

THE CANOE SPORT MAGAZINE FOR THE NINETIES

# Canoe focus

No 86. DECEMBER 1993

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## RODEO WORLD CHAMPS USA

bridget thomas world champion

world sprint champs  
from denmark

british open  
slalom champs

rafting the coruh

Photo: Kevin Danforth

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**BRITISH  
CANOE  
UNION**

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**Front Cover Photo: Eric Jackson of the United States pulls a big gyronite on  
the Open Boat Section of the World Rodeo Championships. Eric placed fourth  
in this section and won the Mens Kayak event. Photograph by Kevin Danforth**

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 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 DECEMBER 1993. Material arriving at FOCUS after this date cannot be included in the FEBRUARY issue.**





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# Comment



## DIRECTOR'S COMMENT

What a year 1993 was for British Canoeing with seven Gold, Five Silver and Seven Bronze medals in World level competition and combined membership of the BCU, SCA, WCA and CANI passing the 20,000 watershed, whilst membership in other sporting Governing Bodies declines.

Our most recent sporting successes include yet another World Champion in Bridget Thomas the new Ladies World Whitewater Rodeo Champion and Bob Campbell's Silver medal in the squirt category. Rodeo is a new development in the competitive future of the sport and it is apparent that we have athletes more than capable of performing at world level.

On the subject of future winners, I was very privileged to be invited to the Womens Sports Foundation Champions of the Future Award Luncheon at the Park Lane Hotel, London. Sponsored by Tampax the awards are designed to encourage and assist young lady athletes to reach their full potential in the three categories of Coach, Team and Individual. Canoeing had three finalists they were Clare Fox in the Individual and Rebecca Train/Suzanne Fowler who went on to win the team category.

Anyone reaching the finals of these prestigious awards can be justly proud as the Womens Sports Foundation represents Women athletes in all sports.

As we go to press I am very pleased to reveal that several of our top athletes are under consideration for the top one hundred awards. Supported by the Foundation for Sport and the Arts and administered through the Sports Aid Foundation the idea is to give Britains most outstanding Sportsmen and Women substantial grants to enable them to undertake full time training.

## A PLEA FOR HELP

With success comes problems and to help with ever increasing workload at the BCU office can I ask all members to quote their membership number when telephoning or writing in. We can of course service even more members, but it helps to us to give our immediate priority to those in membership.

## HAPPY CHRISTMAS

Happy Christmas from everyone at the BCU office to all our readers and Good Paddling in 1994.

## BOXED DISPLAY

Paddlers: Do you want to be a member of BCU Council and have your say ?

## THE TREVOR BAILEY AWARD FOR ENDEAVOUR

We are pleased to announce that the first ever recipient of the Trevor Bailey Award for Endeavour is Mr Bob Porter of the Barking and Dagenham Canoeing Squad. The panel felt that Bob showed outstanding dedication and commitment to the club and its members. It is hoped that the award will be presented to Bob by a member of the late Trevor Bailey's family during the weekend of the International canoe Exhibition in February.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BRITISH CANOE UNION

The AGM of the British Canoe Union will be held on Saturday 12 March 1994 at the Westminster Boating Base.

Members are reminded that Article 18(b) of the Union's Articles of Association requires that any motion for discussion at the Annual General Meeting not originating from the BCU Council, shall be:

Signed by two full\* members entitled to vote and to be lodged with the Secretary (Director) before 1 January 1994.

Article 13(c) requires that the nominations of candidates for election as elected members of the BCU Council are put forward in the form of such a motion. Nominations should be accompanied by a pen portrait of the candidate up to 100 words maximum in length. As a consequence of elected members of the BCU Council completing their two year electoral term there will be five vacancies for membership of the Council.

Members entitled to vote include the following classes of membership only:

1. Adult Basic; 2. Life Comprehensive; 3. Adult Comprehensive (also full and life members under the old system)

Only members as designated in \* above are eligible for nomination as elected members.

Paul Owen





# Notice board

## International Canoe Exhibition

The Canoe Exhibition returns to Crystal Place in 1994. All the usual attractions will be there including a full pool programme. Extra catering arrangements have been made and there will be improvements in the stand layouts, including a one way system, which should reduce the hustle and bustle somewhat. Full details of booking arrangements are enclosed in this issue of Focus. Canoeing for people who are disabled. There will be an open forum at 1430 on the Saturday and Sunday of the International Canoe Exhibition for paddlers who are disabled, and/or helpers. The forum will receive a report from the chairman, and on the Saturday will elect the Committee for the ensuing year. There will be opportunity also for views to be exchanged on current developments, such as Handykayak and Canoeability.

## Nominations

Nominations for election to the Committee, which must be proposed and seconded by adult comprehensive or basic members must be received by the Director of Coaching at the BCU Office by 31 December 1993.

## York's Coaching Evening

Yorkshire and Humberside Region will be holding a canoeing and coaching evening at Bennets Park Pool, Leeds on the 9th February at 7.00 pm, All paddlers welcome Geoff Good, BCU Director of Coaching plans to attend. Further details from Ron Rymer on 0423 330323

## RECEPTION AT ROYAL CANOE CLUB

BCU President Albert Woods and Director Paul Owen joined 70 guests to honour the new Sailing World Champion Robin Wood, who with Mark Goodchild and Michael Fenwick also successfully challenged the USA for the historic New York Canoe Club International Challenge Cup at the World Championship regatta held in San Francisco Bay in August.

At the reception which was held at the Royal Canoe Club Clubhouse at Teddington Sir Peter Yarranton, Chairman of the Sports Council presented photographs and mementos to the winning team. He also welcomed members of the ICF Sailing Committee, who were holding their

annual meeting at Ravens Ait Centre, Kingston-upon-Thames. Sir Peter said that it gave him great pleasure to honour British Sporting Achievements. He also praised the work for all those who worked at international level for the promotion of sport.

Per Sjhoul of Sweden, Chairman of the ICF Sailing Committee, replied on behalf of the guests and congratulated the British Team on their success and thanked the Club members who had worked hard to make the reception so enjoyable where many past and present canoe sailors had been able to come together.

Peter Wells



Above: Sir Peter Yarranton presents Robin Woods with a memento

## Children's Charity Paddle



The Reverend David Ella of Canvey Island will paddle from Lechlade to Southend Pier, solo in an open canoe, to raise funds for the Childrens society. The 205 miles will take David 14 days. He has been paddling a little over a year and holds the BCU Instructor award. Much of David's work is working with young people and paddling with them in the Canvey Island area.



The Children's Society

### STOP PRESS IMPORTANT NOTICE STOP PRESS

The Mike Jones Rally is not on the 11th & 12th of December. This date and venue were published in canoeist and not released by any member of the Mike Jones Rally Committee. It is hoped that the rally will take place in march 1994. Venue to be announced  
Information from: The Mike Jones Rally, c/o Belper Sorting Office, Belper, Derbyshire DE5 1UU from January onwards. Please send SAE for information



*Chris Hare*



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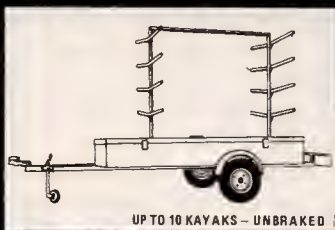
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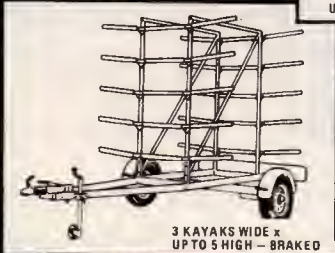
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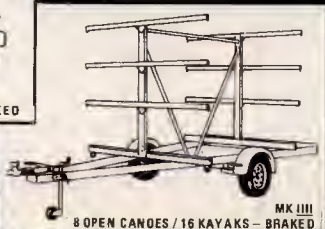
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## Tampax Awards

Kayak Doubles team Rebecca Train and Suzanne Fowler are the winners of the Tampax/WSF Winners of the Future award, worth £2000. Since 1990. Rebecca and Suzanne have won the British Junior National Championships and achieved Bronze Medals in the Senior Championships in 1992 and 1993. At the Junior World Championships earlier this year they were Britain's Highest Placed pair at 10th position and achieved their own personal best time. Rebecca and Suzanne both aged 17, have trained together for three hours every day, for four years and their programme encompasses running, swimming, weight training and canoeing. They are both studying for three A levels and hope to become physiotherapists.

## Ladies Himalayan Kayak Expedition

The all female team are attempting a descent of the 120k Tamur river and will warm up on the Sun Kosi. They are well supported by Cowie Leasing, and FSA grant. They are aiming, in their own words to 'show by example that women can achieve in a sport which is currently male dominated. We feel it would be beneficial if more women were involved in teaching canoeing skills and expeditions' This parallels the aims of the BCU Women's panel.

# STUDENT PROJECTS

About this time of the year various colleges and schools have students getting involved in design or research projects which are Canoe related. Graham Mackereth of Pyranha has voiced the feelings of many other manufacturers (and the BCU Information service) 'We would wish to help but we don't have the time available ....the problem is that the requests are so vague that it appears they would like us to do the work for them....

Pyranha, other manufacturers and the BCU, are keen to give students as much help as possible : here are some suggestions Enclose a SAE Ask Specific questions (not what is the best canoe design?) Put your request in a questionnaire format and please do some research before asking the experts. For the cost of a 50p stamp a helpful guide on researching your student project is available from the BCU.



Foundation  
for sport  
and the arts

## FOUNDATION FOR SPORT AND THE ARTS

The ever generous Foundation has again supported many canoeing causes in it's latest round of grant support. Overall almost £13 million has been given out recently, about £130,000 of which goes to canoe related activity. Notable grants have gone to the following: SCA for purchase of access land to Grantully; BCU Rodeo Contribution to World Championship team; Ladies Himalayan Kayak Expedition; Taunton Canoe Club; Salisbury Canoe Club and Millbrook Canoe Club, all for Club premises.

## SLALOM NEWS

### TEESIDE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION SPONSORS SLALOM

The TDC is to sponsor the first national indoor canoe slalom event ever held in the United Kingdom. It will be held on Sunday December 12 at Sheffield's Ponds Forge swimming Pool and has been organised by the BCU Slalom Committee. It is intended to provide a taste of the real thing in advance of the opening of the Tees slalom course which is being built as part of the £50 million Tees Barrage project.

It is hope that over 200 slalomists will compete at Sheffield in all the usual slalom classes.

Clwyd, LL15 2TF Tel: 0824 704522

### SLALOM COACH TOPS WELSH AWARDS

Slalom Coach Lara Tipper has received the Best Female Coach of the Year award from the Welsh Sports Council. Lara, based in Capel Curig, North Wales coaches the GB under 18 ladies team and has guided five of them to domestic titles this year.

### WCA SLALOM COMMITTEE

The WCA Slalom Committee are running a winter mini-slalom series at Mile End Mill, Llangollen on Saturday 4th December 1993, 8th January 1994, 5th February 1994, for further details contact: D Lloyd, Brynffynnon Hall, Graigadwywynt, Ruthin,

## Surfers against Sewage

A Surfers against Sewage member has been granted legal aid in a personal injury case against Southern Water PLC who allegedly were responsible for the polluted water which caused his illness. This will create an interesting precedent for canoeists who also find themselves ill through immersion in polluted sea water.

## New Rodeo Event

A new event has been added to the calendar. On January 2 at Holme Pierrepont Slalom Course there will be a competition for all levels with some fun new categories. Open Boats and Doubles are welcome and there will be a special event for the more mature paddler. There will be Music during the event and a party the previous evening. The HP course will be available for free practice on New Years Day . More Information and entry forms from 'Frostbite Rodeo' 17 Cambridge Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5NA. SAE Please.





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## British Paddlers Working Abroad

There has been much discussion regarding BCU qualifications recently and this now stretches to British Nationals working abroad, particularly in France, where ski instructors have been prevented from working unless they hold the French equivalent. BCU Coaching Service has started to make some progress on clarifying the situation and avoiding major problems and happily a BCU qualification continues to open doors worldwide for those seeking employment.

Somerset Paddler Tim Maud, 21, has secured employment for Rainbow River Expeditions, based in Katmandu. An ex-slalomist Tim was a member of the 1992 British Colleges Expedition which paddled the Colorado

French based Michael Bruce, will again be running his popular French Alps Canoe Rally in late May and has added a number of courses throughout June and July which are aimed at first time Alpinists. He can be contacted at Mont de l'ans, 38860 les 2 Alpes, France.

# OBITUARY

## JACK LOWES

### Coach Northern Coaching Panel

Following severe illness for several months Jack Lowes died in hospital on Tuesday 31 August 1993.

It is very difficult to know where to start writing a tribute to Jack except to say that in the last 15 years of his life we, in canoeing, had the privilege of working with him and he had the pleasure of his friendship.

His motivation towards helping assisting others enjoy the outdoors, which he enjoyed so much, lead him naturally into instructing and teaching canoeing. Commencing with Boys Brigade and Scout groups and eventually with the Coaching Panel as LCO in the North at the Regional Courses run mainly at Hexham Northumberland. As LCO for 10 years Jack was a mainstay within the North East Coaching Panel to which he gave many hours of his time.

As well as being an excellent teacher

and examiner Jack's attention to detail and empathy with all groups was reflected in the high regard in which he was held. His dry sense of humour lies behind many a story told by his canoeing colleagues.

At the celebration of his life and career held on Saturday 4 September 1993 tributes poured in from all sides reflecting the impact he had made in his profession and through his canoeing. Along with about 280 others at the Thanksgiving Service people gave thanks for the privilege of knowing and working with Jack Lowes.

Our thoughts and sincere best wishes go to Marion his wife who supported Jack in his every activity and path through life and who cared for him lovingly through his final illness.

Dave Hellawell

## TONY HETHERINGTON MEMORIAL

Cullen canoeist Tony, who drowned in Austria earlier this year, is to have a granite memorial erected in his memory on the Giant Steps, on Sunnyside Beach between Cullen and Findlater Castle. Tony originally built the Giant Steps on the coastal footpath.

## THINK ABOUT IT !

Thoughtless Canoeists were who dumped their craft at sea have been slammed by coastguards as 'irresponsible'. Four Auxiliary coastguards, the Hunstanton inshore lifeboat and a helicopter from RAF Coltishall were called to the search after a 999 call. Reports from the public that people had been seen dumping the canoe and coming ashore, resulted in the search being called off. Coastguard Colin Tomlinson said 'It was thoughtless and stupid to have left the canoe at sea without alerting anyone. It was a waste of our time and we might have been needed for a real rescue elsewhere.'

## RNLI walk

On a more positive note, Bill Pretty will cover over 500 miles along the South West Coast Peninsula Path in aid of the Lifeboat Charity, the RNLI. Sponsorship of any form will be gratefully received: money, food, equipment etc. Please make cheques payable to the RNLI and contact Bill at 49 Coniston Crescent, Burnham, Slough, Berkshire SL1 6EE

## BCU LICENCE LATEST NEWS

Negotiations are continuing with the National Rivers Authority (for the Medway, Thames and Anglian Waters) and with the Broads Authority. These licences might still be included in the BCU Licence package for 1994.

If any member is renewing any of these licences before the next edition of Focus (February) please check progress with the BCU Office first.

Wey At the Time of Going to press the renewal for the licence to the River Wey from 1 January 1994 has not been agreed with the National Trust. If you plan to canoe the Wey after that date, contact the BCU Office or Wey Kayak Club.



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## **MESSAGE TO ADVERTISERS**



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# top tips

and handy hints

## White Water Canoeing

### Swimming

*There are a number of stages during any canoeists development where they may spend more time out of the boat than in it: for some of us lesser mortals this can be semi-permanent/permanent state! Having said this, the skills of swimming in white water, with or without your boat hardly gains a mention in any canoe course syllabus or basic white water course. However, I would suggest that swimming in white water is just as vital a skill as route selection or the ability to correctly use a throw bag. It is my hope that during this article to outline a number of approaches, methods and suggestions, all with the aim of making white water swimming as safe as it possibly can be.*

With regard to the act of swimming, over confidence and misplaced pride ('I never come out of my boat!') are as bad as too little confidence. Once over, how many attempts you have at rolling (if you attempt at all) is a matter of experience and the ability to read the geology of a river bed; some deeper sections of river allow you to have three of four or even more attempts, while other shallower sections, after pre-inspection, may tell you to allow one quick snap roll before being upside-down in the boat is more problematic than being out of it.

In fact, it may be the case that while running some very shallow drops with reef-like features, the abandoned-ship method, as soon as your support stroke fails, will be the safest option around. Needless to say any exit out of the boat should be as quick and purposeful as possible.

