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F O C U S

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Royal Opening: Lincoln Canoe Club



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**BRITISH  
CANOE  
UNION**

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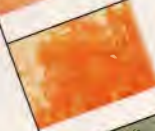
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Like nothing you have seen before.

Front Cover  
Steve MacDonald and Peter  
Bray  
Photo:  
Wendy Blackman



Your contributions make Focus happen. The quality and variety of news, articles, reports and photographs depend on the submission of material from you. Very few contributors are professional writers and photographers. Please don't be put off writing because you have no experience! Canoe Focus is all about canoeist to canoeist dialogue: a paddler's magazine written by paddlers. Contributions are acceptable in clear handwriting or typed (double spaced). PC Technical Information - Contributions can be read from most Word Processing programmes especially if saved as an ASCII file. disks (3.5 or 5.25) can be read from most Word Processing programmes especially if saved as an ASCII file. 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. Next Copy date is the 20th DECEMBER 1996. Material arriving at FOCUS after this date cannot be included in the February issue.

# No Compromise Equipment



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# Canoe Polo World Championships

**C**ongratulations to the Ladies Canoe Polo Team who won the World Championships in Australia. Beating the Australians at home for the GOLD MEDALS is a fine achievement in this the second World Championships for the discipline.

## Barclaycard VIP Programme

Valuing Volunteers in UK sport was the theme of a recent Sports Council announcement during which it was disclosed that in 1995 there were just under 1.5 million volunteers in UK sport, equating to £1.5 billion of effort.

In common with many other sports Canoeing relies heavily on volunteers to run clubs and canoeing activity, including the BCU.

As a direct response to these research findings Barclaycard have announced the Barclaycard Investment Programme. The programme will directly assist clubs and governing bodies in the recruitment, retention and volunteers in UK sport.

The BCU's own programme known as 'Paddlework' will qualify for assistance and will deliver tailored workshops for volunteers and clubs.

The BCU and affiliated Clubs will be considered for awards that will be presented at regional and national levels.

The assessment of the winners will be based on the recruitment, management and retention of volunteers. In particular the judging panels will be looking to recognise the development work and reward innovation. Prizes will be offered as follows:

**UK Club Awards** - 13+ regional awards @ £1000, 1 UK award @ £2000.

**English Regional Governing Body Awards:** 10 regional awards @ £1500 1 national award @ £3000

**UK National Governing Body Awards:** 4 home country awards @ £3000 1 UK National Governing Body award @ £5000.

## River Wye - Stop Press

The 'Response to Objections' proposed by the Environment Agency makes for encouraging reading, but we still have some way to go! The BCU's 'Statement of Case', prepared with the benefit of legal advice, was submitted on time to the Department of Transport. By the time you read this there will,

hopefully, be more progress to report.

## Be Safe, Be Seen

Now that winter is here and it is dark so much earlier please, don't forget to carry a light when paddling. The Environment Agency have received a number of complaints about canoeists paddling on the River Thames without wearing or carrying lights, not red flashing at night.

## Telephones

The new BCU telephone service revealed in this edition of Canoe Focus will potentially bring significant telephone savings to all BCU members and help provide further funds for the development of canoeing in Britain.

## BCU Annual General Meeting

The AGM will take place at Westminster Boating Base, Dinorvic Wharf, 136 Grosvenor Road, London SW1V 3JY, on Saturday 15 March 1996.

Members are reminded that under the Unions Articles of Association (article 18 (b)) any motion for discussion shall be signed by two full members entitled to vote, and lodged with the Secretary (Chief Executive) before January 1 1997.

Any nomination for candidates for election to the BCU Council should be put forward on the enclosed form.

To save embarrassment it is worth remembering that the membership categories to vote are Adult Comprehensive, Adult Basic and Full and Life members under the old system.

## BCU Awards

The September meeting of Council bestowed BCU Awards of Merit on Norman Taylor and Barbara and Jeff Simmons for their outstanding service to canoeing, congratulations.

## International Canoe Exhibition

The NEC in Birmingham will again

be the venue for the International Canoe Exhibition on 22 and 23 February 1997.

## Membership

BCU membership in England has now topped 20,000 members.

## Development Plan

A significant amount of work is going into the BCU's new Development Plan for the period November 1997 to October 2001.

Building on the current successful plan the BCU's New Plan will be underpinned by four key strategies. Performance and Excellence, Communications and Marketing, Young People and Facilities Development.

In addition to the Lottery Capital developments there will be new opportunities to apply for Lottery Revenue Funds which it is anticipated will bring four times the current revenue funding to British Sport. The BCU is ensuring that it is well positioned to benefit from this exciting development.

## BCU Standing Advisory Committee on Canoeing for People with a Disability

Members with a disability, and members who have experience in canoeing with people who are disabled, are invited to put their names forward by 31.12.96 for membership of the Disability Advisory Committee. If more than 5 names are submitted, selection shall be by ballot among the representative members of the Committee. Notification of the result of such ballot will be made to all those involved.

It is a recommendation of Council that a target of 50% or more members serving on the Committee within two years will be paddlers with a disability. The committee will report to Council through the Access, Coaching and Recreation Management Committee, though they will have a direct access through Council members if needed.

In light of this please note: Existing members of the Disability Advisory Panel will continue to offer guidance and advice, and on occasion voluntary support in a personal capacity to other committees of the Union. Contact should be through the BCU office.

## Happy Christmas

To everyone associated with canoesport from the officers and staff of the BCU.

Paul Owen

Chief Executive

## And Finally

As this is the last Canoe Focus of the year may I congratulate and thank everyone who has worked hard for and competed on behalf of the BCU this year. With several World Championships medals, and Olympic and International personal bests our competitors have all competed with distinction. Thank You.

**Grant News**

Ramsay Bayne and Graham Bayne each received £250 from the Scottish Sports Aid Foundation to attend the 1996 World Canoe Polo Championships in Adelaide, Australia. They would like to thank Howard Farley of 'Delapre' for providing all their paddles and Mark Downey of 'Rough Stuff Paddles' who kindly provided Ramsay with a new 'Mystery' polo boat.

**Instant Membership - The Outdoor Trust**

Please note that Instant BCU Membership is now available through the Outdoor Trust, Windy Cote, Belford, Northumberland.

# The MacGregor Paddle Challenge

## -Results 1996 (Inter Club Regatta)

**F**or the second year running **Wey Kayak Club** are the **British Sprint Canoeing Club Champions**, winning this magnificent prestigious canoeing trophy. **Wey** won with only a very small team consisting of ten juniors and twelve senior members, half the number of last year's team. **27 clubs** attended this national event with **Fladbury Canoe Club** far ahead at the end of the first days racing, followed by **Wey, Elmbridge, Leighton Buzzard, Chelmsford, and Barking & Dagenham**. At lunch time on Sunday with 142 races already taken place, it looked an impossible task to stop **Fladbury** from winning the competition, with only 30 races left.

In the **Women's Kayak** and the **Men's Open canoe class Fladbury Canoe Club** dominated to win maximum points. **Elmbridge Canoe Club** won the **Senior Men's class** with **Chelmsford Canoe Club** getting maximum points in the **Girls class**. **Barking & Dagenham Canoe Club** won the **Boys class**, so at this point it looked impossible for our small team to win.

During Sunday afternoon **Wey** won 4 races, were second in 4 and third in one other. This resulted in the club coming 2nd in **Mens, Canadians, and Boys**, 4th in **Girls** and 6th in **Womens**. **Fables** giving **Wey** the overall Championships by two points from **Fladbury**.

We would like to take this opportunity of thanking all of our fellow competitors and the event organisers for a very successful weekend.

Peter Morley

## British Waterways Bid to Regenerate London's Canals

British Waterways have recently submitted a bid for government funding in support of a £28 million major London-wide canal regeneration plan. The British Waterways led bid unites private companies, public bodies and all 15 of London's local authorities which have an interest in canals and rivers. The key themes are business development, leisure and tourism, improved water quality, community involvement and better access. The plan details projects which stretch from Enfield Lock in the North, down the River Lee to Limehouse Basin, then across inner London on the Regent's Canal and along the Grand Union Canal to Brentford and Uxbridge. For further information contact: *Mark Bensted - London Waterways Manager on 0171 286 6101 or David Young - British Waterways Media Relations on 01923 201329*

## What's On ● What's On ● What's On ● What's On

### 1997 Mini Slalom Series - Stafford & Stone Canoe Club

19 January, 9 February, 23 February. These dates have now been set for next year's Mini Slalom's which will be jointly organised by Andy Neave and Dave Royle. The Stafford and Stone Mini Slaloms are always popular for experts and beginners alike. The course design is suitable for paddlers of all abilities. Entry fees are £3.00 for seniors £2.50 for Juniors. For further information contact: *Dave Royle, 3 Hallahan Close, Stone, ST3 4EQ Tel: 01785 818414*

### 4th Scottish Sea Kayak Symposium

Organised by Strathclyde West Coaching Panel - SCA. At the National Water Sports Centre, Island of Cumbrae 23-26th May 1997. For an application form and further detail contact *Gordon Brown (Co-ordinator) Blairview, 1 Hillside Cottages, Dalry, Ayrshire KA24 4DP Tel: 01294 832 745*

### The Waterside Series

The dates for the 1997 Waterside series of races are:  
**Race A:** 2 Feb 1997, Great Bedwyn to Newbury, 13.5 miles, 21 portages.  
**Race B:** 16 Feb, Newbury to Aldermaston and back 17.5 miles, 19 portages.  
**Race C:** 2 March, Pewsey to Newbury,

23 miles, 26 portages.  
**Race D:** 16 March 1997, Devizes to Newbury, 34 miles, 28 portages.  
 The Waterside Series is recognised as being the classic build up for the Devizes to Westminster Race. However, the Waterside Series offers its own challenge, and to complete the series is an achievement in itself. So why not take up the challenge in the Spring. There are 12 classes: K2S, K2J, K2L, K2V, K2M, K1S, K1J, K1L, K1V, K2JV, C2 & C1. There are senior and junior team events for any combination of 3 or 4 boats. Treat yourself to lots of fresh air, plenty of exercise, beautiful scenery and muddy portages! There are hot showers, hot drinks and a snack to greet you at the end. See you there. For further details and an entry form send an sae to: *Lyn McLaren, Priors Farley Farmhouse,*

*Rowborough Lane, South Marston, Swindon SN3 4SU.*

### Pebble Mill - A Day in the Country

On 19 October BBC Pebble Mill spent the day at the BCU offices filming for 'A Day in the Country'. The aim of the day was to present canoeing as a fun outdoor activity and involved the presenter Lyndsay being introduced to paddling for the first time, it also included a video burst at the end of the programme outlining details of canoeing events taking place that week. It was a beautiful Autumn day and the film crew went away very happy with the days work. The programme was due to be shown on 6 November on BBC1. Let's hope it brings more people into our wonderful sport.



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### Leukaemia Research Fund - Kayaking in Africa

Rupert Fitzmaurice, 31 from Sussex and Justin Matterson, 34 from Scotland are attempting to kayak the Zambezi river from source to mouth, a distance of 2,700 km. The pair have just completed the first half of this trip in their aim to raise £25,000 for Leukaemia Research. Anyone wishing to sponsor Rupert and Justin or wanting to know more may reserve tickets for their talk at the Royal Geographical Society, on the evening of January 15th 1997, should contact *Sophie Sinclair* on 0171 405 0101.

### Holme Pierrepont Division 1 Slalom 21/22 Sept

Each year Stafford and Stone Canoe Club run a Division 1 slalom at Holme Pierrepont. This year's event was organised by Andy Neave and everything ran perfectly to time. The course was designed by Andy Maddock, and was quite open with the rough water giving plenty of scope for paddlers to lose time. The course ended below the notorious bottom stopper and it was here that many a good run met its end. Simon Jackson of Four Seasons demonstrated excellent consistency with two clear runs separated in time by less than one second, to win the kayak men, Yael Chance, Basingstoke, won the ladies with a touch on each run. Dugald Taverner, Phoenix Genuine Article, won the Canadian race with a clear run, with Mark Goodfellow in second place with faster times on both runs but penalties letting him down. Andy Maddock, of Stafford and Stone Canoe Club won the officials race.

Report by Dave Royle.

## Trade News

### Avoncraft change of address

Avoncraft have now moved to their new warehouse in West Burrowfield, just a short distance away from their existing premises. All products will be dispatched from 12 West Burrowfield, Welwyn Garden City. AL7 4TW, whilst the administration will remain at 20 Burrowfield until the new year. Telephone and FAX numbers will remain the same.

Following the move Avoncraft are now also responsible for marketing and sales distribution for Coleman Canoes throughout Europe and Scandanavia.

We are pleased to bring to your notice the New, impressive range of Coleman Canoes and the Scanoes. These boats are ideally suited for Centre and family canoeing, expeditions and fishing. At such a competitive price Colemans are now worthy of a much wider interest and a higher profile in the canoe market both here and abroad.

These boats will be on display and sale, along with our other products, at all our UK distributors.

### Ocean Leisure New Canoeing Department

Ocean Leisure based in London is about to open a smart new canoeing department. The department will feature clothing and accessories from Nookie, Palm and Yak, kayaks from Pyranha, Dagger and Prijon, paddles from Schlegal and Dr D. Books and gift vouchers and mail order will also be available. For more detail see the Ocean Leisure advert later in this magazine, or telephone 0171 930 5050.

### YHA Adventure Shops - New Technical Guide

The YHA have recently published a new technical guide to their products of outdoor equipment, all gear is reasonably priced and the 'environmentally friendly' guide is available free of charge from any of the YHA shops, call 01784 458625 (24hrs) for more detail.

# WHITEWATER *The Canoe Centre*

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## BCU South West Region - Good News

The Environment Agency has donated £1000 towards the cost of a disabled unit for the South West region of the BCU. The region already has three specialised units of equipment for disabled paddlers at Frome, Salisbury and Poole Harbour canoe clubs. The new unit is to be based in Devon as soon as a host club or organisation can be found and sufficient additional sponsorship can be obtained. Any club or organisation interested in housing such a unit should contact *Dave Cooke, BCU SW Disabled Persons Rep, 61 Acacia Gardens, Bathpool, Taunton, Somerset TA2 8TA.*

### More Good News

The Foundation for Sport and The Arts have supported two more canoeing applications, £5000 contribution to the International 10 Sq Metre canoe class towards the cost of competing in the NYCC International Cup. And £9,500 to the England Canoe Slalom Team in general support for the activities of the England Canoe Slalom Team.

# Bag it & Bin it

With the increase of disposable 'personal care' products entering the market our sewerage systems are struggling to cope with the estimated two billion items of sanitary protection and vast numbers of nappies flushed down toilets in the UK every year. A great proportion of sewage debris found on the beach consists of disposable personal care items, this denies people the pleasure of a day on the beach, surfers and paddlers all come up against this problem. But there is a solution, the Bag it and Bin it campaign launched by a partnership of water companies, environmental groups, government agencies and manufacturers of sanitary and nappy products aims to promote bagging your rubbish and binning it, perfumed nappy sacks and sanitary disposal bags are available from most high street stores and make the whole process of disposal a lot more pleasant.

