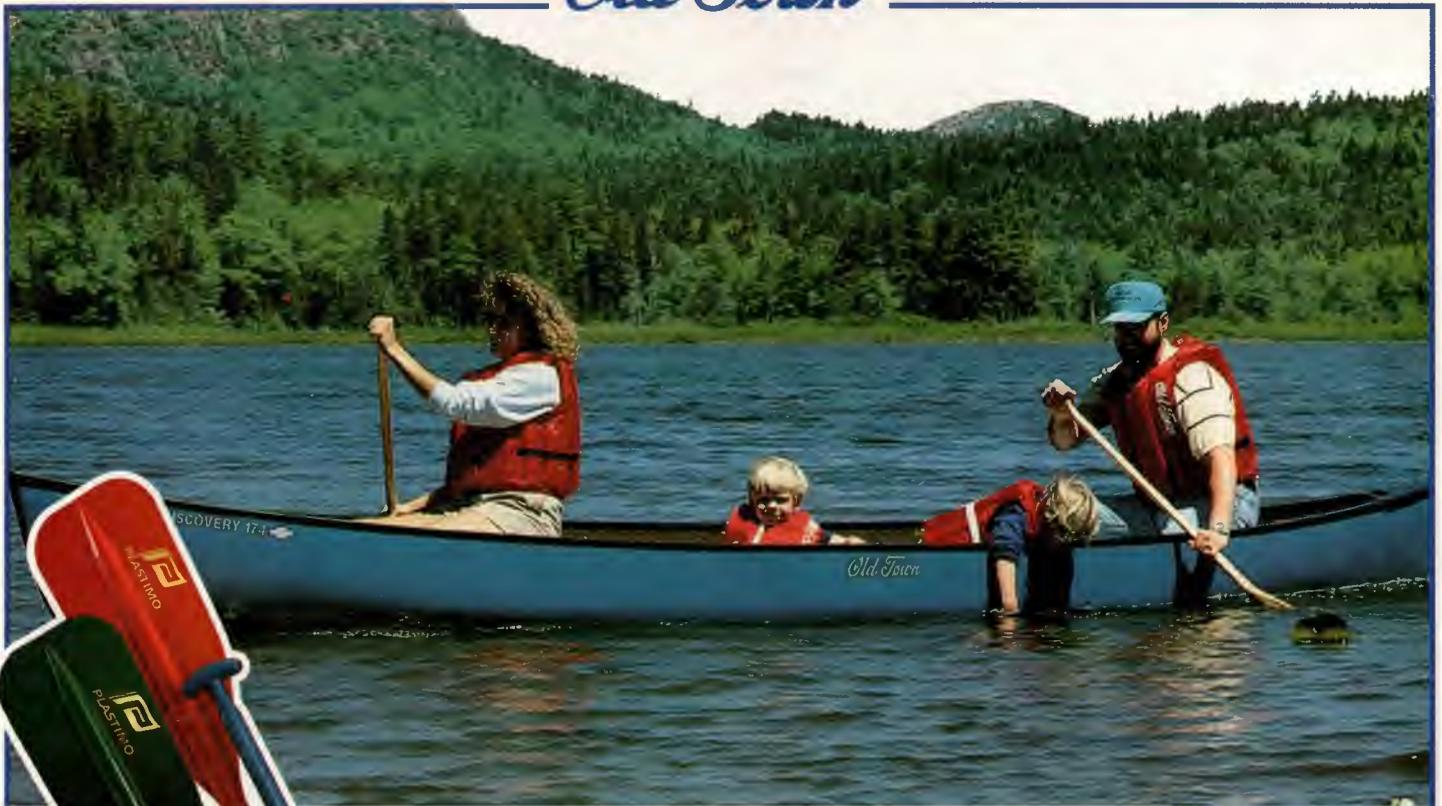
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**Above:**  
 'Have kayak  
 will travel ...  
 (me and Pat  
 with kayak at  
 airport)

**O**h ! Pretty average, as brilliant goes ! This was my initial response to enquiries about how our recent trip down the Colorado river, had gone. This was expanded to 'it was like a 20 day party, with a great bunch of wild Americans, fan-

tastic scenery, hot sunny weather, brilliant food, lots of beer and booze, and regular doses of adrenaline just for good measure'.

Not bad really, for our second, 'trip of a lifetime'. Our first one had been a seven month meander round 15,000 scenic miles of the western states of Canada and America, in 1989. Indeed, our Canyon trip was a direct result of a friendship made in Alaska in '89.

### **TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY MILES**

There's a lot of preparation to be done for a 225 river mile private trip. In our case, everything that is going to be needed by 16 people, for 18 days actually on the water, plus travelling to and from the river and assembling and filling the rafts... 21 days in total.

Patrick and I had escaped the weeks of advanced planning of food and equipment, by virtue of being the wrong side of the big pond, but were keen to help out as soon as we could, despite the intense heat. Loading 40 gallon coolers and dry-boxes the size of large blanket boxes with food fit for kings, and with both wet and dry ice to keep it all as fresh as possible!

Ammo boxes that were now being filled with food, would later become full of food that our bodies had re-processed, so that we too packed out from The Canyon ALL our waste ! Pat and I had the fun task of taking all those boxes to the dump some three weeks later - hummmm hummm !

Once on the river life rapidly set into a predictable routine. Cooking was carried out by four of us for a whole day, every fourth day, on a strictly rotational basis. And in no time at all, in the absence of watches, radios, or television, time was measured purely by when it was time to eat and the number of the day, as recorded in our highly methodical menu planning book.

