

THE CANOE SPORT MAGAZINE FOR THE NINETIES

Canoe focus

No 85. OCTOBER 1993

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Canoe Focus

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Front cover photo: Over forty open canoes gathered for a paddle, along the South Devon coast from Axmouth to Beer, on the first Saturday in July. Organised by Bob Ottley and Geoff Hunt of Axevale Canoe Club - who specialise in open canoeing - this annual event attracted enthusiasts from all over the country who joined local club members for sun, sea and surf on the warmest weekend of the year. Is this the largest ever gathering of open canoes ever seen on the sea in Britain? (correspondence welcomed)

Your contributions make Focus happen. The quality and variety of news, articles, reports and photographs depend on the submission of material from you. Very few contributors are professional writers and photographers. Please don't be put off writing because you have no experience! Canoe Focus is all about canoeist to canoeist dialogue: a paddler's magazine written by paddlers.

Technical Information. Contributions are acceptable in clear handwriting or typed (double spaced). PC disks (3.5 or 5.25) can be read from most Word Processing programmes especially if saved as an ASCII file. Macintosh Files saved as DOS or ASCII can also be scanned. Photographic images are preferred on transparencies (colour slide). Artwork and line drawings should be clear and large. All material is accepted on the understanding that the BCU and it's agents cannot be held liable or responsible for loss or damage, although every care and effort is taken to safeguard material.

A help sheet is available for potential contributors. Please send a SAE to the Editor.

The next Copy date is the 28 OCTOBER 1993. Material arriving at FOCUS after this date cannot be included in the DECEMBER issue.

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World's Selection Rodeo at The Bitches paddling the "AVENGER" GAINING 1ST PLACE

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Comment



ENGLISH REGIONAL AGM


East	22 Nov	8.00pm	Sandy Motel, Bedfordshire.
East Midlands	3 Nov	7.00pm	Portland Leisure Centre, Trent Bridge, Nottingham.
London & South East	24 Nov	8.00pm	St John's Middle School, Caterham.
North	19 Nov	7.30pm	Wentworth Leisure Centre, Hexham.
North West	20 Nov	5.00pm	First Youth, Rivington, Chorley.
South	16 Nov	8.00pm	Liston Hall, Liston Road, Marlow.
South West	26 Nov	7.30pm	YMCA, Friern Avenue, Bridgwater.
West Midlands	6 Dec	7.30pm	Ackers Trust, Small Heath, Birmingham.
Yorks & Humberside	2 Dec	8.00pm	Queens Hotel, Pontefract.

Motions and Nominations for officers and Regional Committee members for election at the AGM, signed by two BCU individual members entitled to vote, must reach the Regional Committee Secretary at least 21 days before the date of the AGM. Most regional constitutions provide for the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary to be elected; also for two representatives of the BCU individual members to be elected; and for the Regional Representatives to the BCU Council, and Specialist Committees whose constitutions provide representation to be elected or approved at the AGM.

The Agenda for the AGM will be dispatched to any BCU individual members and Regional Associates who provide the Regional Committee Secretary with a stamped addressed envelope at least 21 days before the date of the meeting. Agendas will be dispatched to affiliated clubs without special request.


Regional Secretaries, whose names and addresses are in the BCU Members Yearbook, can provide more detailed information.

TWENTY THREE PERCENT INCREASE IN SPORTS COUNCIL FUNDING


 The marvellous news as we go to press is that as a direct result of the BCU's recent achievements and the production of the BCU's New Development Plan 1993-1997 the Sports Council is to increase its grant in support of canoeing by twenty three percent from November 1993. As Sportsmen and Women I know that we all find the production of written plans for the development of our activities a difficult and time consuming occupation. However, in order to manage our business properly these plans are essential and the benefits can now be seen.

Full details of the Development Plan are described by David Ghent, Chairman of BCU Council in this issue of Canoe Focus and we would welcome any comments that you, the most important component in the package, the members, have.


YOUNG PERSONS CONFERENCE

 In order to discuss the way ahead for this vitally important group there will be a young persons conference on October 17th at Holme Pierrepont. If you wish to contribute please contact me at the BCU Office.


TOURING

 The first ICF recognised Thames Tour took place in early August and was attended by many nations. This was an outstanding event and very well organised by the Canoe Camping Club, hopefully many more similar tours will follow in future years.


ACCESS

 Unfortunately, Simon Dawson the Chairman of our Access Committee has resigned due to other personal commitments. The new acting Chairman is Simon Banbury and we welcome him aboard and wish him well with this challenging role.

CANOE EXHIBITION


 Regrettably, having attracted the BCU to Sheffield in 1993 Ponds Forge have increased their prices, and at its recent meeting the International Canoe Exhibition Committee has decided to stay with Crystal Palace as the venue for the 1995 International Canoe Exhibition. The Exhibition Committee is always looking for new venues and if you feel that your local Sports Hall/Swimming Pool can provide the facilities then please write to the Exhibition Organiser, Peter Ingram c/o the BCU Office.

COMPETITION

 I reported in the last issue of Canoe Focus on our recent sporting successes, these have continued and I offer our sincere congratulations to Robin Wood our New International Canoe Sailing World Champion, to Steven and Andy Train for their Silver Medal at the recent Sprint Racing World Championships and to Ivan Lawler for his Gold Medal at the Marathon World Cup, Andrea Dallaway for her bronze medal and to Lynn Simpson for her bronze medal in the Slalom World Cup series.

As you receive this edition of Focus the Rodeo Team depart for their World Championships on the Ocoee River, Tennessee, USA, we wish them well.

AND FINALLY

 The members of the BCU are its most important element and must take an active part in establishing the policies. The members of Council are your representatives and as members you must ensure that these representatives reflect your views. Unfortunately the full BCU AGM has to be run in compliance with the Companies Act and it does not lend itself to wide ranging debate. In order that the Council members reflect your views, read below and attend your local or specialist committee AGM.

Paul Owen
Director



Notice board

Places

Ukraine

A variety of canoeing tours are offered in the Ukraine from class 2 to class 6 difficulty and from 6 to 20 days duration. The contact is Mr Igor Ivanovich Dukov, 27 Shcorsa Street, Apartment 33, 252133 Kiev, Ukraine, CIS. Telephone 010 7 044 269 37 98 or Fax 010 7 044 28 72 72 Colin Kempson on 0234 711833 has outline information.

Eastern region wedding

Congratulations to Paul Fynn (Eastern Region Vice-chairman) and Judith Coffin (Editor) on their recent wedding. As well as the usual paddle-arch reception on the day, they borrowed the vicar's canoe after agreeing to give him some lessons.

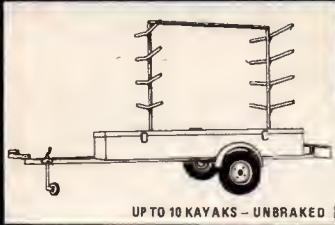
Events

Rivers Recreation Campaign Launched



A major campaign has been launched to encourage more people to enjoy the rivers Tyne and Wear for recreation. The initiative, jointly led by Tyne and Wear development corporation, the Sports council, and the National Rivers authority follows the massive clean-up of the rivers which has taken place over the past few years. A series of seven leaflets including canoeing, and a watersports directory has been produced. The initiatives are being co-ordinated by Trevor Potts, the Watersports Development Officer, himself a canoeist and a BCU Senior Instructor.

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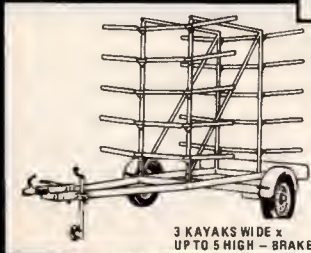
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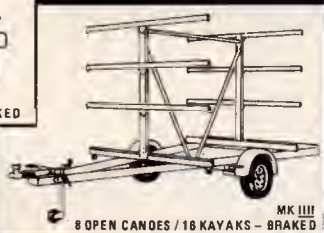
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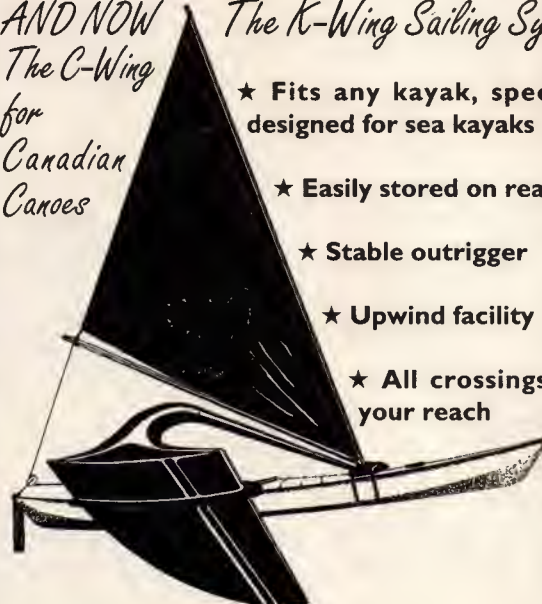
Chris Hare **Marine**



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AFFINITY
WATERSPORTS

World Masters Games

Hundreds of canoeists will travel to Brisbane, Australia next year for one of the most exciting international events ever staged – the World Masters Games. Canoeing is one of 30 sports participating in the event which will be one of the largest multi-sports events ever staged! Even more special is the fact that all competitors will be mature-aged, 30-35 years and older. The Canoeing event will be open to male and female paddlers over 30 and will be contested in five year age groups through to 75 plus! The marathon event takes place on 1-2 October '94 on the Brisbane River at West End, and the sprint events will be held at the scenic Wivenhoe Dam.

Esk, from 5-6 October. Distances are 500m, 1000m, 5000, and Marathon in all categories. The World Masters Games will provide competitors with the perfect opportunity to take a great sporting holiday: Queensland, the Great Barrier Reef, the rain-forest and the outback.

The entry fee is \$US125 and includes sports insurance, T shirt, programme, Wine & Food Frolic and entry to all activities. More information from: Adrienne Costin, Promotions Manager, World Masters Games, GPO Brisbane, Queensland 4001 Australia or call +61 7 405 0953

SCA Watersports Exhibition

The Scottish Canoe Association are planning to hold a watersports exhibition in the Bells Sports Centre, Perth over the weekend of 30-31 October 1993. This event was postponed from March after the worst floods in living memory swamped Perth. Further information on the event can be had from Tony Cook on 0307 65793 (Home) or 0382 60719 (work)

Access Incident on the River Wear

Reports from the Northern region regarding canoeists being shot at whilst paddling the Wear are currently being investigated. The following statement has been issued by Durham Police "Subsequent to this incident being reported to the police, a local man was arrested. He was arrested on suspicion of possessing a shotgun with intent to endanger life, and after being interviewed he was released on Police bail. File has been sent to the Crown prosecution service for their consideration. It will be the decision of the CPS as to whether any charges will be brought in connection with this incident.

Stanley Access

Mary Conacher, SCA access officer sends the good news that negotiations are taking place between the SCA and the Tay Salmon Fisheries who own land at the foot of Lin road, Stanley, with a view to purchasing a car park and launching area. This offer has been possible because of the good behaviour of the majority of canoeists which is recognised by the landowners. Long may it continue!

Sea Cat

Sea kayakers off Anglesey need to exercise caution when paddling from North Stack to the Skerries. As well as the tidal conditions they should be aware of the Stena Sealink Sea Cat ferry which travels at 30-40 knots and is not very high. Kayakers will not be easily seen from the bridge

of the cat, nor will the vessel be seen by kayakers in choppy seas, until it is very close. Carry white collision flares and keep your eyes open.

HM Coastguard will advise on times of sailings: please do not hesitate to contact them.

Royal Mail Sports Award

East Sutherland Canoe Club have benefitted from a generous £500 award from Royal Mail. The award scheme is administered by the Scottish Sports Council.

Below: Junior Canoeist Lewis Gayle displays the new equipment purchased recently with the money from a Royal Mail sports award. Jim Anderson meets the chairman and members.



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AFFINITY WATERSPORTS



Dr D's agony column

DR D's Agony Column. If you have a question relating to any aspect of paddlesport, our distinguished panel of experts will be able to help. Send your queries to Agony Column, Canoe Focus, BCU HQ.

So what is the noun of congregation for canoeists ?

Dr D:

I suggest the following for your competition:

- i) to court favour: A Union of British canoeists
- ii) on a Saturday afternoon at Holme Pierrepont: A Sardine tin of canoeists or an `undercraft' of canoeists.
- iii) on the Lune: A Clash of canoeists
- iv) on Swallow Falls: A Freefall of canoeists.
- v) at a Rodeo: A Flight of canoeists.
- vi) at a Slalom: A Gate of canoeists.
- vii) On Surf: A Wave of canoeists.
- viii) on the D/W: A Slog of canoeists.
- ix) at a sailing regatta: A Wind of canoeists.
- x) my favourite for a general term: A Splash of canoeists.

Yours Splashingly Nick Murphy

Dear Dr D:

Surely it's a CLOT of Canoeists. :like cream they float to the top, but are thick and yellow.

D. Waterton

PS Can my prize be some fishing line ?

Dear Dr D:

The correct collective noun for canoeists is in fact a DRENCH (of canoeists). Based on direct observation this is incontrovertably correct.

Nigel Murray

Dr D Replies:

Some good responses here : I have decided to keep this competition running until the 28th of October and to up the stakes I have aquired some excellent prizes : keep 'em coming !x) (my favourite for a general term) A Splash of canoeists.



Competition focus

JUNIOR RACING WOMEN CLOSE TO FINALS

At the Junior World Racing Championships, held at Racice in the Czech Republic at the end of July, Britain's Junior Women almost achieved the difficult goal of making all of their finals. Junior Women race over 500m and 9 boats make up a final. 41 countries were taking part.

In the semi-finals (the last 18) Anna Hemmings (Elmbridge) missed qualifying for the K1 final by 2.02 secs, the K4 of Becky Train, Sue Fowler (both Fladbury), Anna Hemmings and Emily Ormerod (Richmond)

missed the final by 0.56 secs. and the K2 of Becky Train and Sue Fowler were only 0.12 sec. (about 45cms) away from a place in the final and finished a mere 2.5 seconds behind the winner of their semi-final. Whilst this was a tremendous achievement, it was also disappointing to have come so close! The times of all Junior Women were personal bests.