## Worcester Canoe Club - Swan-along

Good weather with a light following wind and a placid River Severn provided the ideal conditions for a relaxed paddle from Bewdley to Worcester for the 70 canoeists taking part in the Swan-along Charity paddle on 1 September. Many of those taking part raised money for a favoured charity, the total advised to date being £1250. (If you have not yet done so please contact Brian Cox Tel: 01905 773689 to tell him how much you

raised so that a final figure can be arrived at) The organiser would like to thank everyone who supported the event, whether as a paddler, helper, marshall, bank support crew, whatever, and he hopes that you will come to the next Worcester Swan-along charity paddle on Sunday 7th September 1997 For more detail contact *Brian Cox, 23 St Peters Crescent, Droitwich, Worcs WR9 8QD Tel: 01905 773689*

## Pembrokeshire Challenge

Alan Chapman, and Graham Dore, from Bournemouth, travelled to South West Wales to take up the challenge set up by Nick and Sophie Hurst of Preseli Venture. Nick, with his paddling partner Pete Ward took 14 hours to cross the 45 nautical miles to Rosslare from Whitesands Bay last August, which inspired him to set up the challenge as an annual event, offering £500 worth of sea kayaking kit to the winning group of two or three. Alan and Graham made it in 13 hours and ten minutes, and will win the first ever Preseli Challenge trophy if no other team completes the trip in a shorter time this year. For more information on the Preseli Challenge contact *Nick or Sophie on 01348 837709*



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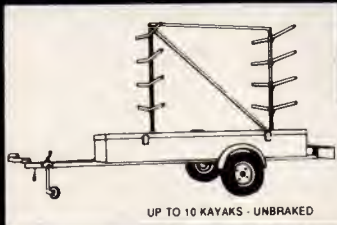
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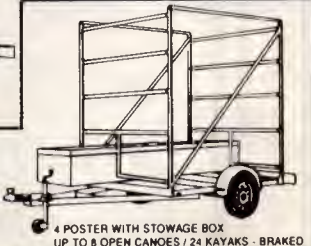
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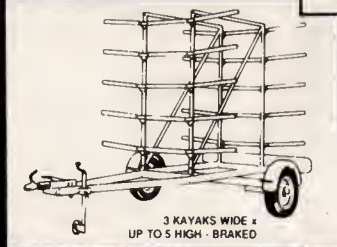
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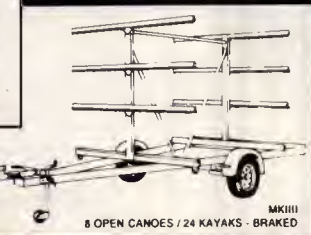
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**Donald Bean MBE - Contribution to Sport**

Donald Bean 76, the kayaking superstar from Stafford was recently short listed in the category of Contribution to Sport, in the Help The Aged Tunstall Golden Awards for 1996. The Awards acknowledge outstanding achievements and contributions to society made by elderly people. Congratulations Donald we are all very proud of you, keep up the good work.

**West Midlands River Guide - Erratum**

Please note that the West Midlands River Guide - First Edition contains an error, and requires the following amendment: Mile 21 LEA MARSTON LAKES. The Environment Agency has informed the author that it will be dangerous to enter the above lakes due to working machinery, poor bacterial water quality and other dangers. Therefore through navigation of these lakes **Must not be attempted under any circumstances.** Best egress will be 16.6 Water Orton Bridge as the water quality becomes noticeably worse between here and Lea Marston.

**Get on the Telly**

Did you know that voluntary groups can get free publicity on BBC Ceefax Community Pages, with a potential audience of nine million homes? the Community Pages on BBC2, are produced by CSV Media, the social action broadcasting arm of the national charity Community Service Volunteers. If you would like to use Ceefax to recruit volunteers or advertise a special event, contact: Kay Parris, Editor, Ceefax Community Pages, CSV Media, 237 Pentonville Road, London N1 9NJ Tel: 0171 278 6601 Fax: 0171 278 7912

**Get on the Telly - Part 2**

Do you know all there is to know about Canoeing at the Olympic Games (1960-1996), or the career of Richard Fox? Cactus TV are looking for contestants to appear on a brand new sports 'Mastermind' quiz presented by Rory McGrath. It's a knockout tournament to find the person who knows most about their chosen sporting topic. So if you feel you are an expert on a particular area of athletics or any sport and fancy competing in a television contest Phone Cactus TV on 0171 464 6225

**Focus** Competition: Slalom

**Slalom Development Officer Has Moved**

For any information about slalom, please contact Sue Wharton, Slalom Development Officer at the new office address: Daisyfield, Inglewhite Road, Goosnargh, Preston PR3 2EB Tel: 01772 786571 Fax 01772 786572

**Slalom Snippets**

**New Rules for 1997**

Watch out for the new rules for the 1997 season - it's very likely that there will be changes to certain rules as a number of proposals are to be put to the International Canoe Federation Congress which takes place in November in Paris. It's possible that the five second penalty will change to two seconds and also, that non-stop practice may be scrapped. Please don't be too alarmed, as we do use certain modified rules here in the UK and it might be that the main changes apply to just Premier, International and special selection events - once again, watch this space and the 1997 Slalom Yearbook which should be published and circulated to all ranked paddlers around the end of January.

**British Open Champions**

British Open Champions this year are Andy Raspin K1 Men, Heather Corrie in K1 Women, Rob Turner in C1 and the Clough brothers in C2 - congratulations! Well done too, to Tim Baillie, Laura Blakeman, Rob Turner (double winner) and Baillie/Paton, all Junior Open Champions. The River Dee at Llangollen provided super water this year, but unfortunately, gave vandals an opportunity to feed their habit. During hours of darkness, around fifteen gates were cut down, causing voluntary officials to work tirelessly to repair the damage. A huge thank you to those officials!

Thumbs down to the small group of slalomists who chose to make an exhibition of themselves at prize giving in the Royal Hotel at Llangollen. The queue of volunteers waiting to organise events is diminishing rapidly and no thanks to this particular group.

**National Development Group**

Still a few places available for Div 3 to Premier paddlers, although there are

now just two training weekends remaining! Coaches - Please remember that opportunity published in the last issue of Canoe Focus - if you are keen to work with the National Teams, you are invited to the weekend 1/2 February at Holme Pierrepont.

**White Water Paddlers**

White water paddlers fancying their chances at slalom are likely to get an opportunity to try slalom at Div 3 level instead of entering the system at Div 5 - watch out for details!

**Heart Rate Monitors**

Did you know you could rent a heart rate monitor - like to try one but are not sure? Polar has started a scheme and you can hire a basic model at 99p per day - if you decide to buy, the rental cost is deducted -call Polar direct for details 01926 851404.

**Lynn Does It Again**

Lynn Simpson's done it again - she took 'gold' at the World Cup final in Brazil which also gave her the number one slot overall to retain her title - World

Cup winner 1997. Paul Ratcliffe's win in the final also well deserved gives him his first major title. Your National Team just keeps winning medals. Bouquets to the Coaches and Team support staff for all their efforts too.

**'Getting Started in Slalom'**

We've just published a new brochure on getting started in slalom. Free of charge, all it needs is a call or note to our Administrator, Sue Wharton, contact details left.

**Entry Cards**

From the beginning of January 1997, we have a new volunteer who will be dealing with your requests - Susan Paterson of 14 Clay Street, Wymeswold, Loughborough LE12 6TY will be 'in charge' of the stock - please remember to always send sae for your reply and a suitable envelope 110 x 220mm minimum - DL size. Special thanks to Irene Osborne who has now retired from this 'job' having patiently dealt with your request for ten years.

**Bibs**

Spare a thought for your Bib Issuing Officers and Ranking Compilers. Fitting in your needs to their own busy lives, that all work for you on a voluntary basis. Please apply for your new bibs from early February - as soon as the Slalom yearbook appears.

**And Finally**

Reassurance to you all that the Slalom Committee considers you all as VIP's - Organising Clubs do their best to give you the challenge and enjoyment that you seek, but this is a two-way process - your input is needed too - into officiating judging, and into all the other jobs which result in a successful slalom. Many thanks to you all for your support and participation throughout 1996 - we all look forward to 1997!



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# Who Dares Wins

The final week of the Round Great Britain Canoe Challenge ended much as it had started with high winds and rough seas.

**A**gainst all the odds, Steve MacDonald became the first blind man to paddle around the coast of mainland Britain. In a double sea kayak, accompanied all the way by ex SAS man Peter Bray, the couple returned to St Katherine's Dock in October.

Steve had begun planning the expedition in August of 1995 and contacted me at the BCU for help and advice. Fortunately that same week Peter called me and said that he "needed a challenge". So I put them in contact with each other and so 9 months later the newly formed partnership began their epic voyage.

The 3000 mile journey had taken 5 months to complete. From the very beginning the team were beset with strong headwinds and at one point were 30 days behind schedule. Surprisingly however, the Scottish coast proved to have the kindest weather and the most spectacular scenery and the lads made up 25 days.

It wasn't only the paddlers that experienced problems. The back-up crew, provided by Paul 'Weave' Weaver and PR/Girl Friday Catherine Bond, spent 4 weeks stuck on the forecourt of a garage in Scotland. The Winnebago Caravan (their only support vehicle and home for the whole 5 months) decided to break down. Paul spent his time being relayed back and forth to Wolverhampton for repairs to the gearbox, whilst Catherine had to travel to a number of pick up points to deliver supplies to the paddlers who were now totally reliant on camping and the good will of friendly canoe clubs en route.

## Dolphins, jellyfish, and even sharks

They had many pleasant encounters on the way paddling with dolphins, jellyfish, and even sharks. The Team all agree that the most breathtaking scenery was the North East Coast of Scotland and would recommend it to anyone either to paddle or purely to visit. It wasn't until Steve and Peter made it to Montrose that they experienced their fist involuntary capsizes on the surf in to the beach, but their well rehearsed drill came into action and they were soon back in the boat.

Despite all of the set backs the team have

Article by:

Wendy Blackman

always remained in good spirits and their sense of humour has



Above: The team with paddlers from Hereford and Croesyceiliog Canoe Club

carried them through even the toughest problems.

The paddlers were accompanied along the final stages of the Thames by members of Hereford and Croesyceiliog Canoe Club. Family and friends, TV, Radio and the Press were all at Tower Bridge to welcome them home. The Team would like to thank their sponsors Somerfield Stores and all their staff for their fund-raising efforts along the way. They would especially like to thank all the paddlers, canoe clubs and friends they have met along the way for their support.

threatening to get fit and get back into marathon racing and Catherine has now decided that it might just be good fun to take up paddling.

The Teams efforts have been an inspiration to many, and have proved that whatever the problem it can be overcome with friendship, commitment and good humour.

Congratulations from everyone at the BCU and especially from me. Thank you for making me feel part of 'The Team'.

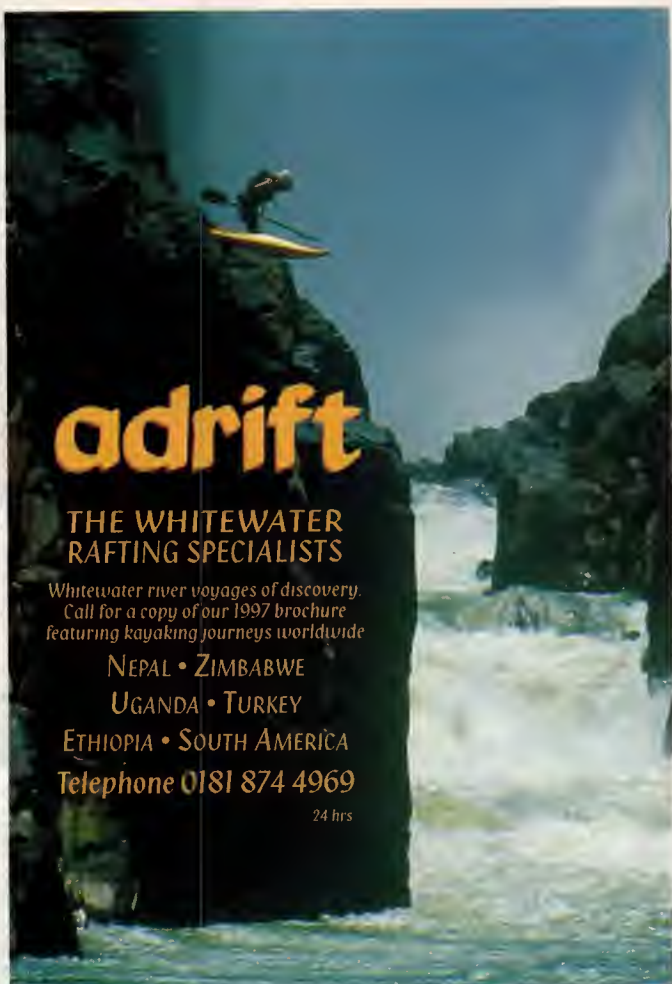
## Raised in excess of £53,000

The aim of the challenge was to raise £50,000 for SPARKS, SPort Aiding Medical Research for Kids, the Team were informed on the final day that they have raised in excess of £53,000 with still more to come.

## What now?

So what now for these intrepid explorers? Who knows? Steve is already planning to cycle across Africa, Pete is off to Nepal for some white water kayaking, 'Weave' is






# adrift

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### February

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Marc Lyle - 1995 U.S. National Whitewater Rodeo team member and playpaddling addict!

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Great Britain's women returned from the 2nd World Canoe Polo Championships, held in Adelaide, South Australia, as Gold Medal winners. The men could manage only 5th place, but their result is in part a reflection of the ever-growing strength of the sport across the world.

Article by Peter Mitchell

# Champions of the

**G**reat Britain's preparations commenced in the Autumn of 1994, immediately following the inaugural World Championships held in Sheffield, at which the Australians won both Gold medals. Men's and Women's training squads were selected to prepare for the 1995 European Championships and ultimately, the 1996 World Championships.

Encouraged by their success at last summer's European Championships - a Gold medal for the men and Silver for the women - both squads held monthly training weekends throughout last winter. In March squad numbers were trimmed, with the men and women fielding 'A' and 'B' teams in a number of international tournaments on the European mainland during the summer, prior to the selection of the players who would represent Great Britain in Australia.

A 21 strong party of team members and coaches left Heathrow on Monday 23 September. Boats and equipment were carried as 'hand luggage' courtesy of Olympic Airlines, much to the bemusement of airport staff, UK customs and fellow passengers. (The departure date allowed 12 days of training and acclimatisation prior to the start of the Championships).

Having landed at Melbourne, the party travelled 100 miles north to Bendigo, a small town in Victoria, for a pre-worlds training tournament. This brought the men into competition with five teams they would face in the World Championships - Canada, New Zealand, the Netherlands, France and Australia - whilst the women played New Zealand, France and Australia 'A' and 'B'.

Results were

encouraging. The men won all their games, including a moral-boosting 2-1 win over Australia, the current World Champions. The women, fielding a weakened team, (officially in order to enable two players to rest niggling injuries but in reality to avoid declaring their hand), none-the-less managed wins over all the competing teams other than Australia 'A'.

### Impressive complex

The Championships finally got under way on Wednesday 9th October. The venue was the Adelaide Aquatic Centre, an impressive complex containing a 50 metre gala pool, 25 metre training and highboard diving facility and large fun pool.

The final entry of 15 men's and 7 women's teams included all the Nations that could reasonably be expected to compete for medals. The state of the game world-wide is such that there are two clearly defined categories of teams. Amongst the men Australia, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy and the Netherlands are from the 'elite' group, in the Women's game Australia, France, Germany and Great Britain. Other participating nations included Canada, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, Japan and South Africa.

The initial phase of the men's competition saw the teams playing in seeded groups. Great Britain were drawn with Portugal, Indonesia and Italy. The disparity of the teams was well illustrated as Great Britain recorded 7-1 and 19-0 victories over Portugal and Indonesia respectively and a 1-1 draw against Italy, (a team that had improved out of all recognition since the 1995 European Championships).