Five days into the trip and I was having trouble even remembering what month it was.

Our day would begin with the smell of freshly brewed ground coffee and a leisurely breakfast. We would then meticulously pack up camp, crushing the inevitable beer cans from the night before, and loading them and everything else back on to the rafts.

More often than not the sun would have appeared some time during this process and temperatures on the shore, in the sun, would already be hitting about 90 degrees Fahrenheit. 'Last call for the sh\*\*\*er' meant we were all but ready ! The kayakers, a maximum of three at any one time, would then entertain us as they squirmed into their wet suits for the day.

When I kayaked I was surprised at how much colder it was down at water level than sat in the raft. I was told that this was because the water is released from the bottom of the Glen Canyon Dam, and is only about 43 degrees Fahrenheit by the time it reaches the put-in at Lee's ferry.

### **HERMITS RAPID**

We had hiked in The Canyon before, down to the river at Hermit's Rapid, viewing the river from the shoreline. I had been impressed then with the grandeur, beauty and tranquillity of this magic world, and now I felt truly part of it.

Spread over four rafts and several kayaks, 16 people together did not become as oppressive as I had thought it might. And though there were undoubtedly many moments of good fun and riotous behaviour, there was also plenty of time to appreciate quietly the world we now found ourselves in.

Mostly, we moved down the river slowly, awe-struck by the scale of The Canyon, squinting up into the bright sunlight trying to estimate distances and searching eagerly for any signs of wildlife.

We saw little wildlife in terms of large animals. A few curly horned sheep, and a few deer. But that any can survive that harsh environment at all is amazing, for the side creeks and splashes of flora and fauna did not always seem to coincide, even approximately, with where we spotted these hardy animals.





One night we saw ring tail cats, with just their red eyes and white tail rings visible, watching us at camp and trying to raid our food stores. Noel even got woken up by one of them licking her toes in the middle of the night!

On the smaller scale, there were lizards by the million, each with its own distinct colourations some shy and retiring, others brave and curious. Ranging in size from barely an inch long, up to a respectable 10 inches. Rattlesnakes were seen and kept well clear of.

One of the crew did have an intimate moment with a scorpion when it stung him five times. It had nested in his wet suit booty, and half way down the beach had finally decided it had had enough of being trod on. Ray stood for some time with his foot in the numbing waters of the river, rowed the raft on a real adrenaline pumping day, and seemed to be no worse for his experience by the evening.

My understanding of geology is appalling, somehow it never made any sense in the classroom. But here, as in the glacial regions of Alaska, I dearly wished I could remember more, or had those same lessons again now, in situ.

I was staggered about how there could be so many different rock formations in such a small area. You could look at one cliff edge and see all at once rock sat in horizontal layers, rock sat totally higgledy-piggeldy

## of the CANYON

and in the same wall rock in totally vertical stripes. The forces that could produce those formations were truly mind boggling.

### FIVE MILLION MILES

I also found the time scales awesome. I remember looking at one rock wall and being told that the thin black horizontal band of rock, a couple of yards above the water line, maybe eight inches deep, represented 5 million years of forming and reforming history.

There is much in The Canyon to make you feel insignificant. Yet, if you let it, it also makes you feel as if you are sharing some special secret of the worlds evolution.

The side canyons form a kaleidoscope of contrast with the main canyon, each one unique from the next. Canyons with rock that seems to flow, almost as if it has been sucked slowly towards the river through a giant straw. Where the black rocks shine and glitter as encrusted with gold or diamonds.

The little creeks become rich with vegetation, from cactus large with bulbous juicy red fruit, to bulrushes and delicate yellow orchids. Here too, willow trees that knew the days before the tamarisk grew like weed trees along the river bank.



The Little Colorado flows in, so muddy that this combined with rains in the back country drainage lands turn the main river a milky version of the colour of the red rocks. Visibility drops to less than one inch below the surface of the river, small rocks, eddy lines and swirlies become harder to see ... and reading the river takes on a new dimension.

Now the water has changed, a few more futile attempts at fishing, and then we face the reality of no more fresh trout for supper. Clear streams occasionally join us, and though they look alluring the threat of giardia is always present and still the water must be treated.

The hike to Thunder River was long and very hot, I decided it was just not sensible for a fair skinned person unused to temperatures well over a hundred to be up there hiking in the middle of the day. The others said it was absolutely breathtaking, but that the hike would have killed me off for sure.

### THUNDER RIVER

Patrick thus inspired was up at dawn the next morning, and hiked off to see for himself exactly where Thunder River flows out of the rock hundreds of feet up and falls to become a tributary into Tapeats Creek. It was, he said, one of the most magical places he'd ever seen.

At Havasu creek we hiked alongside beautiful turquoise water that makes the whole creek look like an advertisement for paradise. Five miles in, and a steep climb up Beaver falls, is an amazing creation. A little ceramic man about one foot high sits and waits for time to pass. The artist who created him then had some climbers to put him in place, on her behalf, and there he sits. We named him Beaver Man, and for the rest of the trip we felt Beaver man was looking after us.

To try and describe all the beauty of the trip would take as long as the trip itself, and the beauty was so much more than simply visual.

The air was filled with sounds of nature, from the river whispering and chattering, or roaring at the approach of rapids - it tones dipping and diving on the wind, to crickets clicking so loudly it could stop conversation.

And at times almost silence. The level of noise where at first you think it's silent, and then you hear the plants breathing, lizards scurrying, you almost think you can hear the ants as they carry on their busy schedule while you watch.