The Team



In the Canadian Canoe events Stuart Crowther (Fladbury) and Malcolm Lane (Leamington) C2 made both semi-finals and Jonathan Love (Leamington) made the 1000m C1 semi-final.

Our Junior Men Kayak team of Stephen Tingay (Leighton Buzzard), Ian Sargeant, David Smith, Paul Darby-Dowman and Brian Hemmings (all Elmbridge) were all eliminated in the repechages against tough opposition.

The 45 medals awarded were won by 13 countries. 33 of the



medals were won by 4 countries: Germany (12), Hungary (11), Spain (6) and Rumania (4). No other country won more than 2 medals. The only nations to win medals, which were not former members of the Eastern Bloc, were Spain and Canada (1 bronze).

**LAURENCE OLIVER
Manager, Junior
Team.**





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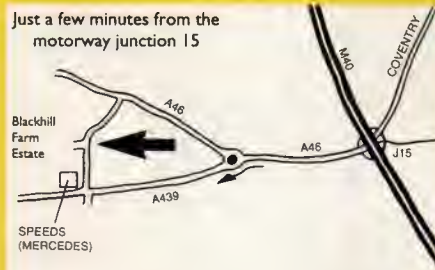
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Polo workshop and tournament (it's on our own court).

9/10 October

Free solo canadian instruction on flat and white water.

27/28 November

Rodeo! Demos, advice and fun, fun, fun.

18/19 December

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The finished dish is a great 'bread and butter' piece of kit. Functional without frills it probably serves sea paddlers best, but does take a waterproof notebook, or first aid kit, or survival bag, flares or BCU Crib cards etc, etc, etc. Straightforward bit of kit, liked it and will use one. Price £49.75



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Grabner Outsider

From the peace and tranquillity of flat open waters to the raging torrents and falls of good white water, I don't think anyone would be disappointed with the Outsider from Grabner. The Outsider is a sturdy robust boat that can take what you give it, and as with the beauty of inflatable open boats – you just roll them up and put them in your boot, or if you don't have a car you can get a carrying sack that makes this boat transportable by bike or bus. I am an enthusiastic, clumsy paddler. Grabner, with heart, feet, nails and everything else in his mouth, gave me the outsider to try. I banged it, twisted it, rammed it into every concrete block on Holme

Pierrepoint's slalom course, even rode the Muncher (falling out several times) and the boat came out of this ordeal unscathed. The effective self-bailing floor was ideal for having fun in whitewater as no sooner had the water come into it then it was out again. (The self-bailing system can be closed off for a reasonably dry paddle on flat water.) I was impressed as a whitewater enthusiast and as a family man, this boat offers fun on the water without having the problems of lifting big heavy boats onto roof racks. Inflatable open boats are here to stay and I think if you give one a try you'll be pleasantly surprised. The price at around £1500 (for the two person Outsider) may put some people off, but as I was informed by Luigi Bolognese (not a made-up name!), the UK import agent, quality is not cheap.



An excellent two-person boat with a lot going for it (except maybe the price), but then maybe I'm being unfair.

PAUL REED



Contact

Luigi Bolognese, Import Agent, 43 Kingwood Avenue, London NW6 6LS.
Tel: 081 9645746 or mobile 0850 233627.

Smith MOAB Sportshields

Depending on your point of view, (sorry!) sports sunglasses are either practical or pose. As far as paddling is concerned I am very pro sunglasses in most situations, especially sea paddling and alpine sunshine. My double standard here is that I hate to see instructors (or worse, examiners) wearing them. Eye contact is essential in that situation. For personal

paddling wrap around UV deflectors are now commonplace. Old fogey's will remember the early summer season scouring of Woolie's bargain shelves for the £2.00 jobs. The modern ethic is to go for the wrap around visor style favoured by mountain bikers. I found the protection excellent without total black-out and comfortable both with and without hel-

met. The polycarbonate lenses claim to be 100% effective against UVA and UVB. I had now way of testing this but they were a lot more use than my normal pair. The set is not cheap at £49.99 but that does include three lenses: clear, yellow and grey and the lot packs into a handy polarfleece case. I couldn't work out why they needed to keep warm, but it is good for cleaning off scud and surf wax, which I stupidly smeared on them. Well made, nothing to corrode and shield the eyes from 'wind, incident light, radiation, and particulate matter'. Did I mention that they look cool too?



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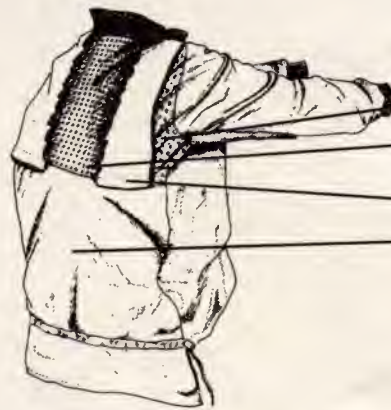


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How many of you out there would see the above as the basic essentials for your summer holiday needs? Well if the answer is – Yes me please! – then check out a map of the Haute Savoie in the French Alps and find a little railhead town called Bourg St Maurice on the River Isere. In the Alps this is one of the Meccas of whitewater paddling – till you've been – you haven't lived. Of course it helps to be a bit of a Francophile – 'pain au chocolat' and 'un grand tasse' in the Brasserie de la Gare after the first session of the day and all that kind of yuppyish stuff – but I'm not proud – in 'quality of life areas' such as these – the French have cornered the market.....

My first sight of the Isere was with the GB Slalom Juniors back in 1972. Old buffers like Langford and Macleod had fed us all kind of horror stories about the river. A fall called the 'Chipper' with wooden slatted boards that 'chipped' you if you got it wrong! Eddylines with huge rolling stoppers on that wouldn't let you breakout – the Aime rapid, 3 kms of continuous 3/4 rapids – the rapid at the entrance to the Centron Gorge which had a 90 degree bend on it.....All this along with tales of razor sharp rocks that never stayed in place long enough to become smooth. We were rather anxious to say the least!

Love Affair

Well we survived that first trip more or less in one piece and for me it was the start of a bit of a love affair with not just the river but the whole valley. Along with many others I've been back (either to ski or to paddle) most years since and to me its a real indication of how paddling standards and equipment have improved that hundreds of paddlers now enjoy the 'Isere experience' every summer.

To my mind the river has everything – especially water – buckets of it – released every day from the huge Tignes Barrage at the top of the valley. Since rafting started commercially on the river in 1985 these releases have been guaranteed. They can vary though and its best to check them out at the 'Base de Canoe- Kayak' near the bridge on the slalom course in Bourg itself. 25-30 cumecs is the normal racing and rafting release and is the optimum level. Any less and it can get a bit rocky – any more and those eddylines do start to take on 'Muncher' proportions!

Warning

Definitely the first port of call each day should be this level check – there are usually 2 releases a day and they can differ. A warning – if its over 40 cumecs – take local advice! 60 – 70 cumecs has been known and is reputed to have reduced grown men to tears!

As for the different stretches they encompass the full spectrum of WW paddling. Most of the slalom course itself has been artificially set up with natural rock groyne on the original bed. Brilliant, demanding but stable eddylines and some great waves. Watch out for the tricky bit of grade 4 just above the slalom start (about 1 km below the sluice gate in Bourg) and the infamous 'Hump' fall just above the slalom road bridge. The latter is a large rock centre river with breakouts left and right above it. The high cross is a true 'Bourg Experience' but watch out for the stopper on the hump itself especially when there's a high release.

After the bridge the river eases off and becomes a pleasant grade 2/3 paddle (including a lake) down to Belle-Entre. A good start-off stretch.

Best Rapids in Europe

The section Belle-Entre to Aime is one of the best rapids in Europe. This was the section used for the 1987 Wild Water Racing Worlds – after a placid first 2 km the Aime Rapid starts and then its non-stop all the way to the bridge at Aime. 3km of solid continental grade 3 river. The French built a narrow road all the way down the left bank for the 87 Worlds – so access for safety and surveying is first class. The exhilaration of paddling this section non-stop is hard to describe – try it – you'll want more.....

In the old days of Prion Phantoms, KW6's



Left:
Bourg 1972
Olymp 4 kayak

and wooden shafts the Downriver boats didn't have the luxury of stopping at Aime – the race carried on through the gorge to Centron. This was 25 mins plus of serious racing with a spectacular finish

through the Centron gorge. The rapids on the entry to the gorge and soon after its finish are well worth the 'experience' – especially at over 30 cumecs! The Gorge itself comes as a complete surprise.

Magic Roundabout

Virtually from nowhere you are suddenly faced with the prospect of the river disappearing into a sheer rock wall. As disaster looms it becomes apparent that this is in fact an illusion – the river turns sharp right through what appears to be a keyhole into the gorge proper. Most first-timers wimp on this and end up in a fierce eddy river left that can only be described as the 'original magic roundabout'. The trick then is to time your 'bid for freedom' from amidst the assorted revolving debris and head for the gorge.....

In the gorge itself the river is relatively quiet almost in respect

at the grandeur of the awe-inspiring vertical rock walls until you emerge into the final rapid – a serious fall which can be a good 4 at high releases. The metal 'Kwai' bridge at Centron heralds the end of the navigable river for WW purposes.

For me its a gem of a river – it has everything and its always there. Whatever your paddling taste its a great paddle and as for the wine.....





top tips

and handy hints

A White Water Rescue *Some Suggestions*

This article is written primarily to address the often asked question of what to carry in white water rescue kit. Before answering that, however, a brief word on safety. The most important item you take onto a river is not listed below, neither can you go to a shop and buy it. That item is your brain. White water paddling entails a great deal of risk assessment and acceptance, and both should be taken seriously.

You should be responsible for your own safety on the river, and that shouldn't mean entrusting the outcome of a trip to the talismanic properties of karabiners, paddle clamps and so on. As an example, ask yourself when, if ever, you have been able to attribute a good trashing, your own or someone else's, to boat or equipment design or failure? Not misuse of the kit, its design or failure? It would be foolish to say this never happens, but probably safe to assert that it is rare. So, use your brain wisely: learn how to use it to stay out of trouble in the first place, but be encouraged to train and equip it with the information and expertise to deal with white water rescues should the need arise. Don't think 'white water safety and rescue', think 'white water safety, and rescue' the comma makes a great deal of difference to your paddling philosophy.

Aim

The following is not prescriptive, but represents a personal viewpoint based on experience.

Weight and size of all kit, including that for rescue is at a premium. Why? Because weight adversely effects a kayak's performance, and size determines the remainder of space available for air bag, or other, buoyancy. Depending on the nature of the trip, and besides what you might carry for rescue, there will be a selection of first aid kit (always), liquid and food, split paddles, spare clothing. The list reflects



the perceived needs of the individual, but if you're at the point where there's a 66mm cannon for blowing probes out of sticky holes, a kit review probably wouldn't go far wrong.

The Rescue Kit Sling

This is carried shortened around the waist, and secured with a karabiner. Apart from a sturdy

knife, this is all I carry on my body. In the event of a spot of cross-training (a swim), I like to travel light, and let my buoyancy aid earn its keep. There is arguably the risk of the sling snagging under such circumstances, hence carrying it shortened, and some people like to carry their sling bandoleer fashion underneath their BA. The sling has a myriad of uses, low-

ering, anchor and belay, securing the boat to a tree, a short and easily jettisoned towline (slipped over the shoulder of one arm only, and never used across the chest).

Knife

Functional and accessible, I carry a knife in my buoyancy aid pocket. there is a wrist loop attached to the handle, and the

clasp can be opened even with the very coldest of hands. I experimented with a small BA mounted clip knife for a while, but discounted it for two reasons. The first was that during an inspection, or rather a Grade VI scramble through trees, the handle snagged, leaving the sheath hanging limply from my torn BA. Secondly, whilst visiting the USA, it was noticed that

karabiner identical to that on my sling: if any system demands matching karabiners, such as the karabiner clutch, they are here. The line is secured by the rope loop at the bottom of the bag, not that at the neck. Once, I saw a bag secured this way unravel in a stopper, and leave 18 metres of line trailing in the river.

Rescue Bag

Clipped also to the karabiner is a Baggins canvas clutch bag, in which I keep the rest of the rescue kit detailed below. This way, whenever the line comes out, so too does the other gear. Some people prefer to carry the kit in a bum bag around the waist.

Short Sling

The short sling is multi-functional, and carried in preference to the prussic loop.

Swing Cheek Pulleys

There are two light weight swing cheek pulleys, invaluable in reducing friction in pulley systems, such as the Z-Drag. Petzl manufacture these relatively inexpensively, and if you have trouble obtaining them, write to either Field and Trek or Cotswold.

Saw

A seven inch pruning saw. Often sold to paddlers for cutting an unfortunate colleague from a boat, I have never had to use it



for this purpose - were it required to, however, it would make short work of any boat on the market, bar perhaps those painted grey, and staffed by the Royal Navy. What it did come in useful for once, was clearing some space on a riverbank during a particularly awkward boat rescue. I've debated whether this merits continued inclusion in the bag, and have so far decided in its favour.

Paddle Clamp & Hooks

The DCS Paddle Clamp, a device for attaching a rope and karabiner to the blade of a paddle, and subsequently to the grab loop of a boat is light and compact. Paddle hooks can also be used.

Conclusion

The total cost of the kit carried in the rescue bag is approximately £40.00, expensive depending in your disposable income, but mine had been acquired steadily, and after being lucky enough to work with some extremely experienced, thoughtful and talented paddlers, rather than with one big cheque-fest. To re-iterate, what is listed is the result of experience: many paddlers will differ in their opinions, so ask them why, and nick all their good ideas. Remember, I also vary my kit depending on circumstances: I don't automatically throw what is not needed into my boat. Don't assume the role of team rescue person: instead, encourage everyone to carry a little, and pool the resources necessary. If you go on a WWS&R course, or read an article, share the knowledge, and check out its validity: like a chain, your team's strength depends on its weakest link. And remember, tune your brain in to 'safety first', with rescue as an informed back-up. Mark Hickman Mark teaches at Current Trends Canoe School Nottingham.

ue Kit

wearing only the sheath to this type of knife seemed popular, especially among raft guides. Further enquiry revealed a high loss rate through accidental release. Some cured the problem by using a short length of elastic cord to attach knife and sheath together, but this was the exception: imagine cross training in a stopper and accidentally releasing the knife . . . The Raging River - Machine a Coupier le Jambon' by Freddie Kreuger!