The top two teams in each of the four preliminary groups were then placed in two four-team

groups to decide which countries would proceed to the semi-finals.

Now the competition really started for the men, as they were drawn to play Germany, Australia and the Netherlands. All three games were played on the penultimate day of the competition. Having got off to a bad start with defeat at the hands of the Netherlands, the British team failed to settle and went on to lose by the odd goal in five to Germany and 2-1 to Australia.

Thus on the final day of competition the British men found themselves playing for pride, to secure 5th place in the Championships. They rose to the occasion and finally discovered some of the form that had made them so dominant in Bendigo, an 8-4 victory over New Zealand in a fast and furious 5-out game being followed by a 5-1 mauling of the Netherlands.

Thus for the men the competition ended on a high note, but also feelings of what might have been.

On day 1 of the Women's competition a 15-0 win over Canada was followed by a 2-1 victory over France, one of the strongest teams in the competition. Day 2 saw a 10-0 victory over Japan. Day 3 commenced with an 8-1 victory over New Zealand and then a 4-3 victory over Germany, (the 1995 European Gold Medalists).

The final game of the day and the last match in the initial league phase of the competition saw the women facing Australia. The format for the subsequent phases of the competition was such that this could be the first of three games against the reigning World Champions, with only the last one, the Final, being of real



# World



significance. This meeting ended in a 4-1 defeat, but much was learnt as to how to beat the Australians, who held the proud record of never having been beaten in international competition.

### Australia and Great Britain

The final day of women's competition saw the top two teams in the league - Australia and Great Britain - once again playing one another. The winner would go straight through to the

***"Australia is now recognised as the strongest nation in canoe polo with our women's team being undefeated in 9 years of international competition". How the mighty have fallen!***

Grand Final. This time Great Britain began to show their hand, employing a 5-out tactic from the start. The result was one of the most incredible games of the Championships, with Great Britain losing by the odd goal in 13!

Again, a great deal had been learnt. Goals had been conceded through loose marking, poorly timed substitutions and a lack of composure when in possession, problems that could be put right with a little thought.

This now left Great Britain to play Germany in what was termed the 'Preliminary Final'. The winner would play Australia in the Grand Final, the losers would be Bronze Medalists. A goal from Diane Ratcliff and two goals apiece from Ginny Coyles and Jackie Marlow saw the women through 5-2.

Having already beaten Great Britain twice and with the support of a highly vociferous crowd behind them, the Australians entered the final as favourites. Further, the British team included four players who had reached three previous World and European Championship finals, only to come away with a Silver medal. Thus the final would be a battle of nerves and self-belief as much as tactics and ability.

The British chose to play 5-out from the first whistle, but the game could not have had a worse start. Immediately following the initial sprint a foul was called against Great Britain. A quickly taken pass and slack British marking saw a goal conceded within 30 seconds.

But after 2.5 minutes Great Britain were level. From a goal line throw Ginny Coyles carried the ball into the

Australian half before taking a long shot which the goal keeper was unable to reach.

This was the prelude to a period of hectic and, at times, physical play which eventually led to the Australians conceding two corners in quick succession and from the second of which a series of long passes from one side of the pool to the other provided the opening, after 5 minutes, for Ginny Coyles her second goal of the

game with a shot from 8 metres.

The second half started much as the first, with the British conceding a goal to bring the score level at 2-2. This could have been the signs for heads to drop, as a feeling of déjà vu set in, but there then followed a period of sustained British pressure, with the Australian goal keeper saving a series of shots. From one such save the Australians managed to break as a result of loose marking and only tremendous covering back by Sue Berry prevented a certain goal, the Australian being hurried into an aimless shot.

From the resulting goal throw the British passed the ball swiftly down the pool and eventually it reached Sue Berry who, with an Australian paddler sitting across her deck, scored from 8 metres out.

With four minutes to go the Australians, seeing their World Champion status fading, pressed forward. But the British maintained their tight marking and much of the play was contained within the opposition's half of the pool.

Eventually the British regained possession and a series of quick passes put Sue Berry into a shooting position 6 metres from goal and tight to the line. The conventional wisdom would have been to pass the ball back out but Sue scored from a seemingly impossible angle to bring the score to 4-2 with a little over a minute to go.

From the re-start the Australians were again forced back into their own half. A desperation shot from long range was blocked by a British player and the clock ran out to leave Great Britain as champions of the world.

The introduction to the World Championships programme stated that "Australia is now recognised as the strongest nation in canoe polo with our women's team being undefeated in 9 years of international competition". How the mighty have fallen!

Now thoughts turn to next year's European Championships to be held in Essen, Germany, in September and the 3rd World Championships, scheduled for Portugal in June of 1998. The Men will be determined to re-establish their dominance of European polo whilst the women will be anxious to go one better than the Silver medal gained in Rome in 1995.

### Great Britain Men:

Graham Bayne,  
Ramsay Bayne,  
Chris Bussell,  
Colin Davis,  
Simon Davison,  
Stuart Moffit,  
Andrew Petrie,  
Alan Vessey,  
Chris Parkes

(Coach)

Mike Moffitt

(Assistant Coach)

### Great Britain Women:

Claire Allen,  
Susan Berry,  
Ginny Coyles,  
Jan Davis,  
Jo Kirkbride,  
Lynn Knowles,  
Jackie Marlow,  
Diane Ratcliff,  
Greg Smale

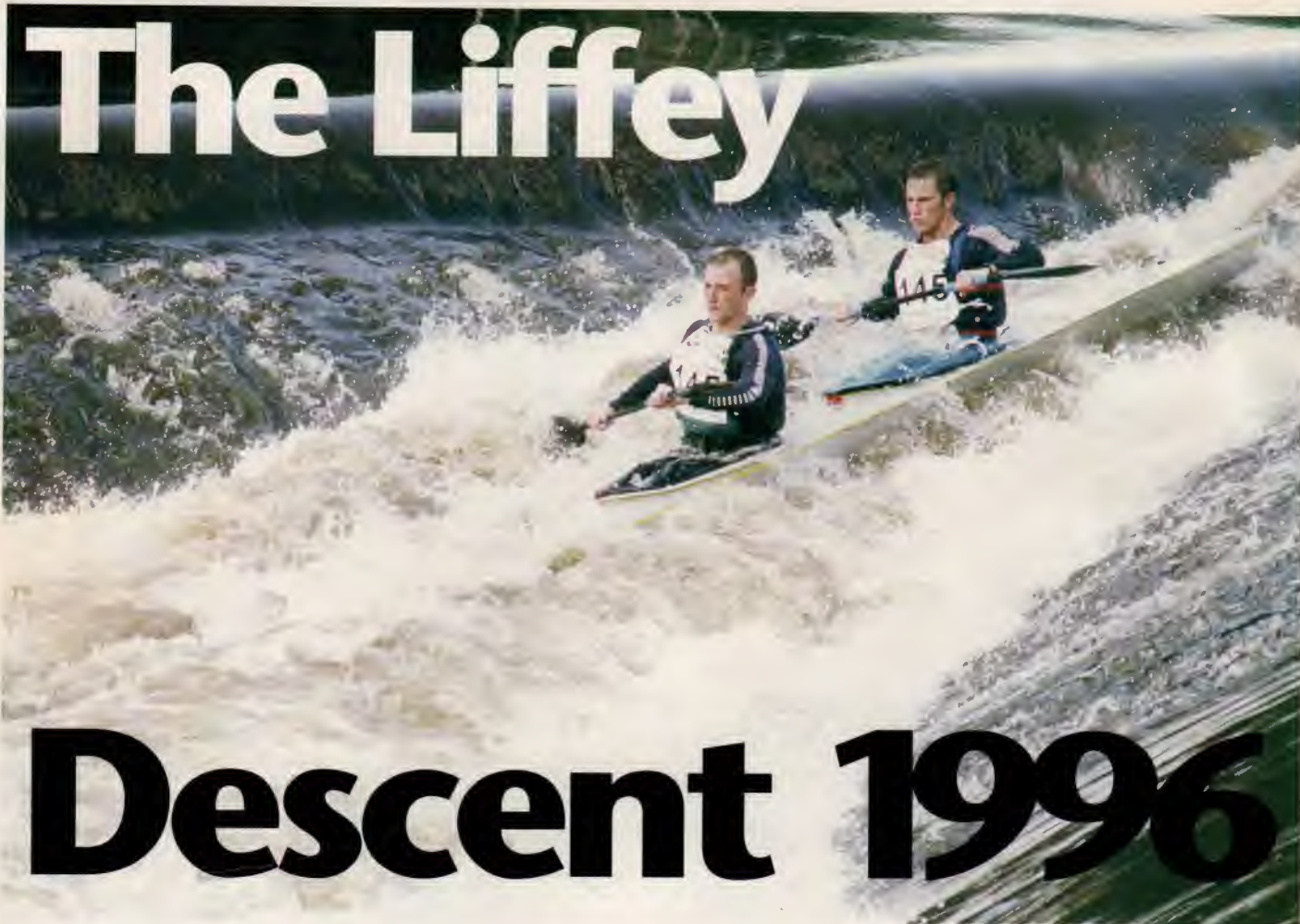
(Coach)

Curly Barker

(Assistant Coach)



# The Liffey



# Descent 1996

The facts speak for themselves: great river, top competition, brilliant atmosphere and a cracking party to cap it all. Oh and the sun shone the whole time. So why weren't you there? No excuses now, I'll see you same time same place next year.

Article by:  
**Mike Mason**

**T**his being my first attempt at The Grand National of International Canoeing, an amount of video studying of the weir shoots gave a good idea of the lines but absolutely no indication of the tremendous atmosphere surrounding the event. This year a number of close finishes were fought out, in particular in the K2 class.

### Whittled down

Coming across the lake into the portage at the half-way point in the race, 6 boats were contending the

Above: Michael Mason, Malcolm Johnson

Photo: Irish Distillers Ltd

lead group, with the defending champions the Tordoff brothers controlling the front and GB marathon team boys Slater and Dark poised comfortably. Then within a few minutes the race was whittled down with Block unfortunately breaking a blade, an Irish crew losing pump action and Slater and Dark folding their boat shooting Lucan too straight. Getting a replacement set at the portage, Block and Swallow worked hard to catch the front group of 3 but finished fourth just 30 seconds down. Over Wren's Nest and Palmerstown's meaty weirs the Tordoffs downed tools and tried to lead the others into mistakes and then drop them afterwards. At the final weir Mason and Johnson holed their boat and took on water ruling them out of contending the finish sprint. The Tordoffs held on well in the finish from Butler and the young Chapman to take an unprecedented fifth Liffey Descent title.

Joel and Scott Wilson performed well by winning a strong Junior K2 race, finishing sixth overall.

Defending K1 champion Gary Mawer made life tough for himself with a swim at the first weir leaving part of his face behind but came

through blooded to win by 30 seconds.

### Post-race sherbets

The Jameson reception is well worth a visit with an invite for a few post-race sherbets, and not even the Scots were able to put a sizeable dent into the sponsor's wares, but not for a lack of trying by Davey.

### Lasting memories

A sizeable English / Scottish contingent attended this year as part of the 1200 entrants and all types of craft took part (although a racing K4 would have been pushing things somewhat). All racing paddlers who enjoy races like the Exe Descent should see this as a must every year, and with a guaranteed good river level its an essential summer race. The trip is relatively inexpensive for groups, with package deals including a ride on the new high speed jet ferry that would impress even the most die-hard train spotter. Lasting memories of this year will be the tremendous bank support (all quietly wishing for you to come a cropper), the school children sprinkling flower petals over you as you pass (makes a change to the stone variation in England), the fantastic battleship fancy dress entrant and a pretty mental alcohol-fuelled knees-up to finish off the day. Nice one.



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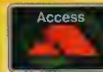
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# Coasteering by canoe around the Pembroke Coast

Unless you call travelling from the heart of South Cheshire into West Wales as foreign canoeing then my article is not of canoeing in exotic climes down raging rivers.

**M**ore a bumble around some of the most spectacular and beautiful coastline anywhere in the world.

Myself and Jane (my wife) and our two daughters were spending the day in St David's the latter two dropped off for a 'Coasteering' afternoon at Twr Y Felin gave Jane and myself the opportunity to explore some of the coastline.

The long haul of boats and equipment down to the beach at Caerfi Bay would have made a pack horse give up and go home but the prospect of a sunny days paddle was beckoning.

In glorious sunshine wearing a T-shirt, shorts, buoyancy aid and as Jane puts it "that stupid floppy hat" we set off.

## Springer spaniel

We had only gone a hundred yards or so when we caught up with another paddler seemingly being followed by a seal, that is until we got closer only to discover it was a Springer spaniel doing seal impressions. Its owner explained that he could not go anywhere without her swimming and their record was eight miles. We left them both exploring a large cave just around the corner from the put in point.

The back ache from getting the canoes onto the beach soon receded as the scenery unravelled itself, access is only via boat (or swim) so the

caves and coves rarely get touched by human beings. (Don't suppose canoeists count as human anyway do they?)

Slack water allowed us to enter some of the caves which were a rainbow of different colour seaweeds, anemones, and sponges clinging to the walls like something from the film Alien.

## Crystal clear

Due to the coastline being predominantly rock, the water is for the main crystal clear, exposing a myriad of plant and animal life just beneath the surface.

As the tides were high and low we were paddling the slack at low, and it had uncovered edible sea urchins who were sunbathing with the barnacles on some of the rocks which don't get to see the sun too often. It was tempting to take one dry it out and put it on the bookcase with the other ornaments, but we both agreed that the best place for it was where it was.

Oyster catchers and sea gulls seemed at one and shared the rock perches with one another whilst they rested awaiting the turning tide.

It was very tempting to really amble and explore each nook and cranny, but a coffee, and the paddle back to get the girls on time meant having to discipline ourselves.

The remoteness was taken advantage of by a few other people, we turned into one cove where there was a schooner and its crew sunbathing on the deck, above them on the cliffs some climbers, they too were wearing the minimum of clothing.

Paddling into Porth Clais and a sandy beach it was surprisingly empty and quiet given the sunshine and the heat. The only other inhabitants being a group of Army divers from Brawdy (formerly RAF) and a family picnicing.

Stripped down to my shorts, T shirt hung up to dry a bit, and feet up and relax with a cup of coffee a choice biscuit, and a bag of crisps. Well the paddling burned the nasty things out of that diet, honest!

## 'Femme fatal' voice

Thought it was too nice to last when I heard Jane use her pathetic 'femme fatal' voice "Phil can I borrow your floppy hat the suns in my eyes?!" Decision time should I stand up for



equality and men's rights by saying "No get your own", or give in and hope she remembered the act of gallantry at some other time perhaps later that day. I'm afraid I'll never have to keep you guessing as to what I did.

The tide was turning and coming in, even though it meant paddling less distance a hard decision was taken to pack the boats, and leave this very quiet beach (or as they say in Wales traeth), and the sunshine to the handful of people baking in the sun.

Paddling back was different, rocks we'd scrutinised earlier were now covered with water, the urchins were back in their proper environment. It did mean though we were able to paddle through some interesting 'Rock hopping' sections which meant getting your timing right lest you were washed against the rocks and losing ££££s worth of plastic boat for the barnacles to eat.

Arriving back at the beach Jane decided that she'd use her silly voice again, in the hope that we would explore the caves on the other side of the bay. Should I give in, no! It was a long climb up the hill again and the girls would be finishing soon. They'll be there another day.