### The Thirds Rule (When to Swim)

This is something that I've adopted from stopper work where I divide my energy levels into three. I use the first third of my reserves in trying for a successful roll; if this fails the second third will be taken up by swimming, sorting various bits of equipment out, taking evasive measures while in the middle of the river or rapid and holding a rescue bag (if one is used).



Receiving a Throwbag

Photo: Kevin Danforth

The last third is used for the post swim boat search; bank scrambling and general physical recovery. The latter two in this Rule of Thirds can certainly leave the fittest of paddlers in a pretty exhaustive state, particularly if the swim taken is less than pleasant.

### Swimming with your Gear

The general advice about holding onto the boat at the stern (the up stream end) and paddles is a sound one. The boat itself when fully bagged out can

offer considerable support to any swimmer. (In addition it can be used as a fender against rocks and other obstacles; even so, this method must be used with caution, and care must be taken that your teeth are not in direct line with the end of the plastic boat). Unfortunately, the second bit of equipment tends to get in the way, and the best method for getting them to the bank safely is to throw them using a javelin style method towards the nearest side of river-side bush.

One situation you must avoid

at all costs is to get yourself placed between your boat and any solid obstacle, if this scenario seems likely to happen immediately push the boat away from you and swim in the opposite direction.

If all is well, holding onto your boat both makes you more visible to rescuers, be them boat borne or on the bank and will have a tendency to slow down the rate at which you float along. The decision when and if to release the boat must be taken with regard to a number of factors. Amongst them speed



and competence of chase boaters, the position of throw bags on the bank and most importantly, what the next fifty feet of river has in store for you. If approaching a large, well-formed eddy the boat may be pushed against the eddy line, swam after and re-collected once in the slack.

If you are approaching any form of holding stopper (which

water and should be looking to see what's coming up in the river and ready to spot throw bags. The arms, again, should be spread out to the sides, stabilising the paddler on his/her back and producing a butterfly motion which will allow you to position yourself for the deepest water channel (usually the downstream vees) via a kind of human ferrylide. Indeed, use all the various features of the river to slow yourself down, stop to allow a better chance of gaining a throw bag, and keep yourself out of trees. A number of texts, mainly American in origin, show and describe methods of climbing on to partly submerged trees in an effort to avoid entrapment. In my own painful experience this doesn't work well and I would not advise anybody to attempt this. The best method for trees is to keep away from them, they are killers.

Although not very common in this country, in very deep water, say ten feet or more, a more upright and alert stance may be adopted. This may have advantages in big standing waves or haystacks as it allows the timing of breathing to be less stressful.

**Aggressive Swimming.** Once you've selected your route to the bank side or spotted a large collecting eddy, roll onto your front and adopting a life saving front crawl stroke (figure B) swim like a person possessed. Keep the head out of the water so last minute alterations of route can be taken. Remember, in any situation where you're out of your boat, the best rescue is self-rescue. A well practised defensive/aggressive swimming technique can have you on the bank before your buddies have realised what all the fuss is about. While making those last few frantic strokes to the bank do not be in any rush to stand

# Skills

is difficult to identify from a swimming position) the floating boat may behave differently to its swimming owner. The boat generally being more buoyant will tend to get caught in any stoppers' returning surface wave, usually getting turned side on in the process. The swimmer being relatively less buoyant will often be submerged as they drop into the stoppers' slot and be flushed out with the under current of the river, of course each stopper has differing features and therefore may need differing courses of action. If you find both yourself and your boat caught in the stopper the decision here, whether to let go, or to hang on, is difficult to advise on; although generally I would suggest that if in doubt, let go. Quite often more damage is done in a stopper by forty five pounds of revolving plastic and a tired swimmer if both are caught in the backwash than if the two were separated.

## Defensive and Aggressive Swimming

If you find you've either left the boat, or the boat's left you, the safest policy to be taken is to adopt the first of two simple positions. Defensive swimming is best where you find yourself in the middle of strong flowing water (white water is always more powerful than you think) where self protection and conservation of energy are your main priorities. Figure A shows the correct position. the pelvis should be held as high out of the water as possible; the legs pointing downstream, slightly flexed and spread to allow them to be used to fend off boulders, rocks, etc. Never try to stand up in mid stream the danger of foot entrapment is real on any kind of river.

The head, as far as possible should be held above the



Canoeist in temporary difficulties

Photo: Kevin Danforth

up; only when you can grab hold of boulders and drag yourself nearer the edge and the water is no more than eighteen inches or so deep, is it safe to stand up.

## Receiving a Bag

Although this area has recently gained much attention and is, in fact, a centre component of a number of courses, I would suggest that the following method provides greater security and comfort to the receiver. Most bags will be thrown to the swimmer in a defensive swimming situation. Once received, (if it misses swim to the thing if safe to do so) tuck the rope under the arm pit which is nearest the bank of the thrower, hold the rest of the rope, or bag across the chest in a normal position. Keep your legs akimbo to help prevent a rolling tendency. The advantage of this lower point of anchor is it tends to keep the shoulders and head of the swimmer above the water, which in turn, is a safety consideration. (See Figure C).

Bill (Freshwater) Taylor



A. Defensive Swimming



B. Aggressive swimming



C. Receiving a Bag

## SUMMARY

Swimming, like any other skill, should be practised. It is a technique we are often asked to perform in the most adverse conditions. A Swimmer who takes both the correct evasive and assertive measures is a safer paddler and is less likely to call to other members of their team for help.

### ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN:

1. Decide before you need to when it's safe, or best to swim. Use Rule of Thirds.
2. Practice in safe conditions both aggressive and defensive swimming.
3. Don't wait to be rescued, enact a self-rescue plan.
4. There are no hard and fast rules about holding onto equipment – treat each individual river rapid as a separate case.

Enjoyment of whitewater canoeing should not be denied to somebody who has not developed a roll. Swimming can be just as an important part of canoeing skills as a sweep stroke. It needs both teaching and practice if this skill is to be used to prevent injury and expensive loss of equipment and pride.





# new HORIZONS

*I was bored and not really enjoying my 18 day Grand Canyon trip. It was my trip: I had waited the eight years for my private permit to come through and now I was bored. Why I was bored was simple: there was no real challenge, the white water is big but simple: head down the green tongue and lean into the waves as they come: the organisation is large but easy: there is an industry in Flagstaff serving your every need for running the river. Admittedly the scenery is spectacular but this was the third time that I had run the Grand Canyon in twelve months. I wanted something more interesting, something different, something that required a back of an envelope to plan and organise rather than being able to run it in one's head.*

My previous trip down the Grand had been as a "responsible adult" for the "First British Youth Expedition". I had been reasonably responsible and the youth had thoroughly enjoyed their "Expedition" and I had enjoyed their trip, enjoying their enjoyment; but the trip had been easy, the "youths" could paddle their kayaks with their eyes shut, three of them even running Lava without their paddles. I felt I needed a challenge.

### **Spectacular River**

From this though process the disabled trip materialised. I had been on the first kayak trip down the Coruh River in 1982 and returned to the river on six occasions to guide groups down the river. It is a spectacular river for white water: 150kms of good white water with the longest flat stretch being about 5kms. It has warm water: most white water runs suffer from cold water either from glacial melt or a release from the bottom of a dam. Also the river has a road alongside for its length – usually a detraction on multi-day trips but for a disabled trip an advantage. A disabled trip seemed like an ideal excuse to go back to Eastern Turkey, a part of the world that I have grown to love. So it was for all these altruistic reasons I decided to run a disabled trip down the Coruh.

With grant aid from the BCU expeditions committee and the Jubilee Canoeing Foundation and the Mike Jones award from the Churchill Memorial Trust, I could pay the helpers' travel expenses. I felt that this was only

fair as they would have to be helping rather than having fun "playing the river". There is nothing worse than having to paddle past a great play hole or miss a surf wave because you are rescuing a swimmer, guiding a paddler down the rapid or paddling "safety kayak" for the raft. Also there would be the problem of disabled mobility on the bank. River banks are not designed for physically disabled people!

### **"Project R.A.F.T."**

Then things got complicated. I had a phone message "Ring Jib Ellison it's slightly urgent". So I did and discovered that "Project R.A.F.T.'s" world rafting championship was having to consider moving from Norway for a combination of reasons including Norway's decision to resume commercial whaling. Jib wanted to know if the event could be run on the Coruh at short notice. I said "Yes" and found myself on a whirlwind tour of Eastern Turkey, showing Jib and the Minister for the Development of Tourism in Turkey around the river, meeting the Minister of Tourism himself and flying back to Britain four days later. The Ministry agreed to host the event and Jib agreed to include the disabled as an entry to the championships as part payment for my help in running the event. So with forty seven working days to go the world rafting championships were moved and I had to be there to help with the on-site organisation, I also had the disabled trip to run and they would arrive in Turkey ten days before





the event; also before that Jez Taylor and David Goldstrom, the organisers of the European rafting championships were coming out to see the river and facilities with a view to moving their event to the country. Well, all this stopped me getting bored, but I needed both sides of a large envelope to plan! Also I would not want to do the drive from London to Erzerum, over 4000kms, towing a trailer with 23 kayaks in a 12 year old transit in four and a half days (including the 22 hrs on two ferry crossings) on a regular basis.

What happened? For the first week Cam McLeay, a rafter friend of mine who also owns runs "ADRIFT" rafting holidays on the Coruh and Zambezi rivers, had volunteered to help with the expedition. The original plan had been to spend the opening few days paddling down the Euphrates learning the skills we would need and discovering the limitations that the group might have. This had to be cancelled. The PKK had stepped up its struggle for an independent Kurdistan and declared war on Turkey. The part of the Euphrates we wanted to paddle was in their sphere of influence. We "relocated", (been with Americans all summer), to the upper Coruh which would have the same water conditions but without the spectacular scenery. Starting below Bayburt the river has some easy rapids: some waves and holes to play, eddies to practice in/on. It has beaches to camp on and is remote from the road and villages and so made it possible to sort everything out without the "help" of local kids! But what happened? Maggie surfed a wave in a double Topolino and grinned, Steve paddled a single kayak with no problems until Frank, his helper, got distracted and stopped talking so he did not know where to go, Steve has been blind from birth. (He also got confused when everyone talked all around him). Dave tried the double kayaks he gave the dukkie a go but he settled for the raft and rowing it, we spent the rest of the trip designing and refining the seat to which Dave had to be strapped: Dave had fallen from a tree when working for the

Forestry Commission and is T9 paralysed (that is from the rib cage down). He has to be strapped to a chair otherwise when he pulled on the oars he moved forward rather than the oars backward. Keith fitted in into any boat we had spare: he never complained (but didn't say much anyway). Donald was there telling us again (and again) about a previous time he was here. It was his fifth time down the river, he is not disabled but he is 72. Bob paddled his own canoe. He has polio in both legs but has been paddling for years.

### World Champs

Then we got to Ispir the starting point for the world champs. Here "the river steepened and went into a narrow gorge". We had the time for the luxury of a practice run down the river. Now we had to stop the fun of playing around with the crafts we had at our disposal and practice rafting. There was no way that we could enter the competition with a paddle raft: we had to have a rowing frame. We just did not have the strength to paddle the raft: though the paddlers had the strength, upper body strength, it needs to be anchored to the raft through sound legs or it loses much of its power. Then we had the problem that should Dave drop an oar he was unable to reach forward to grab it again because he was tied to his seat back: this meant that someone had

*I had a phone message "Ring Jib Ellison it's slightly urgent". So I did and discovered that "Project R.A.F.T.'s" world rafting championship was having to consider moving from Norway for a combination of reasons including Norway's decision to resume commercial whaling.*

to be there to pass him the oar. We also decided that it would be safer if, for the bigger rapids, I rowed the raft; a dropped oar in a big rapid could lead to a flip which would be very serious for our team. The thought of having everyone, especially with Dave strapped (with quick release buckles) to the seat, Steve blind Keith and Bob with limited leg movement and Maggie with both bad legs and confused vision, all swimming in a major rapid







was horrendous. We always had at least a kayak and a double Topolino in attendance. (The double topolino has the advantage that the back paddler can control the boat while the front paddler sees to the rescue.)

### Parade

Just as people were getting tired and people were wanting something extra, Project R.A.F.T and the world championships started. So it was back to Erzerum and the parade down the main street with all the other teams and marching bands, us holding up the parade with our team on sticks and wheelchairs, and speeches and then the cocktails and the reception party. After the opening ceremonies and the friendship float the competitions started in earnest: the first event was the orienteering. After five minutes to transfer the eleven points from the master map to our map we then had to paddle down the river collecting the numbers written on all the check points. We came 13th out of thirty two. We had some major advantages over the other teams; we knew where the check points where ( I have run the river at least twenty times and also helped set the course!) but we did also collect the check points "properly" this meant that we left wheelchairs on the roadside so that we could lift Dave Tuttle from the raft to his chair then he could "run" up the road and collect the number from the check point. Also there were four check points on a loop – run to be collected; we collected these numbers with Steve Pimm running the 3.5kms with me guiding. The numbers weren't in Braille so a protest was registered! The next couple of days were taken up by the "one world one river" eco-conference and the rescue event, both practice and competition. The event was a major challenge for the disabled team: we had to paddle down the river, pick up a swimmer, pass through a "gate", flip the raft, go through the next gate, right the raft, collect every one back into

the raft, paddle to the bank, and get to the finish pole. At the same time we had a kayak paddler who had to paddle down the river through the one gate, perform an eskimo roll, paddle through the next gate and paddle to the finish line, get out and pull the kayak up the bank, clip it to a rope and then get to the finish pole. Bob Boyce, the polio victim, was our kayak paddler. He made it to the finish line where he had to crawl out of his kayak and clip the kayak and then crawl to the finish line. The raft run went to plan though it was a somewhat imaginative interpretation of the rules that enabled us to compete. We came second to last but were the crowd's favourite. The eventual overall winners of the event presented their rescue event prize to the disabled team as a recognition of their "inspiration and example to all". As one competitor said to me as we were carrying everyone back to their wheelchairs and sticks. "That was amazing, it even jerked a tear from me".

### Downriver

After that there was the downriver race and the slalom events. The downriver event was over a 17kms course; once again it had major rapids on it which I had to row as a result we had to change pilots twice and then Andy wanted to get some video film from the raft so he had to get into the raft and I had to paddle his kayak. We came way down the results but would have been seven places up the results has we come in 50 seconds faster. The slalom event was hard for us; we had opted to take the practice day off as we felt we needed the rest. So, apart from Steve, we ran the slalom course almost blind and then had to have Andy videoing in the boat for the second run. We did the kayak runs in double topolinos, Donald Bean and John Pearson did the Cataract events and produced the run of the day, for the spectators, with a perfect back loop in the stopper at gate three. This also resulted in John joining the disabled team temporarily with a badly gashed and bruised calf muscle.

The end of the raft slalom had us arguing about our run: we should have done better; we had not trained for the event; we had no one person calling the shots; we were not a cohesive team. We came last. When the recriminations subsided into tactful silence I remarked to Dave, one time Scottish downriver champion that his competitive spirit had returned, "never went away" was his reply with a grin!

We had lots of grins over the three weeks.

**Dave Manby**  
**Dave will be running his guided**  
**Coruh River trips again in 1994**





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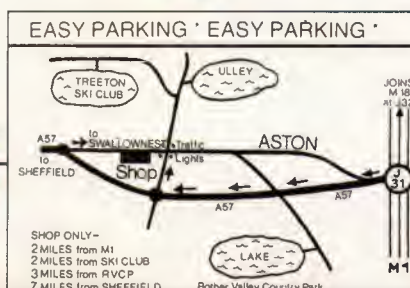
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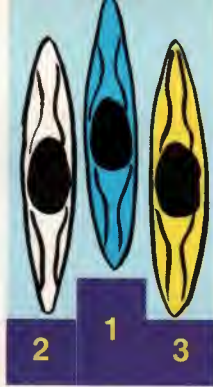
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# Competition *focus*

## Slalom News

### Tees Side National Indoor Pool Slalom -

Ponds Forge, Sheffield. Sunday 12 December - invitations have been despatched to all divisions, all categories! Spectator charges £1 adult, 50p child/Senior Citizen. There are twenty complimentary tickets available - 2 each to the first ten requests accompanied by sae's received by Slalom Development Officer, address below.

### Slalom Yearbook

1994 issue will be distributed towards the end of January. If you've changed address since completing your 1993 registration form, you must remember to inform your Divisional Ranking Compiler before Christmas so that your Yearbook is sent to the correct place.

### Mini-Canoe Exhibition -

Ponds Forge International Centre, Sheffield 12 December 1993 will be held in the foyer all day at the Tees Side National Indoor Canoe Slalom - what a chance to get that Christmas present you've always wanted!