Throwline

This lives secured in my kayak. It is clipped to a short length of cord attached to the seat, then pushed between air bag and foam block for added safety. It remains highly accessible, however, and clips to the cord by a

SOURCES FOR MORE INFORMED DISCUSSION

BCU 1992 Handbook Bechdel L & Ray S. 1991.

River Rescue (Second Edition) Boston. AMC Books. Hardy S. 1990.

White Water Safety. Newcastle. NCS Ray S. 1991.

'Are They Safer Than We Are?' pp23-29, Canoeist Magazine (USA) May 1991.

White Water Kayaking. London. Salamander. Rowe R. 1988

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The new BCU Development Plan for the period November 1993 to October 1997 has been recognised by the Sports Council as a real winner.

The aim of the plan is to increase participation in the whole range of competitive and recreational canoeing activities and also to improve the opportunities for raising the level of performance amongst competitors. Special attention will be paid to the needs of young people, women and people with disabilities.

The Sports Council commented that it is innovative, action packed, ambitious, imaginative and above all achievable.

The Winning Solution

WHY PRODUCE A DEVELOPMENT PLAN ?

First and foremost it is the business plan of the BCU. The plan aims to direct the work of the BCU Committees, inform you the member of the direction being taken, and thirdly, those outside the BCU and canoeing eg the Sports Council what we do and what assistance we need.

The plan will hopefully encourage a more co-ordinated approach to development and ensure better use of resources. It will also be a positive means of securing grant aid and sponsorship for canoeing. It has also other uses as influencing other bodies such as the National Rivers Authority to help improve access to waterways, publicising the varied activities of the BCU and helping to increase BCU membership.

Therefore the plan must clearly let everyone know who needs to know what the BCU expects to do over the next four years.

The Priorities

Eight clear priorities have been identified which need to be developed. They are:

Improving access to water Improving the coaching service
Increasing Priority group participation Improve BCU publicity and information
Increasing membership Develop our competition excellence programme
Increase participation in recreational canoeing Improve the financial position of the BCU

These eight strategic objectives are seen as the major objectives to be achieved if canoeing is to meet the challenges of the next four years.

Each strategic objective will be attained through the successful achievement of individual development programmes. These programmes are too detailed to be listed here but the broad aims of each programme can be outlined.

So how ill these agreed development programmes achieve the strategic objectives.

Access

Three programmes are identified here. The extension of the BCU licence to cover all licensed waterways is a priority especially for Anglian Water and the Thames and Medway Rivers.

The existing access policy will be maintained as the best means of securing further access agreements. Whilst in the longer term, work will be undertaken towards a change in the law.

Coaching

The intention is to update the BCU tests and awards if appropriate, to make them suitable for endorsement by the National Council for Vocational Qualifications.

The resource material for award courses will have to be revised and will include videos on Star Tests and White Water Training.

Placid water paddling will be promoted as the best means to increase numbers participating in this aspect of canoeing and kayaking.

A more cohesive competition coaching strategy will be developed to better integrate competition coaching within the BCU Coaching Service.

Priority Groups

The primary aim of the BCU is to increase participation in canoeing for all sections of the community. Research has shown that some groups participate markedly less than others in canoeing. These groups will be treated as a priority.

The intention is to develop the opportunity for young people to canoe via a revised competition and recreation event programme.

Women in coaching will be treated as a priority as the best means of increasing the total number of women and girls participating in canoeing and kayaking.

The Canoeability initiative for people with disabilities will be extended and will include a new logo approval scheme.

Publicity and Information

The BCU has to ensure that its work and achievements are made known to as wide a public as possible.

The need to improve the information service to members and the communication between officers and management committees is seen as a priority.

The intention then is to produce:

- An improved Canoe Focus and Yearbook

Continued on page 20

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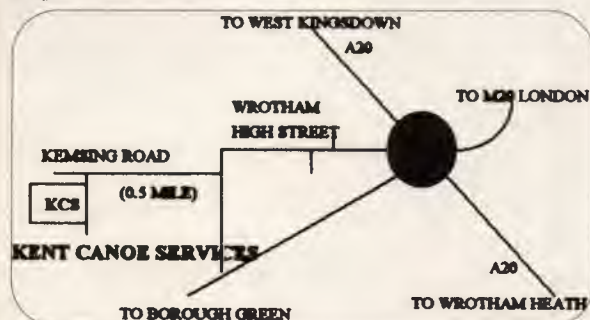
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Map



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Wed - 9.30 - 12.30pm

Thurs - 12.30 - 8.00pm (**Late night shopping**)

Fri - 9.30 - 5.00pm

Sat - 9.30 - 5.30 / Canoe Courses

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- Increase the number of regional newsletters and telephone information lines.
- Establish a trade strategy and develop a sponsorship package.
- Capitalise on the TV opportunities from the forthcoming World Championships in the UK.

Membership

Four clear development programmes are identified.

- To continue to promote the current membership package as the best means of increasing membership.
- Increase the retention of canoeist in membership by a 5% reduction in non-renewals.
- National Associations and English Regions will be asked to strengthen contacts with clubs and potential members to promote membership.
- By creating a positive local image of the BCU promotion of membership at events will become easier.

Competition

The continuing participation in the international programmes of all sporting disciplines is important.

The priority development programmes here are:-

- The achievement of medals at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and in the various World Championships.
- Improve the opportunity to compete internationally by the appointment of National and Regional Coaches.
- A continuing representation on the International Canoe Federation to ensure British canoeing can achieve its international aspirations.
- The hosting of the three World Championships in the UK for Slalom, Wild Water Racing and Canoe Polo, will bring many benefits for canoeing in the UK.
- Finally the development of junior coaching so that juniors may achieve their potential and hopefully produce future world champions.

Recreation

Recreational canoeing is where every canoeist first becomes acquainted with the activity – the source from which all other aspects of canoeing attract their participants. The development of recreational canoeing is vital to the future success of the BCU.

The promotion of touring and recreation will be via new touring and information guides, an increase in the number of local recreational events and the establishment of strong touring development teams.

By attracting recreational canoeists into the BCU this will increase the amount of the BCU monies available to improve the services to members, especially access to water.

Developing the specialist recreations of sea touring, expeditions, lifeguards and whitewater rafting will provide the opportunity for new challenges for many recreational canoeists.

Finance

The BCU has undertaken significant financial developments during the last four year period. The BCU has met its financial commitments to the construction of Britain's first artificial canoe slalom course and the relocation of the BCU office to Nottingham. The BCU has also successfully completed the full computerisation of its financial accounting system.

Two clear programmes exist:

Reduce indebtedness externally to the bank and internally between central funds and individual committee funds.

Cost

How much is it going to cost?

The planned net deficit is costed out at £2.2m over the next four years and with an anticipated Sports Council input of £1.5m, the plan offers extremely good value for money.



WHY WILL THE PLAN WORK?

Why will the plan work? Because it offers a winning combination of:-

THE RIGHT STRATEGY

It is relevant, cohesive and achievable.

THE RIGHT PROGRAMMES

The proposed actions are clearly targeted at real priorities, generating the environment for real development.

CLEAR LEADERSHIP

The BCU development team of local canoe clubs, voluntary officers and professional staff has many years of experience from local to international level of developing canoeing.

EFFECTIVE DELIVERY MECHANISM

The wide network of local clubs and centres and a revised national management structure will ensure effective co-ordination of scarce BCU resources.

INVOLVEMENT OF CANOEISTS

This development plan results from consultation with those responsible for all aspects of canoeing thereby building a consensus for action. Local canoeists and clubs will be powerful players in the implementation of this plan. The innovative approach taken in the plan will result in canoeists ensuring that develop-

ment takes place in the implementation of this plan. The innovative approach taken in the plan will result in canoeists ensuring that development takes place in their local community.

EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Many partners have been identified, from major organisations such as the Sports Council and the NRA to working with our partners at local levels. The objectives can only be achieved through effective partnership.

THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

The BCU aims over the next four years to increase participation in the wide range of BCU competitive and recreational canoeing activities.

The plan will only success if local canoe clubs, canoeists, the BCU office and the BCU Committees work together to achieve the eight priorities. If you would like to become involved in implementing the plan please write to the BCU office at Nottingham. If you wish to receive a copy of the Development Plan Summary please write to the BCU Offices enclosing a cheque or postal order for £2.50 Members (£3.50 non-members.)



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Regional round up

Chair's Chat

Ian Sproat, the Government Minister has changed the Governments thinking on the Sports Council reorganisation. It now seems likely that canoeings reorganisation may be leading the way!

The season of Regional AGMs is fast approaching. These are designed to be friendly with business kept to a minimum in order to discuss policies and regional objectives. If you want a change of policy nationally bring your ideas to your local area.

I hope to meet some of you at as many AGMs that I am able to fit in.

Ron Hodgson



eastern

The Region has a new Regional Coaching Organiser in Paul West. Come to the Region's AGM at Sandy and find out/tell him what you want the region's coaching service to do for you!

Roger Hardman has agreed to act as Regional Touring Officer or at least to act as a focus of information. He would love to hear of tours being organised in the region which would be suitable for families, etc.

Roger has also been busy representing canoeists interest in the survey of water use in the Hertfordshire area, ensuring that Sports Council statements are in line with our ideas!

Any more volunteers to spread the workload?

Ron Hodgson

east midlands

The Regional AGM is on Wednesday 3 November at Portland Leisure Centre, Nottingham 7.00 - 8.30pm. The Committee will welcome any new members. We would like to encourage the counties to be more involved and would like to offer the opportunity for more representation on the Regional Committee. If you are interested in ensuring that your county voice is heard come to the AGM or speak to a committee member before the meeting - telephone numbers in the Year Book.

Following the AGM there will be a meeting of the River Rats - all welcome.

The Pool Slalom will be on Saturday January 15th 1994 starting 6.00pm at Bramcote Swimming Pool Nottingham. Open to all Paddlers enter on the night.

Pearl Hulholland

london & south east

All clubs should have received a questionnaire from Chris West. She is compiling a database on canoeing opportunities for the disabled within the region. Club secretaries are urged to help by returning the questionnaire as soon as possible.

Jeff Simmons, the Regional Touring Secretary, is planning the calendar for 1994. If you have any trips in mind please let him know. Whilst thinking of future trips don't forget the Three Regions River guide covering the South, South West and London and the South East (available from the secretary at £4.00 to BCU members and £4.50 to non members).

The Regional AGM is at St John's School Caterham on Wednesday 24 November at 8.00pm.

Chris Childs

northern

The £6 fee per head for the Tyne Descent on 6/7 November covers all week-end activities; funds raised will be used for access work in the region; details from the Watershed (091 272 2225). Eddie Palmer is compiling the 93/94 regional tours programme; ideas and offers of help to him as soon as possible (0434 270318). Steve Derwin is the regional representative for the Tees Barrage; contact him for information or to offer help (0642 788799). Keith Morris (05395 31758/58897) has details of events and courses in Cumbria. Please put our AGM date in your diary now; it is on Friday 19 November at 7.30pm at the Wentworth Leisure Centre, Hexham.

Mary Armstrong

north west

Notice of AGM - November 20 1993 at First Youth, Rivington, Chorley. This year's meeting has been located in the North of the Region to cater for paddlers in Lancashire and Greater Manchester. The format will be the same as last year, ie paddling activities throughout the day 10.00am to 4.00pm followed by the AGM at 5.00pm. We had 50 people attend last year; let's see if the North can beat that! Regional Seminar and Coaching AGM at same venue on same day at 4.00pm.

North West Region URGENTLY require a new Regional Editor. We have been unable to produce a newsletter this year! Anyone out there fancy the job? Ring 0270 69040.

Roy Hitchings

southern

Thanks to the RLP, Eyot, Longridge, Windsor and Portsmouth and District clubs for hosting successful regional touring/recreational events.

The first joint NRA/BCU inspections of Thames weirs (Marlow and Chertsey) are due in September, to discuss ways of improving them for canoeists. MKCC are now in their new HQ at Caldecotte Lake. The outcome of the Eton rowing and canoeing regatta course planning appeal is eagerly awaited.

Come and air your views on developments at the 16 November Regional AGM (Liston Hall, Marlow at 8pm).

The 1993 Pewsey Canoe Exhibition was bigger and better than ever. There are now plans to make it a National Exhibition for the southern half of the country.

Charles Hicks

south west

Thanks to Wessex Water PLC there is now a mobile unit of canoes for use by the disabled, based at Frome;

arrangements of use through Graeme Warnecke. A second unit is on offer, to be based in the south of Wessex water area. Bids to locate to Terry Cripps please. On the access front, there are new arrangements at Holme Bridge on the Dart. All paddlers must contact the LAO Kevin Chamberlain who will advise. On the Exe, the disused railway bridge just downstream of Tiverton Town weir has been demolished and work is in hand to build a new bridge and relief road. Close inspection is recommended each time you paddle here whilst the work continues.

Dennis Walls

west midlands

Following the successful events over the past two months, we now announce: Vyrnwy or Clywedog 2 or 9 October, Mike Hubbard 021 356 7619.

Marathon Races: Solihull 60km 3 October, Peter Jones 021 745 3415. BCY Marathon Leicester 10 October, K Tonkes 0533 898004. Cannock Chase 24 October, I Crawford 0534 878326. Worcester K4 6 November, I Sinclair 0905 56566. Avon Descent 7 November, N Wooltorton 0203 445214. Nottingham K4 13 November, G Oliver 0602 818758. Trent K2 28 November, G Oliver.