Unusually for me it was the right decision as we arrived at the Centre in time to pick the girls up as they emerged from the hot showers. Their afternoon had been full we had paid for them to crawl through old pipes, over rocks, and jump off old buildings into the sea. They enjoyed it so much we had to take them back a few days later where they did the whole thing again this time with us.

The caves on the other side of the bay were still there a few days later, and we did explore them, as well as the miles of other parts of this coast where EVERY corner you turn yields something different. e.g. Wildlife, wrecked boats, plantlife, secluded coves, ruins, etc. etc.

We will certainly pay another visit to this coastline, we did last Autumn prior to the 'Teifi Tour' and probably will again this year.

Story by

Phil Edwards SI



# River Wye - The Situation at Mid October

The Environment Agency has just released its 'Response to Objections' to the legal order. Unfortunately this article has to be written before the decisions on how we move forward with the BCU case are made.

I am sure much will have taken place by the time you read this and I will have been in touch with all my contacts.

Thank you to all of you, including, especially, the Clubs and Organisations who telephoned or wrote to me to be added to my list of contacts following the October issue of *Canoe Focus*.

Please keep my list growing - whether or not the Legal Order is confirmed it will be important to know who uses the WYE and LUGG so that canoeists - including Non BCU members will have as strong a voice as possible in future decisions affecting the rivers.

Please contact me: *John Westlake, 33 Golden Vale, Churchdown, Gloucester, GL3 2LU Tel: 01452 531218 LAO for the River Wye in England.*

## Bridgewater Canal

The Bridgewater Canal in the North West region will be added to the BCU licence on 1 January 1997, meaning that it will no longer be necessary for members to buy a licence from the canal company. The usual conditions apply, namely that members must display their BCU stickers on their canoes and carry their membership cards. Please note that canoes are not allowed to use the Upper Reach of the Port of Manchester between Salford Wharf and Hunts Bank. Members must conform to the bye-laws and licensing

conditions of the canal company. If you need a copy of these, please send a 9"x6" sae to the BCU office marked 'Bridgewater Bye-laws'.

## River Tees - Abbey Rapids access, winter 96/7

Talks with the landowner for the south bank re- extended access and additional facilities are proceeding as referred to in the April edition of *Canoe Focus*. Unfortunately problems still exist re access to the north bank and so our agreement for the period

1.11.96 to 31.3.97 is the same as in previous years.

This agreement allows access to the water from the south bank only, below Thorsgill beck (just above Egglestone Abbey) down to the Abbey bridge. Users should be BCU members or members of affiliated clubs and are advised to contact 'Four Seasons', 44 The Bank, Barnard Castle, Tel: 01833 37829, beforehand, since no more than ten canoeists are to be on the water at any one time.

This season the BCU North Region, BCU Yorks & Humberside Region and the Army Canoe Union have agreed to share the annual licence fee of £300 + vat and so there will be no charges for clubs or individuals using the white water training facility. Paddlers using the Rapids should appreciate the efforts made by BCU access teams and may wish to make a contribution via the access funds of the supporting organisations either via 'Four Season' or by post to the addresses shown in the BCU Handbook.

## River Leven - Cumbria

Please note that the Local Access Officers Sten and Angela Sture have moved to **115 Oakwood Drive, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 9JU. Tel: 01229 582257**



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# The BCU and its obligations

## under the health and safety at work act with regard to the use of polluted water

- 1 Where the BCU hires or uses a facility for an event which is run entirely by volunteers there is no implication for the Union under the Health and Safety at Work Act with regard to anyone suffering illness as a result of using the course. If the facility was owned by a public authority, then the authority concerned could be liable under the Act.
- 2 Should an employee of the Union, or one of its clubs, be involved in organising the event, as part of his or her employment, then the Union would have an obligation under the act both with regard to ensuring the safety of their employee, and volunteers working alongside him or her, as well as to participants.
- 3 For a case to be brought under the HaSaWA, which invokes criminal law i.e. the case must be proved 'beyond reasonable doubt' - it is likely that the organism causing the illness would have to be identified, and it would have to be proved that at the same time that the person was using the site, the organism was present in the water.
- 4 If a case were brought under the civil law, then the burden of proof moves to the 'balance of probabilities'. In such cases it might be sufficient for the complainant to show that numbers of people were ill, and that on numerous occasions organisms capable of causing such illness were present in the water. They would, however, have to prove 'negligence'. Provided everyone had been given a warning that on occasion organisms were likely to be present which could cause illness, it seems unlikely that such an action would succeed.
- 5 As there are no statutory requirements with regard to acceptable levels of pollution for immersion in inland waters, it is likely that the avoidance of obviously highly polluted sites, and the issuing of warning notices in other cases, would suffice to show that the Union, or a site operator, had used 'reasonable precautions'.
- 6 The status of the BCU or a club as a limited company is not the criterion. It is whether an employee was directly involved in an event, as an employee (not on a voluntary basis) which would bring an activity within scope.

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# Sydney Olympics 2000

Dear Canoe Focus

It is indeed disappointing that the organisers of the Sydney Olympics consider it impractical to construct a slalom site, but why lobby for the inclusion of marathon as a substitute?

Surely this is an ideal opportunity for Canoe Polo to step forward. The facilities are already there, it will be cheap to broadcast and the Australians (and GB?) would be guaranteed medals. With respect, there is no comparison between marathon and polo as far as spectators are concerned; at the top level polo is as exciting as any other team sport included in the olympics.

I would be interested to know if the BCU is aware of any proposal to the IOC for the inclusion of polo, and if not, why not make one now?

**B H Oppenheim**

Dear Mr Oppenheim  
Sydney Olympics 2000

Thank you for your letter addressed to Canoe Focus.

As far as I am aware there is no proposal to introduce Canoe Polo within the programme of the Olympic Games. I suspect that the desirability of a particular disciplines

inclusion rather reflects the opinion of its individual supporters and its standing within its International Federations. Marathon Racing enthusiasts would be upset at your conclusions as for them marathon is just as an attractive proposition. The truth of course, is that both canoe marathon and canoe polo would make attractive alternatives to several of the competition canoeing events within the Olympic programme.

The number of participating nations - marathon 30+ Polo 20+ is a big factor, as is the view of the host nation. Australia appears keen to support the inclusion of canoe marathon. As well as their potential medal success the Australians see that the event enables TV coverage of the surrounding countryside. This is an increasing concern from host cities that one stadium or pool looks the same as another when portrayed on TV, therefore any chance to promote their country in respect of tourism is a bonus.

At this stage the battle for Canoe Slalom is not lost and this remains our first priority.

**Paul Owen -  
Chief Executive**

## Kayakobabble

Dear Canoe Focus

At the risk of sounding sarcastic can I ask what 'a fast boof on the right to avoid a vertical pin' means (Paddling in the Appalachians - Focus August 96).

Seriously though, while the above may be just another example of kayakobabble my enjoyment of such articles is limited by not knowing the exact meaning, cause and possible danger of holes, hydraulics, undercuts, loops, enders and cartwheels etc.

Could someone in the know be prevailed upon to write an article on the same, preferably with diagrams.

We recently had an excellent article on what a stopper is and how to recognise and deal with the dangers associated with one (Franco Ferrero - Focus August 95).

As a placid water tourist I don't intend to take up such dangerous pursuits but I do read Focus from cover to cover from the safety of my armchair and my enjoyment would be greatly improved by such an article.

**Peter Minch.**

Ed's comment: Anyone out there willing to enlighten us?

# Surfers Ear

On reading Andy Middletons article on surfers ear, (Canoe Focus October issue) Terry Hailwood has written the following reply.

...I was interested in point 7 of Andy's article 'Did You Hear What I Said', that some people develop the condition more in one ear than the other.

I was going to make a similar comment in my own article but as it was only a Hypothesis based on my own case study I left it out.

I was interested in the information that Andy got from California to explain way this happens but personally I do not feel this is the case with British paddlers. Therefore I would like to offer my thoughts.

I have Exostoses in both ears. So far I have only had one ear operated on. One of these main reasons is that the surgeons will not operate on both ears at the same time in case of complications. With my own case they operated on my left because that was in a worse condition, with the bony growths practically closing the whole of the auditory canal.

This got me to thinking why my

left ear had suffered more than the right, was it that the exostoses simply grows faster in some ears than others? Perhaps but I think it more likely to do with exposure.

After much deliberation and looking at ear holes on my helmets I came up with a very simple theory to explain my own condition.

In my early years of being trashed on rivers whilst trying to convince myself that I was 'playing' I would predominantly surf holes on my right hand side. Therefore my left ear was uppermost and exposed to down coming water! Convinced? No. Well I wasn't either. Expanding this further though, if you're bracing on the right and happen to trash you tend to deep recovery on that side using the wave. As with many people, particularly in the early years of their paddle life I tended to predominantly roll on my strongest side. That being my right.

If you look at the dynamics of a roll, particularly a right hand screw. Which side of the head is being 'driven' up to the surface? Answer, the left. With the left side of the head leading to the surface it follows that

water is being forced down the left 'lug hole' while the right is in the relative 'eddy' caused by the head moving upwards.

So over the years of predominantly rolling on the right. (Lets face it if you have a choice you tend to roll on the side you were first taught). My left ear had more exposure to cold water being forced down it.

Is this a case for alternating which side you roll on? NO just keep that water out of your ears.

On another point it may be a case of how we teach rolling i.e. teaching both sides at the same time to avoid being a 'strong side' and 'weak side' but that is another issue I could write too much on.

I would like to hear from any other sufferers who have exostoses in one ear more than the other and their ideas on why this is. I look forward to HEARING from you! . . .

Please note that in the October issue of Canoe Focus Terry's surname appeared as Trailwood, please accept our apologies for any confusion this may have caused.

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# A Gold Medal Superbly Won

We arrived at Prague Airport from Heathrow on Monday, 8th July, 1996, to torrential rain, roads were flooded and the weather did not improve on our coach journey to Lipno, dark clouds, heavy mist and hard rain.

Slalom Junior World Championship 1996 Lipno, Czech Republic



**A**lready team spirits were high and strong team characters were developing. We arrived at Lipno at 7.00 p.m. and most of the paddlers opted for a water session on the lake which looked very different from last year's Pre-World Championship (hot and sunny), it looked dark, cold and miserable.

Tuesday was our first session on this impressive river, dam released, with a drop of 12.5 metres over 600 metres with some 18 cubic water per second of water being released.

Some 26 Nations with 190 competitors with limited water time of 1 hour per day per nation, we G.B.R. were training with 6 other Nations on Tuesday and Wednesday, totalling 33 boats on the river at the same time. The training needed to be well organised and for us it ran smoothly and effectively due to the hard work of coaches, support team and the paddlers.

Thursday - each team were allocated 30 minutes training. This was to allow time for course design and building and in preparation for the Opening Ceremony that evening. The race site was changing with banners, tents, stores and the 26 Nations Flags now flying, the whole atmosphere started to change.

### Brave Heart but Czech style

The Opening Ceremony was on Thursday afternoon between dark clouds, rain and sunshine. Each team lined up to march in for the Ceremony and the introduction of each Team. The Czech's put on a show very much like Brave Heart but Czech style and opened the Junior World Championship 1996.

Friday was non-stop individual practice and forerunners, but with a late start to the day, 1.30 p.m., most of the team went for a warm up on the nearby lake in the pouring rain.

The course was designed by Czech, Poles, Germans and was a very good course with not one gate change at course approval. Practise went well with a lot to think about and video to watch in preparation for tomorrow's individual runs.

Saturday, started at 9.00 a.m. with

the CI's followed by the KIW's back to back. The CI's had a formidable task with the likes of Martikan (Suk) and Majek (Cze) both there. Both Alistair Campbell and Dugald Tavener at their first major Junior International Event were coping very well at the start, nervous but determined to do well. Alistair's final ranking does not show the awesome display of commitment and -physical effort in each of his runs finishing 37th. Dugald paddled well with confidence, his second run being the best finishing 18th overall. Robert Turner was the last of the three CI's boat with his first run being slow with penalties but with his second run being fast and clean finished in 12th place some 12.5 seconds behind the winner.

Next came the K1 Womens Class, Helen Reeves also at her first major Junior International was our first lady to go, she had a fast time but took two fiftys, but with a blistering second run, which was fast and clean, putting her into first position with 15 boats still to go and holding onto 1st place to claim Gold Medal and the title of Junior World Champion 1996.

Both Helen Cardy and Laura Blakeman had fast enough times to be 3rd and 4th respectively but had penalties and did not improve on their second runs finishing Laura 8th and Helen Cardy 25th.

Next came the C2's and the K1 Mens Class, unfortunately we have no junior C2 crews at junior level, but onto the mens. Tim Baillie paddled well and finished a very creditable 7th with his first run just 4 seconds off the winning time. Daniel Cook finished 20th with a clean second run and James Hounslow finishing 23rd.

Sunday was team race day and the C1 team of Bob, Dugald and Alistair finished 11th with a lot of penalties on both runs. The womens team of Helen, Laura and Helen had a fast enough time to be in the medals but with 20 seconds of penalties finished 4th. The mens team of Dan, Tim, James were also fast enough to gain a medal but with one touch (5 second penalty) they finished in 5th place.

It was a great Junior World Championship, well run and a super river. The G.B.R. Junior Team - Paddlers, Coaches, Support Team, gave their all, you could not have asked for any more of the Junior Worlds Team.

After the Championship they met up with the Under 17's Team to do two Junior World Cup races in Roudnice (Czech Republic) and Liptovsky Mikulas (Slovakia).

No report could be complete without a thank you to Kelloggs who sponsored our Dietician and three weeks of cereal for the team, and Avoncraft who kindly lent us their boat trailer.

Article by John Reeves National Junior Team Administrator



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The temperature was soaring into the 30s again. Over the preceding 10 days a pattern had been developing; cloud burning off as the sun rose in the north east, accompanied by a cooling breeze. Today was different. What little air movement there was died away, the associated noises of the lakes and forest ceased, and all was still. Gammon Lake turned to glass, every living creature vanished to seek the shelter of the forest. The silence deafened. Even my beloved loons had abandoned me.

**F**inally having reached the headwaters of the Gammon River I set up camp on the shores of the 8 mile expanse of lake which bares the same name. Soon after dawn I was away with a day pack and emergency gear, leaving camp behind to explore the area and travel further up the headwaters.

Gently sliding my 16 foot Mad River Explorer up the beach adjacent to camp after 8 hours and 30kms of paddling, I went to seek shelter under my tree slung tarp. Sitting watching the sun slip silently towards evening the feeling of isolation heightened. It wasn't just that I was probably the only person within 100 square miles. I had been alone for most of the last week, but there had been continual distractions to occupy my mind. Here only emptiness. I wanted to be anywhere else but here, My mind was spinning. For over fifteen years I'd dreamt of being here where Albert Gammon had paddled all those years before. Looking towards the west, a stunning sunset promised.