### New "Guide to Judging"

Available now - diagrams/information for all those of you looking to join the happy band of qualified Officials. Cost £5 - cheque payable to BCU Slalom Committee, address below.

### Entry Cards

For the 1994 season - available from Mrs Irene Osborne - send sae to 9 Stanton Place, Mansfield, NG18 5PW.

Like to check to see whether you've been promoted at the end of the season? Telephone Slalom Development Officer - number below.

### Bibs for 1994

Apply anytime after the end of January - do please remember to update your National Association membership - you need to be a full member for competition.

### Volunteers sought

There must be a willing soul out there somewhere who can store and administer our spare sets of Slalom Bibs and we're also looking for a volunteer to route our sets of BCU approved helmets to Organising Clubs running Div 4/5 events. Please contact Slalom Development Officer for more details.

### Coaching Courses

Our Coaching Development group has been busy revamping the Slalom Coaching structure - watch out for the new scheme which will be launched in February at the International Canoe Exhibition, Crystal Palace.

Further information on any of these items from: Sue Wharton, BCU Slalom Development Officer, 117 Preston Road, Chorley PR6 7AX Tel: 0257 262051 Fax 0257 231180

## BRITISH OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS AND PREMIER EVENT

RIVER DEE LLANGOLLEN OCTOBER 23/24

It may not have been a contest of the highest quality and it may not have stirred the crowd viewing from the bridge at Llangollen on a bright October Saturday, but its riveting conclusion stirred and warmed the blood.

With Richard Fox and Melvyn Jones in Europe, it was left to the comparative youngsters to provide us with the entertainment we have come to expect as this last ranking event of the Premier series which doubles up as the one-off British Open Championships.

Around two hundred competitors thronged the town in search of glory, and for some, the battle to remain in the Premier division, but those relying and indeed, after the wettest October for years, expecting a surging torrent of a Dee they were to be disappointed and only found a mere trickle with Town Falls far less intimidating than usual.

Saturday's men's individual kayak event saw Andrew Raspin two seconds up on Shaun Pearce after first runs, but in the end, Andy must have been relieved to finish winner and British Open Champion by just four tenths of a second. Shaun's result here gave him the edge over 19 year old Paul Ratcliffe who had been leader of the ranking series up to the last event, so it will be Shaun who will quite deservedly sport the number one bib next season. Results highlight our strength in the category, as just under 50% of the top twenty men are under 21, surely cause for optimism for the future!

Trying to imagine a paddler as skilled as Olympic Champion, Liz Micheler, as brimful of canoeing intelligence as Myriam Jerusalem and younger than both and you see Lynn Simpson, winner of the British Open event by six seconds and outright winner of the women's ranking series. This has been some year for Lynn - well prepared for each challenge, she began and finished as favourite.

Richard Domney, the twenty four year old from Camberley also completed the double in the Canadian singles event, just pipping Mark Delaney for the Open title by two tenths of a second, but convincingly winning the '93 ranking series. His fight back to fitness



Andy Raspin first at Llangollen

following injury now almost complete, his win over Marriott at Nottingham earlier in the month and his confidence putting him on top of the class.

There are few things in life you can rely upon, a change of time for a favourite TV programme with video already set up and a Canadian doubles category dusted and done within ten minutes. Only six crews contested the Open with brothers Steve and Phil Green of Olney Paddlers taking Gold and the honours in the overall ranking series. Mike Millar and Stuart Pitt chased them all the way, but it will take



Lynn Simpson overall British Champion

years of commitment, concentration, and dedication to match the skill and experience of current World doubles leaders who have competed together for what in some cases is as long as fifteen years.

### Results Winners are British Open Champions

#### KI Men

1. Andrew Raspin, P&H/Tees, 161.22;
2. Shaun Pearce, Team O'Neill, 161.47;
3. Rob Wright, Shepperton, 163.62

#### KI Ladies

1. Lynn Simpson, Nottingham Univ./P&H, 179.59;
2. Maria Lund, Stafford & Stone, 185.43;
3. Penny Briscoe, Arrowcraft, 185.62

#### C1

1. Richard Domoney, Desperate Measures, 179.22;
2. Mark Delaney, West Lothian, 179.49;
3. Bill Horsman, Du Pont, 181.71

#### C2

1. P Green/S Green, Olney Slalom Paddlers, 184.66;
2. M Millar/S Pitt, Forth, 187.97;
3. T Walling/G Walling, Shepperton, 204.56

British Junior Champions

#### K1 Men

- Under 18 Champion: Tim Morrison, Banbury, 167.17  
Under 16 Champion: Alex Burt, Warrington, 179.46  
Under 14 Champion: Tim Baillie, Aberdeen, 191.95

#### KI Ladies

- Under 18 Champion: Nerys Rowlands, Yat Racers, 198.54  
Under 16 Champion: Helen Cardy, Kingston, 199.40  
Under 14 Champion: Laura Blakeman, Staffs & Stone, 218.59

#### C1

- Under 18 Champion: Colin Scotland C R Cats, 194.66  
Under 16 Champion: Andrew Hamilton, Staffs & Stone, 219.86

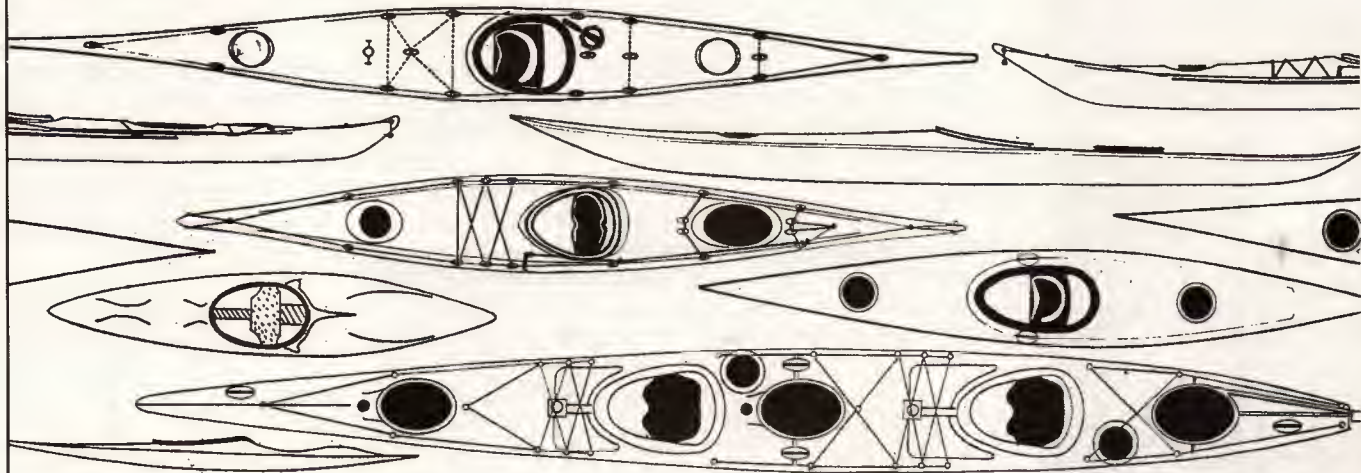
#### C2

- Under 18 Champions: J Roden/A Roden, Staffs & Stone, 216.71



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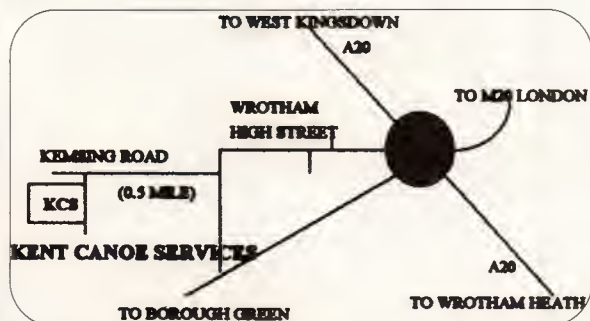
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Map



### Opening Times

Mon - Closed

Tues - 9.30 - 5.00pm

Wed - 9.30 - 12.30pm

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

Fri - 9.30 - 5.00pm

Sat - 9.30 - 5.30

Sun - Canoe Courses

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## Women's Canoe Polo

North West If you are interested in improving your confidence and abilities in a canoe, polo is an ideal game to learn. About a year ago a group of women paddlers in Manchester formed a new Women's polo team, Castlefield Comets, and since then we have entered just about every competition possible, and thoroughly enjoyed losing almost every match. We're in it for the fun of playing the game. (Which is a good job really!)

Nevertheless, it would be good to be able to play other womens' teams of similar ability, so we are aiming to run a North West Region women's league starting in early 1994. We would like to encourage as many women and girls as possible to come and join in.

Anyone interested in entering a team should contact Marienne Yates on 061 969 0181, or Affinity Watersports on 061 833 1500.

If you're interested in canoe polo, and don't have a team to play with then again please ring and we will try to find a team for you to play with. If you don't already play but are interested in learning then we hold practice sessions on Tuesday evenings 9-10pm at Broughton baths in Manchester. All are welcome who have some previous canoeing experience.

The league will probably be run as three or four tournaments; each played on a Saturday evening in a local swimming pool from 5-9pm, Jan-May 94. Please let us know as soon as possible of your interest.

Look forward to seeing you in the pool.

MARIENNE YATES.

## Slalom Committee Announces the new Slalom Skill Awards

Aimed primarily at beginners with a view to providing a progression of skills-orientated tests which when completed, will build confidence and improve allround skills. We believe that canoeists will find the scheme invaluable and will follow it to both improve general technique and to sharpen technical skills.

Successful candidates will receive a certificate, a metal lapel badge and a boat sticker for each Grade achieved.

Currently there are two flat water tests, Grade 1 and 2. Each of these awards is to be performed in either a closed cockpit kayak or in a canadian canoe on a stretch of placid water or in a swimming pool of at least 50 metres in length.

Two further tests on different grades of moving water will be introduced with each grade having a clear list of requirements and target times. Some knowledge of Canoe Slalom rules and organisation will also be necessary.

### Slalom Skill Award Grade 1

To be performed in either a closed cockpit kayak or in a canadian canoe on a stretch of placid water or in a swimming pool of at least 50 metres in length.

1. Enter your boat and secure spray cover completely unaided.
2. Paddle forwards for 50 metres in a straight line and then turn round a single pole or buoy using forwards sweep strokes.  
**Target Time 60 seconds**
3. Complete two circuits in a figure of eight formation using forwards and reverse sweep strokes between two poles or buoys placed four metres apart.  
**Target Time 45 Seconds**
4. Demonstrate an emergency stop.
5. Demonstrate a capsize drill.
6. Swim 50 metres in full canoeing equipment as required for Canoe Slalom.
7. Understand the difference between a life jacket and a buoyancy aid.
8. Identify all personal canoeing equipment required for Canoe Slalom.

### Slalom Skill Award Grade 2

To be performed in either a closed cockpit kayak or in a canadian canoe on a stretch of placid water or in a swimming pool of at least 50 metres in length.

1. Paddle for 50 metres along placid water and return, turning through three suspended poles or buoys using sweep strokes and the early stages of a bow rudder.  
**Target Time 55 Seconds**
2. Paddle in a forward direction through a single gate 1.5 metres wide without breaking the paddle stroke.
3. Paddle backwards in a straight line for 50 metres, turning around a single pole or buoy using reverse sweep strokes and paddle backwards to the start.  
**Target Time 75 Seconds**
4. Complete a sideways movement using draw strokes at the bow and stern, moving the whole boat.
5. Attempt a support stroke.
6. Show a knowledge of a slalom course i.e gates etc.
7. Show that the principles of scoring, timing, Jury etc, are understood.

*In order to achieve the award, it is necessary to pass in all above skills.*

*Further information from: The Scheme Administrator 10 Crowland Road Hartlepool TS25 2JJ*

## CHARLES WELLS NATIONAL INTER-CLUB FINALS 1993

Held once again at Cardington, this annual competition was as successful as ever. Twenty Five clubs and more than three hundred canoeists took part in what has become the "fun" event of the year where our Division 4 paddlers rub shoulders with GB Team Members from Premier Division and all compete on the same course.

Winning club was Stafford

and Stone Canoe Club, with Shepperton SCC and Hemel Hempstead in second and third places respectively. New Club Salisbury took the trophy awarded to the highest placed Club without a Premier or Div 1 competitor and Yat Racers from the South West Region won the special sporting award.

Not only did sponsor Tom Wells present T-Shirts to all

competitors and officials and prizes galore to the winners, he offered to sponsor the event for the fifth time in 1994 - quite an accolade for the sport, for Slalom Executive Organiser, Jim Croft and for all those competitors who have taken part and created such a marvellous atmosphere at what has turned out to be the ideal site for the National Inter Club Finals!



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# SPRINT RACING 25th WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Copenhagen 1993



The Train brothers

**T**he Championships were taken on by Denmark when the Swedes who were scheduled to run the event backed out due to lack of finance. Lake Bagaersvard has been sued as a canoeing venue many times, most recently as the arena for the World Marathon Championships in 1990. It is a natural lake which forms the focal point for a Nature Park. Due

to the irregular shape of the lake, the buoyed course ran slightly diagonally towards the stands, rather than parallel to the spectator area, this made for viewing difficulties.

All the necessary facilities had been installed on a temporary basis, as the park had to be restored to its natural state immediately the championships were over. This did not detract from the efficiency of the organisation in any way and all essential installations worked very well. The starting blocks introduced for the World Championships in Paris were used again here with great success and the chances now of a false start occurring have been reduced to an absolute minimum.

Although the Opening Ceremony was preceded by a short period of very heavy rain, and there was another downpour during the heats of the Womens K2 heats, the weather generally was sunny and fairly warm. The wind direction was a strange phenomena, seemingly blowing around the lake and being a headwind for part of the course and a tailwind for the rest. Watching from the finish line position it was apparent that wind conditions were extremely variable from race to race but did not produce unfair conditions from lane to lane.

The opening ceremony was modest, effective and Danish. In my opinion very appropriate and with suitably brief speeches from the local mayor, the organising body and Signor Orsi of the ICF. The ICF flag was "delivered" from Paris (1991 World Championships) by a Viking Ship rowed down the lake by a local canoe club, while red kayaks and white canoes paddled into the form of the Danish flag on the water in front of the stands. The competing nations were each introduced as one paddler bearing a placard with the country's abbreviated name came forward into the arena.

The ICF have made various efforts in recent years to attract the media to canoeing events, and this year the programme was varied yet again so that all finals of 500m and 1000m events for men and women were held on the same day (Saturday). The (Heats and repechages of 500m events), Thursday (Heats and repechages of 1000m events), Friday (semi finals of all events). Sunday was completely devoted to 5000m races for women and 10,000m for men.

This was the last time these longer events were to be included in the World Championship programme as they had been deemed unattractive to the media. However, come Sunday, the number of spec-

tators watching, cameras whirring and the press room positively bursting with activity, actually belied this misguided opinion.

The British Team travelled out by air to Copenhagen on the Tuesday before racing began with very little time to attend to the standard preliminaries such as boat weighing and measuring. This produced the usual last minute panics when boats proved to be slightly concave in section and fittings necessary to be weighed with boats were still on their way from the airport. It seems obvious to suggest that more time should have been allowed, but apparently the cost of an extra day in Denmark for the team was completely prohibitive. The Danes were making quite sure that the Championships covered their own costs.

This Championships boasted more countries entered than ever before, which is not really surprising when we realise that the might of the USSR has now been divided into eight separate states, Czechs and Slovaks are now two separate nations and Croatia has begun the replacement of Yugoslavia. Not all those entered actually arrived however: the Cubans were reported to have defected to the USA on their way, and the bus bearing the Estonian team broke down near Stockholm and they were forced to abandon their journey.