The air has a different feel and smell about it too. On the water it has a clarity and cleanness even in it's smell, and this becomes refreshing to the extent that it tingles your nostrils as you run the rapids - and of course sometimes just too darn wet to smell of anything.

On land, the dryness of the air sensitises your nose and the flowers you come across have vivid scents. As you pass through the different gorges even the different rock types seem to have different odours, some slightly musty some almost spicy. Food can be smelt at surprisingly long distances (and so too apparently, booze!).

In amongst all this beauty there is the adrenaline. Our four rafts vary in size from fourteen foot up to

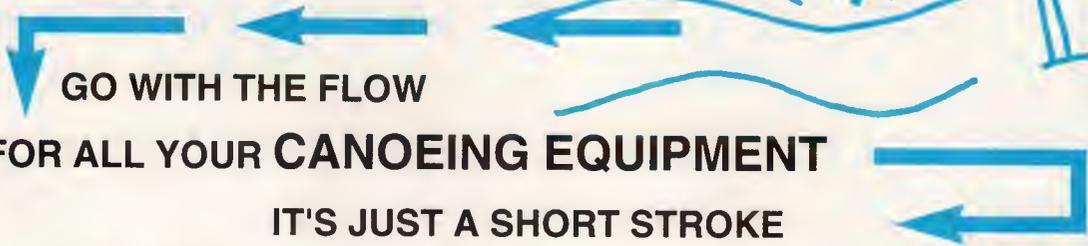
**Above:**  
**Grand !'**

**Top right:**  
**'So this is  
Lava...  
Awesome !'**

**Below:**  
**'A chip off the  
old block'**



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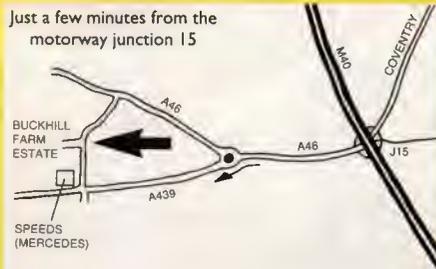
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eighteen foot, this is tiny compared to most of the rafts that run this river. We have two Dancers (one barely used - as it had been 'fitted' too tightly for most people) and our Magic Bat (which Pat and I ended up sharing with several others).

The rafts are heavily laden with most of the weight at the back and everything securely tied in. As we run the rapids we have to throw as much weight forward, low as we can - to prevent the tail ends of the rafts being sucked back into the holes.

Running the rapids becomes a team effort as the crews punch the waves on whatever is currently the 'high side', while the person at the oars negotiates munching holes, standing and huge lateral waves, that can knock you over and flip a raft in an instant.

Some days we would run a few rapids, other days there would be rapids-a-plenty. One day we ran twenty two rapids, and that was only the graded ones! Waves would reach up to fifteen foot (and occasionally higher) but it wasn't always the biggest that were the most frightening, though they were always exhilarating.

In some rapids the holes would form and reform according to no apparent pattern making route choosing a risky business. Even on quieter waters the eddy lines were very strong and as I soon found out the swirlies could spin a kayak round very easily - boy, was I glad I didn't swim!

Our Magic Bat attracted much attention on the trip. Most of the kayakers still had dancers, and none had seen a Magic Bat. It proved to be very very popular, handling the big volume water in a very stylish and clean manner. It surfed the waves smoothly and everyone who tried it was very impressed.

On one rather meaty rapid Patrick did an especially spectacular end, as a hole he'd deliberately dropped into, spat him out forcefully. I was way below and couldn't get a photo shot, but it looked as if he was going to follow this with his one and only swim, until eventually he rolled up grinning, but cursing his spray deck which had popped in the hole!

The Grand has a grading system of it's own, from one to ten (there are only two tens). It's sheer volume makes it pointless to try and equate to British kayaking grades. Even some of the many ungraded and unmarked rapids, could if taken wrong, have quite a nasty bite.

To make matters worse we found that the different guide books attributed different grades to the same rapids,

and in one case one of the two recommended guides didn't even show a medium grade 4-5 rapid!

### CRYSTAL

The grades are largely geared towards big boats - rafts, dories etc. Some rapids that weren't too bad for rafts were worse for the kayaks, and some of the biggest rapids had relatively simple sneak runs for kayaks. Thus Crystal, graded as a 10 at any water level had a runnable kayak sneak route the day we reached it, but flipped a raft bigger than ours while we were scouting.

Our friend Brad, who was trip leader, watched with the rest of us as, the other group gathered up the bits (we were too far off to help) and we lined our smallest raft past this huge rapid. A major exercise in it's own right. This meant we had a support craft below should anything go wrong.

### LAVA

By the time we reached the infamous grade 10 Lava rapid (the one that has flipped more boats than any other rapid in the Canyon) we were all well and truly hyped up. We'd heard all the horror stories, seen zillions of photo's - now we wanted to run it.

As we scouted the river in temperatures of 120 degrees Fahrenheit we watched another group half line and half carry their last raft past the rapid. We looked and looked, and chose our routes, and then we ran Lava.

It was over all too quickly, less than a minute of pure adrenaline and excitement. Water and air alternating so quickly you couldn't work out when or if it was safe to breath... so you just held on and pushed like hell. And at the end, the compulsory whooping and hollering as you realise you are safe and well.

A couple of fairly lazy days followed, slow river passage and hikes, short river days. One last party, one last day to take it all in and try and preserve it in your head and heart. Then suddenly it seemed as though time changed speed again and the trip was over.