**Spiritually important**

How dare I feel this way, surrounded by such beauty, and in a place so spiritually important to me. There was nothing to be done but keep myself occupied and hope that Gammon Lake awoke as evening approached to put aside my mood. I had long since abandoned any notion of paddling out that evening. Five bug ridden swampy portages around the bony drops into Hammerhead Lake would have to be tackled early tomorrow, in the cool of the day. I took a series of slides, wrote some journal and read a little, reorganised my outfit and maps and generally readied myself for the paddle out to Bloodvein Reserve three weeks away to the

**Article by  
James Broad**

west. The feeling of isolation soon passed, a hearty meal cooked

and eaten and pre-mosquito escape to my tent and sleep followed shortly. The quiet of the evenings coupled with moments of contemplation were the only difficult parts of the trip full of adventure, beauty, history and spiritualism. Albert Gammon emigrated to Canada early this century in search of adventure and a healthy climate. He found both in a 40 year career as a Dominion Land Surveyor, one of a number of people set the massive task of mapping the 3.5 million square miles of Canada, much of it by canoe and dog sled. In the summer of 1925 a small team set out from Red Lake in Ontario in Chestnut Canoes and paddled through a water course to join the Bloodvein River and onto Lake

Winnipeg in Manitoba surveying the route as they went. He had left journals and photographs, fuelling my desire to follow the river that was subsequently named after him. My chance came with the offer of a travel bursary from Heineken Export. I was soon on the plane to Canada. Three weeks of preparation ensued, drying and bagging meat and vegetables in a home made machine; gathering everything together that is required for a month in the wilderness; and of course plenty of paddling, including brushing up

**Right: Albert Gammon**

**Below: Rapids on Camshell River - 3/4 mile long. Too rough and swift to run, so to be taken in easy stages. 1934**

# In the Foot

my solo white water skills. The route I was to take deviated from that of Albert Gammon, to avoid a 3km portage through muskeg and an expensive float plane trip. So it was on a cool overcast and English sort of summers afternoon and all the prep was finally over that I loaded up an outfit weighing 250lbs and paddled away from a rather dreary camp site.

**Winapigow River**

Wallace Lake south of the Gammon system is on the beautifully named Winapigow River, more a weed and lily bound stream, but no less stunning for that. A gentle introduction to solo tripping, with short easy portages and smaller less exposed lakes, where I could practise paddling. All my experience having been solo playboating or tandem tripping, I found paddling a fully loaded boat quite delightful. My Mad River Explorer, not ideally suited for the trip, did track well. With the ever present westerly winds, the loads gave great



# steps of Albert Gammon

stability, especially when travelling on the lakes. Although I never tried it I suspect the outfit would have survived me standing on the gunwales. The disadvantage comes in moving water, where poor technique and bad scouting are quickly shown up. But this wasn't to be a hot boating adrenaline trip; rather a spiritual, peaceful sojourn to a place that I felt had always been a part of me, and me it.

I soon melted into the routine of early starts and long lunch breaks to avoid the heat of the day, and all too late frantic searches for campsites, followed by frenzied home building and cooking before sun down and bug time. I'm sure this was caused by a combination of being far too choosy about where I camped and the ever present river magnet that I had experienced so often before. The feeling of wanting to see what's around the next bend seemed much stronger for me when alone. Eventually, I learnt. But not before numerous unpleasant tent erecting and stew eating sessions to the continuous humming and chewing of those infuriating pests.

Aikens Lake, the second deepest in Manitoba and some 5kms across was my first sight of the Gammon waters, following a 2km portage over a height of land through dense woodland and rock outcropping. Five passes over many hours requiring stamina, patience and a steady, unhurried pace normally associated with high altitude mountaineering. One careless slip while carrying the canoe has potentially nasty



consequences. Patience was my watchword throughout the whole trip.

Aikens Lake lies half way down the Gammon, so following a pleasant interlude with the good folks at a fly-in fishing camp I left a cache of food and left for a week long exploration of the upper reaches of the river. At last I was travelling on the Gammon. I felt I was beginning to slow down, take my time, something that I had plenty of. There is definitely only one pace to tripping solo. I began to see more wildlife, I did more exploring away from the river on foot and found time to write and fish. Among the many new experiences of the trip, fishing was one I looked forward to with great anticipation. A few lessons in line tying and casting from an 87 year old master of the art, in his back garden in Ottawa was all the prep I had. Luckily I was not dependant upon fish for food. My count by the end of the trip was 2 pickrell and a lot of missed bites, snagged lines and ultimately, lost tackle. In the mean time I thoroughly enjoyed those moments standing by an eddy, just below a rapid spinning with a 4 foot telescopic rod and yellow plastic lures with great expectation. It was at these times, and while running the rapids that I felt closest to my surroundings.

The lower parts of the Gammon and the Bloodvein have a much greater flow rate, around 80 cubic metres per second. There were far more opportunities to run the river. The hydrology is predominantly pool drop, with only short stretches of fast water, ideally suited for solo boating. This is where patience became so important. Taking time to scout everything from the bank properly, and not by standing up in the

**Top:** 1925 survey marker by Albert Gammon  
**Above:** 'Treasure Island' beach campsite  
**Below left:** Beginning of 1/2 km portage

boat on the approach. Putting on a buoyancy aid and headgear, tying the gear to the boat and sorting out a rope bag are all things its easy not to bother with. I never paddled through a rapid just to save the carry, although the temptation is always there. I did run the stretches up to grade II+, about forty in all but this is not a wild river trip. Many people consider solo tripping of any kind foolish, especially in the Canadian wilderness. I never got caught up in group dynamics where too much testosterone and not enough assertiveness has caused so many accidents in the past. Nor was I counting on someone to get me out of a difficult situation, something we should never do, as often that assistance has no chance of a successful rescue. I'm not a hot boater, but I know my limitations, and paddled well within those limits. I don't wish to advocate solo tripping where it is not appropriate, but there are plenty of rivers out there suitable for intermediate paddlers.

I had an amazing experience in an amazing environment. A vast array of wildlife, beautiful skies, incredible displays of the aurora, great paddling and the company wasn't too bad most of the time. If you want untainted wilderness experience, you'll have to paddle further north, but there is only one river named after my Grandfather. I felt his spirit around me, especially when I happened across one of the thirty or so rock survey monuments built in 1925 by his team. An adventure I shall carry with me, always.

# The Naked Gorges of Ardèche River France

Vallon Pont D Arc to St. Martin

We woke to thunder and lightning and a torrential downpour yet again, which did little for our frame of mind as we were thinking that this day, that was to be the highlight of the holiday looked like it might be a washout.

**W**e packed a good lunch and launched the canoes a few hundred yards from the Canoe Service office, at Vallon Pont D Arc. This was the company that was going to transport our canoes back from the finish for the sum of £20. We left the campervan close to the beach as we paddled off in the rain wondering if this was really a good idea

The weather soon started to brighten up and became quite hot, there were lots of other canoeists on the water as this was the most popular tourist past time in the area, with many canoe hire centres along the banks. Most of the other canoes were Canadian open style, probably more directionally stable than our Dancers, but prone to filling with water on the rapids. After most rapids there would be a collection of beached canoes being emptied, and the soggy paddlers using the opportunity for a rest and picnic or swim. The current was fast in places compared to what we were used to as flat water paddlers. André achieved his ambition of the holiday which was to canoe through the massive natural stone arch bridging the river just outside Vallon. The scenery was fantastic, with the river almost doubling back on itself as it weaved its ancient way through the Gorge. The rock sides towered hundreds of feet above us in places, with natural cave honeycombing in some areas. The ruggedness of the rock faces was quite awe inspiring, with low ledges jutting out over the water, making ideal perches for resting and watching the world float by. We stopped frequently for a swim in the warm water and to have our picnic lunch. We spotted a naturist beach at one point, and as I had promised André I would give it a try sometime, we landed. André

Much to my surprise I took to it like a canoe to water finding I liked the feel of the sun all over and venturing into the river, enjoyed swimming naked. There were lots of other paddlers passing by the beach all the time and I hoped they wouldn't recognise me as the naked white haired lady in the blue sunglasses when we got to the pick up point. We spent two hours at the beach before launching to complete the remainder of the 35 kilometres. Well this certainly was turning out to be a day of great achievements. When we got to the biggest rapid of the tour there were photographers in strategic points taking pictures of the paddlers which they would sell at the pick up point. They were there for the canoe companies, but we had been told that if we held our paddles above our heads before going down they would take ours too. The rapid was brilliant fun, very exciting and we both managed to stay afloat and dodge the other capsized canoeists and craft. We canoed on, enjoying every moment of the experience and finally arrived at St. Martin at around 16-30 with the last mile of canoeing being through what could only be referred to as canoe soup because this stretch was full of wet, worn out but satisfied paddlers. We landed and found the vehicle that would be transporting the canoes back to the start and the minibus that was taking us. We had time to look to see if our pictures had been taken on the rapid before the bus left and found mine had been taken but not André's, which was a bit disappointing, but my photo was very good and cost £5 for a large print, definitely a poser picture. The minibus ride took an hour after first being stopped by the French police and having a vehicle check. (I thought they were going to make us all get out and confiscate the bus) The journey back was almost as picturesque as it had been on the water and gave us time to reflect on our achievements, and the fact that we had always said we were flat water canoeists paddling to see the beautiful scenery and countryside from a different perspective. This we were still doing, but had also enjoyed the thrill of white water canoeing. We had only started canoeing a year ago at the ages of 43 and 45 and were already confirmed paddle addicts. This was the furthest we had ever canoed in one voyage but we were not aching or tired, just elated.

Article by  
André and  
Anne Greaves



Above: Vallon Pont D'Arc  
Below: Anne Greaves paddling the Ardèche gorge



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It was a wonderful occasion for members of Lincoln Canoe Club when their new premises were opened by Her Majesty The Queen, accompanied by His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh.  
**11 October 1996**

# The Opening of Lincoln Canoe Club by Her Majesty The Queen

**Article by**  
**Laurence Oliver -**  
**Lincoln Canoe**  
**Club Chairman**

**T**he Royal visitors were welcomed by the Club's President, Peter Wright J.P and were introduced to his Norwegian wife Kari, to Laurence Oliver, the Club's Chairman and his wife Beryl.

Laurence then introduced Her Majesty to members of Lincoln Canoe Club before accompanying The Queen



Above: The Queen meets the members - introduced by Laurence Oliver



Above: The plaque

Below: The old canoe store with the Lincoln University campus in the background



Below: The new clubhouse



into the building and inviting Her Majesty to unveil the plaque. The Queen and Prince Philip appeared to be very happy and relaxed showing much interest in the activities of the Club, wishing us well for the future. We were blessed with a pleasant Autumn day when Her Majesty could fully appreciate the views of Lincoln's newest and oldest buildings, the University and the Cathedral, from the windows of Lincoln Canoe Club.

The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh signed the visitors' book and a portrait photograph of themselves. Peter Wright proposed a vote of thanks and Kathryn Mylett, aged 5, presented the Queen with a posy. Before leaving, Her Majesty and His Royal Highness chatted to members of the Club's committee and guests, which included the President of the British Canoe Union, Albert Woods.

Lincoln Canoe Club was required to move from its old building because it was situated on the forecourt of the new Lincoln University Campus which opened this Autumn. The club was successful in its application to the Sports Council Lottery funding for 65% (£104,000) of the total cost. The remaining 35%

(£56,000) came from the University Project Company. These premises were the first funded by the Sport Council Lottery Fund to be opened by Her Majesty The Queen.

The ground floor can comfortably hold 126 singles or doubles with plenty of storage space for paddles and buoyancy aids etc. Stairs or a disabled chair lift, which is about to be fitted, lead to where there are two changing rooms with showers and toilet facilities. There is a comfortable lounge with a kitchen area and another room which is used as an office.

It was a great honour and privilege for the Club that Her Majesty agreed to perform the Opening Ceremony, in this the Club's fortieth year. During that time it has had a variety of accommodation but these superb premises will be ideal for the next forty years.



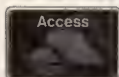
Laurence Oliver and Albert Woods pose next to the new unveiled plaque

North Shore: Pyranha: Rayboy what a copper: Prijon: Knoydart: Dr D's: Wildwater: Coleman:

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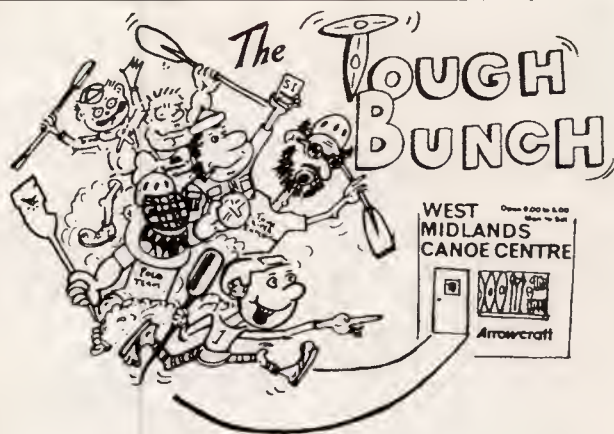
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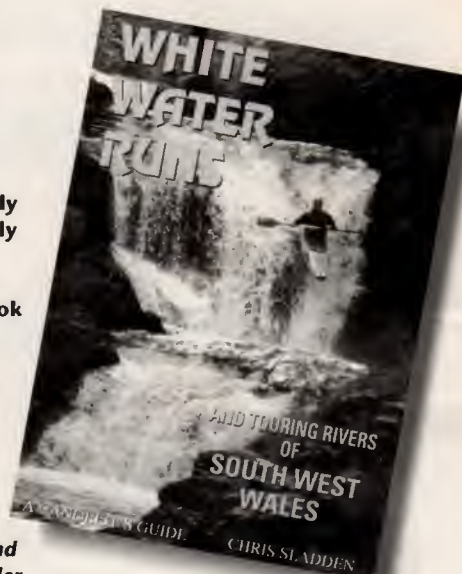
### White Water Runs and Touring Rivers of South West Wales

A Canoeist's Guide by Chris Sladden ISBN 0-9516147-1-1 £9.00 + p&p available from BCU Supplies

**T**his book introduces the rivers of South West Wales in a roughly geographical clockwise order. The first few pages are dedicated to the issue of access and egress and descriptions of river gradings. I would suggest that all access and egress points are confirmed prior to paddling the rivers as those listed in this book are not always available. There is also a small section on the Welsh language which helps you to decipher what the true names of the rivers mean, and how to say them. The descriptions and maps on each of

the rivers are not designed to give a rock by rock, eddy by eddy dissection of the river but merely to point out the main features and to leave you to explore for yourselves. A clearly written book accompanied by a number of photographs in both black and white and colour and a section at the back with places of interest and useful addresses listed. A handy reference book to the rivers of such a beautiful part of the country.

*Review by Geoff Forster E3 and level 5 kayak coach - and paddler local to the South West Rivers of Wales.*



### Learn to Be an Open Canoe Star

Written by Bill Lodge. ISBN 0 900082 12 7

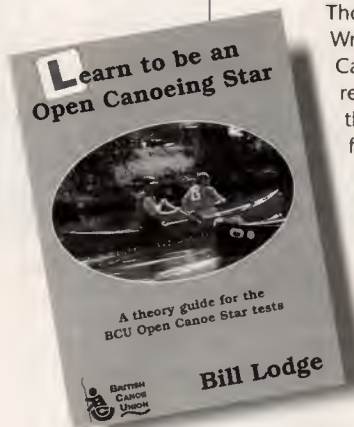
Those familiar with Kath Wright's book 'How to be a Canoeing Star' will recognise the format of this excellent little book, for Open Canoe paddlers. It rakes each of the recently updated Star Test syllabi and clearly states what is required of you. It doesn't get into detail about the strokes i.e. how a sweep stroke should be done - just, that they should

be used to Rotate the canoe 360 degrees on the spot. There are of course plenty of books available on

stroke coaching. But this area is better dealt with by going on a course or paddling with a more experienced paddler anyway! Where this book does excel though, is with regard to the theory aspects of the tests. Again it takes each section of the theory but covers in detail what is involved and what should be known. All the information is there in other books or magazines but it draws together in a very neat little package. It strikes me as

not only a good book for those wishing to take the star awards, but an excellent one for those examiners administering the award, to help them standardise the range and depth of the theory expected at the different levels. Simple line drawings are used extensively throughout, to good effect, though it makes for a rather bland book to the casual observer. But if you are thinking of doing some Star Tests then this really is required reading, candidate and assessor alike.