Racing began at 8000 on both Wednesday and Thursday with races at 10 minute intervals. The race plan adopted fairly recently by the ICF has made for much more competitive racing in the early stages of the competition. Those not qualifying for semi finals directly from heats then race in repechages. From the repechages are selected for example the first 4 of the fastest 5th. Taking this fastest loser ensures that those paddlers who are not in the front of the race still have something to go for and still may get to the semi-finals as fastest 5th. This system

## The fortunes of the British Team were as follows:

### K1 500m

Ivan Lawler, 8th in semifinals, 1:46:45

Finalists in this event: FIN, AUS, DEN, ITA, SUI, SVK, CAN, NOR, HUN  
Winner: Mikko Kolehmainen, Finland, 1:41:96

### C1500m

Eric Jamieson, 8th in Final, 2:00:55

Finalists in this event: BUL, HUN, CAN, SVK, GER, CZE, RUS, GBR, ITA  
Winner: Nikolay Buhalov, Bulgaria, 1:54:02

### K1 500m

Andrea Dallaway, 8th in semifinals, 2:00:15

Finalists in this event: GER, SWE, CAN, FRA, HUN, POL, USA, ITA, AUT  
Winner: Birgit Schmidt, Germany, 1:53:00

### K2 100m

Burns/Bourne, 5th in repechage, 1:38:45

Winner: Bluhm/Gutsch, Germany, 1:32:37

### C2 500m

Crowthor/Love, 6th in semifinals, 1:50:18

Winner: Kolonics/Horvath, Hungary, 1:46:40

### K2 Women 500m

Gilby/Thorogood, 7th in repechages, 1:54:76

Winner: Olsson/Andersson, Sweden, 1:48:56

### Men K4 500m

Wynne/Vansomeran/Dorrell/Clark, 8th in repechages, 1:31:74

Winners Denisov/Tishyenko/Vannik/Gorobyi, 1:24:80

### K1 men 1000m

Ivan Lawler, eliminated in semifinal, 3:52:36

Winner: Knut Holmann, Norway, 3:42:49

### C1 men 1000m

Andrew Train, 8th in final, 4:22:37

### K2 men 100m

James Block/Ian Tordoff, 4th in repechages, 3:38:99

Winner: Bluhm/Gutsche, Germany, 3:21:80

### C2 men 1000m

Andrew & Stephen Train, 8th in Final, 3:56:56

Winner: Nielsson/Frederiksen, Denmark, 3:49:52

### K4 men 1000m

Wynne/Vansomeran/Dorrell/Clark, 7th in repechages, 3:25:75

Winners: Reineck/Kegel/Wohlbe/Von Appen, Germany, 3:04:80

### C4 500m

Crowthor/Love/Train/Train, 6th in semifinals, 1:47:69

Winners: Boldizsar/Novak/Hoffmann/Szabo, Hungary, 1:33:95

Although times are quoted above it is as well to remember that from day to day the weather conditions cause considerable variation in the times, and on this particular course conditions changed even from race to race. The fastest times recorded at this regatta are noticeably slower than the times recorded by the same paddlers in Barcelona last year, variation due mainly to weather and temperature differences.

## 5,000m EVENTS FOR WOMEN

### K1

Andrea Dallaway, 8th;

1st SWE, S Gunnarsson, 22:39:76;

2nd HUN R Koban, 22:40:63;

3rd GER, B Schmidt, 22:42:91

### K2

Helen Gilbey/Alison Thorogood, 12th

1st GER, Porthwich/Schuck, 21:33:51;

2nd HUN Denusz/Meszáros, 21:33:73

3rd ROM Simin/Toma, 21:40:32

## 10,000m EVENTS FOR MEN

### K1

Ivan Lawler, 4th, 42:15:92

1st DEN, Thor Nielsson, 42:12:07

2nd NOR, Knut Hollman, 42:12:81

3rd SVK, Atila Szabo, 42:14:41

### K2

Graham Burns/Grayson Bourne Retired

1st HUN, Abraham/Borhi, 38:43:34

2nd SWE, Sundqvist/Olsson, 38:43:98

3rd NOR, Toppe/Ribe, 38:49:70

### K4

Slater/West/Block/Tordoff 13th

1st Germany, 35:23:38

2nd Poland, 35:28:50

3rd Russia, 35:33:75

### C1

Andrew Train, 4th, 47:52:49

1st HUN, Zsolt Bohacs, 47:11:29

2nd CZE, Pavel Bednar, 47:18:94

3rd GER, Andreas Dittmer, 47:25:99

### C2

Andrew Train/Stephen Train - Silver Medal

1st DEN, Nielsson/Frederiksen, 42:18:58

2nd GBR, Train/Train, 42:26:33

3rd NOR, Toppe/Ribe, 38:49:70

Ivan Lawler





us also used when the 9 finalists are selected from 2 semifinals. From each semifinal the first four are taken plus the fastest 5th.

The award for the top mens Kayak nation and top mens Canoe nation was given to Hungary: best womens team to Germany, and top nation overall to Hungary. Although these nations were obviously very strong, the medals generally seemed to be well distributed amongst the nations, with Denmark performing well in front of their home crowd, Sweden still showing great strength, especially with their womens team and a few medals going to Russia and the new states of Latvia and Ukraine.

The mens K1 500m and 1000m results were unique in that neither Germany or Hungary took medals. Germany did not qualify for the finals, Hungary came 7th and 4th respectively and medals went to Finland, Canada and Australia in the 500 and Norway, Denmark and Romania in the 1000m.

Each team must have had their disappointments and disasters as well as their successes. Italy must have been delighted that Scarpa and Rossi took the Silver medal in the K2 1000m but it must have been a terrible blow to moral when World Champion, Josefa Idem capsized before the line as she was about to take second place in the womens K1 500m and did the same again on the first leg of the 5000m K1. The Italians also quite literally sustained another blow very shortly after the start of the K4 10K when their boat was holed and they sank in front of the stands.

It was a friendly and enjoyable championships without serious controversies, scandals, disqualifications or any other problems surfacing to spoil the atmosphere. Next year, inspite of moves to get arrangements changed it seems that the Championships will go ahead in Mexico.

*Special congratulations to Stephen and Andrew train, our silver medalists and to finalists Eric Jamieson and Ivan Lawler who so nearly reached a medal in the K1 10K*

**Di Lawler**



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**Surf report, Saltburn-by-the-Sea, 7th**

**October 1993:**

**"Conditions are very big. surf is 8-10 feet with a light offshore wind. Very difficult to get outside".**

**It's seldom we have conditions like these on the East Coast. Normally swells are limited to about 4 feet, although with prevailing South Westerlies, the wind is often offshore giving clean, "green" waves**



# North East Challenge

*9/10 October*

The competition was due to start on Saturday morning, so the go ahead was given at the phone-in on Thursday evening. Hopefully things would calm down a bit by Saturday.

The entry was one of the largest at a BCU surf event this season although numbers are fast increasing as paddlers rediscover the thrill of surfing. Forty five paddlers in all some choosing to double up in the Freestyle, Ski, Ladies, Junior and Novice as well as the Open Slalom.

### Novice Entrants

What was especially encouraging was the fact that 29 of the entrants were novices. Most of whom were first time competitors and surfers who hadn't had a local event to enter for several years. Of course, there were also the regular contingent from the SouthWest, some of whom had driven all night to get to Saltburn in time to sign-on at 9.00am. Their long journeys would be well rewarded.

Conditions on Saturday were

very good. The swell size had decreased to 4-6 feet, and the wind stayed offshore, giving a clean shape but also a heavy break to paddle out through.

Unfortunately, conditions for judges weren't as good. In typical Northern fashion, the rain came down in buckets for a couple of hours in the morning thoroughly soaking everyone.

Saltburn saw the unveiling of a new prototype surf kayak designed by Mark Richards. This may be a rival to the Mega Jester that has dominated kayak surfing for the last two or three years. It is yet another indication of the resurgence of interest in surf competition that is growing with every event.

By dusk on Saturday, all disciplines had been run through to the Quarter Finals.

A meal had been laid on at the local campsite for competitors and friends that night. Plenty of potatoes, and naturally, the Southerners wore their underclothes on their heads - as one does in Devon!

If Saturday's surf had been good, then Sunday's was near

perfection. And the sun shone!

### Slalom

In the Slalom, we saw outstanding performances from Gary Adcock, winning the event from Clive Kerswell in second place. One screaming wall ride from Clive pushed Simon Discombe into third and Steve Earl finished a creditable fourth.

Steve had a better result in the Freestyle final, winning from Don McLellan (the surfing stomtrooper) in second, James Manser third and the real star of the weekend, young Malcolm Fawcett from Blyth in fourth.

Malcolm went on to win both the Novice and Junior finals in fine style against very strong competition.

The Ladies event was won by Jo Leach from Marianne Spender, and Gary Adcock completed his double by beating Terry Benton in the Ski final by only one point.

One outstanding feature of the competition was the depth of local talent. These paddlers, often surfing in relatively uncompetitive boats were able to give the regulars a good run for their

money. Hopefully we can maintain this momentum and continue to run competitions "Up North" and possibly persuade Northern paddlers to compete in the South Western and Welsh events next year.

Thanks must go to Nick Noble from the Saltburn Surf Shop for his help with surf forecasting, to Mike Corner from Lanbaugh Borough Council for the loan of the control caravan and PA system, and to Darren and Lynne Clay for their organisational help throughout the weekend.

Let's hope 1994 continues where this left off!

**Eric Chacksfield** 

### Results Open Slalom

#### Freestyle Novice

1. Gary Adcock, 175;
1. Steve Earl, 39;
1. Malcolm Fawcett, 89;
2. Clive Kerswell, 160;
2. Don McLellan, 28;
2. Simon Gregory, 88;
3. Simon Discombe, 152;
3. James Manser, 26;
3. Colin Tee, 85;
4. Steve Earl, 118;
4. Malcolm Fawcett, 21;
4. Terry Benton, 77

#### Juniors Ladies Ski

1. Malcolm Fawcett, 97;
1. Jo Leach, 52;
1. Gary Adcock, 77;
2. Don McLellan, 83;
2. Marianne Spender, 42;
2. Terry Benton, 76;
3. Craig Bell, 82;
4. Matthew Shaw, 43;





# RODEO

World Championships 1993

from Ocoee River  
Tennessee state, USA

Chew wornt fraas wit

Right:  
Chris Taudevin  
flies the flag to  
fourth place.  
Photo Kevin  
Danforth

*The first breakfast after landing in Ducktown, Tennessee set the tone for the whole event. A geordie paddler and breakfast will never seem the same again. A common language didn't exist. Eventually the rodeo team settled on BLT's and biscuits and gravy. It was breakfast, but not as we know it. Fortunately whitewater has a global language and*

## The Format

The Championship was to be decided on two sections of the river: a freestyle event on Entrance Rapid, and the hole riding event on the infamous Hells Hole. The squirt paddlers were to compete on Torpedo Rapid and Hells Hole. 'Entrance' is 800m of good varied grade three-ish and the venue of one this years slalom World Cup races. The course ended up, after much discussion, as a rough water slalom course without gates, the paddlers making attainments (upstream moves) and touching set rocks (marked by traffic cones). Extra points were awarded by making reverse ferry glides, by surfing the wave above Grumpies (naughty stopper) and the whole thing timed to split those on equal points. Hells hole is a short steep stopper, guarded upstream by a short steep wave and very quirky. It was definitely an acquired taste, the sort of stopper which needed time to suss out and make friends with. Our first sight of Hells hole revealed the local paddlers making it look easy, linking horizontal and vertical moves. Newcomers, on the other hand, struggled to stay in the hole! : if Jan Kellner, current world champion, can't get it wired after half an hour the hole is definitely 'way quirky'.

For the four days leading to the event, each team was given one hour per day practice time at HH : with 19 British paddlers this worked out at about 3 mins per day to practice the stopper on which 70% of the final

marks would depend. Extra time could be grabbed between 4.30 and whenever the water was turned off (usually 6.00) but this entailed scrapping up the eddies with the other 60 plus paddlers. On reflection the best training session was the one held in the dark late one evening with the street light on the bridge turned around to shine down on the hole.

## The EVENT

Saturday Freestyle down a rapid turned out to be a slalom without gates, and quite a challenging heavy course at that. The buzz word was 'attainments', basically gaining ground upstream and points awarded for moves in completed, extra points were attained for reverse moves. For many of the paddlers the course was too slalom, two dimensional and too much of a surprise. As one paddler remarked 'I was ready to ring a bell on a string whilst surfing, or hand roll, but I gave up slalom 'cos it was hard work. This course hurt my arms' Best of British on the day Bridget Thomas and Pete Orton, both winning their respective events and setting up good medal potential for Sunday. Significantly both have long Slalom backgrounds. The squirters (squirtists?) had a mixed day at Torpedo in the Flatwater Choreography: the crowd placed them highly, but the judging left them well down the order with it all to do on Hell Hole. This was an achievable target for Bob, Chris & Simon however, as they had impressed







**dat honey ?**

*at. Southern fried hospitality meets weary  
vided, displaced and regionally inverted.  
ut not as we know it. Later we were to expe-  
d the Ocoee is a fine river...liquid esperanto.*

all during training. Open boat, by comparison with the North American continent is not big in Britain. Open boats with airbags, saddles straps and Eskimo roll potential are still novelties to us limeys. Our three boaters, Collins, Faragher and Crooks were looking for fun, experience and knowledge. All three were there for the taking. Throughout the week Loel Collins addressed Hell's Hole with some intent. Hand paddles in open boat Loel? Self christened 'Volvo Crash Dummy' had his numerous training wipeouts, lumps and bruises justified with a very creditable 8th place, against very strong competition, including Paul Mason, son of the legendary Bill. Who says this is not real Open Boating? The quality of competition is reflected in this Focus front cover: Eric Jackson's smooth and vertical 360 only grabbed 4th place.

### Sunday

The event kicked off late due to a long and detailed verbal explanation of how the competition would be run and judged. Chief Judge Frank Mayer did his best to patiently explain the system and deal with the paddlers questions. It is easy to be wise after the event but this could have been avoided with a simple information sheet some weeks prior to the event. Frank had been given a lot to deal with in a short time. All paddlers were to have three one minute rides in the hole. Speed back up the eddies would play



**Above:**  
**Motel: British Rodeo refugee camp.**  
**Photo: Heather Gunn**

a major part. After some heated protests (by American paddlers) on the previous day's results the C1 paddlers hit the water for their final. Pete Orton and Steve Block from the UK were in hot form along with the eventual winner, Alan Braswell. There was no reasonable explanation why Pete should finish fifth, particularly after winning the Freestyle event the previous day. The crowd and experienced judges amongst us placed Pete and Alan close with Blockie in third. The results were not announced until the evening medals ceremony. There were no British smiles until the women's event. American locals Roxanne McDonough and Susan Gentry were the hot tips, along with Sandra Schmidt, the current world champion. All made the final along with Bridget Thomas and Vicky Young of GB. The final reverted to a more familiar head to head and this quite quickly sorted those with less stamina. Surprisingly Sandra went out against Susan Gentry and left Roxanne to slug it out with Bridget in the Final head-to-head. After a dead heat and a re-run the Hells Hole first position was given to Roxanne McDonough: Bridget however became overall world champion thanks to a good Freestyle, the previous day, and steady skills performed with a consistently cool head.

The squirt event displayed on one level all that was bad about the event. Late rule and format changes, uncertainty over judging and the reduction of three rides to one sixty second ride. Did we really travel halfway round the world for one minute of competition? On another level Bob Campbell produced a brilliant ride under unbelievable pressure. Almost faultless, technically excellent with flair, poise and originality it was a privilege to watch. Silver medal did not really do it justice but there was much consolation in having both Bob and Chris Taudevin (4th) beat convincingly the father of Squirt, Jim Snyder. The mens surface boat event produced an exceptionally high standard of technical paddling, if a little short on showmanship. Many of the visiting paddlers simply had to work to hard to stay on the wave or in the hole and it was left to Jan Kellner as the only European hope to battle it out in the head to head finals. Our lads generally lost time in the eddies, and lacked enough practice time in the hole. No excuses but British Rodeos are very different. Moves are marked on style and content and head to heads have been known to last half and hour! Speed in the eddies is not a high priority (good elbows are ).

The major manufacturers now design specialist playboats and this championship was a major test bed for radical new designs. Dagger and Pyranha had paddlers in composite prototypes, Perception had plastic prototypes. The big big moves reflected the possibilities of the

**Right:**  
**Loel Collins: Crash dummy at work!**  
**Photo: Kevin Danforth**







**Above:**  
**Pete Orton,**  
 shuddering to  
 fifth place.  
**Photo: Heather**  
**Gunn**

radical designs: cartwheels and multiple retendos were common and the margins between surface boat moves and squirt moves were definitely narrowed. It was noticeable that most of the top eight paddlers were in prototypes and three of the top four in composite boats.