On the whole trip we were very lucky. All that beauty and splendour, all that excitement. We flipped no rafts, the two kayaking swims were blessedly uneventful. No one was ill. We broke only one raft oar (in Lava). And we still had beer on the last night... aah but that's another story.

Jill Lee.

Photos by Jill and Patrick Lee.



### THE RULES AND REGULATIONS

It is very easy to get flippant about The Grand Canyon, to knock the rules and regulations that are in place, and the associated bureaucracy. Likewise, it's easy for private trips, like ours, to moan about the commercials as they pass by with their motors spoiling the peace of The Canyon. But there really is a need for perspective. The rules and regulations serve to ensure that those of us who are lucky enough to take this trip can really enjoy it. Without them, the thousands of people who go down The Canyon each year, would have a far greater impact on the fragile environment. In all our time on the river, the most we found marking any of the 40 odd beaches we landed on, was footprints, the most we left behind was footprints. The commercial trips allow many people who would not otherwise experience this spectacular environment to come and be part of it for a while. Anyway, given the faster speeds that the commercial guides have to do their runs, they do not shatter the peace for long. When we got a chance to speak to the commercial guides we found them very interesting, helpful and generous. Many of them run non-motorised trips too, and seemed to have a certain camaraderie with us, because of that.



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# dear focus

## TO WEAR OR NOT TO WEAR A BUOYANCY AID

### Dear Focus:

I have followed the debate on the wearing of buoyancy aids with interest and I find that I agree with most of the points made by Helen Mullineux and some of those from the Director of Coaching (CoDe June 1992). However, I would like the opportunity to add my thoughts on this important issue. D of C suggests that "It must, however, remain the freedom of choice of the individuals who is sufficiently experienced, to make his or her own decision. Leaving aside the similarity between this statement and those heard from a minority of car-drivers when the wearing of seat belts was made mandatory, I would ask all those individuals who are "sufficiently experienced" and chose not to wear a buoyancy aid when training or paddling for fun and know that they do not need the added safety of a buoyancy aid whether they also know whether the people, especially the teenagers, watching their antics in the weir, training round the poles or peaceful paddle along the canal can also manage without the added safety factor? Some of those watchers will, hopefully, be drawn towards canoeing and maybe given it a try. Most will do so through a club and receive, hopefully, advice on safety matters. However, some may not and paddle off down the river bliss-

fully unaware of the existence of such things as buoyancy aids.

D of C also points out that "The senior racing and marathon racing fraternity traditionally do not wear buoyancy aids,....". Tradition is not a valid reason, it may be an excuse. Traditionally women were not given the vote, traditionally we spat on our hands before shaking hands to seal a contract, traditionally many groups of sailors considered that learning to swim was tempting providence and so on. The fact is that Trevor Bailey died in still water while canoeing in a racing kayak without a buoyancy aid and it is possible that such an aid may have saved his life. Perhaps this fact should give the traditionalists cause for thought. It is disingenuous of the Director of Coaching to imply that because Trevor's death was the first recorded death on still water from a racing kayak that this is a valid reason to condone the non-wearing of buoyancy aids by racers.

I would like to ask any ranking slalomists for a valid reason for not wearing a buoyancy aid when racing? You must wear one in competition so you all must have one, so no cost saving is evident? Many runners train with added weights so perhaps slalomists should be training with extra-large (white water) buoyancy aids. A similar question

could be asked of people who train in shallow water, particular below weirs, without helmets, however the intelligence quota of such people probably preclude coherent answers.

Finally, as a white water kayaker, I get my high from taking on the river, as a kayak and canoe instructor, I enjoy teaching beginners, young and old alike, to enjoy the river and to learn to control their crafts. I assume that competition kayakers/canoists get their high from competing against each other and the water, touring paddlers presumably enjoy the journeying. None of us seek to make it more dangerous to heighten our enjoyment - except those who paddle without a buoyancy aid and or helmet.

**Martyn Green, Oxon**

### Geoff Good comments:

I agree with Martyn regarding example, and dislike seeing paddlers in white water boats on deep water, without them. It is also quite wrong, it seems to me, on the grounds of 'example' for instructors teaching groups in white water boats, not to wear buoyancy aids, as, unfortunately, sometimes occurs.

Martyn wants to retain his right to decide for himself whether or not to accept the risks involved in white water canoeing. We know that each year at least two paddlers die regardless of the

wearing of buoyancy aids, helmets, and so forth. It is a risk which is ever present.

He does not, however, apparently believe that racing paddlers should have the same right of individual freedom of choice as to whether or not they are willing to accept the minimal risks of their sport, which is virtually accident free.

The example of seat belts is not a good parallel. There are 6,000 deaths a year on the roads, and many thousands of serious injuries. The carnage is the same as fighting the entire Falklands war every three weeks. Numerous lives are known to be saved, and serious injuries avoided, through the law on the wearing of belts. A buoyancy block in the back of the K2 would almost as certainly have avoided Trevor's death as the wearing of a buoyancy aid - it is not the same thing at all.

Racing paddlers do not wear buoyancy aids for reasons of technique, impudence, and control of body temperature. Tradition was stated as a simple fact, not a reason.

Deaths and serious injuries on the football field could presumably be avoided if rugby football players wore the body armour and helmets that American football players wear. It's all football - shouldn't the same regulations apply?