Wild Water Races: Teme 3 Div BOP 20 November. Teme 4 Div COP 21 November, G Stamps, 122 Ulverley Green, Olton, Solihull. Announcing Canoe and Kayak Capers run by Chris Powell, BCU approved, 1 & 2 *, Proficiency and Safety Test, Trips on Severn and Teme 0588 672431. Need to hire at Bewdley? Contact Bewdley Canoe Club, 31 Sandon Road, Lye, West Midlands.

Rosemary Preece

yorks & humberside

Would all members note that the Regional AGM is on Thursday 2 December at 20.00 hours at the Queens Hotel Pontefract. Full details from Hugh Pashley, 10 Crawshaw Grove, Sheffield S8 7EB. Please enclose a SAE.

Norman Taylor is again compiling the Regional Yearbook. Please send him any information that you require publishing for 1994. Remember this is your Year Book. Let other members in the region know what you have planned for 1994. Send your information to 73 Gateland Drive, Shadwell, Leeds LS17 8LN.

The 1 October sees the start of the River Ure agreement, Hack Falls to Sleningford. Contact the LAO for full details: Ken Harrap, 159 Old Road, Overton, Wakefield WF4 4RR.

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Canoe focus

MESSAGE TO ADVERTISERS



Canoe Focus is now designed and produced completely on Apple Macintosh DTP, using Quark Xpress 3.1. For the benefit of advertisers who send their disks to bureaus for output to film or bromide you can now send in your finished design on disk direct to Raven Publishing where the studio can place the image direct on the page, if the file is in Quark Xpress 3.1, or run to film via our imagesetter and conventionally stripped in if the file is Pagemaker 4. Please remember when sending a disk to canoe Focus all TIFF and EPS files have to be included with the Quark Xpress or Pagemaker file. Regarding fonts please phone Raven Publishing to confirm that we hold the same faces on our system.

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WOMEN UK14 MEDIUM	5'7"-5'8"	36"-38"	28"-30"
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b book & video review



Archive Volume Two, Silent, Black and White, 12 minutes An Eskimo and his Kayak 1932

This short film was shot in England and Greenland, and shows Gino Watkins and his team training for one of their Greenland expeditions, with additional footage of them paddling with the Eskimos and rolling in Arctic Waters.

A film for History Buffs.

Archive Volume Three Colour with Music and original voice-over - 23 mins

Competition 1963

This film details the competitive events of Slalom, Wild Water Racing, Canoe Sailing, Surfing, Sprint Racing and Marathon featuring an early Liffey Descent Race.

The rules may have been easier and the equipment may have improved, but the competition was just as stiff.

Archive Volume Four, Colour with Voice Over and Music - 35 mins

Douro Journey A film Diary of a British Expedition. Although in those days it was called a holiday. Paddling the length of the spectacular River Douro in Portugal by folding kayak and Open Canoe. Regrettably the River has now been dammed, but can still be paddled. With additional interesting footage of the trip by car across war torn Europe to get there.

Archive Volume Five, Three Scottish Trips Between 1946 and 1955 - 51 mins

With a short introduction by Oliver Cock OBE on how and why he started filming, these three films detail various Scottish Trips.

Journey down the Spey from source to sea in 1954. Voice over. Colour.

Recreation - Paddling the Docut and Tay with original Soundtrack - Poetry and Music - 1955 colour.

Glen Albyn - Voice over Black and White and Colour.

Three Scottish Trips undertaken for fun.

Archive Volume Six, Colour with sub titles and voice over 23 mins

Verdon Les Gorges - 1956

British Expedition to the Rivers of the Basses Alps paddling through the spectacular gorges of the region, and along the whitewater rivers in folding kayaks. Featuring the 'Brave Heather Meakin'

Archive Volume Seven, Black and White - voice over - 22 mins

Journeys by Kayak

This Archive video is a record by Oliver Cock of a number and variety of dif-

ferent trips over three film titles, dated over the war and post war years.

The first film 'Three Short Journeys', circa 1946/7 introduces us to an Easter meet of the Canoe Camping Club on the river Wye, followed by a second small trip on the Wey, followed by a days outing for Sea Kayaking off Beachy Head.

The second title details two trips on the Tamar in 1941 and 43.

The final title takes us on a journey from Loch Erich to Pitlochry in 1945.

In total a record of 6 journeys on one title.

Volume Eight, Colour, Sound 22 min

Basic Skills circ 1955

This film is an early serious coaching film introducing the Basic Skills of Kayaking covering much of the content of what we know as the One and Two Star Awards.

Volume Nine, Colour - Voice Over 33 min.

Polzeath Rum - 1962

Film of the first BCU organised Sea Canoeing trip, to find out just what paddling was all about. Includes early and successful attempts at Surfing Kayaks and looping Sea Kayaks! Followed by very English Cream Teas in a seaside cafe.

Volume Ten

Alpine Passes or Wild Water Canoeing in the French Alps - 1953

Another Oliver Cock Holiday Trip, we would probably now call it an expedition paddling some of the Whitewater Rivers of the French Alps.

Volume Eleven, Black and White - sound - 22 min.

A Canadian Canoe Demonstration - 1934

Mobile Adventure was really pleased to recover this title from the archives as the original BCU copy has been lost. It was this title more than any of the others that prompted us to finance this archive collection.

In the early 1930's a team of three men toured Canada giving displays of paddling skills, this is a film of one of this men. Basic skills are covered along with a splendid range of tricks.

This really is Canadian Canoeing as its best.

Volume Twelve, Colour - Sound - 17 mins

Guillemot Gully - circa 1962

Sea Kayaking and Wildlife. A day trip paddling around in the North Sea and close contact with Seals and Birds in the early days of fibreglass kayaks.

Volume 13 Colour - Voice over - 13 mins

Helicopter Rescue - circa 1963

A topical instructional film on Safety at sea. Covering preparation, Signals, Deep Water Rescues and finally Helicopter Rescues. Film by Oliver Cock

with the assistance of the Corps of Canoe Lifeguards, the Advance Sea Kayak Club,



THE BOMBPROOF ROLL & BEYOND

By Paul Dutky

Published by Cordee: available from BCU Supplies £11.95



To describe this very readable effort as a book on rolling, really undersells it's worth. At base level it is a how-to-do-it manual for sorting out the inverted kayak situation and is arguably the most easiest understood source. The diagrams are big and clear with good attention to detail. The only better substitute would be to have your own personal rolling coach. The general thrust is a concentration on boat control, particularly the use of edge and rail. Sometimes this is not emphasised enough in novice tuition but it is the nub of whitewater paddling. Control the boat edges and you usually won't fall in. The most useful part of this book for the intermediate paddler (and instructors) covers playboating and advanced rolling. If you want to know how to do a 'window shade' roll or a 'polish' manoeuvre then this is for you.

Highly recommended

Kevin Danforth

Sponsored by Mobile Adventure Ltd. and Chrisfilm Ltd. We are pleased to announce that the first thirteen titles of the BCU Archive Collection are now available.

A series of films, that date from as early as 1934 up until 1963 this collection of videos offers a moving history of the development of Canoeing and Kayaking. (Although after watching some titles, you may well consider we have taken quite a few steps back too).

Film quality varies, some are silent, they were originally shot on a wide variety of cameras. Chrisfilm has spent the last year, with much assistance from Oliver Cock OBE, in transferring these titles onto Video and where applicable adding soundtrack.

These titles are available exclusively from Mobile Adventure Ltd. through BCU Supplies.

Archive Volume One, Silent with sub titles, Black and White, 25 mins.

Canoeing for Beginners: Filmed between the years of 1947 and 1952 by Oliver Cock for the early days of the Coaching Scheme, this title is in three parts, and stars Clarence, the pupil who gets everything wrong, and a number of very patient instructors.

Part One: Clarence Learns to Canoe Part Two: Clarence Improves and Learns to Roll Part Three: Clarence takes his Elementary test.

For younger members of the Coaching Scheme who may not remember that far back, the elementary test was replaced by the One Star Award - or was it, you had to paddle miles, but before that in the good old days you had to build your canoe first.

This title offers a fun way of teaching, with humour and skill of a kind that would enhance modern day teaching films.



Above:
Robin Wood
World
Champion
1993



Robin Wood World Champion

CANOE SAILING WORLD CHAMPIONS

In the toughest conditions yet seen at a World championship, Robin Wood, from Newport, South Wales, won the Gold Medal against 61 competitors from 6 countries (7 if you include Grand Cayman) in three continents. The British contingent completed the week by bringing back the New York Canoe Club International Trophy exactly 60 years after Uffa Fox and Roger de Quincey brought it across the Atlantic for the first time.

We had been promised brisk winds and we were not disappointed. As soon as the container was unpacked after its six week voyage via the Panama Canal the British were out on a shakedown sail to get the flavour of the water. Out of the Golden Gate they found huge breaking seas where the powerful Pacific rollers funnel through and as the depth of water shallows from over 100ft to less than 20ft in the comparatively sheltered "Olympic Circle" turn into a series of short waves, just the length of a canoe with foaming white tops and near vertical walls. The water is cold and this usually causes a mist to form over the bay which the sun normally burns off by noon – the scheduled start time for racing. The hot sun on the land coupled with cold water produces fierce thermals with winds over 25kts in the afternoon.

West Coast hero

Erich Chase led the fleet round the practice race and convinced the locals that the Championship was in the bag. They had not noticed that the real contenders for the title stayed on shore.

With the preliminaries of check measurements, the raising of flags and the opening ceremony by ICF President Sergio Orsi completed the Championship racing started on Sunday 8th August. Robin Wood was soon out front and took first place ahead of the Americans, Steve Clark and Lars Guck.

On Monday Robin repeated his performance, finishing over 1 minute ahead of Steve Clark and with the wind rising to well over 20kts the ebb tide against it created an even more ferocious sea.

Tuesday was the toughest day with two races "back to back". Bright sun and sparkling water there may have been

but the testing conditions were not to be disguised. Lars Guck soon went clear ahead to an easy (or easy looking) victory while Robin Wood pulled up from a poor start to finish second.

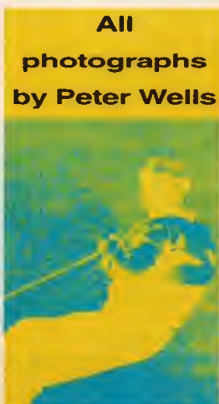
Race 4 with the full force of the sea breeze gave a wild ride to competitors already tired after the morning's contest. Robin Wood was swept overboard at the start of the reaching leg, turned turtle in the shallow water with the top of the sail embedded in the mud. That was his discard written off!

After this came the rest day – the British contingent were encouraged by the announcement that, as had been agreed in advance, on the basis of the results of the first 4 races a British team of 3 would have the honour to challenge the Americans for the New York Canoe Club International Cup. As for the rest day, it was occupied by frenzied repairs, nursing of wounds or sightseeing according to individual priorities.

Racing resumed with Race 5 on Thursday. The wind had eased just a little and with mostly slack water the sea a little less fierce. Lars Guck quickly broke through to a comfortable lead and the race became a procession – Lars Guck, Robin Wood and Steve Clark.

Friday and race 6.

The sun failed to break through the mist and low cloud and with the hills a little greener and the cool air a little moister one could imagine oneself sailing off the Scottish coast, or maybe, the Welsh coast. Either way it inspired Robin Wood enough to maintain his second place while Steve Clark, albeit the heavier man, in these lighter conditions went on to take the honours.





Left:
Ola Barthelsson
of Sweden

Below:
Dave Gilliland
(USA 192) and
Michael Fenwick
(GBR 245)



Race 7.

With Robin Wood, Steve Clark and Lars Guck so close on points all now depended on the last race – but with extra pressure on Robin as he had already blown his discard. As the canoes came up to the weather mark there was the familiar sight of Robin Wood out in front followed, not by one of the Americans, but a British canoe – Michael Fenwick sailing his best race of the series. He held his position until the very last tack to the finish when Lars Guck squeezed by to take 2nd place by inches.

So a memorable Championship finished, strong winds and wild seas to the end. Robin Wood secure with gold and the silver medal, on equal points, shared between the Americans Steve Clark and Lars Guck. Out of the top ten places, 5 went to the USA, 2 each to great Britain and Sweden and 1 to Germany.

NEW YORK CANOE CLUB INTERNATIONAL CUP

The New York Canoe Club International Cup, instituted in 1884, must be the oldest trophy for international competition in small boats in the world. The challenge taken up by Great Britain against the USA as holders provided a fitting finale to the World Championship.

The three helmsmen chose, Robin Wood, Mark Goodchild and Michael Fenwick faced formidable opposition – Lars Guck and Steve Clark, both former World Champions together with top local helmsmen Erich Chase with a wealth of experience of the demanding conditions presented in San Francisco Bay.

The rules of the International Cup races, held over an 8 miles course, windward leeward with a final windward leg to the finish, are unique in that only the first boat to cross the finish line scores – the series being decided on the best two out of three races. Robin Wood, having just won the Championship, was clearly the man to beat.

The first race started with wind at 12 knots or so and the sea a little flatter than we had seen during the week – but at 11.30 the sea breeze had not yet got going. The Americans were quick to pin down Robin Wood, while Lars Guck went through to take a commanding lead, as he had on two occasions during the Championship. Once there he went straight on to win and so Race 1 went to the US.

XIIth Canoe Sailing World Championship

RESULTS

1. Robin Wood, GBR, 8.25;
2. Steve Clark, USA, 11.5;
2. Lars Guck, USA, 11.5;
4. Erich Chase, USA, 29.00;
5. Ola Barthelsson, SWE, 40.00;
6. Sven Ahlenius, SWE, 44.00;
7. Jens Reichert, GER, 48.00;
8. Michael Fenwick, GBR, 52.00;
9. Chris Converse, USA, 55.00;
10. Dave Gilliland USA 56.00

Determined not to go down 2-0 the British were sharper on the start of Race 2. Although lacking the boat speed of Lars Guck, Mark Goodchild covered brilliantly and forced the faster boat right off the course, allowing Robin Wood to break through. Once there was no stopping him and the Americans were evidently so demoralised by this unexpected turn of events that they allowed the British to take the first three places.


By the start of the third race the sea breeze was up to 20kts and although the course was moved to gain some shelter from the land the breaking waves over shallow water certainly made for testing conditions.