Jan Kellner ended up head to head with Bob McDonough for what turned out to be the battle for fourth place. Local opinion rated Bob as the favourite. (Hells Hole is sometimes called Bobs Hole) Kellner had to work hard to produce more than Bob to oust the man from his own stopper, and convincingly did just that. As Jan was in a higher volume kayak his performance was even more impressive. The effort needed left Jan in calorie debt and he just failed to make the final. USA slalom team refugees Scott Shipley and Eric Jackson

*The BCU Great Britain Rodeo Squad would like to thank all of their many and generous sponsors including: Foundation for Sports & The Arts, Pyranha, Prijon, Perception, Valley, Wild Water, Palm, Nookie, Playboater, Smiths, Sub Zero, Jack Wolfskin and anyone else they forgot to mention. Thanks to Pippa at Thomas Cook and Customer Relations at British Airways.*



**Above:**  
 Squirt boats  
 racked and  
 ready to go.  
**Photo: Kevin**  
**Danforth**

were left in the final head to head for the world title. As well as Olympic standard fitness and technical depth these two had the showmanship necessary to lift the event to world status. After a fast and furious flurry of flash Eric was adjudged to have done a little more than Scott to take the crown. Eric

also wound up the crowd and entertained. We remembered what this Rodeo lark is supposed to be about. Worthy champion Eric also competed in C1 and Open boat, with respectable results showing all round ability.

#### **Comment**


The second world championship venue was awarded to the USA in an informal discussion between competitors after the 1991 Worlds at the Bitches, Pembrokeshire. The friendly attitudes of the paddlers in Rodeo suggest that even world championships can be arranged on the back of envelopes. A good and laudable premise, given that the whole ethos of whitewater rodeo is the fun of taking part, meeting like minded paddlers, paddling and finding out about new rivers. For most domestic paddlers this is exactly why they turn up bleary-eyed and motorway-numb at all hours of the weekend in place like Hurley, Nottingham and Ramsey Island : they socialise, they paddle, most folks have a great time, and in the end someone wins. There is unfortunately a potential problem when the winner is given 'World Champion' status. Like it or

not, infant Rodeo has reached puberty : when the top paddlers in the world meet to compete for that very title, there is inevitably some strong desire to win. This is the cleft stick of running a world championship 'fun' event : how can you keep the fun and still run an event which bestows the giddy status of 'Worlds best' ?

It is probably fair to say that these championships 'struggled with the concept'. There were much grumbings about the judging, judging formats, access to water for practice, information flow, and general organisation. The main bone of contention was the adoption of a points per move scoring system and the near absence of non-american judges. (One British judge only in the surface boat class) Over the course of the weekend there were many unhappy paddlers, confirming the wisdom of abandoning this points scoring system in Britain whilst Rodeo was still a toddler. How can any judge accurately score technical moves delivered with speed over such a short time lapse without video playback?. Using video I was able to log, in slow motion, Mark Lyall (USA East) producing seventeen moves (all scoring) in a 23 second ride !! Even if you can count that quickly, you can't write it down at the same time. Even the old fuddy dummies in Cricket have a camera in the stumps these days.

At the Monday morning meeting many issues concerning the sport and its future were discussed : The 1995

World Championships will be organised by Germany and will take place on Augsburg Artificial Slalom Course. Many of the organisational difficulties will be ironed out at a Pre-Worlds next year. Discussion also covered ICF recognition for the discipline, and general talk on the way forward. Growing pains are inevitable in an emerging and exciting sport: the general mood was positive. Rodeo must not lose the grin. Talented paddlers won medals, new tricks were seen, new boats were designed and Eric Jackson reminded an appreciative audience of paddlers of what big fun looks like. Thanks Eric, you made us smile.

**Kevin Danforth**  
 (Un-official Rodeo Team Coach and  
 Social Secretary, on his Holidays) 





# World Championships 1993 from Ocoee River Tennessee state, USA

## Open Boat

- |                    |         |
|--------------------|---------|
| 1. Dale Johnson    | US East |
| 2. Mark Scriber    | Canada  |
| 3. Paul Mason      | Canada  |
| 4. Eric Jackson    | US West |
| 5. Billy Davis     | US East |
| 6. Tyler Elm       | Canada  |
| 7. Martin Neidrich | Germany |
| 8. Loel Collins    | GB      |
| 18. Ross Faragher  | GB      |
| 19. Dave Crooks    | GB      |

## Results

### Mens's Kayak

- |                    |         |     |
|--------------------|---------|-----|
| 1. Eric Jackson    | US West | 19  |
| 2. Scott Shipley   | US West | 44  |
| 3. Shane Benedict  | US East | 45  |
| 4. Jan Kellner     | Germany | 55  |
| 5. Bob McDonough   | US East | 64  |
| 6. Lee Bonfiglio   | US West | 66  |
| 7. Dan Gavere      | US West | 68  |
| 8. Corran Addison  | US West | 74  |
| 16. Shaun Baker    | GB      | 190 |
| 18. Paul Carrant   | GB      | 193 |
| 24. Justin Bunn    | GB      | 233 |
| 26. Jason Buxnon   | GB      | 251 |
| 27. Andy Middleton | GB      | 252 |
| 28. Ray Hudspith   | GB      | 252 |
| 31. Paul Fletcher  | GB      | 295 |

42 Paddlers from 10 nations

### Women's K1

- |                        |         |     |
|------------------------|---------|-----|
| 1. Bridget Thomas      | GB      | 17  |
| 2. Roxanne McDonough   | US East | 22  |
| 3. Susan Gentry        | US East | 39  |
| 4. Sandra Schmidt      | Germany | 47  |
| 5. Hanna Swayze        | US East | 70  |
| 6. Dawn Benner         | US West | 76  |
| 7. Karen Mann          | US East | 79  |
| 8. Risa Calloway       | US East | 81  |
| 11. Vicky Young        | GB      | 92  |
| 13. Louise Wigmore     | GB      | 115 |
| 16. Claire Cheong-Leen | GB      | 153 |

17 Paddlers

### C1

- |                  |         |
|------------------|---------|
| 1. Alan Braswell | US East |
| 2. Donald Calder | NZ      |
| 3. Scott Shoup   | US      |
| 4. Steve Block   | GB      |
| 5. Peter Orton   | GB      |
| 6. Tim Masincupp | US      |

### Squirt

- |                   |         |
|-------------------|---------|
| 1. Lee Bonfiglio  | US West |
| 2. Bob Campbell   | GB      |
| 3. Wayne Gentry   | US East |
| 4. Chris Taudevin | GB      |
| 5. Tony Reeves    | US East |
| 6. Jim Snyder     | US East |
| 7. Dan Gavere     | US West |
| 8. Scott Bowman   | US West |
| 12. Simon Turton  | GB      |

### Women's Squirt

- |                      |         |
|----------------------|---------|
| 1. Susan Gentry      | US East |
| 2. Sandra Schmidt    | Germany |
| 3. Risa Calloway     | US East |
| 4. Katherine Undberg | Canada  |
| 5. Gillian Wright    | US West |

### Squirt C1

- |                    |
|--------------------|
| 1. Kirby Erdely    |
| 2. Chrle Manderson |
| 3. Erk Revels      |



# NEWBURY CANOE CLUB

## Waterside Series 1994

In February and March 1884 Newbury Canoe Club will be running the Waterside series of races.

The series comprises 4 marathon canoe races held at fortnightly intervals over increasing distances. The 1993 series attracted an entry of over 1100 paddlers over the 4 weekends and we are hoping that next year's series proves as popular.

The 4 races are an ideal build up to the famous Devizes to Westminster race, held over the Easter weekend.

Newbury Canoe Club medals are awarded after each race, but those paddlers who have completed all 4 races of the series also qualify for the highly prestigious end of series trophies and shields.

*Details of the race dates and distances are as follows:*

- Race A: Sunday 6th February, Great Bedwyn to Newbury 13.5 miles  
 Race B: Sunday 20th February, Newbury Circuit 23 miles  
 Race C: Sunday 6th March, Pewsey to Newbury 23 miles  
 Race D: Sunday 20th March, Devizes to Newbury 34 miles

If you would like further details and an entry form please write enclosing a stamped addressed envelope to:

**Lyn McLaren Hillside House Hungerford  
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# Dr D's agony column

**DR D's Agony Column** This page will become a regular feature depending on demand. 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.

## Dear Dr D

In view of the recent tragedies and loss of life my club has become increasingly concerned over the understanding of risk, responsibility, liability and negligence. Our past record is sound although some minor incidents have happened from time to time, and we are most certainly not complacent. Our Honorary Secretary has recently received documents from the BCU on Safety Policy, Safety Checklist, Personal Safety, and Insurance Benefits and Procedures. We are currently examining these and documents from other sources with a view to issuing a club policy statement on safety.

I have read the recently published 'Recreation Handbook' (BCU Touring and Recreation Committee, Aug 1993) and found it contained little or no guidance in the aspect of safety. I understand that the aim of this publication is to assist organisers in the running of regional touring events, and I am at a loss to understand why this most important subject has not been more fully covered on a document of this nature. Will you please have your distinguished panel of experts to be Judge and Jury to apportion blame in the attached hypothetical case study. (Derek scripted a worst case scenario

involving the death & permanent injury of two unaccompanied youngsters on a BCU regional tour) In addition, how would they advise on prevention and repetition in the future?

I would recommend that the BCU Policy statement on Safety is included in all publications on 'How to do....' for all aspects of the sport. Not to do so in the Recreation Handbook I think was negligent.

**Derek Clitheroe Hon  
Chairman, Milton  
Keynes Canoe Club.**

## Dr D Replies

*I am not sure I can stand as Judge and Jury on this one, but I will try and clarify the issues involved. All BCU documents are produced in good faith to help volunteers. In this case the guide was written, as you point out, to help potential organisers of events, and does make the basic assumption that the organiser knows enough about the event being run, including it's special hazards, if any, and will arrange safety cover accordingly. I know from attending all sorts of events around the country safety is practically addressed by organisers at signing on, either in signs or handouts and where there are potential problems these are highlighted, or safety provision*

*supplied. A good example of this is the type of documentation given out at the Mike Jones Rallies, or the Coquet Island Sea Race.*

*There is no doubt that event organisers need to be especially wary of the safety aspect: gone are the days when like minded paddlers could gather and paddle informally, naturally taking care of newcomers and the weak and wobbly. In your scenario I feel blame if any, should lie with the group they were originally paddling with as well as the organiser for not realising how inexperienced the youngsters were. Most tours encourage conversation & camaraderie: one of the main reasons for organised tours are to meet other paddlers. If litigation was the outcome of a fatality/injury on a BCU Tour it would be the domain of the courts and our legal system to determine whether or not negligence had occurred, given the full particulars of each case. My legal mates tell me that a likely outcome, given that reasonable precautions had been taken by the organisers (including following BCU Safety & Touring guidelines), would be 'misadventure'. In other words an accident without an individual or organisation at fault. Back to the guide. The BCU Press and Information*

*Officer, Kevin Danforth, is currently compiling a comprehensive catalogue of all the handouts and documents produced by the Union, nationally and regionally and the amount of information produced is staggering. One of the difficulties in producing publications is deciding what the reader needs and what he may already know. It could be argued that if the organiser of a hypothetical event was not already aware of the safety aspects of the sport( and the myriad of BCU Coaching scheme leaflets and advice) he would be unlikely to organise the event in the first place. If we assume the organisers are switched on and active in the sport, those dangerous weirs in your scenario would be covered safety wise (as in Liffey and Exe Descents?). However, we live in times of litigation and the writ and it is just as well to be over cautious, in spite of the excellent safety record of BCU tours.*

*Your suggestion of including the Safety document in the guide has already been taken up. Organisers who would like a full copy of Derek's letter/script of disaster and a copy of the safety document to go with their guides please send an SAE to the BCU Office marked "Dr D, Safety".*



## Congregated Canoeists Competition...

Yet more entries! As mentioned in the last issue I decided to let the competition run for another issue and the results are shown below.

### Winner

#### Dear Dr D

For a collective name that covers all the many varieties of canoeing, from white water to marathon, to sea kayaking I suggest a FLOW of canoeists. When the dictionary describes 'flow' as 'to glide along as a stream; to move easily; to move in waves; to hang loose; to be present in abundance', I can think of no better way of describing this wonderful sport of ours,

**John K. Ruthven,  
Sleaford.**

#### Dear Dr D:

Noun of congregation for canoeists

Don't listen to my Dad (October Focus), they're not a drench of canoeists they are a SPRAY (sort of like flowers, though not exactly)... Except if they paddle like my Dad they're a FLOUNDER especially when like him they spend a lot of time underwater peering at the bottom presumably looking for other fish.

**MIKE MURRAY  
(Viking Kayak Club)**

*P.S My Dad says I should ask for a float jacket because he is going to shove me in the river.*

#### Dear Dr D:

As a recent newcomer to the sport, I feel that I am able to reply to this competition with the appreciation that my recent ex-colleagues in 'Joe Public' have for canoeing.

Let me explain; Nigel Murray's suggestion should surely be a 'Drench of Dragonboaters.' The start of a regatta can only be a 'Confusion of Kayakers', whereas, in stark contrast, an accom-

plished K4 or C2 team is a definite 'Capability of Canoeists'. A group of novices is a 'Wet of Canoeists', but the general term is a 'Tide of Canoeists' unless of course there are too many then it is a 'Wash of Canoeists'.

As you see, to use one collective noun for such a complex problem would surely be a terminological in-exactitude.

**NEIL OSBORNE**



Dear Dr D Here are my attempts at the noun for a congregation of canoeists:

Grade 1 A fellowship of canoeists, all peaceful like a church congregation.

Grade 2 A glide of canoeists, as the water now moves slightly quicker.

Grade 3 and 4 A mob of canoeists, all fighting to get into the best stoppers.

Grade 5 A froth of canoeists, just able to see the odd helmet or stern of a boat.

Grade 6 An asylum of canoeists, YOU MUST BE MAD TO PADDLE THIS!

**PAUL RADLEY**





# Access news

## ACCESS COMMITTEE NEWS

*Simon Banbury takes over from the retiring Simon Dawson.*

**The Access committee expresses their thanks to Simon Dawson for his effort and hard work. Simon Banbury, Regional Access Officer for the Northern Region steps into the breach and hopes to take things forward again carrying on the progress made by his namesake and predecessor. Simon has had experience of managing access in an upland area and white water paddlers particularly should welcome his input. The Northern region has one of the best access models with the Tyne Agreement. In a baptism of fire. Simon is currently involved in investigating a serious incident on the River Wear, in his own region. The alleged shooting incident has resulted in the somewhat diluted charge of 'Using abusive and threatening behaviour, likely to cause stress to members of the public'. The case has been deferred until the 25 November. We await the outcome with great interest.**

## RIVER DART

### History:

The River Dart in Devon rises on Dartmoor and flows into the sea at Dartmouth, being tidal from Totnes. There are no known claims to rights of passage or navigation above the tidal limit. For many years canoeists have been allowed to use the non-tidal stretches of the Dart below Dartmeet during the game fishing close season. Initially this was under the terms of an informal agreement negotiated between Totnes Canoe Club and the River Dart Preservation Society, (the riparian owners body). The number of canoeists using the river rose considerably over the years, a fact which caused increasing problems with inconsiderate parking and changing by canoeists at the main access and egress points, Newbridge and Holne Bridge. The massive increase in use combined with problems of enforcement led to the BCU taking over responsibility for the agreement and to the new conditions of use which took effect in 1989. The main changes over previous usage were that the Dartmeet section now had a reduced season due to its importance as a salmon spawning area, but to compensate for this the 'loop' section had its season extended for a month. All paddlers are meant to have a number on their boat (which would show that

they had permission to be there, and that we are controlling numbers), and the issues of careless parking and immodest changing are higher profile. This agreement was, and still is crucial to the future of canoeing on the Dart; without it I firmly believe that the riparian owners would have stopped canoeing altogether, something which would have been morally questionable but legally enforceable. A controversial aspect of the agreement is that the owners insisted that it should apply only to BCU members or to groups led by BCU members, a stipulation which has been much criticised in some areas of the canoeing press. Their reasons for this are quite simple. Firstly, we are expected to enforce the agreement and the only sanction that we can have is the threat of removing BCU membership. Secondly, the owners have a signed agreement with the BCU as the parent body for canoeing in Britain (England?) so they expect us to be answerable to any problems. Clearly this can not be the case if the problems are created by non-members. Thirdly, we can inform canoeists of the terms of the agreement through the BCU Yearbook, Access Officers and Canoe Focus, all of which are available free to members. Consequently, I do not consider it unreasonable or improper

to restrict the River Dart or any other river on which agreements are negotiated through the BCU, to members only. Aware of the unrest amongst local people whose land we use to gain access to the river, in 1990 the SW Regional Committee of the BCU purchased a small piece of land beside the river, thanks largely to the generosity of local clubs and paddlers.

### The Current Situation:

The first season or two under the new agreement went fairly well, but things have gone downhill since then. Far too many canoeists now turn up without having sought permission from Kevin Chamberlain, far too many park on and around Holne Bridge without any consideration for local people whose access roads are blocked, and some still paddle during the fishing season whenever the river level is up. The unsuitability of our land for parking prevented any development of the site and the traditional egress point at Holne Bridge has continued to be used. At the end of last season (February 1993) the owner of this land, Mr Patrick Simpson, informed us that he would no longer allow canoeists to cross his land at Holne Bridge but

intervention by the Dartmoor National Park on our behalf led to improvements to the bank there, allowing our continued use. It should be added that our land was a crucial bargaining tool at this time.