## ABSOLUTELY BRILLIANT!!!

### Dear Focus

I felt I must write this letter to express my opinion about the changes to the river Washburn. **THEY ARE ABSOLUTELY BRILLIANT!!!**. The big weir is excellent for looping, poppin' out and pirouettes, not to mention simply doing it backwards or trying to get the breakout! I hope you're not thinking of changing it again.

It is not just me, many of my friends agree. I also did rescue below the weir on the Washburn Tour. This normal-

ly being a boring job I was a bit reluctant at first but after the first hour we had pulled 17 people out and were having great fun (I even got two swimmers with one throw). Over the weekend about 70 people must have swum.

I doubt the well being of the safety crew was a design factor, in fact I'm certain it wasn't, but nevertheless you really brought pleasure to Graham Mitchell who spent most of the weekend on the dry end of a throw bag performing

heroics. If so many people fell in, then maybe it would be a good idea to change it but most of the people who did it paddled past uttering yelps of YAR-HOO. Even the ones who fell out thought it was much better than last year. Also by taking the right line, just to the left of centre, it was proved by my Dad that it was in fact ludicrously easy.

The other changes aren't bad with the standing waves above the first foot bridge providing a good hand

surfing spot.

Personally, rather than spending any more money on changing the river I think it would be much better spent on erecting a hugh mosquito net from the dam to the road bridge!

Thank you David Gent and colleagues for all the hard work you put in last winter.

**Rob Taylor  
(Son of Peter)!**

More letters on page 36



# top tips

and handy hints

## STANDARD HAND & PADDLE SIGNALS

by Marcus  
Baillie.  
Additional  
text and  
photographs  
by Kevin  
Danforth.

A system of hand and paddle signals to help river paddlers "talk" to other paddlers in the team and communicate over distances and near noisy white water when verbal communication can be confused or impossible.

It is not intended that any one person on any one river will need a great number of signals. There are dozens of them and the scope for needless confusion is enormous. Select from the list

only ones which are appropriate for the day.

Any signal used should look like a signal, not just a casual flick of the wrist, or twitch of the paddle. If you feel self-conscious or embarrassed about the idea of using signals then use some other system of communication. In general signals should be incredibly clear and exaggerated. Signals are often preceded by a whistle blast or shout to attract attention.

### A. Leader/probe (Instructor to Students)

Instructor or Situation	Signal	Description	Comments
1. One person only to come down the rapid.		Paddle or one arm held vertically or beckon once with a vertical arm.	Hold on for several seconds.
2. Come down one after the other. (At the prearranged interval).		Vertical paddle or arm "pumped" up and down several times.	For easy rapids.
3. Stop or do not come or do not do that etc.		Paddle held or pumped up and down horizontally or arms held above the head with forearms crossed diagonally.	This signal can be used in a variety of situations.
4. Go to the right (or left).		Paddle or arm held diagonally upwards in the appropriate direction.	
5. Break out there.		1. Point at the person. 2. Hit the front deck of your own boat with an outstretched arm then 3. Point at the required spot.	As though to say: "Put your boat there".
6. Join me here.		Bring both hands up and place on top of your head. (A variation on a military signal).	
7. Slow down at the front.		Arm horizontal and moved slowly up and down.	As in driving a car or or bike. This allows the rest of the group to catch up.

## B. After a capsized

Instructor or Situation	Signal	Description	Comments
8. "Swimmer"		Breast stroke action with both arms.	To initially alert everyone.
9. Swimmer coming down.		Breast stroke action then point at the river.	Signalled to rescuers below to expect a swimmer.
10. Boat coming down.		Arms held as wide as possible then point at the river.	As though to say "large object in the water."
11. Paddle coming down.		Arms held close together (in front) then point at the water.	As though to say "small object in the water."

## C. Miscellaneous

12. Raft coming down.	 	Make the action of open canoe (Canadian) paddling then point upstream and cover face with both hands.	Both signals used repeatedly warn kayakers of imminent "steamroller."
13. You		Point straight at the person.	
14. Rock		Tap yourself on the head with one hand several times.	Frequently used to suggest an unexpected or critical rock.
15. Tree		Paddle Horizontal in one hand. Slap several times with the flat of the Hand.	In Practice there is no confusion with the 'stop' signal. Even if there is it doesn't matter.
16. Understood, Good, Well done, Nice Line etc.		Thumbs up, or make circle with thumb and forefinger. Grin Optional.	Good positive feedback, use often.

These signals form the basis of a workable visual communications system which most people can understand and use after a short practice session at the campsite or in the bar. With practice over a period of time detailed conversations may be had about the rapid you are about to run. Extra signals are added when needed, for example in hazard recognition, spikes, stopper, sump etc.

 Try to avoid over complicating: if the person you are signalling to does not understand it is your fault! If in doubt repeat the signal. If confusion

prevails, stop, until it does not Try describing a rapid you all know well using only the signals: a great pub game.

*Marcus and Kevin have written a more comprehensive guide to signals 'How to speak Riverese', shortly available from BCU Office.*

*Marcus Bailie was previously at Plas y Brenin and now works at Tiglin National Centre, it's Irish equivalent.*

*He is also the author of the book 'Canoeing and Kayaking'.*

Compiled by Marcus Bailie, with considerable contribution from Franco Ferrero, Terry Storry, Loel Collins and Kevin Danforth.