The race began with a repeat of Race 1 with Lars Guck forging ahead and Steve Clark holding back Robin Wood. So it remained, with the canoes disappearing in clouds of spray on the reaches, until the final beat to windward, when Robin Wood broke through Steve Clark's cover but still behind Lars Guck. As the American made his final tack for the line Robin Wood was to weather but well behind Steve Clark in third place. Here Lars Guck made his fatal mistake and failed to cover the British canoe. As Robin Wood sailed close to the land he gained a favourable windshift while the American was headed and forced to put in an extra tack.

The British helmsman swept through to take the winning gun and the International Trophy in the most exciting finish we had witnessed.

All six competitors had now spent over 5 hours on the water under the most demanding conditions, and if canoe sailing were susceptible to stopwatch observation there is no doubt that all of the British team would be found to have achieved a "personal best".

Finally, a word of thanks to our sponsor, Chartham Paper Mill of Canterbury who provide practical as well as financial assistance and did much to ensure that we took such a strong team to the Championship.

PETER WELLS 

Right:
Del Olson
showing the
demanding
conditions in
San Francisco
Bay





Competition *focus*

SLALOM NEWS

Plenty to see on the River Dee in Llangollen at the end of October: 23/24 October British Championships Llangollen (Senior & Junior) Premier Division Canoe Slalom. 30/31 October Llangollen Inter-national Classic - International Canoe Slalom.

ANNUAL TROPHY PRESENTATIONS

Will also take place at the British Championships on Saturday evening, 23 October.

NEW KNOCK OUT COMPETITION

Ponds Forge, Sheffield, 12 Dec-ember 1993. Teeside National Indoor Canoe Slalom Open to all categories in all Divisions. Details from Sue Wharton, 117 Preston Road, Chorley, PR6 7AX

BIB DEPOSITS

To all ranked paddlers - if you return your bib with sae to your Bib Issuing Officer by 30 November 1993, you'll receive a voucher which can be used as your deposit on your new 1994 bib.

SELECTION GB WINTER SQUADS 1993/94

All information is included in the Slalom Yearbook - if you don't quite make selection and are interested in improving your technique etc, there will be coaching available in the Development Groups. Paddlers in Div 2, 1 and Premier are invited to send for details to Sue Wharton.

BCU SLALOM COMMITTEE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 27 NOV 1993, NOTTINGHAM

Message to all Slalom Registered Clubs - please remember that this is where you decide on the future of your sport. Motions for debate to be lodged with the Secretary by 28 October.

FOUNDATION FOR SPORT AND THE ARTS

Huge thank you to the Foundation who has granted £8000 towards costs of the GB Junior Team who took part in the "Pre-Worlds" event held at Wausau, USA in August. The Men's kayak team did especially well with Neil Buckley from Shrewsbury and Dan Corner from Hemel Hempstead coming home with in Silver and Bronze medal places respectively.

WORLD CUP 1993

It's been a year of unprecedented British success in slalom with medals galore at the World Championships held in July. The World Cup series coming so soon after this major event proved that Lynn Simpson could rise to the big occasion when she continued the medal winning haul and won gold at the first two legs of the five event series.

Three of the five events took place in Europe, at La Seu d'Urgell in Spain, in Lofers and at Augsburg, all in the space of three weeks. Two weeks rest followed with a trip across the Atlantic to the fourth event held at Gull River, Minden, Canada where Lynn took gold yet again! Confidence oozing she went into the final on the Ocoee River, Tennessee as favourite, but a five second penalty pushed her into fifth place and with final positions overall dependant on only three of the events which had to include the result from the final, Lynn missed gold and went into bronze medal place overall in the women's individual kayak event behind Kordula

Striepecke from Germany and Myriam Jerusalem-Fox from France - a fine result for the 22 year old Nottingham University economics student.

Melvyn Jones, Shaun Pearce, Ian Raspin and Andrew Raspin took fourth, ninth, tenth and eleventh place overall in men's kayak with Gareth Marriott finishing seventh in Canadian singles.



Melvyn Jones



Lynn Simpson

SLALOM WORLD CUP FINAL - OCOEE 1993 Final Overall World Cup Standings Men's Kayak

- Points: 1. Scott Shipley, USA, 80;
2. Thomas Becker, GER, 40;
3. Sylvain Curinier, FRA, 40;
4. Melvyn Jones, GBR, 40;
9. Shaun Pearce, GBR, 34;
10. Ian Raspin, GBR, 29;
11. Andrew Raspin, GBR, 18.

Women's Kayak

- Points: 1. Kordula Striepecke, GER, 65;
2. Myriam Jerusalem, FRA, 65;
3. Lynn Simpson, GBR, 61.

C2

- Points: 1. Simek/Rohan, CZE, 75;
2. Daille/Lelievre, FRA, 47;
3. Adisson/Forgues FRA, 44.

C1

- Points: 1. Lukas Pollert, CZE, 65;
2. David Hearn, USA, 58;
3. Emmanuel Brugvin, FRA, 50;
7. Gareth Marriott, GBR, 36.

TEAM MANAGER

Written applications are invited for the volunteer post of general and Olympic team manager canoe slalom for the period up to and including the Olympic Games 1996. An honorarium may be available.

Please send to Sue Wharton, BCU Slalom Development Officer, 117 Preston Road, Chorley PR6 7AX to arrive by 21 November 1993.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF CANOE POLO COMMITTEE

The Annual General Meeting of the Canoe Polo Committee will be held on Sunday January 2nd 1994, at 12 noon at the National Water Sports Centre, Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham.

Motions for the meeting or nominations for committee posts, must be received by the Secretary before the end of October 1993. Copies of the agen-

da, and proxy voting forms for clubs entitled to vote, who are unable to attend, may be obtained from the Secretary, 73 Dunlin Road, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP2 6LX, from November 1st, on receipt of a stamped address envelope. Proxy forms indicating the way they would like their votes cast must be returned to the secretary by 31st December 1993.

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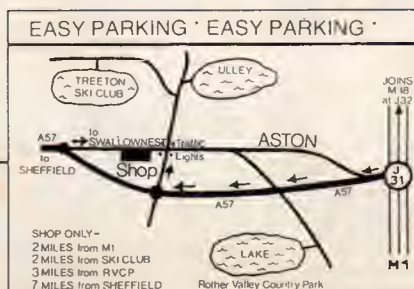
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MARATHON WORLD CUP

Maribo - Denmark

Following closely on the heels of the Sprint Racing World Championships the Marathon World Cup took place in Maribo some 130km south of Copenhagen - Denmark. The event attracted over twenty nations in the Senior Cups event and ten teams in the Junior Competition.

Several members of the Great Britain Sprint Racing squad remained in Denmark following their World Championships held over the preceding weekend the rest of the team flew out on the Thursday and Friday prior to the competition.

The courses for all classes were based on the lake with three portages for the Seniors and two for the Junior competitors.

First away on Saturday was the Junior mens K2 with British interest resting with the crews of David Smith and Brian Hemmings of Elmbridge and Matthew Enoch and David Bull of Nottingham. Both crews coped with a very fast start and remained in the leading group throughout the race. The finish of the race saw three boats in contention for the Gold Medal two Danish and the Elmbridge boat. A hard sprint finish took Brian Hemmings & David Smith to the Gold medal with Matthew Enoch and Martin Bull following to a highly creditable 5th place. In the Junior Ladies race Brian's sister Anna controlled the race throughout to win in another exciting finish from Lisen Augustsson of Sweden. These two superb victories combined with the performance of Malcolm Lane in the Junior C1 who took the Bronze medal ensured Great Britain's victory in the Junior World Cup.

International Junior Marathon racing came of age in Maribo and all bodes well for future attempts to get ICF approval for a full Junior World Championships.

Saturday afternoon saw the first major senior competition with current World Champion Ivan Lawler facing stiff opposition from what was considered to be a more competitive field than encountered at the World Championships. His main rivals included Australian Mike Mills-Thom winner of the Cups event held in Berlin in 1991 and also

Greg Slater, Ivans team mate, who won the Round London Grand Prix. The race got away to a clean start with both Ivan and Greg well within the leading group. This group also included Mike Mills-Thom, Tom Krantz of Sweden and the South African paddler Mark Perrow. Throughout the race Mills-Thom managed to set the pace in the hope that he would break the more established fast finishers including Ivan. The group remained together throughout and just before the third and final portage the main break came and the group of five which also included Mike Mills-Thom's team mate Paddy Holland made their move. A clash with Greg Slater unfortunately sent Paddy swimming and the group was reduced to four. A brilliant portage from Greg Slater saw him lead the group out on to the final stage with Ivan and Mike clinging to his wash. The Sprint finish saw Ivan take the lead with Tom Krantz of Sweden and Mike Mills-Thom fighting for second place unable to break through Ivan's wash. The final result was first Ivan Lawler, second Tom Krantz, third Mike Mills-Thom and Greg Slater taking fourth place.

The late change to the ladies K2 team following a cycling accident to Sandra Troop brought Maria Bluementhal the silver medalist from the 1992 championship together with Alison Thorgood of Newham. Although remaining within the leading group for most of the race a poor portage caused the British Ladies to drop behind and eventually finish in sixth place.

In men's C1 James Lee finished seventh and Michael Marshall finished eighth.

The second day saw an exciting Men's K2 competition with twelve craft remaining in contention for most of the race. The British challenge was lead by John Elliot and Steve Harris of Elmbridge who together with new National Marathon Champion Jimmie Butler and his partner James Block of Nottingham. Both crews remained within the leading group throughout the race but the Australian challenge lead by Mike Mills-Thom (K1 Bronze medal-

list) and Chad Meek was too great and the Australian crews placed first and seconded with South Africa taking the third and fourth position and the British crews fifth and sixth. For South Africa this was compensation for their disappointing Men's K1 performance.

In the Men's C2 class Great Britain fielded the sit down boat of Mark Taylor and Steve Brown of Royal Canoe Club. Unfortunately the sit down craft do not compete on an even basis with their high kneeling counter parts. The race dominated by the Hungarian boats with Pal Petervari and Istvan Guylay taking first place.

The Ladies' K1 competition featured the reigning World Champion Susanne Gunnarsson of Sweden in competition with Denise Cooper of Australia. British interest were represented by Andrea Dallaway and Hilary Dresser. A leading group was soon established which included Andrea but following a difficult start largely influenced by a poor lane draw Hilary found herself in the second group together with both Hungarian K1s. Hilary gradually pulled herself back in to the leading group and following good portages she together with Andrea was in contention for the last 5000mtrs. The current World Champion Suzzane Gunnarsson broke away to establish a lead and won by 16 seconds over Denise Cooper of Australia and Andrea Dallaway took third place with Hilary in her first International Marathon taking fifth place. Sadly the results sheet also featured a eleventh and last place for Dorte Reh of Germany so long a leading light in International Marathons.

These results provide Great Britain with victory in the World Cup Competition although the Grand Prix series had to be conceded to the Hungarians following their victory in the Round London Grand Prix. Marathon Racing looks forward to its fourth World Championships in Holland next year where Great Britain can be sure to feature heavily amongst the medallists.



Maribo World Cup 1993

Results

MEN JUNIOR K2 MARATHON (25KM)

- 1 Smith/Hemmings, Great Britain, 1:36:47
- 2 Svenningsen/Hearing, Denmark, 1:36:47
- 3 Eilert/Mortensen, Denmark, 1:36:59
- 5 Enoch/Bull, Great Britain, 1:39:25

MEN JUNIOR K1 MARATHON (25KM)

- 1 Peter Straka, Slovakia, 1:44:15
- 2 Erik Nielsen, Denmark, 1:44:22
- 3 Brian P. Rasmussen, Denmark, 1:44:23
- 10 Tom Hollings, Great Britain, 1:50:48
- 12 Richard Golder, Great Britain, 1:51:32

WOMEN JUNIOR K1 MARATHON (25KM)

- 1 Anna Hemmings, Great Britain, 1:53:24
- 2 Lisen Augustsson, Sweden, 1:53:57
- 3 Marianne Fjedheim, Norway, 1:54:30

MEN JUNIOR C1 MARATHON (25KM)

- 1 Carsten Scales, Denmark, 2:06:04
- 2 Olaf Gornik, Germany, 2:06:38
- 3 Malcolm Lane, Great Britain, 2:13:18

MEN K1 MARATHON (37KM)

- 1 Ivan Lawler, Great Britain, 2:46:16
- 2 Tom Krantz, Sweden, 2:46:17
- 3 Mike Miss-Thorn, Australia, 2:46:19
- 4 Greg Slater, Great Britain, 2:46:25

WOMEN K2 MARATHON (37KM)

- 1 Billberger/Eklund, Sweden, 2:53:30
- 2 Hovmand Larsen/Selmer, Sweden, 2:53:31
- 3 Pitz/Biro, Hungary, 2:54:31
- 6 Blumenthal/Thorogood, Great Britain, 2:59:13

MEN C1 MARATHON (37KM)

- 1 Gabor Kolozsuari, Hungary, 3:09:51
- 2 Silvestre Pereira, Portugal, 3:11:16
- 3 Niels Andersen, Sweden, 3:11:20
- 7 James Lee, Great Britain, 3:23:35
- 8 Michael Marshall, Great Britain, 3:28:43

MEN K2 MARATHON (37KM)

- 1 Mills-Thom/Meek, Australia, 2:32:20
- 2 McMullan/Blanc, Australia, 2:32:21
- 3 Bird/Evans, South Africa, 2:33:31
- 5 Elliot/Harris, Great Britain, 2:33:48
- 6 Butler/Block, Great Britain, 2:34:55

WOMEN C2 MARATHON (37KM)

- 1 Petervari/Gyulai, Hungary, 3:00:54
- 2 Hladony/Hladony, Hungary, 3:08:16
- 3 Ottone/Zaninetta, Italy, 3:08:42
- 6 Taylor/Brown, Great Britain, 3:20:20

WOMEN K1 MARATHON (37KM)

- 1 Susanne Gunnarsson, Sweden, 2:58:26
- 2 Denise Cooper, Australia, 2:58:42
- 3 Andrea Dallaway, Great Britain, 3:02:19
- 5 Hilary Dresser, Great Britain, 3:03:52

1993 CHESHIRE RING RACE

The 1993 Cheshire Ring Race held on 10/11 July 1993 attracted an average field of 11 canoes. This may not sound a lot of canoes but does involve 80 paddlers and about 40 support crew.