*Review By Nigel Timmins - S/NVQ Consultant*



### Open Canoe Techniques

Written by Nigel Foster. Published by Fernhurst Books. ISBN 898660 26 3 £11.95

As the title says, this is a technique book which, with an exciting colour photo on the front and much use of good quality black and white photos' throughout ensures anyone remotely interested in Open Canoeing will want to pick it up and thumb through it. Nigel is a well known paddler with many daring and exciting expeditions to his credit. The knowledge and experience he has gained comes out in the books and enhances it considerably. His interest in white water however does seem to show through by having a chapter devoted to rolling open canoes and another on wave riding skills. The waver riding chapter particularly is excellent, but of course is not exclusive to Open Canoeing. Some areas are a little limited, like Deep Water Rescues and Marathon, which is surprising considering

his paddling experience in America, though he does mention the technique of switching. To be fair though poling, lining, tracking and sailing are well covered. The chapter on sailing a canoe specifically is interesting and covers sailing in all directions not just down wind. This is however a good general book for those getting started in Open Canoeing, or for the more experienced who wish to know more about specific aspects like sailing or poling, and is one I would recommend anyone to read.

*Review By Nigel Timmins - S/NVQ Consultant*

### Paddle Frenzy

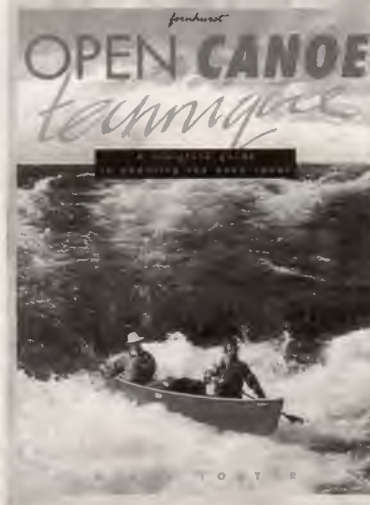
A kayaking odyssey on Northwest Whitewater (USA)

Available from BCU supplies at £19.99 plus p&p

Well they couldn't have chosen a more apt name for this video. A frenzy of whitewater paddling from the USA, showing slalom and rodeo on some seriously big water, plus waterfalls and creek paddling of the most extreme. Accompanied by very loud very heavy music.

It's on a par with those Glen Plake skiing videos, great fun for the first few viewings then they become old hat. 35 minutes of white water madness. Warning: Head bangers and white water junkies only need apply.

*Review by Wendy Blackman*





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**Retirement Sale**, 1 black Perception Dancer VGC £200, Palm neoprene spraydeck £20, paddles: Freeblades £10, Schlegal £10, split paddles £7, buoyancy aid (almost new) £20, pogies £3 Tel: 0171 987 3609 (London)

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**Schlegal** all round Extreme, well used £30. Dry cag £10. Brand new semi dry cag £15, s/sleeve cag £5. Ainsworth K100's as new £15. Pogies £2. Spraydecks: Playboater 9keyhole £10, Nookie (small/slalom) £10. Wilderness ways (small) £5. Also odds and ends BDH's, drybags etc. Tel: 01670 353700

**SeaYak**, plastic sea kayak with waterproof tanks £300, Acrobat 300, green £240, Hurricane, Jade £250, Sunbeam Junior Kayak £150, Sunburst Junior Kayak £150, Microbat £300, Stunt 300 standard £250, Diablo £300. Can deliver any of the items Tel: 0191 272 2225

**Selway Fisher Design 12'** Plywood canoe, three years old, stored in garage (space needed) £50 ono. Tel: 01924 408226 eves 7pm to 9pm Dewsbury

**Slalom C1 Maverick** carbon/kevlar construction, excellent condition, 6 months old, with no repairs, fitted with Italian style seat, £375 ono Tel: Lee 01604 645897 (Northants) Can travel to Notts

**Slalom Kayak**, good condition £200 SW London Tel: 0181 300 7690 (eves)

**Stunt Bat**, full ww spec, white arline, perfect condition £275 Tel: Hayley 01772 720020

**Tyne Touring double**, old but good condition, very stable, as used by PGL, complete with spraydecks £50. P&H pencil WWR C2, designed for 1981 Worlds, good condition, fast (But not as stable as boats like Prijon MK3) £50 Squirt C1, a very cut down slalom boat (shorter, thinner, unrecognisable), for approx 10-12 stone paddler £150 Tel: 01925 823897 (NW England)

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**Wanted** Effly repairable would be OK. Devizes 01380 724628

**Ex Centre or club boats** (plastic) nothing special, for general water use for university club. We need around 10 boats including helmets, paddles, & B/aids. We have around £1500 from the student union for equipment Contact Claire 01633 259615

Newport. **Half a Kober** or Schlegal paddle! Tel: 01823 680467

**Kiwi 2**, in good condition, fair price paid for right canoe Tel: 01924 408226 eves 7pm to 9pm. Dewsbury

**Open Canoe** prefer Old Town Pathfinder of Prospecter for solo paddling. Any condition considered. Tel: 01934 518505 (eves)

**Perception Corsica** Overflow and Perception Dancer XS good condition and dry cag (small) Tel: Worthing 01903 751627 (Worthing)

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**Precision Kevlar** Carbon slalom canoe £250 ono V.G.C. Suit young paddler/light adult. Also Palm Cag V.G.C. £20 (suit 12yrs approx. Please contact J Crabtree on 01962 854769

**New canoe trailer** - holds 16 kayaks or 8 Openes £570. Telephone 01695 576128

## Stolen - Lost and Found

**Nov2/3 From Joel Enterprises** Nr. Worcester a quantity of Palm & Eurokayaks clothing, Long Johns & a roofrack. Anyone with information please contact Peter Elliott on 01905 455311 or local Police.

**The P & H Company** have recently had stolen from a lorry, two brand new sea kayaks. They were being shipped by a carrier in a closed canvas covered lorry to Germany. The kayaks were;

1. Icefloe LC, Golden Yellow deck, Golden Yellow hull with black trim. This kayak had a rudder and a third round hatch on the rear deck. There is, as far as we know, no other kayak fitted to this specification and colour.

2. Sirius hf, Post Office Red deck, Post Office Red hull, with black trim. The deck has two recesses, one for a Compac 50 pump and one for a Silva 70p Compass.

Please telephone 0115 932 0155 if you see these kayaks or can offer any information about them. A reward of up to £100 will be paid should the information lead to the recovery of the kayaks.

**Topo Duo** stolen from Rother Valley Country Park on 15 Sept 1996. Blue with RVCP marked on boat in white marker paint, in a number of places. Serial No: 2700 Any info please contact the centre on 01142 471453

**Found 1 Dry Cag** at Holme Pierrepoint on the weekend of 3/4 August Tel: Alastair or Bob 01732 762424

**Lost Dr D** white water wand paddles with 'Druid' written on blades. Downstream of Cobdens Hotel, Capel Curig on Sunday 29.09.96 Reward for return Tel: Chris 01536 310360 (day) or 01536 711970 (Eves) Northants

**Opportunities** Raft/kayak, Norway or Eastern Europe. There may be an opportunity for a kayaker or raft guide to join an exploratory expedition we mount, resulting from your information and knowledge of a river/s in these regions. A river suitable for a 3 to 10 day expedition (grade III or/and IV, only v if option to safely portage). This is not a pipe dream, I have a successful track record in leading major international expeditions. Please contact Mark Herriott: Rock House, 14 Wye Street, Ross on Wye HR9 7BX Tel: 01989 562868

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# The 1996 Zambezi White Water Challenge

The White Water Challenge (sponsored by a well known leisure company) is an event of World Championship Status, held on one of the Worlds greatest rivers, the mighty Zambezi below Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.



Special thanks to White Water for the expedition buoyancy aids, the organisers and 2010 Media for team sponsorship and finally Teva for the essential rafting footwear! In Africa you have to enjoy hiking out of the Batoka gorge to experience real rafting Zambezi style!

Article by Ian Tordoff  
Photos by Lee Farrant

**I**n its second year the event attracted 19 top teams from 18 nations offering one of the greatest rafting competition spectacles on the planet.

The men's team this year was pulled together at short notice, but brought together a well balanced team of experienced white water canoe and kayak paddlers. Ian and Alan Tordoff from Wild Water Racing kayak. As team manager I pulled the team together, and with Alan gave fitness, and white water skills to the team. Craig Brown from C2 slalom, offered much of his Olympic experience to the events, and combined with Andy Clough gave the

raft its aggression and power. Rob Soothill (Ras Dex) a sponsor to this years event brought further big water experience to the boat, and with Toby Morgan as an experienced Canadian paddler they balanced the mix of the raft, and brought further competition skill to the boat. The final member of the team, Chris Wright, not well known for his competition background, is a paddler I have admired since the first day I met him. His experience from descents in Nepal was clearly evident from day one, and was a valued member of the team. (thanks for the rescue!)

With the team only meeting for the first time at the airport it was felt the first run down the river should be under the guide of a local expert, so off we went to Shearwater to book the GB team in for the daily commercial trip. This was a surprise to the organisers who became further confused on hearing that we felt it was important to paddle together early on the trip as we had never been in a raft before, and at this point still couldn't remember all the names of our team members.

### Hard earned money

The raft guide, who had bet much of his hard earned money on the British team to be one of the leading teams, left at half way following the frequent loss of team members at some of the rapids. He had an urgent appointment with a local bookie he had met earlier that day. He was also interested in the new racing position of hiding as low in the boat as possible at some of the key moves.

Not deterred by the apparent lack of confidence by the locals we started the event well with a 4th in the time trial event. The second event was a head to head rapid sprint where the GB men drew the GB women. Following a respectable 1st run to

place the team in 6th, the girls demonstrated a never say die approach as they passed us on the second run following the sudden ejection of a key player in the team. Well done girls, I think we need to work on our team work!

### play our joker card!

Next the slalom. This was the event to play our joker card! With the experience we had in our team we were keen to produce a good score. Following a safe first run, as there was no practice prior to the race, we followed by producing an almost faultless run to finish second, much to the surprise of the other teams. Thanks must go out to the 150 porters who carried the rafts for all the teams. In terms of skill and team work they were clearly in a class of their own.

The final event, the raft down river started in groups of five from the current seedings. Other than an early battle with Italy we had a clean run finishing 4th giving a 4th overall behind Slovenia, Germany and South Africa.

The challenge also included further fun events including a raft and kayak rodeo with a kayak down river where Chris demonstrated his big water skill in a kayak as well as the raft.

The event motto was raft hard, party hard, and I feel the organisation hit the perfect balance for all people involved. The GB men put in a good 4th position, and the girls won for the second time. Although the women's event had a lower entry than anticipated, I think they have sent out a warning to other countries by finishing 15th in the men's event. Take them on at your peril!

The next White Water Challenge is to be in Turkey lets hope the event is able to expand and that the friendships built last for the future.



# BCU Home International Kayak Surf Championships

Jersey 1996

**Sponsored by**  
Barclays Finance  
(Jersey) Limited

The 1996 BCU Surf Kayak Home Internationals sponsored by Barclays Finance (Jersey) Ltd were held over two weeks in September at St. Ouens Bay (pronounced St. Ones) in Jersey.

**The overall results were:**

- 1 Wales
- 2 England
- 3 Jersey
- 4 Scotland

## Thanks

A big thank you must go to Jersey Surf Kayak Club for all their hard work and hospitality both in organising the 1996 BCU Surf Kayak Home Internationals. The biggest thanks, however, need to go to Barclays Finance (Jersey) Limited for their support and sponsorship. Not forgetting all the other sponsors which helped this event to happen. Thanks also to The Watershed and X.COMMUNICATIONS Ltd for their assistance in publicising and reporting Jersey 96 on the Internet.

**S**t. Ouens bay dominates the western end of Jersey stretching for five miles. Most of this bay is a sandy beach with several rocky out crops providing both beach breaks and reef breaks. In fact there are no less than fourteen separate breaks along the beach. The competition site was based at the most famous of these; the Water Splash.

Organised by Stuart McGlinchey and the Jersey Surf Kayak Club these Home Internationals looked set to be the biggest and most closely contested since the Home Internationals started in 1981. The event had attracted record amounts of sponsorship and a great deal of media coverage from the Jersey Radio and Television channels and daily coverage on the Internet.

The competition was due to start on Wednesday 4th September in St. Ouens Bay Jersey. The Heat draw took place the night before and it was off early to bed for a 9am start in the morning. The Home Internationals consist of ten heats, on each of two days. Those being: 6 Men; 2 Ladies and 2 Juniors.

The results from each heat go towards the final Team scores. One point for first place, two for second and so on. The team with the lowest score at the end of the event is the winner. Heat times of 25 minutes were chosen to allow two heats to be run in an hour and to give these Internationally experienced paddle surfers plenty of time to select the best waves of their heat to score the best points. In reality 25 minutes was needed to give the competitors a chance to catch enough waves in the often small conditions.

Wednesday morning began with a team managers meeting at the competition site at 7.45am. Three inches of surf is not quite enough to run an International Championships! Well, no worries we still have time. Thursday was a repeat of Wednesday. OK! we still have enough time.

Having spent an hour at the Met office desperately searching for surf on Friday morning we still had to call the competition off. However the news was good for the now frustrated teams. One metre of swell was forecast to arrive Friday night with 1.9 metres to follow on Saturday night. By Friday afternoon the swell had arrived.

Everybody hit the water much to the surprise of the local board riders

who are used to seeing only a hand full of kayak paddlers (and that is too many!). With a light offshore wind the conditions could not have been better. Much frustration was released with everybody having a good time.

The frustration returned first thing Saturday morning when the wind although still offshore increased to a pretty constant force 5 and the surf reduced to an alarmingly small size. The Home International is a two day event. We only had two days left. The surf appeared to be shrinking before our eyes. "Who'd be an organiser" echoed around the competition site and for that matter "Who'd be a forecaster".

After a lot of sitting around and deliberation between organisers and chief judges the first heat took to the water at 12.45. Although small, the waves were big enough and clean enough to distinguish good manoeuvres from bad and give a clear result.

In the first heat England began as they have for the last ten years with a win. This heat being won by Chris Bray in front of Richard Berry of Wales.

Heat two saw the tide turn (so to speak) when World Champion Tim Thomas took the heat from Jersey's Keith De Laye, showing his best form yet with England's ever present Gary Adcock wondering what a big guy like him was doing in such small surf anyway.

The next two heats saw Juniors and Ladies on the water. The Junior heat was again won by Wales with a great performance by Mark Williams from Graham Brooks of England. The Ladies heat saw England back on top again with a win from Sue Davey. Sharon Jeffries of Wales took second keeping her country just one point in front of arch rivals England.

By Heat five Wales were slightly further in front with a great performance from Ben Thomas taking this senior heat from Scotland's John Inglis. Heat six saw the Jersey paddlers start to upset the score board with Stuart McGlinchey winning the heat from Malcolm Pearcey of England with Simon Davies of Wales in third and Scotland's KC MacKay in fourth.

Heat Seven, we were back to the juniors with Ben Thomas taking first place for Wales with England's youngest paddler James Hawker close behind. After the next heat, in which Lesley Harker of England won from Wales'

Bethan Thomas and Jersey's Jean Richardson. England had closed the gap by one point on Wales, now ahead by only two points.

The final two heats upset the score board again. First Nigel Holland of Team Jersey won his heat from Wales' Mark Williams with David O'Hare and Robbie Lines finishing in third and fourth respectively.