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**Longridge Scout Boating Centre** require qualified instructors from June to September '93, to help run canoeing and sailing courses together with general help around the centre. Applicants should have a background in Scouting or Guiding. For more information please contact: The Manager, Longridge SBC, Quarry Wood Road, Marlow, Bucks, SL7 1RE. Tel 0628 483252

**Instructors and Assistants** required for 1993 season at multi-activity centre. Should be experienced in wide range of outdoor pursuits with qualifications in at least one area. Clean driving licence, valid first aid certificate and experience of working with children essential. Apply Sealyham Activity Centre, Wolfscastle, Haverfordwest, Pems, SA62 5NF. Tel: 0348 840763.

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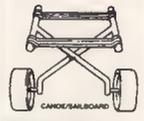
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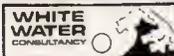
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EDITION DATED OCTOBER 1992



**Dear Focus:**

Today my family received our three copies of Canoe Focus, we eagerly opened them hoping to find an informed article on the Barcelona Olympics by maybe, the team coach or even the team manager. Unfortunately, the only reference to the games was two sentences and a minute picture of Gareth Marriott compared with a full page spread and colour pictures of the Canoe Sailing events.

I would be interested to know how many active competitors there are in these two sports and does the amount of coverage reflect this?

It would be nice to see a few more articles aimed at the grass routes of canoeing eg, a regular club feature, instead of endless expedition reports from places that ninety percent of paddlers cannot afford to go.

On the positive side it may be a good idea if some of the specialist articles that appear in CoDe could be printed in Focus as many active competitors in all disciplines are not members of the Coaching Scheme.

**John Godbold**

*Deadlines unfortunately fell awkwardly as far as the Olympics were concerned: we did manage coverage of the slalom and our only Medal. Did you miss the August issue? It is difficult to achieve a balanced magazine in such a diverse sport. Efforts will continue. Some of your other comments are covered by articles in this issue, particularly clubs and the grass roots.*

**Editor**

**CHIPPENDALES**

**Dear Focus:**

I was disgusted to see a competitor at a Tryweryn slalom (7.6.92) without a stitch on! He did not have the decency to cover himself whilst changing. This happened at about 3pm in the main car park whilst there were children around. I would have been quite willing to provide a privet leaf (a fig leaf would have been too big) for the sake of decency. If any man decides to do this in future can they please make sure they have the body of a Chippendale and not a scarecrow.

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**C2 Diolen** construction, Pyranha £100 ono, excellent condition. White Water Dancer plastic canoe £180 ono excellent condition. Tel: 0594 542216 near Symond Yat rapids.

**Rotobat** full w/w spec, X-link, yellow. Absolutely as new, hardly used, garage stored £300 081 850 4013

**K2 Mirage** racing kayak, solid, good condition, overstem, handles, £200 Tel: Richard 0822 810690

**Solway Dory** Sailing Rig. Complete hardly used. £175 or nearest offer. Newblade surf paddles 190 RH 85DEG. £60 Tel: Howard 0602 863770 home, 0602 614995 work

**White Water Racing C2**. All kevlar GAYBO Fluo. Good condition, very stable and easy to paddle £120 ono Tel: 0222-842481

**Avoncraft fast touring** kayak orange/white good condition £150 ono Tel: C Cherry 0732 359343

**Canoe Trailer**. K2 with rudder. 2x Plastic kayaks price negotiable 0222 692108. **Gaybo Duo C2** full kevlar construction good condition £200 ono Tel: S Cooper 0272 670183

**Nodkapp HM**, Red, chimp pump, new decklines & hatchcovers, VGC £375 Tel: P Tattersal 0760 22148 (Swaffham)

**Europa white water spec**. Buoyancy bags front & rear, spraydeck, paddle, buoyancy aid £150 Tel: 021 460 1724

**Two seater canoe** in very good condition GRP with paddles. For quick sale £120 Tel: 0778 344484

**Mirage K2** Overstem s/steel wires, handles, VGC, good D/W boat £350 Tel: J Cattermole, 0273 472760 (Lewes) eves.

**Open canoe**, Old Town Penobscot 16ft, with skid plates fitted. Nice fast boat for touring. Offers around £375 Tel: Gareth 0509 890543

**Sea Kayak**, P/H Orion in excellent condition with spraydeck, drybags and paddle float. Offers around £275 Tel: Gareth 0509 890543

**Prijon Topolino/Spud**, green, good condition £250. Prijon Invader, purple, used 4 times £260, no holds or folds in either. Please contact Heather 0628 777490

**Magic Bat**, Full white water spec. As new, only used on flat water £350, schlegel paddle £45 Tel 0522 750563.

**White Water** twin seal spraydeck, large, unused £35 ono Tel: Steve 021 474 5878

**2 K2 discoveries** £250 each ono, 1 Stratus Eclipse K2 £300 ono, 1 Discovery K1 £350 ono, 4 Valley Weekenders (sea canoes) hardly used £400 ono Tel: 0480 217881

**K1 Valley Weekender**, new condition £250, reason for sale, age! Norfolk, will meet halfway Tel: 0362 87233

**Canadian**, made by D C Boats, Suffolk. Fibreglass 16ft 6", 30 inch beam, slight rocker. Little used. Norfolk will meet halfway Tel: 0362 87233.