During this season we have continued to battle against those who have no respect for the access agreement. Large numbers of paddlers have been confronted by Kevin Chamberlain or me for not getting permission to be there, we had an untimely pirate run of Dartmeet and one group almost lost the entire agreement due to their conduct on the loop during the weekend of 9/10th October. The situation has got to get better. The major land owner in the area (who is supportive of canoeing) is now very old; his son, who is most decidedly not supportive of our sport, will inherit all of his father's land. The implications for us are clear, and very threatening, so we have got to prove that we are responsible, reasonable and trustworthy. Let's hope that the small minority who fail to meet those standards do not lose everything for the rest of us.

**Adam Box, Regional  
Access Officer  
29th October  
1993**







# Dear focus

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

## ACCESS LETTERS

### Dear Focus

I would be most grateful if you could highlight some problems that we have been experiencing on the River Dart recently, namely:

1. On the weekend of October 9th/10th there was some unbelievable behaviour on the 'loop' section from groups of canoeists who have since been contacted and banned from the river for the rest of the season. They used foul language amongst themselves and at members of the public and at other canoeists, they left one of their group walking naked around Newbridge carpark, and they blocked the road at Holne Bridge by parking

their minibus stupidly. As a result, I had complaints from other canoeists who were quite rightly worried about the future of canoeing on the Dart, from Dartmoor National Park officers, from the riparian owners and from the police at Ashburton.

2. In the same week that I had approached the riparian owners about an extension to the season for the Dartmeet section a group of four paddlers openly pirated that section. We will not now have the hoped for extension for this season.

3. During regular checks by the LAO and RAO almost half of the paddlers on the loop have been found to be canoeing without

consent, contrary to the terms of our agreement.

There are times when I think that canoeists are their own worst enemies, as illustrated by these cases. Fortunately, an increasing number of people are becoming aware of the threat to their sport from such cases and are acting on it themselves. I would particularly want to thank those paddlers who confronted the idiots described in (1) above, and who phoned me to warn me of the likely complaints from the riparian owners.

**Adam Box, Regional Access Officer, Devon and Cornwall.**



### Dear Focus

The following is a translated copy of a letter sent to my Company from the Association Durance Eau Vive which is the development agency for the Southern French Alps. Although I have a commercial interest in this area my main concern is as a canoeist who has had many enjoyable years paddling the Durance and its tributaries. Please note the concern over white water activities.

All we have to do to comply with local access agreements is to read the notice board set up at most of the access points on many of the rivers in that area. No canoeing before 9am, off the river by 6pm. This seems a very reasonable request, considering many of the unreasonable access agreements we have in our country.

"During 1993, The southern Alps Development Agency is undertaking a study of clientele in order to appreciate the economic impact of white water activities on the Durance and to better

understand the tourist clientele.

This framework has led us to meet with the various users of the river and significantly with the fishermen.

You are doubtless aware that the latter group do not always react well when faced with the development of white water sports.

Today the findings of the study indicate that the problem is essentially linked to the behaviour of sportspeople in that the hours of use are not always respected.

It would seem that the participants of the white water sports are not always aware of the minimum respect which is to be paid to the other users of the river.

Perhaps you could give your organisation as well as your clients a few guidelines on this matter, without, however restricting the pleasure of their descent.

**S J Woodward. BCU SI.**



### Dear Focus

On Tuesday 5th October 1993, while on our way to paddle the River Clyde, (S falls - Crossford) we were approached by the owner of the Meadow at our access point, which is at the lay-by between Crossford and Kirkfieldbank.

The owner, Mr McDermot, showed us two sets of tracks left by canoeists who had dragged their canoes across the meadow the day before. Mr McDermot went on to explain that the meadow contained many wild flowers

and that was the reason for his request that paddlers carried their canoes down the path on the right hand side of the meadow.

The request seemed all the more reasonable when we discovered that the same man regularly cuts down the grass and maintains the path, for no other reason that we can see but for our benefit.

At no time was access threatened, indeed, he was talking at the same time about putting ropes up along a steep part of the path to help us carry our canoes down.

He also, when the Council raised the height of the wall at his field, toyed with the idea of fitting a stile but rejected this idea because it would cause us (canoeists) too much trouble, so instead he moved the gate posts out so we can get in past his locked gate.

These are just a few of the things he has done for our benefit so come on, do your body a favour and carry your canoe down the path to the river.

**Sean Harkin - Monklands Canoe Club**



## SEAL PUPS

### Dear Focus

I have just returned from a walk where I was appalled at the gross negligence and irresponsibility of a fellow canoeist. I was watching a group of 40+ grey seals and two pups on a remote beach that can only be approached from the sea (I was watching from the safe distance of a cliff top.) This canoeist deliberately took a group of 8 novices within a few metres of the sleeping seals. The result was that all the adult seals fled into the sea abandoning their young . . . one of which still had a portion of its umbilicus attached, showing how young it was.

Now that the seals had been so totally disturbed I stopped waving and asked them to leave (in a manner that rhymes with "duck cough") and explained that there were pups on the beach. The leader reported that he was 'taking the boys to see the pups'. I then really became angry, it showed that he had deliberately sought out this isolated seal colony knowing that there would be newborn pups. Two hours after the canoes left the adult seals had not returned to their young which were now getting wet from the incoming tide.

Many people paddle to get closer to our wildlife but let us be sensible. Getting within yards of a pupping seal colony is going to cause great disturbance. If sea canoeists are to keep our good name in environmental circles then let us keep clear of both breeding seals and nesting birds, watching from a safe distance.

**Yours Amos Bewick SI (sea)**







# Regional round up

## Vice-Chair's Chat

'Accelerating Expansion' is the theme for our next four years. It is also the title of the BCU Development Plan, which has been widely acclaimed as one of the best in British Sport. When you study the details of the BCU objectives, it is clear that the expansion needs to be generated at grass roots level, where the regions operate. This means that the regions have a major role in accelerating the BCU expansion.

When we talk about the Regions, what we really mean is all the affiliated clubs and individual members in each region. The role of the Regional Committee is to get our act together. Success is directly proportional to the support that clubs and individuals give to their region and the extent to which they become involved in regional activities. Let's make 1994 the year that regional events and activities take off. An excellent New Year resolution for clubs and regions would be to talk regularly about the way in which they can help each other.

And finally, a very practical point. When you receive communications from your region, do please reply and reply quickly. One dedicated regional secretary has observed that she has written over 200 letters and had only 12 replies!

Charles Hicks

## Eastern

Discussions with the NRA and Broads Authority on licences are progressing; any club with an existing arrangement please keep the Regional Committees and BCU office informed. The consultation period for the management proposals for Whitlingham Country Park, Norwich, which includes plans for a water activities site, runs until 31 December.

Free publicity! Remember that the Eastern Region Banner and BCU signs are available for all events; contact Jim Croft or Mike Lewis.

Winter events include ER Slalom Series, Essex Race Series, Norwich and Cambridge Hare and Hounds (details in Newsletter).

Judith Fynn

## East Midlands

Thank you to all who helped others enjoy canoeing in 1993.

To find out who is on your Regional Committee and what their 1994 plans are, make sure you get and read your copy of the Regional Yearbook.

Start the New Year with a paddle on Sunday 2 January at 10.30am; starting point on the telephone information line 0602 850930. There will be a river trip on the first weekend of every month. All welcome.

Pool Slalom - Saturday 15 January starting at 6.00pm at Bramcote Leisure Centre Nottingham. Open to all paddlers. Enter on the night.

Whether you are a Splash of Canoeists or a Roll of Canoeists, Happy Christmas and see you paddling in 1994.

Ann Hart

## London & South East

The AGM in November saw the retirement of Brin Hughes as Regional Chairman. Brin was one of the small group of paddlers that first met to set up the Region in 1980. He became chairman in 1983 and, despite several attempts to resign, (fiercely resisted by the committee), he occupied the post for 10 years: from those heady days in the 1980s when we actually had a full time regional development officer, to the much more restricted financial climate of recent years. He also represented the Region on the English Affairs Committee, which he chaired for several years. Paddlers in London & South East owe him an enormous debt and we all wish him well for the future.

Chris Childs

## North

The list of officers for 1993/94 will be in the next Northern Paddler; alternatively contact David Pope. Many thanks to all who have helped with regional activities; organisers, paddlers and supporters, especially for slaloms, the Tyne Tour and the Durham Raft-up. We look forward to continuing support in 1994 which will see the start of events at the Tees Barrage.

Will organisers of 1994 events, courses, tours and competitions please forward dates ASAP to Dave Pope or myself. As your Regional Editor may I say a big thank you to ALL of you for your help and support; please keep the information coming.

Mary Armstrong

## North West

An excellent season - a good Regional meet at Holme Pierrepont in May; we have booked the same weekend for 1994 (May 28-30). 60 North West canoeists supported the World Triathlon Championships at Rivington by providing safety cover.

The Coaching Calendar has been successfully completed - look out for your new one in the next few weeks, contact your LCO.

Roy Hitchings

## South

Congratulations to RLP, Basingstoke Canal, Banbury and Pangbourne Canoe Clubs who finished 3rd equal, 8th, 11th equal and 15th respectively in the September Hasler Finals at Evesham. The Region finished 3rd out of nine.

On Sundays 9, 16, 23 and 30 January 1994 Eyot Boat Club have again kindly agreed to host our Regional Hare & Hounds training races on the Thames at Henley (contact Charles Hicks, 0252 850657). All welcome - check-in time from 10am, first start about 10.30am. Cost £2 per seat (proceeds assist SR competitive canoeists with grant aid).

A varied programme of Southern Region recreational events is planned for 1994. Details will be published soon in a Regional Newsletter to clubs.

Charles Hicks

## South West

By the time you read this the Regional AGM will have passed and there may have been some changes on your Regional Committee. I invite you to consider for a moment the great deal of work that individuals throughout the Union do on your behalf. The Union

employs very few full time workers, and most of these are based at the BCU office in Nottingham. Thanks are due to the members who are prepared to freely give up their spare time to provide the structure that the sport of canoeing requires. The members of Regional and National Committees, the Coaching Officers and Panels, the Access Officers, the Event Organisers and all who work at a local level to provide the club structure. Please give them your support in the coming year.

Dennis Walls

## West Midlands

All paddling sections of the West Midlands have enjoyed a successful year. The competition paddlers have excelled across the area with many new names entering the rolls of honour. The Solihull 60 kilometre doubled last year's field and proved a smashing success! Recreational paddling proved as ever popular, with assorted tours taking place on most grades of water. The Pershore Camp Weekend and the Anglesey Sea weekend are worth special mention.

A new Regional River Guide will shortly be obtainable from Mike Nicholls. Tel: 021 360 2136. Look out for the 1994 Regional Handbook early in the New Year. The Chairman and Committee send seasonal greetings to all canoeists and kayakists and to look forward to more paddles together in the New Year.

Rosemary Preece

## Yorkshire & Humberside

The last twelve months have been a time of slowly building on the successes of previous years; to maintain this work we do need willing volunteers. Have you a hidden talent that will benefit canoeing? Please contact me, your Regional Chairman, on 0756 753101.

October 93 saw the launch by the NRA, of the Calder and Derwent River Catchment Plans. It is vitally important that we respond in detail to these plans to register canoeing as a significant activity that needs a say in their future management. Norman Taylor, Vice Chairman, is again coordinating the regional responses. Would you ensure that he receives your comments and information on past canoeing activities on these rivers, on 0532 737393.

Mike Twiggs







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MEDIUM	5'8"-5'10"	38"-40"	31"-33"
MEDIUM TALL	5'11"-6'0"	38"-40"	31"-33"
MED LARGE	5'10"-6'0"	40"-42"	33"-35"
LARGE	6'0"-6'2"	42"-44"	35"-37"
EX LARGE	6'2"-6'4"	44"-46"	37"-39"
<b>WOMEN</b>			
UK10 EX SMALL	5'5"-5'6"	32"-34"	24"-26"
UK12 SMALL	5'6"-5'7"	34"-36"	26"-28"
UK12/4	5'7"-5'8"	34"-36"	26"-28"
UK14 MEDIUM	5'7"-5'8"	36"-38"	28"-30"
UK15 MED LARGE	5'7"-5'8"	37"-39"	29"-31"

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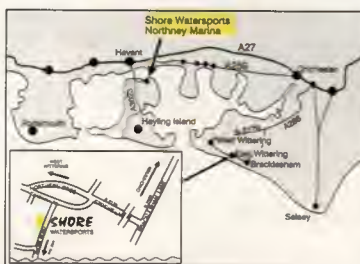
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# b ook & video review

reviews by Kevin Danforth

## White Water Kayaking : River Skills

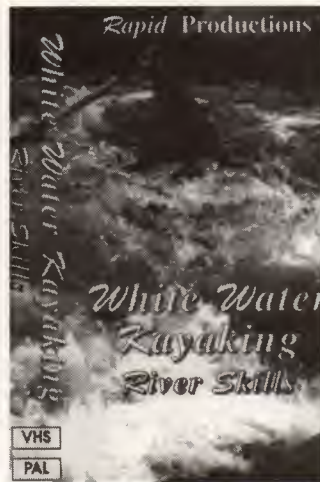
Price £14.99

Rapid Productions

Produced by two coaching scheme members and a cameraman/director in the Northern Region this is an attempt to provide paddlers with an insight into running white water rivers. It is pitched at paddlers who have got the hang of basic strokes and are looking to progress to white water. Shot in North-umberland and Scotland the vid is professionally produced and of good technical quality. I found some of the content questionable: The opening sequence of the presenter being rescued from a lumpy swim and looking a bit cold and emotional during his

preamble would not be my choice of opening footage if I wanted to encourage participation in whitewater. Other wrinkles include non-standard river signals and some odd emphasis and terminology.. I found it difficult to understand why the paddlers avoided teaching some obvious easy ways of staying upright and getting their novice charges to relax and smile. Despite these criticisms the work is a laudable effort and would cause fruitful discussion on paddling courses. Some good points: real beginners with real problems, natural rivers with rock and tree hazards and a woman leading the team

down rapids. Good try by two coaching scheme members and worth a look.



## Alone at Sea

Dr Hannes Lindemann

This is a new edition of a tale which needs telling again to a younger generation. One of the classic seafaring voyages of all time, Lindemann's solo crossings of the Atlantic are presented in this new edition with colour photographs. Would you canoe from The Canaries to the Virgin Island in a folding canvass Klepper canoe? Once was amazing, twice demands a remarkable man, prepared to journey farther into himself than most men dare and in the name of medical science. In his own words 'I wish for the reader to be able to sense that this book deals with honest adventures which were accomplished without the help of others. An inspirational work you must read : where are the hatches to my sea-double ?

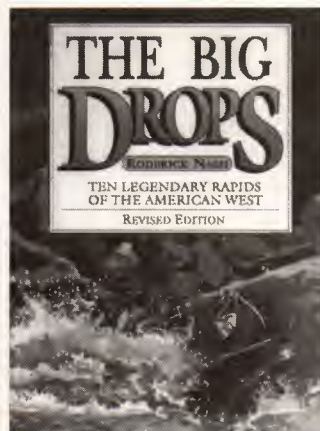


## The Big Drops

Roderick Nash

Price £8.95

This book is a personal guide to the writers experience of ten legendary rapids of the American West. Although written from the standpoint of rowing boats and rafts there is much whitewater paddlers will identify with here. Rod covers the history, myths, legends and fact of big water runs on a number of classics including the Colorado, the Rogue, the Green and the Tuolumne in an accessible style. A right riveting read and a great stocking filler for anyone heading way out west.



## Canoe Ability

Length 12 Minutes

Price £12.99

Looking for something different - looking for a good use to put that Coaching qualification too? Then consider **CANOE ABILITY**.

Funded by a grant from the Sports Council, this film follows a group of paddlers from the Yorkshire and Humberside Region and the Federation of Disability Sports Organisations on a river trip down the light whitewater of the Calder River. With some short sequences filmed in the Pool at Ponds Forge, this is a sheer joy to watch. With the smiles on everyone's faces, it's hard to tell who is enjoying our sport more - the instructors or the students - perhaps this is the way it should be.

Available now in Standard VHF Format, this video will by early November be available with subtitles and signs for the hard of hearing, with a third version available for the Blind, which we are advised will be out before Christmas.

## Videos Heads Up

Length 28 Mins

Price £19.99

This is an occasionally funny, mostly serious and always practical look at how paddlers deal with mishaps on the river.