Wales now leading by four points needed a third place minimum to ensure a leading position to carry into day two. This time it was Jersey's Paul Perchard who took first position with Scotland's Derek Lockhart in second. Craig Norman gave Wales the third place they needed with England's Peter Blenkinsop in fourth.

The next day Sunday was "surf less". As it was the last day of the Home International and a lot of the team members were leaving that evening. The final result was taken on the one days results. A disappointing way to finish the most important Surf Kayak Competition of the UK calendar but a result none the less in a week that was almost completely without surf.

Surf Kayaking is gaining a wider appeal and this will be witnessed with greater numbers, from even more countries, than ever before at the 1997 World Surf Kayak Championships at Thurso in Scotland.

**Stuart McGlinchey**  
Manager of Team Jersey and Co-ordinator of Jersey 1996.



# Soar Valley Canoe Club Open Canoe Rally

8th - 9th June 1996

As you will have noticed we missed the closing date for the August "Focus", but what better than to think back to a superb weekend of canoeing, company and weather last June.

**T**his was the second "Soar Valley Canoe Club Rally for Open Canoes". The multitude gathered at the club house in Leicester and having registered they could fortify themselves for the day with one of the breakfasts being cooked by club members. This consisted of a cob filled with a choice of bacon, egg, beans or tomato, not for the faint hearted. The tea and coffee was provide FREE throughout the weekend.

The minibus that the club had hired for the rally started its job of shuttling people at around

10.00 Hrs. The shuttle bus followed the rally on both days meeting up at points, thus not leaving paddlers stranded if they wished to leave the rally, (No one did). The club also had a motor launch which followed behind the rally covering all of the canal system used over the weekend.

Some intrepid souls started early with club members as guides if they wanted. The majority of the rally left the club at around 10.30 Hrs, most smiling and enjoying the sunshine. People were still smiling even after they chose to shoot the first weir rather than portage around the lock.

Having successfully negotiated the first weir this set the tone for the day. Those paddlers who were more adventurous and those who preferred a more sedate cruise all disembarked at the same watering holes for breaks or lunch. May we thank especially the Navigation Inn, Barrow-upon-Soar and The White Horse, Kegworth for their friendly welcome.

### Very awkward landing

The rally left the canal at Pillings Lock just north of Barrow-upon-Soar with most paddlers portaging the weir at this point. Those who didn't, found the very awkward landing and needed treatment before rejoining the rally. The rally followed this picturesque river section to the campsite at the Cotes Mill Public House on the A60 Nottingham road. The site had been well prepared by the owners and club members had strimmed the banks at the egress points. A short carry up the bank led to the campsite behind the pub. The site is split into different sized areas which are flat and has a water supply. The club had erected a reception / cookhouse tent and hired a mobile toilet block for our convenience.

Saturday night proved to be a very enjoyable evening based around the pub for most of the adults. Many stories were recounted the next morning, hopefully not too many photos were taken!

Sunday morning found the 50+ people on the campsite bathed in sunshine yet again (someone must have liked us that weekend). Having cooked breakfast or eaten a club breakfast cob, the rally moved towards the river and a lazy start ensued, at around 10.30 'ish! The



river continues until it rejoins the canal north of Loughborough, a gentle paddle (or not depending on your mood) brought the rally to Trent Lock, on the river Trent. The stiff breeze and a lot of river traffic sharpened the senses at the end of the day.

All those who completed the rally received their certificates and having placed canoes on their vehicles people either waved a farewell or retired to the pub for lunch before driving home.

The general consensus was that the Soar Valley Canoe Club had organised a good rally; very enjoyable, varied in both scenery and paddling using the river and canal with portages or interesting weirs to shoot. This is a family rally which caters for all abilities. The weather was superb and the company divine.

Watch out for the rally next year in early June and come and join an enjoyable weekend on the Soar Valley Canoe Club Rally for Open Canoes.



**Thanks**  
The club wish to thank not only the publicans on the rally route but again the Cotes Mill public house and campsite and the generous assistance of Colin Broadway 'Mobile Adventure' and especially British Waterways who's financial support was much appreciated by the club and via them the paddlers on the rally.  
Article by  
Ian Dennies -  
Soar Valley CC



**The river Lahn runs for about 177 kilometres through Western Germany starting and joining the Rhine at Lahnstein. It runs through some lovely countryside and beautifully kept old towns. The wooded valleys are frequent reminders of a small version of the Rhine gorge but with gently flowing water.**

**S**ix English canoeists took part on this privately organised tour travelling in three cars, using the Sheerness Vlissingen ferry. Due to age and membership of the Canoe Camping Club my companion and I got an excellent deal of £100 return for car, canoes and two passengers. Don had organised some camp sites and car storage in advance and Fred had translated the Lahn guide from German into English so the trip was well organised from the start.

We started from Geissen where we camped for two nights at the Geissen Canoe Club. The 34 kilometres from Marburg was omitted due to the number of portages required.

The first task was the car ferry. A pleasant drive took us to the camp

site at Berg Lahneck on a mountain above Lahnstein with lovely views of castles and the rivers Lahn and Rhine. It may sound like an odd choice but the waterside camp site had no facilities for storing the cars and, as it turned out, this site gave us free parking in a safe spot just outside the gates. On the return journey to Geissen the train driver/conductor offered us a group ticket for up to five people making the trip very cheap. In fact prices in Germany for food and camping etc. were very similar to England and not the huge expense expected. The first day's canoeing was a short trip to Wetzlar involving three 'bootsgasse' and two locks. The bootsgasse is a sloping channel for canoes that you slide down like a weir. In the case of the first one it was necessary to get out and pull a chain and then leap back into the canoe as a traffic light turned from red to green. This signalled the lowering of a boom at the head of the chute and an extra flow of water to help you down. A longer chain accessible from the water would have been helpful! Two nights were spent at Wetzlar municipal camp site allowing a leisurely tour of the beautiful old town and an excellent shopping centre.



**Beautiful countryside**

The following day was a longer trip of about 32 Kms through beautiful countryside to Weilburg where we again stayed for two nights. On this journey two attractive weirs had to be portaged, in the first case by lining down a chute and in the second case using modern boat rollers. There followed two self service locks and in each case sensible, low, wood lined get outs were provided for canoeists. At Weilburg we met our first large organised party of school children, 50 to 100 in a group canoeing mostly Canadians. Noisy they certainly were, but by and large well behaved and leaving very little litter. Weilburg was another charming old town, well worth a visit. It is approached on water via an enormous-unlit tunnel about 200 metres long.

The next day we paddled 24 km to Runkel, a quaint town with wood frame houses leaning in all directions. A short trip of 10 km took us to

Limburg where we camped at the Limburg Canoe Club. We had a very friendly reception there as we arrived on their club night. We were fortunate to camp there as it was prebooked from England by Don, our German speaking expert. It was very convenient, comfortable and cheap. Limburg is another delightful old town on a hill with a cathedral where we attended a free concert in the evening.

**16 boats and 36 people in the lock**

The following day, on route for Diez, we shared one particular lock with several touring groups. I counted a total of 16 boats and 36 people in the lock together, all touring. This is a measure of the popularity of canoeing and rowing on German rivers and accounts for the facilities that we found.

The sides of the river valley were becoming steeper and we were now encountering several manned locks a day with drops of 15 feet or more. At Rupbach we camped at a railway employees site, remotely situated, and the next day went on to Nassau for another two night stop.

The final day's canoeing took us through deep wooded valleys, and through the famous spa town of Bad Emms, as we approached the Rhine, at the end of the Rhine gorge, at Lahnstein where we camped for three nights to rest up from our small exertions.

I can thoroughly recommend the Lahn for a gentle placid river tour. I am assured that licences are not required and they were certainly not asked for at the locks. Although it rained quite a bit, on most days this was not until the evening and after we had got our tents up.

What next? The Rhine perhaps?



**I would be glad to hear from anyone with knowledge of good rivers to tour, or interest in joining a group. My number is 0181 304 2330, but I am away a lot! Peter Minch**

# Like Nothing You've Ever Seen Before

**The Fury by Savage - £560** available from Outdoor Leisure Supplies the sole importer from the US.



**The Gravity by Savage £560** available from Outdoor Leisure Supplies the sole importer from the US.



**F**irst impressions: Hmm! Uck! Well! O.K so it's not your average whitewater kayak, its a kind of cross between a surf board, a snowboard and a kayak. Starting with the hull, this is flat with speed resisting bumps in the bow and stern to help when flat spinning I'm told. The similarity to a snowboard is when you look at The Fury in plan view, the boats sides are vertical and curve inwards making the centre of the back narrower than in front and behind the cockpit. The resemblance to a kayak, well, you sit in it!

**Fittings: ✓✓✓ Great ✓✓ Average ✓OK X Not OK**  
As with most US boats The Fury was well fitted with one or two bits which required improvement:

Centre Foam in Microcell	✓✓✓
Seat Comfort	✓✓✓
Backstrap	X
Thighgrips	X
Footrest (footstops in demo)	X
Webbing end grabs	✓✓✓

**Overall:** Comfort is not great but this is a weird boat. Room for the feet is a

bit tight, thighgrips just don't but with customisation this could be overcome. End finish and looks are good.

### On the Water

Well to say it's slow on the flat is kind, but who wants to paddle on the flat anyway. It surfs really well on green and broken waves, spins easily but backloops even easier. So the trick is to surf forwards and sideways but not backwards unless it's a really steep wave. Tail squirts are simple but spinning smoothly takes some time because the stern is so flat and wide. It also front loops well even on small waves. It cartwheels and flipwheels but is a little tricky to set up. Flat spins are easy but watch out for the wide stern it catches! You soon get used to it, but the first few powerflips happen pretty quickly. Overall: A fun boat, not for everyone. It gets you noticed and looks weird so people talk to you. Rivers could be fun with a bit of care!

## The Gravity

First impressions: Big, Orange and a skinny bow, fairly rockered with smooth curves leading to a sharp tail. Recessed grab loops on the stern look good, also looks pretty safe to paddle.

**Fittings: ✓✓✓ Great ✓✓ Average ✓OK X Not OK**

Microcell centre foam	✓✓✓
Seat Comfort	✓✓✓
Backstrap	✓✓
Thighgrips	✓
Footrest (footstops in demo)	XXX
(they broke in half an hour)	
Webbing end grabs	✓✓✓
Drain plug	✓✓

**Overall:** comfort is good, the seat is nice and the backstrap works, unlike in the Fury, which is surprising as both backstraps are the same type. Thighgrips could be better and the cockpit size seemed a bit small. Webbing grabs worked and were nicely recessed. Footstops are just not up to the job.

**On the Water:** Average speed, surfs really well on green and broken waves. The bow is really forgiving when surfing and looping is actually not that easy. It turns well into and out of eddys Flat spins in holes are smooth and even after breaking the footrest I could spin, feeling safe and stable. All in all a very predictable boat that would be happy on rivers or ideal for someone teaching who needs a comfortable place to sit all day.

Further to the review Outdoor Leisure Supplies stated that the imported models will come with a full plate footrest option for the Gravity and a foam custom bulkhead option for the Fury. For more detail on The Fury and the Gravity please contact OLS on 01824 707177/707391

**Many thanks to Jason Buxton, British Rodeo Team for reviewing both boats.**

### From Service Sports (Wetherby)

Available at a special price to BCU Members when mentioning this review £69.95 inc VAT and postage and packing.

## The Service Shirt

Made from Pertex with a fibre pile lining. The Service Shirt as its name suggests was designed initially for use by military units. At present, sizes available are medium, large and extra large, with a green outer and black fleece (to blend in with the bankside) Although other colours may soon become available.

The test was carried out over a couple of days with varying weather conditions. Day one a mild day with a wind chill factor of 3 degrees, storm force 5 winds, with light to moderate rain, the second day had heavy rain, strong winds and the air temperature was 9 degrees.

Although I did not have any extreme weather to test the shirt, insulation was good and body heat was retained, apart from the neck chest zip the jacket was windproof, perhaps a larger back flap to the neck zip would solve this problem.

The Service Shirt has a fold away pertex hood, which I'm afraid I did not like, the stowage in the neckband was poor and the hood proved to be too small and tight, the rain ran off the hood onto the face and then down the neck. O.K for a light shower but not for anything more. The pull ties in the hood also proved to be a problem in high winds as the toggles on the ends whipped back and hit you in the face. Perhaps a continuous loop system would have been better. I would also like to have seen a higher neckline to provide cover for the chin, a must on those really cold days. Waterproofing was very good and combined with leggings (if some had been available) would have been excellent. I didn't find the body tightening strap in the hand warmer section particularly easy to use, but once secured, it proved to keep the warm in and the wind out. The Velcro securing tabs on the sleeves were excellent but the side tabs proved to be a nuisance as they kept catching on the side vent zips. The sleeve has been tailored to allow full movement of the arm without any riding up of the waist, and extra material around the back to allow full movement without restriction. Overall I was very happy with the shirt and found the insulation properties when compared with 'jackets' of similar styles were excellent. 7 out of 10, and if the hood gets sorted out probably 10.

**Thanks to Bob Haggart for the review**







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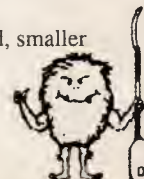
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# The North Channel - by Open Canoe

The forecast revealed a window in the weather, it seemed Thursday 22 August 1996 was going to be the day when we would start our venture, that is sailing a 17' Pyranha Tourer open canoe across the North Channel from Northern Ireland to Scotland.

**T**he expedition was going to start from a small town in County Down called Donaghadee, which is situated on the shores of Belfast Lough, and finish in a similar place, Portpatrick on the Mull of Galloway, (near Stranraer) in Scotland, a distance of 21 nautical miles. It was a plan, that we had in our minds for some time, but events, such as house moving always seemed to prevent us from doing it earlier. The idea came about when we designed and built the rig for Advanced Proficiency and Senior Instructor training courses.... We chose a simple gaff rig, with an addition of a forestay and reefing points (both where to prove invaluable) for the expedition. This stretch of water is used regularly by yachtsmen, and was known to us via a yacht and sea kayaking trips in the past. So it seemed the most logical route for us to take. However this did not mean we were complacent about the challenge ahead.

We left the slipway at Donaghadee Sailing Club at 05.15am just as dawn was breaking. Our Coastguard contact and friend Alan Prichard was there to see us off. Ironically we had to paddle for the first hour, due to a severe lack of wind. However as more daylight revealed itself a force 1 occasionally 2 wind crept in. Radio contact was established, but then lost after 2.5 hours. We were outside the range of Belfast/Bangor Coastguard but in range of Portpatrick Radio operating on 27. The wind was freshening enough to take the decision to reef (reduce the area of the sail). We were relieved that we had done this, because not long afterwards we heard the following message "Securite", all shipping, Gale force winds in the Irish Sea soon". It seemed "the weather" was closing in more quickly than had been forecast.

A decision had to be made about our speed and the need to get to Scotland as quickly as possible. As wind strength was fluctuating,

decisions about sail size had to be made regularly and on one occasion the sail was dropped completely. From time to time wave size put pressure on us and shipping was appearing more frequently which was also a potential hazard. Canoes are too small to be "picked up" on their radar.

## A close call

We were starting to take water on board as quickly as one of us could bail. With a reef in the sail, Phil steering from the front, while I bailed from the rear trying to keep a "weather eye" open at the same time, in case another timely support stroke was needed.

Unfortunately when we lost speed, we also lost control, although our lee boards were working well. On one occasion I could see Phil's head appear through a wave, just as it was breaking on him. That was a close call. It was not over yet!