**Mi 415 Tourer**, blue plastic, good condition £175 ono. Tel: S Young 041 945 5612 (Glasgow)

**Ottersports canadian canoe** 16', good condition. Also includes 3 adult paddles and 2 buoyancy aids for toddlers £120. Tel: Mike Collins 0604 402226

**Phoenix Phreeranger** tent for sale. Excellent for solo use, has only been used 3 times. Great condition £175 Tel: 0372 379479

**Tiger K1**, sandwich construction, sprint use only at 8 regattas. As new condition complete with fitted Kirton Kayaks cover £400 Tel: E G Scotson 0525 379720

**Palm Dry Cag** Large v.g.c £35. Long John wetsuit, medium £20. Wildwater helmet £10 Tel P Rodgers 0297 24209

**Perception Dancer XS**, Jade Green, white water spec, good condition £220 Tel: 0394 460 670

**Coleman Canadian 16'** black "White Water". Good condition £350 ono Tel: 0793 813842

**Pyranha Mountain Bat Extreme**, full white water spec. including 'cage', vgc £280 ono Tel P Diamond 0502 512756 or Work 0603 222832

**Ziggy First** - Slalom canoe, suitable for younger paddlers. Good condition, well constructed £150 Tel: 0244 390326 evenings/weekends.

**Boxer K2** less than 2 years old VGC plus roof bars £500 ono. Tel: 0280 703119

**Prijon T Slalom** 2 years old, very good condition £245 Red inc spraydeck and buoyancy bags. J Harding 0525 370525

**Holidays 1993** North Wales holiday 3 bedroom Marina property £150 per week available July to Sept incl. Tel: 081 804 1864

**Turkey Euphrates** and Coruli Rivers May - August COLORADO 12 days September. Further details from Dave Manby, 125 Hook Rise South, Surbiton, Surrey, KT6 7NA.

**Extreme Slalom Kayak**. Little used good condition Kelvar carbon construction must be seen £230. Extra Tiny suitable for paddler under 14 years of age. Very good condition £120. Consideration would be given to an exchange for sea kayak and travel costs etc. Ring 051-342-5170 anytime.

**Bardsey sea boat**, winning boat at the Anglesey, Torbay and Coquet sea races. Fast, stable, hatches etc £250. Scarba Sea Double 21'6". 3 Hatches, pump, rudder, decklines, £500. no George Oliver Tel: Notts 0602 819758

**Mountain Bat**, 3 Years Old, Pink, desperate to sell, offers around £180. Tel: 0635 48511(w) Ext 237 from 9am to 5pm.

**Snipe**. Diolen or glass cheap but sound! Andrew 0992 714461 (Junction 26 M25)

**WANTED Canadian Canoe** 16 foot, Prospector, Hudson or Huron, must be in good condition Tel: 0454 316169

**Wild Water Expedition** buoyancy aid, small size in good condition and fairly cheap, can't travel far. Roof bars for Peugeot 205 3 door (gutterless), upright bars in good condition. Tel: 0734 265808 Reading.

**Dancer or similar** medium/low volume kayak in London or SE Tel: Caterham 0883 342181

**Junior slalom kayak** wanted to suit 8 year old. Please telephone Phil Stephenson 0904 790782

**Open canoe** - Old Town suitable for touring with wife, child & cuddly toys Tel: Andy of Fiona Cox 0932 564864 after 6pm

**Double canoe** must be stable and in good condition Tel: 081 804 1864 Alan Shersby (NE London)

**Racing kayak** to suit junior paddler. Also wet suit for junior 5ft tall. Tel: 0544 318821

**Perception Dancer**, Dancer XT or Mirage plus all associated kit, ie Paddles, buoyancy, any deck, roof rack, etc. whole package or parts of, bought for sensible price. Giles Westaway 0769 80431 Traval

**Interceptor 4 WWR** - Gaybo and Scimitar WWR - Baron. Please check your garage ! Phone Susan 0225 753641 x3355 (day) or 0703 456001 (weekends)

**LOST & FOUND**

**Lost 1 set of Gees Paddles** & 1 set of Ainsworth paddles on the River Dochart Aug 1992 above Killin Falls. Phone Butch: 0923 266073

**Found at Mile End Mill**, Llangollen on 8 Sept 1992, a Gul Cagjac. Owner contact 0584 875247 for its return.

**STOLEN**

**1991 Topoleno Duo Red**, Value £506. Stolen from Kingston University base at Albany Park, Kingston - this being one of four canoes recently stolen, including Stunt Bats, Falchions. There are crime numbers for these items showing Police are informed and we are looking for any information leading to return of same. A reward will be offered. The Topoleno Duo Red is easily recognised, so we are asking all friends to keep "an eagle eye open" for this particular canoe.

**Pyranha Mountain Bat II** serial number HDPX 209 BH-1. This Aquamarine Mountain Bat fitted out to 1993 standard specification was obtained by using a stolen cheque book, cheque card and identification. A reward is offered for information leading to the recovery of the boat and prosecution of the individual concerned.

**Twr-Y-Felin Outdoor Centre**  
BCU Qualified Instructors required for 1993. Experienced in teaching both adults and children. Aged 25+. Clean driving licence. Good rates of pay. Also required experienced and enthusiastic assistant instructors.  
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SA62 6QS  
Tel: 0437 720391  
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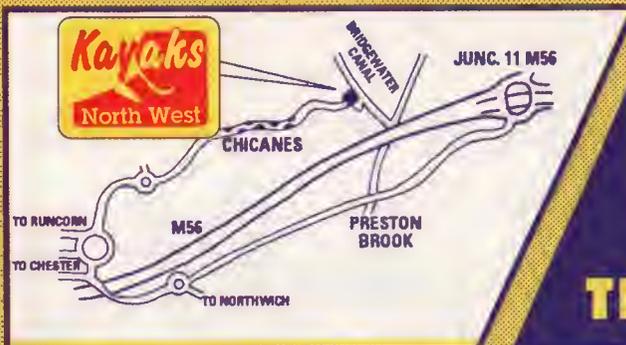
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# Paddlers gear

New equipment is reviewed and tested by paddlers for paddlers. The informed views are collected from a variety of canoeists but are subjective and not an official BCU recommendation of any kind, nor is any BCU approval implied.