Nasty things can and do happen as we all know, and Heads Up! shows those nasty things happening. But this is not all doom and gloom, instead Heads Up! presents a wealth of useful techniques for both staying out of trouble and getting your buddy out of a tight spot.

With the able help of safety gurus Les Bechdel of "River Rescue" fame, this film deals with strainers (fallen trees) foot and body entrapments, undercut rocks and panicked victims. Sequences demonstrating the latest in rescue techniques and punctuated by dramatic real life situations.

The American Canoe Association said "If you take your River Running seriously and want some new tools in your safety tool box, then don't miss Heads Up!"

## LATE NEWS

Back in stock with BCU Supplies, Canoeing by the American Red Cross. Previously reviewed, this book is worth mentioning as it is considered by most Open Canoe Paddlers to be their Bible. Price £9.99



# 1993

# CANI Canoeists Conference

**F**ermanagh district Council laid on a wine (and cheese & onion crisp) reception and the conference was opened by the Chairman of the council. We were then given a talk and slide show on the development of the canoe trail on Lough Erne. This is a Fermanagh Council Project which shows a very positive commitment to developing access and facilities for canoeists on the Erne waterways. Ten sheltered campsites with toilet blocks and showers have been built at strategic points along the canoe trail – which will be available free to canoeists on trips in this very beautiful area of Northern Ireland. Keys for these amenities will be available from the Canoe Centre.

After this the wine flowed freely as did the crack – and by 2.00am the problems of CANI, the BCU and the World in general were solved – so we all retired!

## Saturday Morning

Saturday morning dawned bright and calm and saw the conference members taking en masse to any and every open canoe available. For many it was a chance to experience solo paddling and to learn some of the relevant skills.

The Hon-President of CANI – veteran kayaker Stanley Littlewood stepped into an open canoe for the very first time and was instantly hooked. Meanwhile Clare Medland, Chairman of Cani Council, succeeded in performing a forward loop in an aquatic bicycle on flat water!

After lunch Davy Maxwell (BCU FC) gave us a practical talk on canoe sailing for the lay paddler. The principles of centres of efforts and lateral resistance became clear as the paper sails, dagger boards and canoe drifted around the flip chart.

The rest of the afternoon was spent squirting, slalomming and swimming with K- boats. Again this proved to be a valuable session with participants gaining experience in the new branch of canoe sport in squirting and the much neglected areas of k-boat racing and slalom.

On Saturday evening we travelled to the French Alps and East Greenland.

The former gave an insight into costs access and the availability of lower and medium grade water – which can make Alpine paddling available to many more than just the extreme WW adrenalin junkie.



*The CANI Canoeists Conference was held from 8th-10th October at the Lakeland Canoe Centre in Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh. The theme for the conference was Flat Water Canoeing – and the location was excellent for the weekend. The Canoe Centre is on a small island in the town of Enniskillen – which itself is on an island. Over 40 CANI members participated in a very stimulating and enjoyable conference.*

Jim Shields then gave a superb lecture and slide show on the N.I East Greenland Expedition this summer. His humorous style of presentation and the quality of slides ensured that this was one of the best lectures we have had at a conference.

Jim also gave us a lot of insight into the lifestyle and traditions of the East Greenland Inuit people which was fascinating and not unlike some of the habits of paddlers over here!

## Sunday Morning

Sunday morning dawned even brighter and calmer than Saturday – which was a shame as we weren't going paddling. Instead we locked ourselves in the briefing room and thrashed through relevant coaching issues.

The session kicked off with an outline of the recent developments that the coaching panel had been implementing over the last year – and the chance for participants to feedback their views/ideas on some of the changes and plans.

There was also some discussion on next years conference. The following points were noted:

It was felt that February might be a better time to run the Conference as there are less other paddling events happening at that time.

## Ideas

Some ideas for topics for the Conference were also put for-

ward: River and Sea Safety and Rescue, Equipment Forum, Open Canoeing, Membership benefits, improving our service, Car boot canoe sales, Regulation/accreditation of centres.

The conference then went on to look at first aid and lifesaving requirements for coaching qualifications. A lot of discussion surrounded this and the following points were generally agreed upon.

There should be a greater level of First Aid required for coaching awards. However this should be a short, concise (6hrs approx), water related course – as many standard courses pass over important areas for canoeists.

Canoe Safety and rescue tests should be maintained for coaching awards but duplication of rescues should be avoided in training and assessment courses.

For bank instruction and pool work lifesaving skills are important.

Some consideration could be given to turbulent water rescue skills in the rescue tests i.e sea, surf and white water as techniques are altered.

It was also noted that there is a public and media perception that watersport instructors should have lifesaving ability.

## CANI Pool Awards

Finally we spent some time looking at the development of CANI Pool Awards. Two groups looked at this and came up with quite a different scheme. However both

agreed that the emphasis should be on fun and participation.

One group looked at a scheme under the titles of drown proofing, boat control and confidence in and under the water. They came up with three levels of achievement based on these titles.

One group looked at making use of pool slalom, polo and pool rodeo to develop star test type skills with achievement levels based on the ability to participate rather than assessing pure skills.

Keith Fitzsimmons agreed to chair a working group comprising a couple of folk from each group to come up with a format to be presented to the next conference in February. A number of club reps agreed to go and experiment with these ideas over the winter.

Stanley Littlewood then presided over the prize draw for items kindly donated by Palm Canoe Products and the Share Centre.

Finally Stanley closed the Conference by thanking the organisers, participants and those who gave such stimulating talks and congratulating CANI on such a successful weekend.

*The organisers wish to thank the following for their sponsorship and assistance in making the Conference such a success: Fermanagh District Council Lakeland Canoe Centre and their Staff Palm Canoe Products Ltd Share Centre, Lisnaskea Tollymore – The N.I*





# UK Canoeing Fatalities 1989-1992

Compiled by Pam Peatroy and Paul Kilham

## Total. No of Fatalities 1989-1992 = 26

This chart shows the total number of fatalities per year in the UK from 1989-1992. It is difficult to make general statements or to observe patterns/trends, as the information available to us is not consistent. We have based our information on various news articles sent to us via the press cuttings service.

The following are points and issues raised from reading through those reports and are highlighted here to remind us all of the due care and attention needed regardless of what or where we paddle. Four fatalities occurred to people paddling alone, two of whom were very experienced paddlers. Seven fatalities occurred to people paddling in groups of only two. Six people died as a result of shooting/dropping over a weir. Seven on grade IV water, nine on 0-1 grade, three at sea and 1 resulting from excessive alcohol. As in previous years, the lack of Buoyancy Aids was prevalent in eight of the fatalities, seven of whom were inexperienced paddlers - information about swimming ability is not available in all cases. Information about the paddling experience of all fatalities is also incomplete, but it would appear that there is correlation between inexperience and buoyancy aids not being worn.

### 1989 4 FATALITIES 4 on Rivers

**R. Itchen:** Male (8) playing on river unsupervised with 2 friends, open canoe capsized, no buoyancy aid worn.

**South Tyne:** Male (32) paddling gorge section alone, water level high, S.I fully equipped, reason unknown.

**R. Calder:** Male (28) capsized on weir, recirculated in stopper

**R. Thames:** Male (24) disappeared while canoeing alone, found drowned, no buoyancy aid worn.

### 1990 5 FATALITIES 4 on Rivers

**R. Conwy:** Male (42) capsized after shooting weir then swept over main falls originally on pursuit of "lost" boat.

**R. Severn:** Male (21) capsized & went to bank. Went back into water to retrieve paddle. Drowned. No buoyancy aid.

**R. Esk:** Male (17) hired boat, capsized on top of salmon leap. Swept over weir, recirculated in stopper, drowned.

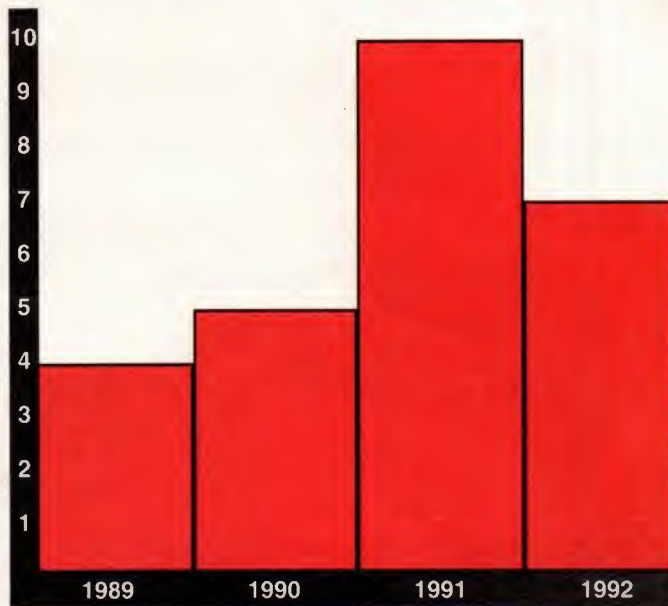
**R. Findhorn:** Female (24) capsized in gorge section and trapped by undercut boulder.

**1 on Sea:** At Christchurch Male (38) died of heart attack after coming ashore during canoe race.

### 1991 10 FATALITIES 6 on Rivers

**R. Leny:** Male (15) got into difficulty above Falls of Leny, swept down falls.

**R. Coquet:** Father (35) and Son (14) capsized on weir, recirculated in stopper and both drowned.



No spraydecks worn.

**R. Wye:** Male (15) capsized and drowned, no buoyancy aid worn.

**R. Cherwell:** Male (40) capsized open canoe and drowned. Excessive alcohol.

**R Wharfe:** Male (23) not in boat, washed over Linton Falls attempting to retrieve abandoned kayak. Water level high.

### 2 on Lakes

**Lough Neagh:** Male (23) capsized in deep inlet, drowned, no buoyancy aid worn.

**Bala Lake:** Male (70) canoe sailing, capsized, heart attack.

**1 on Holme Pierrepont Regatta Site:** Male (44), K2 swamped, capsized, drowned. No buoyancy aid, no spraydecks.

**1 at Sea:** Male (26) found dead, still in capsized Kayak in Menai Straits.

### 1992 7 FATALITIES 5 on Rivers

**R. Lune:** Female (32) Open Canoe capsized, eventually washed under trees where buoyancy aid hooked onto branch. Woman drowned.

**R. Nene:** Male (33) and Male (29) swept over weir and drowned. Both in "home made" kayaks.

**R. Arun:** Male (13) capsized and became trapped under concrete bridge. Water level high.

**R. Ogwen:** Male (26) capsized in very high water, trapped under tree, drowned.

**1 on Loch Linnhe:** Female (27) paddling alone, body found washed ashore.

**1 at Bitches:** Male (22) presumed capsized. Body retrieved by lifeboat.

### To try and learn something from these fatalities we should emphasize the following:

- Those who paddle alone, in difficult or unfamiliar situations, are seriously increasing the risks involved.
- Always wear a closely fitting buoyancy aid on white water. This reduces the risk of snagging on tree branches.
- Take care when trying to retrieve "lost" equipment. Three deaths occurred when paddlers were trying to retrieve boats or paddles.
- Never bow to peer group pressure, get to know your limitations.
- Check suitability of equipment. Footrests and additional buoyancy are essential for shooting weirs and white water paddling.
- Don't become complacent! Accidents happen on all grades of water from I - V. Don't assume you are safe just because you know the river! Take extra care when running rivers at different levels from its usual state, be it high or low.
- Always be aware/on the look out for other paddlers in your group. Canoeing is only as safe as we make it.

Our first priority is to standardise the information received. We can then plot any trends that may emerge. If we are to learn anything at all from these fatalities, then co-operation is required from all involved. We also believe there is an urgent need to educate the general public regarding the wearing of life jackets or buoyancy aids when on the water. The lack of buoyancy aids by inexperienced paddlers is the only common trend to be plotted over the past ten years. Inexperienced paddlers introduced to canoeing through the BCU should already be aware of the necessity to wear buoyancy aids. A Plea To All Members! We are currently collecting information on canoeing accidents and near misses, in an attempt to produce a bi-annual report on canoeing fatalities 1993-94. The report will take a similar format to that of the American Task Force reports. If you have had any fatalities or near misses for that period, then please let us have a short report. The purpose of the publication is to improve the safety of the sport by sharing the experiences of those fatalities or near misses so that we can all learn from them. It is not our intention to point the finger of blame at anybody and confidentially will be guaranteed for those who wish to seek it. Please forward your contributions to:



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# Paddlers gear

## PYRANHA PROSPECTOR

### *Tradition and Style*

**PROSPECTORS** come in all shapes and sizes: It has, like many canoes, evolved over many years. So I was quite keen to see what Pyranha had produced.

At first glance the boat is a well made, traditional looking boat. The classic lines have been retained and the character of the original boats not lost. This may be due to the fact that Pyranha have based their design on a wood strip PROSPECTOR that they imported from Canada. Consequently

there is no keel, as you have on some versions, and the free-board appears quite small, this does mean the crash and bash merchants may not like this boat. The purist will love it.

A closer inspection reveals that Pyranha have certainly got to grips with Royalex. A quike look straight down the keel line shows a classic crosssection. The slight tumbelhome curves, effortlessly, into the bildge which blends, seamlessly, into a gently curved hull. I have to admit I had expected to see a flat hull ready to oilcan at the first chance, but I was more than happy to be disappointed. The hull is symetrical with about three inches of rocker. The full bilges mean that when paddled on its side the rocker is increased. This isn't as

hard as it sounds as this boat has good secondary stability and is "solid" when keeled over, this also lowers the gunnel even more and allows for low and relaxed style.

Enough looking, what does it paddle like? The hull hardly flexes in the water and gives a consistent performance. Consistantly good, that is. The gentle rocker ensures that the boat has plenty of directional stability yet is manoverable, this is partially due to the curved crosssection. In moving water it performs well: here the slight rocker is an advantage as it reduces the need to trim the boat excessively. The bow and stern provide little windage but provide enough height to prevent small waves splashing into the boat.

Pyranha have produced a great open canoe that complements the Traveller. The PROSPECTOR is a definite step up-market and should provide good competition for the other boats in its class. It is a real pleasure to paddle and anyone who enjoys good classic design should try one. I'm sure you will start seeing them on the water very shortly. Paddle over and ask for a go. Just remember the owner will ask for it back and you'll have to ask the next person down for a second go. You'll probably want one.

Loel Collins



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# DAGGER FREEFALL LT

*Air Time in a Purple Slipper*

There is no getting away from it, I definitely am a long boat paddler, so when I was asked to test the Freefall LT I cringed a little and wondered how I was going to manage to put all my prejudices aside, and write an objective review. I need not have worried, the boat took care of it all.

To look at, the LT looks appears identical to its bigger brother. On closer inspection, with two boats side by side one can see where the changes have been made. The back end is smaller with less volume, the front end has a slight reduc-

tion in volume and the 'arabian slipper' nose has been toned down to a slight upturn at the bow.

But what does it do on the water? Well to look at I expected a sluggish heavy beast with very little flair or panache, how wrong could I have been?

On the water the LT excelled beyond my furthest expectations. Obviously manoeuvrability is one of its strongest characteristics, spinning on a sixpence, yet in a straight line she runs well with none of the usual directional twitches common to this type of boat. Quick off the mark and relatively fast to accelerate, the boat holds its forward speed well through the lumpy stuff, often critical when approaching awkward drops through broken turbulent water. This must be attributed to its unique bow profile and water-shedding bow.

The boat trims well allowing the centre of turning to be moved forward and back with little effort. The usual sitting position of

Dagger's is continued on this boat giving a high degree of comfort and maximum effectiveness of edging. The craft holds an edge well being very stable (even when cocked right over on its side) and giving a good degree of control in tight technical water.

My biggest surprise was just how well the boat responded to reverse edging, or edging the boat to the outside of the turn. It was remarkably easy to stern-dip the boat on fast turns - amazing for a boat that size and a paddler of 11 stone. The LT is very stable in the air, does not go deep on drops and surfaces quickly after drops, although its name rather suggests it would perform well on these areas.

Due to its responsiveness the boat is also very satisfying to play in. Though its design limits the extent to which one can perform, it will still surf well and pull enders with the right hydraulics around.

Blessed with the usual safety features one has come to expect from Dagger including broach loops, the craft is produced at a very high standard. There is ample space for stowing equipment for trips at the rear end and a smaller area behind the footrest at the bow. With a large range of colours available and good graphics the boat is visually very attractive.

All in all, an excellent boat with lot more to offer than just drops. Highly manoeuvrable, a fine example of modern boat design, and with a free drinks bottle what more could one want? A backrest with the boat would be a nice finishing touch.