The last one and a half hours, had to be the hardest, a reef in the sail and high support strokes on a regular basis were a must in a confused sea. We could see Portpatrick harbour entrance, but it was not coming fast enough. We needed to keep our position high on the land (our compass bearing was no longer relevant). The waves were taking us in a way we did not want to go.

Then calm - what had happened? we were drifting towards a small beach. We were in the safe haven of Portpatrick harbour. No jubilation or feelings of relief, we had arrived after a journey of 7 hours.

Our arrival had not gone unnoticed. The second coxswain of the Portpatrick Lifeboat made himself known to us. What a treasure! He pointed us in the direction of a campsite and even offered us a secure place for the boat and gear! After a welcome meal, then back to our tent, while the elements raged outside.

## Sunshine and a force 2

After twelve hours of sleep, we woke to a total change in the weather, sunshine and a force 2 great! This came as a total surprise as day two had not been scheduled as the return day due to predicted deteriorating weather forecast. Decision time. We made contact with the Harbour Master, Willie and the skipper of the Ministry of Defence vessel Peter. Looks like a good forecast and the tides are in our favour. All agreed now was the time to go back. A hearty breakfast was a must, with two hours to get organised.

At 11.53am we paddled out of Portpatrick harbour, after saying our goodbyes to the Harbour Master who had come to wish us good luck and with "rather you than me" expression. We started our journey in a healthy force 2 wind with some swell and sunshine. The wind became variable through out the passage but infinitely more pleasurable. No radio contact again with



Belfast/Bangor Coastguards but a listening watch on channel 16/67. A casual glance revealed we were about to lose our mast where it was stepped into the seat. The forestay quickly became a port sidestay (shroud) ideal!

At this stage we had not been able raise the Coastguards for 5 hours. A freight vessel "Saga Moon" was passing to our stern so we relayed a message through them. On listening to the relay we had our exact position confirmed at 3.5 miles east of Mew Island and the Copelands.

There is a fine dividing line with the rig. It works well up to force 4, force 2 is ideal, below that you need to paddle to maintain speed. We also sailed effectively by the person at the front steering while the other rested and trimmed the sail. And two leeboards are better than one.

## Race against time

We had become involved in a race against time, because of the lack of wind we were behind time and into the next tidal range. During the last hour and a half the main tidal stream on the outside of the Copeland Island flows south, where as in the channel between the Copelands and the mainland it flowed north at 3 knots!! By the time we reached this channel, needless to say 3 knots of tide were flowing and we had to ferryglide and paddle very hard to make sure we were not going to be flushed past our finishing point. We did it. We had arrived back at where it all began. There were no feelings of achievement, just relief it was all over.

## Thanks

Jackie and Phil would like to thank Alan Prichard and the team in Belfast/Bangor District Coastguards Operations Room, Bregenz House, Bangor, Co Down, Northern Ireland, Family and friends who supported this venture.

Article by Jackie and Phil Chatterley

One of the classic events in the international marathon racing calendar. It has been run every year since 1983 and attracts some of the best paddlers in the world.

Raced over 7 days with distances up to 98km and a total of 140 classified rapids, it is a major test of a paddlers endurance and watermanship.

Article by  
**Jamie Christie**

**T**he race is divided into race stages, 23 in all this year, the longest being 98km, the shortest a 700m sprint down rough water. Dispersed between these race stages are 15 transfer stages which can be paddled at your own pace so long as you reach the next start on time. With the race being broken up this way it makes for very competitive racing, with someone always trying to take the lead or putting in burns to try and drop stragglers. At the end of each race stage points are awarded. 0 points for 1st 3 points for 2nd 5 points for 3rd 6



# The Arcti Race 1996



Above: Just after the start on Day 8, the last stage entering Kakkolorkoski



Above: Start Day 7 Stage 2  
Below: Janice during 1,000m T.T.



points for 4th and so on. At the end of each days racing the scores are added up and the days winners are presented with prizes donated by the local communities. Also the overall race leader, not necessarily the days winner, is presented with the white jersey to be worn throughout the next days racing. This also makes sure every one on the water knows who they are trying to beat.

Generally all the race stages have white water in them. The biggest being up to grade IV and up to 3.5km long and, apart from one or two of the rapids which you can inspect on your way to the start in Kilpisjarvi, the majority have to be run blind, which means there is lots of action to keep the spectators interested. If there are no rapids there's always plenty of hidden rocks just under the surface on shallow parts of the river which are virtually impossible to see.

Not all of the racing is head to head, usually there is one race a day which is run as an individual time trial, 3 or 4 of which are run down some of the biggest rapids. Also there are mass starts where all the classes start together and group starts for individual classes. On the mass starts all the KI's are always trying to make sure they can get a good K2 wash. In the individual

starts someone always goes flying off the start trying to drop the competition. And because there are 3 or more races every day people save themselves for one particular stage to try and take the stage victory so the racing is always really good.

Each day there are lunch stops usually lasting a minimum of half an hour. Lunch is provided and is usually a meat or fish soup with bread, cheese and fruit juice.

### DAY 1 . 67km

**Stage 1:** 14km across Kilpisjarvi lake, mass start. Jamie missed the K2 washes at the start and 3 KI's got away. Winner: Scott GB

**Stage 2:** 5km White Water Race, group start. A large group went into the 1st rapid and 2 came out of the last for a sprint finish. Winner: Jamie GB

**Stage 3:** 34km, 3 big rapids, group start. 3 boats got away from the start and stayed together until a small rapid at the end where they split up. Winner Jamie GB

### DAY 2. 64km

**Stage 1:** 700m rapid race grade IV, individual starts. Dave hit a rock head on his spray deck came off and forced another swim. Kari Kuhno lost the first half metre of his boat to the ferocious water. Luckily he had a





Left: Scott Wilson, Dave Hewlings, Jamie Christie racing down Kakkolorkoshi on Day 8, last stage.

## DAY 5. 94km.

**Stage 1:** 6km WWR, 2 rapids grade III + 6 others, individual starts from 08.00. Jamie was unlucky going the long way round an island 500m from the finish. Kari went down the inside to take the win by 1 second. Winner Kari.

**Stage 2:** 11km flat water, mass start. Jamie, Scott and Dave got away with the K2's. Dave taking a swim early on which was assisted by Steve Bagshaw driving one of the British K2's. Jamie struggling on an outside wash was dropped just before the finish. Winner Scott.

**Stage 3:** 8km, some small rapids, mass start. A large group formed on the K2 washes until the

**Stage 4:** 7km small rapids, group start. Another tactical race with another sprint finish. Winner Jamie. Stage 5: 3km T.T. around a very long sweeping bend starting when you wanted at 1 minute intervals. Local knowledge playing a big part again. Dave and Jamie started early and with no locals to follow got poor results. Scott however following a Finn did much better. Winner Kari.

## DAY 7. 55km.

**Stage 1:** 20km lots of small rapids, mass start. Jamie and Kari got away with the K2's. Kari took the inside line down one of the rapids and lost the wash. Winner Jamie.

**Stage 2:** 9km flat water, mass start. Jamie got away again with the K2's. Winner Jamie.

**Stage 3:** 3km WWR, group start.

Scott lead into the first rapid with Dave and Jamie close behind. Half way down the rapid Jamie missed a support stroke and went over. Tried to roll getting almost all the way up before running out of stroke and going back over to swim. Winner Scott.

**Stage 4:** 1000m Time Trial


Flatwater starting when you liked. Winner Kari FIN

## DAY 8. 74km

**Stage 1:** 9km fiat water, mass start. Jamie got away with the K2s after a blistering start. Winner Jamie.

**Stage 2:** 15km, 2 of the biggest rapids, grade IV and 3km of it, mass start. A large group got away with the K2's until the start of the big rapids. Scott taking the 1st swim and Dave not too far behind, they weren't the only ones either. The K2's pulled away down the rough with Jamie not too far behind. Jamie later commented that it was the biggest water he'd even seen never mind paddled. Winner Jamie.

**Stage 3:** 16km, 1 big rapid 200m after a group start, to the finish in Tornio. Kari led into the rapid closely followed by Scott, Jamie and Dave. Very close racing between Kari Scott and Jamie with bows of boats landing on sterns in very big water, while Dave stormed down the middle of the rapid in even bigger water to lead the first half of the race. Kari found a better line on the lower sections leaving the rest hacking through weeds. Winner Kari.

The Arctic Canoe Race is the most enjoyable and testing race I have ever competed in. Surrounded by wilderness and some of the friendliest people in the world, I will be going back. I would like to thank Helen for supporting me over the 8 days keeping me fed and watered. And I also want to thank the guys from Nottingham. 

# c Canoe

spare boat to continue the race. Winner Jamie.

**Stage 2:** 18km, 2 big rapids, group start. Kari put a big burn in at the bottom of one of the rapids, only Jamie was able to stay with him, for another sprint finish. Winner Jamie.

**Stage 3:** 30km lots of small rapids, group start. Dave and Jamie had bad races on this stage. Dave breaking a paddle on the first rapid having to return to the start for a spare, losing so much time he was unable to regain any positions. Jamie also had trouble with his spraydeck just after the start, but managed to regain 3rd place. Winner Kari FIN.

## DAY 3. 98krn.

**Stage 1:** 98km, 33 classified rapids some up to grade III, mass start, with a half hour compulsory lunch stop. The 2 British K2's got away from the rest of the field, taking with them Dave, Kari, Jamie and Scott. Scott and Jamie dropping off this lead group early on in the stage. Kari also broke away towards the lunch stop to have a 3minute lead over Dave. Dave, however, managed to catch Kari in the afternoon stage. Unfortunately for Kari he broke a paddle sprinting for the line down the last rapid. Winner Dave.

## DAY 4. Rest day and Finnish rafting Championships.

**Rafting Champs.** 1km, grade IV. GB and the ACR organisers entered 2 ladies rafts. Finishing second to last and last. But if there had been a ladies class, 1st and 2nd!

last rapid. Jamie managing to stay with them for a little longer. Winner Jamie.

**Stage 4:** 9km T.T. flat water. Just what you need after 85krn and 3 hard races. As the river has quite a lot of flow on the flat sections local knowledge of the river becomes a big factor, as shown by the results: 1st Kari by over 30 seconds, 2nd Timo Vepsalainen FIN 1 second in front of Jamie, followed by Dave then Scott. Winner Kari.

## DAY 6. 79km.

**Stage 1:** 5km some small rapids, group starts. There are only 5 bridges over the entire length of the river and we were told the finish was at a bridge. Jamie, Scott and Kari getting away at the start with a big sprint finish at a bridge. Kari being first under the bridge. It wasn't until the rest of the field caught up still racing that they realised that there are 2 bridges on this stretch of river within 2km of each other. So all of a sudden the race is back on and another big sprint finish. Winner Jamie.

**Stage 2:** 10km small rapids and fast flowing very swirly water, group start. Another good race, a large group getting away with another big sprint finish. Winner Scott.

**Stage 3:** 16km fast swirly water, mass start. A very tactical race with people always breaking away from the main group if they thought the water was going faster on the other side. Nobody got away though, resulting in another sprint finish. Winner Jamie.

## Results Overall

K1	
1st	Jamie Christie GB 59pts
2nd	Kari Kuhno FIN 78pts
3rd	Scott Wilson GB 103pts
4th	Dave Hewlings GB 150pts

K2	
1st	Paul Enoch /Richard Horsley GB 11pts
2nd	Dave Enoch /Steve Bagshaw GB 68pts
3rd	Rantatalo /Lindmark SWE 109pts

WWR	
1st	Petri Sutinen FIN 0pts
2nd	Pekka Kaikkonen FIN 75pts
3rd	Veijo Simpainen FIN 118pts

# BCU National Lifeguard Championships '06

A strong breeze and an overcast sky were the welcoming sight on the Friday evening as the ten teams that had entered this years championships arrived at Calshot Activity Centre at Fawley, near Southampton.

**A**s Saturday morning arrived however, the sun was shining brightly and remained so throughout the day.

Saturday saw the teams competing in the skill events - nine gruelling tasks that left the lifeguards physically and mentally drained by the end of the day. The first of these events was a swimming rescue of a struggling swimmer. A 200 meter sprint followed by the same distance back this time towing the casualty. Before one could slow ones heaving chest, the teams had to do the same distance again but this time applying mouth to nose resuscitation whilst swimming for the beach. A rafted resuscitation of an unconscious non breathing casualty utilising all three team members, and an X-rescue of a

team member completed the mornings events. Lunch was eaten quickly and then it was time to get wet again. The wind was picking up and the sea was now quite choppy. The worsening conditions were now seriously testing the competitors skill and stamina. A rescue of a struggling swimmer using the back of the kayak as a stretcher almost proved too much for some of the less experienced teams. This was followed by an all-in rescue of 5 people and so ended the water activities. An extensive equipment check, some rope work and finally the throw bag

exercise saw an end to the formal competition for the day - now for some fun, the Iron Man and Diamond Lady competition! A half mile paddle, half mile run and a half mile swim rounded the day off. It was time to sample some of the local food and ale.

Sunday saw the teams testing their skill and knowledge against the unknown. Two main incidents had been set up, one land based, one water based and each team had to deal with each incident as they came across them. To complete the championships, an extensive theory paper had to be undertaken by every competitor. The water based incident saw our team of lifeguards brought to the waterside by the sound of an explosion. A small outboard engine, attached to a sailing boat, had exploded. The three crew members were seriously injured. One had fallen overboard tangled in the anchor chain and was slowly being pulled under the water. A second crew member had been blinded by the flash of the explosion and was crawling around on the deck of the boat in great pain and the third sailor appeared unconscious and was not breathing. To make matters worse, the boat had been holed by the blast and was sinking.

The land based incident was a fall from the climbing wall at the nearby outdoor centre. Three lads were playing around on the wall with no safety equipment. As a centre official approached the boys to tell them the centre was shut, one of the lads fell taking his two friends with him and colliding with the centre official. Our trio of lifeguards were alerted to the scenario by the shouts coming from the room as they were passing. One lad had suffered a broken leg, another a serious brake to an arm. The centre official had sustained a fractured skull and the remaining lad had escaped with minor bruising.

Marks were awarded not only for



Top: A trapped sailor is helped ashore. Above: Transporting an unconscious non-breathing casualty to the shore.

the speed in completing the rescue but also for patient care. Some teams did not manage to transport their casualties to the shore before the boat sunk. A few teams did not spot the casualty trapped by the anchor chain until it was too late.

The weekend came to a close with the founder of the Lifeguards, Mr Oliver Cock, making the presentations to the winners. Congratulations to Weymouth Lifeguards A Team for taking first place from Hertfordshire Canoe Lifeguards Senior Team and Weymouth Lifeguards Ladies. Congratulations also to Weymouth Lifeguards Junior and Ladies teams for taking first place in their respective categories.

The championships are important to all the participants and spectators for a number of reasons. The prize of becoming the National Champions is obvious, but for many regular competitors and helpers it is a chance to meet up with old friends. But for all, it is a learning experience designed to make one a safer more confident person.



For more information on the BCU Lifeguards, please contact the BCU office, your regional representative or review the following internet web pages.

**Wye Bother Canoe Lifeguards**  
[http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/honest\\_si/wbcl.htm](http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/honest_si/wbcl.htm)

**Rescue and Safety Coastal Lifeguards**  
<http://www.users.dircon.co.uk/~rascl/index.htm>

Article by Simon Fairless

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Colin Hill rowing the gear raft down the Rio Upano in Ecuador for the Adrift South American exploratory. Photo: Matt Horder