The race starts at mid-day and runs through the night to cover the 96 miles and 92 locks of the Cheshire Ring of canals. It begins at Adlington near Macclesfield and proceeds anti clockwise to Marple, Peak Forest canal to Ashton, Ashton Canal to Manchester, Rochdale Canal through the city centre, Bridgewater Canal to Preston Brook, Trent & Mersey Canal to Kidsgrove and Macclesfield Canal back to the start.

The traditional class in each race is the tourer relay, each canoe with 5 pairs of paddlers, each pair including a junior or female. Freestyle Canoe Club from Northwich won followed by Poynton Fire & Rescue, Weatherfield Wanderers (the Kavanagh family team), Macclesfield Canoe Club, Bollington ATC and finally Woodford Fire & Rescue who kept on going to finish in 29 hours.

In the K2 relay class Bollington CC won ahead of Macclesfield CC.

Debbie Richardson & Dave Moore of Freestyle CC improved the K2 all the way record and Steve Amos of Exeter succeeded in his third attempt to break Ken Bryce's K1 all the way record.

1993 Cheshire Ring Race Results

DOUBLE TOURER RELAY (Record 17h:59m)

Freestyle CC, 20h:05m:15s; Poynton Fire & Rescue, 20h:50m:25s; Weatherfield Wanderers, 20h:57m:58s; Macclesfield CC, 21h:58m:37s; Bollington ATC, 25h approx; Woodford Fire & Rescue, 29h:09m

K2 RELAY (Record 14h:26m)

Bollington CC, 15h:44m:53s; Macclesfield CC, 18h:08m:55s

K1 ALL THE WAY (Record was 19h:26m)

Steve Amos (Exeter), 18h:58m:34s; Boyd Millen (Kendal), Retired 35 miles

K2 ALL THE WAY (Record was 21h:31m)

Richards & Moore (Freestyle), 20h:24m:03s

Obituary

In Memoriam – Frank Sutton, M.C (1905-1993)

On May 4th 1993 whilst coaching skiing, there passed away Frank Sutton M.C a canoeist who in the late 1930s initiated a leap forward in British Canoeing.

An Austrian by birth, he bore the name Franz Schulhof when he arrived in England to manage a family firm in London, and he immediately contacted the Royal Canoe Club, attended the Autumn Regatta in 1936 and applied for membership, bearing string recommendations from his Austrian Clubs, where he was well-known and highly regarded as a wildwater canoeist, credited with the first navigation of a number of alpine rivers.

“Eskimo Rolls”

Frank received a warm welcome, and in the Spring of 1937 he brought down to the Club his sealskin kayak from Greenland, together with a folding version built by Otto Hartel of Graz. He demonstrated a number of “Eskimo Rolls” and several members present asked him to teach them the art, in the creek by the clubhouse. Enthusiasm spread rapidly and a number of members acquired Grazer kayaks, so that by the summer of 1938 it was possible to form an “Eskimo Rolling Circus” the members of which offered to give exhibitions of rolling skills at swimming galas and other aquatic functions.

Later Frank encouraged the use of kayaks on the sea, and began surf kayaking on the south coast, when films were made which are now in the Film Archive of the BCU.

It was in 1937 that Frank

arranged for a Coach of the German Team, to visit the Royal Canoe Club to take charge of a Coaching Course planned as part of the preparations for the World Racing Championships in 1938 in Sweden. During this first training course, a nucleus of racing enthusiasts was formed which allowed a full team to be selected for the Championships.

Slalom

Frank had still more to give us; the sport of Canoe Slalom had come into existence in the alpine countries because many of the canoeists there were skiing in the winter and wished to develop a canoeing equivalent to Ski slalom, using a course on turbulent water and suspended poles for gates. This was quite new to the British, and Frank organised the first canoe slalom at Trevor Rocks on the River Dee below Llangollen, ably assisted by enthusiasts from Manchester Canoe Club, and the new sport became established.

In 1938 the kayak enthusiasts were led by Frank on a major trip from Finland to Sweden via the Aland Islands during the time of the Vaxholm Championships, and he also led a party down rivers in the French Alps, when a film was made, now in the archive.

Interned

When in 1939 the war broke out, Frank, as an alien, was interned for a short time but soon released, and joined the Pioneer Corps in the British Army, and it was then that his name was changed by the Army author-

ities, to Frank Sutton. This was to protect him since a soldier with a German name might fare ill if captured. I believe Frank was the first “alien” to gain a Commission in the British Army, and later he was awarded the Military Cross for his services. His memoirs of his life in the Army make very interesting reading.

After the war Frank again took up his sport of skiing and became a highly respected coach in the Ski club of Great Britain. His historic eskimo kayak now decorates the front porch of the Royal Canoe Club.

Frank Sutton was a very accomplished canoeist, a good teacher of canoeing

skills, and a good friend of a whole generation of members of the Royal Canoe Club, and in the 1960s the Club showed its respect and appreciation of his services by electing him an Honorary Member, and this he deeply valued. He died only a few days after attending the Spring General Meeting of the Club of which he so much enjoyed being a member.

Frank Sutton played an important part in the development of canoeing in Britain, and I count it an honour to have been one of his friends.

JOHN DUDDERIDGE,
OBE.





Access news

FROM THE ACCESS CHAIRMAN

My main news this month is to report a resignation. Unfortunately it is my own resignation as Access Chairman. I am disappointed to have to give up the job so soon after taking it on, but I am afraid the situation is unavoidable. My employer (Nottingham City Council) has recently offered to send me back to University to take an MSc in Environmental Control. The amount of study required will not give me the time to lead the Access Committee effectively. A good rule for any voluntary worker is that the family and personal life come first, earning a living and paying the mortgage comes second, and the voluntary work must come third. I regret having to reduce my Access work just when things were beginning to get interesting, but a two year University sponsorship is an offer I cannot refuse. Life must go on however, and the BCU's access work will continue. We all bring to the BCU

our own specialist skills. Because my own personal skills were in publicity and communications, my work was extremely visible to many members. However the major part of the Access Committee's work takes place quietly behind the scenes, and this work will carry on. The main part of this task is the ongoing management of canoeing access by the regional access teams. Elsewhere on this page is an update by Mike Mills on various rivers in Cumbria. One problem he refers to is a problem with guide books. Whilst guide books are useful, they are not always known for their accuracy. Normally books which cover one small area are fairly accurate. The guides will be written by local specialists who know the area intimately, and because the books are fairly small and cheap to reproduce they can be easily reprinted and kept up to date. Many such guides are published by BCU Regional

Committees, and any profits made are reinvested back into the regional management structure. Larger scale guide books can be useful and attractive, but they may not always be so accurate. Sometimes these books will be edited together from work by various different contributors, so the final preparation will not be by an expert with local knowledge. Mistakes are not unknown. Additionally, if the books are higher quality and more expensive to print they will be reprinted less often, and paddlers will be less willing to buy the new edition. Such books may well be out of date in their descriptions of access agreements and other local conditions. The message is by all means use the guides to help you, but do not believe everything you read in print. Please check on the up to date situation using the BCU's Access Service.

Simon Dawson



THANK YOU SIMON

It was with great regret that I have had to accept Simon Dawson's resignation as Chairman of the British Access Committee. When Simon took over the access reins, I was delighted at the enthusiasm and energy that he gave to what can be at times a thankless task. Unfortunately, Simon, like most voluntary officers of the Union, also has to work for a living. Starting a new career in local government and studying for qualifications, he felt that he could not give the job the 100% that he passionately believes it requires. I would like to take this public opportunity to thank him for all the work that he undertook within canoeing and to wish him well for the future.

Mike Twiggs
Chairman, ACRMC

Mike Mills Regional Access Officer, Cumbria Reports

Over the last few years guide books have exacerbated access problems on many of our rivers. Now that information is widely available, however, the problem shouldn't deteriorate further – provided that paddlers use the information wisely and conduct themselves responsibly. Guide book details on access and egress points are sometimes completely wrong and lead to problems as illustrated in the following round-up. The BCU Access Officers are local paddlers with detailed knowledge on the waters on their patch – please consult them and avoid becoming a problem yourself!

River Kent

Over the last two seasons an agreement has been introduced on the Force Falls section of the Lower Kent. It has not been particularly successful, as an agreement, and we are at present uncertain of the situation for this coming winter (November 1 onwards).

Terry Storry's guide suggests finishing this section – "continue for a relaxing 2km through Levens Deer Park to the A6 at Levens Bridge". This section, with its resident otters, is specifically not available at pre-

sent and hopes for a workable agreement are not furthered by anyone paddling it.

River Sprint

The access point at Docker Nook Farm has been under increasing pressure and has now gone, with land owners and the NFU being quite hostile. An alternative access point has been negotiated by the LAO.

River Crake

Spark Bridge egress point and the Bobbin Mill rapid have been the subject of a great deal of work by the LAO to protect paddlers and residents/owners interests. It is vital that paddlers heed this advice to avoid conflict of interests.

Terry Storry's alternative access advice for the Crake is "for very small groups, at the first bridge down river – near Water Yeat".

This access point is not available without trespass and road blockage. To use it would jeopardise the whole agreement.

River Lune

We have been informed that the prime white water stretch of the

River Lune from Crook of Lune (grid ref SD620963) to the Rawthey Confluence (SD 628896) has been closed to canoeing following complaints of overuse and abuse by paddlers. The BCU have met with the owners, angling organisations and NFU, and have been unsuccessful in achieving any form of agreement to canoe this stretch in the future. The BCU will continue to try and negotiate towards a reasonable agreement and will notify canoeists through the canoeing press of any change in the future.

Elsewhere on the river the same pressure is causing problems. Requests for access advice from the LAO should be restricted to stretches other than the Crook to Rawthey section. It is essential that all paddlers wishing to use the Crook of Lune site, for example, as an egress point, do not take vehicles down the lane but carry canoes. This may be seen extreme and canoeists may think that a quick shuttle down and back to drop off boats will do no harm but the history of damage and inconvenience has led to this measure in order to protect the property and welfare of the local people.

Local Access Officers remain:

Kent and Sprint:

Mike Hayward, 422 Warrington Road, Abram, Wigan WN2 5XX. Tel: 0942 861765

Crake:

Colin Litten, Holly Cottage, Soutergate, Kirkby in Furness, Cumbria. Tel: 022989 629

Lune:

Rob Gregory, 74 Burneside Road, Kendal, Cumbria. Tel: 0539 732957

RAO VACANCIES

Many thanks to Bob Hartlebury who has recently resigned as RAO for the NE. We are grateful for the work he has done in the last 2 years.

There is now a vacancy for these important posts; nominations to the NW Regional Secretary as soon as possible, and certainly before the AGM on 20 November.

West Midlands Region is still looking for a replacement for Chris Charters as RAO. Chris cannot do justice to both this job and his job as National Access Officer for the Welsh Canoeing Association.



Send your letters to: Dear Focus, BCU HQ, John Dudderidge House, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Notts NG2 5AS. Tel: (0602) 821100 Fax: (0602) 821797

BACK ISSUES ?

Dear Focus:

As someone once said, reports of my death are greatly exaggerated! I joined BCU last July and received an initial thick pack of excellent material including Year Book etc, etc and, of course, issue number 78 of Focus. What value. All this for £13.50, I really was glad I joined.

And then nothing. Not a sausage. Not even a reminder after a year to pay more subs! Now that is really odd. In my

experience once you are a member of something, somebody somewhere always wants money from you again. So I stuck it out till last week then phoned your membership department. It seems that the next issue of Focus was returned to them by the Post Office with the word 'Deceased' written on it. Very correctly and efficiently they made sure that no further material was sent to avoid causing

any distress to relatives.

Well since my resurrection and rejoining, and yes, another years subscription which I don't object to at all, they have very kindly sent back issues of 81,82 and 84. I have since shut myself away, am doing a lot of rapid reading! A condensed set of Christmases so to speak. However you may note that issues of 79,80 and 83 are not available any longer. My appeal is to any reader who may have

no further use for theirs. I would be grateful for a copy.

**Andrew Ball
6 Hever Close,
Maidenhead,
Berkshire, SL6 4RH**

It may be that our computer has had you confused with someone else. If you are absolutely certain you are alive, perhaps some Members could help you out ?

Ed

The Adironacks

Dear Focus,

I greatly enjoy reading CANOE FOCUS and feel you are to be congratulated for keeping a magazine going which caters for an audience with such a diversity of views. I am always keen to read your feature articles, and often find the top tips and letters interesting too.

In the Summer of 1990 my brother and I went on a three week Canadian Canoe trip in the Adirondack National Park in New York State. This is definitely the most worthwhile thing I have ever done in my life :

Journey by Canoe

The Adirondacks, 1990 , Eighteen Days

*Searing through the morning mist , The loon-birds haunting cry
Rouses us:we kneel to stroke , The drawn-drenched waters by*

*The sun upon the water, Freckles white and blue,
Across the shining water slides , Swift elegance of birch canoe.*

*The deer upon the marshy banks, Scent the noontime air,
We plough before a great white sun And sweat beneath it's glare.*

*We pull against a heady force, The paddle dips and turns
Blood runs beneath a driven bow, A crimson hilltop burns*

*And in my heart and in my head ,A pulse begins to beat,
An incantation from a land, Untrod by human feet*

*Run Raquette River, Through the green ravine,
Brown bear yawns as hero flies, The beaver slaps unseen.*

*Run Raquette River, Through the windswept lake,
The miry swamp and stony creek, Tremble in your wake.*

*Run Raquette River, Through the deep heart's core,
Teach us, redeeming river god, Your ancient, untamed lore.*

Samuel Thompson

Inscribed Paddle

Dear Focus,

I have in my possession a canoe paddle bearing the following inscription : 'The great canoe race, so long discussed and looked for between Scott and Graham, of paddling fame, Goffat and Indian Partner, was concluded July 27 1894 around Chief's Island, distance 8 miles, in the fast time of 1 hour and 20 minutes, longest race known. An immense concourse from many places was present. 'I have tried, so far without success, to find out more about this event and in particular, where Chief's Island is or was. With thanks in anticipation,
Dr Roger Curtis.