Test Pilot: BOB  
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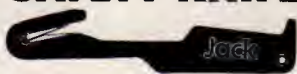
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**The Lake District.** We are looking for qualified and experienced staff to join our team for the 1994 season (March-October). Canoeists, climbers, sailors as well as catering, domestic, PCV drivers and support staff. For further details and an application form contact Newlands Adventure Centre, Stair, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 5UF. Tel/Fax: 07687-78463

**Manor Adventure** require experienced multi-activity instructors from February 1994 onwards. Qualified canoeists preferred: 3 star and above. BCU Senior Instructor position also available. For application form and further information, please ring Manor Adventure on 0584 73333

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For a busy Girl Guide activity centre during May to September 1994. Short and long term contracts available.

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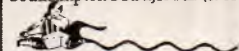
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**C1 WW racer**, Joker, full kevlar epoxy, (very light) Blue, outstanding condition £300 tel: 0235 816451

**Corsica S green**, full plate footrest, airbags and bow cap. In good condition £275. contact Shane or his machine on Chester (0244) 349239

**Slalom K1** concept Primo. All kevlar, well looked after. Looks nice, turns well. Suit light-medium paddler Tel: 0622 812755 (Kent) North Shore Tomado slalom kayak £130 ono Tel: 0703 894904 (Southampton)

**K1 marathon/sprint boat**, Jaguar or similar, preferably all kevlar, must be in good condition. Please phone 0254 831007 (Lancs)

**2 Aquabat Sports**, Lime Green, ww spec, VGC, little used, Bargain price £175 each tel: Horsham W Sussex 0403 263797 day/eve

**6 x K2's, 4 Mystere + 2 Mirages** all one year old. Ideal DW boats offers in the region of £475 for each. Tel: 0480 217881 (Camps) **Jenson ICF marathon C2**, fast light boat in excellent condition, fitted foot pumps, adjustable seats, full spraydeck ideal DW boat £350 ono. Tel: Richard 0533 374998 after 6pm.

**Dancer XT** good condition, Node Cap, Backstrap, YAK spraydeck £200 ono Tel: Bill 0509 812759

**Injury forces sale, Pyranha Master**, full WW spec, excellent condition, £250. Ottersports split blade paddle £25 ono and new Tomado long john wetsuit size L (44) £50 ono All excellent condition. Tel: Katie: 0423 781497 (Harrogate)

**Arrival of new baby (Rotobat)** forces sale of a Snipe fibreglass cane, vgc. Red, white & black, with red MI paddle £50 ono. Tel: 0737 362891 (anytime)

**Prijon T Canyon**, 12 months old, full ww spec £250 Tel: Julian 081 640 5731 fro contact number. Could deliver.

**Corsica S**, magenta, vgc, with airbags and back strap £220 ono. Tel: Gary 0203 597465 Coventry.

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**K1 Kirton Kayak Lancer**, good condition with O/s rudder £130 Tel: Gavin Jones 0242 231938

**K2 Eclipse Stratos** with complete kit. Excellent condition £400 Tel: 0483 417678 Perception Dancer with YAK neoprene spraydeck (unused), Perception paddle, helmet (unused) and buoyancy aid (large). Perception Mirage (unused) paddle, spraydeck, and buoyancy aid (all unused). Dancer £200, Mirage £150 or exchange both for Canadian. (Can deliver). Thule Roofbars (to fit guttered cars) £15.00. Tel: Brian 0246 281963 (Chesterfield)

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**Perception Reflex (plastic)** Teal Green VGC £200 ono. Tel: Coventry 0203 667101

**Eclipse Rapier K1**, marathon boat V. Good condition. Glass construction. Blue with dark blue trim. Standard seat inc £185 Tel: 081 7428601 (West London)

**Reflex Slalom K1**, by Concept. Kevlar sandwich hull. Deck? Has need repairs. Would suit a beginner to slalom or a Div 2/3 paddler wanting a second training boat. £60 ono Tel: Steven (081) 777 2896.

**Fanatic C1 slalom canoe** (P&H) kevlar carbon multi layer hull and spheretex deck, good condition £150. 1 Pair of Schlegel "medium" wings £60. Tel: 0480 212679 Matt.(Camps)

**13'6" 4mm ply kayak**, 36" beam, open seat cockpit, including paddles. Suitable youngsters, hardly used £50 Tel: Bury (Lancs) 061 764 5277

**Pyranha Master** - cross linked, yellow (almost full ww spec) VGC, one lady owner £250 ono Tel: Jennifer 041 776 2701 (Glasgow)

**K1 Cleaver X**, excellent condition, under 1 year old. Carbon construction £475 ono, includes cover. Move abroad forces sale. Tel: 0734 462476 (Reading)

**Red Dancer** (with airbags) good condition £200 Tel: Tim 0924 498117 (W Yorks)

**Pyranha Tuffy Odyssey** two years old, good condition used for placid water only while I learned to canoe. Offered with spray deck, security loop and buoyancy bags for £120 ono. Please phone Tim or his Dad Tel: (Swindon) 0793 765143

**Anorexia is for Sale!** She is my Faldbury Discovery K1, ideal for those first attempts at Marathon. With red deck and white hull, she has been lovingly cared for, is in first class condition, and is offered for sale at £250, complete with lightweight support blocks (to protect the rudder) and home-made spray deck. Contact Martin on 0457 871220 (Oldham) Reasonable delivery arranged. Why Anorexia? She's thin and makes me nervous!

**K2 Foxbat**, ideal DW boat sound condition, bargain at £120 Tel: 0753 540668 (Windsor).

**Rotobat**, X-link, nose cap, backrest, buoyancy bag, full plate footrest, green, good condition £250 (0946) 862009 (Cumbria)

**Umnak Sea Kayak**, sealed hatches, foot pump, adjustable footrests, back rest, deck fittings, yellow deck, white hull, very stable £250. Tel: 0946 82009 (Cumbria)

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**Rotobat full ww spec**, price negotiable VGC Tel: 0222 692108 Cardiff

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**Red Pyranha Freestyle**, also white Perception Mirage, both WW spec and in good condition £130 each ono. For further details Tel: 0904 691598 (York)

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**Prijon T Slalom**, yellow, good condition, buoyancy bags £200 ono Tel: 0895 441665 (Weylesley)

**2 Green Palm Aqua Bats**. Good condition used only in swimming pool £150 each Tel: Andy days 071 956 6689 Eves 0525 17161

**Slalom C1, Gaybo Design** strong design ideal as learner/club boat. Tel: Mark 0462 671332.

**Yellow Dancer XS**, WW spec, with decklines £170 ono. Tel: Eves 0483 450018 ask for Julie.

**2 Glass fibre Snipe kayaks** in excellent condition. Ideal for youngsters. £50.00 each Tel Dorset 0963 62655

**Slalom Canoe**, Good condition with backrest £55.00, also AP2000 crash hat, yellow with adjustable cradle £15.00 only used a few times. 081 4502723 (evenings)

**Stuntbat for sale**. Good condition. Whitewater spec. linear, pink. £250.00 with deck

## LOST & FOUND

**Found 1 paddle** and helmet at Salford, on River Avon 3 October 1993. Tel: 0934 820360

## WANTED

**Enigma Plastic Squirt boat**. Tel: Andy days 071 956 6689 Eves 717161

**Enigma Plastic Squirt Boat**, in good condition (preferably purple) willing to travel or meet within reason. Phone Matt after six on: 0457 83 4837 (Lancs)

**K1 Jaguar or similar**, preferably all kevlar and must be in good condition Tel: 0254 (Lancs) 831007

**Perception Slasher C1**, in any condition & at any price! Tel: Dorset 0963 62655

**Moonraker singel** white hull, ply deck, sports preferred. Paul on Leeds: 0532 691191

**Hudson or Huron Canadian Canoe**. Tel: Alistair, Bath (0225) 872107

**Topolino Spud** must be in good condition. Any colour (As long as it's green or red) Nice price for needy student. Tel: Tim 0924 498117

**Desperately seeking WW River Racer C2** back left any condition considered contact Ian (0678) 521167 or David(0743) 363590

**K2 any condition** considered for Exe Descent etc. Tel: 0703 894904 Southampton. Dri Cag or semi-dri cag in good condition, prefer small size Tel:0603 483563 Norwich.

**Open Canoe: Any condition** but must be watertight, buyer will collect from any area Tel: Adam 0602 701122 (Notts)

**15ft Hudson or Huron Canadian Canoe**, contact Alistair Tel: 0225 872107 Bath.

**Folding kayak any make**. Would part swap with icefloe or straight cash. Peter Adams 62 Main Street Lambley Notts, NG4 4PP Tel: 0602 312587

**Mirage K2** or similar required. Tel: 0985 214473 or 0380 830195

**Plastic Sea Kayak wanted**, Tel Dave Hart, Shrewsbury 0743 709680

**Canadian canoes, damaged**, buckled or holed Coleman canoes wanted for parts and attempted repair. Local scouts will be very grateful, will collect from anywhere. Tel: Simon 0288 354039 (Bude - Cornwall)

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**Jeater, Sabre or Enigma**, anything considered. Please ring Nick on 051 494 2957 or if not there 0271 24077

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# People & politics

*A new occasional series highlighting activities around the BCU. In future these pages will cover news and views from the committees and provide a platform for discussion. Please send your input to People & Politics, Canoe Focus, John Duddreidge House, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgeford, Notts NG2 5AS*

## Declaration of Interests

There are many BCU members who were keen canoeists first and then started commercial ventures that serve canoeists' needs. A good many of them also serve the Union as assiduously as voluntary officers do, and the Union would be poorer without their service.

The Articles of Association of the BCU are that those who have 'A commercial interest in canoeing' are not eligible to serve on Council or to serve on any committee of the Union other than as a non-voting co-opted

member. Currently there are several members of Council and the various BCU committees who appear to fall foul of this rule.

The Council believes these individuals should be fully involved in the decision making process of the Union and not merely on the fringes as non-voting co-opted members. This is why at the next BCU AGM the Council is putting a resolution to the AGM to change the BCU to a system of 'Declaration of Interests'.

### Articles of Association to Introduction

**If the resolution is passed the holding of a commercial interest would no longer mean you could not serve on a BCU committee. Instead the following would apply:**

- 1. All members present at BCU Council or its accountable committee meetings, who know they have, or think they might be thought to have, a commercial interest in an item that is about to be debated make a personal declaration coupled with an offer to withdraw, and if permitted to stay, not to vote on it.**
- 2. The meeting will then decide there and then whether to ask the member to withdraw, or to stay for the discussion, and in that case to speak if invited to do so. A dispensation to allow the declarer to vote should be exceptional, and be minuted, with the reason for the dispensation.**
- 3. Council or the relevant committee concerned will maintain a register in which interests thought by members to be likely subjects for declarations are recorded, (this can be the minutes), but it does not remove the need for declaration on the agenda item when it arises, because its existence in the register (minutes) might not be known to all present.**

Council has already passed standing orders to these above effects and should the AGM accept the resolution to delete the words in article 11(2) "Or has a commercial interest in canoeing" a declaration of interest will become operational. This will allow affected members to be able to continue to serve on BCU committees and Council and not be lost from administering the sport.

The council hopes you vote to support the resolution.

David Gent Chairman of Council





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# Ender

Editor's page

## IN YOUR FEB ISSUE

The return of my favourite paddle

The return of the BCU Club profile

The new 1994 yearbook covering events, calendars, and all the BCU information you will ever need....

and all the usual news and views

## Yakkity Yak

A positive new development on the letters front is our new initiative with YAK. From the February issue the Focus letters page will be known as 'Yakkity Yak and a prize of Yak equipment will be given for the best letter. See you on the water (or at a meeting?), or hear from you by letter.

## THE BIG PICTURE AND THE IVORY TOWER

Recently I received a letter from a coaching scheme member who is a friend/paddling acquaintance and coaching scheme member who was making a few comments and criticisms of the BCU in general, and Focus. Whilst he has some valid points and some of the areas were certainly worthy of discussion he talked of some of his friends who 'felt' or 'were given the impression' that the BCU (big letters) did this, that and the other and they as members felt small, insignificant even, in the general scheme of things. This is an unfortunate perspective and in many ways and understandable one. For want of a better phrase this could be referred to as Ivory Tower syndrome. The odd thing is as far as paddlers are concerned it is only a tower if you want it to be. The writer then uses phrases like 'political insiders' and then expresses the opinion that the BCU (big letters again) is 'becoming less democratic and more authoritarian in it's responses'. As a paddler, a paid up member and salaried BCU officer I am happy that the writer can express an opinion. The writer and his acquaintances are a small number of our 20,000 paddlers. How many did he have the time to talk to listen to, to canvass the opinion of ? A dozen ? Twenty ? Perhaps the writer could have said 'here is the perspective from me and my mates in the coaching scheme in Anytown'. I am privileged to talk/listen to all varieties and species of paddler and there are some interesting (and as ever, conflicting) views on what the big picture looks like from your piece of the water. The BCU is ideally a reflection of it's member paddlers and does genuinely attempt to be democratic: if it fails to communicate successfully at times it is simply because of the number of people involved and limited resources. These problems are constantly being addressed and efforts made to improve. I believe that the BCU office is far better at this than when I first became a member. Our writer does offer to get involved at local level: brilliant and commendable. It would be great to have his input on a regular level but he should beware. The week after he is elected RCO/LCO/LAO the image of 'Joe Paddler' may inexplicably shift and he could well find yourself inside the ivory tower (only to find that it doesn't exist, except in the minds of your mates, the other paddlers). Strange concept this insider/outsider notion. It exists in all aspects of British life. Joe Paddler rightly points out that most people do not have the 'time or inclination to get involved in the committees' Given the choice between a sunny evening out paddling, or a night round the regional committee table voluntarily working out the nuts and bolts of moving the sport forward, there is often no contest. Most go paddling, but feeling a part of the democratic process depends on you getting along to that very meeting, and the BCU AGM, and reading every bit of Focus (even the boring bits), and reading CoDe. If you skip a year's membership you will feel left out or uninformed. Another reason for maintaining qualification by membership. Oh and by the way turn to the Comment page and find out how to get yourself elected into the top room of the ivory tower (BCU Council): you will need more than twenty votes, but surprisingly, not that many more. This is your chance to get hold of the wide angle lens to help others see the big picture.

I almost forgot the Focus criticism: yes I agree I have been a bit harsh and aggressive in editorial treatment of 'moaners'. The writer knows me from coaching activity : I much prefer positive input. It takes the same time and effort to suggest ways of improvement as it does to moan about something not being right. Specifically your concern of 'the loss of Focus as an objective and fair mouthpiece for a range of views' is I feel unfounded. You still have the mouthpiece, let me have the views. In the last two months most of the letters I have received for Focus have been published in this issue. I have left out one which was libelous and one that was malicious (and unsigned), and one that was a personal attack on a voluntary officer. I can find space for genuine concerns like yours (sorry about the small print) : there is no censorship, or hidden agenda. Thanks for the letter: it voices much the same views I had when I first joined, until I realised how much the BCU is multi-faceted and complex for 'a small organisation', as you put it. Paddlers are all different and individual, some liking flatwater, some rough, some competitive, some anti-competition, some salt water, some fresh...and on and on. The wonder is that we are a body of anything at all. However as a FLOW of canoeists please write to FOCUS, and keep the dialogue and discussion going.

## Saint You Aint!

Some members have shot off a letter to us to query their canonization. Those elevated to Sainthood on the address label for the past issue of Focus will be disappointed to learn that the letters 'ST' above their name, are merely the mailing house 'stuffers' code to indicate the contents of the package.

They could equally of course, indicate 'Silly Twerp'!

## When Did you last 'club' your local editor?

Does your Press Officer submit regular reports on club activity or individual successful ventures of special interest? Regular reports will achieve a good level of publicity over a period of time.

This keeps a positive image of the sport in the public eye. It attracts new members for the club and the sport. If things do go wrong it provides credibility for

the club to help mitigate potential damage for the sport.

Centrally we try to obtain publicity for our major achievements. It is a time consuming process, heavy on resources; and of questionable direct value in relation to the results obtained from the effort required.

At local level, however, it is possible to attract a relatively high level of exposure. And this publicity is of direct benefit in that it recruits adult members to the club concerned. Canoeing deserves better publicity. Efforts are being made from the centre, to achieve it. By far the greater potential exists with the local club, however.

A survey of papers a little while ago revealed a surprising, and pleasing amount of regional coverage.

If your club doesn't have a Press Officer – someone whose job it is, not just something the poor old Secretary is expected to do – why not press for an appointment to be made?

Come to that – why not volunteer?

Kevin Danforth





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