## GORILLA GRIP

P & H have produced Gorilla Paddles to supply the contemporary slalom demand for asymmetric blades, adding to the four specialised blades already serving the top end of that discipline. The gorilla blade is in direct competition with those but is significantly cheaper, although recreational paddlers may still balk at the price tag. The blades are well made with a solid feel out of the water. In the water they are firm and flutter free. Although the overall area is not much greater than a standard full size slalom blade there is certainly a lot more bite on forward paddling and support/recovery strokes felt positive. Feathering and slicing is where the blades really score, and after the first broken water session I could not tell that they were asymmetric, until I accelerated. They are available in several specifications and lay-ups including Polo (no alloy tip) and later a scaled down version for apprentice Gorillas who would struggle to pull the bigger blade. Some US playboaters use Carbon composite paddles for recreational boating and this trend has started in Europe. With the price of well known German paddles rising with the Mark, some UK river paddlers may consider high performance blades an option.

Price : Blades from £110 per pair. Mounted on semi-carbon shaft £139. P & H Ltd, West Hallam, Derbyshire. 0602 320155



## Back to the Future ? Composite Stunt Bat



**I**t is funny how the wheel turns full circle. The second new kayak I owned was a glass and diolen Everest. Old memories and a fondness for dumping Northumbria Surf have formed a strong and enduring bond and a yearning for the days when the smell of a new kayak was matched only by eagerness to feel the sleek, rigid hull on the water, it's smooth, unscarred and heavily polished surface gliding effortlessly. Love and romance are wonderful things. The reality was harsh too: riverbank repairs, resin rash, the graunching crunch of instant feedback telling you your line was not that good, or your break-out accurate enough. The penalties for necky runs and pilot error were lost hours of paddling and learning about repairs in dark and dingy garages. Pub arguments have raged for years since the Roto-Revolution. 'Glass is faster' 'Plastic pig paddlers just aren't accurate' 'Tupperware rock bashers' 'If they were paddling a glass boat they would be more careful'. Since the mid eighties anyone seen in a glass kayak was either a 'slalom snootie' or an old weirdo. The new composite stunt bat was met

with the following reactions in the BCU car park, all within an hour. "Its about time someone did that"

"What are you doing with a kevlar boat, fat boy." (*harsh but true*)

"That looks f....fantastic"

"What's the point of that then?"

"I want one" (*olympic slalomist*)

If it is radical enough to cause that range of reaction there must be something going on here. Based on a winning design and almost exactly the same dimensions as it's plastic cousin, the stunt bat is no surprise shape wise. The surprise is the performance. A good analogy would be fitting a turbo charger to your family saloon. It is faster and carves quicker and the seat is a big improvement. Because there is no need to have big plastic thigh braces there is more room for the fuller figure although it may be a shock to our younger brethren to have to resort to fiddling about with bits of foam and glue. To us nostalgia freaks, it's all part of the fun. Safety has not been compromised. Full plate footrest and a large keyhole cockpit remain as standard. There is a strong lobby of opinion that the extra rigidity will make the boat less likely to broach or pin and it will bounce rather than wrap. The glass kayak is so responsive, it really pushes home the realisation that in plastics production performance has always been diluted by durability. For sea surfers and rodeo paddlers there will be no contest. For those who can afford both this gives the

option of a ditch/rock basher and the 'Sunday' boat for the Rodeo or the big photo opportunity. Weighing in at about 14kg it is very light compared to even the linear version but chunky compared to ICF slalom minimum of 9kg. A joy to carry, it will mean that some purchasers will have to learn ancient art of the shoulder carry... no more car park drags. The tough lay-up of Kevlar carbon and diolen with reinforced hull and deck, particularly around the legs makes for a rigid and tough craft, with almost squirt boat rigidity.

The top weight for the boat is about 12.5 stones but even so I enjoyed paddling it. It may also bridge the gap between play and competition again. The same kayak for the novice slalomist, expert playboater or recreational boater. Cosmetically all things are possible, any colour, any pattern, glitter, stripes, Thomas the Tank. Individuality again: how will we cope ?

A composite Magic Bat will soon be available.

It remains to be seen whether they will be sold in large numbers or if we return to the 'what colour should I have this season' era. I can remember when green glitter was the thing to have: that was my first new boat. Oh ... and another thing... this one smells just as goooooood. Price £599. Glitter extra.

**Pyranha Mouldings, Preston Brook, Runcorn, Cheshire.**  
Tel: 0928 716666



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MOUNTAIN



Designed for adventurers, Mountain Bat is a fast-turning but safe and secure kayak for any sporting scenario, from white water to surfing. The first thing you'll notice about the Mountain Bat is its basic stability - it offers a platform very few boats can equal. Paddling along, its volume and hydrodynamically profiled bow ensures a smoothness that, once experienced, could prove addictive. The new deck layout gives more leg room. Taller paddlers will be able to exit the boat easily. The increased 'V' in the rear deck will improve water shedding particularly in reverse manoeuvres. Enthused over by newcomers to "playing the river" and seasoned expedition veterans alike. The Mountain Bat lets you paddle with panache.



Pyranha Mouldings Limited, Marina Village, Preston Brook, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 3DW.  
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