ARE YOU SITTING COMFORTABLY?

then let us begin.....

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NO TIGERS

on the

Tamba

Main Photo:
Surfing on the
Sun kosi

RAY: *The bus ride from Katmandu to Busti Bridge took twelve hours and deserved a grade of III f. The 'f' denoting the lethal consequence of a crash on a road that had to climb over a mountain twice as high as any in England merely to gain the next valley. With three tickets sold for every seat that at a pinch would hold two Europeans, it was not a comfortable journey. My theory that only the best buses and drivers could survive on such road is only reassuring until you see the consequences of the selection process.*

The Nepalese are a friendly, hospitable people with two striking national defects. One is the careful, prolonged clearing of the throat followed by a well aimed gob; first thing in the morning the process could take a sustained effort over several minutes. In our Hotel in Katmandu either the culprit next door or Franco's increasingly rabid denunciation of the habit would wake me. The other defect was to affect us stumbling around that first night as we tried to find a clear spot to camp at Bosti, as the villagers all used the put-in as a public toilet.

Tamba Kosi

The Tamba Kosi at Busti is deceptively placid, its headlong rush to join the Sun Kosi momentarily slowed; a mile below it showed its true mettle. Our nerves were all ready tense in anticipation, for the next day and a half the river was a boulder maze of rushing water

rarely dropping below grade IV. Neither of us had been on a river of such sustained difficulty. Rather like paddling the Fisherman's Gorge on the Ogwen continuously for two days with five or six much harder sections thrown in for good measure.

Working down, eddy by eddy, progress was slowed by bank inspections whenever the river disappeared from sight. Every instinct demanded caution, we were just two in number and a long way from help. A swimmer would be on his own in this water and a roll could not be counted on in this rock maze. As the guidebook said, "A great river if you don't freak out."

The boats were loaded with all of our kit for the eight days we were planning to be on the river. We only took three days food and a litre of fuel reasoning that we could pick up basic foodstuffs from villages along the way. Even so, the boats were sluggish, this led to us carrying around a couple of sections that we might have



By Ray Goodwin and Franco Ferraro



Above:
A Buddhist
Temple

paddled if we had had empty boats and bank support.

FRANCO: The line for the next 200 metres was obvious but demanding: hauls and brake dodging, a quick dash and a breakout behind a large boulder. From there tricky manoeuvring through small but deep holes to culminate in a big drop into an even bigger stopper. The big question is do I want to do it? A loaded boat and a long walk to camp weigh heavily on my mind.

It'll go. Do it!

Into the kavak, butterflies in my stomach as I fix the deck. Enough *low* to concentrate the mind, not enough to inhibit performance.

Into the ritual.

"Concentrate", I breathe deeply and slowly, consciously slow my heartbeat and feel the calm descend on me. When I start, I will be aware only of the line, the 20 meters in front of me and the water under my boat. Even the roar of the rapid will recede to a distant murmur. Thought and action blended, completely, indistinguishable.

Go! I weave my way through the various obstacles and breakout behind the large boulder. An urge to go for it and trust to luck, reduce the time I will have to control the stress, is immediately rejected by my intellect. I climb onto the boulder.

I look at the water carefully and calmly paddle the route several times in my mind's eye.

Go! surging water, curling waves, glance off the cushion and drop into the stopper, the bow rears up, my body snaps forward as I head butt the front deck and drive the paddle deep to prevent the backward loop.

The kavak skyrockets up and out of the stopper, over a boulder, through the next stopper, I'm there!

Emotions flood in with the release of tension. Whoops of delight, relief. I can hear the roaring water, feel the sun on my face, see Ray grinning from ear to ear.

Stereo Nightmares

RAY: It was after a day of such paddling that we set up our tarp, soon to collapse into sleeping bags. There was no choice but to camp alongside the roar of the rapids. Little surprise that we both dreamt of a river of endless huge potrovers and desperate stoppers. Stereo nightmares; the only difference was that

Below:
Ray after two
days on the
Tamba Kosi at
the confluence
with the Sun
Kosi



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Franco was still in kayak in his, whilst in mine I was swimming!

The next section looked far more reasonable in the morning light. As we commented at the time, a good warm up. Within thirty seconds of leaving the first eddy it had all gone wrong, Franco was in the bottom of a deep stopper. I managed to miss him by inches, there was nothing I could do to assist, and within seconds was embroiled in my own fight to regain the line. Tense minutes later we were reunited in the next easier section, both shaken by our misreading of the rapid. Definitely an 'eyes out on stalks' run.

It was with relief that we reached the easy section during the afternoon of the second day. A short run took us down to a campsite below the confluence with the Sun Kosi. From now on the rapids were to be well spaced. The search for the ultimate play wave was now on. With no support rafts to meet we could stop as we please and camp on tiny beaches away from the constant curiosity of the locals. My first attempts at trading were only rewarded with lentils and rice. Franco was more successful.

FRANCO: My fondest memory of the trip is when I went shopping for food in the village of Hakapur. I was sat on a reed mat on the mud floor whilst the shopkeeper sat cross legged opposite me. His wife and three young children sat nearby the youngest stood next to his mother, found her breast and suckled as he looked on. With the help of a phrase book I managed to get rice, lentils, a type of spinach beet, glucose biscuits, a bunch of four pigmy bananas and a can of beer! As each item was produced it was placed on the mat and the number of rupees toted up. By this time neighbours were peering in obviously amused at the sight of the foreigner trying to make himself understood with single words and sign language. Then it happened, I could find the word for chicken but not for egg. 150 rupees came the reply as he pointed at a scrawny chicken. Brainwave, I crouched on the floor made clucking and crooning noises, stretched my neck, screwed my eyes up with the effort, the stood up, looked expectantly at the spot where my bottom had been and said 'egg'. The place was in uproar. The adults rocked back and forth shaking with laughter. The shopkeeper, tears of laughter rolling down his cheeks slapped me on the shoulder in appreciation and the children unashamedly rolled about on the floor clutching their bellies. Finally when he had recovered enough to speak, the shopkeeper managed to say, "Sorry, no alu, no egg".

RAY: The rapid below Hakapur was complex and serious although it ran out into easy water below. I told Franco that I would run on the left taking the easier of the two lines. Neither of us could see the whole route on the right where the vast volume of water went. As I walked to my kayak I debated in my mind my decision, perhaps the Tamba Kosi had made me too cau-

Above:
**Hakapur on
the Sun Kosi**



Below:
**Franco
bargaining for
eggs**



tious. There was no reason to expect disaster to lurk in the unseen section. I was paddling well so stuff it! I didn't shout back to Franco but with a semblance of calm put on the deck and headed out for the 'water line'.

Using the traverse waves to push me on to my chosen line my abiding memory was of holding the power back, of climbing through breaking waves and waiting until the gap between two huge rocks came into sight. Then turning the acceleration on I raced for the space. At the last moment I glimpsed a monstrous cushion covering the second rock. Totally committed I tucked into a brace, head in the wave and heart in mouth I shot around and through. The rapid easing off, I headed for the bank hoping that Franco had captured it on film.

Borro Borro

FRANCO: We made camp on a pristine white beach surrounded by green dark of the Jungle Corridor. I smile as I realize that it reminds me of the 'Jungle Book', of Mogli, Balloo the bear and of course . . . Sheer Khan.

A group of locals congregate on the opposite bank shouting and gesturing.

'Ere' says Ray 'What does Borro Borro mean?' All the time his finger ran down the words in the phrase book.


I tried to see as his finger stopped.

'It says it means . . . TIGER!'

'What!!' I shouted as I leapt about four feet into the air, my head swivelling from side to side as I tried to look in every direction at once. Manic peals of laughter ensued as Ray took off down the beach. Only his head start prevented me exacting revenge.

RAY: The Big Dipper was the last big rapid of the trip. From the bank the line was obvious; down the left to avoid a series of line stoppers then scream right for all you are worth to avoid a grand nightmare of a hole; terminal.

It was one of the few times I saw Franco under full power as he moved right above the big hole, so I started my move early. Both of us had been deceived by the speed of the water I turned on the power and barely cleared the tow back. A glance over my shoulder cost as a stopper, hidden by a steep wave, capsized me. The turbulence snapped me back and forth below the boat for long seconds before I could get a blade to the surface. I rolled up to be greeted by Franco's gleeful grin.

Early the next morning, the eighth of the trip, we headed down the last gorge where the Sun Kosi finally cuts through to the plains of India. A thick mist rolled up towards us blanketing the visibility. We hugged the left bank until we hit the heaps of gravel that divert the waters of the Himalaya into an irrigation canal. Trip end. Franco strode off to arrange transport. With my memories and thoughts I sat alone in the mist. 

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PUJA ON THE GANGA

(North East India) – Easter 1993



Left
Donald Bean
wearing his on
the water attire



Pete Knowles (better known as 'Slime') had been on a two-week trip to India before, in 1992, which included some trekking as well as the main activity – kayaking. The initial trip had exceeded Slime's expectations, and as he apparently wished to wash away his subsequent sins in the sacred water of the Ganga River, he decided to organise a somewhat similar trip for April this year.

For this year's trip, on a non-profit basis, a limited number of experienced paddlers happy on good Grade 4 water, were invited to apply, with the aim of forming a group of no more than 12 kayakers of different ages and sexes, all with similar ideals and expectations. By no means was the trip to be a hard, testing expedition, but an ideal trip, with a holiday atmosphere, for anyone who hadn't paddled before in India, or even outside Europe, and who would appreciate the challenge and cultural experience involved. Although primarily a kayaking trip, a limited number could have been accommodated on the support raft manned by Indians, though no one availed themselves of this facility. A support raft was essential to carry camping and cooking equipment, food and drinks, as for a substantial part of the time on the river we should be away from roads and shops, and would lack minibus support.

The group selected totalled 11, with an age range from 23 to 72, and included 3 ladies. Suffice to say that on Sunday 4th April the 11 highly motivated and dedicated kayakers (being British, I'll refer to them here on as canoeists, and their craft as canoes) arrived at New Delhi Airport at 9am, to be introduced to our waiting rafting and minibus crew. All transport, rafting and camping facilities, together with food and some of the drinks were provided by Snow Leopard Adventures of New Delhi, led by Ajeet Bajaj, who I had met before, in Turkey, in 1989 (small world!). We were whisked away from the airport northwards for some 150 miles on an all day journey by minibus to the travel company's excellent permanent base camp at Shivpuri, on the banks of the Ganga river. It was dark when we arrived, and an excellent meal, and drinks, were awaiting us. Luxury indeed, including camp beds, toilets, shelter from the scorching sun, and chairs to sit on – all too good to last.

'Buddy System'

How nice it would be to get on the water after all that travelling. So next day, after sorting out ourselves and canoes (mainly provided by Snow Leopard Adventures), we were

to paddle the 10 miles from the camp site to Rishikesh, where the Ganga River (known as the Ganges before India's independence) leaves the Himalayas and enters the Indian plains. We had quite a variety of canoes – I opted for a Rotobat. On the water we adopted the "buddy" system, changing partners each half day. Apart from the safety aspect, it enabled us to get acquainted and to experience the strengths and weaknesses of others on the water.

The river was wide, with the water level swollen by melting snow upstream, with a number of good grade 3 and 4 rapids, which presented few problems, and gave us an excellent introduction to the river. We changed from our canoeing gear on a beach at Rishikesh where the minibus was waiting, surrounded by crowds of Indians, of all ages and sexes. We had been asked to be discreet and not show bare legs and chests when in public places, but no way was this possible when we were literally being mobbed. The crowds seemed to enjoy the unexpected entertainment, and everyone seemed very happy.

Make Way for the Cow

Then a quick walk into the old part of Rishikesh, seeing the shops, street stalls and traders: a hive of activity. Then our first ride in an auto-rickshaw back to the beach and our minibus before returning to the campsite for the night. We had just experienced a glimpse of legendary Indian culture and mythology – very interesting, but something we can never really understand. For instance, people carrying heavy loads on their heads, tiny grossly overloaded 3-wheeled auto-rickshaws, families of 4 or 5 riding on motor scooters (normally the wife riding side-saddle at the back), all the street traders. But everyone makes way for the cow so sacred to the Hindus. It has a right everywhere, even in the centre of large cities, frequently reclining in the middle of busy highways and making traffic go round. Religion and customs are reflected everywhere, and the sweet smell of burning incense is all pervasive, even in the streets. What a mixture of religion and culture: Hindus eating pork but



Left:
Donald Bean in his usual "off the water" attire with an Indian rafter.

not beef; Muslims eating beef but not pork! India seems to be a land of contrasts: the slum dwellers in the shadow of palatial buildings – but no more so than in the variety of clothes the people wear, which are a study in themselves.

Himalayan Mountains

The next few days programme involved trekking way up in the Himalayan mountains not so far (at least on the maps) from Tibet, now part of China. But before leaving the Rishikesh area, our driver first needed to get our trekking permits, but the official who was to issue them was unlikely to turn up until noon the next day. So we decided to have the next morning in the other part of Rishikesh, shopping and seeing the sights. In Rishikesh, a big pilgrim and yoga centre of some 26,000 people, beggars with their begging bowls were out in their hundreds, sometimes lining both sides of the roads and pavements. There were also snake handlers, street traders of every description, as well as many shops, yoga ashrams and temples.

With out trekking permits (yes, they were inspected a number of times), we drove north towards our trekking area, following the valley/gorge of the Bhagirathi river, spending the first night at the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering at Uttarkashi. The idea was to motor as far as possible towards the source of the Bhagirathi river (the Ganga's main tributary) at Gaumukh, and after the vehicle could get no further to trek the remainder, in an area of high mountains and perpetual snow. Unfortunately, at 7,000 feet, the narrow road from there on was blocked by vehicles by landslides – both of rocks and snow and ice, though blasting was in progress, with workgangs of men and bulldozers busy on clearance work in preparation for the tourist season expected to commence in about a months time.

We split basically into 3 groups: the experienced advanced mountaineers set off to reach the source of the Bhagirathi river, 2 others aimed to get almost there, and the remainder, who were less experienced/ambitious, who wished to take things more easy. (I was in the third group, and can relate only our particular experiences until the group met up again). Rain set in, and after an unpleasant and muddy trek we all just about made it to the tiny village of Sukhi (8,500 feet), where a kindly Hindu family offered us hospitality for the night. Everything was extremely primitive- no electricity (the power cables were wrecked in earthquakes some two years before and had not been repaired), a smoke-filled room with a wood fire, a bench for us to sleep on and no toilets (just go in the field!) But all very acceptable, particularly as we had no food or tents with us, and it was very wet.

The idea was to start some 12 miles upstream, on the Bhagirathi river, and to canoe back to the campsite, and ultimately some 90 miles almost to Rishikesh. The road we wanted to take was blocked by a landslide, which workmen were starting to clear, so we travelled along a track on the opposite bank to a site where construction was starting on a river barrage. It was, however, over a mile to carry our canoes and equipment down to the water, but it was very much worthwhile. The river here was in an extremely deep gorge, fast flowing, with a number of very heavy rapids. There were several swims (me only one), and it rained heavily en route.

For the next few days we relied entirely on the raft support, as it was not possible for the vehicle to meet up with us at campsites. We camped at the end of day two at Nagar after canoeing some 17 miles, and encountered some heavy rapids. Day three on the water involved some 20 miles canoeing, first easy water and then heavy rapids,



Canoeists on the trip were:
Pete Knowles
(Leader & Organiser);
Phil Dean;
Terry Hailwood;
Pete Higgins;
Rowan Low;
Dawn Macrae;
Chris Nichol;
Chris Oliver;
Helen Taylor;
Tracey Wemyss
and
Donald Bean
(writer of this article)

including a 15 feet fall in three drops. Just before the next campsite we came to the village of Devprayag, where the Bhagirathi and Alaknanda rivers merge, to form the sacred Ganga. A crowd of villagers, together with Holymen, met us as we got out at the confluence, where pilgrims receive their immersion in the swift flowing sacred waters, just yards from a Hindu temple. After receiving handfuls of flower petals to offer to the sacred waters, we were individually lowered out on a strong chain into the fast flowing water, to receive our immersions – and returned to have red Tikas (spots) stuck on our foreheads. Although the full religious significance was not entirely understood, it was a very happy and sociable occasion for all concerned, and apparently, we finished the ceremony whiter than white, with all our sins washed away in this most holy of holy spots in water considered so sacred by some 600 million people.

Next morning we obliged villagers in the far bank by rafting across to them some large driftwood logs, and were rewarded by a conducted tour round the village, and shown a solar panel and electric neon lights (in working order), and then taken round a Hindu temple under construction. We met a large group of pilgrims here – some about to bathe in the sacred Ganga river – and had yellow Tikas stuck on our foreheads by the Hindu priest.

Then a leisurely day on easy water was fairly short, but included three grade 3 and one grade 4 (Golf Course) rapids. The water was very heavy, and expected to increase in volume because of the melting snow upstream. We were met at the finish by the minibus, to take us on a visit to nearby Chilla Wild Life Park, where we saw elephants and apes. Some jeeps transported our canoes back to the final campsite.

What should have been our final day in India followed: on the road at 2.30am for a 150 mile drive to get to our New Delhi hotel as early as possible, to give us a maximum time in New Delhi for shopping and looking around, it was 980f – too hot – and there were hoards of beggars and street traders. More particularly, Air India (our airline) were on strike, and it was unlikely we would get back to Britain as planned. Nevertheless, we were up early on Sunday 18th April, but it was clear there was no way we would fly out of India that day. So Air India put us up in the New Delhi Airport five-star hotel, where we stayed as their guests until the following Tuesday. Half of us then returned to Britain via Moscow on a Russian State airline, and the others on an American 'plane stopping at Frankfurt, from where we travelled on a British Airways 'plane to Heathrow.

So concluded a most challenging trekking and white water canoeing adventure, and an enjoyable cultural experience. We returned home with so many memories, and generally a desire to return again in the future. Our canoeing experience was well refreshed, though at not time did the level of difficulty exceed grade 4. We had canoed broadly within our capabilities, with a minimum amount of involuntary swimming. My own tally was 3 swims, only one of which was in really difficult water.

Our thanks to Slime, and also to Ajeet Bajaj and the staff of Snow Leopard Adventures. We enjoyed India, and its so friendly and hospitable people. The trip certainly exceeded expectations: we hope it also exceeded Slime's, and that, maybe, he will consider organising and leading a similar trip next year to give others the experience we so enjoyed.

My particular thanks go to Slime. Would you have taken a 72 year old canoeist you had never paddled with before, on such a trip?

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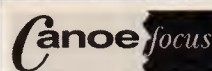
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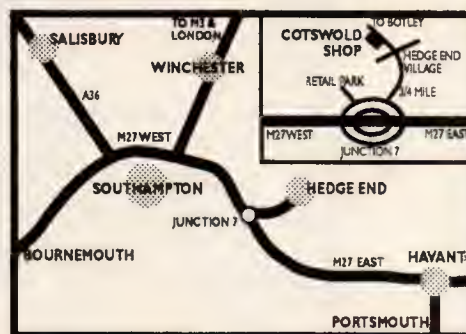


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Above:
BCU President, Albert Woods, speaking during the tour. He told participants that the Canoe-Camping Club was older than the BCU. Indeed he thanked the club for the part it had played in setting up the BCU.

Paddlers Through Liquid History

The Thames Tour

They came from Basingstoke and Bratislava, from Hemel Hempstead and the Hague, from Milton Keynes and Michigan.

Below:
What could be nicer? A canoe, a tent and a meal by the water.

More than two hundred canoeists, British, Bulgarian, Belgium, American, French, Dutch, German, Czech and Slovak assembled on a campsite near Lechlade bridge to paddle along Old Father Thames to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Canoe-Camping Club, a section of the Camping and Caravanning Club.

The Camping and Caravanning Club has various special interest sections. They cover pastimes such as mountain activities, photography, folk singing and dancing. The Canoe-Camping Club forms one of the water-based activity sections who arrange meetings and events for their members.

To see the canoeists off were family and friends as well as leading figures from the world of canoeing, outdoor activities and the Camping and Caravanning Club. In the summer sunshine they chatted, renewed old acquaintances, remembered past tours and tried out each others canoes.

Different People

Among the different nationalities were different kinds of people: solitary paddlers in fibreglass kayaks, family groups in huge open canoes. Of the men and women, young and old, at least half a dozen were octogenarians and a score were over seventy. At the other end of the scale, Caroline and Mark Corke bought along their six month old son, Sam.



At last the formalities were over, the speeches and presentations finished. Monday dawned and paddlers more familiar with the waters of the Danube, the Dutch canals and the Great Lakes of America dipped into the Thames at Lechlade to start a two week cruise down the river that has been described as England's liquid history.

The route would take them through the Cotswolds to the first night's camping at the delightfully named Trout Inn at Tadpole Bridge. On to Eynsham for the sec-

ond night's stop and then on to Oxford to camp beside the Cherwell on Christ Church College sports ground.

Sightseeing

Then it would be time for a day off from canoeing but no real rest for coaches had been organised to show our foreign visitors the delights of Shakespeare's Stratford upon Avon and the Cotswolds.

Next day back on the river onto Clifden Hampden and in the days that followed through Henley, Marlow and to Windsor where the castle, still clothed in scaffolding from last year's fire dominates the river views.

A whole day's sightseeing introduced the canoeists to the delightful royal riverside town.

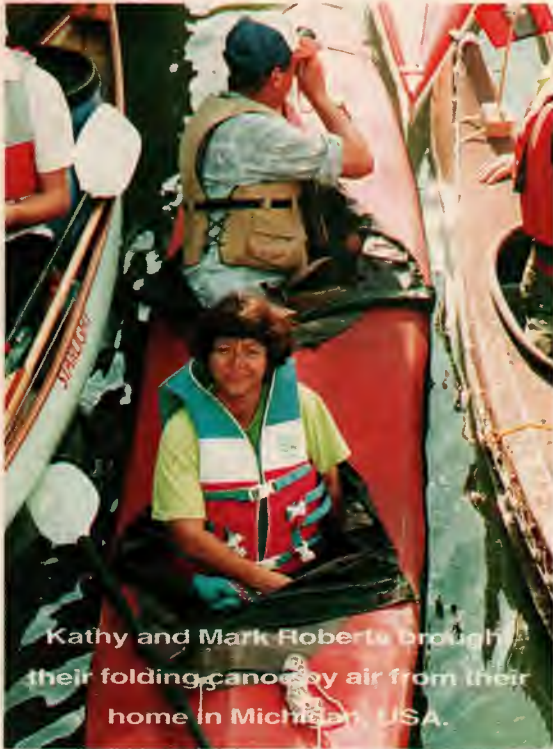
And on they went along the widening watery highway towards the Capital. But before London they stopped in Ham where, at the Thames Young Mariners Base, an International Friendship evening had been organised.

Dignitaries from the world of canoeing, from local authorities and from the Camping and Caravanning Club, joined the canoeists for a barbecue and evening of home brewed international entertainment.

It was a happy evening but one tinged with sadness that the end of the trip was in sight.

On Friday a short paddle to Barnes gave participants the chance to explore London, Richmond and Kew Gardens. On Saturday the final day of the Tour, the canoeists pulled their craft onto the beach outside the Festival Hall for a visit to the heart of London.

Some of the more skilled and experienced canoeists took their boats through the City, under Tower Bridge and on to view the Thames Barrier before returning to Barnes to say their farewells to firm friends they had made in their two week Tour of the Thames.



Kathy and Mark Roberts brought their folding canoe by air from their home in Michigan, USA.

PETER FROST



ALL KINDS OF CRAFT

It would be hard to imagine a collection of canoes more diverse than those that took part in the Canoe-Camping Club's International Tour of the Thames.

As you'd expect there were single and double fibreglass kayaks but open canoes were well represented too. Aluminium, plywood as well as all kinds of plastic craft took to the water.

Folders are still popular and the Americans in particular had brought their folding canoes by plane across the Atlantic.

Star of the show however, had to be Colin Brewster (right), an organiser with the Canoe-Camping Club, with his home built sailing canoe. Its tanned sail added colour and interest all the way down the river.



EDITORS

NOTE:

The Canoe Camping Club, formed in 1933, has a special significance in the history of Canoeing in this country. In 1936 the British Canoe Union was formed from an amalgam of the Canoe Camping Club and the British Canoe Association.





TAILENDER ON LATENESS

The August issue of Focus was late, as promised, but it was never intended to be so emphatically late. My apologies to those who were affected: from some of the 'feedback' coming through my telephone earpiece it seems that the issue was plagued by production gremlins, piling up and causing a domino effect. What most readers are probably not aware of, is that once Focus leaves my Nottingham desk it travels to St.Ives, Cambridge for design and layout; thence to Poole, Dorset for printing; then on to Peterborough for labelling and mailing; and finally to the Post Office en route to your doorstep. Focus is commercially produced by outside agencies, it doesn't just crawl out of the little door on the side of my PC ! Oh and incidentally that letter addressed to the 'Editorial Department'? I have put weight on since I started office work but I am not quite the size of a department yet !! What all this means is that losing two days anywhere in this schedule can mean that the magazine can end up weeks late before you get to see it. Efforts have been made to tighten up this schedule and hopefully there will be no repetition. Please help by getting material in ahead of the copy date shown on the inside cover. Thank you to those who were patient. Most of those who complained loud and long will now understand how the situation arose. Some do like complaining for it's own sake, however, like the member who was adamant that this was the THIRD September issue advertising National Canoeing Day to arrive late. Last year was the first National Canoeing Day !!!

IN YOUR DEC ISSUE

Rodeo world
Champion-
ships from
Tennessee

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Slalom from
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and news and
views

A perspective on Membership growth

It is really encouraging to see that membership continues to grow, generally at a steady pace, but more specifically over the last three months. Why are we successful when other national bodies are losing ground ? The recent rise in membership figures is due to the large numbers of lapsed members re-joining so that their coaching qualifications are valid.

The reason ? After the Lyme Bay tragedy, employers and parents have been asking searching questions about the instructors who run canoeing sessions for young people. The BCU office has been inundated with calls requesting confirmation of qualifications and membership status. In many cases we have had to state that the instructor had been a member but was not now current. Hence a scramble to rejoin.

The same was true of BCU approved centres: from just over 80 at the turn of the year to well over 100 in mid-July, a rapid increase of over 20% One of the few good things to come out of the tragedy is that the BCU was publicly seen to have demonstrably built up a very good coaching scheme with a sound structure catering for all-comers in an incredibly diverse sport. When we were asked to respond to the media on questions of safety and good practice our input was ready and waiting. The documents were there to be faxed, the experts available, the advice and the combined experience of over 7000 current and past practitioners was on tap via phone or fax. The obvious question was put to me by the sen-

sible media 'If you already have all this in place; qualifications, Centre accreditation and support; how can people employed as canoe instructors ignore a scheme which caters specifically for them ?' Is it ignorance ? or is it cost ? Or is it something else ?

There has been much discussion over the years about compulsory membership to retain qualifications. I personally feel that the situation is clear cut: support the BCU (and Coaching Service) with your membership fees and the BCU is able to effectively support you, as an instructor, with information, advice and further training. If you decide that the fee is too expensive then fine, but you are bound to lose out sooner or later. Realistically there is ten pounds difference between basic and comprehensive membership. Is credibility worth £10 a year ? Parents sending their kids canoeing now seek assurances of Approved Centre status and appropriate staff qualifications.

It is reasonable that an instructor, out of membership for seven years should demand his membership (and qualifications) instantly re-instated because his employer needs him to be qualified ?

The Coaching Service is one of the key functions of the Union. It is a shame that it has taken a human tragedy for some fairweather members to run back under the brolly when the rain looks really heavy. Are you part of the solution, or part of the problem ?

Kevin Danforth



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